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X.—On some fifteenth-century Drawings of Winchester College; New College, Oxford; etc.

Thomas Frederick Kirby

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X.—*On some fifteenth-century Drawings of Winchester College; New College, Oxford; etc.* By THOMAS FREDERICK KIRBY, Esq., M.A., F.S.A.

Read March 19th, 1891.

By the kind permission of the Warden of New College, Oxford, I have the honour to exhibit copies of four pen and ink drawings attributed to the year 1463.

They are from a MS. at New College, Oxford, entitled *Brevis Chronica de ortu vita et gestis nobilibus reverendi viri Willelmi de Wykeham*, which is generally attributed to Thomas Chandler. I do not find him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, but he was a man of some note in his day, having been warden, first of Winchester and then of New College; chancellor of the university of Oxford, and of the churches of Wells and York; master of St. Cross hospital, near Winchester; dean of Hereford and the chapel royal; and secretary of state under Henry VI. and Edward IV. He died in 1490.

These are the four illustrations to the *Brevis Chronica* :

The first (Plate XIV.), is a bird's-eye view, taken in 1463, of Winchester College from the north. The artist's happy ignorance of the rules of perspective has enabled him to show more of the fabric than he could manage to do now. He shows, for example, the east window of the chapel and the hall steps by the very simple expedient of making them both look north instead of east; and he has shifted the cloisters bodily from their site behind the chapel, where they cannot be seen, to a point well to the west, where they can be.

The entire society, comprising the warden in his cassock, surplice, and grey amess of fur, with the masters, fellows, chaplains, lay clerks, scholars, and choristers, are paraded as it were for inspection in front of the fabric. The surplices and amesses worn by the clerics, and the *togæ talaris* of the scholars, should be noticed.

Two of the fellow-commoners seize the opportunity to borrow two of the college horses, and have a tilting match in the outer court, and one of them is unhorsed. Who the tall figure may be, stalking by himself in the inner court, baffles conjecture.

The cross on the high ground on the left hand of this drawing must, I think, be Bubb's Cross. This was a great cross which stood prior to the Reformation in an open space at the upper end of St. John's Street, and, from its elevated position, says Milner,^a "must have been visible from most parts of the city," and certainly was visible from the college, although a spectator standing at the point of view from which this drawing was made would have it behind his left shoulder. The cluster of trees in the distance lies in the direction of St. Catherine's Hill; but there were no trees on the summit of that hill until the present clump of beech and Scotch fir was planted there about the year 1760, and I am afraid that no means exist of identifying its exact position. It is a pity that the draughtsman omitted the buildings of the "Sustern spital," which stood immediately to the east of the college on the site now occupied by the head master's house, and "commoners." He omitted them, no doubt, because they did not belong to the college, just as a surveyor making a plan of an estate omits the fields which do not form a portion of it.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about this drawing is the circumstance of its containing the only known representation of Wykeham's original belfry. It was of stone or flint, more likely the latter material, surmounted by a wooden spire which was covered with lead. It contained four bells. The masons' work, and the timber superstructure were finished at the time when the college was opened, March 28, 1393. Wykeham supplied the lead afterwards, and we know from the compotus rolls that the plumbers' wages for casting and laying it amounted to 18s. 5d., and that 4000 "led nayles," 300 "bord nayles," and 34 lbs. of pewter (solder) were used. This belfry was taken down in 1474, when the tower was erected, of which the present tower, erected in 1861, is a reproduction.

^a Milner, *The History, Civil and Ecclesiastical, and Survey, of the Antiquities of Winchester*, ii. 220.



NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

(From Chandler's MS.)



THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH AND BISHOP'S PALACE AT WELLS.

(From Chandler's MS.)

No. 2 (Plate XV.) is a bird's-eye view of New College, Oxford; and is better in its way than the first drawing.

The portion shown of the cloister is particularly well done. The society are on parade, as in the first picture; all of them, except the sixteen choristers kneeling in the front row, appear to be tonsured. In the Winchester picture none of the scholars look as if they were tonsured; their heads have a shaven appearance. The statutes required every scholar to receive the first tonsure within twelve months after admission; but their hair in this picture is clipped so closely as not to show it.

No. 3 (Plate XVI.) is a distorted bird's-eye view of Wells cathedral church and the bishop's palace.

The view is taken from the market-place. It shows Beckington's tower gate, by which the cathedral church is approached from the city. Within the precinct is seen the west front of the cathedral church with its two towers, the massive central tower, and the north transept. Beyond these rises the bishop's palace, the chapel being the most conspicuous. The residence has a sort of mansard roof. The site is surrounded with the wall and towers which Bishops Jocelyn and Burnell erected for defensive purposes in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The moat round the wall is shown, and so is the gateway, which is entered by a drawbridge. Seated in state on his throne within the chapel is the bishop, who is represented in the act of receiving from Chandler a copy of his work.

No. 4 (Plate XVII.) contains a likeness of William of Wykeham seated and holding one of his colleges in each hand. On either side of him are grouped the principal ecclesiastics of his colleges: Archbishop Chichele, founder of All Souls; Archbishop Cranlegh, first warden of Winchester College and archbishop of Dublin; Beckington, bishop of Bath and Wells and keeper of the Privy Seal under Henry VI.; Wayneffete, first provost of Eton, bishop of Winchester, and founder of Magdalen College, Oxford; Thomas Chandler himself, not one of the least distinguished of the number; Andrew Holes or Hulse, archdeacon of Wells; John Norton, archdeacon of Berks; William Say, dean of St. Paul's; John Selot, archdeacon of Cornwall; and Richard Andrewes, first warden of All Souls and dean of York.

All the figures in the picture are vested alike, that is in long gowns, and tippets with hoods; and all have skull caps on their heads. The bishops have also their mitres and crosiers, but the two archbishops carry crosses, and not crosiers, as denoting their superior dignity.

P.S. Mr. W. H. St. John Hope has pointed out to me that in Plate XVII. William of Wykeham and William Waynflete are the only two bishops who actually wear their mitres; the other three figures having the mitres not upon, but just above, their heads, which are covered with skull-caps like the figures in the foreground. Since Cranlegh died in 1417, Chichele in 1443, and Beckington in 1465-6, while Waynflete lived until 1486, Mr. Hope suggests that the three bishops with the mitres over their heads were all dead at the date of the drawing, which would therefore be not earlier than 1466. Wykeham, of course, died in 1404, but he is probably represented wearing his mitre as being the chief figure in the picture.



WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM AND DISTINGUISHED ECCLESIASTICS OF HIS COLLEGES.

(From Chandler's MS.)