

PARRY, DAVID (1682? - 1714), scholar

Name: David Parry
Date of birth: 1682?
Date of death: 1714
Parent: William Parry
Gender: Male
Occupation: scholar
Area of activity: Scholarship and Languages
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born at Cardigan, son of William Parry, 'a poor man.' About 1695, when (as it would seem) at Cardigan grammar school (and 'a good Latinist'), he was brought by [William Gambold](#) to the notice of [Edward Lhuyd](#), who took him on as a helper, and as companion on his travels in Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and Brittany (there, both were imprisoned as 'spies'). On their return to Oxford (April 1701), Parry matriculated from Jesus College; in 1704 [Lhuyd](#) strove to get him a scholarship, but though 'all were fond of Parry,' that 'cold' Fellow [John Wynne](#) (afterwards bishop) prevented this. Parry graduated in 1705 (M.A. 1708), and became unpaid under-keeper at the Ashmolean, under [Lhuyd](#). In [Lhuyd's](#) *Archaeologia*, 1707 (270-89), 'an Essay towards a British Etymologicon,' are by Parry. On [Lhuyd's](#) death, Parry was appointed (19 July 1709) keeper of the Ashmolean - again without salary, however he may have supported himself. Hearne (*Collectanea*, ii, 224) avers that there was no one more competent, 'if he would set himself to work'; but [Hugh Thomas](#) describes him as 'capable ... if he could spare time from his pots and companions; but out of the tipling [sic] house he cannot spare one minute even to common civility' (*Cambro-Briton*, ii, 369). Later on, Hearne confesses that things were not too good at the Ashmolean, excusing Parry because he was unpaid. A German visited the Ashmolean in 1710, but did not see Parry there - 'the custos, always in the tavern, was too busy guttling and guzzling' (Mallet, *Hist. of the University of Oxford*, iii, 22). Parry died in December 1714 - 8 December according to [Richard Ellis](#) (below), 10 December according to Hearne (op. cit., v 2), who added: 'being a perfect sot he shortened his days, being just turned of thirty.' Foster gives his academic career correctly, but errs (wherein he is followed by *W. Wales Hist. Records*, i, 253; iii, 229) in identifying him with another David Parry, vicar of Nolton and Bridell, Pembrokeshire, whose will was proved in 1720.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*

R. T. Gunther, *Life and letters of Edward Lhwyd second Keeper of the Musaeum Ashmoleanum* (indexed)

Hearne, *Collectanea anglo-poetica or, a Bibliographical and descriptive catalogue of a portion of a collection of early English poetry, with occasional extracts and remarks biographical and critical* (Manchester 1860-83), ii, iii, v (indexed)

Richard Ellis in *The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1906-7.

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [David Parry](#)

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