

= Richard Swinefield =

Richard Swinefield (or Richard de Swinfield ; died 15 March 1317) was a medieval Bishop of Hereford , England . He earned a doctor of divinity degree as well as holding a number of ecclesiastical offices , including Archdeacon of London , before being named bishop . While bishop , he worked to secure the canonisation of Thomas de Cantilupe , his predecessor , whom he had worked for previously . Although he was active in his diocese , he spent little time in politics . He died in 1317 , and was buried in Hereford Cathedral where a memorial to his memory still stands .

= = Rise in the Church = =

Swinefield 's last name may come from Swingfield located near Folkestone , Kent . His father was Stephen of Swinfield , who died in 1282 , and his brother Stephen remained a layman . Other information about his family and upbringing is unknown , nor is his day or year of birth . He earned a doctor of divinity degree , but the location of his university studies is unknown .

By 1264 Swinefield was a member of the household of Thomas de Cantilupe , who went on to become Bishop of Hereford in 1275 . Swinefield held the prebend of Hampton in the diocese of Hereford , before 1279 and held that prebend until his election as bishop . Shortly after 17 April 1280 he was named Archdeacon of London , having previously held an unknown prebend in the diocese of London .

= = Episcopate = =

Swinefield was elected to the see of Hereford , or bishopric , on 1 October 1282 . The election was confirmed by John Peckham , the Archbishop of Canterbury on 31 December 1282 , and Swinefield was given custody of the spiritualities and temporalities , or the ecclesiastical and lay income producing properties , of the see by 8 January 1293 . He was consecrated on 7 March 1283 .

During Swinefield 's time as bishop , he was not involved in politics , and spent most of his time in his diocese . He rarely attended Parliament , usually excusing himself on the grounds of urgent diocesan business or his own bad health . He inherited a number of lawsuits from his predecessor , which he managed to settle . Swinefield also resolved a dispute over the boundary between the diocese of Hereford and the diocese of St Asaph , a Welsh bishopric , with the settlement being not entirely to the Welsh bishop 's liking . The town of Hereford also had disagreements with Swinefield , and on one occasion the bishop threatened excommunication against the town unless they submitted .

Swinefield was concerned to ensure that his clergy were well treated . He worked to ensure that churches within his diocese were not misappropriated through the granting of custody to unworthy candidates , as well as trying to keep order in the monasteries . His main efforts though went toward securing the canonisation of his predecessor Thomas de Cantilupe . This did not however take place until 1320 , after Swinefield 's death .

= = Death and legacy = =

Swinefield died on 15 March 1317 , and was buried in Hereford Cathedral , where a memorial in the transept 's north wall shows Swinefield dressed as a bishop and holding a building . Two of his nephews were given offices within the diocese , with John given the precentorship in Hereford Cathedral , and Gilbert made the chancellor there . Another possible relative was Richard Swinfield , who also held a prebend in the diocese .

A record of Swinefield 's expenses as bishop has survived for the years 1289 and 1290 . The accounts offer a rare glimpse of the organisation and expenses of a major household in the time period . During the 296 days covered by the record , his household moved 81 times , with 38 of these stops associated with him visiting his diocese during April through June . The record also shows that he supported two scholars at Oxford University . The record has been printed a number

of times , including by the Camden Society in 1853 though 1855 .