

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 1 December 1539 and proved 26 November 1540, of William Bodley, whose grandson, Sir John Bodley of Streatham, was landlord of the Globe playhouse from 1601-1622, and whose daughter-in-law, Mercy (nee Collett), became the stepmother of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), who leased the ground on which the Globe was built by lease dated 21 February 1599 to Richard Burbage (1568-1619), Cuthbert Burbage (1564/5-1636), William Kempe, Augustine Phillips (d.1605), Thomas Pope (d.1603) John Heminges (1566-1630) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford upon Avon (see TNA REQ 4/1/2):

*for the said gardens and grounds whereupon the said playhouse & galleries were afterwards builded were demised & letten by the said Nicholas Brend by his indenture of lease tripartite bearing date in or about the 21st day of February in the 41st year of the reign of the late Queen Elizabeth [=21 February 1599] unto Cuthbert Burbage, Richard Burbage, William Shakespeare, the said Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, the said John Heminges, one of the said defendants, and William Kempe, to have and to hold the one moiety of the said garden plots and ground to the said Cuthbert Burbage and Richard Burbage, their executors, administrators & assigns, from the feast of the birth of Our Lord God last past before the date of the said indenture [=25 December 1598] unto the end & term of 31 years from thence next ensuing [=24 December 1629] for the yearly rent of seven pounds & five shillings, and to have & to hold the other moiety of the said garden plots & grounds unto the said William Shakespeare, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, the said John Heminges, one of the said defendants, & William Kempe, their executors, administrators & assigns, from the said feast of the birth of Our Lord God then last past before the date of the said indenture unto the said full end & term of 31 years from thence next ensuing for the like yearly rent of seven pounds & five shillings.*

The testator was the son of Richard Bodley (d.1491), grocer of London, and Joan Warde of Hinxworth, whose brother, John Warde, was Lord Mayor of London in 1485. For the will of Richard Bodley, see TNA PROB 11/9/28. The testator's father, Richard Bodley, was of the same family as the founder of the Bodleian library, and bore the same coat of arms, 'Gules, five martlets argent on a chief indented or three crowns azure'. See the coat of arms and pedigree in Barron, Caroline M. and Anne F. Sutton, eds., *Medieval London Widows 1300-1500*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 208, 211 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=uc3RLXFANoMC&pg=PA211&lpg=PA211&dq=%22Nicholas+Leveson%22+%22William+Strete%22&source=bl&ots=91-CgadHEH&sig=Z2EpsIAd2E-DdqOcyE5Ta2znd-w&hl=en&sa=X&ei=hSZqVNTMIsevogSemICQAg&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Nicholas%20Leveson%22%20%22William%20Strete%22&f=false>

After the death of the testator's father, the testator's mother married William Holybrand, tallow chandler of London. For his will, dated 10 November 1505, to which the testator was a witness and in which he is referred to as 'my son, William Bodley of London, grocer', see TNA PROB 11/15/21.

The testator had an elder brother, Thomas Bodley (d.1537), vicar of South Weald, Essex, and two younger brothers, Ellis Bodley (d.1547/8), vicar of Beckenham and St. Stephen, Walbrook, and John Bodley, who died without issue. For the wills of the testator's brother, Thomas Bodley (d.1537), see TNA PROB 11/26/118 and TNA PROB 11/27/81. For the will of the testator's brother, Ellis Bodley, see TNA PROB 11/32/83.

The testator also had three sisters:

\* Emma Bodley (d.1554), who married firstly William(?) Pratt, and secondly Sir Christopher Askew, Lord Mayor of London in 1534/5. For the wills of Sir Christopher Askew and Emma (nee Bodley) Askew, see TNA PROB 11/27/529 and TNA PROB 11/37/124.

\* Isabella Bodley, who was the first wife of Sir William Butler or Boteler, Lord Mayor of London in 1515. See Barron, *supra*, p. 234, and the will of Sir William Butler, proved 11 February 1534, TNA PROB 11/25/123.

\* Ellen Bodley, who married firstly William Copland (d.1515), merchant tailor of London and partner of the London merchant and Lord Mayor, Sir Richard Gresham (d.1549). For the will of William Copland, dated 15 August 1517, in which the testator is bequeathed a black gown, see TNA PROB 11/19/177. After the death of William Copland, Ellen married secondly William Gresham (d.1548), elder brother of Sir Richard Gresham (see the *ODNB* entry). For the will of William Gresham, dated 12 March 1548, see TNA PROB 11/32/156. For the will of Ellen Bodley Copland Gresham, dated 6 July 1550, see TNA PROB 11/36/194. See also Leveson Gower, Granville, *Genealogy of the Family of Gresham*, (London: Mitchell & Hughes, 1883), pp. 86-7, 150, 161; and the History of Parliament entry for John Marshe at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/marshe-john-1516-79>.

The testator was a first cousin of Dionyse (nee Bodley) Leveson (d.1560), grandmother of William Leveson (d.1621), one of two trustees employed by William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon and other members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in the allocation of shares in the ground lease of the Globe Theatre in 1599. For the will of Dionyse Bodley Leveson, see TNA PROB 11/43/645. For the will of William Leveson (d.1621), see TNA PROB 11/137/600. For Dionyse Bodley Leveson's coat of arms, which indicates that she, too, was of the same family as the founder of the Bodleian Library, see 'Nicholas Leveson' in *Proceedings of the Evening Meetings of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, Session 1871*, (London: J.B. Nichols and Sons, 1872), pp. 46-55 at p. 46 and 55:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=6hEVAAAAQAAJ&pg=RA1-PA55&lpg=RA1-PA55&dq=%22gules+five+martlets+argent%22+%22Bodley%22&source=bl&ots=-OuodjcieN&sig=uZKxMVWSbxq3\\_kMyILKxf9Vw\\_7s&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCEQ6A](https://books.google.ca/books?id=6hEVAAAAQAAJ&pg=RA1-PA55&lpg=RA1-PA55&dq=%22gules+five+martlets+argent%22+%22Bodley%22&source=bl&ots=-OuodjcieN&sig=uZKxMVWSbxq3_kMyILKxf9Vw_7s&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCEQ6A)

EwAWoVChMI3JbEoMjDyAIViy-  
 ICh3NogZs#v=onepage&q=%22gules%20five%20martlets%20argent%22%20%22Bodl  
 ey%22&f=false.

The testator married firstly a wife named Elizabeth, widow of the London grocer, William Massett (d.1501?), and secondly Beatrice Sadler, said to have been the daughter of John Sadler, merchant of London. For the will of the testator's wife, Beatrice (nee Sadler) Bodley, see TNA PROB 11/42A/149. For William Massett, see Fincham, H.W., *The Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem and its Grand Priory of England*, (London: W.H. & L. Collingridge, 1915), p. p. 57 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/orderofhospitalo00finciala#page/n89/mode/2up>.

According to the wills of his brothers, Thomas Bodley (d.1537) and Ellis Bodley (d.1547/8), the testator had a son, Francis Bodley (d.1566), who married Mercy Collett, and three daughters, Alice, Katherine and Grissell. The testator's daughter, Katherine Bodley, married the London merchant, Vincent Amcotts. For the will of the testator's son, Francis Bodley, see TNA PROB 11/48/415.

In the will below the testator directs that his house in Bread Street be sold:

*Also I will that my house at Bread Street corner be sold, and the money thereof made that my daughter, Alice, shall have it according as my mother Byrrell [=Burrell?] willed me to give her.*

It may be that the house came to the testator through marriage, and that 'my mother Byrrell' is a reference to the testator's mother-in-law.

For the Bodley pedigree, see also Bannerman, W. Bruce, ed., *The Visitations of the County of Surrey*, (London: Harleian Society, 1899), Vol. XLIII, p. 147 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationscoun01banngoog#page/n160/mode/2up>.

As noted above, after the death of the testator's son, Francis, his widow, Mercy, married Thomas Brend (d. 21 September 1598), father of Nicholas Brend, who leased the land on which the Globe theatre was built to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon and other members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men. For the will of Thomas Brend, see TNA PROB 11/93/316.

For the financial transactions entered into in connection with the Globe playhouse by the testator's grandson, Sir John Bodley of Streatham, see TNA C 54/1682, mm. 10-11 and the other documents listed there.

LM: T{estamentum} Will{el}mi Bodley

In the name of God, Amen. The first day of the month of December the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred thirty and nine and the 31<sup>st</sup> year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the Eight, I, William Bodley, citizen and grocer of London, whole in mind, thank be to Our Lord Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, make this my last will:

First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, my Redeemer, and to Our Blessed Lady his Mother, and to all the holy company of heaven, my body to be buried under the door as they go into the Trinity chapel where my father and my mother and Elizabeth, my wife, lie, on the left hand of my father's tomb;

And I bequeath to the high altar 3s 4d for my tithes negligently forgotten in this my parish of Saint Botolph's;

And also I bequeath to the brotherhood of Our Lady and Saint John in this parish 6s 8d;

Also I will that my house at Bread Street corner be sold, and the money thereof made that my daughter, Alice, shall have it according as my mother Byrrell [=Burrell?] willed me to give her;

Also I will that my part be divided among my children;

Also my debts paid;

And as for the debts that my brother asketh of me for my brother vicar, he hath forgiven me the one half and the rest he hath taken of me, and as their conscience will, so let them do for me;

Of this my last will I make Beatrice, my wife, and my brother Master Doctor overseer, and I give him forty shillings;

In witness I have writ this my last will and set to my name. Per me, William Bodley.

Also I will my Company have £4 to make them a recreation at hall.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentu{m} coram D{omi}no apud London vicesimo sexto die mensis Novembr{is} anno D{omi}ni Mill{esi}mo quingen{tesim}o quadragesimo Iurament{o} Relicte et executricis in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento no{m}i{n}at{e} Ac approbat{um} et insinuat{um} Et com{m}issa fuit administrac{i}o om{n}i{um} et singuloru{m} bonoru{m} iuriu{m} et credit{orum} &c executrici predictae De bene et fideli{te}r &c Ac etiam de pleno et fideli In{uenta}rio conficiend{o} et exhibend{o} Necnon de plano et vero comp{ot}o &c Ad sancta &c

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[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at London on the twenty-sixth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fortieth by the oath of the relict and executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted to the executrix aforesaid of all and singular the goods, rights and credits etc., [+sworn] on the Holy [+Gospels] etc. to well and faithfully etc., and also to prepare and exhibit a full and faithful inventory, and also a plain and true account etc.]