

CHARTER OF ELIZABETH I

Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc., to all to whom these letters come greeting. Whereas our beloved subject Henry Ussher, archdeacon of Dublin, has humbly petitioned us in the name of the city of Dublin that since no College to instruct scholars in good letters and arts yet exists within our kingdom of Ireland we would deign to erect, found and establish a College, mother of a University, near the city of Dublin for the better education, training and instruction of scholars and students in our realm aforesaid, and also that provision should be made in a suitable manner for the relief and support of a provost and some fellows and scholars, KNOW that we, since we have a singular care for the training of the youth of our kingdom of Ireland piously and liberally, and for the benevolence that we have towards studies and students (that they the better be of service to learn good arts and practise virtue and religion), graciously granting this pious petition, of our special grace, and of certain knowledge, and of our mere will, will, grant and ordain, for us, our heirs and successors, that there shall be a College, the mother of a University, in a certain place called Allhallowes near Dublin aforesaid, for the education, training and instruction of youths and students in arts and faculties, to last for all future times, and that it shall be and be called THE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY AND UNDIVIDED TRINITY NEAR DUBLIN FOUNDED BY THE MOST SERENE QUEEN ELIZABETH. And by these presents we erect, ordain, create, found and firmly establish that College with a provost, three fellows in the name of many, and three scholars in the name of many, to continue for ever.

And further we make, ordain, constitute and licence Adam Loftus, D.D., archbishop of Dublin, chancellor of our kingdom of Ireland, the first and present provost of the aforesaid College of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin aforesaid. And we make, licence, constitute and ordain by these presents Henry Ussher, M.A., Luke Challoner, M.A., Lancelot Moine, B.A., the first and present fellows there in the name of many. And we make, licence, constitute and ordain by these presents Henry Lee, William Daniell, and Stephen White the first and present scholars there in the name of many.

And further, of our more ample special grace, certain knowledge and mere will, we will, ordain, grant and establish by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, that the aforesaid provost, fellows and scholars of Trinity College aforesaid and their successors in matter, fact and name in future are and shall be a body corporate and politic, for ever incorporated and erected, by the name of THE PROVOST, FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS OF THE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY AND UNDIVIDED TRINITY OF QUEEN ELIZABETH NEAR DUBLIN, and that in all future times they shall be known, called and named by that name, and shall have perpetual succession, and we incorporate the provost, fellows, scholars, and successors, or provosts, fellows, scholars of the College of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin, and we really and completely create, erect, ordain, make constitute and firmly establish them by these presents a body corporate and politic, to endure for ever by that name.

And that our aforesaid intention may have better effect, and that they may for ever possess goods, chattels, lands, tenements, hereditaments, rents, renders, services and all other and singular profits, for the support and relief of the provost, fellows and scholars of that College, and that they may be better governed, and for the continuation of that College, we will, grant, ordain, and decree for us, our heirs and successors, by the presents, that whenever and as often as it shall happen that any provost in any manner be removed or cease to be, by death, decease, resignation, deprivation, or in any other manner (then and successively the aforesaid fellows and their successors then surviving or the majority of them may elect and name a suitable provost within three months next following.) And in the same way, if it happen that any of the aforesaid fellows and scholars in any manner cease to be, or be removed, by death, decease, resignation, deprivation, or in any other manner, then and successively (the provost and the other fellows or their successors then surviving) or the majority of them may well elect, name and constitute another suitable person or persons in the place or places of the aforesaid fellow or scholar, fellows or scholars (within two months next following, and so from time to

time,) as often as death, decease, resignation or deprivation shall occur. And that each of them, so from time to time elected, shall have and enjoy, and shall be able to have and enjoy as full and free power and authority in all things, and to do, implement and execute all and singular, as any other of the fellows of the aforesaid College have in any manner, or can or ought to enjoy. And that they and their successors by the name of the provost, fellows and scholars of the College of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin may and shall be persons able, apt, and capable in law of acquiring, having, taking possession of, receiving and possessing manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever to them and their successors for ever) so that they be not held of us, our heirs and successors, immediately in chief, in demesne or service) as well from us, our heirs and successors, as from any other person or persons whatsoever, for the support and maintenance of the aforesaid College, and for the relief and maintenance of the provost, fellows and scholars of the aforesaid College.

And further, of our more abundant grace certain knowledge, and mere will, we grant and give licence for us, our heirs and successors, to the aforesaid provost, fellows and scholars and their successors, that they and their successors may and shall be able to acquire, have, receive, take possession of and possess, by the name of the provost, fellows and scholars of the College of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin, manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever, and whatever be their nature, kind and species, (to the annual value of forty pounds current money of England,) beyond all burdens and reprises, to the proper business and use of the aforesaid provost, fellows and scholars, and their successors, notwithstanding in any manner the statutes of not putting lands and tenements in mortmain. And that they can and shall be able to prosecute, plead and be impleaded, defend and be defended, answer and be answered by that name in all and singular causes, plaints, and actions, real, personal and mixed, in all courts, as well temporal as spiritual, within our kingdom of Ireland or elsewhere; and to do, set in motion, and take possession of these and all and singular other things as, and in the same manner as, our other lieges, persons able and capable in law, do and can do within our same kingdom of Ireland or elsewhere, in all places and courts aforesaid, and before all our justices and judges, or any of them.

And further we will and ordain for us, our heirs and successors grant to the aforesaid provost, fellows and their successors by the presents, that in future they shall have for ever a common seal to be devoted to their business according to the tenor and true intention of these our letters patents, as shall seem fit to the provost and the majority of the fellows. In addition we grant and give licence to the provost and fellows of that College that they may from time to time for ever make, constitute and confirm laws, statutes and ordinances for governing their College piously and faithfully, and that they may establish among themselves whatsoever laws they consider well constituted in our Academies of Cambridge or Oxford, as they shall judge them apt and fitted to themselves. (And especially that no one shall publicly profess or teach the liberal arts to any others in places within the limits of our kingdom of Ireland without our special licence.)

And whereas it appears that certain degrees have been of assistance in the arts and faculties, we ordain by these presents that the students in this College of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin shall have liberty and power to obtain degrees of Bachelor, Master, and Doctor, at a suitable time, in all arts and faculties. (This always provided that when the fellows in this College have completed seven whole years after assuming the degree of Master there, then they shall be removed from the number of the fellows so that others chosen in their place shall have the emolument for the benefit of this kingdom and of the church;) and that they shall have liberty to perform among themselves all acts and scholastic exercises for gaining such degrees, as shall seem fit to the provost and the majority of the fellows, (and that they may elect, create, name and ordain all persons for better promoting such things, whether Vice-Chancellor, Proctor or Proctors), (for we have approved assignment of the dignity of Chancellor to our most honoured and faithful councillor, William Cecil, Baron Burghley, treasurer of all England): (and afterwards, when he shall cease to be chancellor, we ordain that the provost and the majority of the fellows shall elect a suitable person of this sort as chancellor of the College. And the chancellor, or his vice chancellor, with the archbishop of Dublin, the bishop of Meath, the vice treasurer, the treasurer for war, and the chief justice of

our chief place within this our kingdom of Ireland, the mayor of the city of Dublin for the time being, or the majority of them who shall be called visitors, shall break off and limit all contentions, actions and controversies (which the provost and the majority of the fellows cannot settle), and that they shall punish all the graver faults not amended by the provost and fellows.)

Finally we establish and ordain to encourage studies and students, so that our subjects and officers may be encouraged to assist in the best establishment and conservation of this College, that they may supply and administer those goods with our grace and authority: and that all goods, chattels, things, lands, tenements, hereditaments pertaining to the provost, fellows and scholars of the said College, shall be from time to time in all future times, free and exempt from all burdens, taxes, tallages, cesses, subsidies, exactions, compositions or demands whatsoever, due or demanded to us, our heirs and successors, in any manner, by reason of our prerogative or otherwise, as well in time of war as in time of peace, notwithstanding any statute, act, ordinance, proclamation, restriction, custom, use, law, prescription, or any other thing, cause or matter whatsoever to the contrary of the premises in anything. In testimony whereof we have made these our letters patents. Witness our beloved and faithful councillor, William FitzWilliam, knight, our deputy general of our kingdom of Ireland.
Dublin, March 3, the 34th year of our reign.
(March 3, 1592.)

PHILLIPS

Enrolled in the patent roll of the chancery of Ireland November 14, the 37th year of the reign of our lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc, (November 14, 1595,) by me, James Newman, clerk to Anthony SentLeger, knight, master of the rolls of the court of chancery aforesaid.