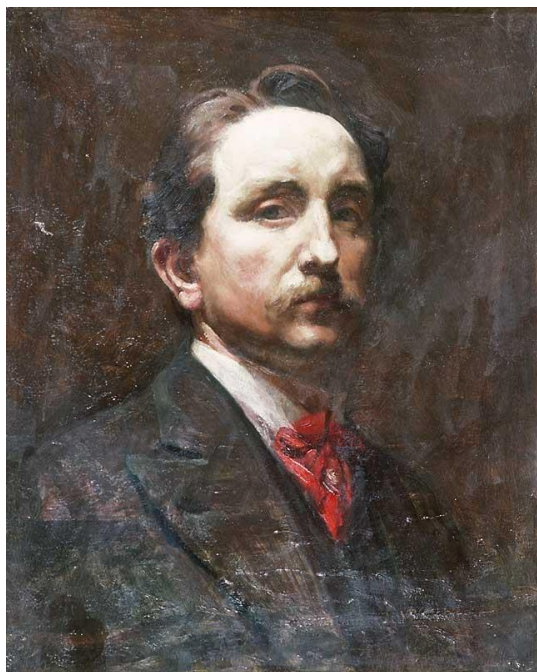


The artist: Christopher Williams



Self-portrait, Christopher Williams

Circa 1915

- Christopher Williams was one of Wales' most important and prominent artists at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was born in Maesteg in 1873 and studied art at the Royal College of Art and the Royal Academy Schools.
- He painted many famous people from the period including prominent Welshmen such as Sir John Williams, one of the founders of The National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, and David Lloyd George when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- In 1916 he was commissioned by David Lloyd George who was Secretary of State for War at the time to portray what happened at Mametz Wood between July 7-12, 1916.
- The Battle of Mametz Wood was one of the fiercest battles in the Somme, and during the battle 4,000 members of the Welsh Division were killed or injured.
- Christopher Williams planned his painting in great detail by visiting the location of the battle at the end of 1916 and studying soldiers who posed for his sketches.
- The painting was finished in 1917 and the completed work is an oil painting measuring 3 metres wide and 1 metre tall.
- Christopher Williams was a pacifist and a socialist. Many people were shocked by the painting when it was shown for the first time.
- The painting *The Charge of the Welsh Division at Mametz Wood* is held at Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales. It will be part of an exhibition at the Museum in 2016: <http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/>