

WYNNE, JOHN (1650 - 1714), industrial pioneer

Name: John Wynne
Date of birth: 1650
Date of death: 1714
Spouse: Jane Wynne (née Wynne)
Child: Catherine Lloyd (née Wynne)
Parent: Elizabeth Wynne (née Salusbury)
Parent: John Wynne
Gender: Male
Occupation: industrial pioneer
Area of activity: Business and Industry
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

The son of the squire of Copa'rleni (the name has several forms - see [Ellis Davies](#), *Prehistoric and Roman Remains of Flintshire*, 159-60; the old mansion is now a farmhouse, known as 'Y Gop'), Trelawnyd ('Newmarket'), Flintshire. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were all named John Wynne; the great-grandfather was the son of Edward ap John Wynne ap Robert ap Ieuan ap Cynwrig ap Ieuan ap Dafydd ap Cynwrig, who was descended from [Edwin ap Gronw](#) of Tegeingl (*Powys Fadog*, iv 99, v 244, and elsewhere; [T. A. Glenn](#), *Griffith of Garn*, 77); Copa'rleni was in the possession of Ieuan ap Dafydd ap Cynwrig in 1441, and we find a reference, to his son Cynwrig in 1467. The surname 'Wynne' was finally adopted in the reign of Elizabeth, and from about the same time the heir was regularly named 'John'; they were mostly lawyers. The John Wynne of 'Rhylofnoyd,' who matriculated from Jesus College, Oxford, 'aged 17' (Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*), and married Catherine Thelwall of Bathafarn, was probably our John's father; and it seems likely that his grandfather, who married Elizabeth Salusbury of Llewesog, was the man of that name who was sheriff of Flintshire in 1677. The subject of this article entered Jesus College, Oxford, in 1668, 'aged 18,' and joined Gray's Inn in 1669. He married (1673) Jane, daughter of [Robert Wynne](#) of Voelas. But the truth is that we know very little about his career, except that he, too, was sheriff of Flintshire in 1695. For all that, he was a most interesting character. In the first place, he was one of the 'spirited proprietors.' He believed that Trelawnyd had a future as a centre of the lead industry, and aimed at converting the hamlet (an insignificant chapelry of the parish of Diserth) of ten houses ([Lhuyd](#), *Parochialia*, i, 59-61) into an industrial town; he built a considerable number of houses and of 'noble public buildings' at his own expense; he established a weekly market and an annual fair, and in 1710 obtained permission from the bishop's court to rename it 'Newmarket' - 'as the old name appears in a dozen or more different ways,' says the petition ([Thomas](#), *A History of the Diocese of St. Asaph*, i, 408-10). However, the works did not materialise, and all that remains of Wynne's dream is the name 'Newmarket' [now in its turn discontinued]. Again, Wynne was a Nonconformist (there is a suggestion that he was connected with Wrexham), and in 1701 he presented Trelawnyd with a Nonconformist chapel - a chapel of which [Thomas Perrott](#) became minister; in this we can, doubtless, see the hand of [James Owen](#). The services were conducted in English, and the chapel was intended to serve not the native-born Welsh of the neighbourhood but the labour imported from across the border. When [John Evans](#) (c. 1680 - 1730) collected his statistics, the congregation numbered 30. As the lead industry declined, so the congregation faded away, and in any event the ministers were, for the most part, a very uninspiring lot. By about 1793, there was only one surviving member (an old Scotswoman), and so it was reconstituted as a Welsh congregation (*Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, iv, 213-4). Finally, John Wynne was a believer in education. There was already, according to [Lhuyd](#), an elementary school at Trelawnyd, run by 'one Mr. Turner, an Anabaptist' and his assistants, and [Lhuyd](#) says that it was Wynne's intention to open a mathematical school as well. His plan can be studied in detail in the codicil to his will, dated 17 October 1713. A grammar school was to be founded to teach Latin, Greek, and French, mathematics and navigation, with 'Mr. [Thomas Parrott](#)', assisted by a staff, as headmaster; the full details can be studied in the Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1815-39 ('Flints.', i, 216-26), and even more fully in [Thomas](#), *A History of the Diocese of St. Asaph*, loc. cit. The school died of inanition and its endowments were wrongfully diverted to other purposes - as were the endowments left by Wynne to relieve the poor at Trelawnyd. John Wynne died 31 December 1714, and was buried in the Nonconformist chapel at Trelawnyd. It is recorded that he had a brother, Edward (who seems to have predeceased him), and three sisters: Mary, Elizabeth (who was married to John Hough of Chester in 1700, by the celebrated Independent minister [James Owen](#)), and Catherine. According to *Powys Fadog* (iv, 298) and [J. E. Griffith](#) (*Pedigrees*, 299), he had a daughter and heiress, Catherine, who married John Lloyd of Rhagad in Edeirinion; but, having regard to the frequency of the name 'John Wynne' in the family tree, there is a distinct possibility that this was his sister and not his daughter. At any rate, she was the heiress. Unless [Dr. John Evans](#) (or [Dr. Daniel Williams](#)) had collected his statistics before the death of John Wynne (which might well have been the case), Catherine must have been a Nonconformist, at least at that time; for [John Evans](#) says that there was one member of the Trelawnyd congregation 'worth £14-15,000,' and this could only have been the owner of Copa'rleni. In the litigation concerning the Wynne endowments, mention is made of one Elizabeth Wynne, who had died before 1764.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Records of the see of St Asaph

N.L.W. *Wynnstay Manuscript at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth* 143 (134)

and the other references given above

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [John Wynne](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q6265051](#)

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