

ROBERTS, DAVID (Dewi Ogwen; 1818 - 1897), Independent minister

Name: David Roberts
Pseudonym: Dewi Ogwen
Date of birth: 1818
Date of death: 1897
Parent: Dafydd Roberts
Gender: Male
Occupation: Independent minister
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Richard Griffith Owen

Born 19 April 1818 at Bangor, son of the Rev. Dafydd Roberts, a Calvinistic Methodist preacher and superintendent of one of **Charles** of Bala's schools; his mother was of the same lineage as **John Jones** of Tal-y-sarn and Cadwaladr Owen of Dolwyddelan. He was first educated in a private school in the town and later in **Dr. Arthur Jones**'s school. In 1833 he was apprenticed as a printer in the office of the local newspaper. At the age of 15 he was admitted to membership of the church at Lônpopty (now the Tabernacle) but two or three years later joined the Independents at Ebenezer. He was apparently induced to take this step because, after reading **Samuel Bowen**'s book on the *Atonement*, he was uncertain about some points of doctrine; it is also probable that **Arthur Jones**'s personal influence had something to do with it. He went on a tour with **Ieuan o Lŷn**, who was a master at **Arthur Jones**'s school at the time, and in the course of this tour began to preach at Dolwyddelan. He received a call to Seion and Seilo, Anglesey, where he was ordained 7 May 1839. In 1842 he went to Tabernacle, Gartside Street, Manchester, returning to Anglesey in 1845 as minister of Cemaes and Seilo. In 1850 he became **Caledfryn**'s successor at Caernarvon. Here, he suffered a painful illness, necessitating an operation on his face, as a result of which he had to wear a gold plate under his cheek for the rest of his life. In 1871 he moved to Queen Street chapel, Wrexham, where he died 5 September 1897. He was buried in the public cemetery, Wrexham.

He had early become remarkably popular as a preacher, partly because of the charm of his eloquence and partly because of his genial personality, and he retained his hold on his congregations until the end. He was in his day a writer and poet of some standing; he had been awarded a number of prizes and had been invested as a bard at Caernarvon in 1862, receiving the name Dewi Ogwen. Hymns written by him are to be found in *Y Caniedydd Cynulleidfaol Newydd*, and he was one of the editors of the old *Caniedydd*. In 1863 he published a monthly called *Yr Ardd*, which continued in circulation until 1869. He had already, in 1862, translated H. B. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Owing to the death of his collaborator, **Scorpion**, the burden of writing the greater part of **Hiraethog**'s biography fell upon him. He published two volumes of sermons in Welsh and one in English, the latter being, by permission, dedicated to queen Victoria. He was secretary of Bala Independent College during the dispute about its constitution, 1876-9. In 1880 he was elected chairman of the Union of Welsh Independents.

Author

Reverend Richard Griffith Owen, (1890 - 1973)

Sources

D. Griffith, *Cofiant y Parchedig David Roberts, D.D., Wrecsam* (Dolgellau 1899), 1899

Cymru (O.M.E.), xiii, 173-7

Y Geninen, 1897 (232-4), 1898 (58-60, 116-8, 10g-17g)

Gwaith John Thomas (1905) (Cyfres y Fil), 17, 44

Further reading

Parch David Roberts, D.D. (Dewi Ogwen) *Y Cymro*, 15 April 1897, p.5

David Evans, *Cymeriadau hynod, Adgofion* (Bala 1903?), pp.79-95

Works

Thomas Roberts and David Roberts, *Cofiant y Parch. W. Rees, D.D. (Gwilym Hiraethog)*(Dolgellau 1893)

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