

DAVIES, WILLIAM (1859 - 1907), musician

Name: William Davies
Date of birth: 1859
Date of death: 1907
Spouse: Clara Davies (née Leighton)
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Music; Performing Arts
Author: Robert David Griffith

Born 1 October 1859 at Rhosllannerchrugog, Denbighshire. As a child he was taught music by Hugh Griffith and **Richard Mills** (1840 - 1903 of Rhos. Before he was 20 he had won a prize for singing Handel's 'Total Eclipse.' **Joseph Parry** (1841 - 1903), the adjudicator, praised him highly and urged his friends to assist him to get a course of instruction at the University College, Aberystwyth. Funds were raised to send him to the college, and when he had completed his studies he set up as a music teacher at Llangefni, Anglesey, in 1880. In 1884 he was appointed chorister at Bangor. It was while he was at Llangefni that he began to compose songs which achieved considerable popularity. The first was 'Pistyll y Llan,' and this was followed by 'Y Banerwr', 'Yr Ornest,' 'Chwifwfn Faner,' and 'Llwybr y Wyddfa.' He won prizes at the national eisteddfod held in Liverpool for his songs 'Neges y Blodeuyn' and 'Y Gloch'; in London, 1887, for a churning song with harp obligato; Wrexham, 1888, for 'O na byddai'n haf o hyd' and 'Myfanwy'; and Brecon, 1889, for four songs. In 1889, out of eighty-six candidates, he was appointed principal tenor at Magdalen College, Oxford. In 1891 he married Clara Leighton, a soprano in the Carl Rosa Opera Company. In 1894, out of 100 candidates, he was appointed assistant vicar-choral of S. Paul's cathedral, London. He continued to compose and was considered one of the best Welsh composers of his time. He died 30 January 1907 and was buried at Abney Park, London.

Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

Sources

Y Cerddor, May 1897, March 1907

Edward Jones, *Rhestr gyda nodiadau byrion, o Enwogion Cymreig o 1700 i 1900* (1908)

Further reading

Lynd Davies, 'Davies, William (1859-1907)', *Cydymaith i Gerddoriaeth Cymru* (Talybont 2018), pp.142-3

Additional Links

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