

## **Bishop Robert Skinner**



Robert Skinner was born on Wednesday February 10, and baptized February 12, 1590/1, the second son of Edmund and Bridget Skinner.

Robert was educated at a school in Brixworth, near Pitsford.

He was admitted Scholar of Trinity College Oxford, in 1607, aged sixteen years; and was Fellow six years later in 1613. He took his degrees of B.A. June 14, 1610, and of M.A. June 14, 1614.

He continued to take holy orders, and became a noted tutor in the college. He took his degree of B.D. April 19, 1621, when he was admitted to the reading of the sentences; afterwards he went to London,

and was unexpectedly chosen preacher of St. Gregory's Church, near St. Paul's Cathedral, where, preaching twice every Sunday for nine years he was well received, especially by the Puritans. When Dr. Laud, in June 1628, became Bishop of London he helped Robert become Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles I. Laud tried to persuade Robert away from the principles he had, such as Christmas being just the pagan festival Saturnalia and that customs like Yule games and carols were relics of that pagan rite. His father, Edmund Skinner, Rector of Pitsford, died and was buried May 21, 1628; and on the following day, the son, Robert Skinner, B.D., was admitted rector of that church.

In the register of Pitsford, written by the Bishop, is the following entry: "*A.D. 1628. Edmonde Skinner, parson of Pitsford, being of years 74, was buried May 21st, after he had been Parson 34 years. Robert Skinner Rectore.*"

This was apparently the only entry made by him, as all others during his incumbency are signed Maurice Tresham, Minister.

*1628, 22 Mali, Robertus Skinner, S.T.B., ad Recto de Pitsford ad pres Ric Mottershead (of Kingsthorpe), et Ric Stockwell (of Northampton).*

*His resignation: 1635, 10 Febrüi, Henricus Wylde, A.M, a.d., Recto de Pytsford, vac per resign. Roberti Skinner, S.T.B., ad pres. Roberti Skinner, Reg. don Ep. Petrib.*

He was made Rector of Launton, near Bicester in Oxfordshire, January 24 1631, afterwards, November 17, 1636, he was appointed minister of Greens Norton, near Towcester, Northamptonshire.

In July 1636, elected eleventh Bishop of Bristol.

*Reg. Laud. 1636. Robertus Skinner, S.T.P., Electus in Epum Bristol, per translat Georgii Cook, S.T.P., ad sedem Hereford, die 26 Julii, 1636. Confirmatus 14 Janii, proz sequent) consecratus Lambethse. ab arch Epo Cant, adsistentibus Epis, Lond, Elyen, Oxon et Norwic. 1637 16 Janii.*

*Greens Norton was given to him by the King as Bishop Elect, to encourage him to accept of the poor see of Bristol.*

*Reg. Don Epi Peterborough. 1636. 17 Novembris, Robert Skinner, S.T.P., Bristol, Epus Electus ad Rect de Greens Norton ad pres Regis per mort ult Incumb.*

As Bishop elect, diplomated, Doctor of Divinity of the University of Oxford, 13th August, the same year, and having the temporalities given him the 20th January, he was allowed him to keep Launton, and Greens Norton, in commendam. He was the last bishop consecrated before the civil war.

In the beginning of 1641 he was translated to the see of Oxon. He was soon called, by his allegiance to his king and his faith, to join eleven of his episcopalian brethren in the celebrated protest, 17th December 1641. Declaring themselves prevented from attendance in parliament, they were all arraigned for high treason, and ten committed to the Tower of London, including Robert. After eighteen weeks he was released on bail. He retired to his rectory at Launton, which he kept also in commendam with Oxon, and lived there as retired. He continued to ordain ministers in secret.

*Reg. Sheldon, 1663. Robertus Skinner, S.T.P., Epus Oxon ad sedem Wigom electus die 12 Octobris, 1663. Confirmatus, 14 Novembris.*

He was translated to the see of Worcester, October 12th 1663. He was enthroned, 80th bishop, November 20th 1663.

He died an octogenarian, June 14th 1670, and was buried in a chapel at the east end of the choir of the cathedral church at Worcester.

The Bishop married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Bernard Bangor, Esquire Bedell in Divinity, in the University of Oxford; they had six sons and four daughters. Elizabeth was born at Oxford, December 12th 1603 and died there, June 25th 1644.

**Robert's** entry in *Foster's Alumni Oxonienses*:-

**Skinner, Robert**, of Northants, clr fil, TRINITY COLL., matric 11 July 1606 aged 15, B.A. 14 June 1610, fellow 1613, M.A. 25 June 1614 (In corporated at Cambridge 1615), B.D. 19 April 1621 (re-incorporated at Cambridge 1621), licenced to preach 14 Jan., 1621-2, created D.D. 13 Aug 1636 (s. Edmund of Pisford, Northants, cler.) preacher of St Gregory's, near St. Pauls, London, 1621-30 chaplain in ordinary to Charles I., rector of Pisford 1628-35, rector of Launton, Oxon, 1631, and of Greens Norton, Northants, 1636, until sequestered 1643, sequestered also from the vicarage of Cuddesden 1646, and from the rectory of Beckenham 1647; bishop of Bristol 1637-41, and of Oxford 1641, imprisoned in the Tower 1641, restored 1660, bishop of Worcester 1663, until his death 14 June 1670; father of Mathew 1639. *See Ath. iv. 842; Fasti, i. 489; Lansdowne MS. 986, ff 135,137: & Foster's Index Eccl.*