

The Very Revd Sir Richard Kaye, 6th Baronet, FRS, FSA, LLD (1736–25th December 1809)

Rector of Kirkby in Ashfield from 1765 - 1809

Canon of Durham 1777 - 1784

Canon of Southwell

Archdeacon of Nottingham 1780 - 1809

Prebendary of Lincoln 1783 -1809

Rector of St Marylebone 1788 – 1809

Chaplain to George III

Kaye was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford graduating BCL in 1761, inheriting the baronetcy from his elder brother Sir John Lister Kaye, 5th Baronet in 1789. He married Ellen Fenton, daughter of William Fenton of Rothwell, West Yorkshire and widow of Thomas Mainwaring. He left no children, and the baronetcy came to an end with his death.

Kaye was a patron of the artists Samuel Hieronymus Grimm, whom he commissioned for two decades to draw "everything curious and Tilly Kettle. He was a friend of Joseph Banks, the botanist and plant collector, whom he proposed for fellowship of the Royal Society and also Captain James Cook, who named after him the island now called Kayak Island.

Kaye had become rector of the parish of Kirkby in northwest England in 1765, and was still serving in that position in 1776 when James Cook departed on his third voyage of discovery. Considered a man of great character, intellect, faith and compassion, Kaye became a friend of James Cook and a much-appreciated support to Cook's wife Elizabeth during Cook's long absences. Honouring a promise made in this letter to acknowledge Kaye's service, Cook named the island now known as Kayak Island in the Gulf of Alaska after him. Visiting there on 12 May 1778, Cook buried a bottle with a paper and two small pieces of silver given to him by Kaye. In May 1776, only weeks before this letter was written, Kaye's parish of Kirkby was suffered an outbreak of small pox, brought from a colliery village in Derbyshire. Kaye offered every family – regardless of sect – the chance of inoculation at his expense. Kaye seemed to be popular in his parish, and many families who were Methodists and Anabaptists came back to the Church of England at this time. Between 1765 and 1774 he noted that the number of 'Dissenters' had dropped from 78 to 24, and the number of children in school had risen from 21 to 109.

Kayak Island (59°56'03"N 144°22'06"W), which includes the Bering Expedition Landing Site, is located in the Gulf of Alaska, 100 km (62 mi) SE of Cordova, Alaska Malaspina Coastal Plain, on the eastern edge of Chugach National Forest. It has a land area of 73.695 km² (28.454 sq mi) and no population.

It was named "Kayak" in 1826 by Lt. Sarichef of the Russian Navy, because of the fancied resemblance of its outline to the Eskimo skin canoe. This island, it is believed, was the one Vitus Bering saw and named "Saint Elias" in 1741.

According to the National Park Service, "Here naturalist Georg W. Steller, surgeon aboard Vitus Bering's ST. PETER, made the first attempts at contact between Europeans and Alaskan natives. His investigations are among the first contributions to the West's knowledge of the natural and human history of the region."

Captain James Cook visited the island on May 12, 1778, and buried a bottle with a paper and two

small pieces of silver given to him by Dr. Richard Kaye, the chaplain of King George III, for this purpose. Because of this, Capt. Cook gave the name "Kaye's Island" to this feature. The 1779 expedition of Spanish explorer Ignacio de Arteaga y Bazán sighted the island about July 16, the feast day of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (or Carmen), and so named it "Nuestra Senora del Carmen" or "Isla del Carmen."

The Bering Expedition Landing Site was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1978.

Cape Saint Elias is located on the southwest end of the island. Mount Saint Elias — about 115 miles to the ENE, and at 18,009 feet (5,489 m) the second highest mountain in both the United States and Canada — was likely named after this cape.

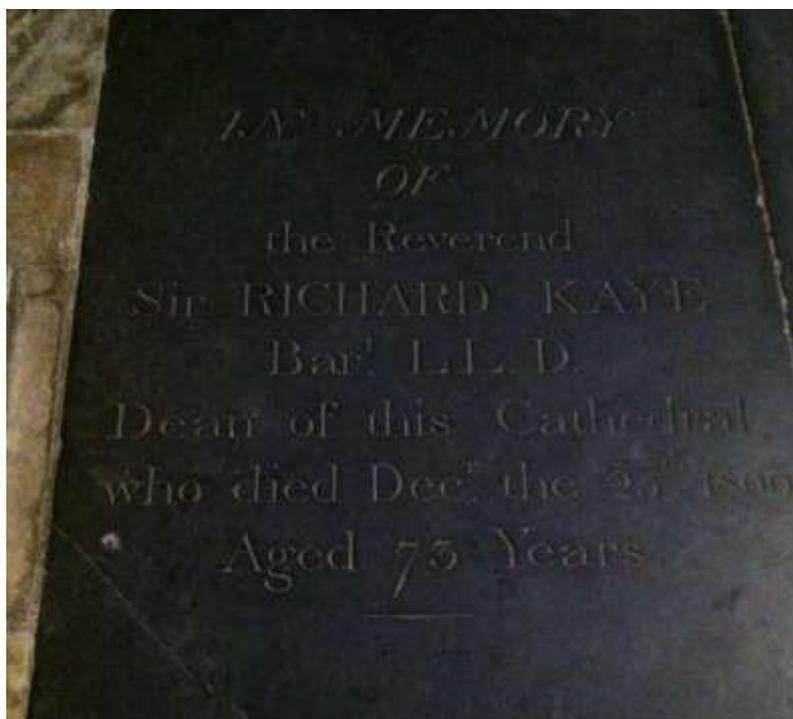
The Cape St. Elias Light is an important aid-to-navigation located on the island.

On his appointment as Dean of Lincoln, Kaye brought the young Reginald Spofforth as organist to the cathedral.

He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on 5th December 1765 as an experimentalist in the field of electricity.

In Nottingham one can still find *Kaye's Walk*, which runs along the north side of St. Mary's Churchyard.

His life can be found in *The Life and Interests of the Reverend Sir Richard Kaye, BT., LL. D., F.R.S., F.S.A., an Eighteenth Century Pluralist* by John Thomas Drinkall, University of Leicester, 1965



The ledger stone to the grave of The Very Revd Sir Richard Kaye, 6th Baronet, FRS, FSA, LLD, in Lincoln Cathedral. Photo by Andrewrabbott - Own work. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons -

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