

## JESUS COLLEGE OXFORD

**JC:PR23** PAPERS OF SIR JOHN RHÛS (F. 1877-95; PR. 1895-1915)

Sir John RhÛs (1840-1915) was the son of a farmer and lead miner, but managed to get an education which led him to study at Bangor Normal College, and become Headmaster of the British School at Rhos-y-Bol, Anglesey, in 1861. In 1865, however, his career took a different turn when, after meeting Charles Williams, the then Principal of Jesus, he matriculated at Oxford from Jesus College, getting a First in Literae Humaniores in 1869. He was elected a Fellow of Merton College, and travelled extensively on the continent.

RhÛs became an inspector of schools in 1871, but simultaneously researched Welsh philology, winning such a reputation that in 1877 he was elected the first Professor of Celtic at Oxford. He became an Honorary Fellow of Jesus College in that year, and then Official Fellow and Bursar there in 1881. In 1895 he was elected Principal to succeed Hugo Harper.

As Principal, RhÛs was undoubtedly one of the most significant heads of Jesus College of any age, not least thanks to his scholarly reputation. He retained close links with Wales, and served on many important commissions. He was knighted in 1907 and made a member of the privy council in 1911, as well as receiving several honorary degrees. RhÛs died in the Lodgings of Jesus College in December 1915.

Almost all of Sir John RhÛs's papers are now held in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. However, the Bodleian Library holds papers of RhÛs's daughters, Mifanwy and Olwen, which include diaries kept by Mifanwy for 1893-1945 and by Olwen for 1897-1927, both of which cover the period when their father was Principal. The papers have the references MSS Eng. Misc. d. 740, e. 674-701, and g. 97, and MSS Eng. lett. c. 314, d. 337 and e. 131 (see further M. Clapinson and T.D. Rogers, *Summary Catalogue of Post-Medieval Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford. Acquisitions 1916-1975* (2 vols, Oxford, 1991), i, nos. 45544-76).

On the other hand, there is very little relating to RhÛs or his family here at Jesus College, apart from this letter from David Lloyd George, and a collection of press cuttings, which may or may not have been assembled by RhÛs and his family. These cuttings were found in the Library of Jesus College, and transferred to the Archives in June 2017 as Accession No. 419.

Catalogued in January 2020.

### **JC:PR23/CI - CORRESPONDENCE**

**JC:PR23/CI/1**

**22 Jun 1910**

Letter (typed with signature) from David Lloyd George (address, 11 Downing Street), to Sir John RhÛs. Lloyd George thanks RhÛs and the Fellows for electing him an Honorary Fellow of Jesus College.

### **JC:PR23/NI - NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS AND OFFPRINTS**

**JC:PR23/NI/1**

**1865**

Offprint from the *Transactions of the Philological Society* containing a paper by RhÛs, "The Passive Verbs of the Latin and the Celtic Languages", which was published in 1865.

## JESUS COLLEGE OXFORD

**JC:PR23** PAPERS OF SIR JOHN RHÛS (F. 1877-95; PR. 1895-1915)

**JC:PR23/NI/2**

**1880**

Proof copy of part of *Y Traethodydd* 35 (1880), its pages uncut, which includes an article (in Welsh) by John RhÛs, "Chwedloniaeth Gymreig" [i.e. "Welsh Myth"], on pp. 476-84. At the head of the article is a note that this was delivered by RhÛs at the Carnarvon Eisteddfod on 24 August 1880. A note has been added in pencil that this piece was reprinted from *Y Geredl Gymreig*, 2 September 1880.

**JC:PR23/NI/3**

**July 1889**

Copy of issue of *Y Geninen*, its pages uncut, which includes on pages 129-138 an article (in Welsh) by John RhÛs, "Cymreig yr oes Hon" ["Welsh of this Age"].

**JC:PR23/NI/4**

**1891**

Part of an offprint from the *Transactions of the Philological Society* containing most of a paper by RhÛs, "The Celts and the other Aryans of the P Group".

**JC:PR23/NI/5**

**Aug 1895**

Cutting from a Welsh newspaper, *Yr Brython Cymreig*, containing a report of an Eisteddfod at New Quay (Ceinewydd) at which RhÛs gave a speech.

**JC:PR23/NI/6**

**Aug 1895**

Cutting from the *South Wales Daily News*, also reporting (this time in English) on the speech given at the New Quay Eisteddfod by RhÛs.

**JC:PR23/NI/7**

**after 29 May 1897**

Offprint from an issue of *The Pembroke County Guardian* for 29 May 1897, which comprises a letter from RhÛs titled "The Ancient Names of Haverford."

**JC:PR23/NI/8**

**1898**

Incomplete leaflet which appears to be a guide to excursions for the Irish Society of Antiquaries to take place in August 1898. It includes articles on the places which they are to visit, one of which, on the Breastagh Ogam Stone, is by RhÛs. Only a page and a half of his article is preserved.

**JC:PR23/NI/9**

**31 Mar 1900**

Cutting from the *Pembroke County Guardian*, which reprints a speech given by RhÛs about St. David, preceded by an explanatory letter from RhÛs. It seems that his conclusions about the origins of the saint caused some controversy.

**JC:PR23/NI/10**

**1903**

Offprint from the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries* for 26 March 1903, giving the text of a paper read by RhÛs on an inscribed stone found at Lllytyn Gwyne, Caernarvonshire.

**JC:PR23/NI/11**

**n.d. (c. 1900?)**

Cutting from an unnamed newspaper of an article "An Appeal to Welshmen", which discusses RhÛs.

**JESUS COLLEGE OXFORD**

**JC:PR23** PAPERS OF SIR JOHN RHÛS (F. 1877-95; PR. 1895-1915)

**JC:PR23/NI/12-13**

**10 Mar 1904**

Two copies of *The Welsh Leader* Vol. I no. 25, which contains an article about RhÛs as part of a series, "Welsh Leaders of To-Day."

**JC:PR23/NI/14**

**Jan 1916**

Copy of *The Welsh Outlook*, Vol. III no. 25, which contains two obituaries of RhÛs.

**JC:PR23/NI/15**

**Jan 1925**

Offprint from *The Proceedings of the British Academy*, containing "Sir John RhÛs", the Sir John RhÛs Memorial Inaugural Lecture, delivered by Sir John Morris-Jones. After the lecture is appended a list of RhÛs's publications.