

PARRY, HUMPHREY (c. 1772 - 1809), schoolmaster, member of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies of London

Name: Humphrey Parry
Date of birth: c. 1772
Date of death: 1809
Gender: Male
Occupation: schoolmaster, member of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies of London
Area of activity: Education; History and Culture
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born about 1772 at Cwm-mawr, in Clynnog-fawr parish, Caernarfonshire. He went up to London to be a lawyer's clerk, but afterwards became assistant in the Brewers' Company's grammar school at Sadler's Wells, under David Davies. On Davies's death (1797), Parry opened a private school at Hackney; it seems to have been successful, for we find him in 1806 speaking of spending £700 on enlarging the premises. He was a member of the Gwyneddigion (vice-president 1807, president 1808) and of the Cymreigyddion. When in 1804 the periodical *Y Greal* was started by these societies, he was one of the committee of four placed in charge - **W. O. Pughe** and **Thomas Jones** (Bardd Cloff), representing the Gwyneddigion, Parry and **John Jones** (Glan-y-gors) the Cymreigyddion (correct the error on this point in *Cymm.*, 1951, 121), though all four were members of both. There is every indication that Parry was the leader of opposition to **Owain Myfyr** and **Pughe** at Gwyneddigion meetings; he felt that **Pughe** (on the strength of **Owain Myfyr's** pocket, as he puts it) was getting too much of his own way - insisting on printing the *Greal* in his own peculiar orthography, excluding from it anything that was not in accord with his own views, and filling it with matter too 'antique' to suit the common reader. All this is set forth in a long letter (September 1806) to **Dafydd Ddu Eryri** (David Thomas, 1759 - 1822) - the letter shows, by the way, that Parry's ideas on Welsh grammar were quite as fanciful as **Pughe's**. He wished to see a more 'popular' Welsh periodical, published at Caernarvon; and when **Dafydd Ddu** began *Yr Eurgrawn* (1807), Parry printed in the second number (1808) of that short-lived periodical the first part (dated 'Clynnog, July 1807') of an article on Welsh grammar. Several of **Dafydd Ddu's** letters printed in *Adgof uwch Anghof* by **Myrddin Fardd** (John Jones, 1836 - 1921) have references to Parry and to his intention of publishing a Welsh grammar. **Leathart** terms Parry a good scholar, in the classical and in the modern languages. Parry died in April 1809, suddenly.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Leathart, *Origin and Progress of the Gwyneddigion Society of London* (London 1831), 44, 45, 101, 102

Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society, iii, 135-44 (the letter mentioned above)

Y Cymmrodor, 1951, 97, 121 (observe the above correction)

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Published date: 1959

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APA Citation



Jenkins, R. T., (1959). PARRY, HUMPHREY (c. 1772 - 1809), schoolmaster, member of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies of London. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 9 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-PARR-HUM-1772>

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