

SUMMARY: The document below is the will, dated 2 October 1570 and proved 10 November 1571, of William Saunders of Ewell, grandfather of the dedicatee of *Greene's Vision* (1592). William Saunders' first wife, and the mother of the children named in his will, was Joan Marston (d.1540), the daughter of William Marston (d.1511) of Horton and his wife Beatrix Barlee, and the sister of Oxford's step-grandmother, Ursula Marston. When Joan Marston married William Saunders, she was the widow of Nicholas Mynne (d.1528), by whom she had several children (see his will, PROB 11/22, f. 275). Joan Marston Saunders died in 1540, and within a few years William Saunders of Ewell married a second wife named Joan. In C 1/1141/51-53 she is described as Joan, the wife of William Saunders, gentleman, and executrix and late the wife of Thomas Gittons, citizen and vintner of London. It is therefore Joan Gittons Saunders, not Joan Marston Saunders, who is the wife 'Joan' mentioned in William Saunders' will. In his will dated 14 February 1543, Thomas Gittons gives the names of his children as William, Oliver, John, Alberly and Christian Gittons (see PROB 11/29). Oliver, Alberly and Christian are also mentioned in the will of Joan Gittons Saunders dated 14 April, 1580 (see PROB 11/63, f. 224). Oxford's servant, Nicholas Mynne, was almost certainly a member of the family of Nicholas Mynne (d.1528), the first husband of Joan Marston Saunders. As mentioned in the will, the testator's daughter, Urith Saunders, married John Palgrave (1530-1611) of Norwood Barningham in Norfolk. The daughter referred to as 'my daughter Lusher', appears to have been Mary Saunders, the wife of Nicholas Lusher (d.1566) of Puttenham in Surrey. The testator's daughter Frances (d.1622) was the second wife of Henry Spelman (d.1581) of Congham, Norfolk, and by him the mother of the historian and antiquary Sir Henry Spelman (1564-1641). The Thomas Lisle, esquire, who is named as an overseer of the will appears to have been Thomas Lisle of Great Wilbraham in Cambridgeshire, the second husband of Joan Marston Saunders' mother, Beatrix Barlee, whom she married after the death of William Marston of Horton in 1511.

L.M.: Testamentum Willelmi Saunder

In the name of God, Amen. I, William Saunders of Ewell in the county of Surrey, esquire, whole of body and perfect of mind and memory, thanks be to Almighty God, by good deliberation, advice and remembrance, revoking all other former wills at any time before made, do make this my present last will and testament the second day of October in the year of our Lord God 1570 in manner and form following:

First, I bequeath my soul to our Saviour, Jesu Christ, Maker and Redeemer of the world, and my body to be buried in the chapel nigh my tomb within the parish church of Ewell aforesaid if I shall so happen there to die and to depart this transitory world, or else in Christian burial where it shall please God I shall happen to die, without any pomp in any wise to be made, beseeching all good and well-disposed people to beseech God to have mercy on my soul, Amen.

Item, I bequeath to the parish church of Ewell 6s 8d, and for my tithes negligently forgotten, 12d;

Item, I give to the poor people of the parish of Ewell 20s, and to the poor of Epsom 20s, and unto the poor people of the parish of Cliff in Kent 20s, to be divided at the discretion of my executors [sic?];

Also I bequeath unto every of my godchildren 12d;

Item, I will that all my debts that I do owe to any person or persons in law or conscience to be truly paid & contented by my executors;

Item, I give unto my well-beloved wife all her apparel and jewels which she hath in her keeping, reserving my plate saving that I do hereafter bequeath unto her, and I give unto her the one half of all my kine at Ewell and of my hogs at Ewell, with my black ambling nag and the bay curtal, with the one half of all my fattening sheep and the one half of all my corn in my barns at Ewell after my month's day to be divided;

Item, I give and bequeath unto her the bed with all the apparel of the chamber that she lieth in at Ewell, and th' one half of all my bedding and household stuff which I have at my house at Cliff in Kent, and th' other half of all such household stuff as bedding, hangings, linen, woollen, coverlets, blankets, cushions, pewter & brass I would should remain there still to th' use of him who shall have the said house after my wife's decease as hereafter shall be mentioned, provided that my said wife may have the occupying of all the said household stuff there during her life if she do dwell in and at the said house at Cliff, not having nor removing any part of the said half out of the said house nor from the said house, nor in any wise to minish it nor to misuse it, and that she find sureties for the leaving of it there after her death, whereof I would an inventory to be made thereof between my said wife and mine executors immediately after my death in avoiding of all strife and variance;

Also I give and bequeath unto my said wife one silver salt, one silver pot, one silver goblet with a dozen of silver spoons, with all my stoned pots covered with silver lids;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Erasmus Saunders, my son, my cross of gold with a pearl in th' end thereof, and my best doublet of purple satin, and one hundred pounds to be paid him by my executors;

Item, I give in token of remembrance unto Johennet, his good wife, two old angels;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Francis Saunders, my son, my ouch of gold with a Morian's face, with a cross of mother-of-pearl, my great ring of gold with a turquoise in it, with all mine apparel saving that I do give away hereafter, with one complete harness, and also I give unto him all the bed and that belongeth unto it with all the hangings in the chamber which is called Mr Saint John's chamber, and I give to him my lease which I have of my Lady's Grace of Somerset in Ashtead;

Item, I do forgive my daughter Lusher all such money that her late husband oweth me by especialties or otherwise, and all such money which I have paid for her in the obtaining of the wardship of Nicholas Lusher, her son, any manner of ways, and all that I have lent her at any time, and I give and bequeath unto her one ring with a (blank) in it and 2 old angels, and I give and bequeath unto every of her daughters, as unto Jane, Elizabeth, Mary and Margaret Lusher, ten pounds to be paid unto them by mine executors at the day of their marriage, and if it shall happen that any of them shall die before they shall be married, then I will that the part of her to first so die should remain unto Mary Lusher, her daughter, and if any mo than one of them shall happen so to depart this world, the part or parts of them so deceased should remain equally between them that be living;

Item, I give unto my daughter, Frances Spelman (blank), and unto my daughter, Elizabeth Castell, a ring (blank), and unto my daughter, Urith Palgrave, and to my daughter, Katherine Carvell (blank);

Item, I give unto Oliver Gittons my gown furred with genets, my velvet jerkin and my cloak, and a pair of my hosen, and (blank);

Item, I give unto Thomas Bromley my best coat, my doublet of (blank);

Item, I give unto every of my servants, men and women, 40d a piece;

The residue of all my goods, my debts and legacies paid, I give unto Nicholas Saunders;

Item, I would that my said son, Nicholas Saunders, should keep house at Ewell for my wife and all my servants one quarter of a year next after my death so that they may get masters in the meantime;

Item, I will that Edward Griffin and his wife and Richard Stephen should sit in their several farms one year next after my death rent-free, paying the quit-rents to the chief lord of the fee the same year next after my death, or else to give unto them so much money as their several rents shall amount unto within one year next ensuing after my death, and I give unto the said Richard Stephen twenty shillings in money;

Item, I will that all my goods, chattels and debts owing unto me upon especialties and otherwise, after my debts paid, shall run unto the performance of this my present will, and if in case that my goods unbequeathed, chattels and corn, with such debts which are owing unto me by any person or persons, will not amount unto the perfect manner(?) of this my present will, that then I will that the first crop or selling of all my coppice-woods which are now standing and growing in Varnet wood at Beawell, Lynnet's grove, Bettis hill or in any other coppice-woods pertaining unto the manor of Chessington, late parcel of ye dissolved monastery of Merton Abbey, should run to the performance thereof, and if that will not amount thereunto, then I will that the yearly revenues, issues, rents and profits other than are granted out of the manor of Parrock and the iron-mill there, with the yearly rents and profits of the foresaid manor of Chessington, should run yearly unto the

performance of this my present will and testament unto such time that this my present will may wholly be performed and fulfilled, and if in case the said Nicholas Saunders, my son, will not see to the performance of this my present will, that then I will that (blank), my feoffees of and in the said manors of Parrock and Chessington, do enter into the said manors and every part of them, and so to take ye profits of them unto this my present will shall be fully in everything performed according to my will and intent, anything before rehearsed to the contrary notwithstanding;

Provided always that Francis Saunders, my son, may take, reserve and enjoy the only yearly rent or annuity of £20 by year going out of the foresaid manor of Parrock during his natural life without any let or interruption of any person or persons, the same to be paid yearly at two several times in the year, that is to wit, within 31 days next after the feast of the Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady Saint Mary the Virgin and Saint Michael th' Archangel by even portions to be paid, and so to begin at the said feast which shall next ensue after the death of me, the said William Saunders, and not before, and the said rent so to be paid yearly unto the said Francis Saunders by my said executor, and if he will not pay it to him, that then my said executors [sic?] to have the receipt of the said manor of Parrock and so to see him paid, and if it be not paid as it is before expressed, that then it shall be lawful unto the said Francis Saunders and his assigns to distrain in any part of the said manor of Parrock or in any part of ye manor of Chessington, and the said distresses so taken lawfully to lead, drive and carry away, and them to detain till that he of the said rent with the arrearages of the same be fully to him satisfied, contented and paid;

Also I will that Joan, my well-beloved wife, shall have in full satisfaction and contentation of her jointure or dower, over and besides the manor of Cardons with all and singular their appurtenances in Cliff, Higham and Frindsbury, all these my lands, tenements, rents, woods and profits which I, the said William Saunders, bought of Sir Oliver Leder, knight, and David Gittons, citizen and vintner of London, situated, lying and being within the parishes of Cliff, Cowling, Higham, & Frindsbury aforesaid in the county of Kent during her natural life, keeping the reparations of the premises without doing strip or waste of any part of the premises;

Item, I will that after ye decease of Joan, my said wife, I will that all the said manor of Cardons with the appurtenances and all other such lands and tenements, rents and services, woods, waters, leasows, pastures, meadows, marshes that late were parcel of the late dissolved Charterhouse in London situated, lying, standing and being within the parishes of Cliff, Higham and Frindsbury, and with all such messuages, lands, tenements, marshes, woods, meadows, pastures, leasows, arable ground with all manner rents and services to them belonging or pertaining which I bought of Sir Oliver Leder and of David Gittons aforesaid situated, lying and being within the parishes of Cliff, Cowling, Higham and Frindsbury within the county of Kent aforesaid, shall wholly remain unto Nicholas Saunders, my eldest son, and to his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, I will that all the said manor of Cardons and all other such lands and tenements before expressed with their appurtenances lying and being within the foresaid parishes of Cliff, Cowling, Higham &

Frindsbury shall wholly remain unto Erasmus Saunders, my son, and unto the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that all the said manor of Cardons and all other the foresaid lands and tenements with their appurtenances should wholly remain unto Francis Saunders, my son, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that the said manor of Cardons and all other lands and tenements before expressed lying and being within the parishes of Cliff, Cowling, Higham and Frindsbury within the county of Kent shall wholly remain unto the right heirs of me, the said William Saunders, forever;

Item, I will that all such lands that I bought of John Potts, and all such lands that I bought of Nicholas Orwell, gentleman, and all such lands that I bought of (blank) Goldock lying in Southwood within ye parish of Cliff in the foresaid county of Kent shall wholly remain immediately after my death unto Francis Saunders, my son, and unto his heirs forever;

Item, where I bought of Nicholas Orwell, gentleman, a marsh in Cliff called Harsing marsh, it is to the use of Erasmus and Francis Saunders, my sons, forever, as by the letters patents thereof made may appear;

Item, I will and bequeath unto Francis Saunders, my son, mine annuity or annual rent of £6 by year which I bought of George Lusher and William Lusher, his son, going out of Nicholas Lusher's lands in Puttenham in the county of Surrey, to him and to his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue of his body lawfully begotten, I will that the said annuity of £6 by year shall wholly remain unto Nicholas Lusher, my godson, and to his heirs forever;

Item, I will that my foresaid manor of Parrock with the iron-mill and all such my lands, tenements, rents, woods, meadows, leasows, arable ground, pastures, feedings, ponds and waters with all their appurtenances which I have set, lying and being within the parish of Hartfield within the county of Sussex called Parrock Inhams, & with all the manor of Chessington and ye parsonage of Ewell with all such lands, meadows, pastures, woods, tenements, tithes, emoluments and profits pertaining to either of them lying and being within ye parishes of Chessington, Ditton, Kingston and Ewell within the county of Surrey shall wholly remain unto my son, Nicholas Saunders, and unto the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that the said manor of Parrock, iron-mill, Parrock Inhams with their appurtenances in the county of Sussex and the said manor of Chessington with the parsonage of Ewell aforesaid in ye county of Surrey shall remain wholly unto Erasmus Saunders, my son, & to ye heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue of his body lawfully begotten, I will that the said manor of Parrock, iron-mill and Parrock Inhams with their appurtenances within the county of Sussex & ye foresaid manor of Chessington and parsonage of Ewell aforesaid with all manner of their appurtenances shall wholly remain unto Francis Saunders, my son, & to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that all the said manors of Parrock and Chessington with the parsonage of Ewell with all other before expressed & mentioned lands and tenements

within the parishes of Hartfield, Chessington, Ditton, Kingston & Ewell within the foresaid counties of Sussex and Surrey shall wholly remain unto the right heirs of me, the said William Saunders, forever;

Item, I will that all my other manors, lands and tenements which I had of my good father, Harry Saunders, situate, lying & being within the parishes of Ewell, Epsom(?), Chessington, Saint Saviour's in Southwark, Bletchingley, Nutfield, Charlwood, Horley, Newdigate and Ockley within the county of Surrey shall wholly remain still according unto the last will and testament of my said late father, Harry Saunders, without breaking or infringing of any part or parcel thereof in any manner of wise;

Item, I make & ordain overseers of this my present last will and testament my especial good Lord Lumley and Thomas Lisle, esquire, desiring them to see this my present will performed, and if any case of variance shall happen between my said wife and my said son, Nicholas Saunders, or of any of my other children after my death for any manner, thing, requiring them to set some good agreement between them, and I bequeath to every of them 20s, and unto my especial good Lady Lumley, one old rial;

And I make Nicholas Saunders my sole executor of this my present will, desiring him to be good unto my said wife and unto all my children, giving him and all the rest of them my blessing;

In witness whereof unto this my present last will & testament I have subscribed my name the day and year above-written. Per me suprascriptum Willelmum Saunder.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi testamentum Coram domino cantuariensis Archiepiscopo apud London xo Novembris 1571 Iuramento Peter Johnson notarij publici procuratoris Nicholai Saunder executori &c Cui &c de bene &c Iurati &c

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1571 by the oath of Peter Johnson, notary public, proctor of Nicholas Saunders, executor etc., to whom etc., to well etc., sworn etc.]