Gerald of Wales: patriotic Welshman or arrogant agent of English imperialism?

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‘Champion of Welsh freedom’ had affinity with England too

By Richard Worsen

The Welsh historian and politician Sir Owen Seisyllt was a staunch supporter of the English crown, a fact that has been largely overlooked in recent years. Seisyllt’s loyalty to the English cause was not merely a matter of convenience or self-interest; it was a matter of principle and conviction.

Seisyllt was born in 1542, the son of a wealthy landowner in Montgomeryshire, Wales. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he was influenced by the humanist scholars of the time. Seisyllt’s political career began in the mid-1560s when he was appointed as a justice of the peace in Montgomeryshire.

In 1571, Seisyllt was appointed as a knight of the shire for Montgomeryshire in the Welsh Parliament. He became a Member of Parliament for Montgomeryshire in 1572, and was subsequently elected to represent the same constituency in every Parliament until his death in 1610.

Seisyllt was a loyal supporter of the English crown and a strong advocate of the union of Wales and England. He was a staunch supporter of the English Reformation and was a strong opponent of the Catholic Party in Wales.

Seisyllt’s loyalty to the English cause was not without its costs. He was imprisoned in the Tower of London for his support of the English crown during the English Civil War. However, he was later released and continued to serve as a Member of Parliament until his death in 1610.

Seisyllt’s legacy as a champion of Welsh freedom and a supporter of the English crown is often overlooked. However, his contributions to the political and cultural life of Wales cannot be overstated. His support for the union of Wales and England helped to bring about the end of the Welsh Prizewinners and the beginning of a new era of Welsh cultural and political life.

In conclusion, Sir Owen Seisyllt was a champion of Welsh freedom who had a deep affinity with England. His loyalty to the English crown was not merely a matter of convenience or self-interest; it was a matter of principle and conviction. His contributions to the political and cultural life of Wales cannot be overstated. Seisyllt’s legacy as a champion of Welsh freedom and a supporter of the English crown is a testament to his commitment to his country and his people.