

OWEN, GWILYM (1880 - 1940), physicist

Name: Gwilym Owen
Date of birth: 1880
Date of death: 1940
Gender: Male
Occupation: physicist
Area of activity: Education; Science and Mathematics
Author: Edwin Augustine Owen

Born 19 July 1880 at Denbigh, son of William Owen, Calvinistic Methodist minister in Liverpool and afterwards at Conway. He was educated in elementary schools at Bodfari and at Henllan, Denbighshire, and for five years at Ruthin school. After graduating with high honours at Liverpool University (1901) he won an '1851 Exhibition' scholarship which took him to Christ's College, Cambridge, to do research work under Sir J. J. Thomson in the Cavendish laboratory; he graduated at Cambridge in 1905. He was then appointed lecturer in physics at Liverpool, remaining there till 1913, when he became professor at Auckland, New Zealand. He served with the New Zealand forces in the 1914-19 war; in 1919 he was appointed professor of physics at Aberystwyth. When principal [Sir Henry Stuart Jones](#) retired early in 1934, Owen, who had been vice-principal since 1932, became acting-principal; he filled that office for a year. In September 1936 he suffered a complete break-down which compelled him to retire; he died 9 November 1940, and was buried in Toxteth cemetery, Liverpool.

At Cambridge and afterwards Owen had done important research work in electronics. But he is best remembered as an exceptionally lucid and attractive lecturer, carefully preparing his lectures and demonstrations in such a way as to make difficult matters in physics clear even to the weakest of his students, and showing great skill in gauging their capacities and great patience in overcoming their difficulties. This clarity of exposition caused him to be in great demand also as a public lecturer beyond the confines of his college; these lectures were usually delivered in Welsh, and in them he showed that the language, in skilled hands, could be made a fully adequate medium for instruction in science. His written Welsh, again, was excellent, and he wrote much on scientific matters for the Welsh periodicals. He published in book form *Athroniaeth Pethau Cyffredin* (1907), *Cwrr y Llen* (1914), *Rhyfeddodau'r Cread* (1933), and *Y Mawr a'r Bach* (1936).

Author

Edwin Augustine Owen, (1887 - 1973)

Sources

Proceedings of the Physical Society, 1940, liv

Baner ac Amserau Cymru, 16 November 1940

personal knowledge

Additional Links

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