

ROWLAND(S), ELLIS (1621 - 1691), early nonconformist

Name: Ellis Rowland (S)
Date of birth: 1621
Date of death: 1691
Parent: Thomas Rowland
Gender: Male
Occupation: early nonconformist
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Robert Thomas Jenkins

Born in 1621, son of Thomas Rowland, yeoman, of Beaumaris - another son, Richard, appears in Ellis's will. From Beaumaris grammar school he went up, in July 1639, 'aged 18,' to S. John's College, Cambridge (Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*), but did not graduate. He afterwards held the benefice of Llanellidan, Denbighshire, and was confined in his tenure of it (1653) by the Triers. In 1657 he removed to the benefices of Clynnog-fawr and Llanwnda, Caernarfonshire Samuel Palmer (*Nonconformists' Memorial*) avers that he was also, and after 1660, 'warden' of Ruthin, but this is difficult to believe - others of Palmer's statements about him are very wide of the mark, e.g. that he was 'a Baptist' (he is officially termed 'a Presbyterian' in 1672), and that he died near Chester in 1683. He was ejected from his cures ('dragged down from the pulpit,' says Palmer) in 1660, and was imprisoned at Caernarvon in 1661 and searched for weapons. He settled down to live at Caernarvon; according to Palmer again, his wife kept a girls' school there, and Rowland drew patterns for the girls to copy - the only certainty is that in his will (N.L.W.) he calls himself 'now a Teacher in a private Grammar School.' In 1666 we find Philip Henry sending him copies of Baxter's *Call* to be distributed. His house was licensed under the 1672 Act of Indulgence, yet, strangely, we find no mention of him in Henry Maurice's report of 1665 nor in Dr. Daniel Williams's report to the Fund Board in 1690. John Pinney (another ejected minister) stayed with Rowland at Caernarvon in January 1688 (*Letters of John Pinney*, 1929). Rowland made his will in July 1688, in failing health. The will shows no sign of straitened means: the legacies in cash amount to nearly £20, a substantial sum for the time. He remembered the poor of Beaumaris and of Caernarvon; he left his old school 'my Cooper's *Dictionary*, with 5s. to have it re-bound'; there are bequests to his kinsfolk and to his wife's. As she is not named, presumably she was dead; everything suggests that she hailed from the Vale of Clwyd - she had a 'great *Bible*' which had been given her by Thomas Jones, rector of Clocaenog, Denbighshire, 1672-1705, and Rowland left Thomas Jones 'two pieces of gold' and six books from his library. His papers were to go to Richard Edwards (died 1704) of Nanhoron. Rowland's brother, Richard, was named executor, and there are two other witnesses named 'Rowlands.' The will was proved on 8 June 1691, so it looks as if Rowland died in 1691 or late in 1690.

Author

Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881 - 1969)

Sources

T. Richards, *Wales under the Indulgence* (indexes)

and other sources cited above

Lyon Turner and Alexander Gordon relied too confidently upon S. Palmer - the official records used by Dr. Richards, and the will cited above, provide safer evidence

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