

GRIFFITHS, DAVID REES ('Amanwy '; 1882 - 1953), poet and writer

Name: David Rees Griffiths
Pseudonym: Amanwy
Date of birth: 1882
Date of death: 1953
Spouse: Mary Griffiths (née Davies)
Spouse: Margaret Griffiths (née Morgan)
Child: Gwilym Griffiths
Parent: Margaret Griffiths (née Morris)
Parent: William Griffiths
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet and writer
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Literature and Writing; Poetry
Author: Gomer Morgan Roberts

Born 6 November 1882 in Efail y Betws, near Ammanford, Carmarthenshire, son of William and Margaret Griffiths (née Morris). One of his brothers was the **Rt. Hon. James Griffiths**, M.P. He was educated in Betws council school, and went to work in a coal mine when he was 12 years old. He was severely injured in an explosion in Pantyffynnon colliery, where one of his brothers was killed. After the explosion he began to take an interest in literature and competed in local *eisteddfodau*. His poems won him many chairs, and though he failed to win the prize, Cyman judged his poem to be the best in the competition for the crown at Aberafan national eisteddfod in 1932: it was published, with the second-best *awdl* by **Thomas Parry**, in *Cerddi'r Lleiafrif*. He won the prize for a sonnet in Neath national eisteddfod in 1934. His early poems were published in *Ambell gainc* (1919), and he edited *O lwch y lofa* (1924), a volume of poems by six Carmarthenshire colliers.

He left the mines in 1927 to become caretaker of Ammanford county school, where he influenced a number of the school's literary-minded pupils. He was responsible for the Welsh column in *The Amman Valley Chronicle* for many years, and contributed much to it on local matters. He also wrote the column 'O gwm i gwm' for *Y Cymro* for some years. He was elected a deacon of Gellimanwydd Congl. church, and published a tribute to his old minister (Rev. Isaac Cynwyd Evans) under the title *Gweinidog fy ieuencid* (1945). He broadcast many times and took a leading role in the film *David*, a portrayal of his life. His poetical works - *pryddestau*, songs, sonnets and hymns - were published in *Caneuon Amanwy* in 1956, and were edited by the author of this note. Some of his hymns were published in *Y Caniedydd* (1960). He married twice: (1) Margaret Morgan of Penygroes; and (2) Mary Davies of Crwys, near Swansea. The son of the first marriage was Gwilym, who had set his mind on taking holy orders in the Church in Wales but died before realising his hopes. His father took him to South Africa in 1929 but he did not recover his health. Amanwy and his second wife had two daughters. He died 17 December 1953 in Middlesex Hospital, London, and was buried in Gellimanwydd cemetery, Ammanford. He was an excellent example of the culture of the folk of the anthracite district of Carmarthenshire, in the first half of the 20th century.

Author

Reverend Gomer Morgan Roberts, (1904 - 1993)

Sources

'Camre'i yrfa' in *Caneuon Amanwy* (1956)

Y Genhinen, 1954, 88-93

personal acquaintance

[Huw Walters in Hywel T. Edwards, ed., *Cwm Aman* (Llandysul 1996) (1996), 131-72]

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [David Rees Griffiths](#)

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