

## WILLIAMS, IOLO ANEURIN (1890 - 1962), journalist, author and art historian

**Name:** Iolo Aneurin Williams

**Date of birth:** 1890

**Date of death:** 1962

**Spouse:** Francion Elinor Williams (née Dixon)

**Parent:** Helen Elizabeth Williams (née Pattinson)

**Parent:** Aneurin Williams

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** journalist, author and art historian

**Area of activity:** Art and Architecture; History and Culture; Literature and Writing; Printing and Publishing

**Author:** Donald Moore

Born 18 June 1890 in Middlesborough, Yorkshire, son of Aneurin Williams, M.P., ironmaster, and his wife Helen Elizabeth (née Pattinson). He married in 1920 Francion Elinor Dixon of Colorado, U.S.A., and they had one son and two daughters. He was educated at Rugby School and King's College, Cambridge. From 1914 to 1920 he served with or in the army, chiefly in France, and retired as captain. He was a man of wide interests, covering literature, bibliography, art, folk songs and natural history. Like his father, he was a keen Liberal, and was twice unsuccessful Parliamentary candidate for the constituency of Chelsea. At first he worked as bibliographical correspondent for the *London Mercury* (1920-39), and then as art and museums correspondent for the *Times* (1936 onwards). He became an authority on the history of art in Britain and published a substantial and important book, *Early English watercolours* (1952). He discussed the Welsh aspects of this subject in an article 'Paul Sandby and his predecessors in Wales' in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1961, Part II (1962), 16-33). He was himself a discerning collector; he presented 24 of his pictures to the British Museum and bequeathed 65 more to the institution.

His literary work is to be seen in numerous publications: volumes of poems (1915 and 1919), a bibliography of John Masefield (1921), *Byways round Helicon* (1922), *Shorter poems of the eighteenth century* (1923), *Seven eighteenth-century bibliographies* (1924). He edited the plays of Sheridan (1926), and wrote an unusual handbook, *The elements of book collecting* (1927). Other works by him were *Poetry today* (1927), *Where the bee sucks* (1929) and *Points in eighteenth-century verse* (1934). He contributed to the *Dictionary of National Biography* and to the *Cambridge Bibliography of English literature*. He was vice-president of the Bibliographical Society in 1944, honorary secretary of the Folk Song Society - he wrote *English folk song and dance* (1935) - and vice-president of the Zoological Society of London. He wrote *Flowers of marsh and stream* (1946) and was an experienced field naturalist. He honoured the memory of his ancestor **Iolo Morganwg** (Edward WILLIAMS), a collection of whose papers he presented to the National Library of Wales, by taking a keen interest in Welsh matters, including the language, and he served on the Council of the National Museum of Wales and on the Welsh Committee of the Arts Council; he was made an honorary member of the Gorsedd of Bards (1960). He died 18 January 1962, and a tribute was paid to him by the *Times*, which referred to his tall, stooping, scholarly figure, indifferent to appearances. He was described as having Gladstonian rectitude, a stern radicalism and an almost fanatical support for temperance.

### Author

Donald Moore

### Sources

*Who was who?*

*The Times*, 19 January 1962

personal research

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Iolo Aneurin Williams](#)

### Additional Links

VIAF: [9933260](#)

Wikidata: [Q19820304](#)

**Published date:** 2001

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