

HUGHES, HUGH DERFEL (1816 - 1890), poet

Name: Hugh Derfel Hughes
Date of birth: 1816
Date of death: 1890
Child: Jane Williams (née Hughes)
Child: Hugh Brython Hughes
Parent: Hugh Hughes
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet
Area of activity: Poetry
Author: Ifor Williams

Born 7 March 1816 at Melin-y-Cletwr in the parish of Llandderfel, Meirionethshire, son of Hugh Hughes (died 1829) who was the miller there until 1822, when he moved to the village of Llandderfel. He worked on farms here and there for some years but eventually obtained employment as a weigher in the Penrhyn Quarry. He married in 1846 and settled at his wife's home, Pen-dinas, Tre-garth, near Bangor, living there until he died 21 May 1890; he was buried at Y Gelli. Hugh Derfel Hughes began to write poetry when he was still young; he also showed a fondness for the study of the history of Wales, antiquities, geology, and botany, although he had received no instruction in any one of these subjects. He travelled throughout Wales to sell his first book, *Blodau'r Gân*, 1844, and wrote, in 1845, a description of 'dull wynebau a chyfansoddiadau' - the physiognomy and constitution - of some well-known Welshmen whom he had met on his journey; see *Y Tyddynnwr*, i, 296-318. A second collection of poems, *Y Gweithiwr Caniadgar*, was published in 1849, this, in accordance with the usage of the period, also contained poems by some of his friends, one carol is by his brother, Thomas Hughes, Pen-dref, Llanfyllin. He won the prize at a Llandygái literary society meeting for an essay on the antiquities of Llandygái and Llanllechid, this essay being published in 1866 (*Hynafiaethau Llandegai a Llanllechid*). Among his surviving papers is an *awdl* to ' Chwarel y Cae ' which won for him the chair at the Bethesda national eisteddfod. His best poem is ' Y Cyfamod Disigl,' written when he was crossing the Berwyn hills with a scythe slung over his shoulder on his return from the harvest in Shropshire; the last verse, which begins ' Y Gŵr a fu gynt o dan hoelion,' has become a part of the wealth of Welsh hymnology. His best *cywydd* is that called ' Y Bore Olaf.' In his memoir of his father he gives also the background to his own life; see *Y Traethodydd*, 1946 (174-83), 1947 (177-83).

Author

Sir Ifor Williams, (1881 - 1965)

Sources

Personal knowledge

Additional Links

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