

## BAYLY, LEWIS (died 1631), bishop and devotional writer

**Name:** Lewis Bayly  
**Date of death:** 1631  
**Spouse:** Ann Bayly (née Bagenal)  
**Child:** Thomas Bayly  
**Child:** John Bayly  
**Parent:** Thomas Bayly  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** bishop and devotional writer  
**Area of activity:** Literature and Writing; Religion  
**Author:** Thomas Richards

The date and place of his birth are uncertain. Born c. 1575, probably at Carmarthen, because of the prevalence of the Bayly surname there, and the particular reference to the town in his last will. Possibly the son of Thomas Bayly who was a curate at Carmarthen that year. He was at Abermarlais for a period and had the patronage of the family that lived there. He went to Exeter College, Oxford, and gained a B.D., 1611, D.D., 1613. He became vicar of Shipston-on-Stour, Worcestershire, 1597, of Evesham, 1600, where he successfully agitated for a town charter and became headmaster of the grammar school. There followed several substantial promotions in the Church, both in Wales and in England - including a chaplaincy to the king and the treasurership of S. Paul's Cathedral. He was parson of Llanedi, 1606-13, and was nominated bishop of Bangor in 1616.

In 1611, most probably, appeared the first edition of his *Practice of Piety*, a book of devotion that became exceedingly popular; the 11th ed. appeared in 1619, the 71st in 1792; the 1st Welsh ed., translated by Rowland Vaughan of Caergai, came out in 1630 - *Yr Ymarfer o Dduwioldeb* - followed by five more editions (up to 1730). He rather belied the *Practice of Piety* as bishop by taking unto himself an inordinate number of livings 'in commendam' and by promoting both his son John and his son-in-law Dr. William Hill from one good benefice to another, and that within short periods of time.

At first he boldly challenged the power of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, the most powerful layman in his diocese, especially over leases of Church lands, but soon found he had been too precipitate in his opposition, for Wynn's hostility meant the disfavour of (the later) archbishop John Williams and the detective reports of Griffith Williams (1587? - 1673), rector of Llanllechid, to whom the bishop sarcastically refers as 'your honest parson Williams.' Before long he adopted quite a different policy by becoming one of Sir John's greatest friends, exerting all his influence to get the latter's son returned as M.P. for Caernarvonshire against his rival, the younger John Griffith of Cefn Amwlch, Llyn. The bishop had seriously underestimated the power of the Llyn faction, for they not only easily won the election of 1620, but carried the war into Court circles and the debates of Parliament. In Parliament, too, the bishop was guilty of poor tactics and great inconsistency; though chaplain to James I, he spoke indiscreet words against Roman Catholics and the Spanish match, and for a short time actually found himself within the walls of the Fleet prison; but having regained the King's favour he became a target for Puritan attack in both Lords and Commons, charged with using unnecessarily strong words and promoting unworthy incumbents: however, all the attacks - whether in the Star Chamber, or the Court of Chancery, or in Parliament - passed away harmlessly because of the royal favour.

On the credit side are the *Practice of Piety*, his warm support for Dr. John Davies's *Dictionary*, 1632, his services as member of the Council of the Marches, the sums of money he spent upon the repair of Bangor cathedral, and his supervision of his diocese, as specified in the apologia to king Charles I subscribed 7 April 1630, and as exemplified in his order, 1625, to put an end to the violent quarrels over pew-seats that had disgraced church life at Llanfairfechan. He died 26 October 1631. His second wife was Ann, daughter of Sir Henry Bagenal of Castle Newry in Ireland and Plas Newydd in Anglesey; his grandson EDWARD BAYLY succeeded to the Plas Newydd estate; and his grandson HENRY BAYLY took the name and arms of Paget (as 9th baron), and was the father of the 1st marquis of Anglesey.

### THOMAS BAYLY (1608 - c. 1657)

The bishop's son had a career both as Protestant and Roman Catholic. He was a staunch Royalist, and happened to be at Raglan castle when Charles I was entertained there after Naseby, and is credited with drawing up the articles of capitulation to Fairfax. Bayly himself came off lightly, crossed to the Continent, but returned soon after the king's execution; before the end of 1649 he had published *The Royal Charter Granted unto Kings*, which brought him into Newgate prison; in that prison he composed *Herba Parietis*, a book of contemplations, published in 1650. He managed to escape from Newgate, crossed to Holland, and declared himself a Roman Catholic - a religious change not at all surprising after the quasi-Roman sympathies of his *Certamen Religiosum* published in 1649 - and brought out in 1654 at Douai a book which was meant to be *The End of the Controversie between the Roman Catholick and Protestant Religions*. Controversy is still far from ceasing

over the *Apophthegms* of 1650 (witty sayings of [Henry, marquis of Worcester](#)) and the *Golden Apophthegms* of 1660 (sayings of king Charles I and the marquis), and whether Thomas Bayly was the real author of the *Life and Death...of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester*. Anthony Wood has succeeded only too well in casting doubts on the authorship of this *Life* of 1655, and on the exact year of Bayly's death - for the moment it stands at 1657.

## Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

## Sources

*Calendar of Wynn (of Gwydir) Papers, 1515–1690, in the National Library of Wales and elsewhere, passim* (see index)

*The Journals of the House of Commons*, i, 831, 837, 845, 850-1, 855, 863, 865, 877

*The Journals of the House of Lords*, iii, 546, 553-4, 572, 676

*The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1928-9, 99-132

*Baron Hill MSS. at University College North Wales Library, Bangor* 3102, 3111

A. Ivor Pryce, *The Diocese of Bangor in the sixteenth century being a digest of the registers of the bishops, A.D. 1512-1646* (1923)

*Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, iii, 133-8

*Caernarvonshire Historical Society Transactions*, 28, 13-36

## Gweithiau

Lewis Bayly, Rowland Vaughan (tr.), *Yr Ymarfer o Dduwioldeb, yn cyfarwyddo dyn i rodio fal y rhyngo ef fodd Duw* (Llundain 1630)

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