

PRICE, BENJAMIN (1804 - 1896), first bishop of the 'Free Church of England'

Name: Benjamin Price
Date of birth: 1804
Date of death: 1896
Parent: Isaac Price
Gender: Male
Occupation: first bishop of the 'Free Church of England'
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born in 1804 at Builth, son of Isaac Price, shopkeeper and prominent Calvinistic Methodist elder. The father was a nephew of David Price, vicar of Llanbadarn-fawr, Cardiganshire in 1770, and was thus cousin to the Orientalist **David Price** (1762 - 1835); the mother is said to have been of **John Penry**'s family - there were certainly Penrys who lived in Merthyr Cynog (Brecknock), which to all appearance was the parish of Isaac Price's origins. Benjamin Price began to preach among the Calvinistic Methodists; there is proof of his having preached with **John Elias** (but in English) at an Association at Newtown in 1830. Possibly it was his lack of Welsh which led him to throw in his lot with lady Huntingdon's connexion, in which he was ordained.

In 1844, reacting against the Tractarian movement, some Anglican clergymen, chiefly in the diocese of Exeter, founded the 'Free Church of England'; one of their centres was Ilfracombe. They fraternized with the Huntingdonians, whom indeed they closely resembled; Price [who had been for three years president of the Huntingdon connexion], went over to them, and became their minister at Ilfracombe; later on, he became their 'President' - they had then no bishops. In America, however, where several Anglican bishops had formed the 'Reformed Episcopal Church,' the 'Free Church' too retained episcopacy. In 1868 it was agreed that Price, though not consecrated, should be entitled 'bishop'; but in 1876 bishop Cridge of British Columbia came over, and Price was formally consecrated. He had not forgotten Wales: his name will be found among the subscribers to the *History of Brecknockshire* by **Edwin Poole**, and he gathered a church at Cardiff, which however did not flourish. He died at Ilfracombe, early in January 1896, aged 92.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Bye-Gones, relating to Wales and the Border Counties, 15 January 1896

information from the Rev. W. Rodgers, secretary of the Free Church of England

[see further G. Hugh Jones in Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (Edinburgh 1908-26), x, 629-31]

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Benjamin Price](#)

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