

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 27 April 1536 and proved 7 August 1536, of Agnes Bradman Basford Butler, third wife of Sir William Butler, Lord Mayor of London, whose first wife, Elizabeth Bodley, was a member of the Bodley family which had ties to the Globe theatre. See his will, TNA PROB 11/25/123.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

In her will, the testatrix states that she was born in 'Owkam', apparently Oakham in Rutlandshire since she mentions her brother's son in Stamford, which lies east of Oakham:

Item, I bequeath to Sir Geoffrey Bradman, priest, my brother's son dwelling in Stamford.

The testatrix appears to have been related to James Bradman of London, gentleman, who in 1467 purchased the manor of Topsfield, and to John Bradman, salter of London, who sold Topsfield in 1503 to William Heron of Alford, Lincolnshire. See TNA C 146/1063, and Marcham, W. McB., 'The Village of Crouch End, Hornsey', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, New Series, Vol. VII, (London: Bishopsgate Institute, 1937), pp. 393-435 at p. 397, available as a pdf file online at:

www.lamas.org.uk/archives/transactions/transactions-vol07.html

For a bond entered into in 1493 by John Bradman, Merchant of the Staple at Calais, see also TNA C 241/267/24. For John Bradman's lands in Totteridge, see:

'Deeds: C.6901 - C.7000', in *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds: Volume 6*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1915), pp. 401-416. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/ancient-deeds/vol6/pp401-416> [accessed 8 April 2018]

C. 6941. Grant by John Bradman, merchant of the Staple of Calais, son and heir of James Bradman, of London, gentleman, to Thomas Englyssh, gentleman, and Richard Broun, sherman, of all his lands, &c. in the town of Taterigge, which he had by the grant of Henry Frowyk, esquire, and Henry Spylman, Thomas Luyte, and John Goodyere, gentlemen. 26 November, 14 Henry VII. Signature and seal.

MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN

First marriage

The testatrix married firstly Roger Basford (d. May 1520), of Ashbourne, Derbyshire, and London, for whose will see TNA PROB 11/20/15. See also, Sutton, Anne F., *The*

Mercery of London, (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), pp. 343, 364-5, 558.

See also *Acts of Court of the Mercers Company 1453-1527*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), p. 496 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=lApNUxjgg1gC&pg=PA496>

By Roger Basford, the testatrix had a son and a daughter:

* **Christopher Basford**. In the will below the testatrix leaves bequests to his sons, Roger Basford and Richard Basford, and his daughters, Cecily Basford and Margaret Basford.

* **Elizabeth Basford**, who married firstly Nicholas Tickill, Tykhull or Tycle, by whom she had three children, and secondly, John Smythe, haberdasher. For Nicholas Tickhill, see the pedigree in Marcham, *supra*, p. 399, which states that he was the son of Elizabeth Tykhull, and that he had a brother, Ralph Tykhull, and a sister, Frances Tykhull, who married Thomas Ive, by whom she had a son, Nicholas Ive, draper of St Dunstan in the East, for whose will, proved 20 May 1558, see TNA PROB 11/40/271. Mention is also made on pp. 397-8 of Agnes Tycle, who circa 1524 purchased the manor of Topsfield from her brother, Nicholas Spencer.

According to Blayney, John Rastell junior, who had married Bridget Basford, the granddaughter of the testatrix and Roger Basford, sued the testatrix in 1536:

In 1536, either actively encourage by his imprisoned father or inspired from beyond the grave by his example, 'John Rastell the yonger gentleman' sued his in-laws in Chancery. Roger Basford, he claimed had been worth over £5,000 when he died, and in his will had left £100 to be divided among the nine children of Christopher, his only surviving son. Two of those children had died under age and unmarried, so each of the others including Rastell's wife Bridget should have received £14 5s 8-1/2d from the executors (Christopher himself and Dame Agnes).

See Blayney, Peter W.M., *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London 1501-1557*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=SLGkAgAAQBAJ&pg=PT700>

In the will below the testatrix mentions her son, Christopher Basford, and his children. See also mention of Christopher Basford of Cripplegate Ward, Merchant of the Staple, in Dyer, Christopher, *A Country Merchant, 1495-1520*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 117 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=lQFQxHJNayYC&pg=PA117>

For Christopher Basford's signature and merchant's mark, see also G.L.G., 'Merchants' Marks', *Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, Vol. XII, 1891, p. 52 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=jws4AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA52>

For the will of Christopher Basford, proved 27 January 1536, see TNA PROB 11/25/452.

Second marriage

The testatrix married secondly, as his third wife, Sir William Butler, Lord Mayor of London. As noted above, Sir William Butler's first wife, Elizabeth Bodley, was a member of the Bodley family which had ties to the Globe theatre. See his will, TNA PROB 11/25/123.

The testatrix' niece by marriage, Margaret Butler, was the second wife of Edward North (c.1504-1564), 1st Baron North. For her will, see TNA PROB 11/25/123. For the will of Edward North, 1st Baron North, see TNA PROB 11/48/64.

Jane Wilkinson (d.1571), niece of Edward North (c.1504-1564), 1st Baron North, married, as his first wife, Michael Lok (c.1532–1620x22), who persuaded Oxford to invest heavily in Martin Frobisher's 1577 expedition in search of a route to Cathay.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

The testatrix leaves a bequest to Mary Axbridge:

Item, I bequeath to Mary Axbridge a black gown.

It is possible that Mary Axbridge was related to Sir Ralph Astrich or Ostriche, alderman of London, whose widow, Dame Margery, was sued in the period 1493-1500 by William Bradman.

For the testatrix' overseer, George Medley, half brother of Henry Grey (1517-1554), Duke of Suffolk, see Sutton, *supra*, pp. 426, 558, and De Lisle, Leanda, *The Sisters Who Would Be Queen*, (London: Harper Press, 2008), pp. 59-60, 115, 160, 162 and pedigrees. See also *Third Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*, (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1842), p. 249 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=SFVJAQAAMAAJ&pg=RA6-PA249>

The testatrix' overseer, John Fayrey, was the husband of Mary Butler, the testatrix' step-daughter by the testatrix' second marriage to Sir William Butler. For John Fayrey, see the will of Sir William Butler, *supra*, and his own will, TNA PROB 11/28/603.

RM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ne Agnet{is} Butler

In the name of God, Amen. The 27th day of the month of April in the year of Our Lord God 1000 five hundred and 36th and in the 28th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the Eight, I, Dame Agnes Butler, widow, late the wife of Sir William Butler, knight and alderman of the city of London, being of whole mind and in good and perfect remembrance, laud and praising be unto Almighty God, make, constitute and ordain this my present testament containing therein my last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I bequeath and lonly [=alonly?] recommend my soul to Almighty God, my Maker, and most glorious Saviour, Jesus Christ, to his blessed and glorious Mother, the immaculate Virgin, Our Lady, Saint Mary, and to all the holy and blessed company of angels and saints in heaven;

And my body to be buried in the cloister next adjoining unto the parish church of Saint Mildred the Virgin in the Poultry of London where I am now parishen;

And I will that my funeral expenses and charges shall be done in honest wise according unto my estate and degree with lights and all other necessaries thereunto belonging unto the honour of Almighty God and for the wealth of my soul without worldly pomp or pride at the good discretions of my executors and overseers hereafter named;

And I will that my said executors shall bestow upon and about my said funerals expenses and charges 200 pounds sterling;

And I will that all the black gowns of cloth hereafter written by me legacied unto divers honest persons, my friends and kinsfolks, shall be perceived and borne of the aforesaid two hundred pounds, that is to say:

First I bequeath to my two executors hereafter named two black gowns;

Item, I [-Item, I] bequeath to John Fayrey and his daughter 2 black gowns;

Item, I bequeath to the wife late of John Butler a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Blake and his wife 2 black gowns;

Item, I bequeath to John Smythe and his wife 2 black gowns;

Item, I bequeath to the wife of my son, Christopher, a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to the wife of John Broke a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to Mary Axbridge a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to Margaret and Cecily Basford 2 black gowns;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Basford a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to William Hobson a black gown;

All which aforesaid black gowns I will shall be of an honest price and value at the discretions of my executors and overseers;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Basford, son of my son, Christopher Basford, forty pounds sterlings to be delivered to him when he shall be and come to the lawful age of 22 years;

And if it fortune the said Richard to decease before he accomplish and come to the said age of 22 years, then I will that the said £40 shall be divided and delivered by my executors to and amongst all the other of the children of my said son, Christopher, as shall be then living;

Item, I bequeath to Cecily Basford, daughter of the said Christopher, my son, forty pounds sterlings, and I bequeath to Margaret Basford, daughter of the said Christopher, forty marks sterlings, to be delivered unto them when they shall come to their lawful ages of 21 years or else at the days of their marriages;

And if it fortune any of them to decease before she come to her said age or marriage, then I will that the survivor of the said Cecily and Margaret shall have the part of the other so deceasing to be delivered unto her when she shall come to her said lawful age or marriage;

And if it fortune both the said Cecily and Margaret to decease before their lawful ages or marriages, then I will the said £40 and the forty marks shall be given and bestowed to and amongst the next of their kindred then living at the good discretions of my executors and overseers;

Item, I [f. 20v] bequeath to Roger Basford, the son of my son, Christopher Basford, forty pounds sterlings to be paid and delivered unto him by my executors within the space of thirteen months next immediately ensuing after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to my daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of John Smythe, haberdasher, two hundred pounds sterlings to be paid to her within the space of 13 months next immediately ensuing after my decease if the said Elizabeth be then living;

And I will that the said Elizabeth and her husband shall seal and deliver a general acquittance to my executors at the receipt of the two hundred pounds aforesaid for all manner of matters and demands concerning me or my late husbands;

And farther I will by this my present testament that if it chance my said daughter, Elizabeth, to decease before the time of my decease, then I will my aforesaid legacy of two hundred pounds to her before legaced be utterly void, frustrate and of none effect;

Provided alway that I will by this my present testament that if the said John Smythe and Elizabeth, his wife, my daughter, or either of them at any time after my decease vex, sue or trouble my executors or either of them in any of the King's courts spiritual or temporal or elsewhere for any matter, cause or demand concerning me or any of my husbands deceased, that then my aforesaid legacy of two hundred pounds by me to the said Elizabeth before bequeathed be void, frustrate and of none effect;

Item, I bequeath to Armelyn Yeoo twenty pounds sterlings to be paid to her by my executors within the space of 13 months next ensuing immediately after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Rowland Broke forty marks sterlings to be to him at his lawful age of 21 years;

And if it fortune the said Rowland to decease before he shall come to his said age of 21 years, then I will that the said forty marks so to him before bequeathed be distributed by my executors to and amongst the next of his kindred;

Item, I bequeath to the six children of Armelyn Yeoo now being born and onelyns [sic for 'on live'?), to every of them £3 6s 8d sterlings, summa £20, to be paid to them at their lawful ages and marriages;

And if any of them chance to decease before their lawful ages or marriages, then the survivors to have the parts of them so deceased;

Item, I bequeath to the three children of my daughter Elizabeth and of Nicholas Tickill, to every of them £10, summa to all £30 sterlings to be paid at their lawful ages or marriages;

And if any of them decease before they come to their lawful ages or marriages, then the survivors to have the parts of them so deceased;

Item, I bequeath to my poor kinsfolks and to the poorer people inhabiting in the town of Owkam [=Oakham?] where I was born £20 sterlings to be paid and distributed by my executors and overseers within the space of three months next after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Agnes Gregges and to her son five pounds 6s 8d sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to Margaret Egliston 6s 8d sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to the Master and brethren of the Collegenall [sic for 'Collegial'?) house of Saint Thomas of Acon in London to th' intent that they shall sing and say a triginal of Masses in their church and pray specially for my soul, for the soul of my late husbands, and all Christian souls, £3 6s 8d sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to the poor sick people being in the lazar-house at Holwey [=Holloway] 20s sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to the two prison-houses of Newgate and Ludgate and to the house of Bethlehem, to every of them to be distributed amongst the poor people there 40s, summa to all, £6;

Item, I will that mine executors or assignees shall yearly during four years next ensuing after my decease provide and buy six cartloads of charcoals, and I will that the said six loads shall be distributed and divided by their discretions and by the good advice of my overseers in manner and form following, that is to wit, two of the said loads to and amongst the poor people inhabiting in the parish of Saint Mildred in the Poultry, and two loads to and amongst the poor people inhabiting in the parish of Saint Martin in Ironmonger Lane, and the other two loads of the said coals to and amongst the poor householders inhabiting in the parish of Saint Michael in Hogen [=Hog?] Lane besides Wood Street of London, for the which 24 loads of coals I bequeath £16 sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to every poor householder in the said parish of Saint Michael in Hogen Lane besides Wood Street 4d to pray for my soul, my late husbands' soul, and all Christian souls;

Item, I will that my executors shall provide and buy one hundred coats of frieze to be made and given to one hundred poor men to pray for my soul immediately after my burying, for the which coats I bequeath £25 sterlings;

Item, I will in like wise one hundred shirts and smocks of canvas to be made and given to one hundred poor men and women at the discretions of my executors and overseers immediately after my burying to pray for my soul, my 2 husbands' souls, and all Christian souls, for the which shirts and smocks I bequeath £10 sterlings;

Item, I bequeath one hundred pounds to be bestowed in noyous and foul highways in such places as shall be thought most needful by my executors and overseers, whereof I will £20 sterlings to be delivered to John Fayrey, my trusty friend, to bestow upon the noyous highway in Dunstable town's end;

Item, I bequeath £20 sterlings to 20 poor maidens toward their marriages, every one of them to have 20s sterlings by the good discretions of my executors and overseers to pray for my soul, my husbands' [f. 21r] souls and all Christian souls;

Item, I bequeath to John Perche, my servant, a black gown and five pounds in money;

Item, I bequeath to Ralph Westwud [=Westwood?] haberdasher, to pray for my soul 40s sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Spalding and to his wife to pray for my soul 20s sterlings;

Item, I bequeath £6 sterlings to be distributed and given to and amongst the poor householders in the parish of Saint Mildred in the Poultry aforesaid to pray for my soul by [+the?] good discretions of my executors and overseers;

Item, I bequeath to Sir Geoffrey Bradman, priest, my brother's son dwelling in Stamford, £10 sterlings to pray for my soul;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Woddam, my servant, 20s sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to Agnes Porter, my maid, a black gown and 40s in money;

Item, I bequeath to John(?) Fletcher 20s sterlings;

Item, I bequeath to John Hodsoil, to John Blakisley, to John Mynard and to Richard Laney(?), to every of them a black gown;

The residue and overplus of all and singular my goods, chattels and debts not by me legaced, named nor bequeathed heretofore nor hereafter by this my present testament, whatsoever they be and whensoever [sic for 'wheresoever?'] they may be found, after my debts which I of right owe to any person be first paid, my funerals honestly done, and this my present testament and last will in all things truly performed and fulfilled effectually according to the tenor thereof, I will it shall be given & distributed by my executors and by the good advice of my overseers over(?) this matter and form, that is to wit:

I will that all the said residue and overplus to be divided into three egal parts, whereof one part I bequeath to the making and mending of foul and noyous highways in divers places needful where my executors and overseers shall think most convenient;

The second part I bequeath toward the marriages of poor maidens, to the relieving of poor householders and bedrid people in London and other places by the good discretions of my executors and overseers;

And the third part of the said residue I bequeath to and amongst the poor prisoners being in all the jails of London, Southwark and Westminster, to be bestowed in victuals for them at divers times, and to redeem and deliver some of them out of prison by the good discretions of my executors and overseers, and they to pray for my soul, my husbands' souls & all Christian souls;

Requiring and charging my said executors thus to bestow and do with all the said residue and overplus as is before recited and bequeathed as they will answer before Almighty God at the dreadful Day of Judgment;

And of this my present testament and last will I constitute, make and ordain my faithful executors my good, loving and trusty friends, William Brothers and John Clerk, citizens and drapers of London, unto whom I give and bequeath for their labours and pains that

they shall sustain and take in and about the true executing of this my present testament and last will, to either of them one hundred pounds sterlings, summa to both of them two hundred pounds sterlings;

And also I, the aforementioned Dame Agnes Butler, make, constitute and ordain to be my faithful overseers of the same my present testament and last will aforesaid my right well-beloved and trusty friends, George Medley, mercer and Chamberlain of the city of London, and John Fayrey, citizen and mercer of the same city, and Merchants of the Staple at Calais, unto whom I give & bequeath for their labours and pains that they shall sustain and take in and about the premises in that behalf, to either of them forty pounds sterlings, summa to both of them £80 sterlings, praying and instantly requiring them all, as well my executors as my overseers aforesaid, at the reverence of God to be diligent in and about the same my present testament and last will with speedy execution thereof and all things therein contained truly to be performed and fulfilled as my faithful trust and confidence is in them in that behalf;

And also further I, the aforementioned Dame Agnes Butler, by this my present testament and very last will utterly revoke, renounce and annul all and every other former testaments, wills, legacies, bequests, executors and overseers by me in any wise before this time made, named, willed or bequeathed, either by words spoken or by writings, and only I will that this my present testament and last will shall stand, remain and abide for my very perfect testament and last will together with all the legacies, bequests, executors and overseers by me herein named, made, will and bequeathed, and none other nor otherwise to be had nor taken in effect;

In witness whereof I, the aforementioned Dame Agnes Butler, unto this present testament and very last will have set my seal the day and year afore-written, being present John Hodsoll, John Blakisley, John Mylner, William Hobson, John Perche and Richard Lany, scrivener.

Probatum fuit sup{ra}scriptum} testa{men}t{u}m coram prefato mag{ist}ro Will{el}mo Petre legu{m} doctore Com{m}iss{ario} anted{i}c{t}o vijo die mensis Augusti Anno d{omi}ni Mill{esi}mo qui{n}gen{tesimo} xxxvjto Iura{men}to execut{orum} in h{uius}mo{d}i testa{men}to no{m}i{n}at{orum} Ac approbatu{m} et insinuatu{m} Et Com{m}issa fuit admi{n}istracio omniu{m} bonor{um} et debitor{um} d{i}c{t}e defuncte pefat{is} Executor{ibus} de bene et fideli{te}r admi{n}strand{o} eadem Ac de pleno et fideli Inuen{ta}rio &c xij die octobris prox{imum} futur{um} exhibend{o} Necno{n} de plano et vero co{m}poto reddend{o} Ad s{an}c{t}a dei &c iurat{is}

[=The above-written testament was proved before the forenamed Master William Petre, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary aforesaid, on the 7th day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 36th by the oath of the executors named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all the goods and debts of the said deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy

Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory etc. on the 12th day of October next to come, and also to render a plain and true account.]