# ROBERTS, JOHN (1879 - 1959), minister (Presb.) and historian

**Name:** John Roberts
**Date of birth:** 1879
**Date of death:** 1959
**Spouse:** Annie Jones Roberts (née Hughes)
**Parent:** Ann Roberts (née Williams)
**Parent:** John John Roberts
**Gender:** Male
**Occupation:** minister (Presb.) and historian
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Religion
**Author:** Gomer Morgan Roberts

Born 16 October 1879 at Porthmadog, Caernarfonshire, son of John J. Roberts ('Iolo Caernarfon') and Ann, his wife. He was educated at Porthmadog board school, Bala grammar school and Jesus College, Oxford, where he graduated in classics, and subsequently in theology. (The University of Wales conferred on him an honorary D.D. degree towards the end of his life.) He was ordained in 1905, and served as minister at Aberdovey (1903-06), David St., Liverpool (1906-13), and Pembroke Tce., Cardiff (1913-38). He was called to serve as secretary of the Central Fund of the South Wales Association in 1938; ten years later the funds of North and South Wales were combined and he became the first secretary of the united Fund of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. In 1903 he married Annie Jones Hughes, Porthmadog; they had four sons and two daughters. He died 29 July 1959.

John Roberts was among the leading preachers of his time, even though his voice was not suitable for the pulpit (see R.T. Jenkins's opinion of him as a preacher in *Cyfoedion* (1976), 39-41). He was Moderator of the South Wales Association (1941) and Moderator of the General Assembly (1943). He delivered the Davies Lecture in 1930 on the philosophy of the history of the denomination, which was published in Welsh (1931), and in English under the title *The Calvinistic Methodism of Wales* (1934). (See again R.T. Jenkin's assessment of this work which placed him in the forefront of historians of the Presbyterian Church, *ibid.*, 41-2). He contributed numerous articles to *Y Goleuad*, and to the periodicals of his denomination. His most valuable contribution to his Connexion was to establish a new scheme for planning and sustaining the ministry. He developed into a first-rate organiser and administrator. He had a discerning and disciplined mind which made him master of everything he undertook. It is interesting to note that his hobbies were heraldry, reading *Who's who* and maps, and mastering railway timetables.

## Author

**Reverend Gomer Morgan Roberts**, (1904 - 1993)

## Sources

In addition to the references above

*Who's who in Wales*, (1921), 414

*Who's who in the Free Churches?* (1951), 323

*Blwyddiadur y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd*, 1960, 271-2

W. Morris (ed.), *Deg o Enwogion* (1965), 60-8

personal acquaintance

## Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: John Roberts

## Works

David Charles, Owen Thomas, John Roberts, William Howells, *Welsh Calvinistic Methodist record; a monthly magazine of religious literature and intelligence*

## Additional Links

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