

DAVIES, MYLES (or MILES) DAVIES (1662 - 1715?), religious controversialist and bibliographer

Name: Myles (Or Miles) Davies Davies

Date of birth: 1662

Date of death: 1715?

Gender: Male

Occupation: religious controversialist and bibliographer

Area of activity: History and Culture; Literature and Writing; Religion; Scholarship and Languages

Author: John James Jones

Son of George and Elizabeth Davies, of Tre'r Abbot, in the parish of Whitford, Flintshire. He was educated at the English Jesuit College in Rome, where he was ordained priest 17 April 1688. On 15 October of the same year he left college and returned home to work with the Jesuit missionaries in Wales and the border counties. But before long he was converted to Protestantism, and wrote an 'apologia' of his conversion in a book entitled *The Recantation of Mr. Pollett, a Roman priest*, etc. (London, 1705). Pollett was the name Davies assumed as a missionary, just as Blount (or Blunt) was his pseudonym as a student. After his conversion Davies seems to have taken up the study of law, for on the title-pages of successive volumes of his chief work *Athenae Britannicae* (six vols., London, 1716) he styles himself a 'Gentleman of the Inns of Court,' a 'Barrister-at-Law,' and a 'Counsellor-at-Law.' The first volume of this (now very rare) work was first published separately in 1715 under the title of *Eikon-Mikro-Biblike sive Icon Libellorum, or a critical history of pamphlets* (London, 1715). Very likely it was the existence of an isolated volume with a separate title in addition to the six volumes with the new title of *Athenae Britannicae* that accounts for the statement in the *D.N.B.* and elsewhere that the British Museum has seven volumes of this work.

Davies's interest in the compilation of this work was primarily that of a religious controversialist. It was his purpose to record, criticize, and refute all the propagandist pamphlets and tracts published by Roman Catholics and by those whom he dubs Arians and Socinians. As his refutation largely consisted in citing the opposing arguments of Protestant tracts, his work proves a valuable source for the bibliography and history of this type of literature. The first two volumes especially should repay a careful study by students of Welsh writers in Latin and English of the 16th and 17th century. Davies included in this work some propagandist writing of his own composition. A more considerable piece of propaganda of Davies's composition was the Latin drama, in mixed prose and verse, entitled *Pallas Anglicana*, etc., and included in the fifth volume of *Athenae Britannicae*.

The year of Davies's death is uncertain. Works of reference generally give it as 1715(?), but there are indications that he may have been still living in 1716. For example, the 2nd edition of *Clerus Britanus*, included in vol. v of *Athenae Britannicae*, is dated 1716. Also there is extant a short Latin ode of greeting to Thomas Parker, lord Macclesfield, who was raised to the peerage in 1716 (see *Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, vi, 309).

Author

John James Jones, (1892 - 1957)

Sources

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Thomas Pennant, *The history of the parishes of Whiteford and Holywell* (London 1796)

Catholic Record Society, vol. 50

Foley, *Records of the English province of the Society of Jesus (1570-1800)*, vol. 6

The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature (Cambridge 1940), vol. 2

D'Israeli, *The Calamities and Quarrels of Authors with some inquiries respecting their moral and literary characters, and memoirs for our literary history*

British Museum. Catalogue of Printed Books (1882)

Jnl. W.B.S., vi., 249-53 (and the note on p. 309)

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Myles Davies](#)

Additional Links

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Wikidata: [Q6947663](#)

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