

EVANS, JOHN VICTOR (1895 - 1957), barrister-at-law

Name: John Victor Evans
Date of birth: 1895
Date of death: 1957
Spouse: Katherine Mary Evans (née Dawson)
Child: John Evans
Parent: Mary Ann Evans
Parent: Henry Howard Evans
Gender: Male
Occupation: barrister-at-law
Area of activity: Law
Author: Walter Thomas Morgan

Born 7 October 1895 at Cwmdare, Aberdare, Glamorganshire, son of Henry Howard Evans, general manager of the Cambrian Collieries in Mid-Rhondda, a prominent Baptist layman and Mary Ann Evans, his wife, who died shortly after her son was born. He was educated at the local elementary school in Cwmdare and at Christ College, Brecon. There followed war service in Egypt, France and Palestine, and after World War I he went to St. John's College, Oxford, where he read History and took a second-class honours degree in 1922. At Oxford he played a distinguished part in the Union Debating Society, being elected successively Secretary, Junior Librarian and in 1922 President of the Union; he was also President of the Dafydd ap Gwilym Society. After leaving Oxford he was called to the bar in 1924. He was an accomplished orator and in the general election of 1929 he contested Pontypridd as a Liberal, polling 37% of the vote and coming second to **T.I. Mardy Jones** in a three-cornered contest. He again entered the lists as the Liberal candidate in the Merthyr Tydfil by-election of 1934, coming second to S.O. Davies in a four-cornered contest, again polling a respectable vote of over 10,000. In 1930 he was appointed a lecturer in law at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, but resigned in 1935 to resume his bar practice. A man of deep religious convictions with a tender social conscience, he felt the urge to do something to alleviate the suffering of the unemployed in south Wales and accepted in 1936 the post of warden of the Aberdare Education Settlement, Coleg Gwerin Cynon, set up by the Council of Social Service. He had married in April 1927 Katherine Mary, daughter of the Rev. Henry Dawson of Streatham. Their only child, John, died suddenly in 1938. Evans had been very happy in his work at Aberdare but the loss of his son proved a shattering blow. In 1939 he resigned his post at the Settlement and returned to London. In the meantime World War II supervened and he took a post in the Ministry of Economic Warfare. In peace time he remained in the Civil Service and ended his career in the Ministry of Supply. He died in his home in Dulwich Village 15 May 1957.

That he did not in many respects fulfil his early promise may be attributed in large measure to his greatly impaired health as a result of his sufferings in World War I. He overtaxed his strength by attempting to achieve at the bar and in politics more than his enfeebled constitution could stand.

Author

Walter Thomas Morgan, (1912 - 1990)

Sources

B. B. Thomas, *Y Ddinas, Cylchgrawn Cymry Llundain*, July 1957

Aberdare Leader, 8 February 1936

The Biographical Index of W. W. Price, Aberdâr

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