

## WILLIAMS, Sir ROGER (1540? - 1595), soldier and author

**Name:** Roger Williams  
**Date of birth:** 1540?  
**Date of death:** 1595  
**Parent:** Eleanor Williams (née Vaughan)  
**Parent:** Thomas Williams  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** soldier and author  
**Area of activity:** Literature and Writing; Military  
**Author:** William Llewelyn Davies

There were three persons bearing this name who must be distinguished one from another - (1) Sir Roger Williams (1604? - 1683), founder of the colony of Rhode Island, U.S.A.; he used to be claimed as a Welshman, afterwards as a Cornishman, but now it can be fairly confidently stated that he was the son of a James Williams, 'citizen and merchant taylor of London,' and his wife Alice; (2) Roger Williams, a member of the family of Penrhos, Monmouth (this family bore, later, the surname Addams-Williams - see under **Williams, Sir Trevor**); and (3) Sir Roger Williams (1540? - 1595), soldier and author; it is with him that this short note will be concerned.

Like his namesake, the second Roger Williams named above, Sir Roger Williams was a member of the family of Penrhos, being the son of Thomas Williams and his wife, Eleanor, daughter of Sir William Vaughan. Anthony Wood says that he spent some time at Oxford - at Brasenose College. He became a soldier; indeed, he was only 17 when he fought at S. Quentin. He spent almost the remainder of his life in Europe as a 'soldier of fortune'; he was courageous and daring and became well-known as an expert in the art of military warfare. In April 1572 he was a member of a troop of 300 men who went to Flushing, under **captain Thomas Morgan** (c. 1542 - 1595), to assist the Dutch against the armies of Spain; he fought also alongside of Sir Humphrey Gilbert and **Sir Philip Sidney**. From the Netherlands he went to Germany - for details refer to the *D.N.B.* He was knighted by the earl of Leicester - possibly in 1586. His first publication was *A Brief Discourse of War*, 1590; this work being followed by *Newes from Sir Roger Williams*, 1591. In 1618 there was published, posthumously, his *Actions of the Low Countries*; of this there was a reprint in Somers's *Tracts*, 1809, a Dutch translation, *Memorien van Roger Williams*, appearing in 1864. He died at his home in London 12 December 1595, and was buried 23 December in S. Paul's Cathedral.

### Author

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

### Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, and the sources noted therein

*The National Library of Wales Journal*, i, 114-5

Sir Roger Williams pedigree roll, compiled by Thomas Jones (Twm Siôn Cati), now in N.L.W.

copies of his publications in N.L.W.

### Further Reading

John Evans, *Memoirs of the life and writings of the Rev. William Richards, LL.D. : who died at Lynn, September 13, 1819 [i.e. 1818] in the sixty-ninth year of his age. With some account of the Rev.*

*Roger Williams, founder of the state of Rhode Island, as well as the first assserter of complete religious liberty in the United States of America* (Chiswick 1819)

Wikipedia Article: [Roger Williams](#)

### Additional Links

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