

## PANTON, PAUL (1727-1797), barrister-at-law and antiquary

**Name:** Paul Panton  
**Date of birth:** 1727  
**Date of death:** 1797  
**Spouse:** Jane Panton (née Jones)  
**Child:** Elisabeth Maria Panton  
**Child:** Jane Panton  
**Child:** Bulkeley Panton  
**Child:** Thomas Panton  
**Child:** Jones Panton  
**Child:** Paul Panton  
**Parent:** Margaret Patton (née Gruffudd)  
**Parent:** Paul Patton  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** barrister-at-law and antiquary  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Law  
**Author:** Evan David Jones

Born 4 May 1727, elder son of Paul Patton (died 1752) of Bagillt, Flintshire, and his wife Margaret, daughter and heiress of Edward Griffith of the same. This branch of the Patton (or Panton) family resided at Coleshill, but they traced their ancestry through the Pantons of Plas Panton (purchased by Paul Panton, junior, in 1811) to Marchweithian. The Griffith family of Bagillt descended from Ednywain Bendew, and Margaret Griffith was a great-grand-daughter of **John Jones** (c. 1578 - 1658) of Gellilyfdy. Paul Panton was educated at Westminster School (from 1739 to 1740), and Trinity Hall, Cambridge (from 25 June 1744). He matriculated in 1746, and had been admitted to Lincoln's Inn, 21 December 1744. Called to the Bar, 14 November 1749, he practised for some time. He married, 1 March 1756, Jane (1725 - 1764), daughter and heiress of William Jones (1688 - 1755), Plas Gwyn, Pentraeth, Anglesey, recorder of Beaumaris. Her mother was heiress of the estates of Derwen, Denbighshire, and Llwyn-gwern, Llanuwchllyn, Merioneth. In addition to his public responsibilities in Anglesey as squire of Plas Gwyn, which he took in earnest, to the great delight of the Morris brothers, Paul Panton took a keen practical interest in collieries, lead-mines, and industrial projects in the Holywell district. **William Morris**, recommending him to the notice of his brother **Lewis** in 1761, described him as 'mine mad.' He was lord of the manor of Coleshill and he spent a large proportion of his time in Flintshire. He was sheriff of Flintshire in 1770, and of Anglesey in 1771. He travelled extensively in Wales, England, and Scotland, and, like his friend, **Thomas Pennant**, he was interested in antiquities. Throughout his life he maintained contact with his fellow-students, visiting them, and meeting them occasionally in Bath or London. He was a collector of manuscripts, and a large proportion of the **Wynn of Gwydir** papers became his property (NLW MSS 9051-9069E ). He was interested in early Welsh literature in spite of his limited knowledge of Welsh. In 1758, **Evan Evans** (Ieuan Fardd) showed him his copy of the poems of **Taliesin**. They remained on friendly terms for the remainder of **Evans's** life (he died 1787), and in the end, after every other scheme had fallen through, he contracted to pay him an annuity of £20 on condition that his collections should go to Plas Gwyn after his death. Within a few months, on 29 December 1787, the manuscripts came to his hands. His wife died 21 June 1764, and was buried at Pentraeth. They had four children - Jane (born 7 April 1757), Paul (born 8 March 1758), Jones (born 14 August 1761), and Elizabeth Maria (born 2 December 1763). He married secondly (6 June 1770) Martha Kirk, a widow, of Chester (who died at Holywell, 27 July 1814, aged 82), and had two sons, Thomas (born 1771) and Bulkeley (born 1772). He died 24 May 1797, and was buried in Holywell church, where a monument by John Flaxman commemorates him. His only brother, Thomas, a merchant at Leghorn, had died the previous year.

### PAUL PANTON, junior (1758 - 1822),

followed much in his father's footsteps, but he made his home more at Plas Gwyn, which he improved and enlarged. From 1765 to 1769 he was at **Edward Owen's** school at Warrington, and from the latter year to September 1775 at the King's School, Chester (under Robert Vanbrugh). He was admitted to Lincoln's Inn, 22 March 1775, but did not reside there until November 1777, spending the intervening period at the University of Edinburgh. In January 1779, his letters, under the pseudonym 'Monensis,' printed in the Chester papers, led the opposition to the appointment of John Probert to collect the king's rents in North Wales. He was called to the Bar, June 1781, and he kept chambers at Lincoln's Inn till 1794. He practised regularly for many years on the Anglesey, Caernarvon, and Merioneth circuit of the Court of Great Sessions. In 1781 he published anonymously, in London, *Free Thoughts on the Continuance of the American War ... by a Gentleman of Lincoln's Inn*. He was appointed, 1793, distributor of stamps for North Wales (Denbighshire from 1821). He took a leading part in local affairs in Anglesey, as a deputy lieutenant, and colonel of the volunteers from 1803, and high sheriff in 1807. He was also sheriff of Flintshire, 1815. He was chairman of the meeting of the Anglesey gentry which sent a petition to Parliament against the claims of the Roman Catholics, giving rise to a debate in the House of Commons, 1813. Like his father, he took a keen interest in Welsh studies and antiquities, though he understood little of the language. He lent **Evan Evans's** transcripts to **Owen Jones** (Owain Myfyr) and **William Owen Pughe** for the publication of *The Myvyrian Archaology of Wales*, and the first volume, 1801, was dedicated to him. He was also a patron of **David Thomas** (Dafydd Ddu Eryri), who dedicated his *Corph y Gaiac* (Dolgelley, 1810) to him. He travelled much and was interested in music and in printing. He could play the violin and he bought a small printing press in 1794. He died, unmarried, 24 August 1822, and his possessions passed between his sisters, and his brother, JONES PANTON (1761 - 1837), sheriff of Anglesey, 1823, 1828; Flintshire, 1827; and Merioneth, 1830.

### Author

**Evan David Jones**, (1903 - 1987)

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