

WILLIAMS, HUGH (1722? - 1779), cleric and author

**Name:** Hugh Williams  
**Date of birth:** 1722?  
**Date of death:** 1779  
**Parent:** Catherine Williams  
**Parent:** William Williams  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** cleric and author  
**Area of activity:** Literature and Writing; Religion  
**Author:** Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born in Llanengan, Llŷn peninsula, in 1721 or 1722 (he was christened 18 January 1721/2), the son of William Williams (or ' Jones ') and Catherine his wife - **William Morris** suggests (*Morris Letters*, i, 308) that he was connected with the **Bodvel** family, but Foster enters 'pleb.' against his father's name. According to a letter which he wrote to **Richard Morris** in 1764, he was educated at Friars, Bangor, and he adds that he was there at the same time as **Goronwy Owen**. He entered Jesus College, Oxford, in June 1740, 'aged 18,' and graduated in 1744. He became curate of Llanengan (1745-51), rector of Llanfrothen and perpetual curate of Beddgelert (1751-4), and rector of Aberffraw from 15 February 1754 (when the **Morris**es had hoped to get the living for **Goronwy Owen**) until his death. Hugh Williams and **Goronwy** were 'dear' friends, according to the latter; in the collection of **Goronwy**'s letters there are several references to him, and there is one letter addressed to him; but except for **Goronwy**'s last letter to **Richard Morris** (1767), in which he enquired whether Hugh Williams was still alive, they all belong to the years 1752-5. As **J. H. Davies** has pointed out, the letter usually believed to have been sent to Hugh Williams in 1751 was in fact a copy of a 1751 letter sent by **Goronwy** to **William Elias** and forwarded by him (probably in 1754) to Hugh Williams. Moreover, there is nothing in the index to the *Morris Letters* to indicate that Hugh Williams was in the inner circle of the **Morris** brothers - if that index is searched (under the name 'Aberffraw') it will be found that Hugh Williams and **William Morris** were on occasional visiting terms; but when Hugh Williams wrote to **Richard Morris** (*Additional Letters of the Morris*es of Anglesey (1735-86) , p. 624) in 1764 it was as one stranger to another. It is not easy to see how **William Elias** could have been Hugh Williams's instructor in poetry, as suggested by **J. H. Davies** - all we know for certain is that **Elias** had criticised some of Williams's verse, and that **Goronwy** had defended his friend; very little of Williams's poetry has survived. The popular belief that Hugh Williams was a member of the Cymmrodorion Society in 1751 is also incorrect - his name appears for the first time in the 1759 list of members. In 1773 he published a Welsh translation of an English sermon, and in 1776 *Rhannau Detholedig o'r Salmau Cân gyd a'r Ystyr o honynt o flaen pob Salm*. Tradition has it that he was a good preacher, and his letter to **Richard Morris** shows that he was keenly interested in the Welsh language. He died in 1779, and was buried 3 July at Aberffraw.

Author

**Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins**, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Entries from the parish registers of Llanengan and Aberffraw, sent by Mr. E. D. Jones  
Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford*  
A. Ivor Pryce, *Diocese of Bangor During Three Centuries, seventeenth to nineteenth century inclusive being a digest of the registers of the bishops*(1929)  
*The Letters of Goronwy Owen (1723â€“69)* (Cardiff 1924) (J. H. Davies ed.), index  
*Cambrian Bibliography* (Llanidloes 1869), 547, 575  
and the references given above

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Hugh Williams](#)

Additional Links

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Wikidata: [Q14945684](#)

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