

LEWIS, GEORGE (1763-1822), theologian and Independent minister

Name: George Lewis
Date of birth: 1763
Date of death: 1822
Child: William Jones Lewis
Gender: Male
Occupation: theologian and Independent minister
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Thomas Lewis

Born in 1763 at Coed near Tre-lech, Carmarthenshire. He became a member of Graig chapel, Tre-lech. For a time he attended the school kept by [John Griffiths](#) of Glandŷr (1731 - 1811), and, later, that kept by [David Davis](#) of Castellhywel. When he was 18 years of age he was admitted to Carmarthen Academy, the senior tutor of which at that time was Robert Gentleman. After spending three years at the Academy he received a call from the Independent church at Caernarvon and remained in that circuit, a highly successful minister, for nine years. Before leaving the district he had toyed with the idea of emigrating to the U.S.A., and entered into correspondence with [Dr. Edward Williams](#) (1750 - 1813), of Carr's Lane, Birmingham, on the subject. However, he received a call from the Independent church at Llanuwchllyn and decided to stay on in Wales. He remained at Llanuwchllyn for eighteen years as minister and supervisor of a number of circulating schools in North Wales. His two-fold labours were crowned with brilliant success and he left an indelible mark on the life of the district.

In 1812 [Jenkin Lewis](#), head of the Independent Academy at Wrexham, moved to Manchester to take charge of a similar academy there, and George Lewis was invited by the Congregational Board in London to manage the Academy at Wrexham. In 1815 he received two calls, one from Liverpool and one from Llanfyllin. The Board was unwilling to allow the Academy to be moved from Wales but raised no objection to its being moved from Wrexham to Llanfyllin (1815-21). In 1821 he moved it again to Newtown, but died within six months, 5 June 1822.

As a Scriptural commentator and divine, George Lewis stood head and shoulders above his contemporaries; his balanced judgement and logical approach were unique. His books and pamphlets were the result of a meticulous study of the Bible and contain none of the intemperate claims so characteristic of the controversial articles of the period. He published a mass of valuable pamphlets dealing with theological difficulties and also a number of booklets written in simple language and containing hymns with words of one syllable suitable for use in the Sunday schools. He had intended publishing a commentary on the New Testament but was unable to finish the work. He published the first three volumes when he was a minister at Llanuwchllyn (1802), and a fourth when he was head of the Academy at Wrexham (1815). The three remaining volumes were published after his death by [Edward Davies](#) (1796 - 1857), his co-tutor and son-in-law; it is more than probable that the commentary on Revelations was entirely written by [Edward Davies](#). But George Lewis's principal work was his *Drych Ysgrythyrol neu Gorph o ddifynyddiaeth yn cynnwys eglurhad a phrawf o amrywiol ganghennau yr athrawiaeth sydd yn ol duwioldeb*, 1796. George Lewis was a Biblical commentator, a divine, and a teacher. As a preacher he was not in the same class as [John Elias](#), [Christmas Evans](#), and [Williams of Wern](#), for he had not the eloquence of the first, the imagination of the second, or the charm of the third. But his *Drych Ysgrythyrol* remained a standard textbook in the theological colleges until the end of the 19th century.

SAMUEL SAVAGE LEWIS (1836 - 1891), classical scholar Scholarship and Languages

(see *D.N.B.*), was his grandson (son of his youngest son, WILLIAM JONES LEWIS, a medical practitioner).

Author

Reverend Thomas Lewis, (1868 - 1953)

Sources

Y Cofiadur, 1934, 1-32

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig (1889-96)

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