

JONES, THOMAS GRUFFYDD (Tafalaw Bencerdd; 1832 - 1898), musician

Name: Thomas Gruffydd Jones
Pseudonym: Tafalaw Bencerdd
Date of birth: 1832
Date of death: 1898
Parent: Hannah Jones
Parent: Gruffydd Jones
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Music
Author: Robert David Griffith

Born 6 January 1832 at The Forge, Pen-y-cae, Monmouthshire, the son of Gruffydd and Hannah Jones. He was apprenticed as carpenter but his chief delight lay in music. He received his first lessons in music from **Rosser Beynon**. When only 16 he became precentor at Sardis, Pontypridd, of which his father was then the minister. In 1850 he began to send his compositions to eisteddfodau; at an eisteddfod held at Bethesda, Merthyr Tydfil, he won the prize (against twenty-two other competitors) for an anthem on the words ' Wele fy ngwas a lwydda.' He began also to be in demand as eisteddfod adjudicator. He moved to Cardiff where in 1858 he published *Y Drysorfa Gorawl*, which contained anthems and choral pieces; this was a useful collection, but it involved the author in financial loss. From Cardiff he went to Kenfig Hill, and thence to Cwmavon. In 1860 he visited North Wales and stayed on as private secretary to **Thomas Gee**. He left Denbigh in 1863 for Aberdare, where he set up a printing office at which he could produce *Y Gwyddonydd Cerddorol*. His ' Gwarchae Harlech,' a cantata, was performed by ' Côr Caradog ' (see **Jones, Griffith Rhys**) in 1865. He emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1866, was ordained minister of a Congregational church at Slatington in 1867, and in 1869 became teacher of the fine arts in Emporia College. He served several churches in the U.S.A.; he died 17 March 1898.

Author

Robert David Griffith, (1877 - 1958)

Sources

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

Y Cerddor, December 1902, January and February 1903

Notable Welshmen (1700â€“1900) (1908)

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