

GRIFFITHS, ROBERT (1824 - 1903), musician

Name: Robert Griffiths
Date of birth: 1824
Date of death: 1903
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Music; Performing Arts; Religion
Author: Robert David Griffith

Born 21 May 1824 at Carmarthen to parents who moved a year afterwards to Bristol. He was possessed of a good voice and was made precentor in the Sunday school at Broadmead chapel. He joined the Bristol Orpheus Society and the Madrigal Singing Society. On the death of his father he went to London where he became precentor in the Baptist chapel, Islington Green. After hearing John Curwen lecturing (in 1851) on the tonic solfa in the literary institute he began to take an interest in that system. When the Tonic Solfa Society was formed in 1853 he became its secretary. In 1854 he went to Manchester where the tonic solfa system was still new. He started classes in connection with Sunday schools; so successful was he as an organizer of such classes that when he left Manchester (in 1865) for London, there were over 2,000 pupils and over 200 teachers of the system. The reason for his return to London was his appointment as secretary to John Curwen; he was also given the task of extending the use of the tonic solfa system. When the tonic solfa college was founded in 1875 he became its secretary and he laboured assiduously to popularize the system, lecturing throughout England and Wales. He composed several pieces of music of a religious character. On retirement in 1900 he went to reside at Ilford where he died 1 January 1903; he was buried in the cemetery of that town.

Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

Sources

M. O. Jones, *Bywgraffiaeth Cerddorion Cymreig* (1890)

Edward Jones, *Rhestr gyda nodiadau byrion, o Enwogion Cymreig o 1700 i 1900* (1908)

Y Cerddor, September 1901, February 1902

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