

EDWARDS, RICHARD (1628 - 1704), of Nanhoron in Llŷn, Puritan squire

Name: Richard Edwards
Date of birth: 1628
Date of death: 1704
Child: Martha Edwards
Child: Timothy Edwards
Child: Jeremiah Edwards
Gender: Male
Occupation: Puritan squire
Area of activity: Land Ownership; Religion
Author: Thomas Richards

A member of an ancient family, his immediate forebears allied with Abêrcain and Pénllech, his first wife a daughter of Saethon, it was his second marriage with a niece of Thomas Wynn of Boduan (or ' Bodfean ' - see under [Wynn](#) of Rug) that brought him within the orbit of the higher gentry. Proofs of his active Parliamentary sympathies are scanty, but the new Restoration powers definitely placed him on the lists of the ill-affected, discovered (under the Militia Acts) two cases of pistols at Nanhoron, opened his letters, and (according to some accounts) lodged him in Caernarvon gaol. Puritan though he was, and an Independent at that, it was found impossible to ignore his high qualities as an effective factor in the life of the countryside; what with his legal knowledge, his uncanny acquaintance with the family ramifications of Llŷn, and his great fund of secretive common sense, he became an ideal arbiter in disputes, and gradually came to be consulted even by the stoutest Cavaliers over their private concerns, as is proved by the part which he played in the Cefn Amwlch will dispute in 1691 (see [Griffith](#) of Cefn Amwlch); previous to this he had been called in to draw up the last will of Jeffrey Glynn, the taciturn Anglican of Gwynfryn by Pwllheli, and to draft a will for Edward Williams of Meillionydd in 1677, under which a capital sum was to be set apart to found a grammar school at Pwllheli, with Edwards himself as one of the feoffees in trust. He was appointed deputy-mayor of Caernarvon in 1668, and sheriff of the county in 1696. These accessions to office and his close familiarity with Cavaliers and Anglicans must not make us forget that Edwards was a loyal life-long Puritan, as witness his welcome in 1672 to his Puritan kinsman [Henry Maurice](#) (1634 - 1682), the son of Methlan, near Aberdaron, the pains he took to help [Maurice](#)'s widow over the leasing of the Gwynfryn lands in 1688, and his assistance in securing the services of a South Wales Independent ([Daniel Phillips](#), 1680 - 1722) to superintend the Puritan causes of Pwllheli and its neighbourhood. In 1687 a particular tribute to his standing as a Puritan was paid as a result of James II's first Declaration of Indulgence (for Roman Catholics and Dissenters); he was named as likely to make a J.P. loyal to James II's new policy - not that there is the slightest evidence that Edwards believed in the policy of the Declaration, nor that he would have acted as J.P. if nominated. He died 10 July 1704, aged 76.

The Puritanism of Edwards comes out in the Scriptural names of some of his children (Jeremiah, Timothy, Martha - six Timothys altogether in the *Pedigrees*) and in their marriages to well-known Puritan families, one son to a Lathrop of West Felton, a daughter to Walter Griffith of Llanfyllin. Curiously, the English wife of one of his great-grandsons - TIMOTHY EDWARDS (1731 - 1780), a captain in the Royal Navy - was very prominent in her support of the Welsh Independent cause at Capel Newydd, near Nanhoron. Their grandson, RICHARD LLOYD EDWARDS (1806 - 1876), was a stalwart Conservative and Churchman, D.L. of Caernarvonshire, high sheriff at various times of three Welsh counties, and in the forefront of the public life of his native county in the middle decades of the 19th century.

Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

Sources

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