

PHILLIPS, PEREGRINE (1623 - 1691), Puritan preacher; Independent 'apostle of Pembrokeshire'

Name: Peregrine Phillips
Date of birth: 1623
Date of death: 1691
Gender: Male
Occupation: Puritan preacher; Independent 'apostle of Pembrokeshire'
Area of activity: Religion
Author: Thomas Richards

son of one vicar (Amroth), nephew of another (Kidwelly). It is said he attended more than one grammar school, including the Puritan school of Stanley Gower at Brampton Bryan; he matriculated at Oxford but the Civil War broke out before he could proceed to graduation. The early records concerning him are scanty; there is not a word of him in the manuscripts of the Plundered Ministers' Committee; he was not named among the twenty-five Approvers under the Propagation Act; the only references to him in the accounts of that Act are that the authorities paid him £70 for preaching in 1650-1, and allowed him £5 for repairing the parsonage house at Llangwm. At first his name is associated with the parish of Mounkton, later he became minister of Llangwm and Freystrop (under the 'Triers' undoubtedly); at this period he signed (1656) the 'Humble Representation and Address' saluting Cromwell and the Protectorate, and persuaded a considerable number of his adherents to sign with him; later on in the same year he is up in London to further the project of uniting several of the adjoining parishes with Llangwm for more effective preaching on the countryside and better administration of the title revenue. If the manuscript evidence about his activities is somewhat scanty, authoritative tradition is picturesquely rich; Cromwell requesting him to preach before him and his officers during the siege of Pembroke in 1648, and to pray on board every ship that sailed to Ireland out of Milford in 1649. He is said to have taken all Pembrokeshire to be his parish, and to have preached before the judges on Assize. Under the 1662 Act of Uniformity he had to leave Llangwm and Freystrop; the Clarendon Code bore heavily upon him, though tradition again comes in with stories of kindness and protection shown him by the **Owen** family of Orielton and the **Perrot** family of Haroldston. Another tradition reports that great pressure was brought upon him to conform with the Church of England and that public debates were held between him and prominent Anglican dignitaries; for all that, bishop Lucy, in a letter to archbishop Sheldon, accused him of celebrating clandestine marriages without the sanction of the parish clergyman. In 1672 he received a licence under the temporary Indulgence of Charles II to preach at his own house in Haverfordwest, and at the house of Richard Meyler in the same town; and there is some ground for believing that he was deceived by the declarations of James II in his Indulgence of 1687. In a report that was sent up to London, some time in 1690, about the state and condition of several nonconformist ministers in Wales, Phillips is described as living on a small farm at Dredgman Hill near Haverfordwest, and as receiving £8 a year from his people if the times were favourable, less if they were not. He died on 17 September 1691.

Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

Sources

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