

## EVANS, DAVID (Dewi Dawel; 1814 - 1891), tailor, publican, and poet

**Name:** David Evans  
**Pseudonym:** Dewi Dawel  
**Date of birth:** 1814  
**Date of death:** 1891  
**Spouse:** Mary Evans (née Davies)  
**Child:** William Caradawc Evans  
**Child:** Dafydd Evans  
**Child:** Thomas Morgan Evans  
**Parent:** Thomas Evans  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** tailor, publican, and poet  
**Area of activity:** Business and Industry; Eisteddfod; Poetry; Public and Social Service, Civil Administration  
**Author:** David Goronwy Griffiths

Born 16 September 1814, at Cefnffordd, Pen-y-garn, Llanfynydd parish, Carmarthenshire. His father, Thomas Evans, tailor, Pen-y-garn, was drowned in the river Cothi at Edwinsford, 9 December 1833, leaving nine children. Starting life as a tailor, Dewi Dawel worked from house to house until he was married on 10 November 1837 to Mary Davies, Maes-yr-haidd, Llanfynydd (died 7 May 1867); they brought up a family of ten children. After marriage he started business on his own account as a tailor at Cwm-du, in the adjoining parish of Talley; he also kept a village shop and public-house. He was self-taught. In a letter to relatives in America, he wrote: 'by coming into contact with travellers I was forced to learn a little English. By the assistance of a pensioner who lodged with me, and reading newspapers and dictionaries, I came to know a little.' His letters and notebooks show how well he succeeded. He was rate-collector for twenty years until 1881, and was clerk to the local school committee until the School Board came into operation in the parish in 1871; there were at that time sixty children at Cwmdu school and 120 at Talley school. He was a solitary Unitarian in the neighbourhood and was a regular contributor of verse to *Yr Ymfynydd*. He competed and adjudicated at local eisteddfodau, and took a prominent part in 'penny readings,' agricultural shows, and other features of country life. A collection of manuscripts, pamphlets, note-books, and printed material presented to the N.L.W. contains miscellaneous ballads and poems in his handwriting, hymn-tunes, extracts, notes on gardening, horticulture, etc. Among his printed compositions are an essay (successful at Llandilo eisteddfod) on the duty of parents to give a good education to their daughters, a ballad, and verses on the state of education in Wales following the report of the commissioners in 1847 ('Brad y Llyfrau Gleision'); these verses (see *Yr Ymfynydd*, 1849) are reproduced in *The Life and Work of William Williams, M.P.*, by Daniel Evans, 1939. He was particularly interested in the history of Talley parish with special reference to the ruined monastery and its bell, and at Talley eisteddfod, 24 April 1891, competed unsuccessfully for the prize offered for an essay on the history of the parish. Two of his sons were schoolmasters, Thomas Morgan Evans (1838 - 1892) at Cwm-du, and Dafydd Evans (1842 - 1893) at Talley. A younger son, WILLIAM CARADAWC EVANS (Gwilym Caradog; 1848 - 1878), left a note-book dated 27 August 1871, containing a number of verses with three chapters of notes on Welsh metres entitled 'Ysgol y Beirdd.' Dewi Dawel died at Cwm-du 20 December 1891, and was buried in the churchyard at Llanfynydd.

### Author

**David Goronwy Griffiths**, (1882 - 1958)

### Sources

*Cymru (O.M.E.)*, xxviii, 1905, 120

*Handlist of Manuscripts in the National Library of Wales*, i, 273-4

### Additional Links

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**Published date:** 1959

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APA Citation



Griffiths, D. G., (1959). EVANS, DAVID (Dewi Dawel; 1814 - 1891), tailor, publican, and poet. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-EVAN-DAV-1814>

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