

## WILLIAMS, TOM PUGH (1912-1985), university professor

**Name:** Tom Pugh Williams  
**Date of birth:** 1912  
**Date of death:** 1985  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** university professor  
**Area of activity:** Education; Scholarship and Languages  
**Author:** G. Len Jones

Tom Pugh Williams was born in 1912 in Trawsfynydd where his parents Edward and Jane (née Jones) Williams farmed Dolwen. When the lake in Trawsfynydd was created, the farm disappeared under the water. The family had moved from Trawsfynydd to Pantgwyn, Ysceifiog, Holywell and Tom Pugh Williams attended the County School for Boys in Denbigh. In 1929 he began his studies at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where he graduated with Honours (First Class) in French in 1932 and in German (First Class) in 1933. After pursuing a one-year course in Education (1933-34), he was accepted as a research student in the Department of German. He spent a considerable part of the next two years in Germany at the universities of Bonn and Munich. In 1936 he was awarded the degree of M.A. for his thesis on 'Germany's relations to France in drama and criticism between 1870 and 1890'. He was appointed lecturer in German at Aberystwyth in 1936. During the Second World War he served in the Intelligence Corps. He was demobbed in October 1946 and resumed his academic career in Aberystwyth. In 1948 he was appointed 'Independent Lecturer', i.e. head of the Department of German in Cardiff. In 1952 he was promoted to the rank of Professor and occupied the Chair of German until his retirement in 1977. In 1950 he married Catherine Mary Macnab who was at that time matron of Carpenter Hall, Aberystwyth. They had no children.

Tom Pugh Williams belonged to a generation of scholars who considered their duty to the students to be more important than their personal commitment to research and publication. He was particularly popular amongst the students - everyone referred to him with respect and affection as 'T.P.' When he retired in 1977, a large number of former students returned to Cardiff to celebrate the occasion. In 1948 he published a collection of German prose passages for translation into English, *Advanced Modern German Unseens* and in 1957 he co-edited with Professor August Closs (Bristol) the wide-ranging anthology, *The Harrap Anthology of German Poetry*. A second edition of this popular anthology was published in 1969. In 1954 he published a Welsh translation of the long short-story, *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe* by the Swiss author, Gottfried Keller (1819-1890) under the title, *Romeo a Julia'r Pentre*. Amongst his interests was the Swedish language and he taught an optional course as part of the Single Honours Degree in German in Cardiff. Tom Pugh Williams was a quiet, likeable, scholarly person who gave generously of his time and talent to the students in his care. He died in Cardiff at the end of July 1985; his remains were cremated there on the day of his funeral, August 1, 1985.

### Author

G. Len Jones

### Sources

Personal knowledge

information from Mrs Rhiannon Henderson, Dinas Powys, niece

information from Mr Emrys Wynn Jones, Aberystwyth

Aberystwyth University Records

*Newsletter* University College Cardiff, October 1985

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