

# ROBERTS, JOHN (Siôn Robert Lewis; 1731 - 1806), author, almanack-maker, and hymn-writer

**Name:** John Roberts  
**Pseudonym:** Siôn Robert Lewis  
**Date of birth:** 1731  
**Date of death:** 1806  
**Spouse:** Margaret Roberts (née Jones)  
**Child:** Robert Roberts  
**Parent:** Robert Lewis  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** author, almanack-maker, and hymn-writer  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Literature and Writing; Poetry; Religion; Scholarship and Languages; Science and Mathematics  
**Author:** Thomas Isfryn Jones

Born 1731 at Llanaelhaearn, Caernarfonshire, son of Robert Lewis, farmer, for whom he acted as shepherd in his younger days. Being converted by [Howel Harris](#) on the occasion of a visit by the latter to the neighbourhood, he began to exhort with the Calvinistic Methodists.

He settled at Holyhead about 1760, when he obtained a licence from the bishop of Bangor to open a school. He was summoned before Bangor consistory court in August 1765 for keeping a school in Llaniestyn without a licence.

He was the author of many works on various subjects; these include *Rhai Hymnau*, 1760, which he wrote in conjunction with Richard Jones; *Yr Anedigaeth Newydd*, 1762, a translation of an English pamphlet, *The New Birth*; *Drych y Cristion*, 1766, which was the second edition of *Carwr y Cymru* published by [T. Gouge](#) and [S. Hughes](#), 1677; *Hymnau a Chaniadau*, 1764; *Rhyfydddeg neu Arithmetic*, 1768, the first arithmetic book in Welsh; *Geirlyfr Ysgrythurol*, 1773, the first Welsh scriptural dictionary; *Caniadau Preswylwyr y Llŵch*, 1778; *Yr Athrofa Rad*, 1788. While the books that Roberts wrote, compiled, and issued were good and valuable, his fame rests rather on his '*Almanacks*,' which he commenced to issue about 1761 and continued to publish for the next forty-four years. After his death his son [Robert Roberts](#) (1777 - 1836) published the almanacks until 1837.

In 1766 he married Margaret Jones, Bodedern, Anglesey, by whom he had six children. He died 19 September 1806.

## Author

Thomas Isfryn Jones

## Sources

*Y Traethodydd*, 1856

*Enwogion y Ffydd* (1880), iv

*Revue Celtique* (1870–1934), i

W. Rowlands *Cambrian Bibliography*

Josiah Thomas Jones, *Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol o Enwogion Cymru (Aberdâr 1867-70)*, ii, 165-6

*Catalogue of Printed Literature in the Welsh Department, Cardiff Free Libraries* (1898), ii

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