

Giftwise

Financial and Charitable Strategies for Alumni, Parents, and Friends of Williams College

Profiles in Giving: Frederick Ferris and Mary Clark Thompson



Mary Clark Thompson

Frederick Ferris Thompson is well known at Williams for his generous philanthropy. His first gift was the clock tower on Lasell Gymnasium in 1886—the same year he became a Trustee and was granted an honorary degree from Williams, although he never finished his studies. The following year he purchased Tallmadge Farm and gifted the 40+ acres to the college. He was one of the largest contributors to the Hopkins Memorial Fund, established in 1888 to build Hopkins Hall; The Thompson Laboratories were donated in the early 1890s at a cost of \$175,000; and he also gave large sums toward general expenses, scholarships, events, and concerts.

At the time of his death in 1899, Thompson had contributed more than \$250,000 to Williams, making him the most generous benefactor in the history of the college. All classes and events at

Williams were suspended the day the news of his death was delivered, and the community gathered in the chapel to pay tribute to one of the college's kindest and most loyal supporters.

Thompson's wife, Mary, outlived her husband by nearly a quarter century. She continued a legacy of philanthropy by providing funding for Thompson Chapel, a project her husband had planned shortly before his death. In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt attended the dedication of the Frederick Thompson Memorial Chapel and the Chapel remains in continuous use today. Mary Thompson's generosity extended further still when she remembered Williams in her own will, leaving \$300,000 and a portion of her personal library to the college.

Many generations of Ephs have benefited from the couple's long-term legacy. Their philanthropy can be felt in the bricks and mortar of these iconic buildings, and in the very fabric of everyday life here on campus.

“Many generations of Ephs have benefited from the Thompsons’ long-term legacy.”



Happy 300th Birthday Ephraim Williams

March 7, 2015, marked the 300th birthday of Colonel Ephraim Williams, Jr., the college's namesake. His legacy and vision provided a gift that has since launched tens of thousands of others.



On July 22, 1755, on his way to lead a Massachusetts militia regiment in battle, Colonel Ephraim Williams stopped in Albany, NY, long enough to pen his will. In this historic document, the Colonel decreed that the bulk of his estate be used to found and support a free school in West Township, Massachusetts.

He was shot and killed six weeks later, at the Battle of Lake George, but Ephraim Williams' thoughtful planning engendered a vision of educational opportunity that continues to transform young lives today.

In 1785, after the conditions of his will were met, the executors transferred more than \$11,000 to the *Trustees of the Donation of Ephraim Williams, Esq., for Maintaining a Free School in Williamstown*. The Trustees expanded upon his vision and petitioned the Massachusetts General Court to convert the free school into a college where “young gentlemen from every part of the Union” might report for instruction “in all the branches of useful and polite literature.” The petition was granted, and Williams College opened its doors on October 9, 1793.

The rest, as they say, is history.

The college celebrated Colonel Williams' 300th birthday with festivities, including a non-denominational service held at Thompson Memorial Chapel reflecting on his legacy, a meal served in Whitmans' Dining Hall featuring foods that would have been served in Ephraim's time, a birthday cake-cutting ceremony, a concert, community service, and an awe-inspiring evening of fireworks over Poker Flats.



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Join The Ephraim Williams Society

The Ephraim Williams Society recognizes those who have demonstrated their commitment to Williams' future by establishing planned gifts or including Williams as a charitable recipient of their estates.

The society's name honors the college's founder in the hopes that alumni, parents, and friends will perpetuate Ephraim Williams' legacy by supporting Williams through their estate plans.

If you have already included Williams in your estate plans, but are not yet a member of The Ephraim Williams Society, please let us know so that we may welcome you! If you're preparing your estate plan and would like to discuss how to include Williams, simply contact us, or fill out this online form at giving.williams.edu/bequest-form.

Founder's Celebration

In honor and celebration of Ephraim Williams' 300th birthday, the College Archives and Chapin Library hosted a month-long exhibit in March highlighting Ephraim's life, and displayed some of his personal belongings.

To view the Colonel's ephemera—his silver watch, his wallet, his last Will and Testament—please visit alumni.williams.edu/ephraim300th.



Katie Nash, Williams College Archivist and Special Collections Librarian, holds Ephraim Williams' wallet—a symbol of the generosity and dedication that led to the establishment of Williams College.

“As part of our 50th Reunion at Williams, we wanted to find a way to boost our gift. The gift planning staff was extremely helpful, and a Charitable Gift Annuity was a great answer.”



John '65 and Martha Storey P'89, will celebrate John's 50th Reunion in June.

Leave a Legacy

Consider naming Williams as a beneficiary. Here's how:

Gifts of any amount may come from your will or living trust. Using a beneficiary designation form, you can also name Williams as a remainder beneficiary of your life insurance policy, IRA, 401(K) or 403(b) retirement plan, bank account, or donor advised fund.

Legal name and tax identification number for beneficiary designation forms:

President and Trustees of Williams College
Tax ID #: 04-2104847

SAMPLE BEQUEST LANGUAGE:

For an Unrestricted Bequest

“I hereby give and bequeath to the PRESIDENT AND TRUSTEES OF WILLIAMS COLLEGE, a non-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, _____ dollars (\$___) [or ___ percent (___%) or all of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate] to be applied to the general uses and purposes of said institution.”

If you are interested in creating a bequest for a particular area of the college—for example, financial aid or faculty support—we are here to help. Contact the Office of Gift Planning directly at 877-374-7526 or at gift.planning@williams.edu. We can discuss your desired gift, and how to best pair it with Williams' needs. This conversation will ensure the college can fulfill your wishes.

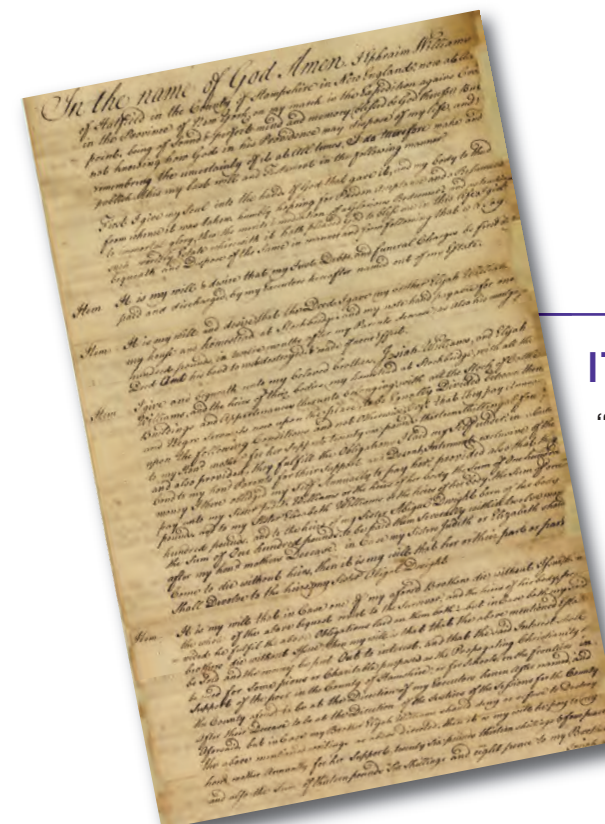
SAVE THE DATE!

2015 EPHRAIM WILLIAMS SOCIETY BREAKFAST

If you plan to be on campus for Reunion Weekend, join us at the Faculty House at 7:30 a.m. Friday, June 12. The Ephraim Williams Society breakfast honors alumni, parents, and friends who have included Williams in their estate plans or have funded life income gifts. President Adam Falk and President Emeritus Carl Vogt '58 will be there, and everyone is welcome to attend. Please register by May 22 by responding to the Gift Planning Office at 877-374-7526 or cbrigley@williams.edu.

We hope to see you in June!

The information contained in this publication is offered for general informational and educational purposes. We advise you to seek your own legal and tax counsel in connection with gift planning matters.



IT ALL BEGAN WITH A BEQUEST

“I, Ephraim Williams ... not knowing how God in his Providence may dispose of my life, and remembering the uncertainty of it at all times, I do therefore make and publish this my last will and testament in the following manner...”

— Excerpt from Ephraim Williams' will