

DAVIES, JOHN (1772 - 1855), school teacher and missionary

Name: John Davies
Date of birth: 1772
Date of death: 1855
Gender: Male
Occupation: school teacher and missionary
Area of activity: Education; Religion
Author: Evan Lewis Evans

He was a school teacher under [Thomas Charles](#) of Bala at Llanwyddelan in 1800 and afterwards missionary for fifty-four years under the London Missionary Society in the South Sea Islands; born 11 July 1772 at Pendugwm, a little farm, in the parish of Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa, Montgomeryshire. He was a weaver's son, and after a little education in [Madam Bevan](#)'s schools he himself set up a school at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. He joined the Methodists and used to worship at a private house called Penllys. When a call went out for teachers for the island of Tahiti, he volunteered for the work, was accepted, and, with his wife, set sail, 5 May 1800. [Elizabeth Davis](#) records a visit which she paid him in Tahiti.

He came from the same neighbourhood as the hymnist [Ann Griffiths](#) [some of his work is included in the edition of her hymns published by [Owen M. Edwards](#)] and wrote frequently to her brother, John. There is also still extant a great deal of correspondence addressed by him to [John Hughes](#) (1775 - 1854), of Pont Robert.

He was the author of a dictionary and grammar of the Tahitian language and translated into that language the *Pilgrim's Progress*, substantial portions of the New Testament and Psalms, Brown's catechism, the *Westminster catechism*, and a number of smaller works. His *History of the Tahitian Mission, 1799-1830*, ed. C.W. Newbury (Cambridge), was published in 1962.

Although he was blind for the last ten years of his life he continued his devoted labours; he died 19 August 1855 after having served abroad for an unbroken period of fifty-five years.

Author

Reverend Dr Evan Lewis Evans, (1898 - 1978)

Sources

R. Williams, *Montgomeryshire Worthies* (1894), 40-1

G. Penar Griffith, *Cenhadon Cymreig*, 129-33

E. Lewis Evans, *Cymru a'r Gymdeithas Genhadol, sef hanes ei Chychwyn* (1945), 30, 36, 59, 181, 193

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