

DAVIES, WILLIAM ANTHONY (1886 - 1962), journalist

Name: William Anthony Davies
Date of birth: 1886
Date of death: 1962
Spouse: Margaret Eirene Hughes (née Williams)
Spouse: Margaret Davies (née Davies)
Parent: Daniel Davies
Gender: Male
Occupation: journalist
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Printing and Publishing
Author: Daniel T. Davies

Born 1 March 1886 in Cwarter Coch, a thatched cottage in Cwmgrenig, Glanamau, Carmarthenshire, third son of the eight children of Daniel Davies and his wife. His father was a coalminer from Ysguborwen farm, Betws, and his mother was a native of Bryn, Llanelli. At 13 he joined his father and brothers in Gelliceidrim drift mine. He was a doorboy working with hauliers for some months but his father felt that this was too rough a life for the lad and he obtained work on the air pumps. In June 1900 he lost his left hand while cleaning powder from dynamite caps at home and he was blinded for several weeks. The accident changed his career from mining to journalism, and following the advice of his Sunday school teacher he mastered Pitman's short-hand. He joined the staff of the South Wales Press, Llanelli, and in 1903 he began to keep a diary in short-hand, a practice he retained throughout his life. He was 'Llyn y Fan' in the prose medal competition at the Llanelli national eisteddfod in 1962, when he was encouraged to publish the diary which he submitted. Selections, edited by [J. Ellis Williams](#), appeared under the title *Berw Bywyd* in 1968. The original diaries were destroyed. In 1905 he moved to Cardiff to the *South Wales Daily News* becoming its political sub-editor and gossip writer. He joined the staff of the *Daily Sketch* in London in 1919 and then moved to the *Daily News* - the *News Chronicle* later, where he was sub-editor, night editor and assistant editor. His weekly column 'Llygad Lluchwr' became very popular and his love of Wales, its people and culture were apparent in it. He became one of Fleet Street's most brilliant executives but he retained his uncompromising radicalism and firm nonconformity throughout his life. His essays reveal his shrewd judgement of people and events. He had a sharp mind and was a staunch defender of the common man and of Welsh interests. One of his successes was to halt the spread of afforestation in the Teifi valley. He was a well-known eisteddfod supporter and was made an hon. white-robed member of the Gorsedd of Bards in Pwllheli in 1955. He followed the missionary campaigns of Stephen and George Jeffreys in Wales and London. He was baptised in Llanelli and while he lived in London he worshipped at Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and did social work with the Salvation Army.

He married (1) Margaret, daughter of William Trefor Davies, minister of Soar (Congl.), Llanelli in 1909; they had a son and daughter. His wife died in 1953 a few weeks after his retirement to Cardiff where he became a member of Tabernacl church: and (2) Eirene Hughes, widow of [T. Rowland Hughes](#) and a fellow-member at Tabernacl, in 1958. After retiring he wrote regularly for a time for *Y Cymro* under the names 'Sguborwen' and 'Llygad Lluchwr'. He died Sunday 4 November 1962 in St. Winifred's Hospital, Cardiff and his ashes were buried in his first wife's grave at the Box cemetery, Llanelli.

Author

Daniel T. Davies

Sources

Personal knowledge

Western Mail, 6 November 1962

Y Cymro, 8 November 1962

Additional Links

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