

Wall, Charles J., *Shrines of British Saints*. Methuen & Co. London, 1905.  
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## CHAPTER IV [part three]

### SHRINES OF PRELATES AND PRIESTS

#### ST. WILLIAM

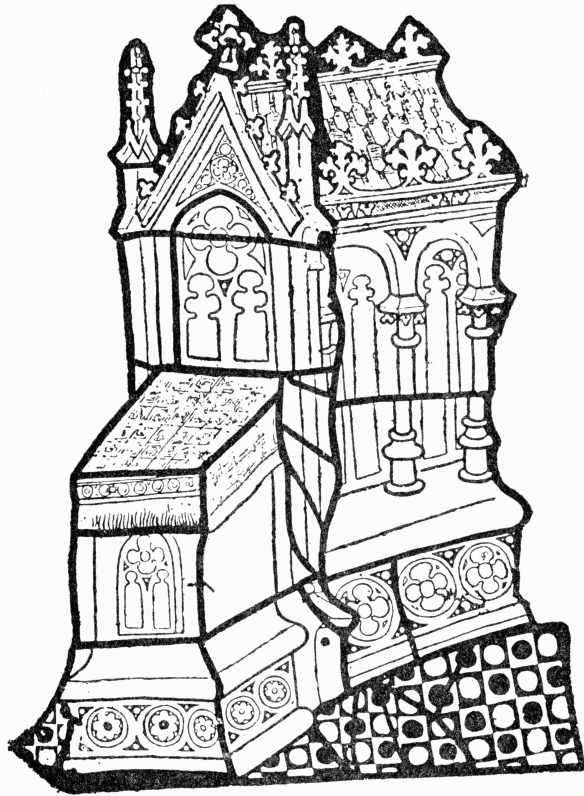
St. William's was *the* shrine in York Minster, which, however, does not appear to have been nearly so rich in such possessions as the metropolitan church of the south.

A simple grave in the nave of the cathedral was the first resting-place of St. William (archbishop of York 1143-1154), and it was not until nearly a hundred and thirty years afterwards that his relics were raised to a lofty shrine by Archbishop Wickwaine, which was done in the presence of the King Edward and his queen. This translation was performed at the sole expense of that princely prelate, Antony Bek, bishop of Durham, who was afterwards created Patriarch of Jerusalem.

St. William's head was enclosed in a *chef* of silver gilt and encrusted with jewels. So rich an object aroused the envy of Dr. Layton, one of Henry the Eighth's commissioners for the visitation of monasteries and a servile creature of Cromwell's, who had been raised to the Deanery of York. He petitioned for and obtained a special grant of this reliquary *for the use of the cathedral*.

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To preserve the relics with reverend care? No ; the man who pawned the altar plate of the cathedral when he gained the deanery, whose personal conduct and irreverent behaviour towards everything sacred in his visita-



THE SHRINE OF ST. WILLIAM  
From a window in York Minster  
By permission from Westlake, *Painted Glass*

Illustration: The Shrine of St. William. From a window in York Minster. By Permission from Westlake, *Painted Glass*.

tions were notorious, only wanted this reliquary for the riches thereon ; and it may well be presumed that it was promptly taken to pieces and sold to the highest bidder.

The relics from the great shrine were buried in the

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nave, under a large spotted marble slab. In May, 1732, this grave was opened by Drake, the historian, who found a leaden box containing a number of bones huddled carelessly together without any order or arrangement. <sup>1</sup>

#### ST. RICHARD

“In the first place, to the Most High Trinity and to the Blessed Mary I commend and bequeath my soul, and my body to be buried in the great church of Chichester, in the nave of the said church near the altar of the blessed Edmund the Confessor, hard by the column.”

So ran the will of Bishop Richard. He died near Dover in 1253, but was buried according to his will.

He was canonised in 1260, and the relics must have been exhumed and placed in a feretory on the tomb until a fitting shrine could be built for its reception.

In 1270 Bishop Stephen required the dean and chapter to find and perpetually maintain ten square tapers to burn before the feretory on the great feasts, and two round tapers before the same feretory, three before the tomb of the aforesaid saint, and nine tapers about the feretory weighing two pounds, to burn continually night and day on festivals of the first, second, and third dignity.

June 16th, 1276, was a great festal day at Chichester. The shine was finished and the translation of St. Richard took place. The king and queen and their court attended the ceremony. The archbishop and nine bishops were present. It was a great occasion and the bishop spent 1,000 marks upon it. The feretory was silver gilt and richly jewelled.

The shine was situated at the east of the high altar on a raised platform, which filled one entire bay behind the reredos, and was reached by two flights of steps on the

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east side. An altar stood at the west of the shine, and a watch-loft was erected, which latter[sic] was removed so late as 1820s.

The throng of pilgrims was so great that the body of St. Richard was dismembered, and three stations were made—the tomb of St. Richard, the shrine, and the head in a separate reliquary.

To judge by his visits and his offerings at the shrine the king must have had a great veneration for this saint. In 1280 he ordered that certain jewels which had been taken from the shine were to be refixed to the feretory, and six years later, when he was at Chichester, on the festival of St. Richard, the gifts of the Royal Family were recorded in the Wardrobe Accounts. The king offered a golden clasp, which cost him 106*s.* 8*d.*,<sup>2</sup> and Prince Edward another of the value of 100*s.* A damsel named Ediliva offered two clasps for the princesses Maria and Elizabeth; these were valued at 36*s.* of the money of that time. Master Robert le Normand offered three clasps for the other daughters of the sovereign — Alionora, Johanna, and Margaret. Eight years after the king gave a jewel made out of a vase found at Edinburgh.

Edward I., although engaged in the Scotch war, sent an offering from Newcastle—November, 1297—with particulars as to its subdivision, and the place for each gift. Roger de Barnely faithfully fulfilled his mission, and in the king's name gave 7*s.* at the shine, with a clasp and cloth of gold, and 7*s.* to both the head and the tomb.

Two years after this the king was there in person, and on June 28<sup>th</sup> he gave—

“In oblations at the feretory on one side of S. Richard 7*s.*, and on the other side 7*s.* and to the mitre of the same saint 7*s.*, and to the head of the same saint and to the tomb where

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S. Richard was first buried 7*s.*, and to the mitre of S. Edmund and to the chalice of S. Richard 7*s.* ; sum total, 42*s.*”

Again, on June 6th, 1299, we find four cloths were delivered to Ralph de Manton for oblations at the shrine for the Lord Edward, Prince of Wales, which were probably for the feast of the translation, and 7*s.* was offered both at the tomb and the reliquary of the head.

A minstrel, with his harp, was stationed at the shrine, and one named Loull was singing the praises of the saint when he received a guerdon of 6*s.* 6*d.* from the king on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1297.

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>—St. Richard’s Day—the concourse of pilgrims was of such magnitude that in 1478 Bishop Storey made stringent rules whereby the crowds might approach the shrine in seemly order. The pilgrims were accustomed to carry staves, and the struggles for precedence led to the free use of these on each other’s heads, often leading to serious injury, and in some case even death. The bishop directed that, instead of staves, they should carry crosses and banners, and the members of the several parishes should approach reverently from the west door in prescribed order, of which notice was to be given by the parish priests in their churches on the Sunday preceding the festival. The procession on Whit-Sunday he required should meet in the choir and proceed through the chancel and nave.

Not only were the pilgrimages voluntary, but occasionally compulsory by way of penance ; and we find the Earl of Arundel obtaining absolution only on this condition, for poaching on the bishop’s preserves in Hoghton chace[sic].<sup>3</sup>

Among prominent offerings Bishop de Lenne (1362-1369) gave a silver image of the value of ten marks to

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the feretory, and Theobald Evyas (1478) left his cross of gold, which he wore about his neck, to the shrine of St. Richard.

When in the fifteenth century Chichester Cathedral was in need of repair, offerings for that purpose were encouraged by granting indulgences to pilgrims to the shrine at Whitsuntide and on Trinity Sunday, and in 1480 St. Richard’s Pence amounted to £5 2*s.* 6*d.*, and in a later year to £7 8*s.* 6*d.*

In the sixteenth century this beautiful structure went the way of all shines. The last heard of it is in the communication made by the visitors of Henry VIII.

“COMMISSION FOR TAKING DOWN S. RICHARD’S SHRINE.

“Henry 8 to our trusty and well beloved servant Sir. Wm. Goring, kt. and . . . Erneley, Esq. For as much as we have been lately informed that in our city of Chichester and Cathedral Church of the same there hath been used long heretofore and yet at this daye is used much superstition and certain kynd of idolatry aboute the shryne and bones of a certain bishop of the same, which they call S. Richard, and a certain resort thither of sundry our subjects, which being men of simplicitie, by the inculcation of certain of the clerge, who, taking advantage of the same, doo seke at the said shryne and bones of the same that God only hath auctoritie and power to grant, We, wylyng such superstitious abuses and idolatries to be taken away, command you with all convenient diligence to repayre unto said cathedral church of Chichester and there to take down the shine and bones of that bishop called S. Richard within the same, with all the sylver, gold, juells, and ornamentes aforesaid, to be safely and surely conveighed and brought into our Tower of London, there to be bestowed as we shall further determine at your arrival. And also that y<sup>e</sup> shall see bothe the place where the same shryne standeth to be rayسد and defaced even to the very ground, and all such other

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images of the church as any notable superstition hath been used to be taken and conveighed away. The 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, in y<sup>e</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> year of Hen. VIII.

“Thomas Cromwell.”<sup>4</sup>

The shrine was destroyed, and the following inventory made by the Commissioners :—

“Hereafter folowyth the juells of gold, sylver, relykks, ornamentes, and other juells taken from the shryne in the Cathedrall Church of Chichester the ffryday the xx<sup>th</sup> day of November, the xxx<sup>th</sup> yere of the reyne of Henry VIII., by Wyllm. Gorgny, knyght, and Willm. Erneley, esquier, comyssioners unto our said lord and Kyng, to take down the seid shryne, with all suche gold, sylver, juells, relykks, and ornamentes of the same, and the same shryne to be raysd and defaced, as more pleyntly apperith by the said commission, the which gold, sylver and other jewells remaynyth in vi cofers, a casket, and in a littell boxe. Item, first in a shippe cofer lv ymages sylver and gylt. Item, in a longe cophyn wheryn byshopp Rychards bones were in lvi ymages sylver and gylt. Item, iii other cofers full of broken sylver. Item, a cover with iii lokks that was delyvered by the deane and archedekyn with relykks and other jewells parcel of the seid shryne. Item, in a litell boxe xxxi ryngs with stonys, and iii other jewells. Item, in a casket xli jewells sett with stonys and perlus.”<sup>5</sup>

Goring and Erneley received from the king for “dis-garnishing of the shine at Chichester and bringing the same to the Tower of London, £40.”<sup>6</sup>

Last of all the dean and chapter had to defray the cost of repairing much of the mischief wrought in the progress of sacrilege :—

“1544. Unto Wolsey the masson, for amending of the Tumbe in our Lady Chapel, that was broken uppe when the

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Commissioners were here from the Councell to serche for the same, xvd.”

By which it is evident that the tomb of Bishop Gilbert de Sancto Leofardo was rifled by mistake. Other repairs necessitated by the violence of that visitation are also recorded.<sup>7</sup>

## ST. HUGH

The canons of Lincoln minster were rich in the possession of the bodies of four reputed saints. Two of these, both of the name of Hugh, were duly canonised, and the other two—John of Dalderby and Robert Grosseteste—both prelates of Lincoln, had been acclaimed saints by the voice of the people. The relics of St. John had indeed been enshrined in a feretory of silver ; but Bishop Robert was left to repose in his tomb, around which pilgrims gathered as freely as though his sanctity was properly accredited from Rome.

It was, however, the shrine of St. Hugh the bishop which attracted as great attention in that part of the country as did St. Thomas of Canterbury in the south.

St. Hugh was one of the first promoters, if not designers, of our Early English style of architecture ; and the grand cathedral, of vast dimensions, which he built must now be considered as his shrine, seeing that his golden feretory found its way through the mint into the purse of King Henry VIII.

St. Hugh died in the Temple in London, but his body was taken to his own cathedral for burial, and a circumstance is recorded which was considered extraordinary and attributed to his great holiness,. During the four days' journey to Lincoln, the tapers which were borne around the bier burnt continually “so that they were not at any

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time without the light of one of the tapers, although the weather was often unusually bad on account of the wind and rain.”<sup>8</sup>

The virtues of St. Hugh were so great that even King John was affected thereby, and he convened an assembly for political purposes at Lincoln, so that there should be a brilliant gathering to do honour to St. Hugh when his relics were brought into the city. On the 23rd of November, 1200, King John and William

King of Scots, with the two English archbishops and one foreign, thirteen bishops and a great concourse of nobles and clergy, went out to receive the body, and the two kings with certain earls carried the coffin on their shoulders to the door of the cathedral.

The northern apse of the north-east transept was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and near this altar of his patron saint was the first tomb of St. Hugh. Shortly after his burial the chapel was enlarged to accommodate the pilgrims who flocked to his tomb, and an altar, dedicated to St. Hugh, was raised in the adjoining apse.

The canonisation of St. Hugh in 1220 gave such an impetus to the pilgrimages to his shrine that the enlargement of the church was rendered necessary by the increased throngs of the faithful.

The beautiful Angel Choir which was now built may—in a liberal sense—also be looked upon as the shine of this far-famed saint, for it was expressly constructed to receive the feretory of St. Hugh. Behind the high altar the new shrine was erected, and on the 6th of October, 1280, the translation of the relics took place. As at the entombment, so at this translation, the occasion was of exceptional grandeur. The whole cost of this magnificent ceremonial was borne by Thomas Bek, who had that day been consecrated in the minster to the see of St. Davids. He

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proved to be a munificent prelate, who did things so thoroughly that, while associating with the princes of the land, he remembered the poorer brethren, and to make it a day of rejoicing to them he caused to of the conduits in

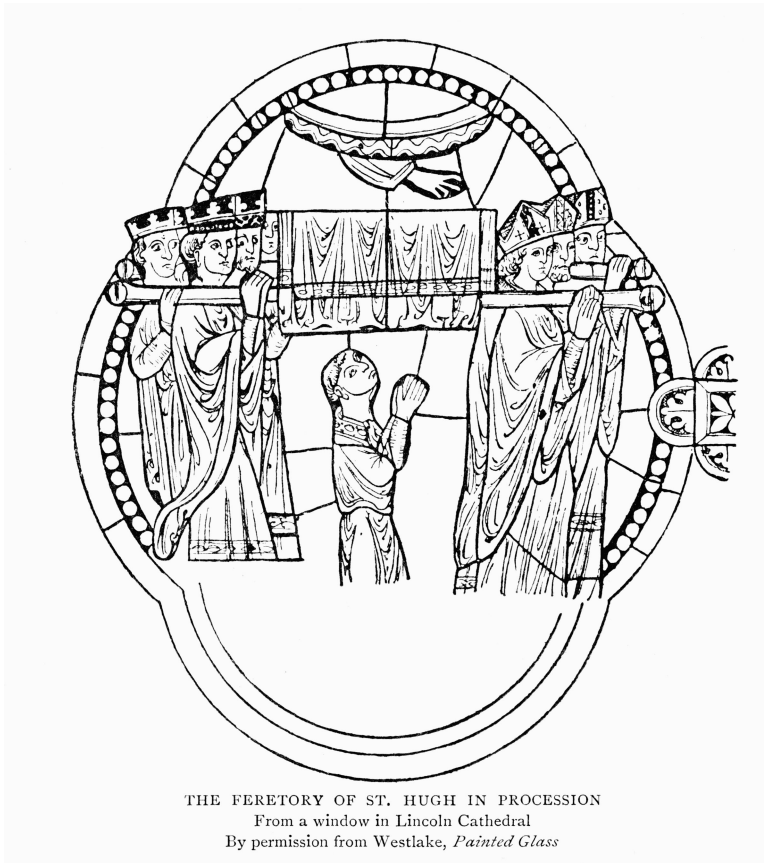


Illustration: The Feretory of St. Hugh in Procession. From a window in Lincoln Cathedral. By permission from Westlake, *Painted Glass*.

Lincoln to run with wine.<sup>9</sup> Edward I. and his queen, Edmund his brother and the queen of Navarre were present with most of the dignitaries of the realm, both cleric and lay.

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It was presumably on this occasion that the head of St. Hugh was taken from the feretory and put into a separate head reliquary of gold and precious stones. During the episcopate of John Bokyngham, 1363-1398, the head of St. Hugh in its golden reliquary was stolen. In this case it was not for the sake of the relic but for the riches of the shine ; for the thieves, after stripping off the gold and jewels, flung the head into a meadow, where, we are told, it was guarded by a crow until it was recovered and taken back to the cathedral.

At this time the treasurer of the cathedral was John of Welbourn, a great benefactor to the church. Among other costly works enumerated in the Chapter Records—in which we find he was the custodian of the relics of St. Hugh—it is chronicled that he covered the two sides of the great shrine, which had hitherto been painted, with plates of pure gold, and placed an image of St. Paul within a niche or tabernacle on the north side of the feretory. He also made a canopy of wood to cover the upper part of the shrine.



The head of St. Hugh, which had been stolen and despoiled, he again decorated with gold, silver, and precious stones.

In the inventories of the cathedral are enumerated some of the jewels with which this *chef* was decorated.

“Item iiij rynges of gold with iiij precieuse stones belonging to the same hede.

“Item . . . of gold.

“Item thre old nobles & two ducates of gold nailed opon the bre (deth of) seint hugh hede.

“Item a ryng of gold with one oriant saphir standing (upon the) top of the mytre of seint hugh hede.

“Item two plaites of gold. . . ”

For the great shrine :—

“Item two branches of gold with a branche of corall . . . the shryn.”

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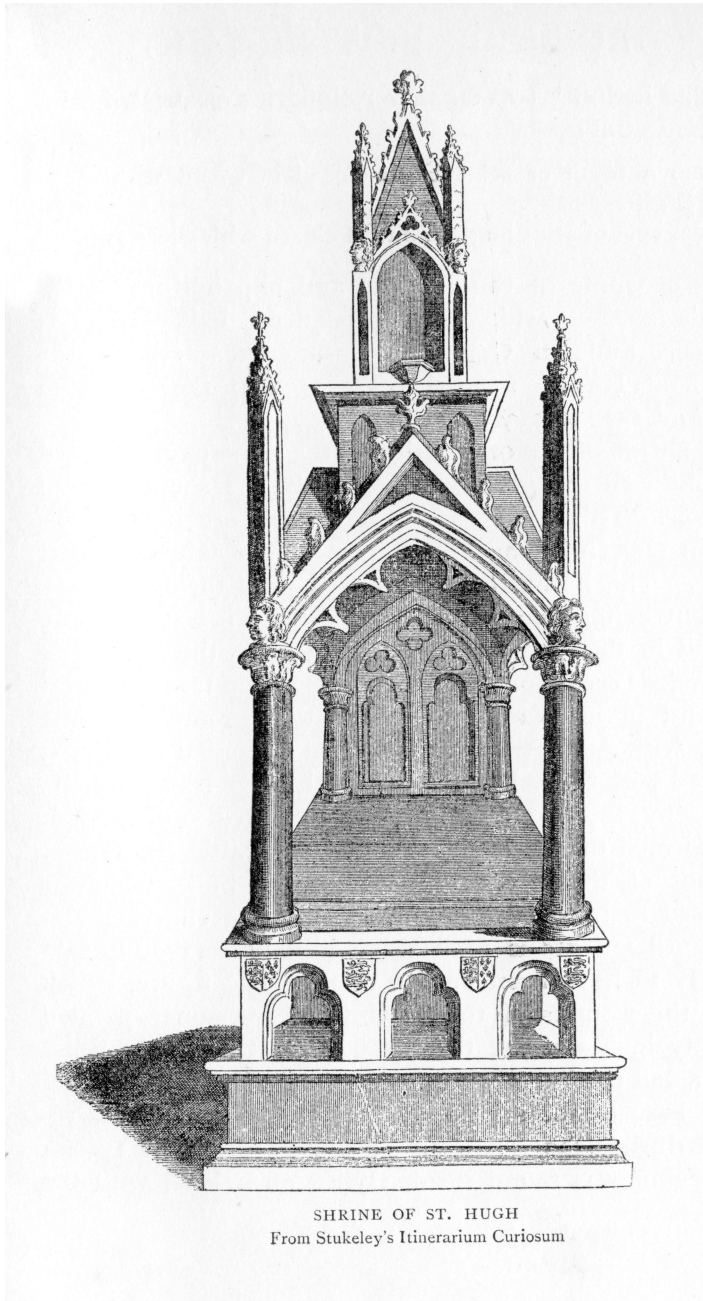


Illustration: Shrine of St. Hugh. From Stukeley's *Itinerarium Curiosum*.

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It also included two smaller reliquaries associated with the same saint :—

“Item a toyth of seint hugh closed in byrall with silver & gilt.

“Item oyle of seint hugh in birrall closed withsilver & gilt.”

The accounts of the receipts and expenditure at St. Hugh's shrine, which were balanced half-yearly—at Pentecost and on October 9th—are preserved in the Muniment Room<sup>10</sup> for the years 1334 to 1494, 1510 to 1517, and 1520 to 1532.

The shrine of the other saint of the same name, known as "Little St. Hugh," was erected in the south aisle, of the choir. This boy is said to have been crucified by the Jews in 1255 in revenge for the wrongs sustained by that people. The body, it was believed, was thrust down a well, but being discovered by Christians it was solemnly interred in the cathedral. The arcade on the outside of the parclose screen of the choir was removed from the third bay, and in its place was substituted a more elaborate arcade with geometrical tracery and canopied headings, enriched with the ball flower and with large-leaved finials, which, by traces remaining, was painted and gilded. This formed the back of the shrine of Little St. Hugh. In front of this a canopied tomb was built, which is supposed to have been surmounted by an effigy.

A mutilated statue of a child, still preserved, is said formerly to have been on the tomb. This figure, which shows the wounds of the nails, is of freestone—painted—twenty inches high; the right hand is raised in benediction, but the head is broken off.

The base of the shrine remains, and when it was removed during the repairing of the cathedral in 1790 a stone coffin was found inside, lying on a level with the

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pavement. The coffin contained a complete skeleton of a boy 3 feet 3 inches in length, corresponding in every respect with the traditions of over five centuries.

"St. Hugh of Lincoln, Martyr," still finds a place in some calendars on the 29th of June.

The origin and growth of this cruel fiction which led to the death of so many Jews has been historically and conclusively treated. The true story of Little St. Hugh, the Lincoln boy, who lost his life in August, 1255, by an accidental fall into the cesspool of a house belonging to a Jew, whereby on a false charge many Jews lost their lives, has been recently brought to light, on historical and convincing lines, by Mr. Joseph Jacobs.<sup>11</sup>

The third shrine in Lincoln Cathedral was of St. John of Dalderby, bishop of that see from 1300 to 1320. He was buried in the south transept, but by the numerous miracles said to have taken place at his tomb the faithful of the diocese quite determined, without the aid of the Pope, that he was numbered among the saints, and in the old-fashioned way—before the elaborate ceremonial of canonisation was introduced—he was declared a saint, and his relics were translated to a "massey silver" feretory, enriched with diamonds and rubies. This rested on a basement of rare marble, and was surmounted by an elaborate canopy, and the whole was surrounded by rails of silver gilt. The basement and supports on which the feretory rested may still in part be seen against the west wall of the south transept.

These three shrines, two of prelates and one of a child, have been classed together, seeing that they rested beneath one roof, and that two of them were spoiled at one visitation. It in some measure exposes the real principles of Henry VIII. in his wholesale destruction of the shrines of saints, when it is observed that the shrine of Little

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St. Hugh, on which we hear of no gold, silver, or jewels being lavished, was not mutilated until the Great Rebellion, while the precious feretories of St. Hugh and St. John, and probably their relics, were utterly destroyed. The official documents of this period, such as the following, are eloquent witnesses against the purity of Henry's motives.

“Henry the Eighth, by the grace of God, King of England & of France, Defender of the Faith, Lord of Ireland, & in earth, immediately under Christ, supreme head of the Church. To our trusty & well beloved doctor George Hennage, clerk, archdeacon of Taunton, John Hennage, & our well beloved servants John Halleley & Robert Draper, greeting. For as much as we understand that there is a certain shrine & divers feigned relics & jewels in the cathedral church of Lincoln, with which all the simple people be much deceived & brought into slander of this realms & peril of their own souls, we let you wit, that we being minded to bring our loving subjects to the right knowledge of the truth, taking away all occasions of idolatry & superstition ; for the especial trust & confidence we have in your fidelities, wisdoms, & discretions, have, & by these presents, do authorise, name, assign, & appoint, you four or three of you,, that immediately upon the sight hereof, repairing to the said cathedral church, & declaring unto the dean, residentiaries, & other ministers thereof, the cause of your coming is to take down as well the said shrine & superstitious relics, as superfluous jewels, plate, copes, and other such like as you shall think by your wisdoms not meet to continue or remain there. Unto the which, we doubt not, but for the considerations afore rehearsed, the said dean & residentiaries, with other, will be conformable & willing thereunto ; & so you to proceed accordingly. And to see the said relicks, jewels, and plate, safely & surely to be conveyed to our Tower of London, unto our jewel house there, charging the master of our jewels with the same. And further, we will that you charge & command in our name, that the said dean there, to take down such monuments as may give any occasion of

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memory of such superstition & idolatry hereafter ; streightly charging & commanding all majors, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, & all other officers, ministers, & subjects unto whom in this case it shall appertain, that unto

you, & every of you, as they shall be by you required, they be abiding, helping, favouring, & assisting, as they will answer unto us for the contrary in their perils.

“Yeoven under our privy seal, at our palace of Westminster, the sixth day of June, in the two & thirtieth year of our reign (1540).”

By virtue of this commission there was taken out of the cathedral of Lincoln, on the 11th of June, 1540, 2,621 ounces of gold, and 4,285 ounces of silver, besides a great number of pearls and precious stones which were of great value, as diamonds, sapphires, rubies, turky carbuncles, etc.

“There were at that time two shrines in that cathedral church ; the one of pure gold, called S. Hugh’s shrine, standing on the back-side of the high altar near unto Dalison’s tomb ; the place is easily to be known by the irons yet fastned in the pavement stones there.

“The other, called S. John of Dalderby his Shrine, was of pure silver, standing in the south-end of the great cross isle, not far from the door where the gallery court is used to be kept.”<sup>12</sup>

After the Restoration Bishop Fuller erected a memorial—a slab of black marble on four small pillars of veined marble—over the spot he presumed the relics of St. Hugh to have been buried, inscribed with Latin verse stating that the saint’s body lay beneath. This caused Leland to write that “S. Hugh lay in the Body of the Est Porte of the Chirche above the Highe Altare,” but when search was made in 1886, an unsoldered leaden coffin was found within one of stone which contained nothing but decayed vestments of rich material.

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At the easternmost part of the cathedral, adjoining the west end of Bishop Burghersh’s, is a structure of the middle of the fourteenth century, which appears to have been the base of a portable shrine. It has two niches on the north side and one in the front for the pilgrims. Over the arches are shields bearing the instruments of the Passion, and the pavement in front is very much worn. This was probably the base of the Shrine of the Head.

## ST. THOMAS OF HEREFORD

The reputation of Hereford was already assured by the possession of the relics of St. Ethelbert, King and Martyr (see page 214), but in the destruction of the cathedral in 1055 it appears that his shrine had been destroyed and apparently one of his teeth was the only surviving relic. Great, therefore, was the joy of the canons when they were able to count one of their own bishops among the saints and to erect a shrine to St. Thomas Cantilupe, which, although accounted of second importance to that of St. Ethelbert, was the means of enhancing their

influence and attracting the offerings of pilgrims. Of this shrine we know the form and much of its decoration, partly through mention of it during the period of the veneration of the relics, partly from the record of its destruction, but more especially from that portion which yet remains. The very contentions between the chapter and the treasurer over the division of the offerings throws light on the life of the times and the exhibition of human passions.

Thomas de Cantilupe (1275 – 1282) was one of the greatest prelates of the age ; but his episcopate was not altogether peaceful—integrity frequently finds enmity in the highest dignitaries—and it was to appeal against an unjust decree of the archbishop of Canterbury that Cantilupe journeyed to Rome. At Monte Fiascone, near

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Florence, he died of a fever, and on Richard Swinfield, his attendant chaplain and successor in the see, devolved the care of bringing his bones back to England. He proceeded to separate the flesh of his body from the bones by the simple process of boiling. The flesh was buried in the church of the monastery of Santo Severo, near Orvieto, and on reaching England the heart was deposited in the college of Bonshommes at Ashridge, in Buckinghamshire, while the bones were brought to Hereford and placed in a sumptuous tomb in the Lady Chapel.

At the entrance to the cathedral miracles are reported to have begun. It is said that the Earl of Gloucester, who had encroached on the liberties of the church, was present at the ceremony, and that as he approached the casket containing the relics, blood began to flow from the bones ; upon which the Earl restored the property he had unjustly seized. Veneration for this character and the circumstances of this death in defence of right, together with the report of cures at his tomb, exalted him to the ranks of the sanctified in the eyes of the whole diocese. Three hundred sick people are reported to have been cured at his tomb ; his healing powers were said to be so great that Edward I. on two occasions made offering for his sick falcons to be restored to health, and sent a waxen image of the ailing bird.

Five years later the relics were translated to a shrine in the chapel of St. Katherine in the north-west transept, in the presence of King Edward I., on Maundy Thursday, April 6th, 1287.

The number of pilgrims increased and the shrine became one of the most frequented in the West of England. It was the custom in cases of sickness to send or bring a wax taper of the height of the sufferer, and sometimes it corresponded with the dimensions of the whole body.<sup>13</sup>

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The profits of these offerings of wax was claimed by the treasurer as his perquisites ; but they became so considerable that it aroused the jealousy of the members of the chapter and led to so great a disagreement that it had to be settled by a mutual compact, in which it is stipulated that, after defraying the expense of

lights at the tomb, the treasurer should receive two-thirds, and the chapter one-third of the profits arising from this source. This instrument, dated 3 Kal. May, 1289, is still extant (see page 144), and on the demise of the treasurer the agreement was renewed by his successor.

In the Taxation of Pope Nicholas a part of the treasurer's income is thus accounted for :—

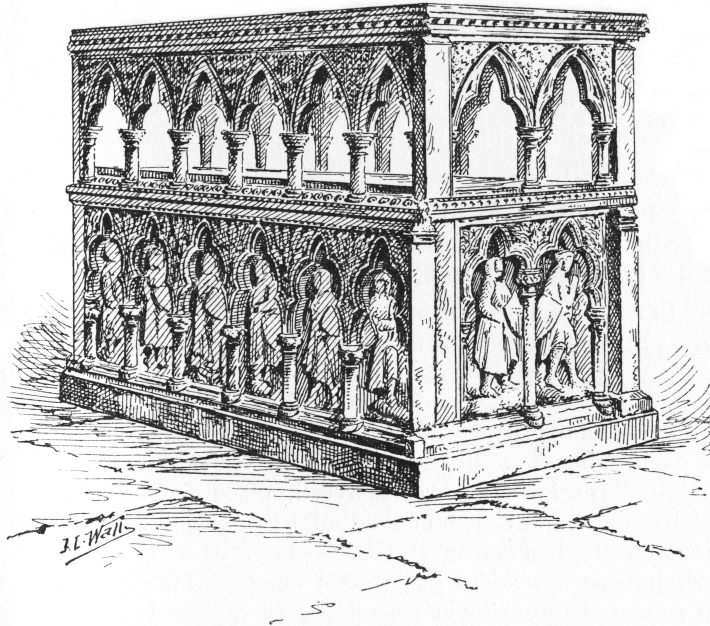
“Item. Thesaurarius recipit quasdam oblationes in cera de tumba  
Espiscopi Thomæ quæ hoc anno taxantur ad . . . . 13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*”

The shrine was twice translated in the sixteenth century, first to its former site in the Lady Chapel, and again back to the north transept, where the pedestal, or throne, still remains.

The structural part of St. Thomas' shrine is different in design from any other of the great type which can be traced in England, excepting that of St. Frideswide at Oxford. It is a long parallelogram, narrowing towards the foot, and built entirely of Purbeck marble. It consists of two stages ; the lower division resembles a high tomb, around which is a series of fourteen cinquefoiled niches containing figures of Knights-Templars[sic] in various attitudes, fully armed in chain mail with their feet resting on dragons and other monsters. Cantilupe was Provincial Grand Master of the Templars in England, and the figures representing that Order form a fitting decoration to his shrine. The spandrels of the arcade are filled with various kinds of foliage—the oak, maple, and clover.

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On the upper slab of this tomb is the matrix of a brass of St. Thomas. The upper division consists of another slab supported by an open arcade, the spandrels containing leaves of the same foliage as those beneath, but formally arranged in rows. The adornments at the east end, or foot, have been destroyed and it is now plastered



SHRINE OF ST. THOMAS CANTILUPE  
Hereford Cathedral

Illustration: Shrine of St. Thomas Cantilupe. Hereford Cathedral.

over. On this top slab rested the jewelled feretory of St. Thomas, which was carried in procession through the streets of the city in 1349 to stay the progress of the "Black Death," which pitiless visitation decimated the population.

The appearance of this feretory is not known. Bishop Booth left certain ornaments of gold and silver for its

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enrichment ; but it is only from the inventory of the jewels taken from it in the sixteenth century that an idea of its beauty can be gathered. In that are mentioned :—

“An image of the Trinity of gold with a diadem on His breast with green stones and red, one oche on his breast with 5 stones and 3 pearls. A table of gold with green and other stones. A plain gold table. A child with the arms of the Marches with green and red stones. A table of gold with Jesus and Our Lady. A round oche compassed with pearls. The salutation of Our Lady . . . 3, 1 with 3 sapphires and 1 emerald. A crucifix with emeralds and pearls. And oche to the same. An Agnus Dei with a chain of gold and 15 rings, some with stones, some without.”<sup>14</sup>

Agreement between Luke de Bray, the treasurer, and the Chapter of Hereford respecting the offerings of wax at the tomb of Bishop Cantilupe.



“In Dei nomine, Amen. Cum nuper super oblationibus cere provenietibus ad tumbas bonæ memoriæ domini Thomas de Cantilupo quondam Herefordensis episcopi, inter discretum virum, magistrum Lucam, thesaurarium Herefordensem asserentem dictas oblationes ad suam thesaurariam pertinere debere ex parte una, et capitulum ejusdem ecclesiæ asserens in usus communitatis ipsius debere converti, discordiæ material esset suborta ex altera, tandem communibus amicis intervenientibus, magister Reginaldus de Heyton’ procurator memorati thesaurarii habens specialem protestatem componendi et transigendi ab eodem thesaurario in præmissis, et capitulum antedictum, in hanc pacis schemam amicabiliter consenserunt : videlicet, ut prædictæ oblationes cere per unum deputandum a dicto thesaurario, et per alium deputandum a capitulo alternatim hinc inde juratos, fideliter colligantur, et custodiantur, et per eosdem, præhabito tamen consilio et præcepto thesaurarii et capituli, fiant expensæ luminariorum circa tumbas supradictas. Et deinde quod liberum super erit, in tres partes æqualiter dividatur, et duæ partes applicentur thesaurario, et tertia capitulo, et de ipsis fiat prout de partibus sic applicatis duxerint ordinandum.

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Per lanc autem compositionem, cedente prædicto Luca vel decedente, successoribus ipsius, et ipsi capitulo, quoad jus seu possessionem in dictis oblationibus nullum præjudicium generetur, aut fiat, quo minus prosequi possint, seu debeant jus suum, prout eis videbitur expedire. In quorem omnium testimonium factum est quoddam instrumentum ad modum cyrographi confectum, cujus una pars sigillo Reginaldi procuratoris præfati signata, remanet penes capitulum, et altera pars sigillo capituli signata penes magistrum Lucam, thesaurarium memoratum. Acta et data in ecclesia cathedrali Herefordensi in pleno loci capitalo iij<sup>o</sup>. Kal. Maii, anno domini. M<sup>o</sup>. CC<sup>o</sup>. octogesimo nono.”<sup>15</sup>

[Note. I do not speak or read Latin. This transcription, though intended faithfully, may have typos or errors.]

## ST. AUGUSTINE

The shrine of the Italian apostle of the English, St. Augustine, and the possession of his relics, was the glory of that monastery which stood just without the walls of Canterbury.

The church was not built when St. Augustine died in 604, and his body was buried in the earth close to the spot where the walls of the sanctuary were rising under the hands of the industrious masons, and when, nine years after, it was consecrated to the honour of Sts. Peter and Paul the body was brought in and buried in the north apsidal chapel. The epitaph said by Bede to have been written on his tomb has been accounted by some antiquaries as spurious, but it may be

considered undue boldness to contend against so venerable an authority on such a matter. That Doctor's record is:—

“Here rests the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being formerly sent hither by the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome, and by God's assistance supported by miracles, brought King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having ended the days of his office in peace, died on the 7th day before the Kalends of June, in the reign of the same king.”

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On September the 6th, 1091, the Abbot Wido (or Guido), leaving some part of the dust and smaller bones in the original place, translated the remainder into the principal church, placing them in a stone receptacle in the wall beneath the east window ; but further details of the manner of which this abbot deposited the relics are gathered from the account of the next translation in 1221.

“The Cycle of the Sun being 6, and the Dominical Letter C, on the 5th of the Kalends of May, John de Marisco, Prior of St. Augustine's in Canterbury, with the senior monks of his house, desiring to ascertain where the body of Augustine the Apostle, their patron, was deposited, acted on the advice of some of the brethren who recounted a threefold revelation said to have been vouchsafed to them—doubtless a tradition handed down since the last translation—and caused the wall beneath the middle window at the eastern extremity of the church to be broken through ; there they found a stone chest strongly secured with lead and iron, on which was this inscription :—

“Inclytus Anglorum Præsul, pius, et decus altum,  
Hic Augustinus requiescit corpore sanctus.”

On the morrow, after the celebration of a solemn Mass, still acting at the instigation of the brethren, the prior had a silver shrine removed and the stone substructure on which it stood broken open, when they found at the bottom of the heap of stones a huge leaden chest nearly seven feet in length, on which was written :—

“Be this accounted part of the bones and ashes of the blessed Augustine the Apostle of the English, who being formerly sent here by the blessed Gregory, converted the English nation to the Christian faith ; whose precious head and larger bones Guido the abbot hath honourably translated in another stone vessel, as by a leaden inscription placed on the vessel containing the said bones, is apparent, in the year of the Incarnation of our lord MXCI.”



Plate: The Shrine and Altar of St. Augustine. Enlarged from the drawing in MS., Trin. Hall. Cam.

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This inscription, it will be seen, was in part copied by the Abbot Wido, or Guido, from the epitaph which had been over the grave in the chapel, as recorded by Bede.

In a third place—on the summit of the silver shrine—was found a small leaden chest, “wherein was contained a piece of his flesh not wholly reduced to earth, but appearing like moist mould wherein blood had been congealed,” with this inscription : “this chest contains part of the dust of the blessed Augustine.”

The silver shrine here mentioned was apparently part of the decoration of the monument, which contained the two leaden chests holding respectively some of the bones and the dust of St. Augustine.

All three reliquaries thus found were borne to the high altar. The large one from the bottom of the monument was too heavy to carry, so the lead was removed, and the stone chest from beneath the window, which contained the head and greater bones, was borne to the high altar with great veneration by the abbots of Battle and of Langdon, and the priors of St. Edmund of Feversham and of St. Radegund, the brethren of Sts. Peter and Paul, or St. Augustine's as it was in future called, singing *Te Deum*.

The stone chest was placed on the high altar and opened. Within was found a thin plate of lead inscribed :—

“In the year of the Incarnation of our Lord MXCI., in the reign of William King of England, son to William the King who conquered the kingdom, the abbot Guido translated the body of the blessed Augustine from the place it had lain fifty years,<sup>16</sup> and deposited all the bones of that saint in the present chest, and many more parts of his holy body did the same abbot gather together into a silver shrine, to the glory of Him who reigns for ever.”

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As the relics had been found in three different places—“by a threefold revelation”—so now King Henry III. and the convent caused them to be honourably deposited in three places. The greatest part was laid beneath the silver shrine, strongly bound with iron and secured with lead ; the second part somewhat lower beneath the marble monument ; the third part—the head—was placed beneath the east window, and that this should be exposed for the veneration of the people, it was not enclosed in the wall, but placed in a feretory by Abbot Hugh, which he had decorated with gold and silver and precious stones at his own expense.

In this state they continued until Abbot Thomas Fyndon in 1300 enshrined the relics in a more sumptuous manner, and retaining the former epitaph, added another distich of his own: —

Abbot Wido	“Inclytus Anglorum Præsul, pius, et decus altum, Hic Augustinus requiescit corpore sanctus ;
Abbot Fyndon	Ad tumulum laudis Patris almi ductus amore Abbas hunc tumulum Thomas dictavit honore.” <sup>17</sup>

It is this shrine which is represented in the fifteenth-century drawing of St. Augustine's Abbey, holding the palace of honour in the easternmost chapel (see page 20).

## ST. DUNSTAN

St. Dunstan, one of the greatest of the prelates, statesmen, moralists, artists, and musicians in this country's history, had a shrine raised to him which was also one of the greatest frauds by which the faithful of Glastonbury were deceived.

St. Dunstan died in Canterbury and was buried before the main altar in the crypt of that cathedral. This tomb

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was of stone, for we are told by Gervase that after the fire of 1012 and the rebuilding of the choir "the Master carefully prepared a resting-place for St. Dunstan and St. Elphege." The Prior Alan with nine of the brethren went by night to the tombs of the saints, and so that he might not be incommoded by a crowd, he locked the doors of the church. He then commanded that the stonework enclosing them be taken down, after which the some coffins of the saints were opened and their relics borne to the vestry and deposited in wooden chests, covered within and without with lead : which chests, thus lead-covered and strongly bound with iron, were carried to the new choir, where they were enclosed in stonework which was consolidated with melted lead.

The shrine and altar of St. Dunstan were on the south of the high altar, those of St. Elphege on the north.

The choir of Canterbury was again destroyed by fire in 1171, but when the rebuilding was finished ten years after the shrines of these two saints retained the same positions as in the former choir.

Glastonbury Abbey, however, claimed to have possession of the relics of St. Dunstan, a saint whose youth and education had been entrusted to the monks of that house, and who had been one of their abbots. In the precincts of their abbey he had constructed bells and organs, therefore they held his memory dear and were proud of one of their number who had become so renowned. How and when they were said to have become possessed of such a treasure is so transparent an invention that the author of the story had to elaborate his romance by which to explain to the inquiring Glastonians the cause why no shrine had been raised to so great a saint before the year 1184.

The story is found in William of Malmesbury's *De Antiquitate Glastoniae Ecclesiae*, which he had probably

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finished in 1135, but he is such a conscientious historian that we cannot look for such falsity from his pen. His original work has perished, and the earliest MS. which exists was transcribed some sixty years after the death of the author. In this transcript is interpolated so much that only those portions which are repeated in the *Gesta Regum* can be looked upon as Malmesbury's writings.

Glastonbury Abbey was destroyed by fire in 1184, the very year in which the relics of St. Dunstan were translated at Canterbury, and the idea then probably occurred to some of the Glastonbury monks to invent a discovery of their already boasted claim which would bring greater offerings to their church.

The Glastonbury account is that, after the burning of Canterbury by the Danes in 1011, King Edmund came to Glastonbury and related events to the abbot and monks of the monastery, who immediately entreated for permission to translate the bones of St. Dunstan from so insecure a place to the house of his youth. This obtained, certain monks were dispatched[sic] to Canterbury—no mean journey in those days—yet they speak of the ruins of the cathedral as still smoking, and found amongst them the bones of St. Dunstan wrapped in cloth of gold and needlework.

Without delay they returned to Glastonbury with their precious burden, and when within a mile of the town sent one of their number to acquaint the convent of the success of their mission, that preparations might be made to give the relics a fitting reception. It was, however, needless. Long before the messenger arrived the bells of the abbey—of their own accord—burst into a joyous peal, and the larger bells in the great tower chimed in with sonorous accompaniment. The abbot and convent understood the miraculous intimation, and went forth in solemn procession to receive the relics with due honour.

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To prevent the relics being again stolen by the monks of Canterbury it was decided that two of the brethren should bury them in a spot known only to themselves, and keep the secret the rest of their lives, when one died the other was to select some trustworthy successor to whom he should disclose it, thereby ensuring that the secret would not be lost.

The two monks placed the bones in a wooden coffin painted on the inside in azure and vermilion. On the right side of the exterior they put S and on the left D, intending that the letters should stand for *Sanctus Dunstanus*. This was buried near the holy-water stoup by the door which gave entrance to the monks from the cloisters into the nave of the great church, and was covered with a stone.

There the relics lay for a hundred and seventy years, and we are told how a young monk wheedled the secret from an older monk and then told the others, and so it happened that after the fire the secret was known, or otherwise it would have been lost altogether. The ruins were searched, the ground was dug, and eventually everything was found as described. The relics were put into a splendid feretory of gold and silver, and became the object of many pilgrimages. Early in the fourteenth century Abbot Breynton spent 500 marks on the shrine, and so famed did it become that it roused the jealousy of the convent at Canterbury, who constantly sent protests to the Abbey of the West, but all to no purpose, until Archbishop Warham, as late as 1508, had a scrutiny made of the tomb attributed to St. Dunstan in his cathedral, and in his letter to Abbot Beere of Glastonbury, he describes how he found in a small wooden chest, girt with iron, a leaden cist

containing the skull and bones and a plate of lead a foot long, inscribed “Hic requiescit Sanctus Dunstanus, Archiepiscopus,” and he admonishes

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the abbot to desist from any such claim. The abbot in his reply declared that the shrine had been set up in their church for over two hundred years with the sanction of his diocesan, with power to move it from place to place, by which we learn that it was a movable feretory. The archbishop eventually forbade the abbot, on pain of excommunication, to assert his possession of the remains of St. Dunstan.<sup>18</sup>

On the south wall of the choir at Canterbury, between the monuments of Archbishops Stratford and Sudbury, is some diapered stonework, which is doubtless the remains of the pedestal of St. Dunstan's shrine.

The head of St. Dunstan was enclosed in a separate *chef* of silver by Archbishop Warham.

The shrine of St. Elphege on the north side of the choir has been totally destroyed.

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1. *Hist. and Ant. of York.*
2. Moneys of the thirteenth century multiplied by twenty-four will approximately give the relative value.
3. *Archaeologia*, v. 45. p. 176.
4. *Lamb. MS. 577*, fo. 73, Draft of Privy Signet of King's Warrant, n. 671, Pub. Rec. Off.
5. *Chap. Ho. Books*, Pub. Rec. Off., A. 3/12 fo. 102.
6. *Arundel MS. 97.*
7. *Comptus* 35 Hen. VIII.
8. Matt. Paris.
9. *Gerald Cam.*, vii. 219, 220, Rolls Series.
10. B. i. 5, 16.
11. *Jewish Ideals and other Essays* (1896), pp. 192-224.
12. *Inventories of Cathedral Church of Blessed Mary of Lincoln.*
13. *Life and Gests*, etc., p. 228.
14. Record Office.
15. *Reg. Swinfield*, f. 63 b.
16. A chronological error.
17. The renowned and pious saint Augustine, supreme head and high glory of the Angles, here rests in the body.  
Led to the shrine by love of a bounteous Father's praise, Abbot Thomas built this present shrine with all honour.
18. This scrutiny was made on April 22nd, 1508. An account of it, and part of the

correspondence with Glastonbury, has been printed by Wharton—*Anglia Sacra*, ii, 227. The full account will be found in MS. E. 27, and in *Register R.* ff. 183-188b, in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury.

-end chapter four, part three-