

ALBAN DAVIES, DAVID (1873 - 1951), business man and philanthropist

Name: David Alban Davies
Date of birth: 1873
Date of death: 1951
Spouse: Rachel Alban Davies (née Williams)
Child: Jenkin Alban Davies
Child: David Harold Alban Davies
Parent: Anne Davies (née Alban)
Parent: Jenkin Davies
Gender: Male
Occupation: business man and philanthropist
Area of activity: Business and Industry; Philanthropy
Author: Mary Auronwy James

Born 13 April 1873 at Hafod Peris, Llanrhystud, Cardiganshire, youngest son of Jenkin Davies, master mariner, and Anne (née Alban) his wife. On leaving the local school at the age of 14 he worked on his uncle's farm at Hafod Peris, since the family had fallen on hard times. As his brothers had been sent to Llandovery College, he saved his earnings to enter Owen's School at Oswestry when he was 18 years old. On 28 November 1899 he married Rachel Williams of Brynglas, Moria, Penuwch, in Holy Trinity Church, Aberystwyth; they had 4 sons and a daughter. Davies and his wife went to London to work with Rachel's brother Evan who had a successful dairy business. David Alban Davies eventually bought Hitchman's Dairies, Ltd., which grew into a flourishing business under his direction. In 1933 he built Brynawelon, Llanrhystud and retired there, leaving the management of the business to two of his sons, **Jenkin** and David Harold. He died 2 December 1951 and was buried at Penuwch.

At the beginning of his career he vowed he would give the church 10% of his earnings. As a result, and in co-operation with other members, the Welsh Presbyterian Church, Moriah, Walthamstow, came into being and he helped provide it with a manse. He also built a schoolroom near his old home in Llanrhystud for the Presbyterian Church. He served the local community as a member of Walthamstow Borough Council for nine years. After returning to Wales he served as high sheriff of Cardiganshire in 1940 and became a member and alderman (1949) of Cardiganshire County Council, and served as chairman of its health and welfare committees. He was a founder-member and chairman of Aberystwyth and District Old People's Housing Society when it purchased Deva, a residence for old people which benefited greatly by his generosity. He was particularly interested in improvements in agriculture and donated £10,000 to the Department of Animal Health, U.C.W., Aberystwyth. He was president of the North Cardiganshire Farmers' Co-operative Society for a period. He also devoted his time to education, being the first chairman of the governors of Dinas Secondary Modern School, Aberystwyth, and a governor of U.C.W., Aberystwyth and of the University of Wales. At short notice he bought and presented to U.C.W. 200 acres of land on Penglais estate to save it from building development. He was given an honorary degree of LL.D. in 1947. The following year his wife presented the first travelling library van to Cardiganshire County Council, to provide a service which was much appreciated by the public.

Author

Dr Mary Auronwy James

Sources

Llawlyfr Cymdeithas Ceredigion Llundain, 1952-3, 5-7
information from Mrs. Margaret Alban Davies, Aberaeron

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