

OWEN, HUGH JOHN (1880 - 1961), solicitor, author and local historian

Name: Hugh John Owen
Date of birth: 1880
Date of death: 1961
Parent: Elizabeth Owen (née Hughes)
Parent: John Owen
Gender: Male
Occupation: solicitor, author and local historian
Area of activity: History and Culture; Law; Literature and Writing
Author: Arwyn Lloyd Hughes

Born 5 February 1880 in Pwllheli, Caernarfonshire, the son of John Owen, master mariner, and his wife Elizabeth (née Hughes). He was educated at Bala grammar school, Bala. After completing his articles with the firm of Robyns-Owen, Pwllheli, and on being admitted solicitor in 1903, he joined the legal department of London County Council. He served at home and in Greece with the R.A.O.C. during World War I and attained the rank of captain. He was appointed Clerk of the Peace and first full-time Clerk of Merioneth County Council in 1920, posts which he held with distinction until his retirement in March 1954. He was made Deputy Lieutenant of the county in 1949.

Without doubt one of his main interests was the study of local history and he always succeeded in transmitting his enthusiasm to others. It was he who was mainly responsible for founding the Merioneth Historical and Record Society in 1939, of which he became a vice-president. He served as chairman of the Society's Council with devotion from its inception until his death. He was also prominent in establishing the Merioneth Record Office in 1952 and in the appointment of a county archivist. He represented Merioneth County Council on the Court of Governors of the National Library of Wales from 1934 until his death. He was a painstaking researcher and worked unceasingly on local records of all kinds, particularly on the records of the Merioneth quarter sessions court. He published five volumes: *The Merioneth Volunteers and local militia during the Napoleonic Wars* (1934); *Echoes of old Merioneth* (1944); *Sir Love's adventures in Spain* (1945); *The treasures of the Mawddach* (1950) and *From Merioneth to Botany Bay* (1952). He contributed between 1951-61 numerous articles to the *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*. His papers are kept in the Record Office in Dolgellau.

He was unmarried. He died in Pwllheli 29 June 1961 and was buried in St. Hywyn's churchyard, Aberdaron.

Author

Arwyn Lloyd Hughes

Sources

Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society, iv, 1-2

Edgar Stephens, *The Clerks of the Counties 1360-1960* (Warwick 1961) (1961)

Who's who in Wales, (1921)

The Times, 1 July 1961

The Liverpool Daily Post, 7 July 1961

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 1 July 1961

Y Dydd, 7, 14 July 1961

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