

WALTER, HENRY (1611 - 1678), Puritan preacher, Independent

Name: Henry Walter
Date of birth: 1611
Date of death: 1678
Gender: Male
Occupation: Puritan preacher, Independent
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Thomas Richards

A member of the house of Piercefield, S. Arvans, Monmouth. He matriculated from Jesus College, Oxford, in 1633, 22 years old, and graduated B.C.L. His father was a squire, and the family were pronounced Anglicans; when his mother made her last will in 1623, the tithes of Howick, after the death of his brother, were to go to Henry.

But he came very soon under the influence of the personality and ideas of [William Wroth](#) of Llanfaches; indeed, he was [Wroth's](#) prime favourite, and his name appears in [Wroth's](#) will (September 1638) as chief executor; for all that, early in 1639, through the help of his brother John as patron, he was made curate of Mounton, a small parish near his home. Curate or not, Puritan he was, and in 1646 he was named by Parliament, with two others, to go on an evangelical crusade in South Wales, and to preach in Welsh.

When the Rump, at the beginning of 1650, resolved to put the Propagation Act into force and named twenty-five prominent Puritans as 'approvers' of preachers, Walter was one of them, and stood at the head of the list. There is plenty of evidence from the account-books that he was exceptionally busy in those days as the outstanding exponent of the Llanfaches tradition, preaching himself in Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire, and sending approved missionaries up the valleys to the hilly hinterland. As that Act was not renewed in 1653, Walter became settled minister at Newport, acting as Puritan vicar of S. Woollos; the Lambeth manuscripts give full details about the component sources of his salary of £100 p.a.

A Dissenter of his standing could not expect much peace at the Restoration; in fact, a troop of unruly soldiers is said to have attacked him at Llantarnam in July, 1660. That story suggests that Llantarnam was his home; the spies of 1669, who report him as giving harbour to Nonconformist hearers, roundly say he lived at Parc y Pil, only they made the mistake of placing it in Caerleon and not in Llantarnam; when his licence under the Declaration of 1672 arrived, that stated quite definitely that his house was at Llantarnam (that being so, he was almost certainly a tenant of a Roman Catholic, one of the [Morgan](#) family of Llantarnam, and near neighbour also to [Percy Enderbie](#), author of *Cambria Triumphans*, who was married to one of the [Morgans](#)). In 1675 [Maurice](#) looks upon him as the pioneer and guardian of the numerous Puritans of Mynydd Islwyn, and the report of [Maurice](#), together with the figures of the census of 1676, agree to show that Walter was not only the main inheritor of the Llanfaches tradition but also the chief succourer of about 200 Nonconformists who worshipped in secret on the flat lands between Marshfield on the one side of Newport and Redwick on the other. The words of [Maurice](#) in 1675 are about the last we have of him; it is not known for certain whether he was counted in 1676 with the thirty-eight sectaries of Mynydd Islwyn or was one of three obstinate Dissenters reported by the parson of Llantarnam.

However, the date of his last will is 13 January 1674-5; he was dead in the summer of 1678, for his goods and furniture were inventoried on 8 August, and his will proved at Llandaff on 4 February 1678-9. In that will were several provisions for the more needy members of the 'gathered church' of Mynydd Islwyn.

Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

Sources

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John Walker manuscripts in Bodleian Library, Oxford c. 13 (17, 45b, 52)

The Lord's Loud Call to England; being a true relation of some late various and wonderful Judgments, or handyworks of God, ... in several places. ... Also of the strange changes and late alterations made in these three nations. As also of the odious sin of drinking healths, with a brief of Mr Pryns solid arguments against it (London 1660), 26 (*The Thomason Tract in*

the British Museum)

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Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Charles II, E.B., 38A (166, 169)

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Cardiff Naturalists' Society, XXV, ii, 6-7

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his will ([LJ/1678/62](#)) at N.L.W.

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Henry Walter](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q5729799](#)

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