



Lambeth Palace Library Research Guide

Places of Confirmation





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Places of Confirmation of Election of Archbishops of Canterbury

By tradition St. Mary Le Bow, where the Court of Arches sat, became the customary place for the confirmation of the election of Archbishops and Bishops. At the Restoration the tradition was not immediately revived: Juxon's election was confirmed in the Henry VII Chapel in Westminster Abbey and Sheldon's in Lambeth Palace (see John Evelyn's account). But from the confirmation of Sancroft's election in 1678 until the early 20th century, the ceremony was always held in St. Mary Le Bow. A change was made in 1903 with the confirmation of the election of Randall Davidson. To prevent protests against the opinions of the elected Bishop or Archbishop which had occurred at some previous ceremonies of confirmation at St. Mary Le Bow, the form was modified and the location was transferred to Church House, Westminster - Davidson, as Bishop of Winchester, had been one of the Commissioners for the confirmation of the election of his predecessor, Frederick Temple, and having witnessed the protest against Temple's views had written to the *Guardian* calling for a review of the ceremony. The precedent set by Davidson was not followed by subsequent Archbishops. Lang reverted to St. Mary Le Bow, but from 1943 until the election of Archbishop Carey, the confirmation took place at St. Paul's Cathedral. The change in venue in 1943 and 1945 occurred because St. Mary Le Bow was still suffering from war damage. Archbishop Carey reverted to the time-honoured custom but in December 2002 the election of Archbishop Williams was confirmed at St. Paul's Cathedral.

William Juxon	20 Sept. 1660	Westminster Abbey (Henry VII Chapel)
Gilbert Sheldon	31 Aug. 1663	Lambeth Palace
William Sancroft	24 Jan. 1678	St. Mary Le Bow
John Tillotson	28 May 1691	St. Mary Le Bow
Thomas Tenison	16 Jan. 1695	St. Mary Le Bow
William Wake	16 Jan. 1716	St. Mary Le Bow
John Potter	28 Feb. 1737	St. Mary Le Bow
Thomas Herring	24 Nov. 1747	St. Mary Le Bow
Matthew Hutton	29 April 1757	St. Mary Le Bow
Thomas Secker	21 April 1758	St. Mary Le Bow



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Frederick Cornwallis	30 Sept. 1768	St. Mary Le Bow
John Moore	26 April 1783	St. Mary Le Bow
Charles Manners Sutton	21 Feb. 1805	St. Mary Le Bow
William Howley	15 Aug. 1828	St. Mary Le Bow
John Bird Sumner	10 March 1848	St. Mary Le Bow
Charles Thomas Longley	26 Nov. 1862	St. Mary Le Bow
Archibald Campbell Tait	5 Dec. 1868	St. Mary Le Bow
Edward White Benson	3 March 1883	St. Mary Le Bow
Frederick Temple	22 Dec. 1896	St. Mary Le Bow
Randall Thomas Davidson	6 Feb. 1903	Church House, Westminster
Cosmo Gordon Lang	30 Nov. 1928	St. Mary Le Bow
William Temple	17 April 1942	St. Paul's Cathedral
Geoffrey Fisher	2 Feb. 1945	St. Paul's Cathedral
Michael Ramsey	21 June 1961	St. Paul's Cathedral
Donald Coggan	5 Dec. 1974	St. Paul's Cathedral
Robert Runcie	25 Feb. 1980	St. Paul's Cathedral
George Carey	27 March 1991	St. Mary Le Bow
Rowan Williams	2 Dec. 2002	St. Paul's Cathedral
Justin Welby	4 Feb. 2013	St. Paul's Cathedral