

WILLIAMS, JOHN (1745/6 - 1818), cleric and schoolmaster

Name: John Williams
Date of birth: 1745/6
Date of death: 1818
Spouse: Jane Williams (née Rogers)
Child: Letitia Maria Davies (née Williams)
Child: David Williams
Child: John Williams
Parent: Dafydd William
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric and schoolmaster
Area of activity: Education; Religion
Author: Thomas Iorwerth Ellis

Born in the spring of 1745/6, eldest son of David Williams, Swyddffynnon, Cardiganshire (a blacksmith by trade, and one of the early Methodist exhorters). He was a brother of [Evan Williams](#), (1749 - 1835).

He was a pupil of [Edward Richard](#) at Ystrad Meurig, and in 1765 he went to teach in a school at Woodstock chapel, Ambleston, Pembrokeshire. Early in 1766 he went to teach at Cardigan, and he was ordained deacon by bishop Moss of S. Davids, 26 December 1768. He received priest's orders on 19 August 1770; and in January 1771, he went to Ross, Herefordshire, as curate and schoolmaster. He stayed there till the autumn of 1776, when his health broke down; but he returned to his native Cardiganshire and began to get better. When [Edward Richard](#) died in 1777, John Williams was appointed in his stead, on 19 August, and he began work in September. He remained there till his death on 20 March 1818, and was buried at Ystrad Meurig.

During his long headmastership he succeeded in placing high standards of scholarship before his pupils, and many of them were accepted for holy orders after no further preparation than that which they received at Ystrad Meurig. Many of them became prominent in the life of the Church (see the list in D. G. Osborne-Jones, *Edward Richard of Ystrad Meurig*, 60-2). He married Jane, daughter of Lewis Rogers (high sheriff of Cardiganshire in 1753), and they had three sons and one daughter, Letitia Maria who married [David Davies](#).

After becoming headmaster of Ystrad Meurig, John Williams was licensed to curacies at Lledrod and Llanafan; in April 1793, he was appointed rector of Llanfair Orllwyn; in 1795, perpetual curate of Blaenporth in June 1799, curate of Ystrad Meurig, in May 1804, vicar of Nantmel, near Rhayader, and at the same time to a canonry in Christ College, Brecon. He was known as 'Yr Hen Syr,' and between 1810 and 1815 he built a new schoolroom at Ystrad Meurig.

Author

Thomas Iorwerth Ellis, (1899 - 1970)

Sources

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Benjamin Williams (Gwynionydd), *Enwogion Ceredigion* (1869)

D. G. Osborne-Jones, *Edward Richard of Ystradmeurig with the story of his school and its associations under its successive masters 1734-1934* (Carmarthen 1934)

T. R. Roberts, *Eminent Welshmen: a short biographical dictionary of Welshmen... from the earliest times to the present* (1908)

Geirlyfr Bywgraffiadol o Enwogion Cymru (1870)

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 13916B](#)

S. David's Diocesan registers in N.L.W.

Cymru (O.M.E.), iv, 45, 127; vi, 124

Images

William Roos, [Revd John Williams, "Yr Hen Syr"](#)

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