

THOMAS, IFOR (1877 - 1918), geologist and inspector of schools

Name: Ifor Thomas
Date of birth: 1877
Date of death: 1918
Parent: Margaret Thomas
Parent: Dafydd Thomas
Gender: Male
Occupation: geologist and inspector of schools
Area of activity: Education; Nature and Agriculture
Author: Huw Walters

Born at Commercial Place, Glanamau, Carmarthenshire, on 24 November 1877, son of Dafydd Thomas ('Trumor'; 1844 - 1916) and his wife Margaret. His father, who was a miner at Gelliceidrim colliery in the Aman Valley, was a poet, a local historian and a regular contributor to Welsh-language newspapers. His prize-winning essay *Hen Gymeriadau Plwyf y Betws* was published in 1894 (reprinted 1912). Ifor Thomas was educated at the Board school, Glanamau, where he was also a pupil-teacher and at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where he graduated B.Sc. After a short period as a teacher at Wellington College and at Brynmawr secondary school, he went to the University of Marburg in Germany to study geology and palaeontology under Professor Emanuel Kayser. He learnt German during this time and graduated with a Ph.D. in 1905. He returned to London in the same year when he was appointed to the staff of the Geological Survey in Jermyn Street and he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geological Society. He gained the degree of D.Sc. from the University of Wales in 1911. He had a great interest in education and when his health deteriorated in 1912 he returned to Wales on his appointment as one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, setting up home in Swansea. He placed great emphasis on the teaching of Welsh in schools at a time when that was not fashionable and he won the respect and admiration of [Sir Owen M. Edwards](#) for his work on behalf of the language. He wrote many scholarly articles on geological subjects in *The Geological Magazine* and he also contributed articles to *Seren Gomer* and *Y Genhinen*. He was among the first to discuss in Welsh the geological interests of [Edward Lhuyd](#). Among his principal published works are: *The British Carboniferous Orthotetinae* (1910); *The British Carboniferous Producti* (1914); *The Trilobite Fauna of Devon and Cornwall* (1909); *A New Devonian Trilobite and Lamellibranch from Cornwall* (1909); *A Note on Phacops (Trimeroccephalus) Laevis (Münst)* (1909); *Neue Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Devonischen Fauna Argentinien* (1905). His health was always indifferent; he returned to his old home in Glanamau in the spring of 1918, where he died, unmarried, on 30 March in the same year. He was buried in the graveyard of Bethesda Baptist church, Glanamau.

Author

Dr Huw Walters

Sources

Seren Gomer, May 1918, 136-148

Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London, 75 (1919), xvii-xviii

South Wales Guardian, 30 March 1975

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q20733286](#)

Published date: 2001

Article Copyright: <http://rightsstatements.org/page/InC/1.0/> 

The Dictionary of Welsh Biography is provided by The National Library of Wales and the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. It is free to use and does not receive grant support. A donation would help us maintain and improve the site so that we can continue to acknowledge Welsh men and women who have made notable contributions to life in Wales and beyond.

Find out more on our [sponsorship page](#).



