

THOMAS, RICHARD (1753 - 1780), cleric, transcriber and collector of manuscripts, and genealogist

Name: Richard Thomas
Date of birth: 1753
Date of death: 1780
Parent: Jane Rowland (née Jones)
Parent: Thomas Rowland
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric, transcriber and collector of manuscripts, and genealogist
Area of activity: History and Culture; Literature and Writing; Religion
Author: William Llewelyn Davies

Born 10 December 1753, son of Thomas Rowland, Tuhwnt i'r Bwlch, parish of Ynyscynhaearn, Caernarfonshire, and Jane (Jones), his wife (J. E. Griffith, *Pedigrees*, 359). He was a pupil at Friars School, Bangor, before he went to Jesus College, Oxford (matriculated 28 November 1771, B.A. 1775). Towards the end of 1777 he became curate at Llanegryn, Meirionnydd, and master at the school there - and therefore within easy reach of the library at Peniarth. By May 1779, if not earlier, he had become curate at Ruthin, where he died in 1780.

As J. E. Griffith (op. cit.) shows there was a family connection between Richard Thomas and Dr. Griffith Roberts, Dolgelly, a collector of manuscripts who came to own some of Richard Thomas's manuscripts, e.g. Peniarth MS 201 . What is more, Richard Thomas was a younger brother of John Thomas (1736 - 1769). The older brother died in 1769, leaving his manuscripts, so it is said, to the younger brother. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Richard Thomas refers in his letters from Oxford to his interest in manuscripts. Thomas met Evan Evans (Ieuan Fardd, alias Ieuan Brydydd Hir) at Peniarth, in April 1775, at a time, be it noted, when the Society of Cymmrodorion, London, with Owen Jones (Owain Myfyr) as its secretary, was seeking to arrange for the transcribing of some manuscripts which were in private custody in order that the work of historians and antiquarians and literary workers might be facilitated; Hugh Maurice, nephew of Owain Myfyr, says that the editors of *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales* used some of the manuscript collections of the Thomas brothers. It is interesting, therefore, to find Richard Thomas telling Owain Myfyr, in a letter written from Peniarth on 17 May 1778, that since he has been in the country he has been shown particular favour by Mr. Vaughan of Hengwrt, who has allowed him to see his books, which in this context includes manuscripts, on more than one occasion and that Vaughan has promised to have such of them as require it repaired and rebound, and that he, Thomas, is to make a catalogue of them. He adds that he had seen Ieuan Fardd at Peniarth recently - see the 'Introduction' to *N.L.W. Handlist of MSS.*, vol. i, where also is quoted an extract from a letter sent by Thomas to Ieuan Fardd in regard to a manuscript in the Hengwrt library. Some of Richard Thomas's letters have been preserved as have some of his manuscripts; among the latter are Peniarth MS 201 and NLW MS 42B and NLW MS 53B . Robert Williams (*Enwogion Cymru: a Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Welshmen*) and Isaac Foulkes (*Enw.*), refer to the fact that some of Richard Thomas's genealogical manuscripts were sold to the College of Heralds, London, by E. Protheroe, M.P.; they also refer to one genealogical manuscript remaining at Rug, near Corwen, and another in Peniarth. Foulkes says that there is extant a *cywydd* of greeting to Richard Thomas when he visited Rhiwedog, near Bala, composed by Rowland Huw, of Graienyn, near Bala.

Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

Sources

To the sources already noted add Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford*

Additional Manuscripts in the British Museum 15030, 15031

NLW MSS 172, 9072, 12864

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Richard Thomas](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q7329445](#)

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