

SAUNDERS, WILLIAM (1871 - 1950), minister (B) and educationalist

Name: William Saunders
Date of birth: 1871
Date of death: 1950
Spouse: Jane Saunders
Child: Eluned Saunders
Parent: Ann Saunders (née Thomas)
Parent: Thomas Saunders
Gender: Male
Occupation: minister (B) and educationalist
Area of activity: Education; Religion
Author: Mary Auronwy James

Born 24 May 1871 son of Thomas Saunders and Ann (née Thomas), 5 John St., Aberdare, but the family soon moved to Abercwmboi where his maternal grandfather was a leading member with the Baptists, and he was baptized there in 1883. The family moved yet again in 1887 to Ynysybwl where William Saunders preached his first sermon in 1890. He was educated in Pontypridd Academy, and in 1892 he entered the Baptist college at Haverfordwest and Aberystwyth before becoming minister of Jerusalem, Rhymney (1895-99), Carmel (English Church), New Tredegar (1899-1901), and Noddfa, Pontycymer, where he remained for 44 years. He gained immediate popularity and soon demonstrated his ability to reconcile opposing factions. Not only was he an eloquent and powerful preacher, genial company and an unrivalled conference man, but he played an active role in many religious and secular movements. He was secretary of the Monmouthshire Union of Sunday Schools, the Welsh Baptist Young People's Union, and the Glamorgan Particular Baptists Association for over 15 years. He was a member of Glamorgan county council for over 40 years (1908-50), being chairman of the Council for two years and chairman of its elementary education committee. For his services to education the University of Wales conferred on him an hon. LL.D. degree in 1946. He and his wife Jane had a daughter, Eluned, who was a doctor in London. He died 2 May 1950 and was buried in Pontycymer cemetery.

Author

Dr Mary Auronwy James

Sources

The Baptist Union of Wales Handbook and Diary, 1951, 173

Baptist Handbook, 1951, 361

Seren Gomer, 1950, 117

The Biographical Index of W. W. Price, Aberdare

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