

## WILLIAMS, JOHN (1762 - 1802), Evangelical cleric

**Name:** John Williams  
**Date of birth:** 1762  
**Date of death:** 1802  
**Parent:** John Williams  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Evangelical cleric  
**Area of activity:** Religion  
**Author:** Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born at Fishguard, the son of John Williams. His father died; his mother married again; and his step-father sent him to Jesus College, Oxford, in 1783. The title-page of his book of sermons styles him B.A., but there is no record of his having graduated, and indeed he was ordained in May 1785, i.e. two years after entering Oxford. Dr. John Phillips (1730 - 1814) gave him a curacy and made him tutor to his children, after which he was incumbent of Burton and Williamston, while at the same time, apparently, acting as curate to the vicar of Rosemarket. In 1793 he was appointed vicar of Begelly, where he remained until his death, 3 April 1802, at the age of 40. The remarkable thing about Williams was his pronounced Methodism; he preached powerfully, and held 'private societies' in the homes of his parishioners. As a rule, he did not preach outside his own parish, but we know of one interesting exception; he was on friendly terms with **Thomas Charles** and other Methodist clerics (e.g. **David Griffiths** of Nevern), and in July and August 1801 we find him ministering to the non-parochial church of Broughton, Chester. It is said that he was invited to take charge of that church, but he declined the invitation - in a letter written to **Charles** in February 1802 he gives two reasons for this, viz. the difficulty of getting another clergyman to take over his duties at Begelly during his absence, and his conviction that a clergyman should not minister to a congregation which was wavering between the Established Church and some kind of Nonconformity. On the other hand, he welcomed the peripatetic preachers who visited Begelly, even if they were Nonconformists - in particular, **Richard Morgan** of Henllan and **Morgan Jones** of Tre-lech were always warmly welcomed by him on their frequent missionary visits to English -speaking Pembrokeshire, and used to stay at his parsonage. A volume of his sermons, *Twenty Sermons on Miscellaneous Subjects*, which included a short memoir, was published in 1805.

### Author

**Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins**, (1881 - 1969)

### Sources

Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford*

Josiah Thomas Jones, *Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol o Enwogion Cymru (Aberdŵr 1867-70)*, ii, 634

*West Wales Historical Records* (1910), i, 243

D. E. Jenkins, *Life of Thomas Charles* (Denbigh 1908) (index)

Charles Ashton, *Llyfryddiaeth Gymreig o 1801 i 1810* (1908), 308

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [John Williams](#)

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q6264353](#)

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