

Christopher Bainbridge

His Eminence **Christopher Bainbridge**, D.Cn., CL
Cardinal, Archbishop of York, Primate of England

Christopher Bainbridge (1462/64 – 1514) was an English Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. He served as Archbishop of York from 1508 until his death.

Early life

The cardinal came from a Westmorland family with roots in Bainbridge, North Yorkshire and was a maternal nephew of Thomas Langton, Bishop of Winchester, which may account for his charmed early life. He was granted an indult in 1479 which allowed him to hold church benefices while still unordained and under the age of 16, and another in 1482 that allowed him to hold more than one benefice concurrently. He was said to have been fifty years old at his death and must therefore have been born about 1464.

He was described as a magister, or scientist, by 1486; at Bologna he was admitted DCL in 1492; he was in Rome between 1492–1494. Appointed Provost of Queen's College, Oxford in 1496, and Master of the Rolls in 1504, he was incorporated at Lincoln's Inn on 20 January 1505. By 1497, he had become chaplain to Henry VII; in 1503 dean of York; in 1505 he was Dean of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. He was appointed Bishop of Durham on 27 August 1507.

Archbishop of York and Cardinal

Bainbridge was translated to York on 22 September 1508, a sign of the favour he enjoyed at court. On 24 September 1509, King Henry VIII (whose coronation he had attended) appointed Bainbridge to be his ambassador to Pope Julius II.

Just at this time Julius had taken alarm at the invasion of Italy by Louis XII of France, and the support of England was therefore of great importance.

Julius left Rome to relieve Bologna, and was nearly taken prisoner in the war. A group of pro-French cardinals summoned a council in opposition to him at Pisa, which Julius opposed by calling another council at Rome, the Fifth Lateran Council,[2] in the course of which he created (in March 1511) several new Cardinals, of which Bainbridge was one, with the title of "Cardinal of St. Praxed's" or Santa Prassede.

Bainbridge was immediately sent with an army to lay siege to Ferrara, but the creation of the Holy League relieved the papacy of some pressure by involving Spain against the French forces. Pope Julius II was succeeded on his death by Pope Leo X, who was initially willing to grant the title of Christianissimus Rex (Most Christian King) to Henry, after Francis had automatically forfeited the title by waging war on the Pope. However, Henry's making peace with France in 1514 probably ended these hopes.

Bainbridge died on 14 July 1514, having been poisoned by one of his own chaplains, Rinaldo de Modena. Rinaldo was imprisoned and confessed to the crime. He also implicated Silvester de Giglis, then Bishop of Worcester, as the instigator of the plot. De Giglis was the resident English ambassador at Rome, and regarded Bainbridge as a threat to his position: he also had sufficient power and influence to make Rinaldo retract his confession and have him killed in prison.

Richard Pace and John Clerk, the cardinal's executors, were eager to prosecute De Giglis, but he maintained that the priest was a madman whom he had dismissed from his own service some years before in England, and his defence was accepted as sufficient.

Bainbridge was buried in the chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury at the English hospice in Rome, which later became the Venerable English College.

References

[Wikipedia](#), the free encyclopedia

[The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church](#)