EDWARDS, FANNY WINIFRED (1876 - 1959), schoolteacher, children's writer, and dramatist

Name: Fanny Winifred Edwards
Date of birth: 1876
Date of death: 1959
Parent: Jane Edwards (née Roberts)
Parent: William Edwards
Gender: Female
Occupation: schoolteacher, children's writer, and dramatist
Area of activity: Education; Literature and Writing; Performing Arts
Author: Arwyn Lloyd Hughes

Born 21 February 1876 in Penrhyndeudraeth, Merionethshire, a sister of the poet William Thomas Edwards ('Gwilym Deudraeth '; and the youngest of the 12 children of William Edwards, master mariner, and his wife Jane (née Roberts). She was educated at Penrhyndeudraeth elementary school, becoming a pupil-teacher, afterwards a teacher until her retirement in December 1944 thereby completing over fifty years' service. She did not marry, and died in Ffestiniog, 16 November 1959, and was buried in Nazareth cemetery, Penrhyndeudraeth.

She realised from her early days as a teacher that there was a dearth of suitable literature in Welsh for children and this prompted her to begin writing short stories which she could read to her pupils. (Sir) O.M. Edwards observed her at work whilst on a visit to the school and urged her to publish these stories. This was the beginning of her very successful career as a children's writer - a career which was to span nearly 60 years. She published more than 150 stories in *Cymru'r Plant* from 1902 onwards. (Her two short novels, *Cit* (1908) and *Dros y gamfa* (1926), appeared orginally in serial form in that monthly magazine.) She also contributed to *Cymru*, *Y Drysorfa*, *Y Winllan* and other denominational publications. Between 1925 and 1951 she published five collections of stories, sketches and pieces for recitation. She possessed the natural gift of the true story-teller and undoubtedly her host of publications filled a considerable gap in Welsh writing for children for many years. She also published 17 short, one-act plays, mostly for children, one of which was translated by Margaret Rosser under the title *Choosing a hat* (1951). She won twice in the national eisteddfod and was herself an adjudicator in the national eisteddfod at Dolgellau, 1949. T.H. Parry-Williams included one of her stories in his volume *Ystoriau heddiw* (1938). At the Llanrwst national eisteddfod in 1951 she was presented with the Sir. O.M. Edwards memorial prize in recognition of her outstanding and untiring service to Urdd Gobaith Cymru and to children's literature in Welsh. She gave faithful service to Nazareth (Presb.), Penrhyndeudraeth, and especially to the Sunday school there, through- out her life. She took an active part in the North Wales Women's Temperance Union and she was a member of the council of the Merioneth Historical and Records Society until her death; she published work in the society's periodical (1951).

Author

Arwyn Lloyd Hughes

Sources

Information from her nephew, Trefor Edwards, London

Trysorfa y Plant, 90 (1951), 52-4

Baner ac Amserau Cymru, 3 December 1959, 26 March 1976

Y Goleuad, 6 January 1960

Yr Herald Cymraeg a'r Genedl, 3, 10 April 1961

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: Fanny Winifred Edwards

Additional Links

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