

HENRY, DAVID ('Myrddin Wylt') (1816-1873), Independent minister and folk poet

Name: David Henry
Pseudonym: Myrddin Wylt
Date of birth: 1816
Date of death: 1873
Gender: Male
Occupation: Independent minister and folk poet
Area of activity: Poetry; Religion
Author: Huw Walters

David Henry was born at Llethri, Llangyndeyrn, Carmarthenshire, 27 January 1816, the son of Thomas and Barbara Henry, members of Pen-y-graig Independent chapel. He was admitted to membership of that cause when very young. At 12 years of age he was apprenticed to his father as a tailor, and he worked for a time as an itinerant tailor in the south Wales valleys, settling in Maesteg, Glamorganshire, in 1842 where he began preaching in Soar chapel in October 1843. He attended the school kept by the Rev. Thomas Roberts, minister of Park Street chapel, Llanelli, in 1844, but he returned to Maesteg in 1847, where he continued to practice his craft as a tailor, and preached occasionally. He married Jane, the daughter of Rees Powell of Brychgoed, Defynnog, Brecknockshire, 27 December 1847. Three daughters and two sons were born of the marriage, one of whom was the Rev. Thomas Mathew Henry (1854-1883), Independent minister of Beddgelert, Caernarfonshire

David Henry was ordained minister of the Independent cause at Cymer, Glyncoirwg, Glamorganshire, in July 1849, but removed to take charge of the two chapels at Milo, Llanfihangel Aberbythych, and Pen-y-groes, Llandybie in 1857. He won numerous prizes at eisteddfodau, including essays on local history in Maesteg, 1859, and Carmarthen, 1867. None of these works have survived, although two medals which were awarded to him are in private hands. He contributed articles and poetry to *Y Diwygiwr*, the monthly organ of the Welsh Independents, under the pseudonym 'Myrddin Wylt'. He also published a sermon *Gwresogrwydd Crefyddol* (1860), and *Llawlyfr Iforaidd* (1863), a handbook for members of the Ivorites friendly society. His most interesting publication is *Pryddest, neu Hanesgerdd, o Ddull Dygiad Priodasau yn Mlaen yn y Ddwy Ganrif Ddiwethaf* (1858), for which he shared the first prize at the eisteddfod held in Ystradgynlais in that year. This long poem vividly describes the various popular wedding and marriage customs which prevailed in south Wales during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He died 12 July 1873, and was buried in Milo cemetery.

Author

Dr Huw Walters

Sources

Y Diwygiwr, August 1873

The Congregational Year Book, 1874

T. M. Henry, *Coronbleth coffa, sef cofiant y Parch. D. Henry* (1882)

Brinley Richards, *History of the Llynfi Valley* (1982)

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