

WILLIAMS, JOHN LLOYD (1854 - 1945), botanist and musician

Name: John Lloyd Williams
Date of birth: 1854
Date of death: 1945
Spouse: Elizabeth Williams (née Jones)
Parent: Jane Williams
Parent: Robert Williams
Gender: Male
Occupation: botanist and musician
Area of activity: Music; Nature and Agriculture; Science and Mathematics
Author: Robert Alun Roberts

Born 10 July, 1854 at Plas Isa, Llanrwst, one-time home of **William Salesbury**, the eldest of seven children of Robert and Jane Williams. For five years, 1868-1872, he served as pupil teacher at the British School, Llanrwst, before going to the Normal College, Bangor, 1873-74; in 1875 he was appointed headmaster of the Board School, Garn Dolbenmaen, Caernarfonshire. In the mid-1890s he worked with Professor (Sir) John Bretland Farmer at the Royal College of Science, London, where he was Marshall Scholar, and from 1897 to 1912 he was assistant lecturer in Botany at University College, Bangor. From 1912-15 he was Adviser in Agricultural Botany to the Board of Agriculture at Bangor when he was invited to the Chair of Botany at Aberystwyth, retiring in 1925. While in London he started his classic researches on the Brown Seaweeds - the life cycle of *Fucus* - the results of which were published in *The Annals of Botany* (1896) and *The Proceedings of the Royal Society* (1897). His best known work on Dictyota was completed in Bangor and published 1904-05, the double tides of the Menai Straits providing a factor of outstanding significance in his studies of rhythmic variations in the environment. It was not till 1921 that he published in the *Annals of Botany* his work on the fertilization process in marine algae, which he discovered simultaneously with Sauvageau though he had contributed papers on the topic to the British Association at Bradford in 1900 and Dundee in 1912.

He was President of Section K (Botany) of the British Assoc. for the Advancement of Science at Southampton in 1925. He was the leading expert on the arctic alpine flora of Snowdonia. From childhood his passion had been natural history and music. While at Garn Dolbenmaen he wrote operettas: his best known mature composition were *Aelwyd Angharad* and *Cadifor* with **Llew Tegid** (Lewis David Jones) as librettist. He was eminent as a musical adjudicator, choir conductor and conductor of musical festivals throughout his life. He was prominent in establishing The Welsh Folk Song Society in 1906. He edited its journal and was an inspirational figure for many years. He also edited *Y Cerdor*. Jointly with Arthur Somerville he compiled the two volumes of *Welsh Melodies* (Boosey & Co.). He was awarded the D.Sc. degree of the University of Wales for his work on marine algae in 1908 and D.Mus. (honoris causa) in 1936. In his retirement he wrote his reminiscences *Adgofion Tri Chwarter Canrif* in four volumes, and *Y Tri Thelynor*. He also wrote *Byd y Blodau* published by Messrs. Morris and Jones, Liverpool. To the end he continued his researches into the origins and early development of Welsh Music.

He was married to Elizabeth Jones, daughter of Emanuel and Ann Jones of Tŷ Lawr, Cricieth, and they had two sons. He died 15 November 1945 at Peacedown St. John, Bath, Somerset and was buried at Cricieth.

Author

Robert Alun Roberts, (1894 - 1969)

Sources

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Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London, 158, pt. 1. January 1947

The Liverpool Daily Post, 19 November 1945

The Weekly Mail, 24 November 1945

Dewi Jones, *John Lloyd Williams y Botanegydd: y blynyddoedd Gorchestol Y Traethodydd*, Vol CLV, 2000, pp. 159-175

Folk Song Journal of the Welsh Folk-Song Society, 6, 40-6; 18, 3-26

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [J. Lloyd Williams](#)

Additional Links

NLW Archives: [Dr J. Lloyd Williams Music MSS and Papers](#)

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