

ASHTON, CHARLES (1848 - 1899), Welsh bibliographer and literary historian

Name: Charles Ashton
Date of birth: 1848
Date of death: 1899
Parent: Elizabeth Ashton
Gender: Male
Occupation: Welsh bibliographer and literary historian
Area of activity: History and Culture; Literature and Writing; Scholarship and Languages
Author: William Llewelyn Davies

Born at Ty'nsarn, Llawr-y-glyn, Montgomeryshire, 4 September 1848, the son of Elizabeth Ashton. When he was about 9 years old he began to receive instruction from one John Jones who kept school for three months at a time in the local Wesleyan and Calvinistic Methodist chapels. At the age of 12 Ashton went to work in the lead mines of Dylife, an occupation which he soon found uncongenial. Leaving home soon afterwards he found employment for some time at Chester, where the Grosvenor Park was then being laid out. Later he became a railway porter, serving in that capacity at Crudgington, Llandderfel, and Bala. In 1869 he joined the Merioneth constabulary, being stationed at Trawsfynydd, then at Corris, at Barmouth in 1878 with the rank of sergeant, and, finally at Dinas Mawddwy, where he had to revert to the rank of constable. He retired from the police force in 1895 on pension, supplemented by grants from the Royal Bounty Fund and the Civil List. He died by his own hand at Dinas Mawddwy, 13 October 1899.

Ashton had attended evening classes at Machynlleth and passed some of the South Kensington Science and Art examinations. He was a notable example of the kind of Welshman who himself profited intellectually and at the same time benefited his countrymen, because the National Eisteddfod Association provided him with subjects and an incentive for research. His chief eisteddfodic successes were: Caernarvon (1886), an essay on 'Cyfreithiau Hywel Dda'; London (1887), an essay on the history of the Act of Union between England and Wales, 1536; Wrexham (1888), an essay on 'Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain'; Bangor (1890), an essay on 'Bywyd Gwledig yng Nghymru ...'; Swansea (1891), Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymreig o 1651 hyd 1850, this work being published by the National Eisteddfod Association in 1893; Rhyl (1892), 'Llyfryddiaeth Cymreig y Bedwaredd-Ganrif-ar-Bymtheg,' a portion of this work, covering the years 1801 to 1810, being published by the National Eisteddfod Association in 1908; Chicago (1893), an essay on 'Y Beirdd Cymreig o William Llŷn hyd at Gwilym Hiraethog'; Caernarvon (1894), Gwaith Iolo Goch (published by the National Eisteddfod Association, 1896).

Ashton also published *Traethawd or Ffeiriau Cymru* (Llanelli, 1881), *Bywyd ac Amserau'r Esgob Morgan* (Treherbert, 1891), *A Guide to Dinas Mawddwy* (Aberystwyth, 1893), and a Welsh translation, entitled *Y Ddirprwyaeth Dirol Gymreig. Crynhodeb o Dystiolaeth* (Dolgellau, 1895), i.e. the evidence given by [Edward Davies](#), Llandinam, before the Welsh Land Commission.

Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

Sources

Evan Davies, Trefriw, in *Y Geninen*, 1900;

Bye-Gones, relating to Wales and the Border Counties, 1899;

Cymru (O.M.E.), xvii;

Y Drych, 1899, 1900;

Young Wales a national magazine for Wales, 1899;

NLW MSS 2134, 3291, 3293, 4939, 5776, 5960, 6023, 7551, 7556, 9334-44, 14654, 14694.

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Charles Ashton](#) 

Images

People's Collection Wales: [Constable Charles Ashton, Merionethshire Constabulary](#) 

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Published date: 1959

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