

## EVANS, WILLIAM MEIRION (1826 - 1883), miner, Calvinistic Methodist minister in U.S.A. and Australia, and editor of journals published in Australia

**Name:** William Meirion Evans

**Date of birth:** 1826

**Date of death:** 1883

**Parent:** Mary Evans

**Parent:** Edmund Evans

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** miner, Calvinistic Methodist minister in U.S.A. and Australia, and editor of journals published in Australia

**Area of activity:** Business and Industry; Literature and Writing; Printing and Publishing; Religion

**Authors:** Robert (Bob) Owen, Ceris Gruffudd

Born 12 August 1826 at Isallt Fawr, Llanfihangel-y-Pennant, Caernarfonshire His parents, Edmund and Mary Evans, moved to Gatws y Parc, Llanfrothen, and from there the son started to work in the Ffestiniog slate quarries.

He emigrated to Australia, landing in Adelaide on 19 May 1849. He worked in the Yuttala copper mines, the Willinga slate quarries and later at the copper mines of Burray, about 100 miles from Adelaide, and began to preach to his fellow- Welshmen there - the first Welsh preacher in Australia.

In 1850 he moved to Aponinga and, 1852, to the Bendigo gold-mining district, where he made a considerable sum of money. He returned to Wales in March 1853 in order to take his parents and other members of his family to the U.S.A. He settled in the state of Illinois in the summer of the same year, and became a preacher with the Calvinistic Methodists. He married c. 1857, the daughter of a Welsh settler, and opened a business in Dodgeville, Wisconsin, at the same time continuing to preach; but he wound up the business and returned to Illinois. He was ordained at Columbus, Wisconsin, 12 June 1861. Because of the state of his wife's health he returned to Australia, landing at Melbourne in March 1863. He spent some time in Ballarat, Sebastopol, and elsewhere; he and others started Welsh religious services in these places; and he officiated at the first Welsh communion service in Australia.

In April 1864 he ceased to work as a miner and became minister of the churches in Ballarat and Sebastopol.

A large eisteddfod was held in Castlemain, and Evans prepared and printed, in 1865, the first number of *Yr Ymgeisydd*, but this undertaking did not prosper and no second number appeared. Evans visited Wales in 1865, proceeded to America, but returned once more to Ballarat. In July 1867 appeared the first number of *Yr Awstralydd*, edited by Evans and Theophilus Williams; this periodical continued to appear until February 1871. On 16 October 1874, the first number of another Welsh periodical appeared - *Yr Ymwelydd: Newyddiadur Cymreig at wasanaeth y Cymry yn Victoria, New Zealand, etc.*; this also was edited by Evans and it continued to appear every month until December 1876.

Evans was also the founder of the ' Cambrian Society ' and the large-scale eisteddfodau of Ballarat. After serving as minister in Ballarat and the neighbourhood for some time he retired and went to live in Bourke Street, Melbourne, where he opened a book-shop. He died 4 August 1883 and was buried in ' The Old Cemetery ' in Ballarat.

### Authors

**Robert (Bob) Owen**, (1885 - 1962)

**Ceris Gruffudd**

### Sources

Memoir in manuscript in the possession of his daughter at Melbourne

*Yr Ymwelydd, Newyddiadur Cymreig at Wasanaeth y Cymry yn Victoria, New Zealand, etc.*, (1874-6)

*Yr Awstralydd* (1867-71)

### Additional Links

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