

HOWARD, JAMES HENRY (1876 - 1947), preacher, author and socialist

Name: James Henry Howard
Date of birth: 1876
Date of death: 1947
Spouse: Annie Matilda Howard (née Davies)
Parent: Catherine Howard (née Bowen)
Parent: Joshua George Howard
Gender: Male
Occupation: preacher, author and socialist
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Politics, Government and Political Movements; Religion
Author: Derwyn Jones

born 3 November 1876, in Swansea, son of Joshua George, and Catherine (née Bowen) Howard. His father claimed to be a direct descendant of John Howard, the prison reformer. He lost his parents when a child. For some time he was brought up in his mother's family and later he was put into the Cottage Homes at Cockett near Swansea. As an adolescent, he was taken in by a collier and his wife, Thomas and Mary Davies, Bonymaen, Llansamlet, and he was a collier himself for some time. He had received his early education in the school at Cockett, but when he decided to become a minister, he went for further education to Gwynfryn School, Ammanford, kept by ' [Wadcyn Wyn](#) ' (Watkin Hezekiah Williams and then to the Academy at Newcastle Emlyn, kept by John Phillips, son of the famous [Evan Phillips](#). From there, he went to University College, Cardiff, and the college at Trefeca. He received a call to the Presbyterian Chapel (an English cause) in Terrace Road, Swansea, before he had finished his college course, and was ordained in the Association meeting in Porth in 1905. He was the minister of Terrace Road for only a short time before he moved to Tabernacl, Cwmavon, (1905-09), and then became the minister of Wilmer Road, Birkenhead (1909-15), the Presbyterian chapel (English) in Colwyn Bay (1915-27), Catherine Road, Liverpool (1921-41), and then received a second call to the English cause in Colwyn Bay in 1941. He remained there until 1947 when he resigned because of ill health. He married Annie Matilda Davies, Ammanford, and they had a son and a daughter. During his ministry, especially in Liverpool, he did much social work and he was known as ' down and out Jim ', because he was often seen joining the queue of the unemployed to have an opportunity of gaining knowledge of social problems. He was a fervent socialist, prominent in the Labour Party, and a personal friend of people like Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald, Arthur Henderson and George Lansbury. He was a candidate for Labour in the parliamentary election of 1931. He was a convinced pacifist and gave a great deal of assistance to conscientious objectors in World War I, speaking in their defence and visiting them in military camps like the one at Kinmel Park. He was a popular preacher, especially with congregations in south Wales and though English was his first language, he became a fluent speaker and writer in Welsh also. He emphasised the social aspects of the teachings of the Gospel and at one time was thought to be a fiery social reformer, but by the time he returned to Colwyn Bay in 1941 his opinions had cooled considerably.

He took great interest in the Poor Laws and was awarded an M.A. from the University of Liverpool in 1920-21, for a thesis on ' Phases of Poor Law policy and administration, 1760-1834, with special reference to Denbighshire and Caernarvonshire vestries '. In 1936, he was awarded a D.D. honoris causa by Princeton University, U.S.A. He wrote regularly for the press on religious and social topics, and published a number of books which were popular in their day, including an interesting autobiography, *Winding Lanes*. His most important publications are: *Y Bywyd llawn o'r Ysbryd (gan John Macneil), wedi'i gyfieithu gan y Parch J.H. Howard ... ynghyd â rhagymadrodd gan y Parch. J. Phillips ac A. Murray* (1906); *Cristionogaeth a chymdeithas, gyda rhagair gan y Gwir Anrhydeddus D. Lloyd George* (1914); *Life beyond the veil* (1918); *Which Jesus? Young Britain's choice* (1926); *Perarogl Crist: cofiant a phregethau y Parch. William Jones, Treforis* (1932); *Jesus the agitator: foreword by the Rt. Hon. George Lansbury* (1934); *Winding Lanes: a book of impressions and recollections* (1938).

He died in a private hospital in Colwyn Bay on July 7th, 1947, and was buried in Bron-y-nant cemetery, Colwyn Bay, on July 9th.

Author

Derwyn Jones

Sources

Winding lanes a book of impressions and recollections (Caernarfon 1938)

Blwyddiadur y Methodistiaid Calfnaid, 1948

Y Goleuad, 10 September 1944

information from his son, Ieuan Davies Howard, Brynsiencyn

and personal knowledge

Further Reading

NLW Archives: [Election address of the Rev J. H. Howard, M.A., The Labour Candidate for Merioneth.](#)

Additional Links

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