

MILLS, HENRY (1757-1820), a pioneer in Welsh congregational singing

Name: Henry Mills Date of birth: 1757 Date of death: 1820 Spouse: Jane Mills Child: Richard Mills Child: James Mills Child: Edward Mills Gender: Male

Occupation: a pioneer in Welsh congregational singing

Area of activity: Music; Religion Author: Gwilym Prichard Ambrose

Born on Tan-'rallt farm, near Llanidloes. As a young man his voice attracted the attention of Thomas Charles of Bala, when on a visit to Bethel, the Methodist chapel at Llanidloes. On the recommendation of Charles the Monthly Meeting gave Mills charge of the singing of the Methodists in the district, although the novelty of the idea and Mills's youth and ability to play several instruments were obstacles in the eyes of elders of the severer sort. Mills did much to improve the congregational singing in the district. He was twice married. Of his first marriage were born (1) Edward, father of John Mills, and of Edward Mills; (2) James (below). Of the second was born Richard Mills. He died on 28 August 1820.

His work was carried on by his son JAMES MILLS (1790 - 1844), whose abilities as a conductor found scope in the musical society founded at Bethel in 1834, with the object of raising the standard of congregational singing, and meeting on Sundays, with a week-night class of instruction in the rudiments of music attended by sixty to seventy young people. Mills composed several anthems and hymn-tunes, one of which, 'Hosannah,' retained its place in later collections.

Author

Principal Gwilym Prichard Ambrose

Sources

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Y Traethodydd, 1901 and 1903.

Published date: 1959

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APA Citation



Ambrose, G. P., (1959). MILLS, HENRY (1757-1820), a pioneer in Welsh congregational singing. Dictionary of Welsh Biography. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from https://biography.wales/article/s-MILL-HEN-1757

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