

## HUGHES, WILLIAM JOHN (1891 - 1945), school teacher and college lecturer

**Name:** William John Hughes  
**Date of birth:** 1891  
**Date of death:** 1945  
**Spouse:** Laura Hughes (née Binns)  
**Parent:** Ann Jane Hughes  
**Parent:** John Owen Hughes  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** school teacher and college lecturer  
**Area of activity:** Education  
**Author:** Thomas Roberts

Born near Penfforddalen, Y Groeslon, Caernarfonshire, 10 September 1891, son of John Owen and Ann Jane Hughes, but his parents moved to Nantlle soon after his birth. The father was a quarryman and later a slate inspector. He was educated at the council school, Nantlle. At an early age he proved to be a gifted child, and he had a remarkably successful career at the county school at Pen-y-groes, 1904-08. He entered the University College at Bangor in 1909. He secured a high place in all his subjects throughout his course, and his name figured year after year in the list of students awarded scholarships for the excellence of their performance. He graduated B.A. in 1912 with second class honours in English, and gained a first-class Certificate of Education. In September 1912 he proceeded to Nuremberg to pursue studies in French and German and methods of teaching these languages at Le Cours de Langues Institute. At the same time he taught English at German night schools. He spent a further six and a half years as a teacher in secondary schools - at Lisburn, Belfast, January 1913 to 1915, Ilminster in Somerset to 1916, and Friars School, Bangor, to 1919. He was awarded the degree of M.A. in 1919 and his dissertation was published in 1924 under the title *Wales and the Welsh in English Literature from Shakespeare to Scott* (Wrexham). This was an attempt to trace and explain the attitude of English authors towards Wales and the Welsh. He researched his subject thoroughly and was able to present his conclusion clearly and interestingly. The chapters devoted to the tourists and antiquaries are of particular value, as are the two appendixes - the discussion on the relationships between the antiquaries of Wales and England in the 18th c. together with a comprehensive bibliography. In 1919 he was appointed lecturer in English language and literature at the Normal College, Bangor, a post which he held for the rest of his life. He was a man of wide culture and his students were deeply influenced by him.

In 1925 he married Laura Binns, a tutor at the Normal College, and they had two daughters.

Between 1920 and 1930 he paid much attention to educational matters in Wales. He wrote articles on the topic for *Y Genedl*, *Yr Efrdydd*, and *Welsh Outlook*, and won a prize of £15 at the national eisteddfod at Holyhead, 1927, for an essay on the education system in Wales. He also tutored adult classes, and for many years served as assistant examiner in English for the Central Welsh Board. In the 1930s he began his involvement in the public life of Bangor. He served on the city council from 1932 to 1944, and was chairman of the general purposes committee from 1939 to 1944. He was of sound judgement, and had a clear mind, and his fellow members appreciated his guidance. He was not of a strong constitution. His health failed for a while in 1921, and deteriorated again towards the end of World War II. He died 24 April 1945, and was buried in Glanadda cemetery, Bangor.

### Author

**Thomas Roberts**, (1885 - 1960)

### Sources

Personal knowledge, and information from members of his family

### Additional Links

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