

WILLIAMS, Sir WILLIAM (1634-1700), lawyer and politician

Name: William Williams
Date of birth: 1634
Date of death: 1700
Spouse: Margaret Williams (née Kyffin)
Child: Emma Owen (née Williams)
Child: John Williams
Child: William Williams
Parent: Emma Williams (née Dolben)
Parent: Hugh Williams
Gender: Male
Occupation: lawyer and politician
Area of activity: Law; Politics, Government and Political Movements

Eldest son of Hugh Williams, D.D. (1596 - 1670), rector of Llantrisant and Llanrhuuddlad, Anglesey (*Willis, Bangor, 170-1; Pryce, Diocese of Bangor in Sixteenth Century, 41, 43, 44; An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Anglesey, 114*). Educated at Jesus College and Gray's Inn (admitted 1650), he was called to the Bar in 1658, becoming treasurer of Gray's Inn in 1681. Recorder of Chester from 1667 to 1684, he was elected Member of Parliament for the borough in 1675 (having unsuccessfully contested the seat in 1672). Attaching himself to the country party, he opposed the extension of the royal prerogative, affected to believe in the Popish Plot, supported the Exclusion Bill, and was elected speaker of the House of Commons in James II's second Parliament in 1680 and again in the Oxford Parliament of 1681. In 1684, his enemy, *George Jeffreys*, instigated an action against him for having, as speaker, authorised, in 1680, the publication of Thomas Dangerfield's libellous *Narrative*, and in 1686 he was fined £10,000 by the Court of King's Bench. He thereupon changed sides, made his peace with James II, and was appointed solicitor-general, and knighted in 1687. He incurred great odium by prosecuting the seven bishops in 1688; he received a baronetcy for his services. Changing sides again at the Revolution of 1688, he was elected Member of Parliament for Beaumaris to the Convention Parliament (1689-90), and helped to draft the Bill of Rights. Although he lost the office of solicitor-general, he was made King's Counsel in October 1689 and the queen's solicitor-general in 1692. With *Robert Price* of Giler and other Welsh members he successfully opposed the proposed grant by William III of the lordships of Denbigh, Bromfield, and Yale to the *earl of Portland*. Elected Member of Parliament for Beaumaris, 1695, he died 11 July 1700. He married, 1664, Margaret, daughter and heiress of Watkin Kyffin of Glascoed, Denbigh, and in 1665 he purchased Llanforda from Edward Lloyd.

Sir WILLIAM WILLIAMS, 2nd baronet (died 1740)

His elder surviving son was the father of the first *Sir Watkin Williams Wynn*.

JOHN WILLIAMS (died 1738)

His younger son. He entered Gray's Inn in 1679, was called to the Bar in 1686, and was appointed attorney-general of Denbighshire and Montgomery, 1702, and of Chester and Flint, 1727. On his marriage to Catherine, daughter of *Sir Hugh Owen, bt., of Orielton*, his father's possessions in Anglesey and Bodelwyddan (Flintshire) were settled upon him. His eldest son, HUGH WILLIAMS (1695 - 1742) was Member of Parliament for Anglesey, 1725-34; the third son, JOHN WILLIAMS (1700 - 1787), entered Gray's Inn in 1718, and was called to the Bar in 1725. He succeeded his father as attorney-general of Chester, Flint, Denbigh, and Montgomery (1738-55), was deputy chief-justice of the Carmarthen circuit (1749-57), and chief justice of Brecknock from 1755 until his death on 25 April 1787.

Sources

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

A. H. Dodd, 'The Pattern of Politics in Stuart Wales' *The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1949, 76

A. H. Dodd, 'Tuning the Welsh Bench, 1680,' *The National Library of Wales Journal*, vi, 253

J. E. Griffith, *Pedigrees of Anglesey and Carnarvonshire Families* (1914), 18-19

W. R. Williams, *The parliamentary history of the principality of Wales, from the earliest times to the present day, 1541-1895*(Brecknock 1895), 11

Further Reading

Friends of Friendless Churches: 'The Arch-Trimmer': William Williams of Llantrisant

Works

Edward Turberville, William Williams (ed.), *The information of Edward Turbervill of Skerr in the county of Glamorgan, Gent. Delivered at the bar of the House of Commons, Tuesday the ninth day of November, in the year of our Lord. 1680* (London 1680)

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Published date: 1959

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(1959). WILLIAMS, Sir WILLIAM (1634-1700), lawyer and politician. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-WILL-WIL-1634>

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