

DAVIES, MORRIS (1796 - 1876), author, hymnologist, and musician

Name: Morris Davies
Date of birth: 1796
Date of death: 1876
Gender: Male
Occupation: author, hymnologist, and musician
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Music; Performing Arts; Poetry; Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born October 1796 (christened 19 October) at Pennant-igi Uchaf ('Pennant Iglillt ' in a record of 1761), Mallwyd parish, Meirionnydd; his father, a farmer, was of Ffestiniog origin. His earliest education was in short-lived schools at Dinas Mawddwy and Mallwyd, together with the Sunday school. Disliking farm work, he decided to become a schoolmaster and went in 1819 to a school kept by **William Owen** (Gwilym Glan Hafren, 1788 - 1838) at Welshpool. After six months there, he kept school, at Pont Robert, Llanfyllin, Syston, Leicestershire, Llanfair Caereinion, and Llanfyllin again, till 1836. The parson of Syston was **Edward Morgan** (1784 - 1869), who was at the time engaged on his *Life of Thomas Charles*, and it was Davies who copied for him the 150 letters by **Charles** used in that book. In 1836 he became clerk to a legal firm at Llanfyllin with which **David Williams** (1799 - 1869) was connected, and he followed the firm when it moved to Portmadoc and then to Pwllheli. He was schoolmaster at Portmadoc, 1844-9, but in 1849 removed to Bangor to become a clerk, and died there 10 September 1876. Remembering his scrappy education and his constant shiftings for half a century, one cannot but be astonished at the amount and high quality of literary and musical work accomplished by Morris Davies. He translated religious booklets; he was a diligent writer to the periodicals, notably to *Y Traethodydd*, in which some forty articles by him appeared: he contributed many articles to *Y Gwyddoniadur* and similar dictionaries; he published a biography, 1865, of **Ann Griffiths** and an edition, 1876, of the works of **Daniel Rowland** of Llangeitho with a biography. He wrote many hymns, was a specialist in hymnology (many of the *Traethodydd* articles are upon this subject), and edited four collections of hymns. He was also a good musician, and in 1860 published (under the title *Jeduthun*) a collection of hymn-tunes, ten of which were of his own composition - on this see **R. D. Griffith**, *Hanes Canu Cynulleidfaol Cymru*, 1948, 170-1.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Daniel Rowlands, *Y Traethodydd*, 1877, 217-44, 359-75 (very full, and including Davies's own reminiscences)

Y Geninen (Gŵyl Ddewi), 1891, 30-7

J. Thickers, *Emynau a'u Hawduriad* (1945)

Works

Daniel Rowlands, Morris Davies (ed.), *Deuddeg pregeth ar bynciau ymarferol... hefyd cofiant yr awdwr, ynghydag attodiad, yn cynnwys gweddillion amrywiol o'i waith, a marwnadau coffadwriaethol iddo* (Dolgellau 1876)

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