

MORRIS-JONES, JOHN HENRY (1884-1972), Liberal/National Liberal politician

Name: John Henry Morris-jones
Date of birth: 1884
Date of death: 1972
Gender: Male
Occupation: Liberal/National Liberal politician
Area of activity: Politics, Government and Political Movements
Author: John Graham Jones

He was born at Waunfawr, Caernarfonshire on 2 November 1884, the son of Captain Morris Jones and Ann Jones his wife. He received his education at Caernarfon Grammar School, Menai Bridge Grammar School and St Mungo's College, Glasgow. He was a general medical practitioner from 1908 until 1929. He was a captain with the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1914 until 1919 and served in France with the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment. He later served as Chairman of his division of the British Medical Association and of the Colwyn Bay Medical Society.

In May 1929 he was elected the Liberal MP for the relatively safe seat of Denbighshire in succession to **Ellis W. Davies** MP who was standing down because of ill-health. Morris-Jones joined the Liberal National group of MPs led by **Sir John Simon** in August 1931, and remained a National Liberal MP for the constituency until he retired from parliament in 1950. He was a member of the Denbighshire County Council and of the Colwyn Bay UDC of which he became chairman. He served as High Sheriff of Denbighshire in 1938.

Morris-Jones served as assistant whip in 1932-35 and Lord Commissioner in 1935-37. The Liberal National whip was withdrawn from him from February 1942 and May 1943. One of his reasons for resigning from the Liberal Nationals may have been a desire to have the freedom to criticise the government over its prosecution of the war, including the need to place war production under the direction of a single minister which Morris-Jones had urged in 1941. Morris-Jones, however, rejoined the Liberal Nationals in March 1943, presumably sensing or calculating it would be the safest way to enable him to continue as an MP. He was chairman of the Welsh Parliamentary Party, 1941-42, and chairman of the National Liberal Party executive, 1953-54. He was also a member of the governing body of the Church in Wales from 1950 until 1962.

While in Parliament, Morris-Jones took a particular interest in public health and agriculture both nationally and as they affected Denbighshire. He was an honorary Treasurer of the Parliamentary Medical Group from the time of his first election to parliament in 1929 and was later appointed as a member of the Committee of Trustees set up under the MPs Pensions Act.

In 1938 he was a member of a Parliamentary delegation participating in events to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Australia. While there he took part in discussions about the development of the Empire, measures to stimulate immigration to Australia and the promoting of Australian trade with the USA. More grimly, he was a member of a Parliamentary Delegation to Buchenwald concentration camp soon after its liberation in April 1945.

Although he stood down as an MP at the 1950 general election, Morris-Jones thereafter remained loyal to the Liberal Nationals, or National Liberal Party as it became known after 1948. He served as Vice Chairman of the Executive of the National Liberal Party in 1952 and the following year (1953-54) he went on to be Chairman.

As a doctor, Morris-Jones took a keen interest in the legislation to set up the National Health Service (the NHS). By and large he was not in favour, usually taking the side of the professional organisations in opposing measures to force doctors into the NHS. By 1948 he was much more closely aligned with the Conservatives and their thinking. However, like the doctors, Morris-Jones eventually bowed to the inevitable. Even though there were many doctors who disliked the Act, Morris-Jones felt they had achieved a significant amount though negotiation and should therefore accept the government's offer to join the NHS in July 1948.

He was knighted in the prime minister's list of the New Year's Honours in January 1937 and was awarded the Hon. Freedom of Colwyn Bay in 1956. Morris-Jones married Leila Augusta Paget-Marsland, the widow of J. Illidge Marsland, in 1931. There were no children of the marriage. Together with Hugh Lett, he published 'Surgical Experiences at Wimereux, France', in the *British Medical Journal* in 1915, and also an interesting volume of autobiography *Doctor in the Whip's Room* (1955).

Morris-Jones lived at Bryndyfynog, Llanrhaiadr near Denbigh, and at Royston, Hertfordshire. He died 9 July 1972.

Morris-Jones's papers are deposited in the Flintshire Record Office, which is located at The Old Rectory, Hawarden. The collection consists of papers between 1896 and 1965.

Author

Dr John Graham Jones

Sources

Who was who?

Etholiadau'r Ganrif / Welsh Elections 1885-1997 (Talybont 1999)

Welsh Hustings - 1885-2004 (Ammanford 2005)

Dod's Parliamentary Companion

columns from *The Times*

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Henry Morris-Jones](#)

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