

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 6 October 1581 and proved 1 July 1583, of Elizabeth Martyn, the second wife of Sir Roger Martyn (d.1573), Lord Mayor of London, and the stepmother of Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes the Earl of Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575.

The testatrix was the daughter of William Castlyn. Her first husband, the mercer Thomas Knolles, died 11 July 1550 (for his will, see TNA PROB 11/34, f. 131). Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, mentioned in the will below, were her sons by this marriage. By her second marriage to Sir Roger Martyn, the testatrix had three daughters. Mary Martyn was the wife of Alexander Denton of Hillesden in Buckinghamshire, and was apparently deceased by the date of the will below. There is a portrait of her at age fifteen in the York City Art Gallery (see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/60861613@N00/3787879041/>). Joan Martyn married Anthony Smith of Camden in 1593. Anne Martyn was the wife of Anthony Culpeper (1560-1618) of Bedgebury, son of Sir Alexander Culpeper (d.1599) and his wife, Mary Dacre, and grandson of Thomas Culpeper (d.1550). For the settlement by indenture of 5 June 1579 between Sir Alexander Culpeper and Dame Elizabeth Martyn for the marriage of Anne Martyn and Anthony Culpeper (see Harleian Charter, 77 A 53 in *Papers Read Before the Juridical Society 1855-1858* (London: V. & R. Stevens, 1858), pp. 57-63). The Culpeper tomb is at Goudhurst in Kent. For the will of Sir Roger Martyn, Lord Mayor of London, see TNA PROB 11/56, ff. 2-4.

RM: Testamentum domine Elizabethe Martyn vidua

In the name of God, Amen. The sixth day of October in the year of Our Lord God one thousand five hundred fourscore and one, and in the three and twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., I, Dame Elizabeth Martyn of London, widow, remembering with myself that all flesh is mortal and must die, but the hour and time thereof is uncertain, and being desirous that in the time of my sickness or weakness of body that my mind may not be troubled with the cares of this world to bestow those transitory goods which it hath pleased God of his mercy and goodness to bestow upon me, but that then, I say, in the time of my sickness even to my death, whensoever and howsoever it shall please God to send it, I may the more quietly call upon God for the forgiveness of my sins by the only mediation and redemption of Jesus Christ, my only Saviour, I do make and ordain this my present testament containing herein my last will in this manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and my body to be buried in the parish of Saint Antholin's in London where I am now a parishioner;

And as touching the disposition of all my goods and chattels wherewith it pleased God of his bountiful goodness to lend and bestow upon me (my debts which I owe in law or in conscience being paid and my funerals discharged), I wholly give and bestow in this manner and form following, that is to say:

First, I will to the Wardens of the Company of Mercers of London one hundred pounds, to remain with them and their successors forever as a stock to be delivered to two young men free of that Company in occupying for five years, and so from th' end of those five years the same money to be delivered to other two young men of the same Company for other five years, and so from five years to five years forever, and that the same two young men that so shall have the same money in occupying shall yearly give and pay to the said Wardens in respect of the occupying of the same money six pounds thirteen shillings four pence, which sum of six pounds thirteen shillings four pence I will shall be bestowed forever by the said Wardens in this manner following, that is to say:

To the churchwardens of the parish of Saint Antholin[‘s], to the intent that they shall every Sunday give and distribute to twelve poor householders of the said parish at the discretion of the same churchwardens, to every one of the said poor householders one penny loaf and one penny in current money, and that those twelve persons do come every Sunday into the chancel of the said parish church immediately after the pistle and Gospel read, and there kneeling down do give God thanks for all his benefits, and after to receive the same benevolence or alms;

And to the clerk or sexton of the said parish, to the intent he shall make clean my tomb every month, six shillings yearly forever;

And to the preachers that do and shall read every morning in the said parish as is used, ten shillings forever;

And the thirteen shillings four pence residue I will that the said Wardens of the Mercers shall retain to their own use in respect of their pains to see this my will and mind in this behalf performed, as my trust is they will;

Item, I will that my executors hereafter named within six months next after my decease shall pay and deliver to the said Wardens of the Company of Mercers five hundred marks [=£333 6s 8d] of lawful money of England, to the intent that they shall have the use and occupying thereof, and that during the life of Sir Alexander Culpeper, knight, the said Wardens shall yearly pay unto Anne Culpeper, my daughter, twenty pounds half yearly by equal portions, and after the decease of the said Sir Alexander, I will that the said Wardens shall pay the said five hundred marks within six months next after the decease of the said Sir Alexander in this manner following, viz.:

To the said Anne Culpeper, my daughter (if she be then living) four hundred marks, and the other hundred marks residue shall be paid to Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, my sons, and the said Anne being deceased at the decease of the said Sir Alexander, then I will

that the said whole five hundred marks shall be paid to my said two sons, Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, equally between them to be divided;

Item, I give to Alexander Culpeper, the son of my said daughter, Anne Culpeper, one hundred marks of lawful money of England to buy him a chain of gold, to be paid to him at his lawful age of one and twenty years;

Item, I give to my loving daughter, Joan Martyn, five hundred pounds of lawful money of England in respect that yet I have not been at any charges in the advancement of her as I have been with my daughter Anne Culpeper;

Item, I give all my jewels to my two daughters, Joan, and Anne Culpeper, equally between them to be divided by my executors hereafter named, whom I do desire to divide the same jewels between my said two daughters, Anne Culpeper, and Joan, as indifferently as they can;

Item, I give and bequeath to my godson, Thomas Denton, the son of my daughter, Mary, one hundred marks of lawful money of England to buy him a chain of gold at his lawful age of one and twenty years;

Item, I give to Elizabeth Knolles, my god-daughter, thirty pounds, and to Samuel Knolles, Mary Knolles and Castlyn Knolles, and to the child that my daughter (blank) Knolles, wife of my son, Thomas Knolles, goeth with, to every one of them twenty pounds, to be paid at their lawful ages of one and twenty years or days of marriage, which shall first happen, and if any of them die before their said ages of one and twenty years or days of marriage, then the survivor of them to have the part and portion of him, her or them so deceasing equally amongst them surviving to be divided;

Item, I give to my sister Hammerton forty pounds of lawful money of England, and to my brother, Edward Castlyn, ten pounds;

Item, I give to Christ's Hospital in London ten pounds of the lawful money of England, to be bestowed toward the relief of the poor children there;

Item, I give to the four prisons in London, that is to say, the two Counters, Newgate & Ludgate, also to the poor prisoners in the Fleet, and to the prisons in Southwark, that is to say, the Marshalsea, the King's Bench and the White Lion, to every one of the same prisons forty shillings apiece, to be bestowed amongst the poor there;

Item, I will shall be distributed to threescore poor persons of Hoxton in the county of Middlesex, to every one of them four pence apiece, and to threescore poor persons in East Ham in the county of Essex, to every one of them four pence the day of my burial

Item, I give to have ten sermons to be made by discreet and learned persons within the parish of Saint Antholin[us] aforesaid, five marks of lawful money of England, which sermons I will shall be made monthly next after my decease;

Item, I will that my executors do make five and twenty small gems or rings of gold of the value of five shillings apiece, and bestow them to every one of my good sisters, the Aldermen's wives of London, in token of a remembrance of my goodwill

I will and give to my cousin Yonge, Mistress Fanshawe, Mistress Osborne, wife of Peter Osborne of th' Exchequer, Mistress Abram, my two daughters-in-law, the wives of Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, my sister Hammerton, my two daughters, Anne Culpeper, and Joan, and to the wife of William Onslowe, to every one of them a gem of gold of the value of five shillings for a remembrance;

Item, I give to the wife of William Rawlyns a ring of gold which her husband did give me;

Item, I give to the wives of my brethren, Thomas Castlyn and John Castlyn, to every of them a gem of gold to the value of five shillings;

Item, I give to every one of my household servants being with me at the time of my decease one year's wages;

Item, I give unto William Hammerton ten pounds, and unto Goodwife Smith twenty shillings;

And as touching the disposing of all my lands and tenements whereof I am seised, I do devise them in this manner, videlicet:

Item, I give to my son, Thomas Knolles, and his heirs forever all that my house in London wherein the said Thomas Knolles now dwelleth, and also all my messuages, lands & tenements situate and being in the parish of East Ham in the county of Essex, saving and except one messuage with a garden at Northend in the said parish of East Ham now in the occupation of the said Samuel Knolles and Thomas Knolles, which house and garden I do give and bequeath to the said Samuel Knolles and his heirs forever, and also I do give and devise unto the said Samuel Knolles and his heirs forever all that messuage or tenement in London wherein the said Samuel Knolles now dwelleth;

Item, I do leave the ordering of my funerals and the bestowing of blacks to the discretion of my two sons, Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, whom I make and ordain my sole and only executors of this my last will;

And I do give and bequeath equally to be divided between them all my goods and chattels not before bequeathed, and I do charge them, as ever they will be thought to bear any loving affection towards me, that they do live lovingly together and like brethren, without any contention for anything to be moved between them, doing as much as in them shall be to see my mind and meaning contained in this my last will truly performed as I have reposed my trust in them, as they will answer to God to the contrary;

In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hands and seal the day and year first above-written. Elizabeth Martyn.

Memorandum: The sixth day of October one thousand five hundred eighty-one in the afternoon of the same day, the said Dame Elizabeth Martyn did pronounce these seven sheets of paper sealed with her seal to contain her last will and testament in the presence of me, William Onslowe, notary public, and Samuel Dodasole(?), Robert Diconson [=Dickinson?], Humphrey Corbet, Thomas Halton.

These words were spoken by the above-named Dame Elizabeth Martyn about the first or second day of February 1582:

Also my will and mind is that my two sons, Thomas and Samuel Knolles, shall have those two rings with diamonds parted betwixt them which I had of Mr Topliff [=Topcliffe?], and for the other rings which be in the said box where they, the said rings are at ye time of my decease, my mind is that my said two sons shall bestow them at their discretions amongst my friends. Witnesses to this: Benet Hammerton, sister to my Lady, and Elizabeth Knolles and Samuel Knolles.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum apud London coram venerabili viro magistro Willelmo Drury legum Doctore curie prerogatiue cantuariensis commissario etc. primo die mensis Iulij Anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo octogesimo tertio Iuramento Thome Knolles et Samuelis Knolles filiorum et executorum etc. Quibus commissa fuit administracio bonorum etc. De bene etc. Iuratis

[The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary etc. of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the first day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred eighty-third by the oath of Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, sons and executors etc., to whom administration was granted of the goods etc., sworn to well etc.]