

WYNNE, JOHN (1667-1743), bishop of St Asaph and principal of Jesus College, Oxford

Name: John Wynne
Date of birth: 1667
Date of death: 1743
Spouse: Anne Wynne (née Pugh)
Child: Margaret Bankes
Child: William Wynne
Child: John Wynne
Parent: Elizabeth Wynne (née Wynne)
Parent: Humphrey Wynne
Gender: Male
Occupation: bishop of St Asaph and principal of Jesus College, Oxford
Area of activity: Education; Religion

Born in 1667, the son of Humphrey Wynne of Maes-y-coed, Caerwys, and his wife Elizabeth (Wynne, daughter of John Wynne of Copa'rleni, Trelawnyd, and his wife Catherine Thelwall, of Bathafarn, see [J. E. Griffith](#), *Pedigrees*, 369 - the bishop was, accordingly, the second cousin of the [John Wynne of Copa'rleni](#) described in the preceding article). He went to school at Northop and Ruthin, and in 1682 was admitted into Jesus College, where he graduated in 1685 (B.D. 1696, D.D. 1706), being elected a Fellow the same year. The name being a very common one, there has been, both in Foster and in the *D.N.B.*, a good deal of confusion about his career; if [D. R. Thomas](#)'s lists of St Asaph clergy are studied it will be seen that he was not the John Wynne who was at Nantglyn and Llansilin as alleged by Foster, nor the John Wynne (another of the same name) who, according to Foster, was at Efenechtyd. Indeed, the bishop's career was comparatively straightforward: he was chaplain to the [earl of Pembroke](#), who gave him the rectory of Llangelynnin, Meironnydd (1701-1714); furthermore, in 1705, he became prebendary of Christ College, Brecon. From 1705 until 1716 he was Lady Margaret professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford, and in 1713 became rector of Llandysul, Cardiganshire, in plurality. He was already (1712) deputy-principal of Jesus College, and in August 1712, after a hard tussle between Whig and Tory Fellows, succeeded in obtaining the principalship. In January 1715 he was appointed bishop of St Asaph, but, in spite of much grumbling at Oxford, continued to hold his post at Jesus College until 1720, when he married Anne, daughter of Robert Pugh of Pennarth, Penmachno (see under [Lloyd, Richard, of Esclus](#) - the bishop was one of [Lloyd](#)'s executors). While he was at St Asaph he spent his money freely on repairs to the cathedral and the palace; it should also be noted that Wynne was the last Welshman to be bishop of that diocese until 1870. In 1727 he was translated to Bath and Wells, where he remained for the rest of his life. In 1732 he bought the Soughton estate in Northop, Flintshire, and it was there that he died, 15 July 1743 'at the age of 85,' according to his tombstone at Northop. He published a few sermons and, in 1696, an abbreviation of Locke's essay *On the Human Understanding* - an abbreviation which was commended by Locke himself, which ran into five editions, and which was translated into French and Italian. [Edward Lhuyd](#) felt in 1704 (*Archæologia Cambrensis*, 1859, 253) that Wynne was cold, if not actually hostile, to him - [Moses Williams](#), on the other hand, received from him a letter of recommendation when he was applying for the post of secretary of the Royal Society.

Two of the bishop's sons were buried at Northop. The elder, JOHN WYNNE (1724 - 1801), barrister, was a Bencher of the Middle Temple. The other was Sir WILLIAM WYNNE (1729 - 1815), also a barrister; he went to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in 1746, graduated in law in 1751 (LL.D. 1757), was a Fellow of the college from 1755 to 1803, and Master from 1803 until his death. He specialised in ecclesiastical law, and was a pleader in the Court of Arches from 1757 to 1788, when he was appointed Dean of Arches and a judge in the archbishop's Prerogative Court, appointments which he held until 1809. He became a member of the Privy Council in 1789, and one of the lords of the Treasury in 1790 - he had been knighted in 1788. Soughton was inherited by the bishop's daughter, who married Henry Bankes, an ancestor of the late [Sir John Eldon Bankes](#).

Sources

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*

Hardy, *Jesus College* (1899), 163-7

H. B. Thomas, *A History of the Diocese of St. Asaph* (1874), ii, 432

A. Ivor Pryce, *Diocese of Bangor During Three Centuries, seventeenth to nineteenth century inclusive being a digest of the registers of the bishops* (1929), 15

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