

RICHARDS, JOHN (Iocyn Ddu; 1795 - 1864) poet and adjudicator

Name: John Richards
Pseudonym: Iocyn Ddu
Date of birth: 1795
Date of death: 1864
Parent: James Richards
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet and adjudicator
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Poetry
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born at Llannerch-y-medd, son of James Richards, shopkeeper, and nephew of John Richards, cleric - it is said that they were kinsfolk of [Edward Richard](#) of Ystradmeurig. He spent some years of his life (till 1844) at Liverpool, in the customs-house, but after 'marrying means' lived successively at Tre-lorwerth (Bodedern, Anglesey) and at Caernarvon - he began building a mansion near Llannerch-y-medd, but died 17 November 1864, before it was finished. He was a schoolfellow of [David James](#) (1803 - 1871) and of [Joseph Hughes](#) (1803 - 1863) at Ystradmeurig, and throughout his life shared their interests - we have some *awdlau* of his. But he is best - though not too fortunately - remembered as one of the three 'chair' adjudicators at the 1849 eisteddfod at Aberffraw. The two serious competitors for the chair were [Emrys](#) (William Ambrose) and [Nicander](#) (Morris Williams). [Eben Fardd](#) was for 'chairing' [Emrys](#), while Iocyn Ddu stood out stoutly for [Nicander](#). The third adjudicator, [Chwaneg Mon](#) (Joseph Jones), thought that [Bardd Du Môn](#) (R. M. Williamson) should get the chair, but was over-persuaded by Richards to cast his final vote for [Nicander](#). The decision provoked a heated controversy in the press - fuel was added to the flames by the fact that the winner and the two adjudicators who voted for him were Anglicans, while [Eben Fardd](#) and [Emrys](#) were Nonconformists.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Richard Parry (Gwalchmai), *Enwogion Môn: henafol a diweddar, mewn cofnodau hanesol* (1877)

Y Geninen, 1900 (70) and 1912

Hanes llenyddiaeth Gymreig o 1651 O.C. hyd 1850 (1893), 694-5

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