

EVANS, THOMAS ('Tomos Glyn Cothi'; 1764 - 1833), Unitarian minister [the first specifically Unitarian minister in Wales]

Name: Thomas Evans
Pseudonym: Tomos Glyn Cothi
Date of birth: 1764
Date of death: 1833
Gender: Male
Occupation: Unitarian minister [the first specifically Unitarian minister in Wales]
Area of activity: Religion
Author: John Dyfnallt Owen

Born at Capel Sant Silyn, Gwernogle, Carmarthenshire, 20 June 1764. His early education was neglected; for a short time he was a farmer's boy, after which he followed his craft as a weaver. He used to go from fair to fair in Glamorgan to sell his cloth, and that was how he came into contact with the poets of that county. He was at the gorsedd of Mynydd y Garth, midsummer, 1797. From his earliest days he had had a passion for learning and he taught himself to be a man of letters and a poet; Theophilus Lindsey helped by sending him English books, 1792-6.

He embraced Unitarianism in a district where Calvinism was in its glory and, in 1786, began to preach in his old home. So great was his enthusiasm for the doctrines set forth by Priestley that he was nicknamed 'little Priestley.' In 1811 he moved to Aberdare to take charge of the Old Meeting House. He was a red-hot democrat and reformer, and it was probably his sympathy with the French Revolution which brought him into conflict with the authorities; on 19 January 1803 he was imprisoned in Carmarthen gaol.

Among the pamphlets, translations, and books published by him are three numbers of *The Miscellaneous Repository neu Y Drysorfa Gymysgedig*, 1795; *An English-Welsh Dictionary neu Eir-Lyfr Saesneg a Chymraeg*, 1809; *Cyfansoddiad o Hymnau*, 1811, etc.; '*Y Gell Gymysg*' is still in manuscript in N.L.W. He was, indeed, an apostle of freedom - political, social, and religious - and was one of the pioneers of those reform movements which were to have such an influence on the later history of Wales.

He died 29 January 1833.

Author

Reverend John Dyfnallt Owen, (1873 - 1956)

Sources

Yr Ymofynnydd, July 1933

Cambrian Bibliography, 679

Further Reading

RCAHMW: Welsh Religious Buildings Trust: [Hen D Cwrdd Trecynon](#)

Wikipedia Article: [Thomas Evans](#)

Works

Thomas Evans and Thomas Richards, *An English and Welch vocabulary, or, An easy guide to the antient British language (Merthyr 1804)*

Additional Links

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