

EVANS, HARRY (1873 - 1914), musician

Name: Harry Evans
Date of birth: 1873
Date of death: 1914
Spouse: Edith Gwendolen Evans (née Rees)
Child: Hubert John Evans
Child: Horace Evans
Parent: Sarah Evans
Parent: John Evans
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Music; Performing Arts; Religion
Author: Robert David Griffith

Born 1 May 1873 in Russell Street, Dowlais, Glamorganshire, the son of John and Sarah Evans. His sister taught him the Tonic Sol-fa system. He was only 9 years old when he was appointed organist at Gwernllwyn Congregational chapel, Dowlais, and the church arranged for him to receive music lessons from Edward Laurence, Merthyr Tydfil. In 1887 he was appointed organist of Bethania Congregational church, Dowlais. He succeeded in passing all the local examinations of the Royal Academy and of the Royal College of Music, London, with honours. He was by that time anxious to devote himself entirely to music, but his father, who wished him to receive a more general education, obtained a post as pupil-teacher for him at the Abermorlais boys' school; here he passed some South Kensington examinations in arithmetic, science, and art. Although he passed the Queen's Scholarship examination (for pupil-teachers), his health broke down and he was unable to proceed to a training college. In July 1893 he became A.R.C.O. and from then on gave all his time to music.

In 1898 Harry Evans formed a ladies' choir at Merthyr Tydfil and a male choir at Dowlais; the male choir won the prize at the national eisteddfod held at Liverpool in 1900. He conducted the Merthyr national eisteddfod (1901) choir; this choir gave a performance of 'Israel in Egypt.' In 1903 the prize of £200 offered at the Llanelly national eisteddfod was won by him. He now gave up competing and in that year accepted the invitation to become conductor of the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union; under his conductorship several works by the masters were given annually by this choir. In 1913 he became musical director at Bangor University College and, in the same year, local conductor and registrar of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society. He also became, at this time, conductor of the North Staffordshire Choral Society; this was at the suggestion of McNaught, who regarded him as the best choral conductor in the country. In 1914 he was invited to Birmingham to conduct a performance of 'Atlanta in Calydon'; he also had the honour of conducting Granville Bantock's choral symphony, 'Vanity of Vanities,' and the composer dedicated this work to him.

He was possessed of particularly penetrative powers as an adjudicator and was much in demand in that capacity at musical festivals throughout the British Isles. His fullest compositions were 'Victory of St. Garmon' and 'Dafydd ap Gwilym'; he also wrote several anthems and hymn-tunes, and arranged Welsh folk-songs and airs for choirs. A little before he died he had been selected as one of the three music editors of *Y Caniedydd Cynulleidfaol*, but he was unable to do any work in connection with that hymnal. His main ambition in life was to found a music college in Wales; had he lived he might have realized his ambition. He died 23 July 1914 and was buried in Smithdown Road cemetery, Liverpool.

Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

Sources

Y Cerddor, December 1896, September, October, November 1914

David Morgans, *Music and musicians of Merthyr and district: Together with a list of eisteddfodau to the year 1901* (Merthyr Tydfil 1922)

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Harry Evans](#)

Additional Links

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