

LEE (LEGH), ROWLAND (died 1543), bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (which included at that time what later became the diocese of Chester) (1534-1543), and president of the Council in Wales and the Marches for the same period

Name: Rowland Lee

Date of death: 1543

Gender: Male

Occupation: bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (which included at that time what later became the diocese of Chester) (1534-1543), and president of the Council in Wales and the Marches for the same period

Area of activity: Public and Social Service, Civil Administration; Religion

Author: William Llewelyn Davies

Although Rowland Lee was not a Welshman - both his parents were north of England people - he is included in this work because of the work which he accomplished when he presided at the Council in Ludlow. Details of his career are given in the *D.N.B.* which, as far as the Marches side of his work is concerned, should be supplemented by referring to [C. A. J. Skeel](#), *The Council in the Marches of Wales*, 1904; R. Flenley, *A Calendar of the Register of the Queen's Majesty's Council in the Dominion and Principality of Wales and the Marches*, 1918, and David Williams, *A History of Modern Wales*, 1950. Lee had had much experience of public affairs in England for some years before he was appointed to the two offices named above in 1534. Under Wolsey, he had been concerned in the closing of some of the monastic establishments; he had also been closely associated with Thomas Cromwell, and was destined to continue that association after he came to Ludlow (see his letters to Cromwell preserved in the P.R.O.). When he followed another bishop (John Voysey, bp. of Exeter) as president, he found that his predecessor had left him a legacy of lawlessness, partly the result of weak administration. He realized that only strong measures might prove effective and he sought full powers - even the authority to inflict capital punishment for a felony, etc. His period of administration was characterized by harsh measures; there is no doubt, however, that the circumstances of the time demanded a strong hand. It is generally believed that it was Lee who caused Welshmen who appeared before him to adopt the English style of nomenclature and surnames; (on this, see Ellis, *Original Letters*, III, iii, 13). It used to be believed that it was at his recommendation that, in the time of Henry VIII, the division of Wales into shire-ground was completed. Actually, Lee protested against the statute of 1536 which made the whole of Wales into shire-ground and gave it justices of the peace and gaol delivery as in England. In April 1540 he expressed it as his opinion (to Cromwell) that it was unwise to convert Denbighland into shire-ground. Lee died at the college of S. Chad, Shrewsbury, 28 January 1543, and was buried in that church.

Author

Sir William Llewelyn Davies, (1887 - 1952)

Sources

Sources named above

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Rowland Lee](#)

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Published date: 1959

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