

MORGAN, WILLIAM (JOHN) (Penfro; 1846 - 1918), cleric, eisteddfodwr, and hymn-writer

Name: William (John) Morgan
Pseudonym: Penfro
Date of birth: 1846
Date of death: 1918
Gender: Male
Occupation: cleric, eisteddfodwr, and hymn-writer
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Music; Poetry; Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born 14 December 1846 at Nevern, Pembrokeshire; his father, David Morgan, removed early to Llanfihangel-penbedw and afterwards to Boncath, at both of which he was parish clerk and precentor. The son, musical like his father, was educated at Cardigan grammar school and Lampeter (B.A. 1871). Ordained in 1871, he was licensed to Llanrwst, where he formed close contacts not only with the famous englynwr, **Trebor Mai**, but also with the eccentric **Gwilym Cowlyd**, whose 'opposition' eisteddfodau on the shores of lake Geirionydd he frequented - indeed, Penfro never became acclimatized in the 'orthodox' national eisteddfod, although in later years he was a prominent figure in the provincial Powys eisteddfod. From 1875 till 1878 he was curate at S. Asaph, where he acquired some repute as a preacher. In 1878 he became vicar of Pennant, Montgomeryshire, then (1887) vicar of Llansantffraid (Glan Conwy) and, finally (1904), rector of Manafon, Montgomeryshire, where he died 23 June 1918, and where a tombstone and a tablet commemorate him; he was married; his wife and two of their four children had predeceased him. Penfro was a copious writer of verse, but is today remembered chiefly for his hymns. A memorial volume, *Penfro: Cyfrol Goffa*, of his verse, with a short biography, was published at Dolgellau in 1924.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

The memorial volume
Y Geninen, March 1920, 17-19

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