

## WILLIAMS, EVAN (1706 - ?), harpist

**Name:** Evan Williams  
**Date of birth:** 1706  
**Date of death:** ?  
**Parent:** Jane Robert (née Griffith)  
**Parent:** Humphrey Robert  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** harpist  
**Area of activity:** Music; Performing Arts  
**Author:** Robert David Griffith

Born at Llangybi, Caernarfonshire. (The following entry is in the baptisms register of Llangybi church - ' September about 29 was baptized Evan, son of Humphrey Robert (Singer) and Jane Griffith his wife.' Nothing is known of his youth. He was an excellent harpist. Like many Welsh musicians he went to London (c. 1740). He assisted [John Parry](#), Ruabon, to collect material for and bring out his *Antient British Music*, 1742. He settled in London as teacher of the harp and obtained a post as harpist in a church; from references made to him by [William Morris](#) it would appear that he played the organ also. In the (Welsh) *Book of Common Prayer*, edited by [Richard Morris](#) (1770), are twenty-four psalm-tunes, the first printed tunes made available for use by Welsh people. Evan Williams performed a valuable service by arranging sixteen of these tunes in the common measure (8.6.8.6.), so that the metrical psalms of [archdeacon Edmund Prys](#), which were 8.7.8.7., could be sung to them. He also composed eight tunes in [Prys's](#) 'New Measure', 8.7.8.7. These were the first tunes composed by a Welshman to be published. With the tunes is also given, for the first time, instructions on how to sing. The [Morris](#) brothers of Anglesey refer to Evan William in their letters. It is not known when he died. His name appears in the Cymmrodorion list of members for 1762, but is not in that for 1777-8.

### Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

### Sources

J. Lloyd Williams, *Y tri thelynor arloeswyr cerddorol Cymru yn y ddeunawfed ganrif*(1945)

R. D. Griffith, *Hanes canu cynulleidfaol Cymru* (Cardiff 1948)

*Caernarvonshire Historical Society Transactions*, 1948

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q20804702](#)

**Published date:** 1959

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