

HUGHES, DAVID ROWLAND ('Myfyr Eifion ': 1874 - 1953), secretary of the National Eisteddfod

Name: David Rowland Hughes
Pseudonym: Myfyr Eifion
Date of birth: 1874
Date of death: 1953
Spouse: Maggie Hughes (née Ellis)
Parent: Elizabeth Hughes
Parent: William Hughes
Gender: Male
Occupation: secretary of the National Eisteddfod
Area of activity: Eisteddfod
Author: Mary Auronwy James

Born 9 September 1874 at Maesglas, Holywell, Flintshire, son of the station-master William Hughes and Elizabeth his wife. He was educated at Porthmadog and Bangor elementary schools; Llandudno Collegiate School (1888-91); and the University of Wales colleges at Bangor (1891-92) and Aberystwyth, though he had to leave before completing his course to earn his living. He taught for a year at his old school in Llandudno before seeking employment in business. In 1894 he went to London, where he lived for 45 years before retiring from the staff of United Dairies, Ltd. and moving to Old Colwyn.

He was a leading figure in all aspects of life among the London Welsh, serving as joint secretary of the London national eisteddfod in 1909, and secretary of the Welsh Presbyterian Church in Falmouth Road. He worked hard for Urdd Gobaith Cymru in the capital, and gave talks on the radio, as well as popular lectures. He was editor of *Our Notebook*, the staff magazine of United Dairies, Ltd. (1920-39); and, with **John Williams** (1872 - 1944), he was joint editor (1926-38) of the London-Welsh periodical *Y Ddolen*, to which he contributed articles under the *nom de plume* 'Tafwys', 'A way farer', and 'Hafren'. After returning to Wales he was elected treasurer (1941) and president (1944-45) of Undeb Cymru Fydd. He was one of the pioneers and a founding member both of the Caernarfonshire and of the Denbighshire Historical Societies (1925-50). His main contribution was as secretary of the National Eisteddfod Association in 1935-36, and as joint secretary (1937-47) with **Cynan** (Sir Cynan Albert Evans Jones) after its amalgamation with the Gorsedd of Bards. It was his indomitable spirit that ensured the continuance of the Eisteddfod throughout difficult war years. It was he, too, who ensured - despite the shortage of paper - the publication of the monthly magazine *Cofion Cymru* (1941-46), as well as the six presentation books (1943-46) which were distributed free among Welsh men and women in the forces, and which were greatly appreciated by them (see D.R. Hughes MSS at N.L.W.). In 1943 he received an hon. M.A. degree of the University of Wales in recognition of his work.

He married, 4 April 1903, Maggie Ellis of London, and they had three daughters. He died 29 August 1953, and was buried in Bronynant cemetery.

Author

Dr Mary Auronwy James

Sources

D. R. Hughes, *Yma ac Acw* (Denbigh 1944)

E. H. Griffiths, *Bywyd a gwaith D.R. Hughes* (Caernarfon 1965)

The Biographical Index of W. W. Price, Aberdŷŷr

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