

DAVIES, JOHN GRIFFITH (1836 - 1861), poet and translator

Name: John Griffith Davies
Date of birth: 1836
Date of death: 1861
Parent: Phoebe Davies (née Griffiths)
Parent: John Davies
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet and translator
Area of activity: Poetry; Scholarship and Languages
Author: William Williams

Second of the four children of [John Davies](#) (Siôn Gymro), Yetwen, Glandwr, Pembrokeshire (1804 - 1884), and his wife Phoebe, daughter of J. D. Griffiths and grand-daughter of [John Griffiths](#), Glandwr (1731 - 1811). All four children died when comparatively young: Mary Ann in 1860 when she was 26, Elizabeth in 1859 at 19, David in 1848 aged 5, and John Griffith, who was lost overboard, near Liverpool, from the ship *Hibernia*, 14 March 1861, when he was 25 years of age.

He was educated at the day school of James Humphreys, Glandwr, and at New Quay and Templeton (near Narberth) schools. He was apprenticed to a tailor at Narberth, but inheriting much of his father's gift for learning languages he went to sea as a sailor to visit foreign countries in order to do so. He learnt Latin from his father; afterwards he mastered Hebrew, French, German, and Italian.

He wrote a great deal of prose and poetry, mainly translations, but little of his literary work has been preserved and none was published during his lifetime. His translation from the Italian of the ' Lament of Petrarch ' (Gwylofain Petrarc), which has appeared since in several biographical notices of him, is perhaps the best-known; a specimen of his published English verse is ' The Grave,' which appeared in *Y Beirniad*, 1863, iv.

Author

William Williams, (1885 - 1950)

Sources

Y Beiriniad, 1863, iv, 244

Y Diwygiwr, 1885, 93

J. Ll. James (Clwydwenfro), 'Yetwen a'r Teulu' in *Y Diwygiwr*, 1888-90

T. R. Roberts, *Eminent Welshmen: a short biographical dictionary of Welshmen... from the earliest times to the present* (1908)

Ben Davies, *Siôn Gymro sef buchedd a gwaith y Parch. John Davies, Glandwr a Moreia, Penfro* (Llandysul 1938)

Josiah Thomas Jones, [Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol o Enwogion Cymru \(Aberdâr 1867-70\)](#), i, 196

NLW MSS 8619-28, 11614, 15132

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