

Biographical Details

Robert MEREDITH

father of John and Bishop Richard MEREDITH

1. **Robert¹ MEREDITH**, born¹ bet 1517 and 1523 in Llanfair Talhaearn, Denbighshire, Wales; died² 1557 in London, England, son of Maredudd ap GRONWY and Elsbeth ferch JOHN ap EDWARD. He married **Margaret** ferch **WILLIAM ap JOHN**, died³ aft 1557, daughter of William ap JOHN OF and Elsbeth ferch HARRY HEN CONWY.

Occupation^{4,5} bet 1537 and 1538 Apprenticed as a Clothworker in London to Davy Price. Occupation 1557 Clothworker and citizen of London. Lived at 1557 in Aldermary, London, England. Probate⁶ 29 Mar 1557 in London, England. Will 24 Jan 1556/57. Bartrum reference Lln.E. 4(A).

Notes for Robert MEREDITH

Robert Meredith was born between 1517 and 1523, one of at least two sons of Maredudd ap Gronwy ap Deio and his wife Elsbeth ferch John ap Edward. His place of birth was Llanfair Talhaearn in Denbighshire (now in the Welsh Unitary Authority of Conwy and called Llanfair Talhaiarn on the Ordnance Survey maps). In about 1537-8 he became apprenticed as a clothworker to a Davy Price in London. The account books of the Clothworkers' Company show that he completed his apprenticeship between August 1544 and July 1545 and was 'made Free'. He would have been at least 21 years old then, but no older than 27: the apprenticeship normally started at age 14-20 and lasted 7 years.

It is unlikely that he would have been married before being made Free, and so his probable date of marriage to Marged ferch William ap John was between 1545 and 1548, taking into account the estimated date of birth of 1550 of his 2nd son Richard, the future Bishop of Leighlin. Robert married into an interesting family, one of his brothers-in-law being George Smith the Chancellor of St. Asaph (i.e. private secretary to the Bishop of St. Asaph). The other brother-in-law was a colourful character called Roger Smyth, a Roman Catholic priest and Welsh translator who fled to the Continent ca. 1573 and spent much of his time there. Roger Smyth was described as "a man of uncommon opinions who disliked both the Jesuits and the English, and desired to see a republic, together with freedom of conscience, instituted in Wales and England". Robert Meredith's two sons John and Richard seemed to have been born ca. 1550.

Sometime between 1544 and 1551 he was the plaintiff in a case, considered by the Court of Chancery, against a first cousin Griffith ap Howell regarding lands in Llanfair inherited from their grandfather Gronwy ap Deio. The details of the case show that his uncle, Howell ap Gronwy ap Deio, was an elder brother of his father Maredudd.

Robert Meredith's Will is dated 24th January 1556/7 and describes him as Citizen and Clothworker of London living in the parish of Aldermary. The Will names his wife as Margaret, mother as Elizabeth (and therefore still living in 1557), and two sons John and Richard. He leaves his property in Denbighshire to his mother Elizabeth for the rest of her life, and thereafter to his son John and his heirs, and for lack of heirs to his son Richard and his heirs (so we can assume that John was the elder son). The Will also names a brother David (but note that the term can be used loosely in Wills of the time). The Will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 29 March 1557, so Robert must have died sometime between 24 January and 29 March of that year.

It is possible that his widow is the "Margarett Meridith" that the IGI shows as having married a "Reighnold Saint" (probably Reginald Saint) on 4 Feb 1559 at Saint Thomas the Apostle, London (which is a parish near to Aldermary).

¹ Peter C Bartrum, Welsh genealogies AD 1400-1500. (Aberystwyth : National Library of Wales, 1983). "now in the Welsh Unitary Authority of Conwy and called Llanfair Talhaiarn on the Ordnance Survey maps".

² Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Will of Robert Meredith, 1557. (Wrastley Register), National Archives, U.K., PROB 11/39. Downloaded as "Will of Robert Meredith or Meredith, Clothworker of Aldermary, City of London 29 March 1557".

³ Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Will of Robert Meredith, 1557. (Wrastley Register), National Archives, U.K., PROB 11/39. Downloaded as "Will of Robert Meredith or Meredith, Clothworker of Aldermary, City of London 29 March 1557".

⁴ Bottigheimer, Karl S., English Money and Irish Land. , BOD 22955 e.83.

⁵ Private Correspondence Clothworkers Company 10 Oct 2005.

⁶ Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Will of Robert Meredith, 1557. (Wrastley Register), National Archives, U.K., PROB 11/39. Downloaded as "Will of Robert Meredith or Meredith, Clothworker of Aldermary, City of London 29 March 1557".