

## JONES, THEOPHILUS (1759 - 1812), the historian of Brecknock

**Name:** Theophilus Jones  
**Date of birth:** 1759  
**Date of death:** 1812  
**Spouse:** Mary Jones (née Price)  
**Parent:** Hugh Jones  
**Parent:** Elinor Jones (née Evans)  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** historian of Brecknock  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture  
**Author:** Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born 18 October 1759 at Brecon, son of Hugh Jones, at that time curate of Llanfaes there, later vicar of Llangamarch (1763-8) and of Llywel (1768-99), and prebendary of Christ College, Brecon - his wife Elinor (died 1786) was daughter of [Theophilus Evans](#), and the historian spent much of his boyhood at Llwyn Einion, Llangamarch, his grandfather's home, and inherited historical documents from him. He was educated at Christ College school under [David Griffith](#) (1726 - 1816); [Edward Davies](#) (1756 - 1831), his lifelong friend, was his schoolmate. Jones practised in law for a considerable period, but on being appointed deputy-registrar of the archdeaconry he gave up his private practice and devoted himself to historical research. He married Mary Price, daughter of Rhys Price of Porth-y-rhyd (near Llandovery), and went to live in his father's former house in Lion Street, which still stands - it was the house in which bishop George Bull had died.

It would seem that the *History of the County of Brecknock* was conceived c. 1800. The first volume appeared in 1805, the second (dedicated to [Edward Davies](#)) in 1809. In his later years Jones was very friendly with [Thomas Price](#) (Carnhuanawc). He died 15 January 1812, and was buried at Llangamarch. His widow died on 22 July 1828, and was buried in Myddfai churchyard.

He was Welsh -speaking, author of an unpublished English version of [Ellis Wynne's](#) *Bardd Cwsc*, and at one time owner of the ' Book of Aneirin ' - this was given him by [Anthony Bacon](#) and passed after his death into [Thomas Price's](#) hands. He had intended writing a history of Radnorshire, and contributed several papers to the *Cambrian Register* and to *Archaeologia*. In 1905, [Edwin Davies](#) published a volume, *Theophilus Jones, Historian*, containing these papers, Jones's letters to [Edward Davies](#) and [Walter Davies](#) (Gwallter Mechain), and a biography by [Gwenllian E. F. Morgan](#).

To this day, Jones's work is the best of our Welsh county histories - a work of diligent and careful research. The author's prejudices are too obvious to cause trouble - his anti-Popery, his dislike of Dissent and of Methodism (yet his article on [Howel Harris](#), reprinted in the memorial volume mentioned, is not altogether unkindly), his prosaic nature which blinded him to the merits of [Henry Vaughan](#) the poet. A second edition with some additions was published by [Edwin Davies](#) in 1898

in one volume. In 1909-11 [Davies](#) began bringing out a third edition, which was completed by the county historical society in 1930, with copious additions from the collections of the [first baron Glanusk](#). In this handsome four-volume edition the work is indispensable for the student of the history of Brecknock and of Brecon.

## Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

## Further reading

Theophilus Jones, Edwin Davies, *Theophilus Jones, F.S.A. historian his life, letters & literary remains* (Australia 1905)

Wikipedia Article: [Theophilus Jones \(historian\)](#)

## Works

Theophilus Jones, *History of the County of Brecknock(1805-1809)*, Vol I, 1805

Theophilus Jones, *History of the County of Brecknock(1805-1809)* Vol II Part I, 1809

Theophilus Jones, *History of the County of Brecknock(1805-1809)* Vol II Part II, 1809

## Additional Links

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