

EVANS, WILLIAM EILIR (Eilir; 1852 - 1910), cleric, poet, and journalist

Name: William Eilir Evans

Pseudonym: Eilir

Date of birth: 1852

Date of death: 1910

Gender: Male

Occupation: cleric, poet, and journalist

Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Literature and Writing; Poetry; Printing and Publishing; Religion

Author: David Gwenallt Jones

Born 26 April 1852 at Garreg Lwyd, Cenarth, Carmarthenshire. He was originally an Independent and was admitted as a student to the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen. Then he joined the Anglican Church and in 1878 went to S. David's College, Lampeter. He held curacies at Llanfaelog (Anglesey), Devizes, and Aberdare, and was for a short period (having previously been master of the National school at Capel Dewi near Llandysul, Cardiganshire) assistant-master and chaplain of Stratford-on-Avon grammar school. In 1889 he became editor of the *Carmarthen Journal*. He removed to Swansea in 1891, and in 1894 to Cardiff, where he was for thirteen years leader-writer to the *Western Mail*, and at times voluntary curate in S. David's church. Retiring in 1907 from his newspaper post (owing to the state of his health), he passed the rest of his days as curate at Llancafarn in the Vale of Glamorgan. In 1910 he published a selection of his poems and articles, *Rhyddiaith a Chân*. He died 7 December 1910.

In Eilir's early days there existed at Newcastle Emlyn a circle of poets which included among its members [Myfyr Emlyn](#) (Benjamin Thomas, 1836 - 1893), [Rhys Dyfed](#) (Rees Arthur Rees), and others. Under their influence he began, as a young man, to write poetry and to compete in the local eisteddfodau. He won the chair at the South Wales eisteddfod held at Cardigan, 1878, with an *awdl* on 'Civilisation,' which was published in 1884. He translated Pope's *Essay on Criticism* (his version was published in *Yr Haul*) and Gray's *Elegy*. He also published poems and articles in *Y Byd Cymreig* (a paper printed at Newcastle Emlyn), *Y Geninen*, *Y Traethodydd*, *Yr Haul*, *Y Dywysogaeth*, *Celt Llundain*, *Papur Pawb*, *The Aberystwyth Observer*, and other papers.

Author

David Gwenallt Jones, (1899 - 1968)

Sources

Western Mail, 8 December 1910

'Atgofion' in *Rhyddiaith a Chân* (1909)

information from Mr. Picton Davies, Cardiff

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