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THE BURIAL-PLACE OF ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY.

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WHERE was Archbishop Courtenay buried? Was it at Canterbury, or at Maidstone? Was his dying wish that his body might be laid to rest at his Collegiate Church of All Saints' complied with? or was this wish overruled by order of Richard II., and his remains brought to Christ Church and interred in the Trinity Chapel? Which is the Tomb, and which the Cenotaph?—the beautiful alabaster monument at the feet of the Black Prince? or the altar-slab of Bethersden marble at All Saints', with its vacant cell, which once contained a fine memorial brass? Is the claim that All Saints' contains the remains of the Archbishop "a fond thing vainly invented" by the Maidstone people? or are they, on the contrary, justified in holding that Canterbury's claim to the same simply originated in the pride and vanity of the monks of Christ Church? These are questions which have been raised for the last three hundred years, while the rival claims of Canterbury and Maidstone to possess the ashes of the Archbishop have each found support from the ablest antiquaries; and it is not a little remarkable that opinion on such an important subject should so long have varied among those best able to judge, while all the time means were at hand to settle the point beyond the possibility of doubt. But although so many who wrote on the matter have differed in their views of it, several of them have pronounced their opinions in a half-hearted way; while some have attempted to shroud theirs in a kind of Delphic utterance, so that their readers should be left in a state of uncertainty as to what was really intended to be conveyed. Very little argument or original investigations were employed on either side; and not until towards the close of the last century was the question lifted out of what till then had been little more than mere *ipse dixit* and conjecture by the

Rev. Samuel Denne, who took the matter up in a thoroughly business-like way on behalf of the All Saints' site, in his able letter on the subject, published in *Archæologia*, vol. x., and whose researches, aided by those of his brother, the Rev. John Denne, considerably strengthened the Maidstone claim.

The Canterbury champions, however, held their own, having been greatly assisted in this by the masterly arguments of the Rev. Beale Poste, and they obtained a goodly number of adherents until 1889, when the Rev. J. Cave-Browne, in his monumental work, *The History of the Parish Church of All Saints', Maidstone*, brought together all that was then known on the subject, and marshalled his facts and arguments for the All Saints' site in such an able and forcible manner that even the late Primate, Dr. Benson, who strongly favoured the claim of his own Cathedral, and who had jokingly threatened to excommunicate Mr. Cave-Browne if he deprived him of his Archbishop, became convinced, and withdrew the ban.

The publication of the above work, therefore, formed a turning point in the controversy, many of the Canterbury champions being driven to alter their opinion of the matter; and others, who were only half convinced, or convinced against their will, saw that unless further evidence were forthcoming in support of their own side it would be impossible any longer to maintain it; while most persons felt that, for the present at all events, Mr. Cave-Browne's view of the case did, and must, hold the field, this success on his part being due to the exhaustive manner in which he had treated his subject and dealt with the materials then at his command. He had consulted all the authorities who had written upon the matter; had considered all the evidence which was then known bearing on the case; had fairly given all the *pros* and *cons* on each side; and had logically worked up to the conclusion that Courtenay's body must lie buried at Maidstone, and nowhere else.

It will be well here to give some extracts from a few of the writers who have touched upon this question, not only to shew how much they have differed about it, and in what a hesitating manner some have pronounced their opinions, but also because it will be necessary to refer to these later on.

JOHN LELAND (as quoted by Mr. Cave-Browne in his above work*), in his *Collectanea* (circa 1544), says that Courtenay lies buried at Maidstone.

* Pages 42, 43.

Archbishop PARKER, writing in 1572, and speaking of Courtenay's death, says:—

*"In ecclesia Cantuariensi juxta feretrum Thomæ Becket ex australi parte sepultus jacet."**

JOHN STOW, in his *Annales* (first published in 1580), says:—

"William Courtney Arch-bishop of Canterbury, deceased on the first of August [1396], after hee had sate Arch-bishop of Canterbury 15. yeeres and more: . . . he builde much at Maidstone: he gaue by Testament 1000. markes towards the amendment of the bodie of the Church of Christ in Canterbury, where hee was buried."†

WILLIAM CAMDEN, in the four editions of his *Britannia* (1586—1594), when treating of Maidstone does not allude to Courtenay; but his translator, HOLLAND, in the English version of the work (1610), the proof-sheets of which were corrected by CAMDEN himself, says:—

"William Courteney erected a faire Collegiat Church [at Maidstone] in which he so great a Prelate, and so high-borne, lieth lowly entombed."‡

Bishop FRANCIS GODWIN, in 1616, says of Courtenay:—

"Humatus jacet ad pedes Edwardi Principis, ab australi parte feretri sancti Thomæ, sepulchro conditus alabastrino."§

In 1631 JOHN WEEVER, writing of Courtenay's monument in Canterbury Cathedral, says:—

"It was the custome of old, and so it is in these dayes, for men of eminent ranke and qualitie to haue Tombes erected in more places then one; for example and prooffe of my speech, I find here in this Church a Monument of Alabaster, at the feete of the blacke Prince, wherein, both by tradition and writing, it is affirmed that the bones of *William Courtney* (the sonne of *Hugh Courtney*, the third of that Christian name, Earle of Deuonshire), Archbishop of this See, lies entombed. And I finde another, to the memory of the same man, at Maidstone here in Kent, wherein (because of the Epitaph) I rather beleeeue that his body lieth buried; Of which hereafter when I come to that Towne."||

* *De Antiquitate, etc.* (1605), p. 270.

† Stow's *Annales* (Edmund Howe's Edition, 1631), p. 314.

‡ *Britain, etc.* (1610), p. 330.

§ *De Praesulibus Angliæ* (Richardson's Edition, 1743), p. 122.

|| Weever's *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (1631), p. 225.

And further on, when speaking about Maidstone, he says :—

“He [Courtenay] lyeth buried according to his will here in his owne Church, vnder a plaine graue-stone (a lowly Tombe for such an high borne Prelate) vpon which his pourtraiture is delineated, and this Epitaph inlaid with brasse about the Verge.”*

WILLIAM SOMNER in 1640 speaks of Courtenay’s burial-place as follows :—

“This Archbishop lyeth buried (said Bishop *Godwyn*) upon the South-side of *Thomas Becket’s* shrine, at the feet of the blacke Prince in a goodly Tombe of Alabaster. But what sayes Weyer? *It was the custome of old* (saith he) . . . [as above] . . . *I rather beleeeve that his body lyeth buried.* Thus he. His place of burial appointed of him in his Will extant in Christ-Church was the Cathedrall at *Exceter*, where he had sometime beene a Prebendary, and where he requested the Bishop of the place to bury him. Afterwards lying on his death bed and having changed his mind in this point; and holding his body (as he then declared) unworthy of buriall in his Metropolitall or any other Cathedrall or Collegiate Church, he wills it to be buried in the Church-yard of his Collegiate-Church at *Maidstone*, in loco designato *Johanni Boteler armigero suo* (as his owne words are). Thus you see his Will sends us to seeke his buriall place at *Exceter*. His after declaration on his death bed, to the Cimitery of his Collegiate Church at *Maidstone*. His Monument in that Church sayes he lyes there, and this in Christ-Church, that he is in none of the three but here. And that I take to be the truest. For I find in a *Lieger Book* of Christ-Church, that the King (*Rich. 2*) happening to be at *Canterb.* when he was to be buried (upon the Monkes suite, ’tis like) overruled the matter, and commanded his body to bee there interred.”†

RICHARD KILBURNE, speaking in 1659 of All Saints’, Maidstone, says :—

“*William Courtney* . . . erected the Collegiate Church aforesaid (in which he was intombed).”‡

HENRY WHARTON in 1691 favours the Maidstone site, as follows :—

“*Cantuariæ sepultum Godwinus scribit. Veriùs Maydenstonæ tumultum esse patet ex codicillo, qui Testamento suo annexus extat inter Archiva Ecclesiæ Christi Cant. ‘Languens in extremis in interiori camera Manerii de Maydenston, voluit et ordinavit, quòd quia non reputavit se dignum, ut dixit, in sua Metropolitana aut aliqua Cathedrali aut Collegiata Ecclesia sepeliri, voluit et elegit*

* Weever’s *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (1631), p. 285.

† *The Antiquities of Canterbury*, by William Somner (1640), pp. 265, 266.

‡ Kilburne’s *A Topographie or Survey of the County of Kent* (1659), p. 178.

sepulturam suam in Cœmiterio Ecclesiæ Collegiatæ de Maydenston, in loco designato Johanni Botelere Armigero suo. Atque isthic quidem Sepulchrum illius hodiernum visendum restat."*

NICOLAS BATTELY, in the second part of his edition of Somner's work (1703), endeavours at first to evade the question; for, although he commences his account of the interments of the Primates as follows: "I will now undertake to account for the Burials of all the Archbishops of *Canterbury*" (p. 32), he loses courage when he comes to the point, and merely says:—

"*William Courtney's Monument is placed at the Feet of the Black Prince. More of this may be seen in Mr Somner.*"†

Later on, however, when giving short memoirs of the Archbishops, he says:—

"*William Courtney . . . died Anno 1396 : His Will is registered, and . . . By a Codicil annexed in his last Sickness, he appointed the place of his Burial to be in the Church-yard of the Collegiate Church of Maydeston in Kent; but this part of his Will was not fulfilled; for by the Command of the King his Body was interred in his own Church at Canterbury.*"‡

JEREMY COLLIER in 1708 gives the question the go-by, merely saying of it:—

"The next year, *Courtney*, Archbishop of *Canterbury* departed this Life at *Maidstone*. . . . We have one Instance of his Humility in his last *Will and Testament*, in which he order'd his Corps to be bury'd in *Maidstone Church-Yard*, not thinking himself worthy to lye in a Church."§

Dr. JOHN HARRIS in 1719 affords a good instance of one who not only contradicts himself upon the subject, but who likewise endeavours to shroud his opinions in obscurity, so as utterly to confuse and perplex his readers. When treating of *All Saints', Maidstone*, he says:—

"In the Chancel, . . . and under a broad Stone near the middle of it, lies the Body of Archbishop *Courtney*, who died in the Year 1396 (and his Epitaph you will find in *Wever's Funeral Monuments*) as appears by part of the Inscription on the adjacent Monument of *Henry Tufton, Esq*; whose Body is said to lye next to that of the Founder of this Church."||

* Wharton's *Angliæ Sacra* (1691), vol. i., p. 121.

† Battely's *Antiquities of Canterbury* (1703), part ii., p. 34.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

§ Jeremy Collier's *An Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain, etc.* (1708), vol. i., pp. 599, 600.

|| Dr. John Harris's *The History of Kent* (1719), p. 190.

And further on, and when speaking of Courtenay's death, he delivers himself as follows:—

"The Archbishop . . . died at *Maidstone*, A.D. 1396, and was buried as most write, in his Cathedral of *Canterbury*, near *Becket's Shrine*, on the *South Side*, where there is a Monument for him, with his Effigies on it, at the Feet of *Edward the Black Prince's Tomb*; though there is an Inscription in *Maidstone-Church* which implies that he was buried there, as I have already observed, when I spake of that Place."*

Rev. J. DART in 1726 writes in a very different way from the above shuffling style, and pronounces his opinion in favour of the *Canterbury* site in a most decided manner:—

"He [Courtenay] fell ill at *Maidstone*, and had by his Will appointed himself a Magnificent Burial; but says the Codicil to his Will, as he lay languishing in his last Hours, in the inner-Chamber of his Manor at *Maidstone*, he gave orders, that because he did not think himself worthy to be buried in his own Metropolitan, or any other Cathedral or Collegiate Church, he chose to be buried in the Churchyard of *Maidstone-College*, in the Place design'd for his Esquire *John Butler*: And there are those who Write that he was there buried; but most certain it is, notwithstanding this humble thought of his, in his lowness of Spirits, that King *Richard* the Second being at *Canterbury* when he was to be buried, over-rul'd the Will, and order'd him to be here buried, at the earnest request of the Monks; and his Monument of Alabaster, with his Effigy at length in his Robes, is in *Trinity-Chapel*, at the Feet of the *Black-Prince*: His death was on the 31st Day of *July*, Anno 1396, and he was buried here the 4th Day of *August* following, or, as *Thorn* says, on the last Day of *July*, the King and Nobles being present; the King going then to Marry the King of *France's Daughter*."†

Rev. WILLIAM NEWTON in 1741, writing of All Saints', *Maidstone*, says of Courtenay:—

"There were anciently in this Church several Altar-Monuments and Tomb-Stones, with Funeral Inscriptions on Brass Plates, which last are almost all taken away; . . . particularly one for Archbishop *Courtney*. . . . *Weever* says, that the Archbishop here lyes buried, according to his Will, under a plain Grave-Stone—so says Mr *Camden* and others; and his Epitaph tells us, that he bequeathed himself to be intombed in this present Place [the Middle of the Great Chancel at *Maidstone*; where the Stone is still remaining, raised a little above the Pavement, with the rough Marks of the Portraiture in it; but the Brass and Epitaph are gone]. But this was not the Place of his Burial, nor indeed the Place where he ordered himself to be buried. *Somner* says, that the Archbishop by

* Dr. John Harris's *The History of Kent* (1719), p. 552.

† Dart's *Antiquities of Canterbury* (1726), pp. 156, 157.

his last Will, now extant, appointed the place of his Burial to be in the Cathedral of *Exeter*, of which Church he had been some time a Prebendary; but that afterwards altering his Mind in this Particular, he in the Codicil of his Will orders his Body to be buried in the Church-yard of the Collegiate Church of *Maidstone*, 'in loco designato Johanni Botelere Armigero suo; the Place designed for John Boteler his Esq;' and yet, notwithstanding this second Order, Bishop *Godwin* says that *Courtney's* Body is not at *Maidstone*, but lyes buried on the South-side of Becket's Shrine in *Christ-Church, Canterbury*, at the Feet of the *Black Prince*, in a goodly Tomb of Alabaster; and *Sommer* adds, that it appears by a *Leiger-Book* in that Church, that the King [*Richard II.*] being at *Canterbury* when he was to be buried (probably upon the Suit of the Monks), overruled the Archbishop's own Appointment, and commanded his Body to be there interred. . . . So that, the Tomb and Epitaph at *Maidstone* was no other than his Cenotaph; as it was customary in old Time for Persons of eminent Rank and Quality, to have Tombs erected in Honour of them in several Places: and the same Custom is continued to this Day.*

WILLIAM GOSTLING in 1774 walked very warily, and in speaking of *Courtenay* merely says:—

"At the feet of this tomb [*Black Prince*], and under the next arch, is that of archbishop *Courtney*, of alabaster, with his figure on it in full habit with his pall and crosier, but without any inscription."†

CAPTAIN FRANCIS GROSE, about 1778, when writing of *All Saints', Maidstone*, says:—

"The church is likewise a very good piece of Gothic Architecture: it was either rebuilt, or much repaired, by Archbishop *Courteney*, who therein lyes buried."‡

JOHN BURNBY, in the first edition of his excellent little work on *Canterbury Cathedral*, intended as a guide-book for visitors, and published in 1772, merely refers to *Courtenay's* monument when saying that the remains of Cardinal *Coligny* lie "At the feet of Archbishop *Courtney*,"§ but in the second edition of the same, 1783, he says:—

"At the feet of the *Black Prince* is an elegant altar-tomb of alabaster, in the Gothic taste, for Archbishop *Courtney*, with his figure lying at full length upon it in his robes, with his mitre and crosier. This prelate, by a codicil to his will, ordered his body to be interred in the church-yard of *Maidstone college*, of which he

* *The History and Antiquities of Maidstone, etc.*, by William Newton (1741), pp. 71-74.

† *Gostling's Walk* (1774), p. 161.

‡ *Grose's Antiquities of England and Wales* (circa 1778), vol. iii., p. 69.

§ *An Historical Description, etc.* (First Edition, 1772), p. 61.

was founder, in the place designed for his esquire, John Butler, not thinking himself worthy to be buried in his own metropolitan, or any other cathedral or collegiate church; but King Richard II. being at Canterbury when he was to be interred, overruled the will, and at the earnest request of the monks he was entombed in this chapel of the Holy Trinity.”*

And further on, in his *Historical Catalogue of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, when giving the life of Courtenay, he says :—

“He died July 31, anno 1396, and his body was entombed, by the command of King Richard, in the chapel of the Holy Trinity in this cathedral.”†

EDWARD HASTED, in his *History of Kent*, 1778—1799, gives his opinion in favour of the Trinity Chapel site, albeit in a somewhat hesitating way, and not in the absolutely decided manner that could have been wished by the Canterbury claimants. When speaking of the “tombstone” in All Saints’, Maidstone, he says :—

“This is supposed to be the cenotaph of *Archbishop Courtney*, the founder of this church, for it was the custom in those times for persons of eminent rank and quality to have tombs erected to their memory in more places than one. . . . The *Archbishop* died at his palace at *Maidstone* in 1396, and in the first part of his will directed his body to be buried in the *cathedral church of Exeter*, where he had formerly been a Prebendary; afterwards, lying on his death-bed, he changed his mind in this point, and holding his body unworthy of burial in his metropolitan, or any other cathedral or collegiate church, he wills to be buried in the church-yard of his collegiate church at *Maidstone*, in the place designed for *John Boteler, his Esquire*; but it appears by a leiger book of *Christ Church, Canterbury*, that K. Richard II. happening to be then at *Canterbury*, when the *Archbishop* was to be buried, perhaps at the request of the monks, overruled the *Archbishop's* intention, and commanded his body to be there entombed, where he lies, under a fair monument of alabaster, with his portraiture on it, at the feet of the Black Prince. Thus *Sommer, Godwin, M. Parker, and Camden*; but *Weever* thinks, notwithstanding the above, that he was buried under his tomb in this chancel at *Maidstone*.”‡

In the fourth volume of the same work, and when treating of the monuments in *Canterbury Cathedral*, he says :—

“Between the two next pillars, *eastward*, is the elegant tomb of *archbishop Courtney*, who died in 1396, having his effigies in *alabaster*,

* *An Historical Description, etc.* (Second Edition, 1783), pp. 47, 48.

† *Ibid.*, p. 98.

‡ Hasted's *History of Kent* (1782), vol. ii., p. 120.

dressed in his *pontifical* vestments, lying at full length on it, but without any inscription; many have contended this to have been only a *cenotaph*, as was frequently the custom in those times for great personages, and that the *archbishop* was buried in the chancel of the collegiate church at *Maidstone*, where there was a tomb and inscription, telling us that he lay buried there; but more of this will be found mentioned in the *archbishop's* life, below.”*

And further on, when giving Courtenay's life, he says:—

“He died at his palace of *Maidstone*, on July 31, in the year 1396, having sat in this *chair* twelve years, all but one month. Where he was buried has been a great doubt, our historians differing much as to the place of it. *Bishop Godwyn* tells us, this *Archbishop* lyes buried on the south side of *Thomas Becket's shrine*, at the feet of the *Black Prince*, in a goodly tomb of alabaster. Here in the *Trinity chapel* is, at this time indeed extant, this his tomb, having his effigies at full length, habited in his *pontifical* dress, lying at length on it, but *Weever* in his *Funeral Monuments* seems to differ from him, for he tells us it was the custom of old, and so it was in his days, for men of eminent rank and quality to have tombs erected in more places than one; for example and proof of which, he found here in this church a monument of alabaster, at the feet of the *Black Prince*, in which, by tradition and writing, it was affirmed that the bones of *William Courtney*, *archbishop of Canterbury*, lay intombed; but as he found another to his memory at *Maidstone*, he rather believed, because of the epitaph, that he laid buried there under a plain gravestone with his portraiture, in his pontifical vestments, and this epitaph round it, all inlaid with brass. . . . The *archbishop's* place of burial appointed by him in his will, which is still extant in the register of the church of *Canterbury*, was the cathedral of *Exeter*, in the nave there; but having afterwards changed his mind in this point, he, whilst lying on his death-bed, made a *codicil* to his will, in which, holding his body, as he then declared, unworthy of burial in his *metropolitcal* or any other cathedral or collegiate church, he willed to be buried in the churchyard of his collegiate church of *Maidstone* in the place designed for *John Boteler* his esquire; but it seems as if this part of his will was not fulfilled, for it appears by a small leiger book or obituary, kept in the library of the dean and chapter of *Canterbury*, that the King happening to be at *Canterbury* when he was to be buried, most likely at the request of the monks, overruled this matter, and commanded the body to be brought to *Canterbury*, where it was deposited in this cathedral, as above mentioned; the King, many of the principal nobility, *bishops*, abbats, and clergy, and upwards of 10,000 of the populace attending the solemnity of it.”†

RICHARD GOUGH in 1786 favoured the *Canterbury* site,

* Hasted's *History of Kent* (1799), vol. iv., p. 541. † *Ibid.*, pp. 724, 725.

for in the first volume of his magnificent *Sepulchral Monuments* he says:—

“WILLIAM COURTNEY, archbishop of Canterbury, who died 1396, has in his cathedral, at the foot of the Black Prince, an altar-tomb adorned on each side with nine arches, and over each side two blank shields. On it his figure pontifically habited, with his mitre and crosier, an animal at his feet, and two angels at his head. . . . He had bequeathed his body to the cathedral of Exeter, whereof he had been prebend; but on his death-bed declaring himself unworthy to lie in his own or any other cathedral or collegiate church, directed by a codicil that he should be deposited in the churchyard of his collegiate church of Maidstone, in the place pointed out to John Boteler his esquire. But Mr Somner says, it appeared by a leiger book of Canterbury, that the king being at Canterbury when he was to be buried overruled this his appointment, and ordered his body to be interred there. Weever and Holland give a long epitaph for him in brass, with his effigy, on a large slab still remaining in the middle of the chancel at Maidstone, in which the word *en* is the only proof that his bequest was fulfilled here. I rather think it alludes to his intention, without implying that it was fulfilled. It celebrates his comely person, *corpore valde decens*, and the figure in Dart’s Canterbury expresses as much.”*

Rev. SAMUEL DENNE in 1788 was the first to go into the question in a thorough manner, and in a letter of that date addressed to Richard Gough, and read before the Society of Antiquaries, he argues the case for the Maidstone site with great ability. It will only be necessary here to give a few short extracts from it, so as to shew what his conclusions on the subject were. He says:—

“... if Courtney was buried at Maidstone, to which notion I incline, he certainly lies under a gravestone in the middle of the chancel.

“Whether Courtney was buried here, or in his cathedral, is a controverted question; and as it may fairly be deemed a collateral subject, I will beg leave to trouble the Society with a fuller examination of it than it seems to have hitherto had.†

“... there are no grounds for imagining that the tomb-stone at Maidstone was not coeval with that event [the death of Courtenay]. As the monument at Canterbury is not known to have had an inscription, there is in this point no room for a comparison; we may, however, contrast the two monuments. That in Canterbury cathedral differs not at all from many cenotaphs, whereas this in Maidstone chancel is *prima facie* a very grave stone, without bearing any resemblance to a cenotaph. It is a flat stone raised but little above the pavement, and, as far as can be traced, was not ever more

* Gough’s *Sepulchral Monuments* (1786), vol. i., pp. 154, 155.

† *Archæologia* (1792), vol. x., pp. 271, 272.

elevated. . . . And its being not uncommon to erect in the same church where a person is interred a monument remote from the stone that covers the grave, this was a reason for my inclining to an opinion that the stalls in Maidstone chancel might have been of the sepulchral class. A memorial of the archbishop they [viz., the tombstone and stalls] certainly are; and as a piece of architecture, both with respect to style and execution, they are superior to the monument in Canterbury cathedral, which, on the authority of a monk of Christ-church, has acquired the appellation of the primate's tomb; but, after what I have written, may I venture to term it Courtney's cenotaph?"*

Dr. ANDREW KIPPIS in 1789 says:—

"Archbishop Courtney died, July the 31st 1396, at Maidstone in Kent, and was buried in the Cathedral Church of Canterbury, under a monument of alabaster, on the South side, near the tomb of Thomas Becket, and at the feet of the Black Prince; the King, who was then going to marry the King of France's daughter, being present, with several of his nobles, at the funeral solemnity."†

Rev. SAMUEL DENNE had in 1794, in conjunction with his brother the Rev. John Denne, taken the opportunity of the stone in Maidstone Church being raised to examine the ground underneath it, and having found some bones which he considered to be those of Courtenay, wrote, under date March 14 of the same year, a letter to Mr. Richard Gough, from which the following is an extract:—

"As from the stone's being raised . . . you will not be surprised that curiosity should prompt to a deeper search, with the view of ascertaining whether the archbishop was really there deposited, as the inscription, aided by tradition, strongly implies; and it was the united opinion of the examiners, founded on what they saw, that this was the case; and, consequently, that the tale of the body's having been conveyed to Canterbury by the King's command was fabricated by the monks of the priory of Christchurch, for the purpose of supporting as they conceived the credit and dignity of that cathedral."‡

RICHARD GOUGH was converted from his former opinion on the subject by the above letter, and in 1796 we find him writing as follows:—

"Cenotaphs are not unfrequent among us. . . . Archbishop Courtney, who has a monument in his Cathedral, was really buried in his collegiate church of Maidstone; where his remains, only a few bones, were seen lately."§

* *Archæologia* (1792), vol. x., pp. 282, 283.

† *Biographia Britannica*, by Andrew Kippis, D.D. (1789), vol. iv., p. 357.

‡ Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments* (1796), vol. ii., part 2, p. cxxxvii.

§ *Ibid.*, p. cxxxvi.

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Rev. JAMES DALLAWAY in 1807 evades the subject, and in speaking of Courtenay's monument merely states:—

"That which adjoins, of Archbishop Courtenay, who died in 1396, is elegantly carved in alabaster."*

EDWARD WEDLAKE BRAYLEY in 1807, when writing of Courtenay, said:—

"He died in July, 1396, at his Palace at Maidstone, where also he appears to have been buried; though some historians affirm that he was interred in the Cathedral at Canterbury, by the King's command."†

And when describing the Trinity Chapel, he wrote:—

"The *Cenotaph* of ARCHBISHOP COURTENEY is under the adjoining arch, eastward from the monument of the Black Prince, and consists of a richly ornamented tomb in the pointed style, on which lies the figure of the Prelate, in *pontificalibus*, with his pall and pastoral staff, and his hands raised in the attitude of prayer. . . . There has been much argument used as to the fact, whether Archbishop Courteney was buried at Canterbury, or at Maidstone; yet, after the manner in which this question has been considered by the late Rev. S. Denne, in the Tenth volume of the *Archæologia*, but little doubt can remain of the real place of his interment being at Maidstone."‡

And when describing All Saints', Maidstone, he decides the matter as follows:—

"He [ARCHBISHOP COURTENEY] was himself buried in the middle of the chancel, in a grave between five and six feet deep, where his skeleton was found in the year 1794, in consequence of a search made by the late Rev. Samuel Denne. This discovery terminated the contention which had long been carried on among antiquaries respecting the real burial-place of Courteney, and which, through the artifice of a Monk of Christ Church, in making a false entry in an antient Manuscript, had been frequently affirmed to have been in Canterbury Cathedral."§

WILLIAM WOOLNOTH in 1816 says:—

"The humility of Courtney, and his attachment to a favourite residence, induced him to give directions in his last moments that he should be buried at Maidstone; which desire, a late discovery of his remains (of which there is an account in Gough's work) proves to have been complied with. The monks of Christchurch, whether

* Wild's *Twelve Perspective Views, etc.* (1807), p. 15.

† *The Beauties of England and Wales* (1808), vol. viii., p. 808.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 866.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 1249, 1250.

out of respect for his character, or in order to assume the credit of possessing his remains, erected a costly cenotaph to his memory at the foot of the Black Prince in the Trinity Chapel.”*

JOHN BRITTON in 1821 gives his verdict the same way, as follows :—

“The cenotaph for Archbishop COURTNEY, who was buried at Maidstone, is placed under an arch to the eastward of the monument of the Black Prince.”†

WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND in 1828, when describing the Trinity Chapel, says :—

“The next monument, eastward, is that of Archbishop Courtney, who died in 1396, with his effigies in alabaster, arrayed in *pontificalibus*. Many have contended, the present is only a cenotaph, and that the archbishop lies buried in Maidstone church, but the supposition appears void of foundation.”‡

And later on, in 1829, when speaking of Courtenay in connection with All Saints’, Maidstone, he says :—

“The archbishop died at his palace at Maidstone in 1396, who, at the commencement of his will, directed that his body should be interred in the cathedral church of Exeter, where he had formerly been a prebend; but that having changed his mind in this respect, conceiving that his remains were unworthy of burial in his metropolitical or any other cathedral or collegiate church, he ordered that he should be interred in the churchyard of his collegiate church at Maidstone, in the place designed for John Boteler, his esquire, However, it appears by the ledger book of Christ church, Canterbury, that King Richard II., happening to be then at Canterbury, commanded his body to be there entombed, where he lies, under a monument of alabaster, at the feet of Edward the Black Prince; such being the opinion of Somner, Godwin, M. Parker, and Camden, whereas Weever conceives that he was buried in the chancel of Maidstone church.”§

SAMUEL LEWIS in 1840, when describing Canterbury Cathedral, says :—

“In the arches surrounding the chapel of the Holy Trinity [is] the cenotaph of Archbishop Courteney, with a recumbent figure of that prelate in his pontificals.”||

* Woolnoth’s *Canterbury Cathedral* (1816), p. 90.

† Britton’s *Canterbury Cathedral* (1821), p. 68.

‡ Ireland’s *History of Kent* (1828), vol. i., p. 192.

§ *Ibid.* (1829), vol. iii., p. 649.

|| Lewis’s *Topographical Dictionary* (1840), vol. i., p. 451.

44 BURIAL-PLACE OF ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY.

JOHN WHICHCORD, jun., in 1845, when describing the monuments in the chancel of All Saints', says:—

"In the centre of the chancel, inlaid in a slab of Bethersden marble, was a superb brass of Courtney, the founder of the church and college, who was buried here, according to his will, in the tomb prepared for his esquire, John Boteler. . . . He died at his palace at Maidstone, in July 1396, . . . As will be seen in the Archbishop's will . . . the place of burial appointed by him was the cathedral church of Exeter, but whilst lying on his death-bed, by a codicil, he directed the interment of his body in this church. For a long time it was supposed he had been interred at Canterbury; a monument to his memory existing there, in the Trinity Chapel, having his effigy in pontifical dress, lying at full length upon it; Weever, however, distinctly mentions the slab in Maidstone Church as covering the place of his burial, and here his body was found a few years ago, upon examination for that object."*

Rev. R. WILLIS in 1845, in his *List of the Burial Places of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, gives:—

"1396 *William Courtney*. Near the shrine of Thomas à Becket to the south."†

Rev. BEALE POSTE in 1847, in his *History of the College of All Saints', Maidstone*, argued the case against the Maidstone claims with great ability, and says:—

"Respecting Courtney's actual place of interment, a great uncertainty still prevails. The codicil of his own will would incline us to look for the place of sepulture in the church-yard, he directing there to be deposited in the spot pointed out to his esquire, John Botelere (*in cimeterio ecclesiæ collegiatæ de Maydeston, loco designato Johanni Botelere, armigero suo*). But if he were buried at Maidstone, this point was certainly overruled by his executors, from the circumstance of his monument being in the high chancel. There is also a monument erected to him in Canterbury Cathedral, though without inscription, a particular in which several of the tombs of the prelates buried there are deficient. It might be thought that the monument at Canterbury was a mere memorial or cenotaph erected in his honour. There appears to be, however, testimony of rather a conclusive nature, as to his burial in that metropolitan edifice. Somner, Godwin, Bishop, Parker, and Camden assert it, while Weever dissents. The evidence which has influenced the above writers is an entry in one of the ancient leiger books or registers of Christ Church, Canterbury, that the King, happening to be in that city when his death became known, specifically commanded that he should be buried in the Cathedral there. The above account is further corroborated by the concluding part or

* Whichcord's *All Saints' Church, Maidstone* (1845), pp. 18, 19.

† Willis's *Canterbury Cathedral* (1845), p. 124.

additions to Thorn's Chronicle, which, however, are by an uncertain author, otherwise, had they been by Thorn himself, who lived in those times and was a monk of Canterbury, the testimony would have been decisive. On referring to the inscription formerly on Courtney's monument in Maidstone Church . . . it will be observed, it does not positively say that his body is deposited there, but that he had ordered it in his will, '*qui se post obitum legaverat hic tumulandum.*' Indeed, after an attentive consideration of the epitaph, the correct inference to draw from it appears to be, that he was not buried there. The epitaph has neither the usual words, '*hic jacet,*' or '*tumulatus,*' but twice directs the beholder to the contemplation of the effigy formerly affixed to the slab, with which two summons and a description of his person, a considerable part of it is taken up. This wording of the epitaph can hardly be otherwise than remarked; but the Reverend Samuel Denne . . . considered the forms of expression as casual, and thought that the '*en Court-naius reverendus*' of the beginning, was equivalent to '*hic jacet.*' About the beginning of the year 1794, an endeavour was made to ascertain the disputed point of the interment. . . . On raising the stone, at the depth of six feet, a skeleton was discovered; but . . . nothing was found,—no episcopal ring or crozier, or aught else to identify the remains with those of the prelate in question; and from the perfect state of the teeth, which is recorded, some suspicions are excited whether the bones were not those of a younger individual. . . . Thus, after all, nothing was decided with certainty: and a negative proof here, of great importance, is required, namely, that Courtney's tomb at Canterbury, does not also contain its skeleton.

"If the bones found were those of Courtney, it will of course follow that the leiger book of Christ Church, Canterbury, is incorrect; and it must be admitted that Mr. Denne has shewn that this was not a current register kept at the time of deaths, but an obituary compiled nearly a century after Courtney, by a monk of the priory . . . [though the notice in it] is seemingly an entry as particular as could be desired.

"Of there being no crozier, cross-staff, or episcopal ring, found with the remains, it may be considered that there is no account to be made. Interments having taken place all round this central spot, some of the excavations may have been formed so near as to have furnished an opportunity of their being abstracted; . . .

"There appears to be strong internal evidence that the epitaph was not written till about half a century after Courtney's decease. . . . Nor could it have been written till the whole of the first members of the College, and all the generation that recollected Courtney had passed away, for it gives the date of his death 1395, instead of 1396. . . . The following may have been the state of the case in respect to this monument:—In the first instance, on the building of the Church there might have been some brief inscription stating the circumstance of the founding of the Church by the prelate, which afterwards it was judged proper to supersede by the splendid brass effigy which there undoubtedly was once here, and

by the inscription which Weever has handed down to us. It seems most judicious to entertain this view, rather than to set aside the Christ Church obituary, and Thorn's continuator, as well as the internal evidence of the epitaph itself, from the circumstance of the bones found by Mr. Denne and his associates, which might have been those of another person."*

DEAN STANLEY in 1852, when mentioning those who attended the funeral of the Black Prince in Canterbury Cathedral, says:—

"A third was Courtenay, Bishop of London, who now lies at the Prince's feet."†

And in 1855, when describing the Trinity Chapel, remarks:—

"Why Archbishop Courtenay was brought into so august a company is not clear; it was against his own wish, and is said to have been at the express command of King Richard II., who was at Canterbury at the time."‡

HERBERT L. SMITH in 1858 says of Courtenay:—

"At the time of his death, July 31st, 1396, King Richard II. was at Canterbury, and being informed of that event, gave orders that the obsequies should take place there; and his body was accordingly removed to Canterbury for that purpose on the 4th of August, where, according to a small old Obituary in the Registry of Canterbury, he was interred in the presence of the King, nobility, clergy, and ten thousand people.

"If this be a correct historical outline, we may reasonably conclude that Courtenay's remains lie at Canterbury, beneath the alabaster monument there raised to his memory, though without an inscription. A tomb, however, had been prepared for him at Maidstone. . . . On this altar-tomb, probably, Courtenay's body lay in state immediately after his death, with the full intention that his obsequies would be there completed as by himself directed, . . . but, owing to the King's directions, the tomb itself remained a mere cenotaph."§

Dean Hook in 1865, in his "Life of Courtenay," says:—

"Courtenay was not a man of a vigorous constitution, and the annoyances, difficulties, and heavy responsibilities of his high office told upon him, making him prematurely old . . .

"On the 31st July, 1396, Courtenay died. Preparations were immediately made for carrying the archbishop's directions, as to his

* Beale Poste's *History of the College of All Saints', Maidstone* (1847), pp. 87-90.

† Stanley's *Historical Memorials of Canterbury* (Third Edition, 1857), pp. 135, 136.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

§ *Archæologia Cantiana* (1858), Vol. I., pp. 179, 180.

funeral, into effect. There still exists in the pavement of the chancel in Maidstone church a large slab. . . . Until the commencement of the present century it formed the tablet of an altar-tomb. On this spot it is supposed that Courtenay's body lay in state, immediately after his death, with the full intention that his obsequies would be there completed as by himself directed; but it was ordered otherwise. The chapter of Canterbury, however, and the people in general were determined to do all honour to the late primate. The King, happening to be at Canterbury at the time, overruled the codicil, and decreed that the body should be brought to Canterbury. There the obsequies were performed in the presence of the King, of the principal nobility, of the bishops, abbots, and clergy, and a thousand spectators. It was a public funeral conducted on a scale of great magnificence. . . .

"There can be little doubt that the remains of Archbishop Courtenay lie at Canterbury, beneath the elaborate monument there raised to his memory."*

J. M. RUSSELL in 1881, in speaking of the College at Maidstone, says :—

"As to the place of Courtenay's burial, some uncertainty prevails, but the general opinion of recent writers upon the subject is that he was interred at Canterbury. . . . When his death occurred, preparations were no doubt immediately made to give effect to his last directions as to his funeral. But according to an obituary kept by the monks of Christ Church from 1486[†] to 1507, the King happened to be at Canterbury at the time, and overruling the codicil, decreed that the obsequies should take place within the Cathedral. The archbishop's body was consequently removed to Canterbury on the 4th of August, and there interred in the presence of the King, the nobles, the bishops and clergy, and eight or ten thousand spectators."‡

GEORGE SMITH in 1883, and speaking of Courtenay's funeral, says :—

"The Chapter of Canterbury and others, however, were desirous of doing all honour to the late Primate; and the King, being at Canterbury, overruled the codicil and commanded that the body should be brought to the Cathedral. The funeral was conducted with great magnificence, the King himself being present with the principal nobility, many bishops, abbots, and clergy, and a thousand spectators. 'Courtenay was entombed near the shrine of St Thomas,' at the feet of the Black Prince, of whose will he was one of the executors. The monument is an elaborate altar-tomb, upon which is the Archbishop's alabaster effigy in full pontificals."§

* Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury* (1865), vol. iv., pp. 392-397.

† A misprint for 1286.

‡ Russell's *History of Maidstone* (1881), pp. 75, 76.

§ Smith's *Chronological History of Canterbury Cathedral* (1883), p. 144.

Rev. WILLIAM HUNT in 1887 says of Courtenay's burial:—

"Courtenay died at Maidstone, Kent, on 31 July 1396. He left directions that he should be buried there, and a flat stone, part of an altar-tomb, in Maidstone Church is said to have been placed there in memory of him. It was probably intended that he should lie there; but his body was taken to Canterbury, and buried, in the presence of the King and of a great number of bishops, earls, and barons, at the feet of the Black Prince, near the shrine of St. Thomas."*

Rev. J. CAVE-BROWNE in 1889 brought out his great *History of All Saints'*, in which he stated the case for the Maidstone site with so much ability and force; and as the work is widely known and easily accessible, it will be only necessary here to quote the concluding paragraph of the author's powerful argument:—

"All then being taken into account, may not the opinion of the exploring party be unhesitatingly adopted, 'that the Archbishop was really here deposited, as the Inscription, aided by tradition, strongly implies, and that the tale of the body having been conveyed to Canterbury by the King's command was fabricated by the Monks of the Priory of Christ Church, for the purpose of supporting, as they conceived, the credit and dignity of that Cathedral?' "†

MURRAY'S *Handbook for Kent* in 1892, when speaking of the slab in the chancel of All Saints', Maidstone, says:—

"This is thought to have been a memorial of Abp. Courtenay, rebuilders of the ch., and, according to the leiger-book of Ch. Ch., Canterbury, actually interred at Canterbury, where his monument still exists adjoining that of the Black Prince. There is, however, some uncertainty as to the archbishop's real place of interment. The ground underneath the slab in Maidstone ch. was examined in 1794, when a skeleton was discovered at the depth of 6 ft.; but no ring or pastoral staff was found; and, from the perfect state of the teeth, the remains are thought to have been those of a younger man than Courtenay, who, however, certainly died at Maidstone. His own will directs his burial in the churchyard here, thereby adding a fresh difficulty. It seems not unlikely that the heart and intestines (as suggested by Mr. Beresford Hope) may have been interred here, and the body at Canterbury."‡

* *Dictionary of National Biography* (1887), vol. xii., pp. 346, 347.

† *The History of the Parish Church of All Saints', Maidstone*, by J. Cave-Browne, M.A. (1889), p. 45.

‡ Murray's *Handbook for Kent* (1892), p. 198.

And when describing the tombs in the Trinity Chapel, Canterbury, the same authority says:—

“At the feet of the Black Prince is the monument of Abp. Courtenay, the severe opponent of the Wickliffites (d. 1396); why erected in this most distinguished place does not appear. He was, however, executor to the Black Prince, and a great benefactor to the cathedral.”*

Here, then, is a conflict of opinions, evidence, and deductions which may well puzzle a student of the subject, and make him despair of ever arriving at a satisfactory conclusion on it. In fact, the question had got into such a state of entanglement that any certainty in the matter seemed to be hopeless, and there appeared no prospect of a final solution to it, unless some further and very conclusive evidence either way were produced. Fortunately such evidence is forthcoming, and it exists in such a form that the claim of Canterbury Cathedral to contain the remains of Archbishop Courtenay is now established beyond the possibility of doubt.

The Author of the present Paper had occasion lately to examine the Canterbury Chapter Records for a purpose quite unconnected with this inquiry, and happened in his search to take up Register G, *Acta Sede vacante*, 1348—1414, which is thus described by the late Dr. Sheppard in the Appendix to the Eighth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, 1881, p. 336 b:—

“Reg. G. The register G is a volume of 300 vellum folios each 12 by 9 inches. The pages are very closely written, and, as the title, ‘Sede vacante’ indicates, entirely taken up with one subject, the transactions, namely, of the Prior and Chapter of Canterbury during several vacancies of the Archiepiscopal See. The first vacancy here recorded is that which began with the death of Abp. Stratford in A.D. 1348, the last that which ended at the election of Abp. Chichele in 1413.”

The first entry in this venerable volume that arrested the attention of the writer was one which to his mind at once settled the long-disputed point as to the burial-place of Archbishop Courtenay, an impression fully confirmed by the ones immediately following it, which entries are here given in their proper sequence:—

I.

“Registrum venerabilis prioris domini Thome Chillyndene. Prioris ecclesie Cantuariensis et ejusdem loci Capituli de tempore

* Murray's *Handbook for Kent* (1892), p. 131.

vacacionis Archiepiscopatus Cantuariensis post obitum pie memorie domini Willelmi Courtenay filii Comitis devonie qui ultimo die mensis Julii Anno domini millimo CCC^{mo} nonogesimo sexto in manerio de maydenston diem clausit extremum et de precepto domini Regis tunc Cantuarie versus mare existentis sepultus fuit in ecclesia Cantuariensi quarto die mensis Augusti tunc sequentis. Anno translationis ejusdem domini Archiepiscopi. xv^o."*

II.

"Licentia eligendi petita," of 3rd August 1396.†

III.

"Licentia eligendi concessa," by Richard II. of 3rd August 1396.‡

IV.

"Decretum electionis," of 7th August 1396.

"Conditores canonici deliberatione provida statuerunt quod ultra tres menses vacare non debeant ecclesie Cathedrales defuncto igitur bone memorie quondam Willelmo Courtenay ecclesie Cantuariensis predictae ultimo Archiepiscopo. . . . Corpore quoque dicti defuncti in eadem ecclesia die veneris quarta mensis Augusti supradicti omni reuerencia qua decuit ecclesiastice tradito sepulture."§

V.

"Instrumentum super decreto electionis," of 7th August 1396.||

VI.

"Litera missa domino Regi quod assentiat postulationi," of 8th August 1396.

"Excellentissimo ac magnifico principi illustrissimoque domino nostro Ricardo Regi Anglie et ffrancie ac domino hibernie vestri humiles et devoti oratores Prior ecclesie Cantuariensis et ejusdem loci Capituli parati et vigiles ad reuerenciam omnimodam cum honore Bone memorie Willelmo de Courtenay ultimo Archiepiscopo nostro viam universalem carnis sicut deo placuit nuper ingresso et in presencia vestre regie magestatis et per vos ejusdem Archiepiscopi corpore ut decuit honorifice in ecclesia Cantuariensi supradicta tradito sepulture."¶

The above extracts from this ancient and contemporary register speak for themselves, and so completely and decisively settle the site of Archbishop Courtenay's burial-place, that we now know for certain that his remains lie beneath the beautiful monument in Canterbury Cathedral, and that there is no longer any need of opening it to set the question at rest, the only wonder about the matter being that these authoritative and convincing records should have hitherto escaped observation; and that those old writers like Camden, Somner, Battely, and Gostling, who touched on the subject, and who

* *Reg. G. Eccl. Cant. Acta Sede vacante*, fol. 235.

† *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.* § *Ibid.* || *Ibid.*, fol. 236-239. ¶ *Ibid.*, fol. 239.

had unrestricted access to the Cathedral records, should so have overlooked these crucial entries and allowed themselves to flounder about so much in mere conjecture is indeed surprising. The case is different with writers of our own time, as they would naturally rely in any search they might make on the fulness and accuracy of the indexes to the Registers prepared by the late Dr. Sheppard, but in which, when seeking for information about Courtenay's burial, they would, under the heading *Archiepiscoporum Electiones*, merely find the following meagre entries, viz. :—"1396 Copia testamenti Will. Courtenay Archiepi," and "1396 Obitus Will. Courtenay Archiepi;" and under that of *Nomina personarum (plerumque Clericorum beneficalorum et Officiariorum) in hoc Registro inventa*, "1396 Courtenay W. Archiepi copia testamenti;" while in Dr. Sheppard's preface to Register G. there is not a single reference to those crucial entries which absolutely settle the long disputed question of his burial-place. But although there is no longer a possibility of doubt as to the final resting-place of Courtenay's body, it may be interesting to examine one or two points in connection with it, and to endeavour to trace the reason why his remains should have been brought to Canterbury for interment, and also why no time was lost in the appointment of his successor in the Primacy.

By 1396 Richard II. was in imminent danger of losing his throne, and was therefore anxious to secure a lasting peace with France by marrying the daughter of Charles VI., so as to procure French assistance against his own rebellious subjects. He consequently pressed the matter on with all possible speed, and while staying at his palace at Eltham he received a confidential visit from his brother-in-law the Count de St. Pol, when the alliance was arranged, and it was settled that he should at once visit France to be betrothed to the young Princess and to sign the treaty; and while St. Pol was sent on rapidly to Paris to arrange matters, Richard followed him leisurely towards the sea, and appears to have arrived on 1st August at Canterbury, where he must have remained for about a week, as he did not reach Calais until the 9th. Courtenay had been languishing for some time at Maidstone, and Richard would certainly have been kept fully informed as to his condition, so that as soon as he knew that the sickness would terminate fatally he must have made up his mind how to act. He had doubtless wished to take the Archbishop over with him for the betrothal; but balked of that object, he was determined to have a new Primate ready to accompany him for the marriage ceremony

which was so soon to follow, and he therefore took an extraordinary step—one that shocks all sense of propriety, and the reason for which has hitherto been a great puzzle. This was to commence proceedings for electing a successor to Courtenay before the latter was yet cold in his coffin, and still unburied, and to drive matters on without a moment's pause. The date of the entries above quoted shew this very clearly. Courtenay died on 31st July. Three days afterwards, on the 3rd August, the very day before the funeral, Richard got the Prior and Chapter to petition him to be allowed to elect a successor to the still unburied Primate. No feelings of decency restrained the headstrong King, and he lost no time in granting the request on the very same day, and there and then, within a few days, the obsequious Chapter met and proceeded to elect Thomas Arundel as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Why did Richard nominate Arundel to the vacant see, and urge on his election with such rapidity? Not so much, as Dean Hook suggests, to conciliate the magnates of the realm and the Arundels in particular—his subsequent conduct to the two brothers shewing how little he cared for any such thing—as it was to have a Primate ready at hand to marry him to the French princess. It must be remembered that time was pressing for the alliance which he hoped would support him against rebellion at home, and that it would never do to waste it by making an appointment which might be disallowed by the Pope. Arundel had been a bishop for twenty-two years, and Archbishop of York for the last eight. He belonged to the foremost family in the kingdom, and was besides in high favour with the Pope, so that there was no risk of the King having his intention thwarted by the nomination being cancelled at Rome, and he was secure of having a Primate to accompany him to France with as little delay as might be.

And now arises the most interesting question connected with this strange proceeding, viz., Why did Richard overrule Courtenay's express wish that he should be buried at Maidstone?—a question which had puzzled Dean Stanley and Murray when they wrote: "Why Archbishop Courtenay was brought into so august a company is not clear; it was against his own wish" (see *ante*), and "why [the monument was] erected in this most distinguished place does not appear" (see *ante*).

Richard must have felt the impropriety of the indecent haste with which he was proceeding, and what a slight he was thereby putting on poor Courtenay, so that he would

naturally be anxious to atone for this by giving him as sumptuous a burial as possible. Means were at hand to do this on a scale of the greatest magnificence. Canterbury Cathedral was available for the purpose, and the King himself was present to assist at the funeral, together with the Dukes of Gloucester and Lancaster and their Duchesses,* together with their children, and a great train of nobles and officials who were accompanying him. The site also which was selected in the Cathedral was one which would have done honour to royalty itself; and it was doubtless hoped that all this pomp and splendour would cover the indignity put on the departed by the very hasty election of his successor. Richard must also have felt that Courtenay was well worthy of such distinguished honour. He was a member of one of the noblest and most ancient families in the kingdom; royal blood had run in his veins; he had been a member of the council of government formed on his accession to the throne; and he had been his father's executor. The young King must also have had a grateful remembrance of his services in shielding him so often as he had done from the oppression of his violent and unscrupulous uncles; and likewise for having advocated in Parliament the French marriage at a time when it was extremely unpopular at home. His conscience must also have pricked him for some very ungrateful and unworthy conduct which he had once shewn to Courtenay, and for which he would doubtless have wished to atone as far as might be. But perhaps the strongest reasons which guided Richard in bringing Courtenay to Canterbury were his own love for magnificence and display, and a weakness which he seems to have had for attending and assisting at the funerals of deceased Prelates. Gough, quoting from Leland's *Itin.*, says of this: "Alexander Bach, bishop of St. Asaph, who died at Hereford, 1394, at the consecration of the Black Friars' Church, was buried in the choir of that church, Richard II. assisting in person at his funeral."† Such an opportunity for a display of himself was not to be neglected, and it cannot therefore be wondered at that Richard should have overruled Courtenay's dying request, and have had him laid to rest in his own Cathedral. The Prior and monks of Christ Church would doubtless have heartily seconded his directions in the matter, though we can scarcely fancy that

* The Duchess of York was likewise one of the party, but her husband the Duke of York having been appointed Regent of the kingdom during his nephew's absence abroad, probably remained behind.

† Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments* (1796), vol. ii., part 2, p. clxix.

54 BURL-PLAGE OF ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY.

they were the first to move in it, as the headstrong King greatly resented having advice and suggestions given to him, it being much more probable that the change originated entirely with himself; and it is to be observed that the Prior and Chapter carefully note the fact that Courtenay was brought to Canterbury for interment by Richard's own order, as if it were to leave themselves safe in the matter.

Several other points of great interest arise out of this inquiry, such as the termination of Thorne's chronicle and the date of his death, the history of the leiger book of Christ Church, and the question as to the position of Courtenay's cenotaph at All Saints', Maidstone, in reference to the original chancel of that Church. Much information has been collected by the Author on these various points, but its consideration must be reserved for a subsequent Paper.

The Author gratefully acknowledges the kind assistance which he has received from Mr. H. Littlehales in tracing the movements of Richard II. at the time.