EVANS, JOHN JAMES (1894 - 1965), teacher and writer

Name: John James Evans
Date of birth: 1894
Date of death: 1965
Spouse: Eleanor Evans
Parent: Mary Evans (née Thomas)
Parent: Enoch Evans
Gender: Male
Occupation: teacher and writer
Area of activity: Education; Literature and Writing
Author: Evan David Jones

Born 21 April 1894 in Tŷ Capel-y-Bryn (U), Cwrtnewydd, Cardiganshire, the son of Enoch Evans, Bwlchyfadfa, Talgarreg, and his wife, Mary Thomas, whose mother came from Llanwenog and who had moved to the chapel house when she lost her husband as a young man. John Evans, the minister at Capel-y-Bryn, had a great influence on J.J. Evans. He was educated at the village primary school to which David Rees Davies, ' Cledlyn ', came as headmaster in 1902. Davies was of the same stock and he had a great influence on his pupil. The father was an engineer in a coal mine in the Aberdare area and he came home to see his family every month. Evans went in 1912 from Llandysul County School to the University College at Bangor where he obtained second-class honours in Welsh in 1915 and took his degree in the following year. In 1926, he was awarded an M.A. for a thesis on the influence of the French Revolution on Welsh literature which was published by Gwasg y Brython in 1928 (*Dylanwad y chwyldro Ffrengig ar lenyddiaeth Cymru*). He taught at schools in Hendreforgan and Llwynypïa before he served in World War I, first with the Royal Welch Fusiliers and then with the Hood Battalion, R.N.D. In 1920, he was appointed Welsh teacher at Fishguard County School where he remained until 1935 when he became the headmaster of St. David's County School. Evans was conscious, as a teacher, that the education of children should be founded on the national language, literature, history and traditions. The Unitarian traditions of the Cwrtnewydd district had left their mark and Evans had the gift of promoting reconciliation and of building bridges within society. He was a vice-president of the teachers' union, Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru, 1938-44. After his retirement in 1961, he was a member of Pembrokeshire County Council which gave him an opportunity to fight both for the place of the Welsh language in county schools and for a hospital at Haverfordwest.

Evans was especially devoted to the National Eisteddfod and he was secretary to the Literary Committee at the Fishguard Eisteddfod in 1936. He won his first *Eisteddfod* prize at Pontypool in 1924 for a Welsh reading-book on animals and birds, illustrated with quotations from Welsh poetry. At the Treorchy Eisteddfod of 1928, he won a prize for an essay on Morgan Rhys and his times which was published by the University of Wales Press in 1935 (*Morgan John Rhys a'i amserau*). His handbooks on Welsh idioms and on *cynghanedd* were awarded prizes at the Cardiff Eisteddfod of 1938. *Llawlyfr y Cynganeddion* was published by the University of Wales Press in 1946 and reprinted in 1951. Evans also published *Cymry enwog y ddeunawfed ganrif* (1937), *Gramadeg Cymraeg* (1946 and 1960), *Dewi Sant a'i amserau* (1963), and *Diarhebion Cymraeg* (1965). He contributed several articles to the *Ymofynydd*.

Evans married, on 2 January 1923, Eleanor, the daughter of T. Jones Davies, a Calvinistic Methodist minister at Taffs Wells, at Pembroke Terrace chapel, Cardiff. They had one son and a daughter. He died at Haverfordwest Hospital on 30 December 1965 and he was buried in the graveyard at St. David's.

Author

Evan David Jones, (1903 - 1987)

Sources

The Biographical Index of W. W. Price, AberdÃ¢r

information from his daughter

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