

JONES, EDWARD (1741? - after 1806), Calvinistic Methodist exhorter in London,

Name: Edward Jones
Date of birth: 1741?
Date of death: 1806
Parent: John Edwards
Gender: Male
Occupation: Calvinistic Methodist exhorter
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

one of the two founders of the C.M. cause there, but better known for his failings than for his virtues. He was from Llansannan, Denbighshire, and **D.E. Jenkins** concluded that he was the 'Edward, son of John Edwards, Arllwyd' who was christened there 1 April 1741; this, indeed, would tally with the 'about 60' which is given as his age in the legal proceedings early in 1801. He joined the Life Guards, was converted by Whitefield, and became an exhorter at the Tabernacle. After leaving the army, he kept a public house, and later on was a spirit-merchant. In 1785 he set up a Welsh C.M. meeting-house in Wilderness Row (afterwards represented by what is known as 'Jewin Chapel'), and his domineering there led to trouble. He expelled two granddaughters of the famous **Daniel Rowland** for 'marrying outside the Connexion,' with the result that a number of his congregation left, and became Independents. This caused Methodist leaders in Wales, such as **Thomas Charles** and **John Elias**, much embarrassment, for the two expelled brides were granddaughters of a most highly venerated Methodist 'father'; yet on the other hand Jones's real services to Methodism in London, and his frequent presence at Associations in Wales, had procured him a standing which made him difficult to handle. The embarrassment was soon to be deepened after the death of Jones's wife; for he then (1799) became engaged to a young woman of 28 - but on a visit to Wales in 1800 married a well-to-do widow. The opposition party egged the aggrieved lady on to sue Jones for breach of promise, and in January 1801 he was mulcted in £50. The news was hailed with joy by the London Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion societies (strongly anti-Methodist), and they published a pamphlet containing the love-letters of 'Ginshop Jones' (as they called him), which had been read in court - and added a most ribald ballad upon him, by **John Jones** of Glan-y-gors. Naturally, things went from bad to worse at Wilderness Row, and most of the members left, to worship elsewhere. The C.M. Association was now compelled to act; Jones was inhibited from his ministrations and seems, indeed, to have been expelled from the connexion. But he still held the trust-deeds of the meeting-house, despite the efforts of **John Elias** and others to get them out of his clutches; finally, however, **Ebenezer Morris** was successful (1806), and Jones had 'to retire, snarling' as someone put it. It is said that he spent the rest of his life in Wales, but no further details have been discovered.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Methodistiaeth Cymru (1851), iii, 435-41

D. E. Jenkins, *Life of Thomas Charles* (Denbigh 1908), ii, 155, 301-14, 384

Y Cymmrodor, 1951, 123-4

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Published date: 1959

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