

WILLIAMS, JOHN ('Siôn Singer'; c. 1750 - 1807), musician and Baptist minister

Name: John Williams
Pseudonym: Siôn Singer
Date of birth: c. 1750
Date of death: 1807
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician and Baptist minister
Area of activity: Education; Music; Religion
Author: Robert David Griffith

Born at Melin Mellteyrn, Caernarfonshire. Losing his parents when he was a child, he was brought up by an uncle in Llithfaen, who gave him a good education. He became a schoolmaster. He also went from place to place to teach music; at this time he described himself as 'Dysgawdwr Muwsig,' 'Athro Cerdd,' and 'Siôn Singer.' He kept school at Llanfairtalhaearn, Denbighshire, for a time, going subsequently to Bodedern, Anglesey, and later to Brynsiencyn, Anglesey; in 1784 he kept school at Ro Wen, near Conway, whence he went to Glasgoed, Llanrwst, where he founded a Baptist church. In 1787 he was at Aberdovey. In 1788 he was ordained Baptist minister of Penrhyn-coch and Aberystwyth. In 1792 he received a call to minister the Baptist church at Hên Dŷ Cwrdd, Swansea.

He was the first in Wales to realise the need for a book in Welsh teaching the elements of music; he announced (in a book published in Trefriw) the forthcoming publication of such a work, the book itself, called *Cyfaill mewn Llogell*, appearing, in three parts, in 1797 (the first work of its kind to appear in Welsh). Towards the end of his life he incurred the displeasure of his denomination by reason of his Arminian views, and in 1797 he was excommunicated by the quarterly meeting, but continued to be the minister of the Hên Dŷ Cwrdd until he died in 1807.

Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

Sources

Hanes y Bedyddwyr yn Nghymru, iii, 332-4, 388-91

Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Bedyddwyr Cymru, 1930

Y Cerddor, 1910, 18, 89; 1932, 272, 304

Caernarvonshire Historical Society Transactions, 1948

J. Thickens, *Emynau a'u Hawduriad* (1945)

Works

John Williams, *Cyfaill mewn llogell: neu ddifyrwrch i'r pererinion* (Caerfyrddin 1797)

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