

## FERRAR, ROBERT (died 1555), Protestant martyr and bishop

**Name:** Robert Ferrar  
**Date of death:** 1555  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** Protestant martyr and bishop  
**Area of activity:** Religion  
**Author:** Glanmor Williams

Born within the parish of Halifax. Ferrar first entered Cambridge University, but later went to Oxford. Here he became an Augustinian canon. In 1528, he was one of a group of students discovered secretly trafficking in Lutheran literature, and was compelled to recant.

In 1535, he accompanied [William Barlow](#), on an embassy to Scotland, and later became Prior of Nostell, Yorkshire, in time to surrender the house to the king, 20 November 1540, whereupon he received a pension of £80. A leading reformer and high in Somerset's favour he was made a royal preacher and visitor in 1547. His consecration as bishop of S. Davids, 9 September 1548, was the first to be celebrated according to the English form of service. At S. Davids he came into sharp conflict with a powerful group of canons, who took advantage of Somerset's fall to present a series of grave accusations against his protégé.

After the accession of Mary, Ferrar was imprisoned in Southwark, and, in March 1554, was deprived of his bishopric for heresy and marriage. After some indecision, Ferrar, fortified by Bradford and other Protestant prisoners, refused to recant when examined by bishop Gardiner and other commissioners in February 1555. He was then arraigned before his successor, [Henry Morgan](#), at Carmarthen, and, still refusing to retract his opinions, he met his death (by burning) with great courage on Carmarthen market square 30 March 1555.

### Author

Sir Glanmor Williams

### Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

*Foxe's Acts and Monuments of these latter and perilous days* (1563)

*Athenae Oxonienses* (1813–20), ii, 759-61

*Athenae Cantabrigienses* (1858–1913), i, 125-6

E. Yardley, *Menevia Sacra. Arch. Camb.* (1927), 91-4

R. Jennings, *Martyrdom of Bishop Farrar at Carmarthen, A.D. 1555 a lecture* (1867)

*Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society*, 1934, 193-266

[See Constantine, George, in Appendix.]

## Further Reading

Ted Hughes, [The Martyrdom of Bishop Farrar](#), accessed 16 March 2020

Wikipedia Article: [Robert Farrar](#)

## Images

[Robert Farrar, Bishop of St. Davids. Martyr](#)

[Robert Farrar B\[isho\]p of St. Davids](#)

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