

PUGH, HUGH (1803 - 1868), schoolmaster and Independent minister

Name: Hugh Pugh
Date of birth: 1803
Date of death: 1868
Gender: Male
Occupation: schoolmaster and Independent minister
Area of activity: Education; Literature and Writing; Religion
Author: Richard Griffith Owen

Born May 1803 at Towyn, Meirionnydd. His father had enlisted in the army, in which he served during the Peninsular War. The son was educated by John Jones of Pen-y-parc, a celebrated schoolmaster, until he was 13 years of age, when he went to London as clerk in a solicitor's office. There, he embraced every opportunity of improving his knowledge but was compelled, owing to ill health, to return to Towyn. In 1823 he went to Llanfihangel-y-Pennant to take charge of a school, and about the same time began to preach. In 1824 he moved to Llwyngwrl, where he had charge of the local school and ministered to the neighbouring churches, and in 1826 went to the Bethel district near Bala, which was part of the territory of [Michael Jones](#). In July 1827 he was ordained minister at Llandrillo but continued his work as a schoolmaster. During this period he came into prominence as a minister, man of letters, and determined reformer. In the course of his ministry the chapels of Llandrillo, Rhydywernen, Llan-dderfel, and Soar (Godre Caereini) were built. He used to preach three times a Sunday and would walk some twenty miles for this purpose; this was in addition to his week-day work. In 1833 he founded the Penllyn and Edeirnion young men's association in order to instruct the young men of the district in the principles of Dissent and Liberalism, and he published *Catechism yr Ymneillduwr* in which he laid particular emphasis on the problems arising from the connection between the Church and the State. Previously, this matter had been very little discussed either in Wales or England. He was bitterly attacked because of his convictions, and a resolution was passed in a Methodist Association urging people to have nothing to do with those who spoke against the authorities and the established institutions of the country - a resolution undoubtedly directed against Hugh Pugh. He remained adamant and came to be regarded as one of the chief leaders of Liberalism in North Wales. He was a regular contributor to the *Dysgedydd* and it was during this period that he published *Drych y Cymunwr* for the benefit of young communicants, and *Hawl a chymwysder dyn i farnu drosto'i hun*. In 1837 he moved to Mostyn, Flintshire, where he continued to work with the same assiduity and where he had men of similar opinions as neighbours, e.g., his predecessor, [Gwilym Hiraethog](#), now at Denbigh, and [Scorpion](#), at Trelawnyd. While at Mostyn he started *Dyddiadur yr Annibynwyr*. In his later years he suffered from ill health and two testimonials were presented to him, one at Mostyn 1851 and the other at Llandrillo in 1867. He died 23 December 1868, and was buried in the Zion burial ground, near Holywell. He was not considered a brilliant preacher, but was recognized on all sides as a man of great ability and an indomitable leader both in religion and in politics. As a writer, he was master of a particularly elegant style.

Author

Reverend Richard Griffith Owen, (1890 - 1973)

Sources

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Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru, iv, 229-33

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