

THOMAS, JOHN (1839 - 1921), musician, generally known as 'John Thomas of Llanwrtyd';

Name: John Thomas
Date of birth: 1839
Date of death: 1921
Spouse: Ann Thomas (née Williams)
Child: Annie Lewis (née Thomas)
Parent: Nansi Thomas
Parent: Benjamin Thomas
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Literature and Writing; Music; Poetry
Author: Robert David Griffith

Born 11 December 1839 at Blaenannerch, Cardiganshire, the son of Benjamin and Nansi Thomas. He went to a day school at Blaenannerch and to the Adpar grammar school, Newcastle Emlyn. He was apprenticed to a shopkeeper at Newcastle Emlyn but, owing to ill-health, returned to work in his father's shop, remaining at Blaenannerch till 1871. He began to write music when he was quite young. He won prizes at the Caernarvon national eisteddfod, 1862, for two-part songs ('Y Lloer' and 'Y glos loer, fugeiles lân') whilst his 'Nant y Mynydd' won for him the prize at the Swansea eisteddfod of 1863. He wrote several anthems ('Bendigedig fyddo Arglwydd Dduw Israel,' 'Fel y brefa'r hydd,' and 'Moeswch i'r Arglwydd'), and many hymn-tunes, of which 'Blaenycefn,' 'Cymod,' 'Aberporth,' and 'Ar ei ben bo'r goron' continue to be sung. He was also a poet; some of his poems are given in the biography by Evan Evans, 1926. In 1871, he married Anne, daughter of the family who kept the post office at Llanwrtyd, Brecknock, and he left Blaenannerch to live at Llanwrtyd. He served as music adjudicator and as conductor of hymnody festivals in many parts of Wales. In 1920 he was awarded the degree of M.A. (honoris causa) by the University of Wales for his services to the Welsh nation. He died 25 February 1921 and was buried in Llanwrtyd parish churchyard.

Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

Sources

Y Cerddor, April 1896 and April 1921

Evan Evans, *Cofiant John Thomas, Llanwrtyd* (Caernarfon 1926), 1926

Additional Links

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