

PHILLIPS, BENJAMIN (1750 - 1839), Unitarian Baptist minister

Name: Benjamin Phillips
Date of birth: 1750
Date of death: 1839
Gender: Male
Occupation: Unitarian Baptist minister
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

was born probably near Meidrym, Carmarthenshire, and became a member (1775) of the recently established Baptist church of Salem (Meidrym). From 1776 to 1780 he was at Bristol Baptist Academy, and from 1780 till 1787 a preacher without charge; in 1787 he became pastor of Salem. Unorthodox in his views, he was among the ministers expelled by the Welsh Baptist Association in 1799. His own congregation was so evenly divided that Calvinists and Arminians used the chapel alternately till 1811, when Phillips's party were bought out. It would seem that he himself lived at St Clears and used his dwelling-house as a meeting-house, at least as early as 1807. A man of great energy and eloquence, he had passed over from Arminianism to declared Unitarianism, and it was he who habitually piloted Unitarian missionaries from England who (e.g. in 1810 and 1816) visited west Wales. Late in 1827 we hear of the building of a Unitarian chapel ('Capel y Graig') at St Clears. When a General Baptist missionary came there in 1834, he found 'our patriarch' bed-ridden. Phillips died at Carmarthen in 1839. His church faded away during the 19th century, and the chapel was sold in 1901 and later demolished.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

David Jones, *Hanes y Bedyddwyr yn Neheubarth Cymru* (1839), 493-6

Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Bedyddwyr Cymru, 1930 and 1931

Yr Ymofynnydd, May 1930.

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