

WILLIAMS, Sir EDWARD JOHN (TED; 1890 - 1963), politician

Name: Edward John Williams
Date of birth: 1890
Date of death: 1963
Spouse: Evelyn Williams (née James)
Parent: Ada Williams (née James)
Parent: Emanuel Williams
Gender: Male
Occupation: politician
Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements
Author: John Graham Jones

Born 1 July 1890 at Victoria, Ebbw Vale, Monmouthshire, the son of Emanuel Williams and Ada (née James) his wife. He was educated at Victoria voluntary school and Hopkinstown elementary school and in 1902, at 12 years of age, he began work at the Waunllwyd colliery, Ebbw Vale. He attended evening classes provided by Glamorganshire County Council in mining, political economy and book-keeping. He and his parents then moved to the Pontypridd area, and he served as secretary of his trades union lodge and as Minimum Wage Agent for the Great Western Collieries from 1909 until 1913. In the latter year Williams was awarded a scholarship to the Central Labour College in London where he spent two years. Thereafter, following his return to south Wales, he was a provincial lecturer for the college. In 1916-17 he faced a period of unemployment, returned to the coal mines in 1917, and was promoted checkweigh-man in the following year. In 1919 he was appointed miners' agent to the Garw district of the South Wales Miners' Federation in succession to Frank Hodges. From 1928 until 1931 he was a member of the Glamorganshire County Council, and in 1937 was appointed a J.P. for the county. He was unflinchingly sympathetic towards those suffering poverty and hardship.

Williams was elected M.P. (Lab.) for the Ogmore constituency in 1931 as successor to **Vernon Hartshorn**. He was parliamentary private secretary to the under-secretary for the Colonies, 1940-41, to the financial secretary to the Admiralty, 1942-43, and to the parliamentary under-secretary of state for foreign affairs, 1943-45. He served as Minister of Information during 1945-46 (a post of Cabinet rank, although not within the Cabinet).

He resigned from the House of Commons in 1946 following his appointment as High Commissioner of Australia, in which post he remained until 1952. He was granted an extension of a year in this position because of the respect which he had earned - an unprecedented step. Williams became especially interested in plans to encourage British people to emigrate to Australia. In 1950 he became a J.P. in New South Wales. In July 1952 he was appointed to a post in the Commonwealth Relations Office, and from 1953 until 1959 he served as a member of the National Industrial Disputes Tribunal. He published a number of articles in journals in south Wales and in miners' newspapers. He became a member of the Privy Council in 1945 and was created K.C.M.G. in 1952. He remained loyal to the Labour Party throughout his life.

He married in 1916 Evelyn, daughter of David James, Lanelay, Pontypridd. They had two daughters. He died 16 May 1963 at his home Canberra, 107 Grove Road, Bridgend, Glamorgan, and his remains were cremated at Thornhill Crematorium.

Author

Dr John Graham Jones

Sources

Who was who?

Who's who in Wales, (1937)

Dod's Parliamentary Companion

The Times, 18 May 1963

Western Mail, 17 May 1963

Further Reading

Who's Who: [Williams, Rt Hon. Sir Edward John](#)

Wikipedia Article: [Edward Williams](#)

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