

## POPKIN, JOHN (fl. 1759-1824), Methodist and Sandemanian exhorter

**Name:** John Popkin  
**Spouse:** Mary Popkin (née Prichard)  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Methodist and Sandemanian exhorter  
**Area of activity:** Religion  
**Author:** Gomer Morgan Roberts

He was a wealthy gentleman, one of the Popkins of Ynysdawe and Forest; he lived at Plas Tal-y-garn c. 1801 [having married Mary, daughter of James Prichard of Collennau near Tonyrefail, who had at one time lived at Tal-y-garn-fawr ], but resided at Forest, Llansamlet, in the latter years of his life. The date of his joining the Methodists is not known but he came into prominence in 1759 as an exhorter who opposed the return of **Howel Harris** in the Associations. He came under the influence of the doctrines preached by J. Glass and R. Sandeman c. 1760, and caused turmoil in some of the societies. He went on a missionary tour of North and South Wales and founded Sandemanian societies at Swansea, Llangadock, and Carmarthen. **Williams** of Pantycelyn opposed his views in the Association, and Popkin was excommunicated. He now began to translate into Welsh, and to publish, the works of Glass and Sandeman - *Anghyfreithlondeb Bwyta Gwaed*, 1764; *Llythyrau rhwng Samuel Pike a Robert Sandeman*, 1765; and similar books until 1768. Before the end of the 18th century he had begun to publish a series of testy, controversial books of his own authorship and continued to do so for some years - *Dychymmygion Dynol yn nghylch Ffydd*, 1797; *Llythyr oddi wrth John Popkin at y Parch. David Jones ... yngylch Natur Crefydd*, 1801. In 1812 he published a book attacking the bishop of S. Davids, *Traethawd yn nghylch Natur 'Ty Dduw' neu 'Eglwys Crist'*, and another similar one in 1813. [In 1816 he published *Caniadau Cristionogol*, a collection of his hymns.] Later on, two English books appeared: *Further Remarks on the Unitarian ... Doctrine*, 1815, and *Observations on the Coming of the Son of God*, 1821. In 1824 he published *Llythyr I oddiwrth J. Popkin at Gyfaill*, and *Llythyr II, etc.*, the same year. His writings are an extraordinary rigmorole but display a considerable knowledge of the Scriptures, along with confused thinking and an embittered temper. The date of his death is not known.

### Author

Reverend Gomer Morgan Roberts, (1904 - 1993)

### Sources

Thomas Shankland in *Cofiant J. R. Jones, Ramoth yn cynnwys casgliad helaeth o'i lythyrau* (Carmarthen 1913), 757

G. M. Roberts *Y PŴr Ganiedydd [Pantycelyn]*. *Cyfrol 1 Trem ar ei fywyd*; *Cyfrol 2: Arweiniad i'w waith* (Aberystwyth 1949, 1958), 132-48, 156

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**Published date:** 1959

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#### APA Citation



Roberts, G. M., (1959). POPKIN, JOHN (fl. 1759-1824), Methodist and Sandemanian exhorter. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 15 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-POPK-JOH-1759>

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