

ROBERTS, JOHN (1775 - 1829), cleric and author

Name: John Roberts
Date of birth: 1775
Date of death: 1829
Parent: John Roberts
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric and author
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born in 1775, son of John Roberts, Plas Harri, Llanefydd, Denbighshire. He went up to Jesus College, Oxford, in 1792, and graduated in 1796; after which he remained for a while at Oxford as press-corrector of the S.P.C.K.'s *Welsh Bible* and *Prayer Book* (published in 1799). In 1798 he was appointed curate of Chiselhampton and Stadhampton (Oxfordshire), but longed to return to Wales, and so became in 1803 curate to the vicar of Tremeirchion, Flintshire, succeeding to the vicariate in 1807 on the death of his chief. He is most generally remembered for his vigorous opposition to the views of **William Owen Pughe** on Welsh orthography; when **Thomas Charles** of Bala, who had been dazzled by **Pughe**, decided to print the British and Foreign Bible Society's *Welsh Bible* in **Pughe's** orthography, a rather heated exchange of letters ensued, between **Charles**, Roberts, and the authorities of the Society; finally, Roberts won the day. So too, later on, he battled with **Tegid** when **Tegid** wanted to apply **Pughe's** system to the *Welsh Book of Common Prayer*; Roberts published in 1825 *Reasons for rejecting the Welsh Orthography ... attempted to be introduced* (etc.), a tract to which **Tegid** made reply in 1829 (see further under **Knight, William Bruce**). Yet, though no lover of Methodism, Roberts had no quarrel with **Thomas Charles's** general aims; indeed, he warmly supported the Bible Society and the Sunday school movement. A letter of his (printed in **D. E. Jenkins, Thomas Charles**, iii, 302-3) shows that (with the consent of his bishop, Cleaver) he was willing to adopt quasi-Methodist practices such as prayer-meetings and society-meetings, and that he had urged the bishop to admit suitable young men to holy orders even though they had had no academic training. Indeed, it is clear that he was a most energetic minister. He supported the 'Tract Society' of his diocese; he edited in 1817 a reprint of the Welsh translation of the *Book of Homilies*; he published in 1831 a hymnary for the use of the Welsh Church; and he began (1814-15) to publish a bilingual periodical, *Cylchgrawn Cymru*, which, however, came to an end with its fourth number. He died 25 July 1829, and was buried at Llanefydd.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Foster *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford*

Y Gwyllydydd, 1830, 263-7, 295-9 (the main source)

D. E. Jenkins, *Life of Thomas Charles* (Denbigh 1908) (consult index)

T. M. Jones, *Llenyddiaeth fy Ngwlad: sef hanes y newyddiadur a'r cylchgrawn Cymreig yn Nghymru, America, ac Awstralia, yn nghyd a'u dylanwad ar fywyd cenedl y Cymry* (Treffynnon 1893), 73

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [John Roberts](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q6255179](#)

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