BRYAN, JOHN (1776 - 1856), Wesleyan Methodist minister

Name: John Bryan
Date of birth: 1776
Date of death: 1856
Gender: Male
Occupation: Wesleyan Methodist minister
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Albert Hughes Williams

Born at Llanfyllin, where he spent much of his childhood with his uncle, a certain John Rogers. At the age of 12 he moved to Shrewsbury, and then in the course of the following years to Corwen, Bala, and Wrexham, whence, in 1798, he went to Chester as an assistant in the drapery business of the Misses Williams, daughters of Richard Williams of Rackery, near Gresford. He underwent the spiritual experience of conversion in December 1798 and joined the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists at Chester, but he soon transferred his membership to the Octagon, the Wesleyan Methodist chapel in the city. In February 1800 he began to preach as a local preacher, and during the next eighteen months he gave useful assistance to Owen Davies and John Hughes, the two missionaries appointed by the Methodist conference to North Wales in 1800. In August 1801 he was admitted to the Wesleyan Methodist ministry, and itinerated on various circuits in Wales until 1815. From 1815 until 1824 he travelled on circuits in England, but he left the ministry in 1824 and resided at Leeds as a grocer and tea-merchant until 1831. In that year he returned to Wales because of the failing health of his wife, and set up as a grocer in Caernarvon, where he continued to serve as a local preacher until within a few weeks of his death. He died 28 May 1856.

Bryan was somewhat tactless and impulsive, and occasionally his flashing wit hurt. But as a translator of some of John and Charles Wesley's hymns into Welsh, as well as some of Owen Davies's theological essays; as a champion of Arminianism against Calvinism; and, above all, as an original and effective preacher, he was a valuable addition to the ranks of the Welsh Wesleyan Methodist missionaries in the early days of the 19th century, and was the means of converting many to religion and to the church he served so long.

Author

Albert Hughes Williams, (1907 - 1996)

Sources

William Davies, *John Bryan a'i Amserau* (Bangor 1900)

NLW Archives: NLW MS 3504B: John Bryan: Journal

A. H. Williams, *Welsh Wesleyan Methodism, 1800-1858 its origins, growth and secessions* (1935), 97-8, 170-1, and passim

Further Reading

T. Morgan, *Enwogion Cymreig 1700-1900* (1907), p.35

Wikipedia Article: John Bryan

Images

John Thomas, Welsh Wesleyan Ministers, multi-portrait

Works

John Haime, John Bryan (trnsl.), *Hanes bywyd Mr. John Haime, yr hwn a ymroddodd yn sawdwr: ynghyd Ã¢'i lwyddiant yn pregethu yr efengyl ymhlith ei gyd-filwyr* (Dolgelleu 1811)

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