

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 30 September 1576 and proved 19 October 1576, of John Harding (d.1576), husband of Christian Shakerley, whose sister, Elizabeth Shakerley (d.1583), was the wife of Sir Ambrose Nicholas (d.1578), Lord Mayor of London, purchaser of Oxford's mansion at London Stone, and the stepmother of Daniel Nicholas, a witness in the *Belott v Mountjoy* lawsuit who is stated therein to have had a personal conversation with William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford upon Avon.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The grant of arms to the testator's brother (see below) indicates that the testator was a younger son of John Harding, son of John Harding of Newport Pagnell, Bedfordshire. For the testator's family, see the pedigree of Harding of Aspley in Blaydes, Frederic Augustus, ed., *The Visitations of Bedfordshire, Annis Domini 1566, 1582, and 1634*, (London: Harleian Society, 1884), Vol. XIX, p. 114 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationsofbed19blay/page/114>

Quare whether 'Richard Harding of London Alderman' in that pedigree should read 'Robert Harding of London Alderman'.

Testator's siblings

The testator had four brothers and three sisters:

-Robert Harding (d. 26 November 1568), alderman of London, who predeceased the testator and was the father of the testator's nephew, Simon Harding, mentioned in the will below:

Item, to my cousin, Simon Harding, a black gown and three pounds to make him a ring.

In the grant of arms to Robert Harding on 30 August 1568 it is stated that he was the son and heir of John Harding, son of John Harding of Newport Pagnell, Bedfordshire. See:

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Harding-1171>

See also Warburton, John, *London and Middlesex Illustrated*, (London: C. & J. Ackers, 1749), p. 62 at:

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=fXhbAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA62>

For the will of Robert Harding (d. 26 November 1568) in which he mentions his brothers, John Harding, William Harding, Thomas Harding and Richard Harding; his sister, Agnes

Harding, wife of Robert Cooke, and his sister, Joan Harding, wife of a husband surnamed Pigott; his son, Simon Harding, and daughter, Anne Harding, wife of the London alderman, Hugh Offley (d. 26 November 1594), and their daughter, Elizabeth Offley, see TNA PROB 11/50/395. For the will of Simon Harding, dated 9 April 1580 and proved 5 January 1582, in which he mentions his uncles, Richard Harding and Thomas Harding, see TNA PROB 11/64/5.

-William Harding of Aspley, Bedfordshire, who married ‘the daughter of Atslowe’. He may have predeceased the testator as he is not left a bequest in the will below. His two sons, Edmund Harding and James Harding, as well as a daughter married to a husband surnamed Bryan of Northampton are mentioned in the will below. For Edmund Harding, see Page-Turner, F.A., ‘The Hillersdens of Elstow’, *The Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society*, Vol. V, Part I, and Volume VI, Part I, (Aspley Guise, 1919), pp. 75-95 at p. 77:

<https://archive.org/details/publicationsofbed05bedf/page/76>

William Harding’s great-grandson, Edmund Harding (living 1634), married Anne Becher, the daughter of Sir William Becher and Elizabeth St John, eldest sister of Oliver St John, 1st Earl of Bolingbroke. See the Harding pedigree in Blaydes, *supra*, p. 114, and the Becher pedigree in Blaydes, *supra*, p. 82 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationsofbed19blay/page/82>

See also the Wikipedia entry at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_St_John,_3rd_Baron_St_John_of_Bletso

-Thomas Harding of Cranfield, Bedfordshire. He and his children, including his daughter, Anne Harding, are mentioned in the will below.

-Richard Harding of Eversholt, Bedfordshire. A Richard Harding is mentioned in the Harding pedigree, *supra*, p. 114, although *quaere* whether the pedigree erroneously conflates him with his brother, Robert, who was an alderman of London. Richard Harding and his two children are mentioned in the will below. His son, Michael Harding, is mentioned in the will of Robert Harding (d.1568).

-Agnes Harding, who married Robert Cooke. In his will, the testator’s brother, Robert Harding (d.1568), leaves bequests to her, to her husband, Robert Cooke, and to their children.

-Joan Harding, who married a husband surnamed Pigot. In his will, the testator’s brother, Robert Harding (d.1568) refers to her as ‘Joan, my sister’, and leaves bequests to her, to her husband ‘Pickett’, and to their children.

-() **Harding**, who married a husband surnamed Carter. In the will below the testator leaves 40 shillings ‘to every of my sister Carter’s children’. In his will, the testator’s brother, Robert Harding (d.1568), mentions ‘Richard Hankyn, my brother-in-law’, and ‘William Carter’, my steward. It seems possible that the testator’s sister married firstly Richard Hankyn or Haukyn, and secondly William Carter. In his will dated 9 April 1580, TNA PROB 11/64/5, the testator’s nephew, Simon Harding, mentions ‘Avis Carter, the daughter of my cousin, John Carter’.

MARRIAGES AND ISSUE

The testator married firstly a wife named Margery, whose surname is unknown.

The testator married secondly Christian Shakerley, for whom see the wills of her father, Rowland Shakerley (d.1565), TNA PROB 11/48/92, her mother, Anne (nee Winwood) Shakerley (d.1571), TNA PROB 11/53/250, and her sister, Elizabeth Shakerley, TNA PROB 11/65/520. In the will below the testator bequeaths £10 to each of Christian Shakerley’s sisters.

The testator had one daughter, likely by his first marriage:

* **Elizabeth Harding** (d.1599), who married, as his second wife, the London ironmonger, William Gamage (born c.1557), only son of Anthony Gamage (d. 11 June 1579). For the will of Anthony Gamage, proved 9 July 1579, see TNA PROB 11/61/341. For the inquisition post mortem taken after his death, see TNA C 142/190/22, and:

'Inquisitions: 1580', in *Abstracts of Inquisitiones Post Mortem For the City of London: Part 3*, ed. E A Fry (London, 1908), pp. 19-32. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/abstract/no3/pp19-32> [accessed 31 July 2019].

Most sources state that William Gamage had only one wife, Elizabeth Offley, the daughter of the London haberdasher, Robert Offley (buried 29 April 1596), whom the testator names as one of his executors in the will below. For the will of Robert Offley, proved 11 May 1596, see TNA PROB 11/87/327.

The Harding and Offley families were already related through the marriage in 1553 of Robert Offley’s brother, Hugh Offley (d. 26 November 1594), to the testator’s niece, Anne Harding. For Hugh Offley see the inquisition post mortem taken after his death, TNA C 142/243/92, and:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/78302520/hugh-offley>

Mercer of London and Director of the Eastland Company. Hugh was the seventh son of William Offley, sheriff of Chester. He was a freeman of the Leathersellers Company, Alderman of London several times, and Sheriff during the year of the Armada. In 1556 he fled to France, having become implicated in the Dudley Conspiracy, which Lord Guilford

Dudley had been delivered to Hugh's brother Thomas Offley, Lord Mayor of London, to be beheaded. During this time in exile he met 'the Nobillity of France' with whom he later 'was in great Favour', but by Nov. 1557 he was back in London, having purchased a pardon. The more reputable side of his career is exemplified by his development of the wool trade and his effort to improve London's water supply as 'a Founder of the great Conduitt in the Markett place'. His primary residence was his mansion house on Lime Street, which he erected on the site of Nicholas Leveson's former dwelling, where Hugh "bountifully received...many of the Nobillity of France."

For the marriage of William Gamage and Elizabeth Offley by licence dated 22 April 1574, see Armytage, George J., ed., *Allegations for Marriage Licences Issued by the Bishop of London 1520 to 1610*, Vol. I, (London: Harleian Society, 1887), Vol. XXV, p. 59 at:

<https://archive.org/details/allegationsform01londgoog/page/n65>

See also Harrison, William Welsh, *Harrison, Waples and Allied Families*, (Philadelphia, 1910), pp. 136-7 at:

<https://archive.org/details/harrisonwaplesal00harr/page/564>

In the will below the testator refers to William Gamage as his son-in-law, and it thus seems that William Gamage married twice, and that his first wife, Elizabeth Offley, died shortly after the marriage, and that shortly thereafter he married secondly the testator's daughter, Elizabeth Harding.

For the burial of the testator's daughter, Elizabeth (nee Harding) Gamage, on 7 August 1599 in the Harding vault at St Benet Gracechurch, see:

<http://fortunatusfamilia.com.au/getperson.php?personID=I05917&tree=tree1>

For the Gamage family, see also the pedigree in Howard, Joseph Jackson and George John Armytage, eds., *The Visitation of London in the Year 1568*, (London: Harleian Society, 1869), Vol. I, p. 14 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=vSnTAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA14>

Testator's widow's second marriage

After the testator's death, his widow, Christian Shakerley, married, by licence dated 29 November 1577, Sir Ralph Bouchier (d. 11 June 1598), whose first wife was Elizabeth Hall, the daughter of Francis Hall (d. 10 June 1552), esquire, of Grantham, Lincolnshire, by Ursula Sharnington (d.1569), the daughter of Thomas Sharnington (d.1524?) and Katherine Pyrton. Elizabeth Hall was the sister of Lord Burghley's ward, the translator, Arthur Hall (1539-1605). For the will of Francis Hall, see TNA PROB 11/43/610.

After the death of Christian Shakerley, Sir Ralph Bouchier married thirdly Anne Coote (d. August 1598), widow. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, pp. 363-4 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=kjme027UeagC&pg=PA364>

For the messuage at St Pancras formerly occupied by the testator's father-in-law, Rowland Shakerley, and later by the testator's daughter, Elizabeth, and her husband, William Gamage, see:

D J Keene and Vanessa Harding, 'St. Pancras Soper Lane 145/11-13', in *Historical Gazetteer of London Before the Great Fire Cheapside; Parishes of All Hallows Honey Lane, St Martin Pomary, St Mary Le Bow, St Mary Colechurch and St Pancras Soper Lane* (London, 1987), pp. 705-712. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-gazetteer-pre-fire/pp705-712> [accessed 1 August 2019].

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In 1548 this was described as a great messuage formerly leased to Robert Packyngton for a term of 50 years at £7 rent. It was now held by Roland Shakerly, who was probably living there in 1541 and 1544, when he was assessed as a resident of St. Benet (sic) parish and Cordwainer Ward. He had ceased to live there by 1558, when he was described as of Aynho (Northants.) and was granted a lease of the capital messuage representing 13 by the rector, churchwardens, and parishioners of St. Pancras for a term of 500 years at £2. 11s. 2d. rent. The messuage, with its shops, cellars, chambers, warehouses, yards, and entries, was now inhabited by Richard Elkyn and lay in the parishes of St. Pancras and St. Antonin, between 14-15 on the E., 12 on the W. and N., the highway leading from Soper Lane to Watling Street on the W., 'Seint Pancrace Lane' on the N., and a messuage formerly belonging to the college of Higham Ferrers on the S. The lessee and his successors were to keep the 'foredore and entry' of the capital messuage at the street door which then opened into Pancras Lane so that the inhabitants of the house would be counted as parishioners of the parish of St. Pancras. About 1560 the house was inhabited by Walter Marler, citizen and haberdasher, who by his will, dated and proved in 1561, left to his wife Elizabeth his leases and terms of years in the shops and warehouses which she then occupied (probably part of 13) and in the house which he inhabited in the parish of St. Pancras. Elizabeth may then have married Ambrose Nicholas, citizen and salter, who later had a wife of that name and was tenant of 13. (fn. 13) In 1563 13, or a part of it, may have been in the possession of John Alsopp, citizen and haberdasher (see 12).

Roland Shakerley died in 1565 and left the house then held by Ambrose Nicholas, to his wife Anne and her heirs. At the inquisition which followed his death, the house was valued at £10 a year and Shakerley was said to have held it in free burgage of the Queen, suggesting that the long lease under which he in fact held it was intended to conceal the parish's interest. In 1566, in order to remove any doubt concerning this interest the rector and churchwardens quitclaimed their right in the messuage to Ambrose Nicholas,

who was said to be seised in demesne. In return Nicholas was to pay the parish £68 in instalments of £2 payable twice a year. Before the end of the year Nicholas and his wife Elizabeth granted and quitclaimed in the messuage with its halls, chambers, cellars, solars, houses, warehouses, yards, and wells to John Wanton, citizen and grocer. Anne, widow of Roland Shakerley, senior, was still alive in 1570, when Roland Shakerley, junior, son of the elder Roland's son Ralph, died leaving as his heir his sister Anne, then aged 7. (fn. 14)

Richard Patrick and his wife Ursula seem later to have been in possession of the property, and in July 1577, in pursuit of an agreement earlier that year, quitclaimed their right in it to Anthony Gamage, citizen and alderman, who was then seised of the great capital messuage or mansion house with its halls (cenaculis), chambers, cellars, solars, houses, warehouses, backsides, and wells. At about this time there was probably a lawsuit or arbitration concerning the property. In November 1577 Ambrose Nicholas, then a knight, made an agreement, the details of which are not known, with Ralph Bouchier, esquire, of Benyngborough (Yorks.) on the one hand and William Cordell, Master of the Rolls, and Robert Mounson, one of the Justices of Common Pleas, on the other. In pursuit of this agreement Bouchier granted 13 and other properties to Cordell and Mounson. This was presumably a stage in providing Bouchier with an impregnable title, for in 1580 Bouchier and his wife Christiana sold these properties to William Gamage of London, gentleman. William Gamage was the son and heir of Anthony Gamage, who died in 1579, when he was said to be seised of 13. Anthony Gamage lived in the messuage, which soon after his death was occupied by his widow Alice Gamage. (fn. 15)

In 1586 William Gamage sold the capital messuage, which he had occupied to Stephen Soame, citizen, and his wife Ann. In 1588, in consideration of a payment of £90, Gamage and his wife Elizabeth quitclaimed to Soame and Ann in the property. Soame, a wealthy alderman who was knighted in 1599 and died in 1619, used 13 as his London residence. He left it to his second son, Stephen Soame.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

For the testator's overseer and brother-in-law, Sir Ambrose Nicholas (d.1578), see his will, TNA PROB 11/60/296.

For 'Doctor Atslowe', see the *ODNB* entry:

Atslowe, Edward (d. 1594), physician, probably from Eversholt, Bedfordshire, was educated at Winchester College, and admitted BA at New College, Oxford, in 1555. After being elected to a fellowship at his college he was created MD at Oxford on 27 August 1566, and was one of the four doctors appointed by convocation to dispute before Queen Elizabeth I when she was entertained at the university in September of that year. Shortly afterwards Atslowe settled in London and was admitted a fellow of the College of Physicians; between 1569 and 1583 he was appointed censor and named elect and

consiliarius. On 2 November 1573 Atslowe married Frances Wingfield (d. 1605) at Stoke Newington; they had six children. Among his patients were many of the nobility, and he was probably attached for some years as physician to the household of the earl of Sussex. In 1572 Edward's brother, Luke, had been appointed by Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford, as one of his four commissioners to conduct courts of survey of his lands; the Atslowes were soon after related to Oxford through Edward's marriage to Frances Wingfield.

According to the Harding pedigree in Blaydes, *supra*, the testator's brother, William Harding, married the 'daughter of Atslowe', likely the sister of Edward Atslowe (d.1594).

For Thomas Smythe (1522-1599), Customer of London, see the *ODNB* entry. His daughter, Ursula Smythe, married the testator's nephew, Simon Harding. See the latter's will, TNA PROB 11/64/5.

For Benedict Spinola (1519/20-1580), who forwarded funds to Oxford during his continental tour and from whom Oxford purchased his Great Garden property by indenture dated 15 June 1580, see his will, TNA PROB 11/62/443.

Grace Elkyn, to whom the testator leaves a bequest in the will below, was the daughter of the testator's sister-in-law, Elizabeth (nee Shakerley) Elkyn Marler Nicholas (d.1583), by her first husband, Richard Elkyn (d.1559). See the will of Elizabeth Shakerley, TNA PROB 11/65/520. Grace Elkyn married the testator's servant, Thomas Harding.

'John Field, minister', to whom the testator leaves a bequest in the will below may have been John Field (c.1545-1588), father of the actor and playwright, Nathan Field (1587-1620). See *ODNB* entries for John Field and Nathan Field. For John Field's involvement in the Marprelate controversy, see:

<https://marprelate.itercommunity.org/johnfield.html>

Richard Wright and Thomas Wayde mentioned in the will below are referred to in the will of Anthony Gamage, *supra*, as his sons-in-law. For the will of Thomas Wade, ironmonger, proved 2 July 1601, see TNA PROB 11/98/74.

Mr Doctor Matthew appears to be Tobie Matthew (1544?-1628), later Archbishop of York, for whom see the *ODNB* entry. He is referred to as 'cousin' in the will of the testator's sister-in-law, Elizabeth (nee Shakerley) Elkyn Marler Nicholas (d.1583), and the will of her third husband, Sir Ambrose Nicholas (d.1578). See TNA PROB 11/65/520 and TNA PROB 11/60/296.

For the testator's overseer, Edward Taylor, salter, see his will, proved 26 February 1579, TNA PROB 11/61/133.

RM: T{estamentu}m Ioh{ann}is Harding Aldermani London

In the name of God, Amen. The last day of September in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred threescore and sixteen and in the eighteenth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., I, John Harding of London, alderman, being whole of mind and of good and perfect remembrance, laud and praise be given unto Almighty God, do make, ordain and dispose this my present testament and last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul into the hands of th' Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, three persons and one God, trusting and verily believing that through the merits of the most blessed passion of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, my sins be clearly forgiven me;

And I will my body to be buried in the parish of St Benet Gracechurch in London whereas I am a parishioner, nigh the place where the body of Margery, my late wife, lieth buried;

Item, I will that all such debts and duties as I owe of right or in conscience to any person or persons shall be well and truly contented and paid by mine executors hereunder named by the sight of mine overseers, or else ordained for so to be paid without delay or contradiction;

And as touching th' order and disposition of all and singular my goods, chattels, silver plate, jewels, ready money and debts whatsoever, I will that all and singular the same, [f. 202v] after my debts and funerals deducted and paid, shall be indifferently valued and appraised and equally divided into three equal parts or portions according to the laudable custom and usage of this honourable city of London;

Whereof one equal third part I give and bequeath unto Christian, my well-beloved wife, in the name of her part and portion to her belonging according to the custom of this city of London;

And the second part of my goods and chattels according to the custom aforesaid I give and bequeath unto Elizabeth, my daughter, wife unto William Gamage of London, ironmonger, in the name of her part and portion of my said goods and chattels, in and of which her said part I will shall be accounted and allowed the sum of four hundred pounds the which I have afore this time given unto her;

And the third part of my said goods and chattels I wholly reserve unto myself and my executors hereunder named to perform, fulfil and pay my legacies and bequests hereafter following:

First I give and bequeath unto Mr Wager, parson of Gracechurch aforesaid, forty shillings;

Item, I give and bequeath to and amongst twenty learned preachers being graduate in one of the universities of Cambridge or Oxford six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence for twenty sermons, whereof ten of the same sermons to be made in the parish of St Benet Gracechurch aforesaid and other ten in the parish church of All Hallows in Lombard Street within two years after my decease at the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor people dwelling within the parish of Gracechurch ten pounds to be laid and put in the poor box within the same church, and the same to be taken out and distributed from time to time at the discretion of the churchwardens to and for the relief and succour of the poor within the same parish as need shall require;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor people dwelling in the five and twenty wards of London the sum of fifty pounds, that is to say, to the poor dwelling in every ward forty shillings to be delivered to the alderman's deputy of every of the same wards by mine executors within three months after my decease, and I will that the same forty shillings shall be given and distributed by the same alderman's deputy to the most poorest people dwelling within the same wards at their discretions;

Item, I do give and bequeath the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds to be given and distributed to and amongst poor householders by the discretion and order of mine executors;

Item, I will, give and bequeath unto the Company of Salters within the city of London whereof I am free the sum of one hundred pounds to be paid unto the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the same Company within three months after my decease;

And I do hereby devise and appoint that the same hundred pounds shall be lent and delivered out for three years forever unto two poor young men of the same Company of Salters for their advancements and preferments by the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the same Company for the time being from time to time at their discretions where they shall think most need, viz., to either of them fifty pounds;

So that they and either of them that shall receive the same several sums of fifty pounds by me given to the said Company as aforesaid shall always before the receipt thereof become bound with three such good & sufficient sureties unto the Master and Wardens of the same Company for the time being as they shall like of in sufficient penalty by obligation under condition for the true payment of the same fifty pounds at the end of the three years next ensuing the date of the same obligation unto the Master and Wardens of the same Company for the time being to the use of the same Company;

So that also every young man that shall have any part of the said hundred pounds lent unto him as I have afore devised shall ever at the receipt thereof pay and allow unto the Wardens of the same Company for their pains to be taken in that behalf and for the making of the obligation ten shillings apiece for every change at every three years' end;

And I do appoint the day of lending of the same hundred pounds to the poor young men of the same Company to begin that day month that my executors shall make payment thereof to the Company;

Item, I bequeath to the said Wardens and Company of Salters for a recreation for the Wardens, Assistants and Livery to be had amongst them at the day of my burial ten pounds;

Item, I bequeath to the Master, Wardens and Fellowship of the Company of Ironmongers of London ten pounds, whereof I do appoint for a recreation for the Master, Wardens and Assistants and Livery of Ironmongers to be had amongst them at the day of my burial five pounds;

And I do likewise appoint thother five pounds to be given and distributed the same day amongst the poor of the same Company of Ironmongers at the discretion of the Wardens then being;

Item, I give and bequeath to the prisons of Newgate and the two counters in London, the King's Bench and the Marshalsea in Southwark, to the poor prisoners of every of the same prisons forty shillings to be distributed within as convenient time as may be after my decease by my executors or overseers;

Item, I give [f. 203r] and bequeath to the three hospitals, that is to say, St Bartholomew's Hospital near Smithfield, Christ's Hospital in London and St Thomas Hospital in Southwark to the use of the poor within the same three hospitals forty pounds, that is to say, to the poor of every of the same three hospitals thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence;

Item, I bequeath to forty poor maids' marriages within the city of London twenty pounds, that is to say, to every marriage ten shillings, to be distributed and paid by mine executors within four years after my decease, viz., to ten poor maids' marriages every year;

Item, I bequeath to forty poor men whereof twenty of them to be free of the Company of Salters, to every of them one gown-cloth of the price of six shillings the yard and to every of them twelve pence in money, so that they do follow my corpse to the church at the day of my burial;

Item, I bequeath to the poor parish of Whitechapel without Aldgate in London thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence to be paid unto the churchwardens of the same parish within three months after my decease and to be distributed and given by them at their discretion where most need shall require;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of St Botolph without Aldgate of London ten pounds to be distributed amongst them within three months after my decease by the churchwardens and alderman's deputy there and the substantial of that parish at their discretions where most need shall require;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people within the town of Dunstable in the county of Bedford five pounds to be distributed amongst them within six months after my decease at the discretion of the churchwardens of the same town;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor people of Leighton Buzzard in the said county of Bedford five pounds to be distributed amongst them by the churchwardens there within six months after my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor people of Luton and Toddington four pounds, that is to say, to the poor in either parish forty shillings to be paid unto them within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Owburne [=Woburn?] in the county of Bedford five pounds to be paid unto them within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Ampthill in the said county of Bedford five pounds to be paid unto them within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Asplignes [=Aspley?] in the said county forty shillings to be paid within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Little Brickhill in the county of Buckingham five pounds to be paid them within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Much Brickhill in the same county forty shillings to be paid unto them within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Newport Pagnell in the same county of Buckingham five pounds to be paid within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the town of St Alban's in the county of Hertford five pounds to be paid unto them within six months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Fenny Stratford in the county of Buckingham forty shillings to be paid within six months after my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor people within the city of Norwich twenty pounds to be paid and delivered to the mayor and aldermen of the same city within six months after my decease to be distributed at their discretion to the most poorest people of the same city;

Item, I give and bequeath to Sir Ambrose Nicholas, knight, Lord Mayor of the city of London, one livery pot of silver and gilt;

Item, I give and bequeath to the foresaid Christian, my wife, over and above her said third part of my goods and chattels, my new basin and ewer of silver and two hundred pounds in money upon condition that she shall not at any time hereafter claim or demand any dower in any of my lands;

Item, I give and bequeath to my foresaid daughter, Elizabeth Gamage, my best standing cup of silver and gilt;

Item, I give and bequeath to Thomas Harding, my servant, the sum of one hundred pounds upon condition that he do put in good sureties to be bound with him by obligation unto my executors with condition for the true and sure payment of twenty marks yearly to be paid to my brother, Thomas Harding of Cranfield, by and during the space of ten years next ensuing after my decease;

Item, I do give and freely forgive unto my said brother, Thomas Harding, all such sums of money as he is indebted in and oweth unto me;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my brother, Richard Harding of Eversolde [=Eversholt?] in the said county of Bedford, one hundred pounds in money to be paid unto him within one year after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Edmund Harding and James Harding, sons of [f. 203v] my said brother, William, thirty pounds, viz., to James Harding twenty pounds and to Edward Harding ten pounds, to be paid unto them at their lawful ages of one and twenty years, and if it fortune either of them to decease afore they come to their lawful ages as aforesaid, then the part and portion of such of them as shall so decease to be paid to the survivor of them;

Item, I bequeath to the daughter of my said brother, William, being wife to Mr Bryan of Northampton, ten pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of the children of my brother, Thomas Harding, which shall be living at my decease five pounds apiece to be paid unto them at their lawful age of one and twenty years except Anne Harding, his daughter, and if it fortune any of them to decease afore their said lawful ages of one and twenty years, then the part and portion of him or them that shall so decease to be paid to and amongst the survivors or survivor of them;

Item, I bequeath to my brother Richard Harding's two children, to either of them ten pounds apiece, and either of them to be other's heir in this behalf;

Item, I bequeath to my sister Cooke & my sister Pickett [=Pigot?], to either of them ten pounds to be paid within one year after my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Thomas Harding, my servant, the son of William Harding, the sum of five hundred marks in money to be paid unto him at the age of one and twenty years or sooner at the discretion of my executors;

Item, I bequeath to Edward Taylor, my servant, the sum of one hundred pounds in money to be paid unto him within one month after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Matthew Joyner, my servant, twenty pounds [+to be paid?] within three months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to William Linge, my servant, ten pounds to be paid within two months after my decease, in consideration that my said servants shall do their diligence and best endeavour to gather in the debts now owing unto me;

Item, I bequeath unto Joan Bromfield, my maidservants [sic], ten pounds to be paid within one month after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Harris, my late servant, ten pounds to be paid within one year after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Peter Axton ten pounds in money;

Item, I bequeath to William Carter twenty pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Bennett five pounds;

Item, to Edward Horrall, my servant, twenty pounds;

To Allen Cotes ten pounds;

To Susan, my maid, five pounds;

And to Elizabeth Lane, my maid, five pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Roger Morrell, a scholar of Cambridge, five pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Peter Collen twenty pounds;

Item, to Thomas Blowke, the son of John Blowke, ten pounds;

And to the wife of Richard Ivett, grocer, ten pounds;

And to John, his son, my godson, ten pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mr Thomas Smith, Customer, a black gown and three pounds in money to make him a ring, and to his wife a black gown and forty shillings in money to make her a ring;

Item, to my cousin [=nephew], Simon Harding, a black gown and three pounds to make him a ring, and to his wife a black gown and ten pounds in money for a pair of bracelets;

To Mrs Luntelowe a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to William Gibbons, salter, a black gown and ten pounds in money, and to his wife a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to John Lyvers, fishmonger, twenty pounds in money, and to his wife a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to John Marshall, fishmonger, a black gown and ten pounds in money, and to his wife a black gown;

Item, I bequeath unto George Utley a black gown and forty shillings in money for a ring, and to his wife a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to my godson, Thomas Offley, son of Hugh Offley, ten pounds to be paid unto him at his age of one and twenty years;

Item, I bequeath to every of the other children of the same Hugh Offley which shall be living at my decease forty shillings apiece to be paid unto them at their lawful age of one and twenty years or days of their marriages, which shall first happen, and every of them to be other's heir in this behalf;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of my godchildren ten shillings apiece except such as before I have given any legacy unto, so as they do claim and demand the same within one year after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to William Droughte forty shillings to make him a ring;

To John Brooke forty shillings to make him a ring;

To Mr Richard Morris one black gown;

To William Plaseden one black gown;

To Thomas Starkey one black gown;

To Richard Smithe one black gown;

To Thomas Taylor forty shillings;

To William Dayle [=Dale?] forty shillings;

Item, I will, give and bequeath to four poor scholars of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge four score marks in money towards their exhibition so as the same scholars do study divinity, that is to say, forty marks to the two scholars of either of the same universities to be paid in two years by mine executors or overseers, [f. 204r] and payment and distribution of the same to be made by mine executors to such two poor scholars studying divinity within the same universities as they shall think meet;

Item, I give and bequeath to Anne Harding, my brother Thomas' daughter now dwelling with me, fifty pounds to be paid at the day of her marriage;

Item, I give to every of the children of my sisters Cooke and Pigott forty shillings apiece to remain to the survivor of their several children to be paid when they shall come to their full ages or be married;

And to every of my sister Carter's children forty shillings to be paid at their full ages or marriages and to remain to the survivor as aforesaid;

Item, I bequeath to William Agar forty shillings;

Item, to Henry Walter, gentleman, a black gown and three pounds in money for a ring;

Item, I bequeath to Mr Benedict Spinola one black gown;

Item, I will, give and bequeath unto Christian, my wife, the lease of my house wherein I do now dwell and the term of years therein to come in lieu and part of a hundred pounds of her portion during the time that she shall be a widow and unmarried;

And if my said wife do chance to marry or do die and decease, then I will, give and bequeath the same lease and the term of years then to come therein to Thomas Harding, son of William Harding, in as good case for wainscot and glass as it now is, the same Thomas then paying unto my said wife a hundred pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Grace Elkyn ten pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Garrett, mine apprentice, ten pounds to be paid when he shall come out of his years;

To John Some [=Soame?], mine apprentice, five pounds when he shall come out of his years;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Harding, son of Thomas Harding, the sum of twenty pounds to be delivered unto him at the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Wright and Thomas Wayde [=Wade?] and to their wives, every of them a black gown;

To Myles, the beadle of the Salters, a black gown;

To Robert Partriche and William Crawe, cloth-worker, either of them a poor man's gown and forty shillings in money;

Item, I bequeath to the poor people within the parish of East Ham five pounds to be paid within one month after my decease to the hands of the churchwardens and substantial men of the same parish by them to be distributed amongst the poorest in the same parish;

To William Walker of East Ham a black coat and five pounds in money, and to his wife a black cassock;

Item, I bequeath to William Babham and his wife, either of them a black gown;

Item, I will, give and bequeath to William Mosse his wife, my late tenant at East Ham, forty shillings by the year during her life to be paid by mine executors;

Item, I bequeath to every of my wife's sisters ten pounds apiece to be paid within one year after my decease;

Item, if there chance a free school hereafter to be founded and builded within the town of Owburne [=Woburn?] in the county of Bedford, then I will that immediately after the finishing of the same school mine executors shall pay unto the gardens [=guardians?] and feoffees of the same school the sum of one hundred pounds in money towards the payment of the building of the same or the maintenance of poor scholars there so as the same be builded and [-and] finished within ten years next ensuing or else I give the same sum of one hundred pounds towards the exhibition of ten poor scholars in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge within six months after the end of the same ten years by the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I bequeath to Robert Offley, haberdasher, my best furred gown faced with martens;

Item, I give and bequeath to Robert Hogeson of London, gentleman, the writer of this my will, the sum of eight pounds in money and one black gown for his pains herein taken;

And to John Felde [=Field?], minister, one black gown;

And to Doctor Atslowe one black gown;

Item, I bequeath to Hugh Doxie, Thomas Fettapace [=Fettiplace?] and Thomas Felde [=Field?], every of them forty shillings;

Item I will that Mr Dean of Paul's, Mr Doctor Matthew, or Mr Crowley shall make my funeral sermon, and which of them shall make the same I do give and bequeath one black gown for his pains therein to be taken;

The residue of all and singular goods, chattels, leases, plate, ready money and debts whatsoever they be and wheresoever they may be found, after my debts which I do owe being paid which I will shall be truly paid, my funeral charges performed and these my legacies and bequests in this my present testament contained fulfilled and paid, I do wholly & freely give and bequeath unto Christian, my well beloved wife, and Elizabeth, my daughter, to be equally divided betwixt them;

And of this my present last will & testament I do make, constitute and ordain my very well beloved friends, Mr Anthony Gamage, alderman, and Robert Offley, haberdasher, my full executors;

And I do give to either of them for their pains herein to be taken twenty pounds apiece;

And I do make, name and ordain my loving friends, Sir Ambrose Nicholas, knight, Lord Mayor of this city of London, Hugh Offley, leather-seller, Edward Taylor and Thomas Harding, my servant, overseers of this my [f. 204v] last will and testament;

And I give and bequeath to the said Sir Ambrose Nicholas, knight, Lord Mayor, for his pains twenty pounds;

And to the said Hugh Offley for his pains ten pounds;

Item, I bequeath to the said Hugh Offley's wife ten pounds for a pair of bracelets;

And to every of mine overseers a black gown.

And as touching the disposition of all and singular my lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever with their appurtenances as well freehold as copyhold wheresoever they lie or be within the realm of England, I will, give and bequeath and my full will and mind is that the same shall descend and come unto Elizabeth, my daughter and heir apparent, wife unto William Gamage of London, ironmonger, according to the laws of this realm of England and according to the custom of the manors on which my copyhold lands been holden, together with all deeds, evidences, charters, copies of court rolls and other muniments touching and concerning the same which I will shall be delivered unto my said daughter immediately after my decease, to have and to hold all and singular my said lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever to the same Elizabeth, her heirs and assigns, forever, the same Elizabeth, her heirs and assigns paying yearly out of the same lands and tenements to Christian, now my wife, and her assigns one annuity or annual rent of ten pounds by the year during her natural life, the first payment thereof to begin at the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady next after my decease, and for lack of payment thereof it shall be lawful for the same Christian or her assigns to enter into all or any of my said lands or tenements and there to distrain for the

said annuity or annual rent of ten pounds or so much thereof as shall then be behind and unpaid;

And I utterly revoke and annul all and every former wills, testaments, legacies, bequests, executors and overseers by me in any wise before this time made, named, given, willed or bequeathed, and I will that this my present testament and last will together with all my legacies, bequests, executors and overseers by me herein mentioned and named shall stand, remain and abide for my very last will and testament and none other nor otherwise;

In witness whereof to this my present testament and last will I, the said John Harding, have put my hand and seal the day and year first above-written. John Harding.

Sealed and subscribed in [-in] the presence of us, Robert Hogeson, the writer hereof. By me, John Alderson. Signu{m} Richardi Lychfield. Signu{m} Thome Warren. Signu{m} Edwardi Lyle. By me, Edward Taylor, salter. By me, Thomas Harding.

Probatum fuit Testamentu{m} h{uius}mo{d}i coram Mag{ist}ro Will{el}mo Drewrie Legu{m} doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuarien{sis} Com{m}issario apud London Decimo nono die mens{is} Octobris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Quingen{tes}imo Septuagesimo sexto Iuramento Will{el}mi Babham No{ta}rij publici Procuratoris Anthonij Gamage et Roberti Offeley Executoru{m} &c Quibus commissa fuit Admi{n}istracio &c de bene &c ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c Necnon de plano et vero Computo &c Iurat{is}

[=The same testament was proved before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the nineteenth day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-sixth by the oath of William Babham, notary public, proctor of Anthony Gamage and Robert Offley, executors etc., to whom administration was granted etc., sworn to well etc., and [+to exhibit?] a full and faithful inventory etc., and also [+to render?] a plain and true account etc.]