

JENKINS, DAVID LLOYD (1896 - 1966), writer, poet and schoolmaster

Name: David Lloyd Jenkins
Date of birth: 1896
Date of death: 1966
Spouse: Arianwen Elizabeth Ann Jenkins (née Lewis)
Parent: Betha Jenkins (née Lloyd)
Parent: William Jenkins
Gender: Male
Occupation: writer, poet and schoolmaster
Area of activity: Education; Eisteddfod; Literature and Writing; Poetry
Author: Evan David Jones

Born at Foelallt, Llanddewibrefi, Cardiganshire, on 20 November 1896, the son of William Jenkins, school attendance officer, and Betha Lloyd, his wife. He was educated at the village primary school before he entered Tregaron County school in September 1909. He entered the University College, Aberystwyth in 1915 and obtained second-class honours in Welsh, with philosophy as an additional subject, in 1918. He was awarded a research scholarship which led to an M.A. degree for a thesis on the development of free-metre verse during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1921, he obtained a Meyrick Scholarship at Jesus College, Oxford, but he did not take a degree at that university. He was a lecturer at the Barry summer school in 1922. He was a teacher at Lledrod primary school before he returned in 1924 to spend the rest of his working life at his old school at Tregaron, first as English master and, from 1945 to 1961, as headmaster. His cultural and gentle personality nurtured a love of both English and Welsh literature among his pupils.

He delighted, from early years, in Welsh poetry, both in the strict and in the free metres, and he was a master of cynganedd. While a student, he contributed lyrics and essays to *Cymru* and to *The Dragon* as well as short stories and essays to *Welsh Outlook*, *Y Ford Gron* and *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Ceredigion Llundain*. He won prizes for essays at the National Eisteddfod in 1942 and 1943. He had been close to winning a chair until, finally, he won the chair at the Llandybie eisteddfod in 1944 for an ode entitled 'Ofn'. He also translated some songs, e.g. *Prifwyl Pan*, 1925; 'Cwsg, cwsg, dlysaf un' (Blake), 1927; and 'Teg ei gwedd' from Handel's *Alcina*. In 1929, he wrote with S.M. Powell, the libretto for *Trwbadŵr*, with music by J.T. Rees. He was an examiner for the Gorsedd of Bards and a member under the name of Moelallt.

The great interest in drama at Tregaron County School led him to publish *Y Trysor cudd: drama fer yn nhafodiaith canolbarth Ceredigion* (1921); *Ffortiynau*, a simple one-act comedy performed by the school's drama company in 1937; and *Gwanwyn, neu yr hen ŵr yn mynd i ffwrdd*, a translation of a one-act play by T.C. Murray. In 1948, he published a collection of his verses for children, *Awelon y bore* (Druid Press). His most important published work is *Cerddi Rhydd Cynnar (detholiad o farddoniaeth rydd Cymru'r XVleg ganrif a dechrau'r XVleg)*, 1931, which is now a rare book. This work was based on his Master's thesis in the early 1920s and it is probable that the burdens of his teaching career hindered him from pursuing further scholarly research.

In politics he was a radical Liberal, serving for a time as president of the Cardiganshire Liberals and speaking on election platforms. He was an elder of Bwlch-gwynt Calvinistic Methodist Chapel where he served as the precentor and, on occasions, preached. Two of his hymns are included in the school's service book - the school hymn and the St. David's Day hymn.

He married on 29 December 1929, Arianwen Elizabeth Ann (Ane), the eldest daughter of Gruffydd Thomas Lewis, the school's headmaster, and they had a daughter. He died 5 August 1966.

Author

Evan David Jones, (1903 - 1987)

Sources

Information from his daughter, Bethan Bennett

Glyn Lewis Jones, *A Bibliography of Cardiganshire 1641-1968 Supplement* (Aberystwyth 1970), II, 521-2

Barn, 55 (1967), 172-3

Further Reading

E. Pan Jones, *Oriel Coleg Presbyteriaidd, Caerfyrddin: yn cynwys hanes yr holl fyfyrwyr fu yn y coleg o 1796 hyd 1899*(Merthyr Tydfil 1909), 114

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