

THELWALL family, Plas y Ward, Bathafarn, Plas Coch, and Llanbedr, Denbighshire

JOHN THELWALL

from whom the family is descended, settled in the Ruthin district with Reginald de Grey, about 1380. His son, also named JOHN, married Ffelis, daughter and heiress of John ap Rhys Fychan by Alice, daughter and heiress of Walter Cooke or Ward, of Plas y Ward; and thus were the Thelwall family first associated with this historic house. Little of note is known of the family's fortune for some time afterwards until we come to RICHARD THELWALL, son of Edward Thelwall, a great-great-grandson of John and Ffelis Thelwall) who died at Caerwys eisteddfod, as he sat upon his commission, in 1568.

SIMON THELWALL (1526 - 1586)

Son and heir of Richard, was admitted student at the Inner Temple in November 1555, and called to the Bar on 8 February 1568. He represented the borough of Denbigh in the parliaments of February–March 1553, September–December 1553, and 1571; and the county of Denbigh from 1563 to 1567. He was high sheriff of Denbighshire in 1572, and also a member of the Council of the Marches. In 1576, and again in 1579, he was appointed assistant to judge John Throgmorton, and deputy-judge of the Court of the Marches in 1580 and 1584. It was while holding this last appointment that he sentenced **Richard White**, the Roman Catholic schoolmaster of Llanidloes, to his death in 1584. Thelwall was an exceptionally gifted man, who, according to **Simwnt Fychan**, was fluent in eight languages. After the death of **Gruffudd Hiraethog**, c. 1560, it appears that **Simwnt** forsook the patronage of the **Mostyn** family for that of the Thelwall family of Plas y Ward. In an awdl to Simon Thelwall, the poet calls him his friend and master. It is said that it was due to a suggestion made him by his 'master' that **Simwnt Fychan** translated into Welsh Martial's epigram on the happy life. In **NLW MS 354B** (12) someone has recorded that Simon Thelwall was worthy of great praise for his legal writings, and had been made one of the barons and justices of the seven shires (Chester and the six shires of Gwynedd) by queen Elizabeth. Furthermore he could compose an englyn, as is proved by the poetic dispute between him and **Rhys Gruffydd** and **William Mostyn** (**NLW MS 1553A** (761)). He married (1) Alis, daughter of **Robert Salusbury of Rug**, (2) Jane, daughter of John Massey of Broxon in Cheshire, and (3) Margaret, daughter of **Sir William Griffith of Penrhyn**. He died 15 April 1586, aged 60, and was buried at Ruthin.

Simon Thelwall's oldest son of his first marriage was

EDWARD THELWALL (died 29 July 1610)

He married, as his third wife, **Katheryn of Berain**. SIMON THELWALL, Edward's son of his second marriage, married Gaenor, daughter of **Dr. Elis Prys** of Plas Iolyn, and from this union were descended the Thelwall family of Ruthin.

The Bathafarn Park branch of the family traced their descent from John Thelwall, son of Eubule ap Simon ap Dafydd ap John Thelwall Hen, and his wife Margaret, daughter of Ieuan ap Dio ap Meredydd of Llangar. Their son JOHN WYN THELWALL (1528 - 1586) married Jane (died 12 December 1585) daughter of Thomas Griffith of Pant y Llongydd in Tegeingl. Of their ten children, a few deserve particular mention.

JOHN THELWALL (1533 - 1630)

The oldest, was brought up at court as 'Groom of the Stole' and gentleman usher to the countess of Warwick. When he was 32 years of age he married Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Robert ap John Wyn of Bacheirig and Bryn Cynwrig. By patent from James I he was made steward of Ruthin.

RICHARD THELWALL (died 1630)

Fourth son of John Thelwall - married Margaret, daughter and heiress of John ab Edward Lloyd of Plas Llanbedr in the Vale of Clwyd. The Thelwall family of Llanbedr were descended from them. By patent from James I he became recorder of Ruthin for life. He died in 1630, aged 80 and more, as it seems, and was buried at Llanbedr.

EUBULE THELWALL (1562 - 1630), principal of Jesus College, Oxford

The fifth son, became principal of Jesus College, Oxford. Educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge, he graduated B.A. in 1577. On 14 July 1579 he incorporated at Oxford, where he graduated M.A. on 13 June 1580. Admitted to Gray's Inn on 20 July 1590 he was called to the Bar in 1599 and became treasurer of the Inn in 1625. He became chief master of the alienation office, and in 1617 one of the masters in ordinary of the High Court of Chancery. He was knighted on 29 June 1619, and represented the county of Denbigh in the parliaments of 1624, 1626, and 1628-9. In 1621 he was elected principal of Jesus College, Oxford, an office he held until his death on 8 October 1630, and was buried in the College chapel where his brother, Sir Bevis Thelwall, erected a memorial to him. Because of his numerous benefactions to the college - he spent £5,000 renovating its hall and chapel, and in 1622 also obtained a new charter for the college from James I - he was styled its second founder. The king employed him in 1624 to assist in framing statutes for Pembroke College, Oxford. He died unmarried and bequeathed his estate, and Plas Coch which he had built for himself in the parish of Llanychan, Denbighshire, to his nephew John. There is a portrait of him as a child in Jesus College.

SIMON THELWALL (born 1561), lawyer

Seventh son of John Wynn Thelwall, entered Balliol College, Oxford, 16 October 1581, aged 20, and graduated B.A. [from S. Mary Hall] on 28 February 1584. He was a student of Lincoln's Inn in 1591, and became chief clerk to Sir Daniel Dunne, judge of the prerogative court; a proctor of the court of arches, and registrar of Bangor. He sat as Member of Parliament for Denbigh from February to April 1593, and for Denbighshire from March to June 1614. He married Ann Biggs, who owned an estate in Essex. He was alive in 1631.

AMBROSE THELWALL (1570 - 1652)

Ninth son of John Wynn Thelwall. He spent some time in the service of Sir Francis Bacon before being appointed to the office of yeoman of the robes to James I, Charles I, and Charles II (while he was prince of Wales). He died 5 August 1652, and was buried at Llan-rhydd.

BEVIS THELWALL (- 1600 -)

Tenth son of John Wynn Thelwall, he was first bound apprentice to one of Cheapside's leading silk merchants. He married his master's daughter, and thereupon entered into partnership with his father-in-law. He became friendly with James I before his accession to the English throne, and afterwards he was appointed page of the king's bedchamber and clerk of the great wardrobe. He was knighted for his services. He was thrice married.

Author

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Sources

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Images

NLW: [John Thelwall](#)

Gilbert Jackson, [Eubule Thelwall](#)

Gilbert Jackson, [Ambrose Thelwall](#)

Gilbert Jackson, [Bevis Thelwall](#)

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