

HUGHES, WILLIAM BULKELEY (1797 - 1882), Member of Parliament

Name: William Bulkeley Hughes

Date of birth: 1797

Date of death: 1882

Spouse: Elizabeth Hughes (née Donkin)

Spouse: Elizabeth Hughes (née Nettleship)

Child: Sarah Elizabeth Hughes

Parent: Elizabeth Hughes (née Thomas)

Parent: William Bulkeley Hughes

Gender: Male

Occupation: Member of Parliament

Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements

Author: Emyr Gwynne Jones

Born 26 July 1797, eldest son of Sir William Bulkeley Hughes of Plas Coch, Llanidan, Anglesey, and Brynddu, Llanfechell, and Elizabeth, daughter and co-heiress of [Rice Thomas](#) of Coed Alun, Caernarvon. His family, which claimed descent from [Llywarch ap Bran, lord of Menai](#), had since the middle of the 15th century played a leading part in the local administration of Anglesey. Hugh Hughes (died 1609), who in 1569 built Plas Coch on the site of the older house called Porthamel Isa, had a brilliant legal career, rose to be Queen's Attorney in North Wales and a member of the Council of the Marches, and was just before his death about to take up his appointment as lord chief justice of Ireland.

William Bulkeley Hughes at first followed in his ancestor's footsteps, proceeding from Harrow to Lincoln's Inn, from which in 1824, he was called to the Bar. But while still actively engaged on the Oxford and Chester circuits, he came forward as Tory candidate in the Caernarvon boroughs election of 1837, and defeated [captain Charles Henry Paget](#). Thus began his long parliamentary connection with this constituency, extending, but for a short hiatus between 1859 and 1865, over a period of nearly forty years. His politics were described as those of a moderate Conservatism, although it was as a Liberal that he contested the election of 1865. He was still M.P. for Caernarvon at the time of his death, and was in point of age the 'father' of the House of Commons.

He took an active interest in local affairs and administration, being a justice of the peace of Anglesey and Caernarvonshire and high sheriff of Anglesey in 1861. As chairman of the Llandudno Improvement Commissioners he contributed in large measure to the development of the town through his successful negotiations with the Mostyn Estate between 1873 and 1877. A keen speculator in railway shares, he took full advantage of the boom of the 40's to replenish his estate, and held the chairmanship of the Anglesey Central Railway from its opening to its absorption by the L.N.W.R. Co. It was he, moreover, who organised the banquet given to Robert Stephenson at the George Hotel, Bangor, in August 1851, to commemorate the opening of the Britannia tubular bridge.

He was twice married: (1) in 1825, to Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Jonathan Nettleship of Mattersey Abbey, Northampton, and widow of Henry Wormald of Woodhouse, Leeds, and (2) to Elizabeth, daughter of William Donkin, of Rothbury, Northumberland. His only child was Sarah Elizabeth, born of the second marriage, and she inherited the estate upon his death, 8 March 1882.

Author

Emyr Gwynne Jones, (1911 - 1972)

Sources

J. E. Griffith, *Pedigrees of Anglesey and Carnarvonshire Families* (1914), 30-1

Annals and Antiquities of the Counties and County Families of Wales, 43-4

Bye-Gones, relating to Wales and the Border Counties, 15 March 1882

U.C.N.W. *Plas Coch Manuscripts at University College North Wales Library, Bangor*

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [William Bulkeley Hughes](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q8006112](#)

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