

EVANS, MARY (1735 - 1789), mystic, known in her day as 'Whitemantle' (y Fantell Wen)

Name: Mary Evans Pseudonym: Whitemantle, Y Fantell Wen Date of birth: 1735 Date of death: 1789 Gender: Female Occupation: mystic Area of activity: Religion Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

She is generally believed to have reached Merioneth from Anglesey c. 1780 - some have it that she came as a maidservant to Maentwrog rectory, others that she lived at Breichiau, on the Maentwrog border of Llandecwyn parish; there are suggestions that she hailed from Cardiganshire. She had left her husband (probably before leaving Anglesey), and cohabited with another man. But she asserted that she was betrothed to Christ; arrayed in a red mantle she led a long procession to her 'marriage' in Ffestiniog church, after which there was a 'marriage-feast' in a tavern in that village, and Mary received many bridal gifts. On Sundays, she and her followers wore white mantles, and held ceremonies on Manod mountain and other hills. The sect spread far and wide around Ffestiniog, Penmachno, and Harlech - it seems to be agreed that apart from their credulity her followers were quite harmless and indeed good-living folk.

Mary ended her days at Talsarnau. She had announced that she would never die, and accordingly her body was kept unburied for a long time; but eventually it had to be buried (28 October 1789), in Llanfihangel-y-traethau churchyard - the tombstone gives her age as 54. For some time, her followers preserved scraps of her clothing as relics; but the sect soon died out.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

Robert Jones (Rhoslan), *Drych yr Amseroedd* (Trefriw 1820), 152-3 O. Gethin Jones, *Gweithiau Gethin sef casgliad o holl weithiau barddonol a llenyddol* (Llanrwst 1884), 257-8 D. Tecwyn Evans, *Atgofion Cynnar* (Tywyn 1950), 19 information from Mr. John Lloyd, Llanbedr, Meironnydd

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: Mari'r Fantell Wen

Additional Links

Wikidata: Q18535799

Published date: 1959

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.

Conate

APA Citation

×

Jenkins, R. T., (1959). EVANS, MARY (1735 - 1789), mystic, known in her day as 'Whitemantle' (y Fantell Wen). Dictionary of Welsh Biography. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from https://biography.wales/article/s-EVAN-MAR-1735

Copy to Clipboard

Privacy & Cooki Copyright The Project Help Contact

