

## DAVIES, JOHN (Siôn Gymro; 1804 - 1884), Independent minister, linguist, and commentator

**Name:** John Davies  
**Pseudonym:** Siôn Gymro  
**Date of birth:** 1804  
**Date of death:** 1884  
**Spouse:** Phoebe Davies (née Griffiths)  
**Child:** Elizabeth Davies  
**Child:** Mary Ann Davies  
**Child:** David Davies  
**Child:** John Griffith Davies  
**Parent:** Mary Davies  
**Parent:** David Davies  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Independent minister, linguist, and commentator  
**Area of activity:** Literature and Writing; Religion; Scholarship and Languages  
**Author:** Thomas Eirug Davies

Born at Bwlch-yr-helygen in the parish of Llanarth, Cardiganshire, 5 March 1804, but his parents - David and Mary Davies - shortly afterwards moved to a near-by farm called Castell-y-geifr. His father, whose education was above the average, was his first teacher, but when he was 7 years old he was sent to the school at Neuaddlwyd kept by [Thomas Phillips](#) (1772 - 1842). He began to preach on 1 July 1819 at Neuadd-lwyd school, and in 1822 was received into the Independent Academy at Newtown. Here his teacher was [Edward Davies](#) (1796 - 1857), while among his fellow-pupils were [Samuel Roberts](#) and [David Rees](#) (1801 - 1869) of Llanelly. Here, too, he was given the opportunity of mastering the elements of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac, as well as of improving his knowledge of Latin, Greek, and divinity. He was invited to Glandŷr, Pembrokeshire, on six months probation, and was ordained 28 March 1827. Two years later he founded Moriah church, Llanwinio, Carmarthenshire. In 1863 he gave up Glandŷr and, thereafter, until his death, 16 December 1884, confined his activities to Moriah. He was a good pastor, a sound preacher, and a leader in his circle and denomination; in 1873 he was chairman of the Union of Welsh Independents. He was a frequent contributor to the periodicals of the day, writing under the pseudonyms Siôn Llethi, Castellanus, and Siôn Gymro. He delighted in controversy of the kind carried on with [John Roberts](#) (1804 - 1884) in *Y Dysgedydd*, 1850-2, on 'Fanciful Preaching.'

He excelled as a translator and commentator. In 1881 he published his version of the Minor Prophets (*Y Proffwydi Byrion*), an original translation from the Hebrew with marginal Latin, Greek, and Syriac readings, and explanatory notes. This work is the fruit of forty years of sustained labour and research. His other papers include *Llyfr Coheleth* and *Llyfr Hosea* - translations; *Horae Petrinae*, lectures on S. Peter's epistles; *Floreas Poetici* - a collection of his verse. He also published *Llethi, Afonig Llanarth gyda Sylwadau Achlysurol*, in 1868, but he was but an indifferent poet. His son, [John Griffith Davies](#) (1836 - 1861), is separately noticed.

### Author

Reverend Thomas Eirug Davies, (1892 - 1951)

### Sources

'Sion Gymro' by Ben Davies

*Y Geninen*, iii, 126, iv, 116

*Y Diwygiwr*, 1888-90

*Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, v, 258

NLW MSS 6196, 8613-9

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [John Davies](#)

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q20738093](#)

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