

WILLIAMS, HENRY (1624 - 1684), Puritan preacher, prominent as a free-communion Baptist in Montgomeryshire.

Name: Henry Williams
Date of birth: 1624
Date of death: 1684
Child: Rosamond Davis (née Williams)
Gender: Male
Occupation: Puritan preacher, prominent as a free-communion Baptist
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Thomas Richards

His home was Ysgafell in Llanllwchaearn, Montgomeryshire. He was a disciple of [Vavasor Powell](#), and had opportunity to use his gifts as itinerant preacher under the Propagation Act of 1650, mainly in lower Montgomery and the borders of Radnor; his name appears, in conjunction with those of several other preachers, defending [Powell](#) in the *Examen et Purgamen*, 1654; and he supported [Powell](#) as one of the signatories of the *Word for God* in condemnation of Cromwell's Protectorate, 1655. With the Restoration of 1660 and the coming of the Clarendon Code, it was difficult for Williams to escape close observation; the spies of 1669 reported that he kept a conventicle in his own house, and figured as chief preacher in it; accounts have come down of brutal conduct towards his father and his wife. On the other hand are the persistent traditions about the quasi-miraculous wonders of 'Cae'r Fendith' (the Field of Blessing); [Joshua Thomas](#) the historian had a good look at the field in 1745; [Dr. William Richards](#) gave a prominent place to the story in his *Cambro-British Biography*, and [David Davies](#) (1849 - 1926) a more prominent place still in his biography of [Vavasor Powell](#). [Henry Maurice](#), in 1675, said that [Powell](#)'s mantle in Montgomeryshire had fallen on Henry Williams, and he says also that the preacher, as in Propagation days, went over the border to succour the Puritans of Radnor. The records give the impression that he was a quiet man of sterling character, fond of the ways of peace; Calamy, using the recollections of [James Owen](#), goes out of his way to pay tribute to his work and self-sacrifice. He was buried at Llanllwchaearn, 2 April 1684. A somewhat long elegy to his memory was written by [Richard Davis](#), minister of Rothwell in Northants, who was married to his daughter Rosamond. [Jane Williams](#) the historian was a distant descendant of Henry Williams, and by her pen-name renewed the memory of the old home of [Ysgafell](#).

Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

Sources

Joshua Thomas, *Hanes y Bedyddwyr ymhlith y Cymry: o amser yr Apostolion, hyd y flwyddyn hon: yn ddwy ran* (1778) (1885 ed.), 285-7

Vavasoris Examen et Purgamen or Mr V. Powell's impartiall triall who being apprehended upon the late hue and cry raised after him, hath appealed to God and his country, and is found not guilty (London 1654), 1654, 14

John Walker manuscripts in Bodleian Library, Oxford, c. 13 f. 60

Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1660-1, 130

Lambeth MS 639 (139)

Broadmead Records (1847, 1865), Add. B, 516-8

D. Davies, *Vavasor Powell. The Baptist evangelist of Wales in the seventeenth century* (London 1896) 1896, 114-31

R. Williams, *Montgomeryshire Worthies* (1894), 310-2

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Published date: 1959

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