

LLOYD, JOHN AMBROSE (1815-1874), musician

Name: John Ambrose Lloyd
Date of birth: 1815
Date of death: 1874
Spouse: Catherine Lloyd (née Evans)
Child: John Ambrose Lloyd
Child: Charles Francis Lloyd
Parent: Catherine Lloyd (née Ambrose)
Parent: Enoch Lloyd
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Music; Religion

Born 14 June 1815, at Mold, Flintshire, the son of Enoch and Catherine Lloyd. The father, who was a cabinet maker, also preached with the Baptists and was, in 1830, ordained minister of Hill Cliffe Chapel, Warrington.

When the family moved to Hill Cliffe, John Ambrose Lloyd moved to Liverpool where his brother Isaac was a schoolmaster. It was at Liverpool, in 1831, that he composed his first hymn-tune - he was then 16; it appeared in *Y Gwladgarwr*, 1835, under the name of 'Wyddgrug.' Isaac Lloyd was appointed editor of the *Blackburn Standard* and after he had left Liverpool the younger brother, John, became assistant master in a private school and afterwards joined the staff of the Picton school; in 1838 he began to teach in the Liverpool Mechanics' Institute. In 1849 he gave up teaching on account of his health and he, and a friend, opened a business as lithographers, a venture which, however, proved to be a financial loss. He became a North Wales representative for the firm of Francis Firth, Liverpool, and later, after the death of Firth, for the successors of that firm, viz., Woodall and Jones; this post he relinquished in 1871 owing to the state of his health.

When he first went to Liverpool, John Ambrose Lloyd, like his brother, attended the Welsh church of Dewi Sant, but when his brother left for Blackburn (1835) he joined the Tabernacle Congregational church where his cousin, the **Rev. William Ambrose** (Emrys), was a member. Soon after he had joined this church he became its precentor. In 1835 he married Catherine, daughter of Edward and Elizabeth Evans, members of Tabernacle; Catherine, like her husband, was a native of Mold. In 1841 he left Tabernacle for Brownlow Hill Congregational chapel. Here also he was made precentor. In 1851 he moved to Bwlch Bach, about two miles from Conway, and it was here that he composed his well-known anthem 'Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear.' In 1852 he moved to Chester for the sake of the education of his children; he left Chester in 1864 for Rhyl, where he spent the rest of his life.

In 1843 he published *Casgliad o Donau*; this including twenty-seven hymn-tunes and two anthems written by himself. The hymn-tunes in this collection were poor - they were of the type sung in Wales during the religious revivals of the 18th century, importations from England which he imitated in regard to their style. In 1870 appeared another collection, *Aberth Mollant*; of the twenty-seven hymn-tunes which had been included in the 1843 collection, two only were admitted into this - 'Wyddgrug' and 'Eifionydd.' The hymn-tunes composed between 1843 and 1870 have a dignity and a sense of devotion - they are, in short, in the true ecclesiastical tradition. This was John Ambrose Lloyd's great contribution to congregational singing in Wales - giving it hymn-tunes which were worthy vehicles of praise and worship.

His compositions include three cantatas, twenty-eight anthems, and over ninety hymn-tunes - for a list see his biography, written by his son, **C. Francis Lloyd**. There is no collection used anywhere in the world by Welsh people which does not include a good number of his hymn-tunes; some of them are included in English hymnals also. He died 14 November 1874, and was buried in the Necropolis, Liverpool.

One of his sons

JOHN AMBROSE LLOYD (1840 - 1914),

was organist of the Queen Street Congregational church, Chester. For years he travelled for the firm of Messrs. Frost, Chester. Returning to Liverpool, he became a member of the firm of Lloyd and Thomas, corn merchants. He wrote several hymn-tunes, the best-known being 'Kilmorey,' which was published in the second supplement to **John Roberts** (**Ieuan Gwyllt**), *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*. He died 6 September 1914 at Liverpool; he was buried in the Chester cemetery.

C. F. Lloyd was another son.

Sources

C. Francis Lloyd and H. Elvet Lewis, *John Ambrose Lloyd. History of his life and works. Written in English by his son, C. F. Lloyd*; Translated and edited by Elfed (Wrexham 1921)

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

Y Cerddor, April and May, 1892, October 1914 (28), 1915 (72, 82, 137-8)

Additional Links

NLW Archives: NLW MS 22503D: J. Ambrose Lloyd: Anthemau

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