

Original Documents.

WILL OF RICHARD DE ELMHAM, CANON OF THE CHURCH OF
ST. MARTIN LE GRAND, LONDON. Dated June 28, 1228.

FROM THE MUNIMENTS OF THE DEAN AND CHAPTER OF WESTMINSTER.

Communicated by JOSEPH BURTT, one of the Assistant-Keepers of the Public Records.

THE subjoined document, which by the courteous permission of the Dean and Chapter we are permitted to bring before our readers, has been recently found amongst the evidences preserved in the Muniment Chamber at Westminster. It is the will of one of the canons of the collegiate church of St. Martin's Le Grand, within Aldersgate, one of the most ancient of the foundations in the metropolis; some writers, indeed, have assigned its origin to as remote a period as the seventh century, and have stated that it was founded in the year 677, in memory of a Saxon sovereign. We are assured, however, by Bishop Tanner that it was founded not long after that time, possibly by Wythred, king of Kent, about A.D. 700, and that it was chiefly endowed by two Saxon nobles, about ten years previous to the Conquest.

The possessions and privileges of the church of St. Martin were confirmed, with fresh grants, by the Conqueror in the year 1068; the confirmation was subsequently ratified with great solemnity on occasion of the coronation of Mathilda his queen at Westminster. Great privileges were conferred upon this collegiate church, being a royal free chapel, such as right of sanctuary, and exemption from ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction. In 1502 the church and all its possessions were given by Henry VII. to the abbot and convent of Westminster; and, as parcel of that monastery, St. Martin's was granted, 34th Hen. VIII., to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, as part of their endowment. Hence, doubtless, the following document, that had previously been preserved amongst the evidences of the collegiate church of St. Martin, is now found in the extensive assemblage of valuable documents at Westminster.

The testator was doubtless a native of Norfolk; he describes himself as "de Elmham dictus;" he makes a bequest of three marks to Cecilia his sister, residing at Geystwick near Foulsham, places in that county in the immediate neighbourhood of North Elmham. He appears, by the amount of monies and valuable effects, plate, books, vestments and household appliances, to have been possessed of considerable property. He held the benefice of Westwell, a parish situated near Burford, in Oxfordshire. To the hospital at the last-named place he bequeaths a brass pot and a pan (*patella*) that were at Westwell. To the church of that parish he leaves his unbound antiphonary, in quires ("quod ligari debet"), and a psalter therewith; to each of his two servants at Westwell he gives a mark, "pro servicio suo." William de Ripa, his vicar at Westwell, is named as one

of his executors, with the legacy of a psalter, glossed, to ensure faithful performance of the provisions of his will. To another of the executors, Nicholas de Neville, the worthy canon bequeaths "pulcrum mappam meam,"—his fair tablecloth.

The bequests to churches and to various conventual establishments are numerous, not only to such as were in London and adjacent to the great collegiate foundation of which he was a member, but in more distant localities,—Stratford, Hertford, and to the nuns of Ankerwick. He leaves a small contribution to London Bridge, a form of testamentary benevolence by no means uncommon. Thus Joan, Lady Bergavenny, by her will dated 1434, devised not less than 100*l.* to the making and amending of "fabul brugges" and fowl ways.¹

To Robert de St. Medard the testator gives his book "de tractatu Pape Innocencii," doubtless one of the treatises of Innocent III., whose numerous works have repeatedly been printed. The will does not indicate which of the writings by that eminent pontiff on moral and controversial questions may have been here intended.

The canon devised to master Nicholas de Farnham, the king's physician, his "portehors," namely, the breviary or *portiforium*. Of that learned and distinguished ecclesiastic, Matthew Paris has given high commendation;² he had devoted himself in earlier life to the study of medicine, chiefly at Bologna, and was much in favor with Henry III. and his Queen. On the death of Alexander, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, in 1238, he declined to assent to the election of the monks of Coventry, in opposition to those of Lichfield, who gave preference to their own dean as successor to the deceased bishop. The see of Durham having become vacant shortly after by the death of Richard Poore, Nicholas de Farnham, chiefly on the persuasion of Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, consented to the election of the monks of Durham. He was consecrated Bishop of Durham in 1241, in presence of the King and Queen with their court; he resigned his see in 1248-9, and retired into private life.³

To every anchorite in London the testator bequeathed a penny, and to the anchorite of Colemanschurch two furred garments (*pelicia*) with a rochet.

Stow,⁴ under Coleman Street Ward, states that on the north side of St. Margaret's church, against the Old Jewry, was Coleman Street, so called of the first builder and owner thereof as also of Cole-church, or Coleman-church, against the great Conduit in Cheap. He makes no mention of the anchorite there. Doubtless there were many recluses in the city of London. Stow relates that Henry III. granted to Katherine, late wife to William Hardell, 20 feet of land in length and breadth in Smithfield, next to the chapel of St. Bartholomew, "to build her a Recluse or Ankorage."⁵ Of hermitages he notices that of St. James in the Wall, near Cripplegate, another near East Smithfield, and a third near the Hospital of St. Mary Rouncivall by Charing Cross. It must be noticed that although the distinction between anchorites and hermits is often not recognised, they are

¹ Nicolas, Testam. Vet., p. 226. See also p. 376.

² M. Paris, Hist. Angl. A.D. 1241, p. 549, edit. Wats, 1640.

³ Godwin de Præs., p. 742.

⁴ Survey of London, edit. 1633, p. 293.

⁵ Ibid., p. 415. The hermitages above

enumerated occur at pp. 339, 468, 495. For the anchorite and his house within the precincts of the abbey of Westminster, see "Memorials of Westminster Abbey," by Dean Stanley, 2nd edit., 1868, p. 394 *et seq.*

not to be confounded together; the latter were free to wander where they pleased, the anchorites were closed up, by sanction of the bishop of the diocese and with a solemn service. The respect, it might almost be said veneration, shown towards recluses, both male and female, is remarkable, and bequests to them occur often in wills. Their austere life and solemn dedication for the remainder of their days, when shut up in the anchorage or *clusorium*, gained for them a reputation of superior sanctity. Their prayers were in request by those who regarded the intercession of such holy men as of special virtue. Henry IV. founded a hermitage at the spot where he landed at Ravenspur in Yorkshire, in 1399, and Henry V. established a recluse near the Charter-house in London. The most remarkable evidence of the respect with which anchorites and hermits were regarded, and also of the great number of such ascetics in England is found in the will of Henry Lord Scrope, deceased in 1415. His partiality to anchorites seems unbounded; he bequeathed sums of money to many in the north of England and elsewhere by name. To every anchorite and recluse in London or York, or in the suburbs, he gave 6s. 8d. One was in special favour, as shown by the following bequest—"domino Johanni anchoritæ apud Westmonast' c. s. et j. par Pater Noster geinsid de gete, quibus utor." At the close of a very long list Lord Scrope makes the further bequest—"cuilibet anchoritæ et anchoritissæ qui potest leviter cognosci inter tres menses post obitum meum vj.s. viij.d.⁶

It will be noticed that the testator bequeathed ten marks to a certain person to make pilgrimage to the Holy Land on his behalf ("cruce signando pro me"), and there to make sojourn according to the prescribed usages. Such vicarious pilgrimages were by no means uncommon. There are many instances recorded of the gift or bequest of a sum of money by persons who, having taken the vow, were unable or unwilling to encounter the perilous fatigues of the holy voyage. Thomas Lord Berkeley, who died in 1321, having made a vow to go to the Holy Land, his son gave 100*l.* to Sir John Veel to go in his stead. Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady of Clare, by her will dated 1355, bequeathed "pur trover v. homes d'armes à la terre seinte c. mares à bailler à ascun qe loil soit et covenable qe voudra enprendre la charge, si comune viage se face dedeins les sept ans prochains apres mon deces, de les despendre en la service Dieu et destruction de ses enemys."⁷ Richard, Bishop of Chichester, who died in 1253, bequeathed fifty marks for the aid of the expedition to the Holy Land, to be paid to Robert Chandos, his brother, that he should go for him if it were his will, or to a substitute if he should decline to go.⁸

The vow of pilgrimage was not unfrequently redeemed, especially by the aged or infirm, on the condition of giving money to those who did perform the journey, or of contributing to the building or repair of churches and the like. It will suffice to cite a memorable instance of such absolution. Henry II., having taken the cross in 1188, sought eagerly to induce his nobles to join in the enterprise. Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, was sent into Wales to preach the Crusade. Amongst the influential associates

⁶ Rymer, vol. ix. p. 275. Much valuable information regarding mediæval asceticism and the various classes of devotees, may be found in a notice, of "The Ancren Riwle," Arch. Journ., vol. xi. p. 194.

⁷ Royal Wills, p. 29.

⁸ Nicolas, Testam. Vet., p. 762. See also the will of Sir Richard Arundel, *ibid.*, p. 196; and other instances cited by Dr. Rook, Church of our Fathers, vol. iii. part i, p. 447.

in his journey the King's chaplain, the most popular of the clergy of St. David's, Giraldus de Barri, took a prominent position. The people were drawn in crowds by the eloquence of the prelate and the archdeacon: not less than three thousand persons hastened to take the cross. The death of the King in the following year, however, abated the zeal of the votaries, amongst whom were Giraldus himself and the Bishop of St. David's. The papal legate and cardinal had reached Dover on his departure from England; Giraldus, however, hastened to the coast, and obtained dispensation for the bishop and himself, with other persons who had taken vows of pilgrimage, the condition being enjoined that "de bonis divinitus sibi collatis Ierosolimam euntibus tribuant, et ad reparationem ecclesie Menevensis operam impendant et auxilium."⁹

A. W.

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti, Ego, Ricardus de Elmham dictus, canonicus ecclesie Sancti Martini London, in vigilia Apostolorum Petri et Pauli anno Incarnationis Domini Millesimo ducentesimo vicesimo octavo, condidi testamentum meum. In primis, legavi Deo et Beate Marie et Beato Martino corpus meum cum palefrido meo ad operationem ecclesie, et quinque marcas quas Gilbertus de Aquila mihi debet, similiter ad operationem ejusdem ecclesie, et tres marcas pro capa qua teneor eidem, et capam meam de coro cum quodam superpelicio in vestuario ad opus supervenientium; et cuilibet vicario ejusdem ecclesie xii. denarios, et Sacriste et dormitorio xij. denarios, et Domino Petro iij. coclearia, et domino Herberto ciphum meum de argento, et domino Ricardo de Sancto Nicholao duo coclearia, et domino Thome de Sancto Botulpho duo coclearia, et Capelle Sancti Leonardi dimidium marcam ad aliquem librum emendum, et superpelicium meum delicatum; et Ecclesie Sancti Alphegi j. marcam ad idem; et Ecclesie Omnium Sanctorum de Colmanescherche j. marcam ad idem, et unum gradale sine nota; et ecclesie mee de Westwelle antiphonarium meum in quaternis quod ligari debet, et unum psalterium cum eo; et cuidam cruce signando pro me decem marcas ad terram sanctam et ibidem moram faciendo secundum constitutionem cruce signatorum; et ad duo annualia facienda sex libras; et Capellani London' x. solidos; et cuilibet Anacrite London' j. denarium; et Anacrite de Colemanescherche duo pelicia cum uno rocheto; Ecclesie manacorum de Stratford melius coopertorium cum uno chalone et duobus linceillis et uno orilerium¹ ad opus hospitum; et Hospitali Sancti Bartholomei duo linceillis; Willielmo de Ripa Vicario meo psalterium meum glosatum, quod fideliter intendet execucioni testamenti mei; Nicholao de Neville pulcrum mappam meam; Roberto de Sancto Medardo librum meum de tractatu Pape Innocencii; Cecilie sorori mee, que manet apud Geistweit in Norfolk juxta Folesham, tres marcas, si vivat, vel pueris suis, si mortua sit;

⁹ Gir. Cambr., de Rebus a se Gestis; in the collection of his works, edited by Mr. Brewer, vol. i. p. 84, where the Cardinal's letters of absolution, above mentioned, addressed to Archbishop Baldwin, are given at length. It appears that, unless papal dispensation was obtained, non-performance of a vow of pilgrimage to the Holy City was supposed to be attended with perils of sudden or violent

death. The most full details regarding the Holy voyage, and peculiar usages connected with pilgrimage, are given by Fosbroke, *British Monachism*, p. 432—458. See the curious documents regarding redemption of vows of participation in the crusades, M. Paris, *Auctarium*, p. 225.

¹ A pillow, in French *Oreiller*. "Origliere, Origlierium, Pulvinar." Ducange.

fratri Sawallo de Stratford cognato meo majorem ollam meam eneam et majorem ciphum meum de mazre ; uxori Gilberti de Aquila unam cistam meam ; Hospitali de Bureford ollam meam eneam et patellam similiter que sunt apud Westwelle. Et Osberto servienti meo de Westwelle j. marcam pro servicio suo ; Gerrardo homini meo unum marcam pro servicio suo ; vicariis Sancti Martini unam de mappis meis et unum manutergium in refectorio suo ; Magistro Nicholao de Farnham medico Domini Regis meum portehors ; Normanno filio Hugonis de Hertford' supertunicam de burneto et unum ciphum meum de mazre ; Thome garcioni dimidiam marcam ; Jeppe garcioni dimidiam marcam ; ponti London' xl. denarios ; [Fratribus de Halebuirg ad ornamenta sua ; Fratribus minoribus infra Civitatem xl. solidos ; et domui Sancte Marie de Hertforde xl. solidos ;]² et Monialibus de Anckerwic j. marcam.

Debita que debentur mihi Ricardo. Magister Willielmus Crespin xij. solidos pro capa fratris sui et panno garcionum ; Hawisia de Laugal' x. solidos de prestito ; Herbertus Canonicus x. solidos ; Willielmus de Sancto Martino canonicus dimidiam marcam ; Ricardus Camerarius Sancti Albani duas marcas.

Et ego debeo sexaginta solidos de testamento Johannis de Plesset' assignatos ad emendum inde redditum in certo loco ad opus canonicorum de Dunmawe, ad pitanciam [v. solidos³] ipsi canonicis annuatim die obitus ipsius Johannis ; et quia Prior nondum invenit redditum illum ad vendendum, ideo remansit solucio predictorum denariorum, que fiat ex quo redditus ille inventus fuerit ad vendendum. Item, debeo de eodem testamento circiter xx. solidos, ut credo. Predictum vero testamentum meum fiat de omnibus mobilibus meis, et exitibus prebende mee per annum et j. diem, et de x. marcis quas habere debeo de domibus meis a successore meo, per cartam Decani et Capituli quam inde habeo. Et ad testamentum meum exequendum et faciendum predictum Dominum Nicholaum de Neville, Herbertum Capellanum et Willielmum de Ripa executores meos constitui.

² The words bracketed are in another handwriting.

³ This is interlined.