

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 14 November 1516 and proved 16 December 1518, of Lawrence Martyn of Long Melford, grandfather of Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575.

The testator's wife was Elizabeth Cheke, the daughter of John Cheke of Blood Hall near Debenham, and his wife, Elizabeth, the daughter of John Bacon of Baconsthorpe, Norfolk. For the will of John Cheke, proved in 1492 as 'John Cheke. Of Debenham', see Norw. C.C. 70-1 Typpes (G). For the will of Elizabeth (nee Bacon) Cheke, proved in 1505 as 'Elisabeth Cheke als. Berdewell', see Norw. C.C. 141-2 Ryxe (G) (*The Visitation of Suffolk 1561*, p. 275.)

According to the will of his father, Richard Martyn (d.1500) of Long Melford, the testator had an elder brother, Roger (d.1542?), and four younger brothers, John, Thomas, Richard and William, as well as a sister, Alice. Of the testator's siblings, only Roger and William are mentioned in the testator's will below. For the will of the testator's father, Richard Martyn (d.1500), see TNA PROB 11/12, ff. 30-1. For the will of the testator's elder brother, Roger Martyn (d.1542?) of Long Melford, see TNA PROB 11/29, ff. 75-7.

The testator leaves bequests to his four sons, Roger (d.1573), Richard, John and Edward, and his two daughters, Alice and Elizabeth, all of whom were underage at the time of the making of the will. The Sir James Hewer named as an executor was the testator's priest.

For the will of the testator's son and heir, Sir Roger Martyn (d.1573), father of Humphrey Martyn, addressee of the *Langham Letter*, see TNA PROB 11/56, ff. 2-4.

RM: Testamentum Laurencij Martyn

In the name of God, Amen. I, Lawrence Martyn of Long Melford in the diocese of Norwich, having use of reason and whole memory, the 14th day of November in the year of Our Lord God 1500 and 16 make my last will or testament in this manner:

First, I give my soul to Almighty God and to Our Blessed Lady Saint Mary Virgin and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the churchyard of Melford Church on the south side by the window of the sacraments;

Also I will that all my debts that can be lawfully proved be content and paid;

Item, I will that mine executors spend at my burial 40s, not infesting [=in feasting] of rich people, but to priests and clerks and poor people and other things necessary at my burial;

Also I give to the high altar of Melford Church in recompense of tithes and offerings forgotten or not paid, 20s;

Also I will it be spent at my 7 day 20s;

Item, I will there be spent at my 30th day to priests, clerks and poor people 40s, but not in feasting the rich people;

Also, I give to Roger, my son, Higgelles and Reyners lying in Monkyfyllly [=Monks Eleigh] after the decease of Elizabeth, my wife, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will it shall remain to Richard, my son, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will it remain to John, my son, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, I will it remain to Edward, my son, and to the issue males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for default of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that the profits of the foresaid lands called Higgelles and Reyners go to the discharging of the commony dwelling within Melford, that is for to say, in taxes, in aids or subsidies or any other charges being to the King within the town of Melford forever;

Item, I will if all my children die and their heirs males, that then my brother Roger Martyn and his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and four of the substantial men dwelling in the town of Melford receive the farm of the foresaid lands called Heggelles and Reyners, and to be put into a common hutch to the behoof of my will before rehearsed, and that my brother Roger and his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten for their labour have 5s a year, and the other 4 20d a year for receiving of the farm of the foresaid lands, so that they keep my year-day once a year as long as the world stand with part of the farm of the foresaid lands, that is for to say, to priests, clerks and poor people 6s 8d by year;

Item, I will that 40 of the best of the town of Melford offer at my year-day as long as the world stand, of the money of the foresaid farm called Higgelles and Reyners, each of them ob [=halfpenny?] unto the priest in the house of God for my soul, my wife's soul and all Christian souls, and to take for their labour of the foresaid farm, each of them 2d;

Item, to Richard, my son, Hegekockes lying in Aston after the decease of Elizabeth, my wife, and to his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that John, my son, have the foresaid lands called Hegekockes to him and to his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will the foresaid lands called Hegekockes go to Roger, my son, and to his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will it remain to Edward, my son, and to his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of issue males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that the profits of the said lands called Hegekockes go to the keeping of my year-day, my wife's year-day, and the year-day of my father and my mother, my brother, Roger Martyn, and my brother, William, forever, providing always that there be spent at the year-day of me and my wife, my father and my mother, my brother, Roger, and my brother, William, 14s 4d, and the residue of the foresaid lands called Hegekockes go to the reparation of Melford church forever;

Item, I bequeath to John, my son, my place sometime Robert Smythe's, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for fault of heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will it go to the keeping of mine year-day and my wife's, my father and my mother, my brother, Roger, and my brother, William, and for all my friends' souls and all Christian souls;

Item, I bequeath to Roger Martyn, my son, 10 marks to be delivered to him when he come to lawful age;

Item, I bequeath to Richard, my son, 10 marks to be delivered to him when he come to lawful age;

Item, I bequeath to John, my son, 10 marks to be delivered to him when he come to lawful age;

Item, I bequeath to Alice Martyn, my daughter, 10 marks to be delivered to her the day of her marriage;

Item, I bequeath to Elizabeth Martyn, my daughter, 10 marks to be delivered to her the day of her marriage;

Item, I will if the foresaid Roger die or he come to lawful age, that the money that I have given unto the foresaid Roger, my son, be divided between Richard and John when they come to lawful age;

Item, I will if Richard Martyn die or he come to lawful age, that the money that I have given unto the foresaid Richard, my son, be divided between Roger and John, my sons, when they come to lawful age;

Item, I will if the foresaid John Martyn die or he come to lawful age, that the money that I have given unto the foresaid John, my son, be divided between Roger Martyn and Richard, my sons, when they come unto lawful age;

And if all my sons die except one or they come to lawful age, then I will that the said one have all the foresaid money which I bequeathed unto my foresaid sons, and [+if] all my sons die or they come to lawful age, then I will that Alice and Elizabeth, my daughters, have to their marriages two parts of the foresaid money which I bequeathed unto my foresaid sons, and the 3rd part to find a priest a year [+to sing] for me and my wife, my father and my mother, my brother, Roger, and my brother, William, and my friends' souls and all Christian souls;

Item, I will if Alice, my daughter, die or she be married, that then Bess, my daughter, have the said money unto her marriage which I bequeathed unto the foresaid Alice;

And if Elizabeth, my daughter, die or she be married, then I will that Alice, my daughter, have the foresaid money unto her marriage which I bequeathed unto the said Elizabeth, my daughter;

And if both my daughters die or they be married, then I will the money which I bequeathed them go to a priest service 2 years to sing for me and my friends before rehearsed;

And if all my children die or they come to the age of my will before rehearsed, then I will all the money which I have bequeathed unto my foresaid children go to a priest service 5 years to sing for me, my wife, my father and my mother, and my brother, Roger Martyn, my brother, William Martyn, and all my friends' souls and all Christian souls;

Item, I bequeath to Christian Cawndishe [=Cavendish?] 40s;

Item, to Edward, my son, £10, and if he die, I will Christian Cawndyshe have £5 of the said £10 beside the 40s, and my wife the other £5;

Item, I bequeath to my weavers and spinners amongst them for restitution, 20s;

Item, to Bess Lord, my servant, 20s;

Item, to John Cowper my old sleeved coat;

And all the residue of my goods, my will performed, I bequeath unto Elizabeth, my wife, so that she do lay a gravestone upon my grave, and do my name graved thereon, and keep [-my year?] my year-day in Melford Church;

Item, I will Elizabeth, my wife, be mine executrice, and Sir James Hewer my executor, and he to have for his labour 26s 8d;

And I will desire my brother, Roger Martyn, to be my supervisor, and he to have for his labour 26s 8d.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascripti defuncti Coram domino apud Lameth xvjo die mensis Decembris Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo xvijjo Iuramento executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum Ac approbatum et insinuatam &c Et Commissa fuit administratio omnium & singulorum bonorum & debitorum dicti defuncti prefatis Executoribus De bene & fideliter Administrando Ac de pleno & fideli Inventario citra festum Natalis Domini proximum futurum exhibendo Necnon de plano & vero compoto reddendo Ad sancta dei Euan gelia In debita Iuris forma Iuratorum

[=The testament of the above-written deceased was proved before the Lord [+Archbishop] at Lambeth on the 16th day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 18th by the oath of the executors named in the same testament, and probated and entered etc., and administration was granted of all & singular the goods & debts of the said deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to well & faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full & faithful inventory before the feast of the Birth of the Lord next to come, and also to render a plain & true account.]