

## SIMON, BEN (c. 1703 - 1793), dissenter and copyist

**Name:** Ben Simon  
**Date of birth:** c. 1703  
**Date of death:** 1793  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** dissenter and copyist  
**Area of activity:** Poetry  
**Author:** Garfield Hopkin Hughes

There is a record of the burial of ' Benjamin Simon, a Pauper,' at Abergwili, 1 March 1793, and **Iolo Morganwg** has left for us in his ' Agricultural Observations,' 1795 (NLW MS 13115B , i.e. Llanover MS. C 28) a picture of the old man in his poverty. **Iolo** says that he was 90 years of age at the time of his death and that he had been a bookbinder by trade. Another tradition, however, has it that he was a bootmaker. His elegy on **Griffith Jones** of Llanddowror shows how greatly he, like many other contemporaries, was indebted to **Jones** and his schools. Simon, like so many other antiquaries and literary men of that generation, was a dissenter, and he is recorded as being a member of the chapel at Panteg, Carmarthenshire, in March 1743 (the Panteg Church Book, NLW MS 12362D ). Ben Simon was one of the group of copyists greatly influenced by **Iaco ab Dewi**. His most celebrated manuscript, 'Tlysau'r Beirdd' (NLW MS 5474A ) was written between 1747 and 1751, and his well-known collection of **Dafydd ap Gwilym's** works (NLW MS 5475A ) in 1754. Some of his other manuscripts are in the Cardiff City Library and at Oxford. His books and manuscripts were bought by **Thomas Evans** (Tomos Glyn Cothi) in 1790, and **Iolo Morganwg** made use of some of them at a later date. Ben Simon was also closely connected with **Siôn Rhydderch**. His best-known ballad is *Marwnad ar Farwolaeth ...*, 17 o Ddynion yng Waith Glo'r Wern Fraith, ger-llaw Castell Nedd yn Sir Forgannwg, 1758. Another of his elegies was printed as a supplement to *Llawlyfr Ysgrhythrawl*, 1756.

### Author

**Garfield Hopkin Hughes**, (1912 - 1969)

### Sources

*The National Library of Wales Journal*, v, 302

*Carmarthenshire Miscellany*, i, 1892, 100

the elegy on Griffith Jones is in Thomas Levi's collection, *Casgliad o hen farwnadau Cymreig, yn dal cysylltiad a chyfundeb y Methodistiaid a wnaed ar gais y Gymanfa Gyffredinol* (Wrexham 1873), 1873

### Additional Links

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**Published date:** 1959

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#### APA Citation



Hughes, G. H., (1959). SIMON, BEN (c. 1703 - 1793), dissenter and copyist. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 13 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-SIMO-BEN-1703>

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