

JONES, GRIFFITH RHYS (Caradog; 1834 - 1897), conductor of a once well-known South Wales choir, 'Côr Caradog'

**Name:** Griffith Rhys Jones  
**Pseudonym:** Caradog  
**Date of birth:** 1834  
**Date of death:** 1897  
**Parent:** John Jones  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** conductor of a once well-known South Wales choir, 'Côr Caradog'  
**Area of activity:** Music; Performing Arts  
**Author:** Robert David Griffith

Born 21 December 1834 in the Rose and Crown tavern, Trecynon, Aberdare, the son of John Jones, engineer at the Llwydcoed iron-works, Aberdare. He was apprenticed to a smith.

He showed an early interest in music and became a competent violinist. When he was 19 he took a choir to an eisteddfod at Aberafan, the test piece being 'Hallelujah to the Father' (Beethoven). As the name of the choir which was successful was entered as 'Côr Caradog' the conductor was henceforth known as 'Caradog.' In 1858 he was appointed conductor of the Aberdare United Choir, and it was his work in this capacity which made him famous, the choir taking the chief prize at eisteddfodau over many years. In 1870 he moved to Treorchy in the Rhondda valley where he formed a male voice choir. In 1872 a choir was formed to compete at the Crystal Palace, London, and Caradog was chosen as conductor. His choir numbered 456, the members coming from various districts in South Wales. The contest, which took place on 10 July 1872, was won by 'Côr Caradog,' one of the competitors being a London choir led by Joseph Proudman. Later the choir sang before the prince and princess of Wales. After the dissolution of the 'Côr Mawr,' as it became affectionately known, Caradog formed a choir in Treorchy to perform the works of some of the masters.

He moved from Treorchy to Llanybyther, Carmarthenshire; thence he went to Cardiff, and from Cardiff to Pontypridd, where he died 4 December 1897; he was buried in the Aberdare cemetery. After the funeral it was decided to organize a public subscription to provide a suitable gravestone; a statue of him, the work of [Sir William Goscombe John](#), was afterwards placed on the square at Aberdare.

## Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

## Sources

'[Caradog](#),' *Y Cerddor*, Ionawr 1898, p.7

'[Y diweddar Griffith R. Jones \(Caradog\)](#),' *Y Cerddor*, Chwefror 1898, pp.14-15

*Y Cerddor*, 1920, 108

Watkin Hezekiah Williams, '[Caradog](#),' *Y Geninen*, Gwyl Dewi 1898, pp.46-51

## Further Reading

Cardiff University: [Trust to honour](#)

Wikipedia Article: [Griffith Rhys Jones](#)

## Delweddau

People's Collection Wales: Items relating to [Griffith Rhys Jones \(1834-97\)](#)

## Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q5608920](#)

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