

THOMAS, WILLIAM (Gwilym Mai; 1807 - 1872), poet and printer

Name: William Thomas
Pseudonym: Gwilym Mai
Date of birth: 1807
Date of death: 1872
Parent: Ann Thomas
Parent: Thomas Thomas
Gender: Male
Occupation: poet and printer
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Poetry; Printing and Publishing
Author: David James Bowen

Son of Ann and Thomas Thomas, miller, Llanelly and Carmarthen. His mother died 10 May 1828 (*Seren Gomer*, 1828, 188). He worked at Merthyr, Llandovery, and Carmarthen. He was a compositor in the office of **David Rice Rees** and **William Rees** at Llandovery, and at Carmarthen he worked in the offices of the *Carmarthen Journal* with **William Evans** and Benjamin Jones. Afterwards he set up his own business at Carmarthen. He was an ardent eisteddfodwr, and was successful in the poetry competitions at the Swansea (1846) and Carmarthen (1852) eisteddfodau. He published collections of his own poetry, *Meillion Mai*, 1849; *Blodyn Dyffryn Tywi*, 1854, and also an elementary text-book on the Welsh *cynganedd*, *Clorian y Bardd*, 1850. In his introduction to the latter he states that the times were too difficult for poets to afford the *Drych Barddonol* and the grammars of **Robert Davies**, Nantglyn, and **Siôn Rhydderch**. He was an Oddfellow for thirty-five years, and published a treatise on the subject, *Traethawd ar Oddyddiaeth; ynghyd a nifer Cyfrinfaoedd Cymru*. He also wrote an awdl to Oddfellowship (*Meillion Mai*, 18). He was a deacon at Lamma Street chapel, Carmarthen. At one time he worked with **William Saunders** (1806 - 1851).

Author

Professor David James Bowen

Sources

Seren Gomer, 1828, 188, 340

Yr Haul, 1872, 240

Baner ac Amserau Cymru, 22 May 1872

J. Ifano Jones, *A history of printing and printers in Wales to 1810, and of successive and related printers to 1923* (Cardiff 1925)

Catalogue of Printed Literature in the Welsh Department, Cardiff Free Libraries (1898)

H. Blackwell, **NLW MS 9274A: A Dictionary of Welsh Biography**

G. Eyre Evans, *Lampeter* (1905)

Works

William Thomas, *Yr awen lawen; sef, Casgliad o ganiadau dewisol* (Caerfyrddin 1851)

Additional Links

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