

THE KING FAMILY. A BISHOP'S THRONE FOR VILLAGE BOYS.

Worminghall has the distinction, probably unequalled by any other village in the kingdom, of having been the birthplace of two Bishops. They were [John King](#), son of Philip King, born 1559, Bishop of London, 1611, and [Henry King](#), the eldest son of Dr. John King, born 1591, Bishop of Chichester, 1641. A brass in the Chancel's south wall commemorates Philip King and twelve children, one of them being John King, the future Bishop of London, as stated above.

There is a reference on the brass to [Robert King](#), Philip's uncle, who was the last Abbot of Oseney and first Bishop of Oxford, who sat at Cranmer's trial.

There is also an oaken tablet on the north wall of the chancel, in memory of John King, Bishop of London, 1611, on which are carved the arms of the See of London, impaling those of John King, surmounted by a mitre, dated 1611; also Tudor roses.

James the First called John King, Bishop of London, King of preachers, and Sir Edward Coke, the best speaker in the Star Chamber. Henry King, the eldest son of Dr. John King, was born in the same house in Worminghall as his father. He became bishop of Chichester in 1641 and was the most noticeable of this remarkable family. Author of excellent prose, and of the famous poem "Tell me no more how fair is she", he was on terms of affectionate intimacy with Ben Jonson, Izaak Walton and the poet, Donne.

Walton celebrated him in his life of Donne, on whom King wrote an elegy, lamenting that the dead poet could not himself, compose the lines.

"So jewellers no art or metal trust
To form the diamond, but the diamond's dust"

King's wife died when she was only 23, and as he was a Prebend of St. Pauls, she was buried in the old cathedral, he writing to her a most exquisite farewell, in which these lines occur:

"Sleep on my love, in thy cold bed,
Never to be disquieted.
My last Good Night. Thou wilt not wake
Till I thy fate shall overtake.
Stay for me there: I will not fail
To meet thee in that hallowed vale."

Donne made King his executor and gave him a life size drawing of himself in a winding sheet, made as he awaited death at the Deanery. King had the drawing reproduced exactly in white marble, and, almost the only monument in St. Pauls to survive the Great Fire, it is in the cathedral today, just as Sir Henry Wootton described it. "It seems to breathe faintly, and posterity shall look upon it as a kind of artificial miracle." Remembering the fire, posterity does so look upon it, but who remembers that we owe it to the love and reverence of the bishop born here, who has been for nearly three centuries, sleeping in his own Cathedral at Chichester.

(Copied from framed text in the Church, source unknown.)

