

THOMAS, TIMOTHY (1694 - 1751), cleric and scholar

Name: Timothy Thomas
Date of birth: 1694
Date of death: 1751
Parent: Thomas Thomas
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric and scholar
Area of activity: Religion; Scholarship and Languages
Author: William Llewelyn Davies

son of Thomas Thomas, 'gent', Llandovery. From Westminster School he went to Christ Church, Oxford (matriculated 4 July 1712, B.A. 1716, M.A. 12 March 1718/19, B.D. and D.D. 1735). He became a chaplain to **Robert Harley, earl of Oxford**, and so came to know Humphrey Wanley, the earl's librarian; his brother **William Thomas** (fl. 1685-1740) was also in the service of the earl. He was still a young man when he was asked to complete the work on an edition of the poems of Geoffrey Chaucer, which had been begun by John Urry (died 1715) and continued by Thomas Ainsworth (died 1719). This work, a large folio, published in London in 1721, has a preface by Timothy Thomas, who was also responsible for the glossary; **William Thomas** corrected and enlarged the life of Chaucer, originally prepared by John Dart. Numerous references to Timothy Thomas are to be seen in the Hist. MSS. Comm., *Report on Portland MSS.* - see the indexes to the various volumes - from the time he was student of Christ Church, chaplain to the earl, and until after he received (in 1727, at the hand of the **second earl of Oxford**) the rectory of Presteign, Radnorshire, a county with which the **Harley** family was closely connected. At Presteign he was friendly with Sneyd Davies, incumbent of Kingsland (see the article on the **Davies-Cooke** family, of Gwysaney), collaborating with him in translating into Latin the *Essay on Man* by Alexander Pope, a poet with whom he had become acquainted through the **Harley** connection. **John Davies** quotes in his biography of **Moses Williams** part of a Welsh letter written by the latter, 16 April 1719, to Timothy Thomas; in this letter **Williams** refers to **William Thomas** as 'Gwilym Gwalstawd Ieithoedd,' which suggests that he was a good linguist (B.M. Harl. MS. 7013). In B.M. Harl. MS. 7526 is a list of volumes in the library of the **first earl of Oxford** which Timothy Thomas was reclaiming; among them was a manuscript, 'The Statutes of St. Davids' (now B.M. Harl. MS. 6280), which Thomas had borrowed from some source and had lent to the earl. He died 17 April 1751, and was buried, according to Foster (*Alumni Oxonienses*), 'in his cathedral' (Christ Church, Oxford).

Author

Sir **William Llewelyn Davies**, (1887 - 1952)

Sources

To the references already given add J. Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century Consisting of authentic memoirs and original letters of eminent persons; and intended as a sequel to the Literary anecdotes* (London 1817-58)

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