

Original Documents.

INDULGENCE GRANTED IN 1491 TO JOHN DOD AND MATILDA HIS WIFE BY ROBERT BOLTON, "MINISTER" OF THE HOUSE OF TRINITARIAN FRIARS NEAR KNARESBOROUGH.

From the muniments of WHITEHALL DOD, Esq., at Llanerch Park, Flintshire.

To the courtesy of Mr. Whitehall Dod, through the obliging request of Dr. Kendrick of Warrington, we are indebted for permission to examine several documents preserved amongst the evidences of his family at Llanerch Park, near St. Asaph. With these documents, valuable as throwing light on the descent of property chiefly in Shropshire and Staffordshire, the subjoined Indulgence has been found.

On a former occasion some remarks were offered on documents of this description; an example was then given of an Indulgence issued in 1461 by the Pope's Commissaries-General *ad hæc*, and authorising the appointment, by the person for whose benefit it was intended, of a confessor, who might hear his confession and grant him absolution of all sins, &c., with certain exceptions specially mentioned.¹ Some notices were also given of certain Indulgences granted by Papal authority to members of certain confraternities, such, for example, as those connected with the Hospital of the Holy Trinity and St. Thomas the Martyr of Canterbury, in Rome. The following Indulgence, however, differs in some of its details from those to which attention has been already invited. Documents of this nature are, moreover, by no means of frequent occurrence, and they may serve incidentally to throw light on the history of conventual establishments in this country, and also on the privileges that they enjoyed. We gladly avail ourselves of the kind permission of Mr. Whitehall Dod that the subjoined Indulgence should be printed in this Journal, and hope that it may prove acceptable as supplementary to the notices that will be found in a previous volume.

The Friars of the Order of the Holy Trinity, called Trinitarians or Maturines, enjoyed probably a large measure of public sympathy, from the special purposes of benevolence to which they were devoted. The order was instituted in France about 1197, and confirmed by Pope Innocent III. (1198-1216), by whom their "*Regula*," which will be found in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, was approved.² The great excitement, it will be remembered, that so rapidly spread through Western Europe, had for a century been sustained with unabated ardour. The first crusade was published in 1034. How many must have been the wounded and captive victims of the Holy Voyage, that had worn out their misery in the dungeons of the infidel!

¹ *Archæo. Journ.*, vol. xvii. p. 250.

² *Dugdale's Mon. Ang.*, edit. Caley, vol. vi. p. 1558.

The deliverance of Christians incarcerated for the faith was an object which could not fail to win the sympathy of all classes. The Trinitarians appear to have been brought into England in 1224, their first house being founded in that year at Modenden, in Kent. Eleven houses are enumerated in the recent edition of the *Monasticon*. Amongst these is the house at Knaresborough, established in the reign of Henry III. by the king of the Romans. It seems to have occupied the site of an hermitage on the rocky banks of the Nid, where, according to Leland, Robert Flower, subsequently designated St. Robert of Knaresborough, had taken his dwelling-place in a cave, still an object of curious interest.³

The Friars of the Order of the Holy Trinity enjoyed numerous privileges, conceded doubtless in consideration of their benevolent purpose; these privileges were, moreover, extended to the *confratres* and *consorores*, to each of whom a formal recognition in writing ("*scriptum confraternitatis*") was delivered, specifying the benefits to which they were entitled respectively, and the conditions on which they were granted. The privileges conceded to the House of the Order at Hounslow by Clement V., and to the brethren and sisters by Alexander IV. and other pontiffs, seem to have been even more ample, according to the statements of Thomas Becon, than those enumerated in the subjoined document.⁴

The Indulgence that has been so kindly entrusted to us by Mr. Whitehall Dod, was granted by Robert Bolton, designated "Minister" of the House of Knaresborough. It may deserve observation that the Masters of the houses of the Order of the Holy Trinity seem to have been thus styled. In the *Regula* before mentioned, approved by Innocent III., we find that the official sometimes called, in other orders, a *Procurator*, was in this order to be named *Minister*, to whom obedience was enjoined.⁵ There was, however, a *Minor* as well as a *Major Minister*; their duties are distinctly defined respectively. No list of the *Ministri* of Knaresborough has been published. We believe that collections for the history of this House have been made by an antiquary well versed in the monastic history and archæology of Yorkshire, and to whose obliging communications we have formerly been indebted. We hope that the author of the Memorials of Fountains Abbey, which may be mentioned as one of the most valuable works that have appeared under the auspices of the Surtees Society, may at some future time undertake the history of the Priory of Knaresborough, and its origin in the ancient hermitage on the banks of the Nid.

Mr. Burt has called our attention to an imperfect impression of the seal of the Minister of the House of St. Robert, near Knaresborough, in 1465. It is appended to a document amongst the muniments of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster: we have obtained a fac-simile from Mr. Ready. The device of the seal, which is of pointed-oval form, represents a seated figure of a saint, probably intended for St. Robert, seen in profile towards the right. The head, which is surrounded by a nimbus, is inclined slightly downwards towards an open book that the holy person here portrayed

³ See the Legend of St. Robert, given by Mr. Walbran, in the memorials of Fountains Abbey, edited for the Surtees Society. This curious legend is extracted from a MS. in possession of the Duke of Newcastle; it had been imperfectly given in Drake's *Eboracum*, f. 369,

371. See also Hargrove's Knaresborough, &c. Leland's *Itin.*, vol. i. p. 98.

⁴ The Reliques of Rome, Lond. 1563, fo. 190.

⁵ See the *Regula*, Dugl. Mon. Ang., vol. vi. p. 1549, Caley's edition.

holds upon his knees. Before him is a stem of a tree with leafy boughs, probably typifying the sylvan seclusion in which he dwelled. A portion of the legend, in bold capitals, remains on the right side of the seal,INISTRI DOMVS... and at the end may be deciphered one or two damaged letters, possibly the termination of the word Knaresborough. In its perfect state the seal may have measured about an inch and a half in height. The date of the matrix of which this is an impression may be assigned to the thirteenth century: the seal may have been coeval with the foundation of the House.

A. W.

Universis Christi fidelibus presentes literas inspecturis Nos, Frater Robertus Boltone Minister domus Sancti Roberti juxta Knaresbroughe Eboracensis Diocesis ac ordinis sancte Trinitatis et redemptionis captivorum qui sunt incarcerati pro fide Jhesu Christi a paganis, salutem in eo per quem omnium peccatorum plena sit remissio. Notum facimus quod cum plurimi Romani pontifices omnes et singulos Confratres et Consorores multis privilegiis dotaverunt, presertim in eo quod nostri Confratres et Consorores possint sibi annuatim eligere ydoneum presbiterum secularium vel cujusvis ordinis, eciam mendicantium religiosum, in suum possunt eligere Confessorem qui eos absolvant ab omnibus casibus Sedi Apostolice non reservatis, et semel in vita ab omnibus peccatis eciam a casibus Sedi Apostolice quomodolibet reservatis. Que quidem privilegia ipsa sanctissimus in Christo pater et dominus noster dominus Innocencius Papa octavus modernus confirmavit et approbavit, et in articulo mortis plenariam omnium peccatorum suorum Indulgentiam et remissionem eis impertiri valeat, et quilibet Confrater habebit scriptum dicte confraternitatis, et eiidem sepultura ecclesiastica non negetur quacumque morte moriatur, nisi nominatim fuerit excommunicatus, Presbiteris et Clericis et aliis Sacerdotibus secularibus ac viris religiosis tam mulieribus cujusecumque religionis et habitus quam Monialibus, si dicto ordini de bonis suis transmiserint, quidcumque per impotentiam, necligenciam, oblivionem aut corporis debilitatem, vel per defectum librorum in divinis officiis aut horis Canonice obmiserint, penitus est eis remissum. Cum igitur devoti nobis in Christo Johannem Dod⁶ et Matildam uxorem ejus fraternitatem suam modo confraternitatis confratrie sue promisit, de bonis que suis contribuerit, tenorem literarum Apostolicarum adimplendam, ideo ipsos associamus in vita pariter et in morte una cum omnibus amicis vivis ac defunctis in omnibus suffragiis nostre predicte religionis. Datum sub sigillo nostre Confraternitatis, Anno domini Millesimo cccc. nonagesimo primo.

The three following formulæ are endorsed on the Indulgence:—

Forma absolucionis annualis.—Dominus noster Jhesus Christus per suam plissimam misericordiam absolvat te. Et ego, Auctoritate Apostolica

⁶ A large blank seems to have been left for the name; "Johannem Dod" seems to be written in the same pale ink as the form of confraternity, and possibly by the same hand; the word "Matildam" is in different ink, and unskilfully written quite out of the straight line. There appears to be a double error in this part of the Indulgence. The form was pre-

pared for one person, and not only are two names inserted, but they are in the accusative case instead of the nominative. It is probable that the sentence should have run thus:—"devoti nobis in Christo Johannes Dod et Matilda uxor ejus . . . promiserint, de bonisque suis contribuerint," &c.]

michi in hac parte commissa et tibi concessa, absolvo te ab omnibus peccatis tuis contritis confessis et oblitis Sedi Apostolice non reservatis. In nomine patris, etc.

Forma absolucionis semel in vita.—Dominus noster Jhesus Christus per suam piissimam misericordiam absolvat te. Et ego, Auctoritate Apostolica michi in hac parte commissa et tibi concessa, absolvo te ab omnibus peccatis tuis contritis confessis et oblitis, eciam a casibus Sedi Apostolice quomodolibet reservatis. In nomine patris, etc.

Forma absolucionis et remissionis plenarie in articulo mortis.—Dominus noster Jhesus Christus per suam piissimam misericordiam absolvat te. Et ego, Auctoritate Apostolica michi in hac parte commissa et tibi concessa, absolvo te ab omnibus peccatis tuis contritis confessis et oblitis. Et do tibi eciam plenariam omnium peccatorum tuorum remissionem et Indulgenciam, remittendo tibi penas purgatorii quas pro peccatis et offensis tuis pati meruisti, in quantum claves sancte matris ecclesie se extendunt in hac parte. In nomine patris, etc.