

W H GRIFFITH THOMAS

David C F Wright DD

William Henry Griffith Thomas was a Welsh preacher, theologian, and an admired Keswick speaker.

He was born on 2 January, 1861. His father died before he was born and his mother married again to one Joseph Charles. She was originally Anne Nightingale Griffith whose father was William, a surgeon in Oswestry .But there were financial difficulties and Griffith Thomas left school at the age of 14 to go to work and bring in some necessary income. At the age of 16, he took a Sunday School Class and realised how little he knew and spoke with two friends who helped him to find the Lord Jesus as Saviour which resulted in his ardent study of the Scriptures and as a witness to the Lord

At the age of 18, the family moved to London where the young man worked in his uncle's office with excessive long hours so that he could not study until 10.30 pm. His uncle was William Charles who was a watch maker. The young man learned New Testament Greek studying late into the early hours.

Then, in 1883, at the age of 21 the church he was attending offered him a lay curacy which allowed him time to study at Kings College and elsewhere and after three years he obtained his A K C

(Associate of Kings College) with distinction and was ordained.

In 1886, he moved to St Aldgate's in Oxford hoping to study at the University and eventually became a non-collegiate student at Christ Church and, in 1894, was awarded the Hall-Houghton Junior Septuagint Prize and, in 1895, earned his BD with first class honours. In 1896, he became vicar of St Pauls, Portman Square and in his nine years there he was noted for his evangelical and authoritative preaching and was regarded as an excellent Bible teacher. He eventually was awarded a MA and a DD.

He returned to Oxford IN 1905 as Principal of Wycliffe Hall and in those five years was affectionately known as G T. These were the days of Higher Criticism emanating from Germany which was shaking the faith of many, but he stood for the authority of the Scriptures.

He had a surprise invitation from Wycliffe College, Toronto, in 1910, and spent his last fourteen years in North America. At Wycliffe (1910 -1919), he was a senior teacher but had some trips home where he would speak at the Keswick Convention and elsewhere. Sometimes he dealt with the controversial aspects of Higher Criticism but he was always evangelical and relevant in his trusty exposition of the Bible. He travelled to China and in Philadelphia in 1921 he spoke of the worrying modernism in China

He died on 2 June 1924 of heart trouble.

These were the days of some excellent evangelical clergymen in the Church of England who accepted the Bible as the Word of God, and preached faithfully from it and honoured the Lord Jesus.

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