

DAVIES, THOMAS WITTON (1851 - 1923), Baptist minister, and Semitic scholar

Name: Thomas Witton Davies

Date of birth: 1851

Date of death: 1923

Spouse: Hilda Mabel Davies (née Everett)

Spouse: Annie Davies

Gender: Male

Occupation: Baptist minister, and Semitic scholar

Area of activity: Religion; Scholarship and Languages

Author: Lewis Edward Valentine

Born 28 February 1851 at Nant-y-glo, Monmouthshire, of illiterate but pious parents. The family moved to Witton Park, co. Durham (whence he took his middle name); his elementary schooling there was the only education afforded him before he was over 21. In 1872 he entered the Baptist College at Pontypool; there, in addition to pursuing the prescribed courses, he diligently read Coleridge and Carlyle, whose influence upon him throughout his life was very deep. From Pontypool he went in 1879 to Regent's Park and University Colleges in London, graduating in 1876 - James Martineau deeply influenced him in these years.

From 1879 to December 1880 he was pastor of High Street church at Merthyr Tydfil, and from 1881 till 1891 classical and Hebrew tutor at Haverfordwest Baptist College. He was principal of the Baptist College at Nottingham from 1891 till 1898, acting also as lecturer in Arabic and Syriac in University College, Nottingham; several terms during these years were spent at German universities - a whole year at Leipzig under Buhl, Socin, and Dalman, and a term under Noldeke at Strasbourg; he also studied Assyrian under Sayce. He moved to Bangor in 1898, first as Hebrew tutor at Bangor Baptist College (1898-1905) and afterwards (1905-21) as professor of Hebrew at the University College of North Wales. His students at Bangor held him in very high regard, in no way diminished by his many eccentricities.

In addition to articles in periodicals (English, American, and German) and in the Welsh *Geiriadur Beiblaidd* and Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, he published, among other things, commentaries on *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, and *Esther*, 1909, and the latter half of the *Psalms*, 1906, a book entitled *Magic, Divination, and Demonology among the Hebrews*, 1898, another, *Heinrich Ewald*, 1905, and a small Welsh 'Introduction' to the Old Testament. He was a doctor of Leipzig and Jena universities, and an honorary doctor of Geneva and Durham. His large library was left (for the most part) to the National Library of Wales.

He was twice married: (1) 1880, to Mary Anne Moore, who died in 1910, leaving one daughter, and (2) 1911, to Hilda Mabel Everett, by whom he had a son and a daughter. He died 12 May 1923.

Author

Reverend Lewis Edward Valentine, (1893 - 1986)

Sources

T. Witton Davies, *Outstanding Literary and Human Factors of My Life* (Australia 1911)

T. Witton Davies, 'Vita,' in *Magic, Divination, and Demonology among the Hebrews and their neighbours: including an examination of Biblical references and of the Biblical terms* (London 1898)

Who was who?

information from Mrs. Witton Davies

information from the Very Rev. the Dean of S. Davids.

Darllen Pellach

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