

EVANS, EVAN (Ieuan Glan Geirionydd; 1795 - 1855), cleric and poet

Name: Evan Evans
Pseudonym: Ieuan Glan Geirionydd
Date of birth: 1795
Date of death: 1855
Parent: Elizabeth Evans
Parent: Robert Evans
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric and poet
Area of activity: Poetry; Religion
Author: David Gwenallt Jones

Born at Tan-y-celyn, Trefriw, Caernarfonshire, 20 April 1795. His father, Robert Evans, was a local poet and man of letters, while his mother, Elizabeth, was a woman of some culture, being able to read Welsh and English - they were among the founders of Calvinistic Methodism at Trefriw. Evan Evans was sent to the school kept at Trefriw church by one Griffiths; from there he went to the free grammar school at Llanrhwst. After leaving school he returned home to work on the farm. The new stewards of the Gwydir estate raised the rent of the farm, with the result that his parents could not pay their way and became impoverished. In 1816 he went to Tal-y-bont, Caernarfonshire, as master of a day school. At the Wrexham eisteddfod, 1820, he won the prize with his *awdl* 'Hiraeth Cymro am ei wlad mewn bro estronawl'; there, too, he met a number of gentlemen and some clerics like **Richard Richards** (see **Thomas Richards**, 1754-1837) and **John Jenkins** (Ifor Ceri, 1770-1829), who persuaded him to seek holy orders. He studied at Aberriw ('Berriw,' Montgomeryshire) under **Thomas Richards** (1785-1855) for a time and then went to S. Bees College. He was ordained by the bishop of Chester and was licensed to conduct the Welsh services at S. Martin's church, Chester, 19 February 1826. On 17 December he became curate at Christleton, where he remained until 21 April 1843, when he was transferred to a curacy at Ince. Towards the end of 1852, his wife having died and his own health having broken down, he returned to Trefriw. In July 1854 he obtained a curacy at Rhyl. He died 21 January 1855 and was buried in Trefriw churchyard.

He published the following works: *Prynedig-aeth Neillduol neu Grist yn rhoi ei hun dros yr Eglwys*, 1819?; *Amddiffyniad yr Athrawiaeth Ysgrythyrol o Brynedigaeth Neillduol*, 1820, a translation of J. Hurrión's book; *Pedwar Cyflwr Dyn*, 1821, a translation of Thomas Boston's work (the translation bears the name of **J. Parry** (1775 - 1846), but is believed to have been the work of Ieuan Glan Geirionydd); *Hymnau i'w defnyddio yn Eglwys St. Martin, y Prydnawn Sabboth cyntaf o'r Flwyddyn; Casgliad o Salmau a Hymnau at wasanaeth y Lithwriaeth Gymraeg yn Nghaerlleon*, 1829 (*Geirionydd* asserts that 'Y Lithwriaeth Gymraeg' meant 'Welsh Lectureship,' but in all probability it was intended to mean 'Welsh Liturgy'); *Y Seraph, sef casgliad o donau crefyddol ar amrywiol fesurau; Y Bibl Darluniadol*, 1844-7.

Ieuan Glan Geirionydd assisted **Rev. John Parry** of Chester to edit the monthly *Goleuad Gwynedd*; in 1830 he sent a letter to the bishops asking for their patronage for a proposed Welsh periodical on the lines of the *Saturday Magazine*, and in 1833 *Y Gwladgarwr* appeared. Ieuan edited this for three years but, as he lost money on it, it passed into the ownership of **Edward Parry** of Chester. He won the chair at the S. Asaph eisteddfod, 1818, with his 'Awdl ar farwolaeth y Dywysoges Charlotte'; at the Denbigh eisteddfod, 1828, with his 'Awdl ar Wledd Belsassar'; and at the Denbigh eisteddfod, 1850, with his *pryddest* 'Yr Adgyfodiad.'

Ieuan was the most versatile Welsh poet of the last century. Apart from the classical forms, he wrote lyrics in the modern manner, and hymns. He belonged to the liberal school of **Gwallter Mechain** which attacked the classical metres and began to write *pryddestau* and lyrics. His poems were influenced by the English 'churchyard school' - Gray, Robert Blair, and Edward Young - and his hymns by English hymn-writers like Watts.

Author

David Gwenallt Jones, (1899 - 1968)

Sources

Evan Evans, William John Roberts and Richard Parry (Gwalchmai) (eds.), *Geirionydd: Cyfansoddiadau Barddorol, Cerddorol, a Rhyddieithol y diweddar Barch. Evan Evans (Ieuan Glan Geirionydd). Wedi eu Casglu a'u Trefnu gan ei Nai, W. J. Roberts, Trefriw, gyda Nodiadau ar ei Fwyd a'i Weithiau Llenyddol* (1862)

Saunders Lewis, *Detholion o Waith Ieuan Glan Geirionydd* (Cardiff 1931)

Images

William Henry Mote, **Y Parch. Evan Evans (Ieuan Glan Geirionydd)**

Elizabeth Evans

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