

**Name:** Robert David Thomas  
**Pseudonym:** Iorthryn Gwynedd  
**Date of birth:** 1817  
**Date of death:** 1888  
**Spouse:** Sarah Thomas  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Independent minister  
**Area of activity:** Eisteddfod; Literature and Writing; Poetry; Religion  
**Author:** Richard Griffith Owen

Born at Llanrwst 17 September 1817. He began to preach in 1838 and soon developed an inclination to write both prose and verse. He spent some time at a school at Oxford, kept by Eleazer Jones, son of [Dr. Arthur Jones](#). He received a call to the church at Penarth, Montgomeryshire, and its branches, and was ordained there, 25 May 1843. In the course of his ministry Canaan church was erected and Penarth chapel re-built, and he was largely responsible for starting the Welsh causes at Welshpool and Newtown. In 1851 he went to America to raise money for paying off the debts on his chapels and was able to realise sufficient for this purpose. In 1852 he married a talented girl known as 'Sarah Maldwyn,' and in 1855 they, and a number of others with them, emigrated to America. He spent two years as minister of Rome and Floyd, Oneida County, N.Y., and then became the first minister of Mahanoy City Independent church where he remained until 1870. In 1872 he went to Knoxville, Tennessee, and afterwards (1875) to Columbus, Ohio, where he remained until 1877. He visited Wales in 1872-3. He died 25 November 1888 and was buried in Gray cemetery, Knoxville, Tennessee. He was a regular contributor to the different periodicals and was a well-known figure at the eisteddfodau. He published *Hanes Cymry America*, 1872, and *Yr Ymfudwr, yn cynnwys hanes America ac Awstralia; yn nghyda phob hyfforddiad i ymfudwyr*, 1854.

## Author

Reverend Richard Griffith Owen, (1890 - 1973)

## Sources

*Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, i, 322; iv, 79

*Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig* (1889-96) (2nd ed.), ix, 548

E. D. Jones, *Memorial volume of Welsh Congregationalists in Pennsylvania, U.S.A., their churches, periodical convocations, clergy and prominent lay members* (Utica 1934)

## Additional Links

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