

## DAVIS, WILLIAM ('Golden Farmer '; 1627 - 1690), highwayman

**Name:** William Davis  
**Pseudonym:** Golden Farmer  
**Date of birth:** 1627  
**Date of death:** 1690  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** highwayman  
**Area of activity:** Anti-Establishment; Nature and Agriculture  
**Author:** William Llewelyn Davies

Born at Wrexham. He moved in early life to Sodbury, Gloucestershire, where he married the daughter of a wealthy innkeeper, by whom he had eighteen children. He became a successful farmer, adding to this trade another - that of a highwayman, and succeeding in hiding his identity as such, even from his wife, until almost the end of his life. The *D.N.B.* article, on which this short account is based, gives particulars of his methods and the names of some of his victims, some of the latter including farmers returning from market or going to pay their rents. According to one account he was at one time a corn-chandler in Thames Street, London, selling by day, but robbing farmers at night. He was tried at the Old Bailey Sessions, 11-17 December 1690 for the murder of a butcher, and was convicted; he died 22 December and was afterwards hung in chains on Bagshot Heath. His exploits led to the publication of broadsides, chapbooks, and even a play (some of these are mentioned at the end of the *D.N.B.* article).

### Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

**Published date:** 1959

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### APA Citation

Davies, W. L., (1959). DAVIS, WILLIAM ('Golden Farmer '; 1627 - 1690), highwayman. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Retrieved 11 Nov 2024, from <https://biography.wales/article/s-DAVS-WIL-1627>

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