

OWEN, HUGH (1575? - 1642) of Gwenynog, translator

Name: Hugh Owen
Date of birth: 1575?
Date of death: 1642
Spouse: Elizabeth Owen (née Bulkeley)
Child: John Hughes
Parent: Owen ap Hugh ap Richard
Gender: Male
Occupation: translator
Home: Gwenynog
Area of activity: Scholarship and Languages
Author: Emyr Gwynne Jones

Born about 1575, son of Owen ap Hugh ap Richard, the owner of the small estate of Gwenynog, in the parish of Llanfflewyn, Anglesey. It is not certain that he ever went to a university, but he is said to have been learned not only in law but in more than one foreign language, 'the which he was not taught by any Teacher save himself, and that in his own study in his own home.' In the course of the first quarter of the 17th century, he was for a time the [Bodeon](#) estate agent, and between 1614 and 1618 played a prominent part in the military affairs of the island as captain of the Talybolion commote train-band. It was about this time that he decided to turn to the Church of Rome, and about 1622 that he left his home and family and went to London where he became secretary to [lord Herbert](#) at Worcester House. In 1627, when [Herbert](#) succeeded to the [earldom of Worcester](#), he accompanied his master to Raglan castle. He continued to serve the earl until the middle of 1640 when he appears to have resigned in order to live in the neighbourhood of Tintern Abbey. Here, in the parish of Chapel Hill, he died some time between March and July 1642. As far as is known, he only returned once to Anglesey and that was about mid-summer 1624. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Bulkeley of Groesfechan, by whom he had two sons and seven daughters. He was the uncle of [William Griffith, D.C.L.](#), chancellor of Bangor and St Asaph and of [George Griffith](#), bishop of St Asaph. He is chiefly remembered as the author of *Dilyniad Crist*, the first translation into Welsh of Thomas à Kempis's *De Imitatione Christi* which was edited and published in 1684 by his son [Hugh](#), the Jesuit priest, better known as [Father John Hughes](#) (1615 - 1686). In his introduction to *Dilyniad Crist* [Hughes](#) says that his father wrote 'a number of godly Dissertations, and when he was but 27 years of age translated into Welsh Llyfr y Resolution ... and after that Vincentius Lirinensis, the which, perchance, may yet see the light of publication.'

Author

Emyr Gwynne Jones, (1911 - 1972)

Sources

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T. Llechid Jones, *ibid.*, III, iv, 145-51; III, v, 204-19

A. O. Evans, *ibid.*, IV, i, 15-6

E. G. Jones in *Anglesey Antiquarian Society & Field Club Transactions*, 1938, 42-9

Works

Thomas a Kempis, Hugh Owen (trns.), *Pattrwm y gwir-Gristion: neu, Ddilyniad Jesu Grist* (Mwythig c.1730)

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