

EVANS, GRIFFITH IFOR (1889 - 1966), surgeon and pioneer of the Christian Faith Healing Movement in Wales

Name: Griffith Ifor Evans
Date of birth: 1889
Date of death: 1966
Spouse: Dilys Evans (née Eames)
Parent: G.T. Evans
Gender: Male
Occupation: surgeon and pioneer of the Christian Faith Healing Movement in Wales
Area of activity: Medicine; Religion
Author: Emyr Wyn Jones

Born 14 February 1889, the son of G.T. Evans, a bank manager, Bryn Estyn, Rhyl, Flint, and his wife. He was educated at Ruthin School and Oxford, where he read history and economics at Lincoln College and then moved to Magdalen College to prepare for clinical medicine studies at St. George's Hospital, London. He had a very distinguished student career and was awarded a number of the chief prizes. He graduated in medicine in 1916. Following a period of three years war service with the R.A.M.C., he gained the M.A. and D.M. in 1919, and the F.R.C.S. in 1921. With such a remarkable academic record it is somewhat surprising that he did not seek a consultant post in one of the London hospitals. However he came to Caernarfon in 1926 to join Dr. Lloyd Roberts in general practice at 37 Castle Square. In 1931, as the result of publishing his book *Essays on familial syphilis*, he was awarded the gold medal of the Hunterian Society. He was appointed surgeon to the Caernarfon and Anglesey Infirmary at Bangor, but decided to retire from the post within a few years. His attempt to return to the staff as physician was not successful. During this period Evans was active in many spheres outside his practice. He had a good singing voice, he was an elder at Engedi chapel and a lay preacher. In 1942-43 he was president of the North Wales Branch of the B.M.A., and in the same year he was High Sheriff of the County of Caernarfon.

He was a man of wide culture and was interested in philosophy and theology as well as the sciences. As the years went by Griffith Evans was increasingly attracted to the borderland between these disciplines and pure medicine. In time, and with the support of a number of friends, he established the Centre of Spiritual Healing at Caernarfon, and he was elected first chairman of the Healing Committee of his denomination. Thereafter his active interest extended to the London Healing Mission, and his support reached the stage that he decided to move to London, making his home at Melbury Road, Kensington, and becoming a member of Charing Cross Chapel in 1958.

By this time his close association with Spiritual Healing had apparently weakened his relationship with orthodox medicine. It was in the sphere of Christian healing that he maintained his interest, and in this area he centred his theoretical studies. He enriched his mind by wide reading, and he wrote quite extensively, mainly in English, in an attempt to distil the observations of contemporary experts. These issues have always presented serious medical and ethical problems but it was generally admitted that the vagueness and imprecision of his contributions were such that the articles were almost incomprehensible to doctors and laymen alike.

There is no doubt about the sincerity of his belief in the value of healing centres, nor in the thoroughness of his research, but it can scarcely be claimed that he succeeded in transmitting his enthusiasm to his professional colleagues, nor could their inherent conservatism be held entirely responsible for this lack of response. Without doubt the motivation for his work was the strength of his Christian belief, and the realisation of the effect of mind and emotion on the 'complete' health of the individual. Notwithstanding the distinction of the earlier years of his medical career, Evans could not avoid the influence of an obsessional element when analysing the results of his observations, and it is not improper to record that this tendency was recognised by his contemporaries long before he embarked on his work in the Healing Ministry.

He married Dilys Eames of Bangor in 1916 and there were no children of the marriage. He died 20 September 1966 in London and was buried in Llanbeblig cemetery, Caernarfon.

Author

Emyr Wyn Jones, (1907 - 1999)

Sources

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Lives of the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, 1965-1973

Y Goleuad, 30 November 1966

personal knowledge

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