How the Reformation Came to Winchester and how Prior William Basyng became Dean William Kingsmill

By Andrew Payne

Introduction

William Kingsmill (usually spelt Kyngesmill) was admitted as a monk to the priory of St Swithun in 1513, taking on the new name of William Basyng. He was made prior of St. Swithun’s in 1536 and in 1541 he was appointed the first Dean of the newly constituted cathedral church. The Reformation of the Church in England in the 1530s and the Dissolution of the Monasteries had a profound effect upon all churches, cathedrals, abbeys and priories at just the time when Basyng/Kingsmill had reached the high office he so desired. He has been credited with saving the cathedral from destruction during this tumultuous period [1 p.97 – see Sources]. Barbara Carter Turner is more cautious; she concludes that “perhaps he saved the cathedral.” [2] There is no evidence that he did. I shall show that the cathedral church was not at risk of destruction. However, what is clear is that during his period in office most of the monastery estates were preserved for the future benefit of the cathedral.

William Kingsmill survived the controversies and perils of the Reformation apparently untouched. His reformist principles never seem to have been tested. He was avaricious and thoroughly corrupt but perhaps it was this avarice which saved enough of the wealth of the monastery to guarantee a prosperous future for the cathedral. If so, the cathedral owes him a significant debt of gratitude.
Early Years

Ten years after entering the monastery he was ordained priest and in March 1529 he received his Doctorate in Theology [3]. This lengthy period suggests that he was but a boy when he first became a monk. This is also born out by the fact that his mother was his principal executor when he died in 1549 (see later). If he had been born much before 1500 his mother could have been in her late seventies by 1549; a very great age at that time.

Basyng first appears in the Letters and State Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII in November 1529 when the prior of St. Swithun’s, Henry Broke, and William Basyng, representing the Chapter, were summoned by Henry VIII to a Convocation [4 p.2697]. These were the only two men summoned from Winchester. The bishop, Cardinal Wolsey, did not attend Parliament or Convocation. He had been dismissed as Chancellor in October. Henry’s declared purpose for the Convocation was to stop the abuses of the Church and to combat Lutheranism, which he saw as a far greater threat. Whether Basyng actually attended is unknown. However it is quite clear, by virtue of this summons, that he had risen to some prominence within the monastery by this time. As will be seen he was ambitious. Over the next few years he moved closer to becoming prior. Convocation, incidentally, granted Henry a levy of £100,000 plus the cost of raising the levy (another £3444) for combating Lutheranism [4 p.2701]. This was an enormous sum, equivalent to the annual rent of about two and half million acres of good farmland [5].

The Beginnings of the English Reformation 1530 to 1535

Wolsey died in 1530 and Stephen Gardiner was appointed bishop in 1531. In 1532 Basyng took the Oath of Supremacy recognising Henry as supreme head of the Church in England, “as far as the laws of Christ allow”, and in 1534 he took the Oath of Succession, acknowledging the infant Princess Elizabeth and/or any subsequent children of Anne Boleyn as heirs to the throne.
In September 1535 Henry visited Winchester and helped himself to some “fine rich unicorns’ horns and a large silver cross adorned with jewels” from the cathedral [6 p.5]. He also took “certain mills” from the bishopric and monastery and handed them over to the community [6 p.5]. Understandably no-one objected. Cromwell, Henry’s newly appointed Vicar-General, came too. His agents were now scouring the land taking valuations of all Church properties in England for the “Valor Ecclesiasticus”. The primary purpose of this exercise was taxation. A tax of one tenth of the annual income on Church possessions had been granted earlier in the year. The gross income and taxable income for every church institution in the land was assessed and the tax payable recorded. These documents were transcribed and printed by Royal Command in the early 1800s. Volume 2 [7] provides the assessments for the diocese of Winchester, Salisbury, Oxford, Exeter and Gloucester. The documents are almost entirely in abbreviated “dog Latin”; there is no preface and no explanations but they provide a fascinating insight into the distribution of wealth at that time.

Stephen Gardiner’s gross annual income is shown as £4191, his taxable income was £3804 (MMMDCCciij libra). This, incidentally, was more than the Archbishop of Canterbury whose taxable income was £3280 [7 Volume 1]. The taxable income of Henry Broke, the prior, was £1104 4s 4d and the taxable income of William Basyng (Hordarius et Coquinarii) was £208 9s 4d. The gross income of St. Swithun’s was £1762 19s 2d and its taxable income £1507 17s 2d, so the bottom line, the tax due, was £150 15s 8d. That, technically, is what the Crown was after, but this survey also showed Cromwell and Henry VIII how wealthy the Church was. Access to Church wealth became the primary objective of both Henry and of Thomas Cromwell and led, inevitably, to the dissolution.

Although this Valor was before the policy of Dissolution of the Monasteries had been enacted, Cromwell’s Commissioners or “Visitors” were already carrying out vigorous tours of inspection of all religious houses, large and small, often accusing their occupants of either sexual misconduct, financial impropriety or the veneration of saints and other “superstitious” practices in order to dismiss them, fine them or seize their treasures. Winchester’s great wealth made it a highly significant target.

Dissolution

In keeping with the times complaints were raised against the prior, Henry Broke. In 1535 the vicar of Chilcombe in Wiltshire wrote to Thomas Cromwell complaining that Broke was demanding an annual income from the parish of two marks (26s 8d) to which Broke had no title [8 p.399]. That same year a monk named Myllys complained to Cromwell that Broke had prevented him receiving an exhibition (award) of £4 at Oxford as well as a “coverlet” worth 4 marks (£2 13s 4d) because he, Myllys, had spoken out against the veneration of saints with candles and smoke, against pilgrimages and, amongst other things, had denied that a monk’s cowl was holy [8 p.386]. In 1536 a much more serious charge was brought against Broke. On 14th March, Thomas Parry, an agent of Cromwell’s, informed Cromwell that “divers precious stones ... were taken out of the jewels of the house by the prior and four or five monks ... and sold to one Bestyan, a jeweller” of London. He added that Broke had been into other religious houses for the “like purpose”. Parry believed that “a little coercion would make him give up what he has got.” [9 p.193]

Things moved very fast. On 16th March Basyng wrote to Dr Leigh, another of Cromwell’s agents, promising to pay Cromwell £500 “and more if required” if Cromwell could be “moved” on his behalf [9 p.197] and, on the same day, Parry informed Cromwell that he had persuaded Broke to resign,
he then recommended “Wm. Basing, D.D. a man of learning and a favourer of the truth, who never consented to the spoils and sacrilege here committed, and who for your favour herein will give you £500. He will [also] raise your fee here from £10 to £20 yearly ...” [9  p.195] Basyng seems to have been appointed prior with immediate effect. On 21st March, Broke “the late prior of St. Swithin’s” wrote to Cromwell that he had been unjustly forced to resign because of certain “alleged dilapidations” at the property and begged for a pension from the revenues of the priory [9  p.205].

At this point Basyng must have become seriously embarrassed. He didn’t have the £500! On 31 March he wrote to Cromwell sending him only £100, “because my predecessor has left me in debt to the King and others ...” but he promised to provide Cromwell with the necessary sureties that the remainder would be paid over time [9  p.233]. Cromwell’s accounts for 1537 to 1539 [10  p.318-327] show that Basyng paid him the best part of the outstanding sum over the next three years as follows:

1537:  May £50, July £50, October £10, December £50
1538:  February £50, May £10, July £50, October £10, December £50
1539:  May £10, November £10

In total he had paid Cromwell £450. Perhaps Cromwell was executed before a final payment could be made.

£500 was a huge sum. It represented the annual rental of about 12,000 acres of good farmland [5]. One hundred quality riding horses could be bought for that sum [11]. Who today would give the price of 100 horses to secure a lucrative position? Basyng had pledged an enormous amount of money to secure the position he coveted; a sum totally out of accord with his vow of poverty and very much in accord with his soaring ambition. To put this sum in context, as the Dissolution of the Monasteries progressed, most monks and nuns were awarded pensions. When St Mary’s Abbey in Winchester surrendered to the crown the abbess was awarded a large annual pension of 40 marks (£26 13s 4d), the prioress’s pension was £5 a year and 21 “other religious” received between them £91 13s 4d [10  p.183]. When the monastery of St. Mary Overy, Southwark, part of the bishopric of Winchester, surrendered to the Crown in October 1539 the prior was awarded an annual pension of £100 a year and a house in the close; the other “religious” received £8 a year or less, a comfortable living [10  p.142]. The cost of keep, that is, board and lodging, would amount to a few pence a week. In 1536 a servant of Lady Lisle brought her son to Winchester and paid for the son’s keep at 4d a week for a period of 27 weeks. He also bought him a frieze (wool) coat for 5 shillings and a bonnet for 18d [12  p.355]. A man’s keep would be a lot more. After all, claret cost two farthings a pint! [11] It is clear that a man could live comfortably on a few pounds a year. (Incidentally, Lord Lisle, the boy’s stepfather, was the Lord Deputy of Calais and a bastard son of Edward IV; a man of great wealth whose stepson would be well provided for.) £500 was a sum far, far beyond the means and needs of most priests and many a gentleman.

On 7th October 1536, our new prior received orders from the Lord Privy Seal to send 50 men to Ampthill (Bedfordshire) to support the King against the northern rebellion in Lincolnshire (now known loosely as part of the Pilgrimage of Grace) [12  p.232]. Five days later the orders were countermanded and the force was to “return home and to keep watch and apprehend seditious persons and strong vagabonds who may be scattered abroad by the defeat of the rebels.” [12
p.261/2] Monasteries were great landowners so the responsibilities of the prior would extend well beyond the religious to the judicial, political and even the military.

In April 1538 bishop Gardiner had earned the displeasure of Henry VIII. In an attempt to mollify him he handed over to Henry the manor of Esher and all the lands owned by the manor across Surrey. Basyng, as prior, had to ratify this transaction [13 p.292] This begs the question, in the bishopric of Winchester, who “owned” what? When Beaufort was bishop he, personally, owned enormous estates, because, in his will, he left the value of these estates to a number of largely wealthy beneficiaries [14 p.3 to 5]. The proportion of a bishopric’s estate owned by the bishop or by the monastery is very difficult to establish. *Valor Ecclesiaticus* tells us so much about incomes but nothing about ownership of land.

Until this time the institutions and estates of the larger religious houses had been, theoretically, safe from seizure by the Crown. The Religious Houses Act of 1536 had targeted the “lesser” monasteries; those with an annual income of less than £200. (Less than the income of William Basyng.) However, by 1538 numerous monasteries, large and small, had “surrendered” their properties or their treasures to the Crown as a consequence of Cromwell’s bullying and accusations.

The year 1538 saw a marked acceleration in the number of surrenders of larger monasteries. Very early in the morning of Saturday 21 September 1538 Thomas Wriothesely and his fellow Commissioners destroyed the shrine of St. Swithun in Winchester cathedral and took away many valuables including 2000 marks worth (£1367 13s 4d) of silver. “The prior and chapter were conformable.” [6 p.6] Of course the prior was conformable, he still owed Cromwell £130! Wriothesely also made an inventory of the cathedral treasures which were huge [6 p.7] but in the monastery he was sorely disappointed. For “the old prior (Henry Broke) had so diminished the plate” [15 p.155] of the monastery that they “could not take any.” As we know, the bishop was not present but he later applauded the action [6 p.7]. What is odd about Wriothesely’s report to Cromwell is that there is no mention of the reliquary or the relics of St. Swithun. Guides at Winchester cathedral will tell you that the monks had hidden it, but it is hard to believe that Wriothesely (with a “little coercion”!) would not have discovered its whereabouts. Oddly, although he never mentions the relics or reliquary of St. Swithun, he goes on to write that they were now off to Hyde Abbey and St. Mary’s to “sweep away all the rotten bones that be called relics … lest it should be thought we came more for the treasure than for avoiding the abomination of heresy.”[6 p.6] The news that Thomas à Becket’s shrine at Canterbury had been destroyed just two weeks earlier would certainly have alarmed the monks at Winchester and prepared them for this visit but what they did about it is far from clear. If they had hidden the reliquary why does Wriothesely not demand of the prior what has happened to it? Wriothesely doesn’t say that the monks had already destroyed the relics; he doesn’t say that they had hidden the relics; he doesn’t mention them. It’s as though they never existed. It is clear that explaining the reliquary’s disappearance by stating that it had been hidden by the monks is very unsatisfactory.

Despite his seizure of church treasures, Henry needed his bishops and their cathedrals. In fact, he now set about establishing more bishoprics. In May 1539 the French ambassador reported to King Francis I that Parliament were discussing “the reduction of certain abbeys of which they wish to make bishoprics” [16 p.454] and an Act of Parliament was passed in June providing for the creation of
bishoprics. At about the same time two other Acts of Parliament enabled the suppression of all monasteries which were neither attached to cathedral churches nor intended to become ones. The Proclamation of the Crown Act 1539 provided that the King could legislate by decree, without Parliament (something Stephen Gardiner had advised the King against [17 p.399]), and the Suppression of Religious Houses Act 1539 formally legalised the suppression of the larger monasteries. All monasteries would, in due course, surrender their treasures, estates and buildings to the Crown.

Winchester cathedral and all the other cathedrals were secure. Before the Reformation there were 17 cathedrals in England. Eight were monastic foundations, including Winchester, and nine, like Salisbury, were run by secular clergy, known as canons (a list is provided below). New bishoprics were created in 1540/41 by Henry VIII. He wanted more bishops and more cathedrals, not fewer. Clearly, none of the original 17 cathedrals was at risk. Neither William Basyng/Kingsmill nor Stephen Gardiner “saved” our cathedral church from destruction. (Five of the new bishoprics continue to this day, namely: Peterborough, Chester, Bristol, Oxford and Gloucester.)

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<th>Benedictine Foundations</th>
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A New Chapter

The monasteries attached to these cathedrals were not secure. They surrendered to the Crown. A Record Office document [18 p.47] records the surrender of St. Swithin’s monastery. At this time Basyng changed his name back to Kingsmill.

“The certificate of Rob. Southwell, esq, Will. Petre, Edw. Carne and John London, doctors of law, John app Rees, John Kingsesmll [sheriff of Hampshire], Ric. Poulet and Will. Berners ....St. Swithin’s, Winchester, surrendered by deed of 14 Nov. 31 Hen.VIII, and altered. Clear yearly value of possessions, £1575 16s 6d, out of which pensions are to be paid to 1 guardian (Will. Kyngesmll, D.D.), 12 seniors, 12 commoners, 4 priests, 4 singing men ... 8 choristers, 4 bellringers. Wages and liveries for 19 officers of the household, 12 servants assigned to the guardian, and liveries to the extent of £20 yearly at the guardian’s discretion; also 4 servants assigned to seniors ... Total pensions and wages £528 13s 4d. Further allowances for diets, £316 8s; alms £29 15s 5d and pensions to four ‘late religious despatched’, £12 13s 4d.”

That’s a household of 80 persons plus four additional pensions! The document then goes on to record the debts owing to the monastery, “plate and stuff” to remain in the house and plate and ornaments reserved for the King, and superfluous buildings are identified, probably for demolition, and the bells in the church and superfluous goods to be sold by the Commissioners. It ends with the extraordinary statement, “And so remaineth clear to the use of the King’ Majesty, £30 3s 4d.” An
extract from the book of pensions, dated 14th November 1539, records that Kingsmill was awarded a pension of £200 a year, the next person down in the hierarchy, the steward, was awarded an annual pension of 20 marks (£13 13s 4d) [19 p.183]. Such a pension, far in excess of any other, made Kingsmill a wealthy man.

Remarkably the grand total for all pensions and wages and “further allowances” plus what “remaineth ... [for] the King’s Majesty” does not add up to “the clear yearly value” of £1575. There is a surplus of income over outgoings of almost £690. To my knowledge no historian has observed this huge discrepancy. Kingsmill, it would appear, has saved for the benefit of the monastery and later for the benefit of the Dean and chapter a very substantial income.

In July 1540 Kingsmill’s patron, Thomas Cromwell, was executed. From then on the reformers were embattled and the conservatives, led by men like Stephen Gardiner, were in the ascendency. How did this affect our prior? Very little, if at all, appears to be the answer. Just one year earlier the sheriff of Hampshire, one John Kyngysmill (William had a brother John but this is not the same man), had complained to Wriothesely and later to Cromwell about Gardiner’s obstructions to reform and his support for preachers like “one Wygg, a seditious person, preacher and sometime friar” who had preached in the cathedral in what he described as “hummynge, hacking and dark setting forth of God’s words” [16 p.372], but, John Kngysmill complained, Gardiner remained untouchable for, as everyone knew, Gardiner was “the King’s own bishop” [16 p.331-332]. William Kingsmill’s continued success, however, appears to have been undisturbed.

On 22nd March 1541 the “late monastery of St. Swithin, Winchester” was reconstituted, by means of a charter, as a cathedral with one dean (“Will. Kyngesmill, S.T.P.”) and 12 “priests prebendaries”, all named. “The said dean and prebendaries to be called the dean and chapter.”[20 p.330] Attached to the charter is an image of the occasion. Kingsmill is shown kneeling, receiving the charter from the King.

As previously observed it would appear that the greater part of the original wealth of the monastery had in fact been retained or “saved” since 1535. The annual (gross) income of the monastery in 1539 was £1575. In the year 1535 it had been £1762 19s 2d. The Crown had, of course, since then seized some estates. Some evidence of these lost estates appears in the 1540s when numerous grants of these lands were made by the King to his supporters. For example, in May 1543, Henry awarded grants of lands at Michelmersh “in tail male” to sundry persons from “the reversion and rents reserved on leases [held formerly] by Wm. Basyng, late prior and the convent of St. Swithin’s” including “two meadows called Newbridge meades of 33 ac. at 20s rent and four loads of hay” (that’s 8d an acre) [21 p.368]. Occasionally one finds amongst the records of the Court of Augmentations (the Court that administered the estates seized by the Crown) references to estates once owned by St. Swithin’s priory and now being granted to Henry’s supporters, but to trace all these lands is not the purpose of this exercise.

The future prosperity of the cathedral was assured in May 1541 when Henry VIII granted to the dean and chapter more than 30 Hampshire manors “in frank-almoigne”, a great number of the former possessions of St. Swithun’s monastery, as well as rectories once in the possession of Hyde Abbey, Romsey Abbey, Southwick Priory, Llanthony Priory (Glos.), Amesbury Priory (Wils.) and Christchurch Twynham Priory. The grant also included “certain pensions and yearly rents” issuing from a number of parishes and “all pensions, portions, etc, in the diocese of Winchester ” in the
counties of Wiltshire and Surrey “which belonged to the said late monastery”. [20 p.417] The size of this grant, from this King, is truly remarkable.

**A Comfortable Living 1541 to 1549**

In an era in which men condemned their fellow men to die most horribly for their beliefs, and men like Thomas More or Thomas Cranmer were ultimately prepared to die for their own beliefs, William Kingsmill seems to have sailed through the maelstrom completely unharmed. He was certainly a reformist, but he must have worked well with bishop Stephen Gardiner too (see below). Back in 1536, when he had written to Cromwell advising him that he did not have the necessary £100, he also wrote in defence of a Dominican friar of Winchester named James Cosyn who had been arrested and indicted for heresy in early March. Cosyn had preached that there was no difference between holy water and normal fresh water, no difference between holy bread and your own bread and that you might as well go to a friend for confession as go to a priest for all the good it would do you [22 p.190-191]. Radical preaching! Kingsmill wrote to Cromwell, “I beseech you your favour to a friar named Cosyn, wrongfully vexed in these parts. I never heard him preach other than the true word of God.”[9 p.233] Other testimonials were provided by certain citizens of Winchester and, in due course, Cosyn was discharged from custody on the authority of bishop Hilsey of Rochester (a former friar) and given his licence to preach.

The evidence that he found favour with Stephen Gardiner at this time is that on 24th July 1541, shortly after becoming Dean, Kingsmill was appointed by Gardiner to be the rector of Alverstoke which at the time of *Valor Ecclesiasticus* provided an annual income of £21 - a very comfortable benefice [23].

Barbara Carter Turner in her highly informative articles in the *Winchester Cathedral Record* for 1973 and 1974 [2 Part 2] presents a picture of the priory church and its prior and subsequent dean (Kingsmill) being in somewhat straitened circumstances from well before the destruction of the shrine of Saint Swithun in 1538. She cites as evidence that the gold and jewels on the shrine were all fakes, although this practice was not uncommon at the time. She seems not to realise that 2000 marks of silver taken from the shrine alone could have purchased the construction of some 80 modest Tudor dwellings [6] and she clearly has not observed the lengthy inventories of gold and silver held by the cathedral and drawn up by Wriothesely [6]. She is also completely unaware that Kingsmill pays Cromwell £450 in the period 1536 to 1539. At the time of the surrender of the monastery she appears to be unaware that Kingsmill was provided with a huge pension of £200 a year and 12 servants, all paid for, and that the income of the monastery at that time was only about £200 a year less than what it had been at the time of *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, a reduction of about one ninth. She also fails to observe the surplus income of £690 a year for the monastery under Kingsmill’s guardianship over and above the outgoings. The uses to which this surplus could be put would be at Kingsmill’s discretion. The huge grant made by Henry VIII to the dean and chapter in 1541 is not mentioned. From the time of the surrender of the monastery she imagines an impoverished cathedral church with its desecrated shrine and a ruined High Altar and an equally impoverished dean. She cites two further pieces of evidence for this. Firstly that on two occasions Kingsmill borrows money and secondly that the inventory of his possessions after his death yields no evidence of wealth. Apparently he presented a lender with two silver gilt candlesticks valued at £10 7s 6d and later redeemed them for the lesser sum of £10 and on another occasion he presented the
lender with a “mitre of stone pearl and silver gilt” valued at £17 and later redeemed for just £7. In both cases Kingsmill must either have already repaid some of the debt before the items were redeemed or he was cheating the lender. Professor MacCulloch, in explaining a somewhat surprising debt incurred by Thomas Cromwell, suggests that in a cash only era wealthy individuals might easily incur a short term cash flow problem which could be resolved by borrowing [24 p.29]. The modest valuation of Kingsmill’s possessions by his executors (see later) is easier to explain. His principal executor and residuary beneficiary was his mother who lived in some style in Chilcombe, Wiltshire. She would have had no reason to provide a high valuation for his possessions and every reason to keep it low.

From 1541 until his death, one and a half years into Edward VI’s protestant reign, Kingsmill’s name seldom appears in official State Papers. In 1543 he was appointed rector of Colemore, a benefice valued at £22 a year in 1536 [23], and he continued in the same role at Alverstoke. So much for one of the reformists demands, namely, an end to the plurality of benefices! Two years later he resigned this post for the benefit of John Tredgold a former fellow monk of St. Swithin’s priory [23]. It seems evident to me that our conformable prior had become a very comfortable dean. It has to be during this period that the handsome Tudor stalls in the Choir were commissioned, displaying, amongst other images, the Royal Coat of Arms and the initials WK. (It is unlikely that they would have been installed when Kingsmill was merely Guardian.)

Kingsmill died in early 1549. He had drawn up his will the previous August. His executors drew up an inventory of his personal possessions in the priory, in his private lodgings in Southwark, and in private lodgings elsewhere. The will and inventory were examined in the 1970s by Barbara Carpenter Turner and she has written extensively about them in the Winchester Cathedral Records for 1973 and 1974 [2]. His private lodgings in Southwark, at the Tabard Inn, comprised eight chambers, including two bedchambers, his own kitchen and his own chapel! At the Tabard Inn his possessions included 20 “borded” books and five covered in parchment. Books, of course, were valuable. You have to wonder whether one of these books might have been Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales and whether he had read these words:

Bifil that in that seson on a day,  
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay  
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage  
To Counterbury with ful devout corage,  
At nyght was come into that hostelrye  
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye  
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle  
In felaweshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,  
That toward Counterbury wolden ryde.

If so, would he have recognised in himself the description of Chaucer’s monk, “a manly man to been an abbott able, ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable”? A “deyntee hors” could cost as much as £5 [11]! (According to Barbara Carter Turner Kingsmill only possessed two horses. [2]) And what would he have made of the monk’s view of the rule of St. Benedict (Beneit)? “The rule of seint
Maure and seint Beneit, by cause that it was old and somdel streit, this ilke Monk leet oldes thynges pace [pass], and heeld after the new world the space ....” [25]

The only surviving memorial to Kingsmill in the cathedral today is his carved initials on the Tudor stalls in the Choir. His name is also delicately woven on one of the Choir Stalls cushions beautifully embroidered in the 1930s.

Carved initials on the Tudor Choir Stalls
Picture: Simon Newman

He was buried near the Nave pulpit. Samuel Gale, in 1715 recorded: “In the Body of the Church, near the Pulpit, is a Stone with this inscription: Willimus Kingsmell prior ultimus, Decanus primus Ecclesiae . . . Obit 1548 (sic)”. [26  p.37] The Nave pulpit, today, is not where it used to be. Its location in 1715 is unknown.

Sources
[18] Letters and State Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII, Vol.15
[22] History of the County of Hampshire, Vol.2  Victoria County History, 1903