

THOMAS, SAMUEL (1692 - 1766), Independent minister, and tutor of Carmarthen Academy

Name: Samuel Thomas
Date of birth: 1692
Date of death: 1766
Gender: Male
Occupation: Independent minister, and tutor of Carmarthen Academy
Area of activity: Education; Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born in 1692 at Derllysg, near Carmarthen, the son of a well-to-do farmer. He was one of the first pupils of [Thomas Perrott](#); he left the Academy in 1724 and is believed to have gone to West Looe, Cornwall, as minister. In 1735 he was called to be minister of Lammas Street, Carmarthen, where at the same time he kept a grammar school. But in 1743, when the Academy was moved for the second time to Carmarthen, Samuel Thomas was invited to assist [Evan Davies](#) (1694? - 1770) in conducting it - it should be noted that the grammar school was not closed, but continued to operate, in conjunction with the Academy, until 1845; accordingly, when we are told that some minister was educated 'at Carmarthen,' it does not follow that he had been to the Academy. Both as a preacher and as a lecturer Samuel Thomas seems to have been uninspiring - [Thomas Morgan](#) (1720 - 1799) complains of his frigid temperament. He was certainly an Arminian and probably an Arian. His church did not quarrel with this; but its records show that after thirty years of his ministry it was small and moribund. As a tutor, his views caused considerable concern to the Congregational Board; and after several unavailing attempts to persuade [Evan Davies](#) to get rid of him, the Calvinists decided, in 1757, to start their own Academy in Abergavenny. [Evan Davies](#) left Wales in 1759, and the Presbyterian Board entrusted the management of the Academy to Samuel Thomas, with [Jenkin Jenkins](#) as his assistant; the reputation of the Academy for unorthodoxy was finally established under these two men. It is generally conceded that Samuel Thomas was a thorough and conscientious tutor, and the standard of learning at the Academy was admittedly high in his time. He retired in 1764, and died 7 September 1766 'at the age of 74,' according to his memorial in Lammas Street.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru, iii, 429-30, 433-4

J. Dyfnallt Owen, *Hanes Eglwys Heol Awst, Caerfyrddin* (1926), 20-3

G. D. Owen, *Ysgolion a Cholegau yr Annibynwyr* (1939), 30-44

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Wikidata: [Q20804771](#)

Published date: 1959

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