

## REES, Sir JAMES FREDERICK (1883 - 1967), Principal of the University College at Cardiff

**Name:** James Frederick Rees  
**Date of birth:** 1883  
**Date of death:** 1967  
**Spouse:** Dora Rose Lucile Rees (née Davies)  
**Parent:** John Rees  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Principal of the University College at Cardiff  
**Area of activity:** Education  
**Author:** Evan David Jones

Born 13 December 1883 son of John Rees, Priory Hill and later of Hakin, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, a dock worker. He was educated in the local board school before gaining a scholarship to the local intermediate school on 24 January 1898; he entered the University College at Cardiff in 1901, where he graduated with Class 1 in History in 1904. In 1908 he gained Class I in the school of Modern History at Lincoln College, Oxford. He became an assistant lecturer in History in the University College at Bangor, 1908-12, a lecturer for a short while in Queen's University, Belfast, and then a Reader in Economic History at Edinburgh University, 1913, until he became Professor of Commerce in Birmingham University in 1925. In 1929 he was appointed Principal of the University College at Cardiff, a post he held for 20 years. He was vice-chancellor of the University of Wales twice 1935-37 and 1944-46, and Warden of the Guild of Graduates, 1950-53. After retiring in 1949 he went to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) University in 1953-55 as a visiting Professor in Economics, and served as head of the department of Economic History at Edinburgh University, 1956-58.

As a man of uncommon wisdom, insight and energy, he became a member of many industrial and constitutional committees. He was chairman of the Consultative Committee on the Welsh Problems of Reconstruction, 1942-46, and was a member of the commission on Reforming the Constitution of Sri Lanka, 1944-45 and of the Local Government Boundary Commission, 1946-49. He received honorary LL.D. degrees of the Universities of Wales, Birmingham and Edinburgh, and was knighted in 1945 when he was in Sri Lanka. In 1955 he served as High Sheriff for his native county, and was president of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, 1956-57.

He was the author of many books, including *A social and industrial history of England, 1815-1918* (1920), *A short fiscal and financial history of England, 1815-1918* (1921), *Studies in Welsh history* (1947); *The story of Milford* (1954), *The problem of Wales and other essays* (1960); and editor of *A survey of economic development with special reference to Great Britain* (1933), and *The Cardiff region: a survey* (1960). Many of his articles appear in history society journals, encyclopaedias, *Cambridge History of the British Empire* and *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography down to 1940*. Several of his public addresses have been published, among them *The dominion of Ceylon* (1949) and the B.B.C. Welsh regional annual lecture entitled *Of Welsh nationality and historians* (1951).

He married in 1913 Dora Rose Lucile, daughter of Gethin Davies, Principal of the Baptist College, Cardiff and they had one son. He died 7 January 1967 at his home, 11 Celyn Grove, Cyncoed, Cardiff.

### Author

**Evan David Jones**, (1903 - 1987)

### Sources

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### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [J. F. Rees](#)

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