

## HUMPHREYS, HUMPHREY (1648 - 1712), bishop, antiquary, historian, and genealogist

**Name:** Humphrey Humphreys  
**Date of birth:** 1648  
**Date of death:** 1712  
**Spouse:** Elizabeth Humphreys (née Morgan)  
**Child:** Margaret Lloyd (née Humphreys)  
**Child:** Ann Humphreys  
**Parent:** Margaret Humphreys (née Wynn)  
**Parent:** Richard Humphreys  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** bishop, antiquary, historian, and genealogist  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Religion; Scholarship and Languages  
**Author:** Evan Gilbert Wright

Born 24 November 1648, eldest son of Richard Humphreys, Hendre, Penrhyndeudraeth (a Royalist officer) and Margaret, daughter of **Robert Wynne** of Cesaigyfarch, Penmorfa, Caernarfonshire. He was educated at Oswestry and Bangor grammar schools and afterwards at Jesus College, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1669, M.A. 1672, was elected a Fellow 1672-3, B.D. 1679, and D.D. 1682. Ordained (by a faculty) deacon and priest on 12 November 1670 by **bishop Robert Morgan** in Bangor cathedral, he was, on the same day, collated and instituted to the rectory of Llanfrothen. His other benefices were - Trawsfynydd, 1672; Criccieth, 1677; Llaniestyn, Caernarfonshire, 1680, and Hope (a sinecure) in 1689. He was installed dean of Bangor, 16 December 1680 and consecrated bishop of that see on 30 June 1689. Much against his inclination he was translated to Hereford in November 1701; there he died on 20 November 1712. In 1681, Humphreys married Elizabeth, daughter of **bishop Robert Morgan** of Henblas, Anglesey, a family of which **bishop William Lloyd**, one of the 'Seven Bishops,' was a distinguished member.

Bishop Humphreys's episcopate was one of marked activity, and even after his translation to Hereford, his interest in his native country did not lessen, although ill-health darkened his latter years. When dean of Bangor he improved the organization of the diocese, rebuilt the deanery, and joined **bishop Lloyd** in an effort to win back the Dissenters to the Church. In 1690, he issued visitation queries in Welsh to find out the state of the diocese. He was the leading supporter of the S.P.C.K. in North Wales, and in a letter to the clergy he exhorts them to hold monthly meetings and to make themselves ' wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ.'

An ardent Welshman, he merited Thomas Hearne's tribute that 'he was reckon'd next to **Mr. Edw. Lluyd** for knowledge in the British language; but **Mr. Lluyd** used to say he was a greater master of it.' The bards, **Edward Morris** (died 1689) and **Owen Gruffydd** (1643 - 1730), wrote *cywyddau* in his honour, and the prose-writers **Ellis Wynne**, **Edward Samuel**, and **Samuel Williams** acknowledged their indebtedness, the first and last by dedicating to him their works, *Rheol Buchedd Sanctaidd* and *Amser a Diwedd Amser*.

To **Edward Lhuyd**, the bishop was ' incomparably the best skill'd in our Antiquities of any person in Wales.' James Tyrrell (1642 - 1718), the historian, accepted Humphreys' chronology of the British princes and **William Wynne** (1671 - 1704), dedicated his *History of Wales* to him. The heralds of the Colleges of Arms, Piers Maudit (Windsor herald), and Peter le Neve (Norroy king of arms), directed their enquiries on Welsh pedigrees to the bishop, who remarked to Maudit that searching out pedigrees was his chief diversion in spare hours.

Humphreys' main literary work was his additions to and corrections of Anthony Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*, for the most part printed in Bliss's edition of that work. Numbering over a hundred, these, together with a catalogue of the deans of Bangor and St Asaph, provide a wealth of historical data for any considered history of the diocese. The bishop's notes on Camden's *Britannia* and on S. Winifride's Well, and his defence of **archbishop John Williams** cannot now be traced.

### Author

**Reverend Canon Evan Gilbert Wright**, (1903)

### Sources

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### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Humphrey Humphreys](#)

### Additional Links

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**Published date:** 1959

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APA Citation



Wright, E. G., (1959). HUMPHREYS, HUMPHREY (1648 - 1712), bishop, antiquary, historian, and genealogist. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-HUMP-HUM-1648>

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