DAVID ab OWEN (died 1512), abbot and bishop

Name: David ab Owen
Date of death: 1512
Parent: Owain ap Deio ap Llywelyn ab Einion ap Celynin
Gender: Male
Occupation: abbot and bishop
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Evan David Jones

A native of Glasgoed in Meifod, Montgomeryshire, he was the son of Owen ap Deio ap Llewelyn ab Einion ap Celynin. He studied canon and civil law at Oxford, and he is said to have taken his doctorate in law. His legal knowledge seems to have been put into practice in the service of John, earl of Worcester, chief justice of North Wales, between 1461 and 1467. He was thus a supporter of the house of York, but the poets reveal that, like many others, he changed sides and supported Henry Tudor in his need. He was at one time abbot of Strata Marcella, and for a period abbot of Strata Florida. Sometime after the end of 1489 he became abbot of Aberconwy at Maenan, and continued there after his elevation to the bishopric of St Asaph, 12 December 1503. By name of David, bishop of St Asaph, or David, abbot of Conway, he was granted a pardon on 16 May 1508, and with his principal officials he accepted the invitation to partake of the general pardon extended upon the accession of Henry VIII in 1509. He died 12 February 1512, and was buried near the altar in his cathedral church in accordance with the wish expressed in his will made the previous day (P.C.C. 23 Fetiplace). To learning and mastery of ecclesiastical statesmanship he is said to have added loving care of the buildings which came under his authority. He restored the ruined abbey of Aberconwy and rebuilt the episcopal palace at S. Asaph. It is also said that he erected a wooden bridge there where in 1630 a stone bridge was built, and that it was known as bishop David's bridge. He was greatly eulogized by the Welsh poets, who praised his scholarship and learning. See poems by Bedo Brwynllys, Dafydd Amharedudd ap Tudur, Gruffudd ap Llywelyn Fychan (2), Guto'r Glyn, Hywel Rheinallt, Ieuan ap Tudur Penllyn, Ieuan Deulwyn, Ieuan Llwyd Brydydd, Lewis Môn (2), Owain ap Llywelyn Moel, Rhys Pennardd, Tudur Aled (9), and William Egwad.

Author

Evan David Jones, (1903 - 1987)

Sources

Robert Williams, *Enwogion Cymru. A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Welshmen* (1852)

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Williams, *Gwaith Guto'r Glyn* (1939), 309

Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1882, 71

Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1494-1509, 551

Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, part I, 246

NLW Archives: Peniarth MS 176: Achau (pedigree)

NLW Archives: NLW MS 100B (a collection of poems in his praise)

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: David ab Owen

Additional Links

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