

MORYS, HUW (Eos Ceiriog; 1622 - 1709), poet

Name: Huw Morys
Pseudonym: Eos Ceiriog
Date of birth: 1622
Date of death: 1709
Parent: Morris ap John ap John ab Ednyfed
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet
Area of activity: Poetry
Author: David Jenkins

Second son of Morris ap John ap John ab Ednyfed of Hafodgynfor in the parish of Llangollen, Denbighshire. Although he spent the greater part of his long life at Pontymeibion, in the parish of Llansilin, it appears that Huw was not born there as is generally supposed, but that he moved there with his father and family about the year 1647. We know that his grandfather, John ap John, owned certain lands in the commotes of Rhiwlas and Hafodgynfor, at the time of his marriage to Gwen, daughter of Thomas ap Llywelyn ap John of Rhiwlas. As far as we know the poet had two brothers, John, his senior (it appears that Huw made his home with him), and Humphrey, his junior. We have no proof that he received a better schooling than was the common lot of boys of his locality, though it is possible that he attended either the free school at Oswestry, or Ruthin grammar school. In a poem 'Ar ofyn gostegion yn amser Cromwel!', the poet complains of his seven years' apprenticeship to learn a trade, and this appears to be the only evidence in support of the oft-quoted tradition that he was apprenticed to a tanner at Gwaliau in Overton, Flintshire. It is said that he forsook his apprenticeship and returned home to assist his father on the farm. That he was well patronised by the gentry of Llansilin and district is amply proved in his poems, for time and again he acknowledges his indebtedness to **Sir William Williams** (1634 - 1700), Glasgoed (Speaker of the House of Commons), the **Myddelton** family of Chirk castle, **William Owen** of Brogyntyn, and others. Huw was ever an ardent churchman, and a staunch royalist. He was warden of Llansilin parish church, and alternately criticised the 'Wrexham Committee,' and sang the praises of the royalist cause with great gusto. He escaped the rough treatment experienced by **William Phylip** of Arudwy, and **Rowland Vaughan**, Caer-gai, by adopting a much more careful (and subtle) means of criticising his opponents during the Commonwealth period - he resorted to the method used in the vaticinatory poems of the 15th century of giving his characters the names of appropriate animals. Huw Morys wrote his poems so that they could be sung to popular tunes, and thus became well known throughout Wales. He was buried 31 August 1709 on the south side of Llansilin parish church. In the church wall above his grave there is a stained glass window whereon are inscribed his famous englynion cyffes (confessional verses), while another memorial window to him may be seen in the east wall. In front of Pontymeibion farmhouse a memorial in stone has been erected.

Huw wrote many cywyddau after the patterns set by the poets of the 15th century, but they lack the power and majestic touch common to the poems of classicists like **Tudur Aled**. His feat was to bring into vogue a new metre based on the well-established free accented metres but also containing perfect cynghanedd. In form and content it appears to be more akin to the strict metres of the cywyddwyr than to the poetry generally called 'free verse.' At first, through the use of internal rhyme and consonance, each stanza of a poem was full of cynghanedd sain. This was further developed until each poem became an intricate metrical pattern, in which the musical effect of rhyme and consonance became more important than the content. Elegies, love poems, 'request' poems, as well as 'May' and 'Christmas' carols were written to this pattern, and as Huw Morys was pre-eminent among this school of poets (he may indeed have been the originator) this type of poetry has often been named after him. His best known poem, true to form, is the 'Elegy to Barbara Myddelton.' Huw Morys also wrote at least two interludes dealing with 'The Civil War' and 'The Prodigal Son,' and there are also extant a few poems which suggest that he wrote a third interlude entitled 'Y Cogiwr' (The Swindler).

In 1823 a collection of his poems was published in two volumes by **Walter Davies** (Gwallter Mechain) entitled *Eos Ceiriog, sef casgliad o bêr ganiadau Huw Morus...* This contains but two-thirds of his poems which have survived, and the text does not always compare favourably with the readings of the best manuscripts, of which **Cwrwmawr MS 224B** (now in the N.L.W.) may be principally in the poet's own hand. A selection of his work was published also by **O. M. Edwards** in the 'Cyfres y Fil' series.

Author

Dr David Jenkins, (1912 - 2002)

Sources

Personal research

Further Reading

T. R. Roberts, *Huw Morus (Eos Ceiriog) ei fywyd a'i waith* (Newport 1910)

Wikipedia Article: [Huw Morus](#)

Works

Huw Morys, *Ymddiddan rhwng y gwir Brotestant a'r Eglwys* (Mwythig 1707)

Huw Morys, *Y rhyfeddod mwyaf yn yr oes hon: a weithiodd Duw ar ferch ieuangc yn SÃ@r DdinÃ-ch yn y flwyddyn o oed Jesu 1703* (Mwythig 1706?)

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