

## EVANS, GRIFFITH, and OAKELEY, families, Tan-y-bwlch, Maentwrog, Meirionnydd

The family of Tan-y-bwlch (or Bwlch Coed y Dyffryn), Maentwrog, Meirionnydd, claimed descent from Collwyn ap Tangno. According to the pedigrees, ROBERT AB IFAN, whose will was dated 24 August 1541, was twelfth in descent from Collwyn. As with other families in west Merioneth there was a connection with **Osbrwn Wyddel** - through the marriage of Robert ab Ifan with Annes, daughter of Nicholas ap Thomas ap Dafydd ab Ifan ab Einion ab Osbrwn. The wife of his son, EVAN AP ROBERT, was Gwen, daughter of **Humphrey ap Maredudd ab Evan ap Robert**, Cesail-gyfarch, Caernarfonshire, and it was their son, ROBERT AB EVAN, who first stabilized the surname and became known as ROBERT EVANS.

Robert Evans married Elizabeth, daughter of **John Wynn ap Cadwaladr**, Rhiwlas, Meirionnydd, their heir being EVAN EVANS, sheriff of Merioneth in 1634, who married Catherine, daughter of **Morris ap Robert Wynn**, Glyncywarch. ROBERT EVANS, son of Evan and Catherine vch Robert, was admitted to S. John's College, Cambridge, 20 May 1633, at the age of 18. His wife was Lowry, daughter and heiress of Ffoulk Prys (died 1624) and granddaughter of **archdeacon Edmund Prys** and their son was EVAN EVANS (died 1680), who married Jonet, daughter of John Vaughan, Cefnbodig, near Bala. The heir of Evan Evans and Jonet (Vaughan) was CATHERINE, who married ROBERT GRIFFITH (died 1729), of Bach-y-saint, Ynyscynhaearn, Caernarfonshire.

The heir of Robert Griffith (who left Bach-y-saint and came to reside at Tan-y-bwlch) and Catherine (Evans) was IFAN GRIFFITH (1688 - 1735). (Note that Ifan Griffith's sister, Gwen Griffith, became the wife of **Lewis Anwyl**, vicar of Abergele, author and translator, and that Ifan Griffith's brother, Owen Griffith (died 1728), was rector of Llanfrothen.)

The heir of Ifan Griffith was ROBERT GRIFFITH (1717 - 1750), his son by his first wife, Jane, daughter and heiress of Thomas Meyrick, Berthlwyd, Ffestiniog. Robert Griffith, who was sheriff of Merioneth, 1742, married Ann, daughter of Thomas Lloyd Anwyl, Hendre-mur, Llandecwyn. His heir was EVAN GRIFFITH, sheriff of Merioneth, 1770, whose wife was his cousin Mary, another member of the Anwyl family of Hendre-mur. Evan Griffith and Mary (Anwyl) left an heiress, MARGARET (died 1809), who married WILLIAM OAKELEY (1750 - 1811), son of William Oakeley, Forton, Staffs., clergyman. The heir of William Oakeley and Margaret (Griffith) was WILLIAM GRIFFITH OAKELEY (1790 - 1835), who, however, died without leaving an heir and was succeeded by a kinsman, WILLIAM EDWARD OAKELEY (1828 - 1912), of the family of Sir Charles Oakeley, bart., governor of Madras (see *D.N.B.*). W. E. Oakeley was very closely connected with the Blaenau Ffestiniog slate quarry industry.

Several poems written to members of the Tan-y-bwlch family have been preserved, among the poets being **John Davies** (Siôn Dafydd Las), **Huw Morys**, Evan Williams, **John Prichard Prys**, and **Ellis Rowland**, Harlech. The full pedigree table of the Evans and Griffith families contains the names of several clergymen. In this connection note that Mary Anwyl (above), after her husband Evan Griffith died, became the wife of John Griffith, rector of Ffestiniog, and that John Griffith, after her death, married Eleanor, daughter of David Morris, another rector of Ffestiniog (and a prominent supporter of **Griffith Jones**'s schools), and by her was the father of (a) David Griffith, chaplain of Beaumaris gaol, (b) Ann, who married Robert Williams, surgeon, Amlwch, and (c) JANE (died 1852), who became the wife of Thomas Love Peacock (1785 - 1866), author of *The Misfortunes of Elphin* and other works (see *D.N.B.*); their daughter, MARY ELLEN PEACOCK, was twice married, her second husband, whom she married in August 1849, being George Meredith (1828 - 1909), novelist (see *D.N.B.*).

### Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

### Sources

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