

Gilbert Gerard



No Picture Available

Born: 1534 Sudbury, ENG

Married: Anne Ratcliffe

Died: 4 Feb 1593 Ashely, ENG

Parents: James Gerard & Margaret Holcroft

Sir Gilbert Gerard (died 4 February 1593) was Attorney-General to Elizabeth I for over twenty years, who later became Master of the Rolls.

Life

Gerard, from Lancashire, spent some time at the University of Cambridge but did not graduate. He was called to the bar by Gray's Inn in 1539, serving as Treasurer in 1556. He was MP for Liverpool in 1545, MP for Wigan in 1553 and 1555, and MP for Steyning, Sussex in 1554. On the accession of Elizabeth I, he was appointed Attorney-General and served in this role for over twenty years, helping to reform court procedure in Ireland amongst other tasks, but not playing a large role in policy-making. He sat as a judge on trials including that of John Hales in 1564. Three years later, he helped Matthew Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in reforming Merton College, Oxford. In 1570, he was a member of a commission trying participants in the northern uprising, and in 1571 he was thanked by Cambridge University for his work in securing the passage of an Act of Parliament confirming the charters and privileges of the university. He also assisted the prosecution of Duke of Norfolk in connection with the Ridolfi plot.^[1]

He was knighted in 1579 but was passed over for the position of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal in the same year. In 1581, he became Master of the Rolls, and although his period of office was not a success, this may not have been due to personal failings. He was involved in further treason trials in later years. He died on 4 February 1593 and was buried in Ashley, Staffordshire.^[1]

References

- ^a ^b Brooks, Christopher W (September 2004). "Gerard, Sir Gilbert (d. 1593)". Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Oxford University Press. Retrieved on 2008-08-04.