

BISHOP RICHARD FOX 1447-1528 A BRIEF SUMMARY OF HIS LIFE

'A Lord of extreme authority and goodness' Henry VIIIⁱ

- ❖ 1447/8 Born at Ropsley, parish five miles east of Grantham in the Parts of Kesteven, Lincolnshire
- ❖ School possibly Boston, Oxford then Cambridge University, definitely studied in Paris - but no actual evidence of him attending any establishment
- ❖ 1484 age 36 - no evidence of him till he is made vicar of Stepney, London, but he must have been well known because King Richard III opposed the appointment
- ❖ 1485 known to be secretary to Henry, Earl of Richmond (future Henry VII) whom he met in Paris, accompanied Henry at the Battle of Bosworth Heath, where Richard III killed
- ❖ Upon Henry VII's accession Richard was given many posts: Principal Secretary of State, Lord Privy Seal - involved in all matters of State and negotiations on Henry's behalf - baptised infant Henry VIII - admired as a good mediator, his moderate views prevented reprisals against Richard III's allies - appointed to prebends of Bishopston, Brownswood and South Grantham, but these had to be renounced when he became bishop
- ❖ 1487 Bishop of Exeter - resided at bishop's house in London - involved in negotiating treaty with Scotland
- ❖ 1491 Bishop of Bath & Wells
- ❖ 1492 negotiated Treaty of Etaples
- ❖ 1494 age 46 Bishop of Durham, possibly because of troubles on Scottish border worked on major affairs of state
- ❖ 1496 negotiated Treaty with Flanders *Intercursus Magnus*
- ❖ 1497 organised defence of Norham Castle against Perkin Warbeck plus military harbour works at Calais
- ❖ 1499 marriage contract of Prince Arthur and Catherine of Aragon
- ❖ 1501 Bishop of Winchester - most prestigious bishopric in England - as such became the official Visitor to New College and Magdalen College, Oxford, and Winchester School
- ❖ 1502 negotiated marriage treaty of Margaret Tudor and James IV
- ❖ 1508 negotiated marriage treaty (failed) of Mary Tudor and Charles of Castile
- ❖ 1509 death of Henry VII - Richard continues his work with Henry VIII
- ❖ As executor of Henry VII, involved in the founding of St. John's College, Cambridge & building of Kings College Chapel, Cambridge
- ❖ 1513 age 65 visits France with Henry VIII
- ❖ 1514 works with Wolsey on many matters of state, but age is against him and he prefers to attend to diocesan matters in Winchester
- ❖ 1515 Fox resigns Privy Seal and Wolsey is appointed to position
- ❖ 1517 founds Corpus Christi College, Oxford
- ❖ Eyesight gradually fails (blind by 1520)
- ❖ 1519 resigns Mastership of Pembroke College
- ❖ 1528 endows grammar school in Grantham, now known as The Kings School, and dies three days later, aged 80/81.

Richard Fox was very interested in architecture. He was deeply involved in the design of the Chantry Chapel at Winchester 1513, and of his own college. He is believed to have endowed the porch at St. Peter's, Ropsley, Lincolnshire.

by Marion Ellis

ⁱ R.P. 7 Hen VIII No. 1306, vol. ii, p378 in *Life of Bishop Richard Fox* by E. Chisholm Batten p100