

## OWEN, WILLIAM (1785 - 1864), antiquary

**Name:** William Owen  
**Date of birth:** 1785  
**Date of death:** 1864  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** antiquary  
**Area of activity:** History and Culture  
**Author:** Emyr Gwynne Jones

Born 1785 at Beaumaris, where he was a pupil at the grammar school. During the Napoleonic wars he served as a marine. From 1824 on, his name is connected with Caernarvon where he was known as 'Y Pab' (the Pope). On his own evidence, he acquired this nick-name in consequence of a pamphlet he published in 1829 defending the stand made by the marquis of Anglesey in the House of Lords on behalf of Catholic emancipation. For the same reason, he says, he was so loathed by his fellow-countrymen that no one would give him employment. It appears that for a substantial portion of his life he was engaged as a sawyer in a saw-pit. He was extremely interested in antiquities; he is heard of from time to time searching old registers in London or deciphering old manuscripts here and there in Wales. But, as a historian, he was notoriously credulous, a fact borne out by his surviving works: *Drych Crefyddol yn dangos Dechreuad y Grefydd Brotestanaidd, etc.*, 1824; *Hanes Cyflafan neu Ddinysr y Beirdd Cymreig, etc.* (prize-winning essay at the Cymreigyddion eisteddfod held at Caernarvon, 1824); *Y Drych Bradwriaethol, sef Hanes Brad y Cyllyll Hirion*, 1825; *Hanes Dechreuad Cenedl y Cymry*, 1826; *Hanes Owain Glandwr [ sic ]*, 1833; and *History of Dolbadarn Castle, Llanberis* (undated). His life was spent in dire poverty, and he died 15 February 1864.

### Author

Emyr Gwynne Jones, (1911 - 1972)

### Sources

J. E. Lloyd, *Owen Glendower / Owen Glyn Dwr* (1931), 157-8

J. E. Lloyd, *Anglesey Antiquarian Society & Field Club Transactions*, 1921, 43-4

*Cyfaill yr aelwyd cylchgrawn misol at wasanaeth oriau hamddenol y Cymry, yn cynnwys chwedleuaeth, cerddoriaeth, barddoniaeth, gwyddoniaeth, a llenyddiaeth bur, adeiladol, a dyddanus*, 1892, 93-5

*Gwaith y Parch. Walter Davies (Gwallter Mechain)* (Carmarthen 1866-1868), ii, 512-41

U.C.N.W. Plas Newydd correspondence

*Caernarvon and Denbigh herald, and North and South Wales independent*, 20 February 1864

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q20734688](#)

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