

## GRIFFITHS, WINIFRED MAIR (1916-1996), minister (Cong) and headmistress

**Name:** Winifred Mair Griffiths  
**Date of birth:** 1916  
**Date of death:** 1996  
**Gender:** Female  
**Occupation:** minister (Cong) and headmistress  
**Area of activity:** Education; Religion  
**Author:** Ioan Wyn Gruffydd

Mair Griffiths was born in Cardiff 6 June 1916, one of two daughters born to Griffith William and Alice Maud Griffiths. Griffith William Griffiths had come as a young man to work in Cardiff from Montgomeryshire, where his parents were farming at the Forge Farm, near Pontrobert, on the road to Melfod. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the brother of one of her father's great grandfathers had married a young woman from Dolannog, named **Ann Thomas** - who came to be known as **Ann Griffiths**, the hymn writer. Mair's mother was the daughter of the Reverend and Mrs. R. O. Jones, the minister of the Congregational Churches at Moreia, Bedlinog, and Graig.

Mair was educated at the Cardiff Secondary School, and the University College of South Wales and Monmouth, where she graduated B.A. with Honours in German and French in 1940. She served as a teacher, between 1940 and 1942, at the Greeford County School (and was a member at that time at the Welsh Congregational Church at Tabernacl, King's Cross, London). Between 1942 and 1945 she taught at the Swansea High School. From 1945 to 1947, she served as the Wales' Organizer of the Student Christian Movement. During that period, she lived at home in Cardiff and was a member of the Welsh Congregational Church at Minny Street.

In 1946 Mair Griffiths offered her service to the London Missionary Society. She spent a period of preparation at Selly Oak, Birmingham and at the April 30, 1947, Board meeting of the London Missionary Society, she was appointed to serve at Madagascar. Two Services of Dedication were held for her, one at Tabernacl, King's Cross, London, on January 8, 1948, and the other at Minny Street chapel, Cardiff, on January 21. She sailed to Madagascar on April 1, 1948, and commenced her service as a teacher at the Ambodin' Andohalo School, in Antananarivo, the capital, and she was also in charge of the women's hostel. During this period, she was very active with the Young Women's Christian Movement. From 1950 to 1964, she served as headmistress of the Amboitrantantenaina School, in Fianarantsoa. From 1964 onwards, she continued to teach at the same school after the appointment of a Malagasy headmaster. She also taught at the Teachers' Training College, in the founding of which she had such a prominent role. She was always willing to serve the churches of a wide area. As a sign of the value of her contribution to the educational life of Madagascar, the Malagasy Government presented her with the Order of Merit in June 1968.

She returned home from Madagascar in 1967, and was appointed, the same year, as the Headmistress of the Rhydlafer Orthopaedic Hospital School, Cardiff, where she taught children who came as long-term patients to the hospital. She remained in that post until 1976. She was ordained and inducted as the minister of Mynydd Seion Welsh Congregational Church, Newport, in 1976, and served there until her retirement in 1983. On account of her ill health, in November 1993 she left her home in Roath and settled in the Home for the Elderly at Lake Road East, Cardiff.

She died on October 13, 1996, at the University Hospital, Cardiff.

### Author

Ioan Wyn Gruffydd

### Sources

Personal research

### Additional Links

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