

THOMAS, EVAN (Ieuan Fardd Ddu; 1733 - 1814), printer and translator

Name: Evan Thomas
Pseudonym: Ieuan Fardd Ddu
Date of birth: 1733
Date of death: 1814
Spouse: Ellen Thomas (née Parry)
Parent: John Abel
Gender: Male
Occupation: printer and translator
Area of activity: Printing and Publishing; Scholarship and Languages
Author: Thomas Isfryn Jones

The son of John Abel (or John Thomas) who was the son of Thomas Abel of Wtra Wen in the parish of Llanfair Caereinion, Montgomeryshire. He was a printer by trade, and a good Welsh scholar, which caused his services to be sought and appreciated in English printing offices where Welsh books were printed. From Shrewsbury, where he was employed in 1765, he removed to Chester, thence about 1767, to Carmarthen, where he remained some years, and among other works corrected for the press was an edition of the Welsh Bible. He and his father, John Thomas, were contributors to the *Eurgrawn Cymraeg*, the first Welsh magazine ever published, which first appeared in 1770. He was a good poet, many of his works being published under the pseudonym Ieuan Fardd Ddu. In 1781 he was a compositor in the office of T. Wood, the first publisher of the *Shrewsbury Chronicle*. He wrote or translated *Anfeidrol werthfawrogrwydd Enaid Dyn*, 1767, and *Barnedigaethau ofnadwy Duw*, 1767. He translated *Grace Abounding* (John Bunyan) under the title *Helaethrwydd o Ras*, 1767; *A Life of Faith* (W. Romaine), under the title *Traethawd ar Fywyd Ffydd*, 1767; and edited *Hymnau cymmwys i addoliad Duw o waith y diweddar Parch. Jenkin Jones... ynghyd a'i Farwnad*^[↗], 1768. He also published an *Almanack* under his own name.

Unfortunately he gave way to drink and became a man of loose character. He gave up his occupation as a printer and set up as an astrologer, conjurer, and fortune teller. He finally found refuge in the 'House of Industry' at Shrewsbury.

His wife was Ellen Parry, sister of William Parry of Cae Ceirch, Dolgellau, Warden of Ruthin School (Bye-Gones, 6.3.1901, 4.6.1902, 21.1.1903); according to the parish register of St. Chad, Shrewsbury, they married there on 15 June 1766.

He died at Shrewsbury workhouse, 12 January 1814 - *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 14 January 1814; 2s. 10d. was paid to the bearers at his funeral, as in the workhouse accounts at Shrewsbury Record Office.

Author

Thomas Isfryn Jones

Sources

R. Williams, *Montgomeryshire Worthies* (1894)

W. Rowlands, *Cambrian Bibliography*

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