

## EVANS, RHYS (1835 - 1917), musician

**Name:** Rhys Evans  
**Date of birth:** 1835  
**Date of death:** 1917  
**Child:** William John Evans  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** musician  
**Area of activity:** Eisteddfod; Music; Performing Arts  
**Author:** Robert David Griffith

Born 24 June 1835 in a farmhouse at Cross Inn (now called Ammanford), Carmarthenshire. He was a tailor by trade. He received his first music lessons from one William Penry. When seventeen he went to Swansea where he joined a music class. He moved to Cwmavon and afterwards to Cardiff; at the latter place he became a member of choirs conducted by [Rhys Lewis](#) and a Mr. Righton, which performed works by the masters. After spending two years in London he went to Ammanford where he formed a choir which became well known.

After marriage he moved (1860) to Aberdare where he opened a business as clothier. He became a member of Siloa Congregational chapel and was made precentor there. He formed a chapel choir which won prizes at several eisteddfodau. He played a prominent part in forming 'Côr Caradog'; when [Caradog](#) (Griffith Rhys Jones) moved to Treorchy, Evans became conductor of the 'United Aberdare Choir.' He gave up competing and concentrated on the performance, with the aid of an orchestra, of large works by the masters. He was a good violin player and it was his practice to teach the various voices their parts by playing them for them on that instrument. He used also to write in the columns of *Tarian y Gweithiwr* analyses of the works learnt in the singing practices. In 1873, for two days during the Christmas season, he performed Handel's 'Messiah' and Mozart's 'Twelfth Mass,' with the aid of professional soloists, and the Cyfarthfa orchestra augmented by professional players from Bristol and Gloucester.

He continued to give similar performances until 1895 when he retired and was succeeded by his son, [WILLIAM JOHN EVANS](#) (1866 - 1947), also a skilled musician, who died 27 November 1917 and was buried in Aberdare cemetery. His grandson, [IFOR LESLIE EVANS](#) (1897 - 1952), was principal of University College, Aberystwyth, from 1931 till his death.

### Author

**Robert David Griffith**, (1877 - 1958)

### Sources

'Mr Rhys Evans, Aberdar', *Y Cerddor*, 1 Awst 1899, pp.86-87

*Y Cerddor*, August 1905, January 1917

### Additional Links

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