

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 19 August 1500 and proved March 1504, of Robert Harding (d. 18 February 1504), whose nephew, Robert Harding (d.1515), was the great-grandfather of Humphrey Martyn (d.1587?), the addressee of the *Langham Letter* describing Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575. See the Langham page on this website.

The testator's nephew, Robert Harding (d.1515), was also the grandfather of John Pakington (1530-1578), who married Elizabeth Newport, the sister of Sir Richard Newport (d.1570), owner of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle*, formerly Loan 61 in the British Library, now in the hands of a trustee, Lady Hesketh, containing annotations thought to have been made by Shakespeare. See Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator*, (London: Putnam, 1954); the will of Sir Richard Newport, TNA PROB 11/53/456; and the Annotator page on this website.

The testator's nephew, Robert Harding (d.1515), was also the grandfather of Ellen Harding Knyvet Browne (1537-1601), whose second husband, Sir Thomas Browne (d. 9 February 1597), signed Lady Russell's petition against James Burbage's Blackfriars theatre. For Sir Thomas Browne and Lady Russell's petition, see Laoutaris, Chris, *Shakespeare and the Countess: The Battle That Gave Birth to the Globe*, (London: Fig Tree, 2014). Sir Thomas Browne was the father of Sir Matthew Browne (d. 2 August 1603), who by indentures dated 7 October 1601 and 10 October 1601 purchased in fee simple properties owned by Nicholas Brend, including the Globe playhouse. For the will, dated 2 August 1603 and proved 19 April 1608, of Sir Matthew Browne, see TNA PROB 11/111/273. For the will of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), see TNA PROB 11/98/348.

For the foregoing relationships, see the will of the testator's nephew, Robert Harding (d.1515), TNA PROB 11/18/194.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Nothing is known of the testator's family background. His bequests to the parish churches of Leighton Buzzard and Billington suggests that he was related to the Harding family of Bedfordshire.

In the will below, the testator mentions a sister, Agnes, and two nephews, Thomas Harding, ironmonger of London, and Robert Harding, goldsmith. For the latter's will, see TNA PROB 11/18/194, *supra*.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married a wife named Agas, for whose will see:

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<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Hardyng-1>

None of the testator's children were living when he made his will, and the heirs to his manors of Knowle and Watvile were his nephews, Thomas Harding and Robert Harding (see above).

TESTATOR'S LANDS

For the testator's manor of Chelsham Watevile see:

'Parishes: Chelsham', in A History of the County of Surrey: Volume 4, ed. H E Malden (London, 1912), pp. 270-274. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/surrey/vol4/pp270-274> [accessed 3 August 2019].

. . . Richard Hayward . . . died seised of a messuage or farm called Fickeshole in 1607. This messuage, according to Manning and Bray, was the manor-house of Chelsham Watevile. (fn. 65). . .

Sir Thomas Cook, kt., (fn. 15) draper, and afterwards alderman, of London, who, being in need of money, mortgaged the manor to Robert Harding, citizen and goldsmith of London. (fn. 16) He repaid a part of the money, but the greater part remaining unpaid, Robert Harding entered into possession. In 1499 Robert leased it to William Palmer of Chelsham for five years, together with a tenement called Welles and a croft called Gyldenhyll with the 'game of conyes' thereto belonging and all suits of court, excepting, however, the woods, underwoods, and all the chambers and parlours at the north end of the hall of the tenement called Welles, the stable, orchard, 'the easement of the kitchen, the garden and all other sporting places there at such times and whenever the said Robert, his executors, servants, guests and assigns shall thither resort.' (fn. 17) William, Robert's son, was the next owner, and he held a court here on 13 December 1530. (fn. 18) This William Harding, described as a merchant of London, died in 1549, (fn. 19) and by his will left the manor of Chelsham Watevile to his daughter Helen, who became the wife of Richard Knivett. In 1561 Helen, then a widow, settled the same on herself for life, with remainder to Richard Onslow, husband of her sister Catherine, for twenty-one years, and then to her son Henry Knivett. (fn. 20) No further mention is found of the manor, and it is probable that it was sold somewhat later to the Uvedales, who held the other manor in Chelsham, and that the two became united. (fn. 21)

For the testator's manor of Knowle, see:

'Parishes: Cranleigh', in A History of the County of Surrey: Volume 3, ed. H E Malden (London, 1911), pp. 86-92. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/surrey/vol3/pp86-92> [accessed 3 August 2019].

The early history of KNOWLE Manor (Knolle, xiii to xviii cent.) is somewhat obscure. . . .

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In 1481–2 the trustees of Thomas Slyfield of Great Bookham conveyed Knowle to Robert Harding, afterwards master of the Goldsmiths' Company. (fn. 38) He bequeathed it to his nephew Thomas Harding. (fn. 39) Robert Harding left two crofts and a cottage towards the maintenance of the aisle called Our Lady Aisle in Cranleigh Church. (fn. 40) In 1549 William Harding of London, mercer, died seised of Knowle, which he had bequeathed to his daughter Catherine, (fn. 41) with whom it went in marriage to Richard Onslow. (fn. 42) The manor henceforward remained in the Onslow family.

TESTATOR'S TOMB

For the testator's tomb, see:

'Parishes: Cranleigh', in *A History of the County of Surrey: Volume 3*, ed. H E Malden (London, 1911), pp. 86-92. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/surrey/vol3/pp86-92> [accessed 3 August 2019].

Up to the restoration of 1845 a good specimen of the combined altar-tomb and Easter sepulchre, in Sussex marble, remained against the north wall of the chancel. Most improperly, it was then demolished, and the brasses upon and over it were permitted to disappear. It bore the effigies of a man and woman with a child between them, all kneeling, each having inscriptions issuing from the mouth, the man's having the words: 'Have m'cy Jhesu in honour of thy gloriovs resvrreccion'; the woman's: 'And grant vs the merite of thy bytter Passion'; and the child's: 'Accipe parentes, et infantem, bone [Christ]e.'

Fortunately a facsimile of the plate on the wall behind is preserved in an engraving, probably of the size of the original, in Hussey's Churches of Kent, Sussex, and Surrey. This, as is often the case in Easter sepulchres, was a representation of the Resurrection of our Lord, Who is stepping out of the tomb bearing the cross and pennon and displaying the bleeding wounds, while guarding the tomb are four soldiers. Detached from the tomb, on the other side of the chancel, was a shield bearing a merchant's mark and the initials R. H.; and on the tomb itself, beneath the figures, was the imperfect inscription, which when complete read: 'Of your Charite pray for the soulys of Robert Hardyng late Alderman & Goldsmith of London and Agas his Wyffe whos body here lyeth beryed, And departyd this present lyfe the XVIII day of Febrvarⁿ in the yere of ovre Lord God MCCCCC and III for whos Sowlys and all [christ]en we pray you say Paternoster and Ave.' Above the man's figure were the arms of Harding, which were: Argent a bend sable with three martlets or thereon.

See also Heales, Major, 'Cranley', *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, Vol. VI, (London: Surrey Archaeological Society, 1874), pp. 21-56 at p. 37:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=_TUGAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA37

LM: Test{amentu}m Roberti Hardyng

In the name of God, Amen. The 19th day of the month of August in the year of Our [+Lord?] a thousand 1500 and in the 15 year of the reign of King Henry the 7th, I, Robert Harding the elder, late alderman and citizen of London, being in my perfect mind and in good memory and in good health of body, laud and praising being to Almighty God, make, ordain and dispose this my present testament and last will of all and singular my goods and chattels movable and unmovable which I now have or shall have the day of my decease as well within the city of London as elsewhere within the realm of England in manner and form ensuing, that is to say:

First I bequeath and recommend my soul unto Almighty God, my Maker and Redeemer, and to Our Blessed Lady the Virgin, Saint Mary, and to all the holy company of heaven;

And my body honestly to be buried without pomp or pride within the Pardon Churchyard of the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul's of London if so be that I die within the said city in a place convenient there after the discretion of my executors underwritten;

And if I die out of the said city of London, then I will that my body be buried in the parish church of Cranleigh in the county of Surrey;

And after my body so buried, then I will that all the duties which I owe to any person or persons of right or of conscience be first and foremost and before all other things truly content and paid;

And after that done, then I will that an egall division and portion be made by my said executors of all my said goods, chattels and debts whatsoever they be into egall parts;

Whereof I give and bequeath the one egall part to Agas, my wife, she therewith to do her own free will and pleasure;

And the other egall part I give and bequeath to be reserved to my executors, thereof to perform and fulfil my legacies and bequests hereunder written, that is to wit:

First I give and bequeath to the opening of the ground where it shall fortune my body to be buried 6s 8d sterlings;

Item, I will that my executors after their best discretions provide and ordain the day of my decease for torches honestly to bring my body on earth, and for 4 honest tapers to burn about my body and hearse the time of my dirge and Mass when my said body shall be buried, and at my month mind with 4 tapers, I will that 4 poor men hold them;

Item, I give and bequeath to every poor man holding the said tapers and torches at my said burying and month's mind 8d;

All which torches so by my said executors provided and ordained at the time of my said burying I will that immediately after my month's mind that they and every of them be given and distribute[d] unto poor churches whereas most need shall be by the discretion of my executors;

Item, I give and bequeath to the high altar of the parish church of Cranleigh aforesaid for my tithes and oblations by me negligently forgotten or withdrawn in the discharge of my soul 6s 8d;

Item, I give and bequeath to the church works of the parish church of Saint Vedast to the intent that all the parishens of the same parish the more specially pray for my soul £4 sterling;

Item, I give and bequeath to the church works of the parish church of Saint Matthew in Friday Street of London to the intent that the parishens of the same parish the more specially pray for my soul 40s sterling;

Item, I give and bequeath to the church works of the parish church of Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey of London to the intent that the parishens of the same parish the more specially pray for my soul 40s;

Item, I give and bequeath to the reparation of the parish church of Chelsham in the said county of Surrey to the intent that the parishens of the same parish the more specially pray for my soul 10s;

Item, I give and bequeath to the church works of the parish church of Warlingham to the intent that the parishens of the same parish church the more specially pray for my soul 3s 4d;

Item, I give [f. 30r] and bequeath to the reparation of the parish church of Cranleigh aforesaid to [+the intent that?] the parishens there the more specially pray for my soul 10s;

And I will that my said executors provide and ordain an honest priest of good name, fame and conversation to sing and say his Mass and other his divine service within the parish church where it shall fortune my body to be buried by the space of 3 years next ensuing my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath to the same priest for his salary & wages yearly during the same 3 years 10 mark sterling;

Item, I will that my said executors distribute and dispose for my soul and all Christian souls incontinent after my decease amongst the poor prisoners in Newgate, Ludgate and the 2 Counters, the King's Bench, the Marshalsea, the Convict Prison of Westminster and the parson [sic for 'prison?'] of the Fleet £3 6s 8d;

Item, I will that incontinent after my decease my said executors distribute and dispose amongst the poor parishens of the parish of Saint Vedast most needy 40s after their best discretions, that is, every man and woman 8d;

Item, I give and bequeath to tho[se] 4 persons that shall bear my body to church and to my burying-place if I die within the city of London 13s 4d, that is to say, to every of them 3s 4d, and if I die out of the city of London then I will that every of the said 4 persons that shall bear my body to church and burying-place to have for their labour 20d;

Item, I give and bequeath to 40 poor householders dwelling within the town of Leighton Buzzard in the said county of Bedford to pray specially for my soul 13s 4d, that is to say, to every of them 4d;

Item, I give and bequeath to the relieving of the poor sick people being within the house of Our Blessed Lady of Bedlem [=Bethlehem] without Bishopsgate of London 10s;

Item, I will that my said executors distribute and dispose for my soul after my decease in as goodly haste as they can amongst the poor people of the town of Addington most needy after their best discretions 10s;

Item, I will that my said executors provide and ordain the said day of my decease for 4 trentals of Masses to be said for my soul and all Christian souls in the 4 orders of friars in the city of London, for the which 4 trentals so to be said and done I give and bequeath 40s, that is to say, for every of them 10s;

Item, I give and bequeath to the reparation of the chapel of Billington in the said county of Bedford to the intent that my soul may be prayed for there 10s;

Item, I give and bequeath to every man and woman being in necessity that hath served me as covenant-servants(?) 6s 8d;

Item, I give and bequeath to every priest and clerk of that church where it shall fortune my body to be buried, being at my dirge and Mass, 12d;

Item, I give and bequeath to the prior and convent of the Charterhouse [-at] beside London to the intent that they the day of my decease keep a dirge and Mass of Requiem for my soul and the souls aforesaid 40s;

Item, I give and bequeath to Agnes, my sister, to pray for my soul 20s and a new gown after the discretion of my said executors;

And whereas William Beton of Bigging [=Biggin?] in the county of Buckingham, husbandman, and Thomas Markham of North Marston in the said county, husbandman, stand bound unto me, the said Robert Harding, in £40 to be paid yearly 20s unto the time

that the said £40 be so content and paid, of the which I will that my said executors after my decease content and pay unto my said sister, Agnes, yearly during her life 6s 8d;

Item, I give and bequeath to 5 poor houses of lazars next unto the city of London 25s, that is to say, to every of them 5s;

Item, I give and bequeath to the marriage of 6 poor maidens £6, that is to say, to every of them 20s;

Item, I pardon, release and forgive Robert Chantrey, citizen and fishmonger of London, 40 mark sterling which he oweth unto me and the which I delivered unto him in my lifetime;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Agnes Chantrey, daughter of the said Robert Chantrey, £3 6s 8d which I will shall be delivered unto her the day of her marriage;

Item, I give and bequeath towards the reparation and mending of the highways which be in decaycy [sic for 'decay'?] and noyful to the people within the parishes of Chelsham, Croydon and Cranleigh in the county of Surrey £20 sterlings which I will shall be disposed within a year next ensuing my decease in such places as shall seem most needful as by the advice of my said executors shall be advised;

Item, I give and bequeath to William Chamberlain, my servant, 40s and one of my best gowns furred;

Item, I give and bequeath to every child of Thomas Harding 40s to be delivered to them at their lawful age or the day of their marriage;

And I, the foresaid Robert Harding, for certain causes and motions me moving, revoke and annul all and singular testaments and wills by me afore this time made, and all and singular legacies, gifts and bequests in any of them made, and all and singular executors in the said testaments or any of them by me afore named and ordained, and none of the foresaid wills to stand but this my present will and testament;

The residue of all my part of all my said goods, chattels and debts whatsoever they be after my body buried, my funeral expenses done and this my present testament fulfilled, wholly I give and bequeath unto the said Agas, my wife, she therewith [f. 30v] to do her free will and pleasure;

And of this my present and last will I make and ordain mine executors [+the?] aforesaid Agas, my wife, my nephews, Robert Harding, goldsmith, and Thomas Harding, ironmonger, citizens of London;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of my said executors for their labour and business in that behalf 20s.

Given the day and year abovesaid.

This is the last will of me, the foresaid Robert Harding the elder, made the day and year aforesaid as to the disposition of all my manors, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and service[s], meadows, leasows and pastures, woods and underwoods with all and singular their appurtenance which I have within the towns, fields and parish[es] of Chelsham, Warlingham, Addington, Farleigh, Cranleigh, Shalford, Codham [=Cudham?] and Chelsfield in the counties of Surrey and Kent and elsewhere within the same counties in manner and form ensuing, that is to wit:

First I will and ordain by this my present testament and last will that all such feoffees as be seised and enfeoffed of and in 2 crofts which I, the said Robert Harding, late purchased and bought of Boxewell(?), widow, and the which John Clerk otherwise called John Mover(?), now holdeth to farm of me, the same Robert, of the yearly value of 6s 8d sterling, and also of and in a cottage which William Norton now holdeth and occupieth, incontinent after my decease make or cause to be made a sufficient and sure estate of and in the same 2 crofts and cottage with the appurtenance to the parson and churchwardens of Cranleigh aforesaid;

To have and to hold the said 2 crofts and cottage with the appurtenance to the said parson with the churchwardens and to their [-churchwardens] successors parson and churchwardens for the time being for evermore to the intent and effect hereafter ensuing, that is to wit:

I will that all the rents, profits and revenues which after my decease shall grow and come of the said 2 crofts and cottage with the appurtenance yearly be disposed and distributed towards the reparation, supportation and maintaining of the aisle called Our Lady Aisle within the parish church of Cranleigh aforesaid and to the intent that the parson there for the time being and the parishens of the same parish pray the more specially for my soul, my wife's soul, the souls of my father and mother, my children's souls, and all Christian souls at all such times as they shall make their devout prayers within the same church;

And I will & ordain by this my last will that if the said rents, profits and revenues coming and growing of the [-the] said 2 crofts and cottage with the appurtenance be not disposed to th' intent abovesaid, or if that the said parson and parishens for the time being have not my soul and the souls aforesaid in remembrance as is abovesaid, that all the said rents, profits and revenues coming and growing of the said 2 crofts and cottage with the appurtenance yearly be distributed and disposed toward the reparation of the parish church of Ewhurst in the sai[d] county of Surrey to the intent that the curate and parishens of the same parish for evermore pray the more specially for my soul and the souls aforesaid;

Also I will and ordain by this my last will that all such feoffees as been enfeoffees [sic for 'enfeoffed?'] and seised of and in all my lands with the appurtenance lying in Codham and Chelsfield aforesaid which the vicar of Codham now holdeth to farm make or cause

to be made a sufficient and sure estate of and in the same lands unto the vicar and churchwardens of Chelsham aforesaid;

To have & to hold the same lands with the appurtenance to the said vicar and churchwardens of Chelsham and to their successors vicar and churchwardens for the time being for evermore to the intent and effect hereafter ensuing, that is to wit:

I will that all the rents, profits and revenues which after my decease shall grow and come to the said lands with [+the?] appurtenance which the said vicar of Codham now holdeth to farm yearly be disposed towards the reparation, supportation and maintaining of the body of the parish church of Chelsham aforesaid and to the intent that the vicar there for the time being and parishens of the same parish pray the more specially for my soul and the souls aforesaid at all such times as they shall make their devout prayers within the said church of Chelsham;

And I will and ordain by this my last will that if the said rents, profits and revenues coming and growing of the said lands with the appurtenance which the vicar of Codeham holdeth to farm be not disposed to the intent abovesaid, or if the said vicar and parishens for the time being have not my soul and the souls abovesaid in remembrance as is abovesaid, that all the profits and revenues coming and growing of the same lands with the appurtenance which the said vicar of Codham now holdeth to farm yearly be distribute[d] [f. 31r] and disposed towards the reparation of the body of the parish church of Codham aforesaid to the intent that the curate and parishens of the same parish for evermore pray the more specially for my soul and the souls abovesaid;

Furthermore I will and ordain by this my last will that all such feoffees and feoffed [sic for 'as been enfeoffed?'] and seised of and in all other my manors, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and service[s], meads, leasows and pastures, woods and underwoods with all and singular their appurtenance shall stand and be feoffees to the only use of Agas, my wife, and of her assigns during the natural life of the said Agas;

And after the decease of the same Agas, then I will that all such feoffees as been sealed [sic for 'seised?'] and enfeoffed of and in my manor of Knoll [=Knowle] with the appurtenance in the said parish of Cranleigh or of any other my lands and tenements within the same parish make or cause to be made a sufficient and sure estate as well of and in the same manor of Knoll as of and in all other my lands and tenements with the appurtenance in the said parish of Cranleigh and Shalford unto my nephew, Thomas Harding, citizen and ironmonger of London;

To have to hold the foresaid manor, lands, tenements and all & singular their appurtenance in the said parish of Cranleigh to the said Thomas Harding, to his heirs and assigns for evermore;

Also I will and ordain by this my last will that incontinent after the decease of the said Agas, my wife, all such feoffees as been enfeoffed and seised of and in my manor of Watvile with the appurtenance [and?] of and in any other my lands and tenements, rents,

reversions and service[s], meadows, leasows and pastures, woods and other woods [sic for 'underwoods'] with all and singular their appurtenance within the towns, fields and parishes of Chelsham, Warlingham, Addington, Farleigh, Shalford, Codham and Chelsfield aforesaid as elsewhere within the said counties of Surrey and Kent make or cause to be made unto my nephew, Robert Harding, brother of the said Thomas Harding, a sufficient and sure estate of and in the said manor of Watvile, lands, tenements and other the premises with the appurtenance within the said towns, fields and parishes of Chelsham, Warlingham, Addington, Farleigh, Codham and Chelsfield aforesaid as elsewhere within the said counties of Surrey and Kent;

To have and to hold the foresaid manor of Watvile, lands, tenements and other the premises with the appurtenance to my said nephew, Robert Harding, to his heirs and assigns [-and assigns] for evermore;

In witness whereof to this my present testament and last will I have set my seal and subscribed with my own hand the day and year abovesaid.

[**NOTE:** Lacks probatum clause]