

JONES, DAVID (1708? - 1785), 'of Trefriw', poet, collector of manuscripts, publisher, and printer

Name: David Jones
Date of birth: 1708?
Date of death: 1785
Spouse: Gwen ferch Richard ap Rhys
Child: Ismael Davies
Parent: Jane ferch Elizabeth
Parent: Sion ap Dafydd
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet, collector of manuscripts, publisher, and printer
Area of activity: History and Culture; Literature and Writing; Poetry; Printing and Publishing
Author: Griffith Milwyn Griffiths

Little is known about his birth and early years. His father's name is given as Siôn ap Dafydd in [NLW MS 476E](#) and [NLW MS 3107B](#), and his mother's as Jane ferch Elizabeth Rowland in B.M. Add. MS. 14888, and Jane ferch Dafydd ap Sion in [NLW MS 3107B](#). He married Gwen ferch Richard ap Rhys ([NLW MS 3107B](#)), but the date of his marriage is uncertain; Trefriw parish records note a marriage between a David Jones and Gwenna Prichard, 27 January 1734/5.

David Jones wrote a considerable amount of verse, but did not attain great eminence as a poet. He is best known in this respect as editor of an anthology of poems entitled *Blodeu Gerdd Cymry, sef Casgliad o Caniadau Cymreig gan amryw Awdwyr o'r oes ddiwaethaf*, 1759. He also edited such works as *Histori Nicodemus*, 1745, an old Welsh translation of the 'Gospel of Nicodemus,' *Egluryn Rhyfedd*, 1750, and *Cydymaith Diddan*, 1766, the last two being miscellaneous collections of prose and verse. He was also extremely active as a collector of old Welsh manuscripts, and the fruits of his labour can be found amongst the manuscript collections of the British Museum and the National Library of Wales. Later in life he acquired a printing press, and set up as a printer at Trefriw. The first output of this press appeared in 1776, the first major work being *Histori yr Iesu Sanctaidd* in 1776, a Welsh translation of the 'History of the Holy Jesus,' by William Smith. He continued to print until his death on 20 October 1785. His uncle, [John Davies](#) (Siôn Dafydd Las, died 1694), is separately noticed.

Author

Griffith Milwyn Griffiths

Sources

Ifano Jones, *A history of printing and printers in Wales to 1810, and of successive and related printers to 1923* (Cardiff 1925)

O. Gaianydd Williams, *Dafydd Jones o Drefriw (1708-1785)* (Caernarfon 1907)

Morris Jones, *Hanes Trefriw fel y bu ac fel y mae sef disgrifiad cryno o'r ardal a'r trigolion* (Llanrwst 1879)

A. O. Evans, 'Dafydd Jones, Trefriw, 1708-1785,' *Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, August 1937

G. J. Williams (ed.), *Llythyrau at Ddafydd Jones o Drefriw*, supplement to *The National Library of Wales Journal*, series iii, no. 2, 1943

The Records of the Diocese of Bangor in the National Library of Wales in N.L.W.

J. H. Davies, *Catalogue of Additional Manuscripts in the National Library of Wales*

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 476E](#): Llythyrau at David Jones ('Dewi Fardd')

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 783B](#): Barddoniaeth, &c.

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 841E](#): Barddoniaeth

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 843B](#): Barddoniaeth

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 2039D](#): Letters to Ieuan Fardd, &c.

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 3107B](#): Amserdydiaeth a Barddoniaeth

Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the years 1841-1845 (London 1850), 1841-5

Works

David Jones, *Histori Nicodemus neu yn hytrach ysgrifennu Nicodemus, oherwydd na ddetholodd yr Eglwys ond pedair Efengil* (Dolgellau c.1800)

Additional Links

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Published date: 1959

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APA Citation



Griffiths, G. M., (1959). JONES, DAVID (1708? - 1785), 'of Trefriw', poet, collector of manuscripts, publisher, and printer. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-JONE-DAV-1708>

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