

## WILLIAMS, WILLIAM (Caledfryn; 1801 - 1869), Congregational minister, poet, and critic

**Name:** William Williams  
**Pseudonym:** Caledfryn  
**Date of birth:** 1801  
**Date of death:** 1869  
**Child:** Margaret Mary Williams  
**Child:** William Williams  
**Parent:** Mary Williams (née Roberts)  
**Parent:** Thomas Williams  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Congregational minister, poet, and critic  
**Area of activity:** Eisteddfod; Literature and Writing; Poetry; Religion  
**Author:** Frank Price Jones

Born 5 or 6 February 1801 at Bryn y Ffynnon, Denbigh, eldest son of Thomas and Mary Williams. His father, a weaver, also kept a shop. He was educated at a number of schools in the town but c.1814 his father became financially embarrassed; the shop was sold and the family removed to Henllan-street where the father continued his work as a weaver. The son was sent to his grandfather and uncle at Llanrwst to learn weaving and then returned to assist his father. From c. 1820 to c.1826 he kept a school in the Methodist chapel at Denbigh.

In 1827 he quarrelled with some of the Methodist elders, and became a member of the Congregational church at Swan-lane. He was encouraged to begin preaching with them and for four months he was a student at Rotherham College. He was ordained minister of the churches at Peniel (Llannerch-y-medd) and Maenaddwyn on 2 June 1829. He later held pastorates at Pendref (Caernarvon), 1832-48; Aldersgate-street, London, 1848-50; Llanrwst, 1850-56; Beulah near Bangor, 1856-7; and Groes-wen, Glamorganshire from 1857 till his death on 23 March 1869. He was thrice married and had one son, [William](#) (Ap Caledfryn), and a daughter, Margaret Mary. Caledfryn was admitted a bard at Caernarvon in September 1821 and he won the chair for his *awdl* on the wreck of the *Rothesay Castle* at Beaumaris in 1832. He published *Cyfarwyddiadur i Ddarllen ac Ysgrifennu Cymraeg* (A Guide to reading and writing Welsh), 1821; *Grawn Awen*, a volume of verse, 1826; *Drych Barddonol neu Draethawd ar Farddoniaeth* (An essay on Poetry), 1839; *Grammadeg Cymreig* (A Welsh Grammar), 1851; and *Caniadau Caledfryn* (a further volume of verse), 1856. He edited *Gardd Eifion*, the works of [Robert ap Gwilym Ddu](#) in 1841, and *Eos Gwynedd*, the works of [John Thomas](#), Pentrefoelas (1742-1818), in 1845, and a collection of hymns in 1860. He contributed essays on [Robert ap Gwilym Ddu](#) and [Dewi Wyn o Eifion](#) to *Y Drysorfa* in 1852 and 1853. He edited many periodicals, including *Y Sylwedydd*, (1831), *Tywysog Cymru* (1832-3), *Y Seren Ogleddol*, [1835-6], *Yr Adolygydd*, [C'von, 1838-9], *Cylchgrawn Rhyddid* [1845-6], *Yr Amaethydd* [1845-6]. He assisted with *Yr Adolygydd* [Cardiff, 1852-63], *Y Gwron Cymreig* [1852-6], *Y Gwladgarwr* [1863-8], and *Y Dysgedydd*. [See also under [Hugh Hughes](#) (1790-1863) and [Josiah T. Jones](#)]. He was a frequent adjudicator at eisteddfodau, and many complaints were made about his scathing criticisms. He opposed the

ideas of many contemporary poets and critics, and urged greater simplicity and directness in *cynghanedd* poetry. He supported the Liberal movement by speeches and pamphlets. He was prominent in the Anti-Corn-Law League, the Peace Society, and the Society for the Liberation of Religion. He opposed Sir James Graham's Factory Bill in 1843 and gave evidence on behalf of Nonconformists before commissioner Johnson in 1846. In the Temperance movement he opposed total abstinence, preferring temperance. His autobiography, together with some of his verse and prose works, was published under the title *Cofiant Caledfryn* (ed. [Scorpion](#)) by H. Evans, Bala, in 1877.

## Author

Frank Price Jones, (1920 - 1975)

## Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

T. R. Roberts, *Eminent Welshmen: a short biographical dictionary of Welshmen... from the earliest times to the present* (1908)

*Geirlyfr Bywgraffiadol o Enwogion Cymru* (1870)

*Y Traethodydd*, 1900, 384

*Y Geninen*, March 1889, 17; 1906, 172

*Cymru (O.M.E.)*, xxi, 155

*Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru*, ii, 389; iii, 240

*Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig* (1889-96)

*The Congregational Year Book*, 1870

*Hanes llenyddiaeth Gymreig o 1651 O.C. hyd 1850* (1893), 674-9

T. Parry, *Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg hyd 1900* (1944)

*Y Dysgedydd*, 1869, 170

*Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 31 March and 7 and 14 April 1869

*Carnarvon and Denbigh herald, and North and South Wales independent*

T. M. Jones, *Llenyddiaeth fy Ngwlad* (1893), 118, 145, 162, 169

Newly discovered materials (letters, memoranda, etc.) were published by Mr. Edgar Phillips in *Y Cofiadur*, 1955

Dates by G. Rees-Hughes, Liverpool

## Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [William Williams](#)

## Images

NLW: [Er Coffadwriaeth Am Y Parch W Caledfryn Williams, Groeswen](#)

## Works

John Thomas, William Williams (ed.), *Eos Gwynedd: sef casgliad o ganiadau ar destynau crefyddol, moesol, a difyrol* (Llanrwst 1845)

## Additional Links

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