

GRUFFYDD, THOMAS (1815 - 1887), one of the best known harpists of his period

Name: Thomas Gruffydd
Date of birth: 1815
Date of death: 1887
Child: Susannah Berrington Gruffydd Richards (née Gruffydd)
Gender: Male
Occupation: one of the best known harpists of his period
Area of activity: Music; Performing Arts
Author: Ray Looker

Born at Llangynidr, Brecknock, grandson of the rector of that parish. The fact that he lost his sight at an early age did not hinder his progress. A pupil of [John Wood Jones](#), family harpist at Glanbran near Llandovery, he subsequently occupied a similar position at Llanover, Monmouth. Most of his life, apparently, was spent in Llanover, where he also kept a smallholding. He won the triple harp in the Abergavenny eisteddfod of 1836. He became very popular as harpist and penillion singer in Monmouthshire and Glamorgan. In 1843 Gruffydd and his teacher played at Buckingham Palace, being accompanied on their visit by [Thomas Price](#) (Carnhuanawc); Gruffydd also gave a number of recitals at Marlborough House. In 1867 he was the guest of the Comte de la Villemarqué in Brittany, and was presented by the Comte, who spoke Welsh, with an engraved ring to mark the occasion. One of his songs, ' Gwlad y Beirdd,' was published. He died 30 August 1887, and was buried in the churchyard at Llanover.

Author

Ray Looker

Sources

H. Blackwell, [NLW MSS 9251-9277A: A Dictionary of Welsh Biography](#)

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Y Geninen, 1888, 189

Notable Welshmen (1700–1900) (1908)

Further reading

National Museum Wales: [53.48.1: Tunic worn by Thomas Gruffydd \(1815-1887\)](#)

Additional Links

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Published date: 1959

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