

SUMMARY: The document below is the will, dated 4 October 1591, of Elizabeth (nee Roydon) Golding, wife of Sir Thomas Golding (d.1571), eldest brother of Oxford's mother, Margery Golding. The testatrix was the daughter of Thomas Roydon, esquire, of Roydon Hall in East Peckham, Kent, and his wife, Margaret Whetenhall. Her two brothers, George Roydon (d.1541) and William Roydon (d.1548) predeceased her, as did three of her sisters, Margaret (1511-1590), who married Hugh Catlin of West Malling; Anne (d.1565), who married Henry de la Haye (d.1547) and, secondly, Nicholas Burton; and Alice (1527-1566), who married William Heron (d.1563), and, secondly, Oliver St. John (1510-1571). Her sister Mary (1525-1591), who married Thomas Darell of Scotney, is mentioned in the will. The first of Elizabeth Golding's three husbands was William Twysden (d.1549), esquire, of Wye and Chelmington, Kent, by whom she had a son, Roger (1542-1603) who married Anne Wyatt (d.1592), the daughter of Sir Thomas Wyatt the younger (d.1554), leader of a rebellion against Queen Mary, and three daughters, Margaret (1545-1608), who married Richard Dering of Pluckley, Catherine, and Bennet. Her second husband was Cuthbert Vaughan (d.1563) of Great Chart, Kent. As noted above, her third husband was Oxford's uncle, Sir Thomas Golding, whom she married in May 1564. In addition, Elizabeth Golding had other connections with the Earls of Oxford. Her second cousin, Christopher Roydon (d.1543), had a daughter and sole heir, Mary Roydon, who was a ward of the 16th Earl of Oxford, and married the son of the 16th Earl's friend and counsellor, John Lucas. Christopher Roydon's brother, John Roydon (d.1568), had a daughter, Ursula, who married Oxford's uncle, the translator Arthur Golding (1535/6-1606), half-brother of Sir Thomas Golding (d.1571). In her will, Elizabeth Golding mentions her grandson, Anthony Dering; his eldest son, Sir Edward Dering (1598-1644), was the owner of a manuscript of Henry IV (Folger MS V.b.34) which is the first surviving manuscript of a play by Shakespeare. Elizabeth Golding died, aged 72, on 19 August 1595, and was buried in Peckham church. Her portrait by Hans Eworth is in the collection of the Tate Gallery.

LM: Testamentum Domine Elizabethe Golding

Forasmuch as it is an unchangeable decree that everyone must die and after come to judgment, it behoveth every Christian to live prepared, having their account ready against the uncertain day when the messenger or sumner shall warn us to appear to give up the same, and this judgment must everyone come under whether they have kept the law or not, which not being performed is death forevermore; therefore I, Dame Elizabeth Golding, widow, late wife of Sir Thomas Golding, knight, deceased, looking upon the law as in a glass, do in the same behold myself a loathsome spectacle of all abomination, subject to death and condemnation for that God is a righteous judge and will judge everyone according to that they have done, but I know as thou art a just judge, so thou art a merciful father, and in thine incomprehensible wisdom hast found a way both to satisfy thy judgment and yet to show forth thy mercies; thou hast given to us thine only-begotten Son to become man with us, who by the power of his godhead hath in our flesh performed all righteousness and yet hath submitted himself to sin, death, hell and

condemnation, even for to be accursed for us, and hath subdued, conquered and triumphed over them all, whereby he hath redeemed and justified us, and yet hath not so left us, but hath enlarged his mercies in that he hath entered the heavens to take possession for us of that glory which unspeakably exceedeth that paradise we had before lost by the fall of Adam, so that by his abounding mercy Adam's fall is become our unspeakable blessing, and for all this thine exceeding love thou requireth no more again of us but to hold fast this faith, and in the assurance of this salvation I do leave this testimony to the world that I die a professor of the gospel of Jesus Christ and a member of his church, and to th' end I may the more cheerfully, when I shall be called, yield up my spirit in this hope, I do in time of my perfect health and memory make up mine account with the world, committing my soul into thy hands and my body to the earth until the time all flesh shall arise to judgment, when in body and soul I shall hear this blessed sentence: Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the inheritance prepared for you before the foundations of the world etc.

And touching my worldly goods and livings, I dispose and will them as followeth:

First, I will and give unto Roger Twysden, esquire my loving son, all those my goods, chattels and moveables whatsoever I have or shall have at the time of my death in East Peckham in the county of Kent, as well those which he hath of me by inventory as otherwise, and also of my plate my two gilt pots, two dozen of silver trenchers, a great basin and ewer of silver double-gilt, one deep basin and ewer of silver all white, a chafing-dish of silver, three silver candlesticks and twenty pieces of silver vessel, my best damasked tablecloth with two towels to the same, one dozen of my best damasked napkins milled, two fine damask napkins unmilled, with other linen put together in a bundle with the same, and my Great Bible, all which parcels before given are already delivered;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my loving daughter-in-law, Anne Twysden, wife of my son, Roger Twysden, my book of gold with four rubies set in it;

And I will and bequeath unto my loving daughter, Margaret Dering, wife of Richard Dering, esquire, one basin and ewer of silver parcel-gilt which I have already delivered to her, a chafing-dish of silver used to be set on the table, three tuns of silver, a great silver salt with a cover all double-gilt, a gilt bowl with a cover likewise delivered, and also all the moveable stuff within the lodging and those rooms adjoining which I have reserved to myself at the nether end of the hall in my house in Redcross Street;

All the residue of my household stuff within my said house in Redcross Street I do give unto my son, Roger Twysden;

Further, I give unto my said daughter my second tablecloth of damask with a towel to the same, a dozen of napkins, two long fine damask napkins with other linen together made up in a bundle, which linen I have already delivered to her;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my loving son, Adam Ashburnham, twenty pounds in money;

Item, I will and bequeath to my daughter, Elizabeth Ashburnham, wife of Adam Ashburnham aforesaid, one cup to the value of ten pounds, one pair of Holland sheets, a long tablecloth, a towel, a dozen of napkins, with one pair of latten andirons, which andirons I have already delivered her with fire-pan, fork and tongs;

Item, I give unto my loving son, Henry Fane, twenty pounds in money;

Item, I give unto my daughter, Margaret Fane, one silver cup of the value of ten pounds, one pair of Holland sheets, a long tablecloth, a towel, a dozen of napkins;

Item, I will and give unto William Twysden, eldest son of my said son, Roger Twysden, the like cup of the value of ten pounds;

Item, I give to Thomas Twysden, second son of my son, Roger, the like cup of the value of ten pounds;

Item, I give to Jane Twysden five pounds to make her a jewel, and also the chain which she now weareth of mine;

Item, I give to Bennet Twysden five pounds to make her a jewel;

And moreover I give and bequeath to the said Jane Twysden and Bennet Twysden, to each of them one hundred pounds of lawful English money which I have already delivered to my son, Roger Twysden, their father, that there may be use made of it towards their finding until it please God they marry, and at the day of their several marriages, my will and mind is that the said two hundred pounds shall be put into gold and severally delivered to each of them as my gift, and if it fortune that any of them die before they marry (which God forbid), then my will and mind is that she that surviveth shall have the said two hundred pounds delivered as my gift in manner as is beforesaid;

Item, I give to Anthony Dering, eldest son of my son, Richard Dering, one silver cup of the value of ten pounds;

Item, I give to my son, Henry Hall, twenty pounds in money, and to my daughter, Jane Hall, his wife, one cup to the value of ten pounds, one pair of flaxen sheets, one long flaxen tablecloth, a towel, and a dozen of napkins;

Item, I give to Bennet Dering five pounds to buy her a jewel;

Item, I give unto all the residue of my son and daughter's children not already remembered, to each of them fifty shillings;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my daughter, Elizabeth Skeffington, wife of William Skeffington, my little basin and ewer of silver parcel-gilt which I use in my chamber, and also all manner of bedding, money, plate, jewels, brass, pewter, woollen and linen, and all other implements of household whatsoever is or hath been delivered before the date hereof, and I am sorry I have not better thing to recompense their pains taken with me, but I trust my loving and dutiful children will be thankful unto them therefore;

Item, I give unto my sister, Mary Darell, if she be living at the time of my death, one gilt salt and six silver spoons which she hath of mine in her custody, and also four angels of gold to make her a ring, and to every one of her children that shall be living at the time of my death twenty shillings to buy them rings;

And the like twenty shillings for the like intent and after the same manner I give to every child of my late sister Catlin;

Item, I will and bequeath unto every one of the children of my brothers Steven and Charles Vaughan that shall be living at the time of my death forty shillings to buy them rings;

Item, I will and bequeath to every one of my children's children and their children to whom I was witness at the time of their baptism forty shillings apiece;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my very friend, John Parker of New Inn, gentleman, forty shillings to buy him a ring, besides such part of his annuity as shall be behind at the time of my death;

Item, I will and bequeath to the poor people of East Peckham aforesaid twenty pounds of lawful English money to be put to use of increase for them for the setting forth of their children to be apprentices or otherwise, more or less upon some as need shall require according to the discretion of my son, Roger Twysden, and his heirs, culling unto them the assistance of four or five honest men of the parish, and the said money to be paid and put to use above specified within one quarter of a year next after my death, and that there be a special regard of such people as are honestly disposed and were born or have been of long abode in the parish, and as any of those assistants shall die, to have new chosen in their place, and that there may be an account taken of them once every year;

And I do further will and straitly charge my said son, Roger Twysden, and his heirs that shall be owners of the manor or messuage called Roydon Hall alias Fortune with their appurtenances as he and they will answer before the tribunal seat of the eternal God, that such annuity of four pounds yearly, to be paid quarterly, as I shall grant to the poor of East Peckham from time to time forever to continue, to be distributed at the discretion of my said son, Roger Twysden, and his heirs that shall be owners of the foresaid messuage within the said parish where most need shall require, and if it fortune I do decease out of this mortal life before any such grant of annuity be made, or that any such as I shall make be not sufficient in law to carry th' use of the said annuity to continue forever, then I straitly charge my son, Roger Twysden, and his heirs to make such a sufficient grant of

annuity of four pounds yearly to the only use and behoof of the poor of East Peckham aforesaid forever, and to no other use or purpose;

Further, I will and bequeath to the poor people of Mereworth, Wateringbury and Yalding, to each parish twenty shillings, to be distributed at their houses by the churchwardens of the parish, and will that in any wise they shall not trouble themselves nor come to the place when I shall be buried on that day;

Item, I will and bequeath to the poor people of the parish of Saint Giles without Cripplegate ten pounds of lawful money, to be distributed at the discretion of my son, Roger Twysden, the vicar and churchwardens there, which I would have distributed within forty days next after my death;

Item, I will and bequeath unto as many of the brothers and sisters of Sir Thomas Golding, knight, as shall be living at the time of my death forty shillings apiece to buy them rings;

Item, I will and bequeath unto Anne Stafford, my gentlewoman, if she be with me at the time of my death, twenty pounds of lawful English money, and one featherbed and bolster with all things that belong thereto which is within my own lodging-chamber over the buttery at London, and two pair of sheets, a tablecloth and a dozen of napkins, with some such of my apparel and wearing linen as is meet for her;

Item, I give unto Giles Golde, my servant, ten pounds of English money over and above his wages due at my death, and the featherbed whereupon he now lieth at Peckham, and also if he be desirous to be with any of my children, then I will that they shall give him meat, drink and lodging so long as he is willing to continue with them;

Item, I will and bequeath unto every other of my servants, men as women, that shall serve me at the time of my death the sum of his or her whole year's wages over and above his or her wages due at my death, and to them that have served me above two years before my death, not only their wages due with one whole year's wages besides as thother, but to every such of them twenty shillings apiece over and above all that before mentioned;

And for the time of the payment of these legacies, I will shall be within one quarter of a year next after my decease, having a special regard to the payment of Anne Stafford and the rest of my servants, which legacies I will shall be paid with such ready money, goods, debts and farms as shall be left and due at the [-the] time of my death, and not out of any goods before particularly given;

The residue, if any be, after my legacies discharged and body buried (which I would have done without pomp, but honestly to accompany earth to earth, only thirty black gowns to be made for poor folks, whereof twenty for women and ten for men, amongst which number I would have old Smith and his wife, and they to have their free dwelling in the house where now they are during their lives and the longest liver of them, and over the place where I am buried to have some tomb for a remembrance according to the discretion of mine executors), the residue, I say, if any be, I will shall be divided into three parts,

whereof I give unto my son, Roger Twysden, two parts, and the third part thereof to my daughter Dering;

And of this my last will and testament I ordain and make my loving son, Roger Twysden, and Margaret Dering, my loving daughter, mine executors, not doubting but they will carefully and dutifully perform all things herein contained;

And in witness that this is my last will, written in my perfect memory, I have hereto prefixed my hand and seal this fourth of October, and in the year of our Lord Christ one thousand five hundred ninety and one, and in the three and thirtieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth etc., whom I beseech the Lord long to preserve. E. G. Witnesses: Roger Twysden, Richard Dering, William Skeffington, William Tylman

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud London Coram venerabili viro Magistro Willelmo Lewin Legum Doctore Curie Prerogatiue Cantuariensis Magistro Custode siue Comissario Quinto die Mensis Maij Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentesimo Nonogesimo Sexto Iuramento Iohannis Theaker notarij publici Procuratoris Rogeri Twysden et Margarete Deeringe Executorum in huiusmodi Testamento nominatorum Quibus commissa fuit administracio Bonorum Iurium et Creditorum dicte defuncte De bene et fideliter administrando &c Ad sancta dei Evangelia Iuratorum Examinatus

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master William Lewin, Doctor of the Laws, Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the fifth day of the month of May in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred ninety-sixth by the oath of John Theaker, notary public, proxy of Roger Twysden and Margaret Dering, executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc. Examined.]