

## THOMAS, WILLIAM (KEINION) (1856 - 1932), Congregational minister, and publicist

**Name:** William (Keinion) Thomas  
**Date of birth:** 1856  
**Date of death:** 1932  
**Spouse:** Janette Spencer Thomas (née Spencer)  
**Spouse:** Ruth Thomas (née Lewis)  
**Child:** Truda ap Thomas  
**Child:** Dafydd Rhys ap Thomas  
**Child:** Iwan ap Thomas  
**Child:** Alon Circuit ap Thomas  
**Child:** Keinion Spencer ap Thomas  
**Child:** Reuben Gwyn ap Thomas  
**Child:** Robert Tibbot Kerris ap Thomas  
**Child:** Garth ap Thomas  
**Parent:** Elinor Thomas  
**Parent:** Robert Hughes Thomas  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Congregational minister, and publicist  
**Area of activity:** Printing and Publishing; Religion  
**Author:** Dafydd Rhys ap Thomas

Born at Bangor 25 September 1856, elder son of Robert Hughes Thomas, chief smith at the Penrhyn quarry, and of Elinor his wife. He served as pupil-teacher under **T. Marchant Williams**, but became (c. 1872) an accountant in a Manchester office. He began to preach at Gartside Street chapel, Manchester, and then went to Bala Independent College, under **M. D. Jones**; there he added 'Ceinion' (later 'Keinion') to his name. His pastorates were: Garisim with Peniel (Llanfairfechan) 1879, Siloh with Moriah (Port Dinorwic) 1900, Penraeth (with Penmynydd, Llanfair-pwll, and Menai Bridge) 1910, and finally Beaumaris 1922-32.

He was twice married: to Ruth in 1889, and they had two sons, Garth and Robert Tibbot Kerris, and in 1902 he married Jannette Spencer, and they had five sons, Gwyn, Alon, Iwan, Jac and **Dafydd Rhys** and a daughter, Truda.

Believing that every minister should have some other profession, he took up journalism. After the death of his friend **John Roberts** ('J.R.', 1804-1884), he edited *Y Cronicl* from 1885 to 1910, at first with the help of 'J.R.' 's' brother **Samuel** ('S.R.'), and then with the purely nominal help of **M. D. Jones**. He also edited *Y Celt* from 1885 to 1901. Apart from his journalism, an occasional *englyn*, and a short *Life of 'S.R.'* (1898), he wrote little. He travelled extensively - in Ireland to gather data on the potato famine and on home rule in Brittany, and in the *Bible* lands. And he won a name for himself with his dramatised lectures; the proceeds of one of these paid the costs of an action brought against *Y Celt* by **lord Penrhyn**. A threatened seizure of the leasehold Congregational chapel at Llanfair-pwll impelled him to promote the 'Chapel Sites Bill.' From 1913 to 1932 he was secretary of Bala-Bangor Independent College.

He died 5 August 1932, and was buried in Penmynydd churchyard - a tablet to his memory was unveiled in Seion chapel (Beaumaris) in 1937. Thomas was a good example of 'mens sana in corpore sano,' an entertaining companion, and a personality respected even by opponents.

### Author

Dafydd Rhys ap Thomas

### Sources

Personal knowledge

D. J. Williams, *Hanes Coleg Bala-Bangor*, i, 212

*Y Dysgedydd*, 1879, 138

*Y Tyst*, 11 August to 13 October 1932

*Y Genedl*, 15 August 1932

*The London Missionary Society Chronicle*, September 1932

*North Wales Chronicle*, 11 August 1932

### Additional Links

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