

Roderick Williams and Anne Price Williams

Ecclesiastes 5:18

My great-great-great-grandparents, Daniel Williams and Ruth Jones Williams, were married on April 16, 1805. Nine months later, on January 26, 1806, their first son was christened in Llandeilo'r-fân parish, Brecknockshire, Wales. Roderick Williams, named after Daniel's father, was the first of eight children.

Uncle Roderick was possibly born on Brunant Farm. That's where the family lived when he was seven years old in 1813. Between 1816 and 1820 the family moved to a nearby farm called Nant-y-gwrdu. Between 1820 and 1839 the house at Nant-y-gwrdu was apparently removed. Nant-y-gwrdu, as a field, was annexed to Bryn-melyn Farm where the family lived when Roderick was married.

On February 7, 1840 Roderick Williams, age 34, married Anne Price, age 28, at the Parish Church in Llandeilo'r-fân. Both the bride and the groom signed the Marriage Register by mark, indicating that both were probably illiterate.

Anne Price, born in August 1811 in Brecknockshire, was a daughter of Thomas Price. The Price family arrived in Llandeilo'r-fân before 1814 when Thomas Price married Anne's stepmother, Mary Thomas. By 1816 the Price family lived at Lan-fraith Farm. Between 1823 and 1834 they moved to Cythane Farm. Six years before her marriage to Roderick Williams, Anne became the unwed mother of Mary Williams, who was christened April 13, 1834. The child's father was William Williams of Garth-isaf Farm. His parents, Thomas and Mary Williams, raised their granddaughter Mary. I'm not aware of any relationship between William Williams of Garth-isaf and Roderick Williams.

Following their wedding, Roderick Williams and Anne Price Williams stayed at Bryn-melyn Farm, as shown by the census of June 7, 1841:

Daniel Williams	55	Farmer	born in Brecknockshire
Ruth Williams	60		born in Brecknockshire
Mary Williams	20		born in Brecknockshire
Samuel Williams	15		born in Brecknockshire
Roderick Williams	35		born in Brecknockshire
Ann Williams	30		born in Brecknockshire
John Williams	17		born in Brecknockshire
Ann Jones	15 months		born in Brecknockshire

Soon after the census was taken, Roderick and Anne moved to Merthyr Cynog, Brecknockshire, where their daughter Ann Williams was born in 1841. Ann married a Morgan and had at least two children: William Morgan, born in Ystradgynlais, Brecknockshire about 1876, and David Morgan, born in Swansea, Glamorgan, Wales about 1878. In 1881 Ann Williams Morgan was a charwoman, or cleaning lady, living with her parents.

Between 1841 and 1847 the family moved to Llanelly parish, Brecknockshire, where

their son Roderick was born in about 1847.

In Llanelly parish, Roderick Williams supported his family as a hauler or carrier. Later in life, Uncle Roderick reported that he was a laborer in the iron mine works. He may have worked as a hauler for the iron mines, or he may have changed jobs.

Roderick and Anne were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Christmas day 1848. The baptisms were performed by A. Jones, as were the confirmations of Roderick Williams on December 27, 1848, and Anne Price Williams on January 3, 1849. Roderick was age 42, and Anne was age 37. It's possible that Roderick and Anne discovered the LDS gospel on their own, but it seems more likely that they followed the example of other members of the family, starting with Roderick's brother-in-law John Evan Price who was baptized in 1847.

On May 25, 1849 Roderick and Anne Williams became the parents of John Roderick Williams, born in Brynmawr. John married Miss Mary Ann Jenkins in 1873 and had six children, three born in Wales. John's family immigrated to America in 1879, locating at Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he engaged in the photography business. His wife died in 1887 at Scranton. On May 26, 1896, Wilford Woodruff Crockett, an LDS missionary from Safford, Graham County, Arizona, baptized John Roderick Williams in Scranton. Later in 1896 John and three of his children moved to Safford, Arizona where they operated a photo gallery. John married Darcus Branch in 1898 and had two more children. He died on February 19, 1920 in Safford. In 2008 John Roderick Williams has many descendants, one of whom is Harold Roderick Williams, Jr., who serves in an LDS stake presidency in California.

Roderick and Anne Williams probably had other children besides Ann, Roderick and John. According to Family Search, another son was Thomas Williams who died before 1881.

The LDS Church suspended the membership of Roderick Williams on March 19, 1850. The recorded reason was "Am Waddo ei Waraig," which seems to be translated, "for disowning his wife." I don't know why he disowned his wife. I only know that the Church did not approve. It's unclear whether Roderick ever reconciled with the Church. He did, however, reconcile with his wife.

The census taken at the beginning of April 1851 shows the re-united family living in the town of Brynmawr, Llanelly parish, Brecknockshire. Next door was his brother William Williams:

Roderick Williams	Head	Mar	45	Haulier	Breconshire, Llandilo-faur
Ann Williams	Wife	Mar	40		do, Llanviangle bryn pebuan?
Ann Williams	Daur		10	at home	do, Merthyr Cynog
John Williams	Son		1		do, Llanelly
William Williams	Head	Mar	42	Shoemaker	Breconshire, Llandilo faur
Ann Williams	Wife	Mar	22		do, Llaneydless
Mary Williams, Mother-in-law	W		74	Pauper	do, Llanwrtwd
Roderick Williams	Nephew		4	Scholar	do, Llanelly

On April 13, 1851 the LDS membership of Ann Price Williams was transferred to the Bryn Mawr congregation. According to the church record, she and Roderick lived in Pont

Clydach (Clydach Bridge), where he was a “Carrier.”

By 1861, Roderick and Anne seem to have moved again, leaving William Williams at Clydach Bridge in the town of Brynmawr:

William Williams	Head	Mar	53	Shoemaker & Coal Miner	Brecon, Llandilo-fawr
Ann Williams	Wife	Mar	53		do, Tirhabart
Mary Williams, Mother-in-law, W.			86		do, Llanwrtyd

In 1866 Roderick’s wife, Anne Price Williams, returned to Llandeilo’r-fân parish for a few months to care for the children of Samuel Daniel Williams. Their mother had died, and their father had not yet remarried. When her brother-in-law needed help at Top-glas farm, Aunt Anne was quick to provide it.

I have yet to locate Roderick Williams and his family in the 1861 and 1871 census. At least one child seems to have lived in Ystradgynlais, Brecknockshire as early as 1866.

In 1881, Roderick was living with his wife, daughter and grandchildren in Brynore, Lower Ystradgynlais, Brecknockshire:

Roderick Williams	Head	M	77 M	Llandilofan formerly a laborer in Iron Mine Works
Ann Williams	Wife	M	74 F	Llandilofan, Brecknock, Wales
Ann Morgan	Daug	M	39 F	Merthyr Cynog, Brecknock Charwoman
William Morgan	Gson		5 M	Ystradgunlais, Brecknock, Wales
David Morgan	Gson		3 M	Swansea, Glamorgan, Wales
John Williams	Gson		15 M	Ystradgunlais, Brecknock Coal Miner

Roderick Williams didn’t live long after the census was taken. He is said to have died August 25, 1881 in Bedwelty, Monmouthshire. His life wasn’t easy. He may have been illiterate. He labored in the iron mine works and as a hauler or carrier. His daughter was a charwoman. His fifteen-year-old grandson was a coal miner. It seems the whole family was accustomed to hard labor. Roderick had experienced family strife and reconciliation. He had experienced rejection from the Church. His family was divided, some remaining in Wales, and others moving to America.

For some reason, the life of Roderick Williams reminds me of Ecclesiastes:

*What does man gain from all his labor
At which he toils under the sun?*

Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him – for this is his lot.

NOTES

Daniel Williams and Ruth Jones were married 16 Apr 1805 in Llywel, Brecknockshire, Wales, as proved by

the Parish Registers (National Library of Wales) and Bishop's Transcripts (FHL 104,486) of Llywel Parish.

The christening of Roderick Williams is recorded in the Bishop's Transcripts of Llandeilo'r-fân parish, Brecknockshire, Wales (FHL 104,471, item 4):

A true Copy of all Xnings Weddings, & Burials contained in the Register book of Llandeilorvane
(in the Year 1806) ...
Christenings
Janry.... 26th. Rodrick Son of Danl. Williams

The farms where Roderick lived while growing up are given in the christening records of his younger siblings. See the Parish Registers of Llandeilo'r-fân, Brecknockshire, Wales (available at the National Library of Wales). See also the 1839 Apportionment of Tithes for Llandeilo'r-fân, Brecknockshire (available at the National Library of Wales).

The Parish Registers also contain the marriage record of Roderick Williams and Ann Price:

Page 4. 1840. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Church of Llandilo'r fane in the Count_ of Brecon / No. 7 / When Married. February 7th / Name and Surname. Rhoderick Williams / Age. full age / Condition. Labourer / Rank or Profession. Farmer / Residence at the Time of Marriage. Brynmelyn / Father's Name and Surname. Daniel Williams / Rank or Profession of Father. Farmer / Name and Surname. Anne Price / Age. full age / Condition. Spinster / Rank or Profession. -- / Residence at the Time of Marriage. Cythanan / Father's Name and Surname. Thos. Price / Rank or Profession of Father. Farmer / Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by [illegible] by me, Jno. Evans Clk. / This Marriage was solemnized between us, Rhoderick Williams My Mark / Anne Price X by Mark in the Presence of us, William Jenkins / Evan Jones

Data on the Thomas Price family are found in the census records, Parish Registers and Bishop's Transcripts of Llandeilo'r-fân.

The census records abstracted in this report are: **1841 Census**, Llandeilo'r-fân parish, Brecknockshire, ED 15, Page 5 (FHL 464,300). **1851 Census**, town of Brynmawr, Llanelly parish, Brecknockshire, page 453/480, house #117/118 Wain-y-ly-can (FHL 104,252). **1861 Census**, town of Brynmawr, Llanelly parish, Brecknockshire, page 24/93, #151, Clydach Bridge, #151 (FHL 543,252). **1881 Census**, Brynore, Lower Ystradgynlais, Brecknockshire, PRO Ref RG11, Piece 5346, Folio 72, Page 17 (FHL 1,342,288).

The Latter-day Saint membership record of Bryn Mawr, Wales 1848-1868 (FHL 104,167) shows:

No. 33 / Names: Roderick Williams / Occupation: Carier / Place of abode: Pont Clydach / Birth: Llandiloyr-fain, Sir Ferchy [Brecknockshire] / Baptized: Age 42. 25 Rhagfyr [December] 1848. A. Jones / Confirmed: 27 Rhagfyr [December] 1848. A. Jones / Suspended: 19 Fawrth [March] 1850 Am Waddo ei Waraig [for disowning his wife].

No. 36. / Names: Anne Williams / Place of abode: Pont Clydach / Birth: 1811 Awst [August] / Baptized: Age 37. 25 Rhagfyr [December] 1848. A. Jones / Confirmed: 3 Ionawr [January] 1849. A. Jones / Delivered by Letter: Abril 13th 1851. To what Branch: Brynmawr.

While writing this report, I established contact with a fourth cousin, Hal Williams, whose full name is Harold Roderick Williams, Jr.; son of Harold Roderick Williams & Wanda Willis; grandson of Roderick Williams & Retta Louisa Crockett; great-grandson of John Roderick Williams & Mary Ann Jenkins, who are mentioned in this report. In exchanging information with Hal Williams, I have obtained a wealth of photos and data about his branch of the family tree.

On the LDS Family Search website (<https://new.familysearch.org>) I found Roderick Jones Williams (died 25 Aug 1881 Bedwelty, Monmouth, England; or died after 1881 Brinore, Penrhos, Brecknock, Wales) married to Ann Price (has wrong parents) with children Ann Williams (born 1841), John Roderick Williams (born 25 May 1849 Brynmawr, Breconshire, Wales; died 19 Feb 1920 Safford, Graham, Arizona), and Thomas

Williams (died before 1881 Wales).

The story of Anne Price Williams going to Top-glas Farm to care for the motherless children of Samuel Daniel Williams is written in "Samuel Daniel Williams and Elizabeth Ann Parry Williams History," at <http://www.welshmormonhistory.org/index.php?/resources/view/1557>.

The passage from Ecclesiastes is 1:3 and 5:18, New International Version.

In this report, I transcribed place names as well as I could read the handwriting in the original documents. Llanviangle bryn pebuan may be a badly mangled form of Llanfihangel Nant Bran. Llaneydless must be Llandulas. I think the rest of the place names are more easily discernible:

Bedwellty, Monmouthshire	316740,200650
Llandeilo'r-fân, Brecknockshire	289600,234670
Brunant	289320,238620
Bryn-melyn	288600,237550
Cythane	291100,237360
Garth-isaf	290250,234120
Lan-fraith	291480,237850
Llandeilo'r-fân Village	289600,234670
Nant-y-gwrdu	288700,237700
Top-glas	287880,237520
Llandulas (aka Tirabad), Brecknockshire	287860,241370
Llanelly, Brecknockshire	323210,214820
Brynmawr	319200,211620
Pont Clydach (Clydach Bridge)	(place in Brynmawr)
Llanfihangel Nant Bran, Brecknockshire	294500,234300
Llanwrtyd, Brecknockshire	286370,247770
Llywel, Brecknockshire	286970,230100
Merthyr Cynog, Brecknockshire	298430,237430
Swansea, Glamorgan	265300,192800
Tirabad (aka Llandulas), Brecknockshire	287860,241370
Ystradgynlais, Brecknockshire	278700,210400
Brynore	(place in Penrhos)
Penrhos	279850,211190

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