

## GRIFFITHS, RICHARD (1756 - 1826), colliery pioneer

**Name:** Richard Griffiths  
**Date of birth:** 1756  
**Date of death:** 1826  
**Parent:** Elizabeth Griffiths (née Davies)  
**Parent:** William Griffiths  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** colliery pioneer  
**Area of activity:** Business and Industry  
**Author:** Robert Thomas Jenkins

The second son and third of nine children of William Griffiths and Elizabeth (Davies), of Gelli-fendigaid, Llanwynno, Glamorganshire, he was christened 13 January 1756. His family connections, by birth and by marriage (see Morgan, cited below), are very interesting; members of his family were among the earliest and strongest supporters of Methodism in Llanwynno and Pontypridd; and his youngest sister's marriage with EVAN MORGAN of Hafod Ucha was to have important consequences for Griffiths. He practised medicine at Cardiff; but the Methodist associations of his family would not seem to have affected him very deeply, for he was a 'sporting man' and an inveterate practical joker — he even arranged a comic funeral for himself (Morgan, 44-5). He died in 1826 (will proved May 31), and was buried at Llanwynno.

His fame rests upon the fact that his enterprise turned him into the first systematic exploiter of coal in the Rhondda valley. In 1790, he leased rights to open a level at Gyfeillon, connecting it with the canal at Treforest by a tramroad which crossed the Taff over a bridge. Before 1802, he had also leased from his brother-in-law Evan Morgan (above) the mineral rights under Hafod, and soon leased rights to open a level there; under his successors, the Thomases, pits were sunk at both places.

### Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969), Bangor

### Sources

O. Morgan, *History of Pontypridd and Rhondda Valleys* (1903), 38-45;

Elizabeth Phillips, *A history of the pioneers of the Welsh coalfield* (1925), 153-5;


E. D. Lewis, *The Rhondda Valleys: a study in industrial development, 1800 to the present day* (London 1959), p.39.

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Richard Griffiths](#) 

### Additional Links

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