

TRANSLATION OF THE 1280/I STATUTES OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

To the honour of God and the usefulness of the University of Oxford, the Masters who were deputed in the presence of the university of Regents to enquire and make a decision on those matters pertaining to the will of Master William of Durham, as far as it could be decided at that time, have in their initial enquiries found that the said Master William bequeathed 310 marks to the University, under this agreement, namely that they should purchase with this money annual rents for the use of 10 or 11 or 12 or more masters who would be supported from the rents of this money. In addition, they found through thorough investigation that rents had been purchased to the value of 18 marks or around that named figure. Furthermore the said Masters, enquiring further on the rest of the money, have found that the University of Oxford itself, being in need of money for itself and for certain magnates of the realm who were coming to the said University for aid, had taken some of the rest of the money (viz. 100 pounds and 10 marks) as a loan for its own business, and gave the rest of it as a loan to others, from which nothing whatsoever has been returned.

Furthermore this is the decision of the Masters who were thus deputed by the University and are considering the will of the testator, namely that from the goods purchased from the money now above-mentioned, there should be chosen four Masters, of good learning and conduct, who have regented [right word?] in arts, in the first instance in this way: the Chancellor, having summoned the Masters in Theology, will summon, on their advice, certain Masters from other faculties whom he will have seen ought to be summoned; and these masters together with the Chancellor, bound by the good faith by which they are tied to the University, will chose, from all those who offer themselves to live from the afore-mentioned rents, four Masters who they have seen, according to the conscience, as more suitable for progressing in the holy church, and who otherwise had no other resource from which they could live honourably in the state of Master. The interpretation of this is to be left to the judgement of those making the choice. But afterwards the same method of choosing will be used, save that those four who are sustained from this charity should be summoned to the election together which those aforesaid.

One of these four Masters at least must be a priest. Also these four masters will each receive annually for their sustenance 50 shillings a year from the rents now purchased. But one of them, who, together with a Regent Master in Arts helping him, will keep guard over the purchased

rents, and take steps to purchase other rents, and carry out, promote and follow business, and be the proctor (i.e. Bursar), will receive 55 shillings a year as far as can more generously be provided for.

Furthermore the aforesaid masters living together will hear Theology and together with this be able to hear decrees and decretals, if these seem useful to them. Furthermore, as regards living and learning, these men will behave themselves just as will be told them by some suitable and tried men, deputed by the Chancellor. But if it should happen that someone ought to be removed from the aforesaid income or aforesaid office, then the Chancellor with the Masters of Theology have power over this.

Furthermore the said proctor, together with the said Regent Master of Arts, bound by the trust with which he is held to the University, will take care for the repair of his houses and guarding them, and take all diligence that he can to collect any money which has been scattered around, which he will make sure is housed in one chest set aside for to protect the same money. One key of this chest is to be in the possession of the Chancellor, another in that of the said proctor, and the third is to be entrusted to some other master whom the proctors of the University will have decided is appropriate for this purpose.

Furthermore it is to be forbidden to use the collected money for any uses except that which had been in the last will of the testator. Furthermore more rents are to be purchased as soon as possible, and the number and exhibition [ie income?] of the Masters increased.

In addition the said Masters have decided none of the houses of the said Masters are to be schools unless by the consent of the same.

Henry of Stanton, then Chancellor of the University, and the assembly agreeing to the same, have ratified this decision, and have confirmed the present writing with the defence of their common seal.