

JONES, OWEN VAUGHAN ('O.V.') (1907 - 1986), obstetrician and gynaecologist

Name: Owen Vaughan Jones
Date of birth: 1907
Date of death: 1986
Spouse: Gwyneth Jane (née Davies)
Child: Huw Vaughan Jones
Child: Luned Vaughan Jones
Parent: Mary Jones (née Jones)
Parent: John Edmund Jones
Gender: Male
Occupation: obstetrician and gynaecologist
Area of activity: Medicine
Author: Dafydd Johnston

Owen Vaughan Jones was born at Pengwern, Llanwnda, Gwynedd, on 27 December 1907, the second son of John Edmund Jones (1874-1965), farmer, and his wife Mary (née Jones, 1877-1960). After primary school in Llanwnda he attended Caernarfon County School, and went on to Liverpool University to study medicine, graduating in 1931. He became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh in 1934, and after choosing to specialize in obstetrics and gynaecology he gained an MD at Liverpool in 1936 for a thesis on oestrogenic substances.

He was appointed Honorary Gynaecologist at the Caernarfonshire and Anglesey Infirmary, Bangor, in 1937, and the following year he became the first consultant obstetrician to be appointed by Caernarfonshire County Council, based at St David's Hospital in Bangor. A genial man known to one and all as 'O.V.', he transformed maternity services in the counties of Caernarfon, Anglesey and Merioneth, establishing collaboration between hospital, local authority and family practitioners, with peripheral antenatal clinics and a 'flying squad' for home emergencies, a scheme which became a model for other rural areas. When O. V. Jones took over as consultant the death rates of mothers and babies in the area were the highest in Britain; through his own hard work, his organisational talent and his inspirational leadership he succeeded in bringing them down into line with the UK average.

He married Gwyneth Jane Davies (1907-1995) of Llanilar, Ceredigion, in 1942, and they made their home at Carreg Lwyd in Menai Bridge, Anglesey. They had two children, a son, Huw Vaughan (1944-2014) and a daughter, Luned Vaughan (b. 1949).

He continued to research in his specialist field, lecturing widely in Britain and the USA and publishing in medical journals throughout his career, and was an active member of several professional societies, serving as chair of the north-west Wales branch of the BMA in 1955 and president of the North of England Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society in 1972.

Following his retirement in 1972 he was awarded an Honorary MA by the University of Wales in 1973. He served for many years on the University Court, and chaired the Council of the University College of North Wales, Bangor for five years 1981-85. That was a difficult period in the history of the college, and O. V. Jones is credited with doing a good deal to alleviate bitter divisions within the institution. He was a staunch supporter of Welsh-language culture, a member of the Gorsedd of Bards and of the Court of the National Eisteddfod, and was one of the founder vice-presidents of Y Gymdeithas Feddygol (the Welsh Medical Society) in 1975. He had a particular interest in local history, and in 1984 he published *The Progress of Medicine: A History of the Caernarfonshire and Anglesey Infirmary 1809-1948*.

Owen Vaughan Jones died on 4 September 1986. He was cremated at Bangor Crematorium, and his ashes were scattered on the Menai Straits.

Author

Dafydd Johnston

Sources

O.V. Jones, 'Thirty years' review of an area obstetric service 1938-67', *Journal of obstetrics and gynaecology of the British Commonwealth*, vol 75, no. 7 (July 1968), 754-8
Gwilym Wyn Griffith, obituary, *British Medical Journal*, 293 (October 1986), 964
Bedwyr Lewis Jones, 'O. V. Jones, 1907-1986', *Y Faner*, Medi 26, 1986
Information from Luned Vaughan

Images

Geoff Charles, O V Jones, gynaecologist at Caernarfonshire and Anglesey Infirmary for 34 years

Geoff Charles, Mr O V Jones campaigning to establish a Medical School at Bangor

Geoff Charles, O. V. Jones llawfeddyg ym Mangor

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