

GRAVELL, DAVID (1787 - 1872), farmer, herbalist, and publisher

Name: David Gravel
Date of birth: 1787
Date of death: 1872
Parent: Mary Gravel
Parent: Thomas Gravel
Gender: Male
Occupation: farmer, herbalist, and publisher
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Medicine; Nature and Agriculture; Printing and Publishing
Author: Tom Beynon

Born 3 June 1787, son of Thomas and Mary Gravel of Cwmfelin, in the parish of Llandyfaelog, Carmarthenshire. He took to religion under the ministry of [David Peter](#) of Carmarthen. As a young man he suffered from bad health and this led him to experiment with herbal remedies; at the same time, he made the most of his friendship with ([Sir](#)) [David Daniel Davis](#), the royal physician who was a native of the parish and whose father was a deacon in Pen-y-graig church. There are still people who remember 'Gravel of Cwmfelin's Oil.'

He published at least six books: *Caniadau Seion*, 1847, comprising over 1,200 Welsh hymns, twenty-one anthems, and a number of English hymns; *Crist yn Llawn Perlau, sef Egwyddoreg*, 1855; *Hynafiaethau Cristionogol, sef Hanes yr Eglwys*, 1859; *Corph o Ddiwinyddiaeth wedi ei Ddethol o Catecism Cymanfa Westminster*, 1862; *Crefydd Gymdeithasol, neu Gydymaith y Cristion gan y Parch. Mathias Maurice gyda Byrdraeth*; *Bywyd David Gravel ynghyd a Hanes Eglwys Penygraig*, 1865; *Athrawiaeth Pabaidd-Esgobol yn cael ei Gwrth-brofi*, 1871. Among the *Caniadau Seion* there are a few hymns written by himself but they are very ordinary and lack popular appeal. He regarded himself as an elder, not as a deacon, of Pen-y-graig Independent church and in his later years his views on church government were a sore trial to his minister, Joseph Jarvis, and there were frequent tussles between him and [David Rees](#) of Llanelly on the same point.

He had a deep-seated interest in education and it was chiefly through his generosity that the British school at Idole near Pen-y-graig was built.

He was a bachelor, and lived all his life at Cwmfelin. He died 15 August 1872 and was buried in Pen-y-graig burial ground.

Author

Reverend Tom Beynon, (1886 - 1961)

Sources

Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru, iii, 444

W. A. Griffiths, *Hanes Emynwyr Cymru* (Caernarfon 1907), 162-3

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