

EDWARDS, THOMAS (Cynonfardd; 1848 - 1927), Independent minister and eisteddfodwr

Name: Thomas Edwards
Pseudonym: Cynonfardd
Date of birth: 1848
Date of death: 1927
Gender: Male
Occupation: Independent minister and eisteddfodwr
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Religion
Author: John Dyfnallt Owen

Born at Glandŵr (Landore), Swansea, 6 December 1848. As a boy he moved to Cwm-bach, Aberdare, attending the elementary schools at both these places and subsequently becoming a pupil and assistant master at Merthyr Tydfil. He began to preach at Mynydd Seion, Cwm-bach, and from 1868 to 1870 studied at the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen. In 1870 he emigrated to the U.S.A. for the sake of his health and became minister successively of Mineral Ridge Independent chapel, Ohio, 1871-2, the First Congregational Church, Wilkes-barre, Pennsylvania, 1872-8, Wilkes-barre and Edwardsville, 1878-80, Edwardsville, 1880-91, Ebenezer, Cardiff, 1891-3, and Edwardsville again, 1893-1927. In America he was one of the most successful ministers of his time, and his church was one of the largest in the States. He had a distinguished personality and a good voice which was always under perfect control; he was a fluent and popular preacher, an excellent organizer, and a leader in his denomination.

In 1913 he was invested archdruid in the U.S.A. and became a shining light in the eisteddfodic world. He won many important prizes in the field of poetry and composed many hymn-tunes but, above all, he was regarded as an eisteddfod conductor in a class by himself. Between 1891 and 1897 he conducted five of the national eisteddfodau in Wales. He was professor of elocution in Wyoming College, Kingstone, Pa., 1880-90. He published *Darllen a Siarad*, 1891, a book which had a substantial circulation. He also published *Y Mayflower a Chaniadau Eraill* (Utica, 1877). He died 13 March 1927.

Author

Reverend John Dyfnallt Owen, (1873 - 1956)

Sources

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H. Blackwell, *NLW MSS 9256A: A Dictionary of Welsh Biography*

E. Pan Jones, *Oriel Coleg Presbyteriaidd, Caerfyrddin: yn cynwys hanes yr holl fyfyrwyr fu yn y coleg o 1796 hyd 1899*(Merthyr Tydfil 1909), 123-4

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