

MORRICE, JAMES CORNELIUS (1874 - 1953), priest and Welsh scholar

Name: James Cornelius Morrice
Date of birth: 1874
Date of death: 1953
Parent: Margaret Morrice (née Thomas)
Parent: James Cornelius Morrice
Gender: Male
Occupation: priest and Welsh scholar
Area of activity: Religion; Scholarship and Languages
Author: Brynley Francis Roberts

Born 10 December 1874 at Porthmadog, Caernarfonshire, son of James Cornelius Morrice, engine driver, and his wife Margaret (née Thomas). He was educated at Porthmadog county school and University College Bangor (1897) where he graduated with first-class hon. in Welsh in 1900, the first to do so, it is claimed: he gained his M.A. with a dissertation on 'The poems of William Lleyn' in 1902. Ordained deacon in 1900 and priest in 1901 he served as curate in Mallwyd, Newport (Pembrokeshire) and Amlwch (1902, 1903), chaplain in the training ship *Clio*, and a sub-canon of Bangor cathedral before being inducted rector of Ffestiniog and Maentwrog, 1910-12, and vicar of St. Mary's Bangor, 1913-20. He was vicar of St. Margaret's Oxford, 1920-26, and while he was there he gained his B.Litt. (1920) and D.Phil. (1923) from Corpus Christi. He was vicar of Holyhead, 1926-27, and served afterwards in various English parishes as listed in *Crockford's*.

He was a very productive scholar in the period after he left college. He edited the first vol. in the Bangor Manuscripts Soc., *Gwaith barddonol Howel Swrdwal a'i fab Ieuan* (1908) and in the same series *Detholiad o waith Gruffudd ab Ieuan ab Llewelyn Vychan* (1910), both editions based on British Museum (Library) MSS. His main work, *Barddoniaeth William Llŷn*, was published in 1908, followed by *A manual of Welsh literature* (1909) based on lectures he had given at University College Cardiff, 1902-03. Morrice was one of the first generation of editors of the work of the cywydd poets and though these editions have the shortcomings of their period he could have become an acknowledged editor and literary historian and he could have followed a university career. He was nominated by the College Board for the chair of Welsh at St. David's College Lampeter in 1903 but the college Council did not accept the proposed arrangements. He was for a time lecturer in Welsh at University College Cardiff. *Wales in the seventeenth century* appeared in 1918 and his D.Phil. dissertation, *Social conditions in Wales under the Tudors and Stuarts*, in 1925.

He retired from the rectorship of Helmdon Brockley, Northants in October 1951; he died 22 January 1953 in Bournemouth.

Author

Dr Brynley Francis Roberts

Sources

Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1951-52

Who was who?

The Biographical Index of W. W. Price, Aberdŵr

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