

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 18 April 1558 and proved 9 February 1559, of James Castelyn, mercer, whose niece, Elizabeth Castelyn, was the stepmother of Humphrey Martyn (d.1587?), the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575, and whose nephew, John Castelyn, married Humphrey Martyn's sister. See the Langham page on this website.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator states that he (and perhaps his ancestors?) were from Norton in Derbyshire:

Item, I bequeath to the parish church of Norton in Derbyshire where I was born a vestment of russet velvet and a cope of the same colour, and ten shillings to be a collation made in the church at the delivery of them, and that they shall pray for me and mine ancestors.

The names of the testator's parents are unknown. He had a brother:

-William Castelyn, who married Angelet Vlacho or Vlachos (buried 19 August 1570), the eldest daughter and heir of Michel Vlacho of Chios, Greece, by whom he had three sons (Edward, Thomas and John) and three daughters (Elizabeth, Bennet and Anne), for whom see his will, TNA PROB 11/32/39. William Castelyn's son, Edward Castelyn, and daughters, Bennet Castelyn and Anne Castelyn, are mentioned in the will below.

For a Chancery suit mentioning the testator and his brother, William Castelyn, see TNA C 1/824/70-73.

For a suit in the Court of Admiralty concerning the testator's ship, the 'George Duffield', see Marsden, Reginald G., ed., *Select Pleas in the Court of Admiralty*, (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1894), p. 106 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=20Q8AAAAIAAJ&pg=PA106>

This was an important case. . . . The proceedings lasted for two or three years, circa 1538-1541. Money was taken up at Cadiz by the master for the use of the ship upon bills payable upon the arrival of the ship; the ship did not accomplish her voyage to England, and put into St. Michael's in distress, and was there lost. The lenders alleged that she was unseaworthy when she sailed, and that the master purposely cast her away at St. Michael's; and that consequently the money was payable although the ship did not accomplish her voyage.

It appears from the pleadings that James Castelyn was master of the 'George Duffield' when the ship was deserted at Ponta Delgada on the island of St Michael's in the Azores, and that his brother, William Castelyn, had authorized the taking up of money at Cadiz:

. . . that James Castelyn had a special mandate from William Castelyn to take up money for the ship; therefore William is liable and also his goods.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

In the will below the testator mentions his two wives, deceased, as well as his surviving wife, Elizabeth.

The testator had a son and a daughter:

* **James Castelyn**, under 21 when the testator made his will.

* **Angel Castelyn**, under 21 when the testator made his will.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

Sir Roger Martyn (d.1573), Lord Mayor of London, whom the testator appoints as one of his executors, married, as his second wife, the testator's niece, Elizabeth Castelyn. For the will of Sir Roger Martyn, see TNA PROB 11/56/48. For the will of Elizabeth (nee Castelyn) Knolles Martyn, see TNA PROB 11/65/430.

Thomas Allen, whom the testator appoints as another of his executors, may have been Thomas Allen, skinner, who invested in the Frobisher voyages. See TNA E 164/35, pp. 171-3, and Huntington Library HM 715, ff. 1-3. For the will, dated 23 November 1591 and proved 12 April 1592, of Thomas Allen, skinner, see TNA PROB 11/79/254.

LM: T{estamentum} Iacobi Castlyn

In the name of [+God], Amen. Anno Domini 1558 the 18th day of April, be it known to all men by these presents that [+I?], James Castelyn of London, mercer, perfect in mind and whole in body, do constitute and make this my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I bequeath my soul into the hands of Our Lord Jesu Christ, Our Lady Saint Mary, and all the blessed company of saints, trusting fully to be saved through the blood and passion of Our Lord Jesu Christ;

And my body to be buried in the church where it pleaseth Almighty God to call me;

And to the same church I bequeath 6s 8d to the furnishing of the high altar;

Also I will at the day of my burial that 20s to be given to the poor;

And for the charges of the burial, I defer it unto the discretion of my executors and overseers;

First I bequeath all my lands unto my son, James Castelyn, and to his heirs;

And if it fortune him to depart this world afore he come to his perfect age, then I will my daughter, Angel, shall have all my lands;

And if God take both them without issue, then my nephew, Edward Castelyn, shall have all my lands;

Furthermore I bequeath all my farms and leases which I have in my hands unto my said son, James, and to my daughter, Angel, to be divided equally betwixt them the profits that shall come of such leases and farms;

And as I said before, if either chance to depart, the other to enjoy the whole;

Further I bequeath unto my son, James, a gold ring with a seal of a talbot, [+and a?] casting-bottle of silver and gilt;

Also I bequeath unto Angel, my daughter, my ring with the blue sapphire, and a pepperbox of silver parcel gilt;

Also I bequeath unto Dorothy Lawson ten pound if she live till God call her to marriage, and not afore;

Also I bequeath unto my man, Symond, if he be in my service, 20s and new apparel;

Item, I bequeath unto Margaret, wife unto Henry Callewaye, a mattress, a bolster, a pair of sheets, a pillow, 2 blankets, one covering, 3 dishes, 3 platters, 3 saucers, one tin salt, one pint pot;

This I give if she be living at my departure, or else not;

Item, I bequeath to the parish church of Norton in Derbyshire where I was born a vestment of russet velvet and a cope of the same colour, and ten shillings to be a collation made in the church at the delivery of them, and that they shall pray for me and mine ancestors;

And further I will that my old apparel to be given to the poor;

And further I will that immediately after my burial an inventory be made of all my goods, as rings, jewels, (blank), tablets, with all my plate, with all other goods, and to be divided in three parts, one part for myself to fulfil my legacies, the second part for my wife, and

the third unto my children James and Angel, whom I make my full and whole executors of this my will and testament;

And if it chance that one depart to God, the other to be wholly executor and to enjoy all the goods and profits;

And if it fortune that both depart afore their years of age come, then I will that Mr Roger Martyn, Edward Castelyn and Thomas Allen to be my executors and to have for their labour £10 apiece, and the rest of my goods to be given to the poor of my kin at their discretion, or other poor;

Item, I bequeath unto John Patenson one gold ring at the discretion of my overseer;

And also I will that Mr Roger Martyn, Edward Castelyn and Thomas Allen to be my overseers of this will, and to have the custody of all their goods and leases till the children come to their age to the only profit of my said children and their bringing up, and I give them for their labour 40s apiece;

All other goods unbequeathed I give it wholly unto my children which be my executors;

Also I give and bequeath all such apparel as were my 2 late wives' now deceased to be divided in 3 equal parts, that is to weet, one third part to Elizabeth, my wife, one third part to Bennet Hammerton, my niece, and the other third part to Anne Castelyn, my niece, saving that out of the said apparel I will first be given to Margatte [Margaret?] Calewaye, sometime my maid, and to Agnes, now my maid, to each of them a frock or other vesture at the discretion of my said overseer. Per me, James Castelyn. Per me, George Allen. Per me, Thomas Fawconer.

Debts to be received which I have by the executors of Harry Clerke:

Imprimis, of Doctor Story threescore [f. 278r] pounds;

Item, of Master Champes £10;

Item, of John Russell £10;

Item, Mr Stevens of Billingsgate £20;

Item, for rent at Vxceter £14.

Nono die mensis ffebruarij Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo octavo emanuit Com{m}issio mag{ist}ro Rogero Martyn Ciui et Aldermanno Ciuitatis London et Thome Allen sup{er}uisoribus testamenti anted{ic}ti defuncti ad administrand{um} bona ip{s}ius defunct{i} iuxta tenorem h{uius}mo{d}i testamenti

duran{te} minor etat{is} executor{um} de bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario
Necnon de vero et plano compot{o} reddend{o} &c Iurat{is} Res{er}uat{a} p{otes}tate
Edwardo Castlyn sup{er}uisor{i} etiam cu{m} venerit &c

[=On the ninth day of February in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-
eighth a grant issued to Master Roger Martyn, citizen and alderman of the city of
London, and Thomas Allen, supervisors of the will of the aforesaid deceased, to
administer the goods of the same deceased according to the tenor of the same testament
during the minority of the executors, sworn to well etc., and [+to exhibit?] a full and
faithful inventory, and also to render a true and plain account etc., with power reserved to
Edward Castelyn, supervisor also, when he shall have come etc.]