

DAVIES, DEWI ALED EIRUG (1922-1997), Congregationalist minister and professor of theology

Name: Dewi Aled Eirug Davies
Date of birth: 1922
Date of death: 1997
Gender: Male
Occupation: Congregationalist minister and professor of theology
Area of activity: Education; Religion
Author: John Tudno Williams

He was born in Cwmllynfell, Glamorganshire, 5 February 1922, one of the eight children of **Thomas Eirug Davies**, the Congregationalist minister there (and after 1926 in Lampeter) and his wife. His mother Jennie was the daughter of R. H. Thomas, the Calvinistic Methodist minister in Llansannan. He was educated at Peterwell primary school, Lampeter, and at Aberaeron County School. As a consequence of his conscientious objection to military service during World War 2 his academic career was interrupted when he was required to work on the land and in a hospital. In 1944 he resumed his academic studies and entered University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where he graduated in Welsh and Philosophy in 1947. He went on to pursue a theological course in the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen. He gained his B.D. degree in 1950 with a distinction in Christian Doctrine.

He served as Congregationalist minister at Bethlehem, St Clears (1950-52), Radnor Walk, London (1952-59), Llanbryn-mair (1959-65), and at the Tabernacle, Morriston (1965-70). He continued his theological studies during these years, gaining the M.Th. degree of the University of London in 1955, and the M.A. degree of the University of Wales in Swansea in 1962 for a thesis (in Welsh) on 'The Nature and Role of the Holy Spirit in Paul's Epistles'. From September 1961 to the end of May 1962 he studied at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, and wrote of his experiences of that time in *Blas Virginia* (1964). In 1970 he was appointed Professor of Christian Doctrine at the Memorial College, Swansea, and then in 1981, following the relocation of the College to Aberystwyth, he succeeded **W. T. Pennar Davies** as Principal. He retired in 1988 and moved to Cardiff. He was the Chairman of the Union of Welsh Independents in 1990.

He was a prolific author (as is revealed in the Bibliography compiled by his brother, Alun, for the volume *Cofio Dewi Eirug*), publishing and editing a number of substantial volumes. He was also the editor of the annual publication of the Theology Section of the Guild of Graduates of the University of Wales, *Diwinyddiaeth*, from 1978 to 1989, and a joint editor of the weekly paper of his denomination, *Y Tyst*, from 1975 to 1983. He published *Arweiniad i Athrawiaeth Gristionogol* (1969) and *Hoff Ddysgedig Nyth: cyfraniad Coleg Presbyteriaidd Caerfyrddin i Fywyd Cymru* (1976). He was awarded the Ellis Griffith Memorial Prize for his substantial volume *Hanes Diwinyddiaeth yng Nghymru 1927-1977* (1984), which gained for him the Ph.D. degree of the University of Wales. Later he examined the reactions of the Welsh nation to the two World Wars, and the fruits of his research were published in the two volumes, *Byddin y Brenin (Cymru a'i chrefydd yn y Rhyfel Mawr)* (1988) and *Protest a Thystiolaeth: agweddau ar y dystiolaeth Gristnogol yn yr Ail Ryfel Byd* (1993). All these works reveal extensive reading in books and articles and the ability to present this detailed material in a readable and interesting form. By means of these works he opened for his fellow Welshmen and women fields which had hitherto been largely unknown to most of them. He edited a volume of sermons, *Ffolineb Pregethu* (1967), a volume of essays on nationalism from a Christian standpoint, *Gwinllan a Roddwyd* (1972), as well as a Festschrift for **Pennar Davies**, *Cyfrol Deyrnged Pennar Davies* (1981). His last volume, *Chwyldro Duw a Homiliau Eraill* (1995), consisted of seventy short homilies.

He married Emily Davies, an actress and drama producer, who became a lecturer in the Drama Department of University College of Wales Aberystwyth, and they had two sons. She died 8 September 1992, and he died 8 August 1997 in Llandough Hospital.

Author

John Tudno Williams

Sources

Personal knowledge

Huw Ethall, *Cofio Dewi Eirug* (2000) (2000)

Blwyddiadur yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg, 1998, 107-108

Barn September 1997 (with a photograph)

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