

TOY, HUMFREY (died 1575), Carmarthen merchant

Name: Humfrey Toy
Date of death: 1575
Spouse: Jane ferch David ap David
Child: Robert Toy
Gender: Male
Occupation: merchant
Area of activity: Business and Industry
Author: William Llewelyn Davies

The first New Testament in Welsh (1567 - [William Salesbury](#)), and the first Welsh translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* (also 1567 - [bishop Richard Davies](#)) were printed in London by Henry Denham 'at the costes and charges of Humfrey Toy.' It has been suggested that the latter was Humfrey Toy of Carmarthen and not his nephew, also Humfrey Toy, who was a bookseller in London and became under-warden of the Stationers' Company; on the other hand it is known that the London Humfrey Toy had [Salesbury](#) as his guest in his London house in 1567. Particulars taken from the will of Humfrey Toy, Carmarthen, are given in *Transactions of the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society and Field Club*, xi, 76-7; from these it is learnt that he was a wealthy merchant and tanner who lived at Carmarthen and who owned much property in the town itself and outside it. He is mentioned in official documents as early as 1542/3, and his will, dated 1 March 1575, was proved by his son Robert on 2 May the same year. His wife, by whom he had a large family, was Jane, daughter of David ap David, who was mayor of Carmarthen in 1523. Toy was mayor in 1557. He would naturally come to know [Richard Davies](#), bishop of S. Davids, when the latter lived at Abergwili, and become acquainted with [William Salesbury](#) when the latter visited the bishop at Abergwili. Toy's interest in the Welsh language is further proved by the fact that he made provision in his will for the giving of a sermon or lecture three times a week for a year, some of the sermons to be in English and some in Welsh.

It has to be borne in mind, however, that [William Salesbury](#) took up residence in Humfrey Toy the printer's house in London in 1567, in order to see through the press his Welsh translation of the New Testament and that Humfrey Toy printed, in the same year, the second edition of [Salesbury's](#) *A playne and a familiar Introduction, teaching how to pronounce the Letters in the Brytische Tongue, now commonly called Welshe*; at the end of the preface to this work are the words 'Soiourning at your house in Paules Churchyarde.' All this appears to prove that it was the London Toy who was responsible for 'the costes and charges.'

Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

Sources

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

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Heraldic Visitations of Wales and Part of the Marches between the years 1586 and 1613, under the authority of Clarencieux and Norroy, two kings at arms (Llandovery 1846), i

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