JONES, BENJAMIN MAELOR (1894-1982), educationalist and author

Name: Benjamin Maelor Jones
Date of birth: 1894
Date of death: 1982
Gender: Male
Occupation: educationalist and author
Area of activity: Education; Literature and Writing
Author: Arwyn Lloyd Hughes

born 6 July 1894, the fifth son of Edward and Jane Jones, 13 Yale Street, Johnstown, near Rhosllannerchrugog, Denbighshire. Eleven children were born to them, but three died in infancy. His father, a carpenter at the Hafod colliery, hailed from Llansanffraid Glyndyfrdwy, Meironnydd, and his mother from Llansanffraid Glynceiriog, Denbighshire. (The Edeirnion poet, Edward Jones ('Iorwerth Goes Hir'; 1824-1880) was his paternal grandfather.)

He was educated at the local elementary school, Ruabon county school (1905-12); the University College of North Wales, Bangor (B.A., 1915 with hons. in English; M.A., 1932 'with distinction'), the universities of London (LL.B., 1925), and Oxford (diploma in education, 1932). He became a member of the Middle Temple, and was called to the bar in 1929. He was a schoolteacher at Dronfield (1915-16), Clitheroe (1916-20) and Woking (1920-36) before his appointment as headmaster of the boys' grammar school, Bala, in 1936. In December 1942 he was appointed director of education for Merioneth, 'with great unanimity', out of 31 applicants. He commenced on his duties in April 1943, and remained in post with distinction until his retirement in July 1960.

During his period as director of education, and for over twenty years in retirement, he gave exemplary service to numerous educational institutions and cultural societies in Merioneth, e.g. Coleg Harlech (vice-president, 1949-82), the Rural Community Council (president, 1953-69) and the county's Historical and Record Society (honorary secretary, 1948-61; chairman, 1961-82) to name only a few. As with the History Society and the Merionethshire Library, he gave his ardent support to the Merioneth Record Office from its establishment in 1952. He was a member of the court (1936-43) and later of the council of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. He was also a governor of Dr Williams' school and of Ysgol y Gader, Dolgellau, for years. He served as the first vice-chairman of the Friends of the National Library of Wales during 1965-74. He was chairman of the music committee of the Dolgellau National Eisteddfod, 1949. He was a deacon from 1947, and treasurer of Judah (B) chapel, Dolgellau from 1953, and he was a popular Sunday school teacher there for over 35 years. He was elected president of the Denbighshire, Flintshire and Merioneth Baptist Assembly for 1951-52; his presidential address on the subject Addysg Grefyddol ('Religious Education') was published in *Yr Adroddiad* am 1952; see also his article on Addysg Grefyddol yn yr Ysgolion ('Religious Education in Schools') in *Seren Cymru*, 8 and 15 July 1938.

His M.A. dissertation was published under the title *Henry Fielding: Novelist and Magistrate* (1933). The University of London made a grant towards its publication and the distinguished judge, the Hon. Mr Justice Du Parcq wrote a foreword to the volume. It was regarded as an important study on Fielding and was widely and generously reviewed at the time.

B. Maelor Jones was highly respected within Merioneth and beyond. He was a wise, efficient and popular director of education. A genial and magnanimous person, he was a gifted and humorous raconteur. In 1930 he married Magdalen Mary Jones (she died 11 May 1972) of Uwchmynydd, near Aberdaron, Caernarfonshire, who was a nurse in London at the time. There were no children of the marriage. He died on 13 January 1982 at 87 years of age at Hywyn, his home in Dolgellau, and his remains were cremated on 18 January at Pentrebychan, near Wrexham, close to where he was born. A memorial service was held at Judah chapel, Dolgellau, on 20 February 1982.

Author

Arwyn Lloyd Hughes

Sources

Papurau B. Maelor Jones yn Archifdy Meirionnydd, Dolgellau

family information given by his sister in law, Miss Claudia Catherine Jones, Pwllheli

personal knowledge

Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society, IX(I), 1981, 1-2

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 8 July 1960, 22 January 1982

Y Cymro, 14 July 1960

Y Dydd, 18 December 1942, 1 January 1943, 8 July 1960, 22 January/26 February 1982

Seren Cymru, 8, 22 August 1936, 2 January 1943, 7 July 1960

A photograph of him appears in *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, IX (1), 1981

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