

## PHILLIPS, Sir THOMAS (1801 - 1867), barrister and author

**Name:** Thomas Phillips  
**Date of birth:** 1801  
**Date of death:** 1867  
**Parent:** Anne Phillips  
**Parent:** Thomas Phillips  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** barrister and author  
**Area of activity:** Education; Law; Literature and Writing  
**Author:** David Williams

Born in 1801 at Ynys-garth, Clydach, in the parish of Llanelly, Brecknock, the son of Thomas [who died at Llanellen, 6 January 1845, aged 80] and Anne Phillips. In his youth the family moved to Trosnant, near Pontypool. He was articled to **Thomas Protheroe**, an attorney of Newport, and became his partner. The two men took an active part in local politics in the period of the Reform Act, and, in 1838, Phillips became mayor of Newport. Towards the end of his period of office, on 4 November 1839, occurred the Chartist march on that town. Phillips was wounded in the rioting at the Westgate Hotel, and afterwards honours were showered upon him for his share in repelling the Chartists, including a knighthood and an invitation to dine with the queen, a subscription of £800, and the freedom of the city of London (26 February 1840). He gave up his partnership and was called to the Bar on 10 June 1842. He had a highly successful career as a Chancery barrister, and he also became a colliery proprietor. In later life he lived at Llanellen, near Abergavenny. He died in London on 26 May 1867, and was buried at Llanellen. He was not married.

He was very active in educational work, both as governor of King's College, London, and in furthering the work of the (Anglican) National Society in Wales. In this cause he gave generously from his private fortune. He devoted much time and labour to collecting material to refute the aspersions of the educational commissioners of 1846 in Wales, and his masterly book, *Wales, the Language, Social Condition, Moral Character, and Religious Opinions of the People considered in their relation to Education*, 1849, remains his chief claim to fame. He also wrote a wholly delightful biography of **James Davies** (1765 - 1849), the pedlar schoolmaster of Devauden, *The Life of James Davies, a Village Schoolmaster*, 1850.

### Author

**Emeritus Professor David Williams**, (1900 - 1978)

### Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

John Morgan, *Four Biographical Sketches Bishop Ollivant, Bishop Thirlwall, Rev. Griffith Jones, Vicar of Llanddowror, and Sir Thomas Phillips, Q.C.; with a chapter on 'The Church in Wales'* (London 1892)

David Williams, *John Frost, A Study in Chartism* (1939)

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Thomas Phillips](#)

### Additional Links

VIAF: [48784601](#)

Wikidata: [Q7793148](#)

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