

HUGHES, ROBERT (1811 - 1892), Calvinistic Methodist minister

Name: Robert Hughes
Date of birth: 1811
Date of death: 1892
Spouse: Catherine Hughes (née Hughes)
Gender: Male
Occupation: Calvinistic Methodist minister
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born 25 March 1811 at Bodgared, Llanwnda, Caernarfonshire; his father, a tenant-farmer who moved from holding to holding during the son's early life, finally settled at Moelfre Fawr, Llanaelhaearn, dying there at ninety-five. The boy had little schooling (he was for a while taught by [David Thomas](#) (Dafydd Ddu Eryri, 1759 - 1822)), but gained local fame as a wood-carver. In 1830 he walked up to London with a cattle-drove, intending to enlist the support of [Griffith Davies](#) the mathematician, who was related to his mother. [Davies](#) found him work of sorts in London, and he became a member of Jewin Calvinistic Methodist church, where [Hugh Owen](#) was his Sunday-school teacher. But in 1833 his father placed him in the large (and badly rundown) farm of Uwchlaw'r-ffynnon, where he had to struggle hard to keep things going. Yet he read diligently, and also turned to verse, winning prizes at eisteddfodau; he became a friend of [Ellis Owen](#) of Cefn-y-meusydd and of [Ebenezer Thomas](#) (Eben Fardd); it is clear that his abilities attracted attention, for [J. H. Cotton](#) offered to help him to Anglican orders, and other well-wishers proposed to send him up to University College, in London. But the farm could not be left, especially after he married and had a growing family; he had to content himself with inquiring of students who called at his house what books were being used at Bala College, and acquiring the rudiments of Greek and Hebrew and Latin unaided. He had begun to preach in 1838 (the year of his marriage with Catherine Hughes of Gelli in Deneio near Pwllheli), and was a notable preacher; he accompanied [John Jones](#) of Tal-y-sarn on preaching-tours, and was remarkable not only for verbal wit but also for a pictorial style of preaching. Ordained in 1848, he was the unpaid pastor of a chapel (Babell) which he built in 1857. He died 3 May 1892. Robert Hughes was an exceptional man, and his autobiography (published with a selection of his sermons in 1893) is highly interesting. What emerges is an artistic bent - in his wood-carving, in his metrical skill, in his pictorial preaching, and lastly, in his hobby of painting in oils, which he took up when sixty years of age.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Autobiography (above)

Y Drysorfa, 1892, 226

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