THE WILL OF JOHN FROMOND, BENEFACTOR TO WINCHESTER COLLEGE.

COMMUNICATED BY THE REV. W. H. GUNNER, M.A.

JOHN FROMOND, whose very curious will we have now the pleasure of laying before our readers, through the kindness of the Reverend the Warden of Winchester College, among the archives of which it is preserved, was the founder of that beautiful Chantry Chapel which stands in the area of the College Cloisters, and is now used as a library. Of the testator himself little is known. His will shows him to have been an extensive landowner, and that some of his possessions had descended to him from his ancestors, as it speaks of lands and tenements in Sparsholt, Stokebridge, and Sombourne, which had belonged to his grandfather Richard Fromond. He was in the employment, and appears to have won the confidence and favour of William of Wykeham, who in 1392 appointed him to the office of Bailiff of the Manor of Waltham, as appears by the following instrument, recorded in the Register of that prelate. (Pars secunda fol. ceij. verso.)

"Williaam, par la suffrance de Dieu Evesque de Wyncestre, à toutz ses amys et bien voillantz et a toutz ses tenantz frankes, et autres que cestes lettres verront ou orrount, salutz en Dieu. Sachez nous avoir ordeignez et faitz nostre chere et bien ame John Fromond baillif de nostre Manoir et seignorie de Waltham ou toutes les membres appertenantz à ycelles, à gardez et gouverner nos terres, fines, hundredes, et fraunchises, et nos courtes tenir- et · pursuire, et chalanz toutes les droitures et fraunchises appertenantz à nostre Egglise de Wyncestre, et à Manoir susdicte, en toutz lieux, pour le temps quils plcst a nous. Et pour ces prions à noz amys et bien voillantz, et commandons à toutz noz tenantes frankes et autres, que à dit Johnes choses susdicte soiez entendantz, conseillantz, et responantz, en due manere à tout cœ que à dit office appertient. En tesmoignance de quelle chose nous luy avons faite faire cestes noz lettres, seallez de nostre seal. Don à nostre chastell de Farnham le ijde jour de Janver l'an du regne nostre seigneur le Roy Richard IIde xv, et de nostre cons' xxv."

He is generally reputed to have been afterwards Steward to William of Wykeham, but I am unable to find any authority for this assertion. He was, however, Steward to the College, and seems to have attended to its affairs with great zeal and fidelity, doubtless from feelings of gratitude and reverence for its great founder, his own early friend. This feeling was proved by the liberal benefaction which he bestowed on the college, and which is in part continued to this day, since it is to him that the sixteen choristers, maintained in the College, are indebted for their clothing. The chantry is of course suppressed, as is also that which he founded in the parish church of his village of Sparsholt, situate about three miles north-west of Winchester. There can be little doubt that the altar of St. Catherine, to which he attached his chaplain, was placed at the east end
of the south aisle of that church, and that the aisle itself was the work of Fromond. If so, his liberality there has not been wholly lost.

The chapel founded by Fromond within the enclosure of the cloisters of the College at Winchester has been so fully described by others, that it would be superfluous to speak of it here. But it may not be uninteresting to describe somewhat in detail the particulars of his foundation; which may help to illustrate some curious features in the habits and religious notions of our forefathers. It will be observed that in his will, dated 1420, the year of his death, Fromond bequeathed to the Warden and Scholars of Winchester College certain rents and tenements in the city and soke of Winchester, for the purchase of clothes for their choristers, and a moiety of his Manor of Aldyngton (now written Allington), after the death of his wife Matilda, for the purpose of celebrating his anniversary every year within the College; and for paying those who should be present at the mass on that day a certain sum of money, according to their rank in the College; also for providing a pittance in the hall; and for the further purpose of sustaining a chaplain to celebrate mass in the place where the bodies of himself and his wife should be buried. This chaplain was also to take his part in the ordinary services of the College Chapel. Such are the provisions of the will, so far as concerns the benefaction to Winchester College, which alone it is proposed to notice. They appear not to have been carried out until 1446, in which year, his wife being then dead, a deed was executed by Robert Thurbern, Warden, and the Fellows and Scholars of Winchester College, in which, after referring to the will of John Fromond, and acknowledging his long and faithful services as Steward of the College, it was stipulated for them, and their successors for ever, that they would find a chaplain, for the purposes contemplated by the testator, in the chapel within the cloisters of their College, where himself and his wife Matilda had been buried. This is an important fact in the history of this beautiful chapel, inasmuch as it enables us to fix more accurately the date of its construction. It is not mentioned, although its construction seems to have been contemplated in Fromond's will. We shall perhaps not be wrong, then, in attributing the actual building of it to his wife Matilda, or to her and her co-executors, who were empowered by the will to dispose of the residue of the personal estate in works of charity to the praise and honor of God, for the health of his own soul, that of his wife, their parents, ancestors, benefactors, and of all the faithful departed, as they would answer for it in the day of judgment. It is stated in the deed of 1446 that this chapel had been sumptuously constructed out of the proceeds of the estates of John Fromond. This may have been accomplished after the death of his wife, as the moiety of the manor was granted to the College only in reversion after her death. It seems most likely perhaps that the chapel itself was erected after her death, under the directions of the Warden, Robert Thurbern, over the ground, which contained the bodies of Fromond and his wife. All indications of the exact spot of their place of sepulture have long disappeared in the complete destruction of every thing that would mark the building as a chapel. But there is a stone over the entrance door in the interior, obtruding in a strange manner upon the central lights of the west window, which has much resemblance to the front of a tomb, and is, to all appearance, out of place in its present position. This stone may have been a part of the tomb of the founder of the chapel. It is sufficiently curious to justify an attempt to describe it, though words, without a
representation, will not convey a clear idea of it. The slab is divided into four quatrefoiled compartments, each 1 foot 4 in. square, the length of the stone being about 6 feet. In the first compartment on the left, looking towards the stone, is a grotesque figure, resembling a lion with a human head crowned; and a band, passed round the neck and over the back, is suspended a shield bearing the arms of Fromond, azure, a chevron or, between three fleurs de lys argent. In the second is a heart ensign with a mitre encircled by a wreath of roses. In the third is a winged monster, half eagle, half lion; it is represented as having the tail apparently of a dragon in its beak, and trampling on the body, while one of the hind feet is being bitten by the monster. In the fourth is a grotesque figure, a wodewose possibly, half man, half beast, the upper half clothed in a shaggy garment, and with a singular cap on the head. It is blowing a trumpet, which is held in the right hand, while the left hand carries an axe uplifted over the back, and the arms of Fromond on a square-shaped shield hang at the side.

The chaplain was to receive ten marcs a year, and it was provided that he should not reside within the College, but in some honest place. For this stipend he was to say mass three times a week at least, in the said chapel, and besides that to take a part on all Sundays and Holydays in chanting and singing psalms, and in all masses, processions, and canonical hours (matins in the winter excepted), in like manner as the other chaplains in surplice and habit like them, but of his own providing (de propriis), in the choir of the College chapel; for which purpose he was to have a stall assigned to him. Besides the support of this chaplain, the College further agreed to give out of the proceeds of the manor and tenements to each of the choristers of the College, sixteen in number, on the Feast of the Nativity, every year, three yards of broad-cloth, of seven quarters wide, or six and a half at the least, of a dark colour, different from that worn by the scholars.

Moreover, it was agreed that on the 20th day of November, in each year, or, if any impediment should occur on that day, then on the earliest possible day after it, the obit or anniversary of the deaths of John and Matilda Fromond should be solemnly kept in the choir of the chapel, in the manner and order following, viz. : That solemn funeral rites (exequie) should be celebrated the night before, and on the morrow commendations and the mass of requiem; and that the Warden, if he were present and should celebrate mass, or if absent for any just and lawful reason, should receive 3s. 4d.; each fellow and conduct chaplain 2s.; the schoolmaster 1s.; the hostiarius 8d.; each chapel clerk 4d.; each scholar 2d.; each chorister 1d.; and that a pittance should be provided in the common hall (in communi in the indenture, per totam aulam in the will) for the Warden, Fellows, Chaplains, Scholars, and Choristers, on which 13s. 4d. should be expended. If the rents of the manor and tenements should decrease and become insufficient for these purposes, then first the pittance was to be withdrawn, and next the distribution of money among the Warden and the others, next the cloth of the choristers, and last of all the stipend of the chaplain. For the due performance of all these engagements the Warden and Fellows bound themselves in a penalty of 5l., to be paid in equal portions to the Bishop of Winchester, and the College of St. Mary of Winton in Oxford, in case of neglect or omission.

Such were the obligations entered into by the Warden and College, to
carry out the objects of Fromond's will. His chaplain is suppressed; but
the beautiful little chapel in which he officiated is in existence; and, since
it can no longer be used for the purpose for which it was originally
destined, it has been converted into a library. The memory of its founder
is still respected in the list of benefactors; while the choristers, in their
dark-brown dresses, continue to recall to our minds his thoughtfulness and
care for them.

W. H. GUNNER.

In Dei nomine, Amen. Ego, Johannes Fromond de Spersholt prope
Wynton xiii\textsuperscript{mo} die Novembris, Anno Domini Mccece, xx\textsuperscript{mo}, sane memorie,
condo testamentum meum in hunc modum. In primis, lego animam meam
Deo, beate Marie Matri sue, et omnibus sanctis ejus; corpusque meum ad
sepeliendum in medio cimiterii Collegii beate Marie prope Wynton.
Item, lego x\textsuperscript{a}. pro missis celebrandis et inter pauperes distribuendas
die sepulturae meae ad orandum pro anima mea, et animabus omnium
fidelium defunctorum. Item, lego Abbati et Conventui de Hydra e\textsuperscript{a},
Priori et Conventui Sancti Swithuni e\textsuperscript{a}, Custodi, Sociis, et \textit{Scolaribus}
Collegii Beate Marie prope Wynton x. marcas, Priori et Fratribus Kalendar
Wynton xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}, Capellanis et Clericis domus Sancte Crucis apud Spark-
ford xx\textsuperscript{a}, Capellanis et Clericis Sancte Elizabethe xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}, Abbatisse
et Conventui Monialium Sancte Marie Wynton xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}, Abbatia\textit{et}
Conventui de Romesy xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}, ad orandum pro anima mea. Item, lego
iii\textsuperscript{b}, ad distribuendum equaliter inter Fratres quatuor ordinum Wynton
commorantes, ad orandum pro anima mea. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie de
Spersholt x\textsuperscript{a}, et Vicario ejusdem ecclesie vi\textsuperscript{a}, viii\textsuperscript{d}, et Clerico parochiali
ibidem x\textsuperscript{a}, et ad distribuendum inter pauperes tenentes meos ibidem xx\textsuperscript{a},
ad orandum pro anima mea. Item, lego ecclesie de Mapulderham xx\textsuperscript{a}, et
ad distribuendum inter pauperes tenentes meos ibidem xx\textsuperscript{a}, et Capellan
ibidem parochial\textit{i} x\textsuperscript{a}, et Clerico ecclesie ibidem xii\textsuperscript{a}, fabricae ecclesie de
Petresfeld xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}, et Capellan\textit{a} parochial\textit{i} ibidem ii\textsuperscript{a}, fabricae ecclesie de
Kateryngton xiii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}, et ad distribuendum inter pauperes tenentes
meos ibidem vi\textsuperscript{a}, vii\textsuperscript{d}, et Vicario ejusdem ecclesie ii\textsuperscript{a}, et Clerico parochiali
vi\textsuperscript{a}, ad orandum pro anima mea. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie de Waltham
vi\textsuperscript{a}, viii\textsuperscript{d}, et Capellan\textit{a} parochial\textit{i} ibidem ii\textsuperscript{a}. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie parochial\textit{i} de Derle x\textsuperscript{a}, et fabricae Capelle de Aldyngton x\textsuperscript{a}, Abbati et
Conventui de Dureford xx\textsuperscript{a}, Priori et Conventui de Mottesfont xx\textsuperscript{a},
fabricae ecclesie de Elyngge xx\textsuperscript{a}, et Vicario ejusdem ecclesie xii\textsuperscript{a}, ad orandum pro anima mea. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie de Depeden x\textsuperscript{a}, et ad
distribuendum inter pauperes tenentes meos ibidem xxvi\textsuperscript{a}, viii\textsuperscript{d}. Item,
lego fabricae ecclesie de Lymington vii\textsuperscript{a}, vii\textsuperscript{d}, fabricae ecclesie de Milford vi\textsuperscript{a},
viii\textsuperscript{d}, et Vicario ejusdem ecclesie x\textsuperscript{a}, et ad distribuendum inter pauperes
tenentes meos ejusdem parochie xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie de
Milton x\textsuperscript{a}, et Capellan\textit{a} ibidem ii\textsuperscript{a}, et Clerico ejusdem parochie xii\textsuperscript{a}, et
ad distribuendum inter pauperes tenentes meos ejusdem parochie xii\textsuperscript{a}, Item, lego
Priori et Conventui de Christi Ecclesia et Vicario ibidem vi\textsuperscript{a}, viii\textsuperscript{d}, et
fabricae pontis ibidem e\textsuperscript{a}. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie de Soppele xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d},
et Vicario ibidem x\textsuperscript{a}, et Clerico parochiali ibidem xii\textsuperscript{a}, et ad distribuendum
inter pauperes tenentes meos ejusdem parochie xii\textsuperscript{a}, iii\textsuperscript{d}. Item, lego Vicario
de Romesy et Capellan\textit{a} ibidem xii\textsuperscript{a} iii\textsuperscript{d}. Item, lego fabricae ecclesie de
Hoghton vii\textsuperscript{a}, viii\textsuperscript{d}, et ad distribuendum inter pauperes tenentes meos
omnia tenementa mea et omnes redditus meos in civitate Wynton et in Soca ejusdem civitatis, pro indumentis emendis ad choriastas Collegii predicti in perpetuum. Item, mea voluntas est ut Custos, Socii, et Scolares Collegii predicti et eorum successores habeant et teneant in perpetuum medietatem manerii de Aldyngton cum suis pertinentiis, quondam Johannis Wodelok, cum post mortem meam et Matildis uxoris meae vacaverit, pro anniversario nostro annuatim in Collegio predicto tenendo ; ita quod qui libet Capellanus ejusdem Collegii, qui interfuerit exequiis nostris, et celebraverit missam suam pro nobis die supradicto, recipiat ii°. per manus Bursariorum ejusdem Collegii ; et quod idem Custos, si missam solemnam pro nobis oedem die celebraverit, recipiat xl°. ; et quilibet clericus sive scolaris ejusdem Collegii, qui interfuerit exequiis et missa predictis, recipiat ii°. Et fiat pittance oedem die in prandio per totam aulam ad valenciam xiii°. iiii°. Et ulterius de exitibus medietatis manerii predicti idem Custos, Socii, et Scolares et eorum successores annuatim inveniant unum Capellanum idoneum celebrantem pro animabus nostri, ubi corpora nostra quiescunt, cui predicti Bursarii qualibet anno solvent, vel solvi facient, x. marcas ; et quod predictus Capellanus veniat ad servicium et horas canonicas in choro Collegii predicti, ad legendum et psallendum secundum quod predicti Custos et Socii et eorum successores ei assignaverint, si expediens eis videatur ; et quod idem Capellanus sit remotius, tociens quociens necesse fuerit, ad voluntatem dictorum Custodis et Sociorum et eorum successorum. Et quod idem Bursarii, qui pro tempore fuerint, de residuo exitum mediatis manerii predicti solvent annuatim pro integra liberata dictorum Choriistarum redditus et proficua tenementorum, tam in Wyntonia quam in Soca predicta, [si? ad plenam liberatam semel in annis [?] sufficeret non potest ; ita quod quilibet Choriista capiat ad minus pro liberata sua tres virgas lati panni, et alterius coloris quam scolares. Et Episcopus Wyntoniensis, qui pro tempore fuerit, in defectu hujusmodi Capellani alium idoneum Capellanum ad Cantariam predictam presentare potest, si per mensem vacaverit. Item, mea voluntas
lego Johanni Harries uuum cymphum alterum cum cooperculo, quasi novum, quorum parcelle deaurate. Item, lego Johanne que fuit uxor Willemi Oysell unum cymphum alterum argentum cum cooperculo, quondam Thome Warener. Item, de illis sex peciis, vocatis Turdenerres, [?] lego Johanne que fuit uxor Willelmi Oysell unum clyphum alterum argenteum cum cooperculo, quondam Thome Warener. Item, de illis sex peciis, vocatis Turdenerres, [?] lego Willelmo Rystor de Eldon unam peciam argenti planam, Johanni Philip unam peciam argenti planam, Ricardo Leeeford unam peciam argenti planam, Willelmo Eseote unam peciam argenti planam, Johanni Mottesfont unam peciam argenti planam, Johanni Kobbell de Lokerle unam peciam argenti planam. Item, lego Ricardo Wallop unum clyphum argentum planum cum cooperculo meliorem; Ricardo Seman clerico meo c. ct v. cocliaria argentea, remanentia apud Haywode, cum mappis, lectis, ollis, patellis, et omnibus alis catalis mis ibidem existentibus. Item, lego Elene Bygge v. marcas. et v. cocliaria argentea. Item, lego Thome Weston servient! meo xx. et v. cocliaria argentea, et unam clyphum vocatum Note cum cooperculo deaurato. Item, lego Johanni Brice balli-


Chedesey, et Ricardum Seman clericum meum. Et volo quod unusquisque predictorum executorum meorum, videlicet, Robertus, Johannes, Ricardus, Ricardus, et Ricardus, qui plenam administrationem testamenti predicti cepert, capiat pro labore suo xl s., et aliter non. In cujus rei testimonium huic presenti testamento meo sigillum meum apposui die et anno supradictis.

Probatum fuit presens testamentum coram nobis, Johanne Langthorn, venerabilis in Christo patris et domini, domini Henrici, Dei gracia Wynton Episcopi, commissario generali, approbatum, insinuatun, legitimeque per nos pronunciatum pro eodem, administrativoque omnium honorum supradictorum testatoris et testamentum quoquomodo concernentium, supradictae Matildi Fromond et Ricardo Seman administrationem hujusmodi sponte admittentibus, primitus in forma juris juratis, reservata potestate administrationem hujusmodi ceteris coexecutoribus suprascriptis committendi, cum venerint, est commissa. In cujus rei testimonium sigillum quo utimur in officio presentibus apponimus.Datum apud Sombourne Regis penultimo die mensis Novembris Anno Domini millesimo ccce mo. xxmo. Sexto decimo die mensis Decembris Anno Domini supradicto Johanni Halle de Burgate et Magistro Roberto Thurbern, executoribus supranominatis, primitus in forma juris juratis, administrationem suprascriptorum honorum commisimus, eandem sponte admittentibus, &c.—Johannes Langthorn.

The seal of the testator is lost; but the seal of the commissary is attached to the will. It is a small oval seal of beautiful design, and represents a penitent kneeling at the feet of St. Catherine, who stands before him, with a crown on her head, her right hand leaning on a sword, the point of which reaches the ground, and with the wheel in her left hand. The legend is, VIRGO DIVINA CLEMENS MICHIS KATERINA.

We cannot refrain from expressing deep regret at the untimely decease of our valued friend, to whom we owe the foregoing communication. This painful event occurred whilst this contribution was passing through the press, in consequence of which it has not had the advantage of his final revision.