

HUGHES, EDWARD DAVID (1906 - 1963), scientist and Professor of Chemistry in London University

Name: Edward David Hughes
Date of birth: 1906
Date of death: 1963
Spouse: Ray Fortune Christina Hughes (née Davies)
Parent: Ann Hughes
Parent: Huw Hughes
Gender: Male
Occupation: scientist and Professor of Chemistry in London University
Area of activity: Education; Science and Mathematics
Author: Melfyn Richard Williams

Born in Ynysgain Bach, a farm near Llanystumdwy, Caernarfonshire, 18 June 1906, youngest son of the nine children of Huw and Ann Hughes, who came from Llandecwyn, Meirionnydd. He was educated in Llanystumdwy primary school and Porthmadog grammar school. He was fortunate to have a notable science teacher in W.J. Hughes, and consequently secured a place for himself in the University College, Bangor, to read chemistry under Professor Kennedy Orton. In 1927 he gained a B.Sc. honours degree (1st class) in chemistry. During 1927-28, he was trained as a teacher, and the following year he returned to his old department as a research student. He took his Ph.D. degree in 1930 and was awarded the M.Sc. of London University in 1932 and D.Sc. (London) in 1936. That same year he was awarded the Meldola medal of the Roy. Inst. of Chemistry and also elected Ramsay Memorial Fellow. He was chosen to deliver the Tilden Lecture of the Chemical Society in 1945.

On the outbreak of World War II his department moved to the university colleges at Aberystwyth and Bangor, where it became mainly his responsibility. In 1943 he was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the University College, Bangor, and was dean of the faculty of science there 1946-48. In 1948 he returned to London as Professor of chemistry in University College, and in 1961 he was appointed head of the chemistry department which at the time had five professors. In 1949 he was elected F.R.S. He was the first to produce and use heavy hydrogen in the U.K., and he succeeded with the assistance of I. Dostrovsky and D.R. Llewellyn to build apparatus to separate oxygen isotopes on a large scale.

He held a number of posts during his period in London. He was honorary secretary of the Chemical Society, 1950-56, and vice-president, 1956-59; honorary secretary of the Chemical Council, 1953-55; Chairman of the Board of Studies in Chemistry and Chemical Industries, University of London, 1955-60; a member of the council of the Roy. Inst. of Chemistry, 1961 up to his death; governor of the Northern Polytechnic, 1950-60; honorary secretary of the Ramsay Memorial Fellowships Trust, 1949-61, and chairman of the Advisory Council from 1961. He was also dean of the faculty of science of University College, London, 1958-61. He wrote over 200 articles and scientific papers, most of which appeared in the *Jnl. Chem. Soc.*

In 1934 he married Ray Fortune Christina, daughter of Llewellyn Davies, Brecon, and they had one daughter. He died in University College Hospital, London, 30 June 1963, after a short illness.

Author

Melfyn Richard Williams

Sources

Who was who?

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