

**Name:** Jane Williams  
**Pseudonym:** Ysgafell  
**Date of birth:** 1806  
**Date of death:** 1885  
**Parent:** Eleanor Williams (née Marsh)  
**Parent:** David Williams  
**Gender:** Female  
**Occupation:** Welsh historian and miscellaneous writer  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture; Literature and Writing  
**Author:** Brinley Rees

She was the daughter of David and Eleanor Williams of Riley Street, Chelsea, where she was born on 1 February 1806. Her father, who held an appointment in the Navy office, was descended from [Henry Williams](#) (1624?-1684), of Ysgafell, near Newtown, Montgomeryshire, a friend of [Vavasor Powell](#). Owing to her weak health she spent the first half of her life at Neuadd Felen, near Talgarth, Brecknock, where she acquired a knowledge of Welsh and developed an interest in Welsh literature. Here, too, she made the acquaintance of [lady Llanover](#) who introduced her to many literary friends. From 1856 on she lived in London. She died at Chelsea on 15 March 1885, and was buried in Brompton cemetery.

She was the author of *Miscellaneous Poems*, privately printed at Brecon, 1824; *Twenty Essays on the Practical Improvement of God's Providential Dispensations as Means to the Moral Discipline to the Christian* (London, 1838); *Artegall; or Remarks on the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* [↗](#) (Llandovery and London, 1848), an anonymous pamphlet examining the reliability of the witnesses called to give evidence and quoting section of the *Reports* to disprove the generalisations made therein; *The Literary Remains of the Rev. Thomas Price, Carnhuanawc ... with a Memoir of his Life* [↗](#) (Llandovery, 1854-55); *The Origin, Rise, and Progress of the Paper People* (London, 1856), a little book about paper-cutting, with illustrations by [lady Llanover](#); *The Autobiography of Elizabeth Davis, a Balaclava Nurse, Daughter of Dafydd Cadwaladr* [↗](#) (London, 1857); *The Literary Women of England* (London, 1861); *Celtic Fables, Fairy Tales and Legends versified* (London, 1862), reprinted from *Ainsworth's Magazine*, 1849-50, and *A History of Wales derived from Authentic Sources* [↗](#) down to the end of the Tudor period (London, 1869). The lastnamed was her most ambitious work and in spite of its defects was not superseded until the publication of [Sir John E. Lloyd](#)'s researches on the subject. She also wrote 'A History of the Parish of Glasbury,' published in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 1870, while her translation from the French of an essay by Carl Meyer on Celtic philology appeared in the *Cambrian Journal* in 1854. [Brinley Richards](#), in his preface to his *Songs of Wales*, acknowledged her 'kind and valuable aid' in the preparation of the work.

## Author

Brinley Rees, (2001)

## Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

## Further Reading

Gwyneth Tyson Roberts, *Jane Williams (Ysgafell)* (Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru 2020)

Wikipedia Article: [Jane Williams](#)

## Gweithiau

Jane Williams (ed.), *The autobiography of Elizabeth Davis: a Balaclava nurse, daughter of Dafydd Cadwaladyr* (London 1857), [Vol.I](#); [Vol. II](#)

Jane Williams (ed.), *The autobiography of Elizabeth Davis. Betsy Cadwaladyr: A Balaclava Nurse* (Cardiff 1987)

Jane Williams (ed.), *Betsy Cadwaladyr a Balaclava Nurse. An Autobiography of Elizabeth Davis* (Dinas Powys 2015)

Thomas Price, Jane Williams (ed.), *The literary remains of the Rev. Thomas Price, Carnhuanawc*, [Vol.I](#); [Vol.II](#)

## Additional Links

NLW Archives: [NLW MS 24051F: Jane Williams \(Ysgafell\) papers](#)

VIAF: [12151337](#)

Wikidata: [Q6152943](#)

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