

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 16 May 1541 and proved 11 October 1541, of Agnes Wigston, whose brother-in-law, Roger Wigston (c.1483 - 27 November 1542), esquire, was the grandfather of Roger Wigston (c.1537 - 1608), at whose home, Wolston Priory, the last two Marprelate tracts, the *Theses Martinianae* and the *Just Censure and Reproof of Martin Junior*, were printed on a secret press in July 1589.

According to Hartopp, the testatrix was the daughter of William Pysford (d.1518) of Coventry. See Hartopp, Henry, 'Wigston or Wiggeston Family of Leicester' in Spencer, John and Thomas Spencer, eds., *Leicestershire and Rutland Notes and Queries and Antiquarian Gleaner*, Vol. III, (London: Elliot Stock, 1895), pp. 270-72 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/leicestershirea00unkngoog#page/n325/mode/2up>

According to the will below the testatrix had a sister married to a husband surnamed Norton, a sister married to a husband surnamed Wethell, and a sister Agnes, married to a husband surnamed Nicholls.

MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN

According to Hartopp, the testatrix married firstly William Ford of Coventry, by whom she had a daughter, Jane Ford. The testatrix' daughter, Jane, married firstly Nicholas Trotter of London, by whom she had a daughter, Mary Trotter (b. December 1525), and secondly Henry Barnes, named in the will below as the testatrix' executor. The testatrix' daughter, Jane, and her second husband, Henry Barnes, brought proceedings in the Star Chamber in 1537 concerning Jane's daughter, Mary Trotter. See Mundy, Percy D., ed., *Abstracts of Star Chamber Proceedings Relating to the County of Sussex, Henry VII to Philip and Mary*, (Sussex Record Society, 1913), pp. 5-8 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/abstractsofstar00greauoft#page/4/mode/2up/>

The testatrix married secondly William Wigston (d. 8 July 1536), by whom she had no issue. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/25/556.

For the will of the testatrix' brother-in-law, Roger Wigston (c.1483 - 27 November 1542), esquire, see TNA PROB 11/29/275.

T{estamentum} Anne Wigston

In the name of the high and most blessed Trinity, I, Agnes Wigston of Leicester, widow, late the wife of William Wigston, merchant of the Staple of Calais, being in good health and whole of mind and memory, make this my last will and testament in manner and

form following, that is to wit, when it pleaseth(?) God to call me unto his mercy, I bequeath my soul unto his infinite mercy, beseeching him to receive it unto his infinite mercy and to the number of them that shall be saved and to be one of the partakers of the merits of his blessed passion;

And my body I bequeath unto the earth to be buried in the New College of Leicester of the north side of the body of the church and chapel that my husband there founded, as nigh to my husband as may be conveniently;

I bequeath to our mother church of Lincolnus 6s 8d;

And to my curate that [f. 273r] duty that is due to him for the mortuary;

Item, I bequeath for my burial and for clothing forty pound;

Item, I bequeath twenty pound for my dole at the day of my burial & shortly after by the discretion of mine executors at their houses to be dealt;

Item, I bequeath also ten trigintals to be said after my departing and in the day of my burial or thereabouts, summa £5;

Item, I bequeath to the Newarke of Leicester £3, of the which I will that twenty shillings be bestowed of the ornaments of my husband's chapel there;

Item, I will that a priest celebrate in Saint Martin's church at Leicester at the rood altar for my soul and for the souls of my husband and father and mother and all Christians 10 years, and he to help to maintain God's service in the choir and to have every year for his stipend £5 6s 8d, summa £53 6s 8d;

Item, I bequeath to my obit to be done in Saint Martin's church the day of my burial for priests and clerks of the same church and to the children and for the bells 26s 8d;

Item, to every other parish church in Leicester the day of my burial for dirge and Mass and for the bells, and it to be ordered after the discretion of mine executors 13s 4d;

Item, I will that there be dealt to poor people at the five evens of Our Lord and of Our Blessed Lady the space of ten years and 4s at a day, summa £20;

Item, I bequeath forty pound to be bestowed upon highways about Leicester;

Item, I bequeath twenty pound to be bestowed on the bedehouse of my husband's in Leicester, of the which I will that the master of the hospital there bestow upon every house towards the reparations of their beds 6s 8d after his discretion, and the rest go to the profit of the house;

Item, to my husband's bedehouse in Coventry to every house ten shillings for the space of ten years, and it to be bestowed upon fuel or any other necessities after the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I bequeath ten pound to be dealt to poor folks in Coventry in weilles [=veils?], cardes(?), shirts and smocks;

Item, I bequeath five pound toward deliverance of prisoners in Leicester at sessions when they be quit, and to be spend [=spent] every year a portion after the discretion of mine executors;

Item, to twenty maids born in Coventry towards their marriages, every one twenty shillings, summa twenty pound;

Item, to 5 trigintals every year for five years, summa £12 10s;

Item, to Saint Martin's church in Leicester 40s;

Item, to every altar in the same church a sheet for an altar cloth and a kercher for a corporas;

Item, I will that the tithes of the south field that I have taken of the abbey of Leicester for certain years by indentures of the lease that I have bought of Phillippes Wrethe(?), that they shall remain to the master and his brethren of my husband's bedehouse in Leicester and to their successors towards their charges to keep commons in the said house, paying yearly the rent that is due therefore;

Item, I bequeath to my son [=son-in-law] Barnes and to my daughter, his wife, 2 hundred pound which he hath now in his hands in occupying for me and hath had certain years, but my will is that all my other money and goods that shall come to his hands from beyond the sea or is come, that he shall deliver it to the other of mine executors to the performance of my will;

Also I bequeath £100 to the children of my son Barnes that he hath by my daughter, and I will that my son Barnes receive it, and he to deliver it to his said children by even portions, and if any of them depart to God, that then his part among the rest;

Item, I bequeath to Henry Barnes twenty pound;

Item, I bequeath to my said daughter, Jane Barnes, 3 gilt goblets with the cover, my best salts, my best standing cup, a basin, an ewer, a dozen spoons of the 'Postles;

Item, I bequeath to my brother Norton twenty pound, and to my sister, his wife, 3 goblets with the cover parcel gilt that were my husband's, my little salts, a black nut with a cover, a dozen spoons, a pair of long coral beads, a girdle of stool-work set with roses and pearl

with the harness, 2 tablecloths, the one of diaper and the other plain, a diaper towel, a dozen of diaper napkins, 2 pair of flaxen sheets, a ring with a turkey [=turquoise];

Item, I bequeath to my brother Wethell a spice-dish of silver gilt with the fork;

And to my sister, his wife, my little black nut with the cover, a ring with a poucle(?) diamond, and 2 little bottles to cast rosewater;

And to every one of his children 20s;

Item, I bequeath to every one of my sister Agnes Nicholls' children 40s;

Item, to Richard Walker of Coventry £6 13s 4d which he hath in his hands and doth owe it to me;

Item, to my cousin, Randolph Wood, 40s, and to his children £6 13s 4d, which I will that he receive it and to deliver and part it to them by even portions;

Item, to every one of my godchildren within Leicester not married 3s 4d;

Item, a suit of vestments to Saint Michael's church in Coventry of purple cloth of yellow, that is to say, for the priest, deacon and subdeacon, one cope;

Item, I bequeath one hundred pound to find a schoolmaster in Leicester for as long as it may after the years be expired or the money spended of the school after that my brother [=brother-in-law], Master Thomas Wigston, did give;

Item, I bequeath twenty pound to the town of Leicester for this use, to help to bear the charges of the poor commons when there cometh any payment to the King's grace that be set at 2d or 4d or thereabouts after the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I bequeath to my brother [=brother-in-law], Roger Wigston, a cross of gold with the picture of Our Lord on it that was my husband's;

And to my sister [=sister-in-law], his wife, a ring of bead fashion with a sapphire;

Item, to my cousin [=nephew?], William Wigston, a brooch of gold with the salutation of Our Lady and £6 13s 4d;

And to his wife a little ring with a diamond, a tablecloth of diaper, a towel of diaper, and 2 pair of sheets;

Item, to my cousin, Anne Higford, twenty shillings;

Item, to my cousin, Roger Gyllott, 40s;

And his wife a ring with a sanguine stone;

[f. 273v] Item, to my cousin, John Harwar, forty shilling sterling;

To his wife, a black riband with knops of gold;

Item, to Richard Staples 40s;

And to his wife, a black gown, a kirtle, 2 pair of sheets;

And I will that my bequests to my friends be paid of my goods that shall come from beyond the sea;

Item, I bequeath to Mr Robert Pachett [=Paget?] a gilt cup with the cover to drink ale;

Item, to Mr William Gyllot a silver pot of stall [=steel?] to drink ale;

Item, to Master Walter Browne a little Maudlin cup with a cover, silver and gilt, to drink wine withal;

Item, to my sister Bond a little ring with a sapphire;

Item, to Christian Marler a great ring with a turquoise, a little chain of gold, a flower of gold and robes [sic for 'rubies'?] with apparel [=a pearl?] hanging to it;

Item, to John Wigston of Elston twenty shillings;

Item, to Dan [sic for 'Dame'?] Anne Gyllott forty shillings;

Item, to Agnes Sewnsto of Coventry a little ring with a white camewey [=cameo?];

Item, to John Oldham 40s;

And to every other manservant to be belonging at my departing forty shillings except him of the kitchen that have ten shillings;

Item, to every woman servant time of my departing forty shillings and a pair of sheets;

Item, I bequeath to Mary Trotter £50, a pair of gilt salts with my husband's mark of the cover, a plain standing cup gilt, 3 goblets parcel gilt with my husband's mark upon the cover, a dozen spoons of the Apostles, my best girdle of stool-work with the harness, a pair of silver beads, double gauded with silver and gilt, a great ring of scals [=scales?] with a stone, and in bedding, napery, brass, pewter, maskelen [=maslin] and other necessaries of household to the value of twenty pound;

Item, to Sir Thomas Thorpe six pound thirteen shillings and four pence and a black gown;

Item, to Mr William Bradley twenty shillings;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Davenport £100 if he do marry Marie Trotter, but if he do not, then to have alonely £40;

Item, to my cousin, Sir William Herwer, 20s;

And my will is that if so fortune that there cometh no sufficient goods to th' hands of mine executors to perform this my last will withal, that then every particular bequests to my friends be minished after the quantity of the same that shall want to perform this my last testament;

And of this my last will I ordain and constitute my son Barnes, Master Robert Pagett, Master William Gylot and Master Walter Browne mine undoubted and faithful executors;

And Mr Robert Pagett to have for his pains and labour ten pound;

And Mr Walter Browne ten pound;

And all the rest of my goods, my will performed, I will that they be divided into two equal parts, and thone of them shall be kept 5 or 6 years where mine executors shall think it best for to bear all manner of charges and costs that shall fortune to mine executors or to any of them for cause or causes, and after the said years be 'complished, then the remainder I will that mine executors bestow it in works of pity after their discretion;

And thother equal part I give to the use of my son Barnes and to his wife;

But if thother part aforesaid be not sufficient to discharge all charges or costs that may or do fortune to mine executors for my cause or causes, that then my son Barnes shall suffice it with his part;

And for a sure knowledge that this is my last will I have caused it to be writ the 16 day of May in the 33rd year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8th and subscribed my name with my proper hand the day and year aforesaid. By me, Agnes Wigston. Per me Roger Gillett. Per me Randell Wood. By me, John Heyrick. By me, William Mause. By me, Thomas Thorpe.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum coram D{omi}no apud London Vndecimo die mensis Octobris Anno dominj Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quadragesimo primo Iurament{o} Henrici Barnes p{er}s{onali}t{er} p{rese}nt{is} et D{omi}ni Thome Thorpe cl{er}ici procur{atoris} alior{um} executor{um} Et com{m}issa fuit administrac{i}o o{mn}i{u}m et singulorum bonor{um} iuriu{m} et creditorum dicti

defuncti p[re]fat[us] executoribus de bene etc Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario ex[hibendo]
necnon de plano et vero comp[ot]o reddend[o] Ad sancta Dei Eu[an]gelia Iurat[us]

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at London on the eleventh day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred forty-first by the oath of Henry Barnes, personally present, and Sir Thomas Thorpe, clerk, proctor of the other executors, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory, and also to render a plain and true account.]