

FOLEY, Sir THOMAS (1757 - 1833), admiral

Name: Thomas Foley
Date of birth: 1757
Date of death: 1833
Parent: John Foley
Gender: Male
Occupation: admiral
Area of activity: Military
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born at Ridgeway, Llawhaden, Pembrokeshire, entered the navy in 1770, was at the relief of Gibraltar in 1780, in the actions off Toulon (1793), at the battle of Cape S. Vincent (1797), and led the British line at the battle of the Nile (1798). He was again with Nelson at Copenhagen (1801), but ill-health kept him out of the fighting which culminated at Trafalgar. Knighted in 1815, he became admiral in 1825, and died 9 January 1833 at Portsmouth, where he was commander-in-chief. His naval career is fully described in *D.N.B.*; it remains to deal here with his Welsh associations. He was descended from a John Fawley or Foley, architect to the bishop of S. Davids, and ' constable of Llawhaden castle,' who was granted the estate by the bishop (Adam Houghton) in 1383. A Foley was constable of Llawhaden during the [Owain Glyn Dŵr](#) rising; and several of the family are said to have been killed at the battle of Colby Moor (close by) in 1645. The admiral was the second of the three sons of JOHN FOLEY of Ridgeway (who had married a Herbert of Court Henry, Carmarthenshire), and had an uncle, THOMAS FOLEY (captain R.N., died 1758), who was with Anson on his voyage round the world, 1740-4. The eldest son of John Foley, and the heir of Ridgeway, was JOHN HENRY FOLEY, a friend of [Richard Fenton](#)'s, but dead by 1811 when [Fenton](#) published his *Tour*. When captain Foley (as he then was) married in 1802, he bought the estate of Abermarlais, Carmarthenshire, rebuilt the mansion, and made it his home; though he died childless, another branch of the family occupied it far into the 19th century - a Foley was sheriff of Carmarthenshire in 1870.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

The Red Dragon, v, 97 ff., 193 ff.

Richard Fenton, *A Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire* (London 1811), (1903 ed.), 54, 171, 175

James Buckley, *Genealogies of the Carmarthenshire Sheriffs* (1770)

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Thomas Foley](#)

Additional Links

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