

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 8 September 1573, of Sir Roger Martyn, father of Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575. Sir Roger Martyn was born in Long Melford, Suffolk, the eldest son and heir of Lawrence Martyn (d.1518) and his wife Elizabeth Cheke. He had a successful career as a mercer and a charter member of the Company of Merchant Adventurers, and served the city of London as alderman, sheriff, and in 1568, Lord Mayor. His will was probated on 28 January 1574, with administration granted to his second wife, Elizabeth, the daughter of the London merchant William Castelyn, and to Humphrey Martyn, his eldest son and heir by his first wife, Lettice, the daughter of Humphrey Pakington. On 6 February 1588, administration was granted to the his second son, Edmund Martyn, since his wife Elizabeth and his eldest son Humphrey had both died before administration of the will was complete. A transaction involving the rectory of Islington (see CP 25/2/172/29/30ELIZIMICH) establishes that Humphrey Martyn was still alive in 1587. The grant of probate to his brother Edmund on 6 February 1588 thus suggests that he died in late 1587 or early 1588. His father's will and the transaction involving the rectory of Islington thus establish that 'Humphrey Martyn, mercer', the addressee of the *Langham Letter*, had just become head of a prominent London merchant family after the death of his father at the time of the original publication of the *Letter* in 1575, and had died before the letter was republished in 1590. The copy of Sir Roger Martyn's will includes a coat of arms in the right margin which appears to depict 'Argent, a chevron between three mascles within a bordure engrailed sable, a crescent of the same for difference'.

RM: Testamentum Rogeri Marten Militis

In the name of God, Amen. The eighth day of September Anno domini one thousand five hundred seventy and three, and in the fifteenth year of the reign of our most dear Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., I, Sir Roger Martyn, knight and alderman of London, being whole of body and in perfect mind and good remembrance, God be lauded therefore, do ordain and make this my last will and testament in manner and form following, and utterly disannul and frustrate all other my wills and testaments before this present day made or devised either by writing or by mouth;

And first I bequeath my soul to Almighty God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, only trusting to be saved and to have clean remission of all my sins in and by the blood and merits of Jesus Christ's passion, and my body to be buried in the parish church where I shall dwell in London at the time of my death in such order and manner as to one of my degree appertaineth according to the laudable custom of the city of London, which I trust my executors will see worshipfully performed;

And for the better relieving and furnishing of the poor with gowns at my said burial, I bequeath out of my own stock and portion over and besides that my executors shall bestow out of my whole goods in poor men's gowns the [+ sum of] one hundred marks for a hundred gowns for poor men and poor women where shall be most need, and in those parishes chiefly where I have been most abiding, as in Saint Antholin's in London, in Saint Michael's in Bassishaw in London, in the parish of Saint Leonard's in Hoxton and in East Ham parish, to every of my poor tenants there;

Item, I bequeath out of my own part the sum of one hundred pounds to be bestowed in black gowns over and besides those which my executors shall give out of my whole goods at my burial, that is to say, to such persons as be specially named in a schedule hereto annexed and to such other of my loving friends as my executors shall think most meet and as were most friendly unto me which I cannot now call to remembrance, but I will that Elizabeth, my well beloved wife and my executrix, if she be then living, shall have the only disposing of those gowns to my friends that be not named, for she knoweth best, and if any of those happen to die before me to whom I have appointed gowns, then I will that their gowns shall be given to such of my friends as by my executors shall be thought meet;

And I will that all my debts being paid which I do owe by bills of my hand or by any witness or good conscience, and my funerals ended, then I will the rest of all my goods to be divided into three equal parts according to the laudable custom and manner of the city of London of long time used, that is to say, one third part to my well beloved wife, one third part to all my children then living, and for that some of my seven children now living be by me partly advanced and some be not, and so by the laws of the city such as be somewhat in my lifetime advanced cannot demand any more or greater portion than they have already received except I do express and declare in writing what every one of those that be advanced have had and received of me as part and portion of their child's part if God do increase it to be a more greater sum at the hour of my death, and therefore I minding to do to every of my children equal right concerning their right that every one of them have after my decease to the said third part of all my goods, do by this my last will plainly declare what sum of money I have already given to every of such of my children as be by me already partly advanced, and for that I have given and advanced some of them with more amplier and great sums than to the other, and minding that every one of my said children that shall be living at the time of my death should have and perceive a just equal part of the said third part of my goods, accounting every one of them the sum and sums of money which every one of them hath already received as part and portion towards and of his child's part, so as he or she of them which hath received the lesser sum must have the more to make up his part, and if any one of them have received already as much or more than his part will amount unto, he can demand no more;

And these five of my seven children I have already advanced with these sums of money following, that is to say, I did give to my daughter, Susan, at the day of her marriage with Robert Lie, mercer, five hundred marks of good and lawful money of England, and I did give to my daughter Martha at her marriage with John Castelyn, mercer, the sum of five

hundred marks in ready money, and I did give to my son Humphrey Martyn, mercer, at his marriage the sum of five hundred pounds in ready money, and I did give to Edmund Martyn, mercer, my son, towards his part of advancement and child's part the sum of five hundred pounds in ready money the same day that I did give the sum before specified to his brother, Humphrey Martyn, and I did give to Mary, my daughter, at her marriage with Mr Alexander Dent [sic], my son-in-law, as appeareth by a quitclaim of his hand, the sum of one thousands [sic] pounds, I say, ten hundred pounds of good and lawful money of England, and as these be the just and several sums that I have already delivered to every of my said children before named, so I most heartily require my Lord Mayor and all his worshipful brethren, the aldermen, to take such order according to the laudable custom of the city and according to this my last will that every one of them, as well those that be already partly advanced as those which be not, may quietly enjoy and have with that they have already received such part and portion of the third part of my goods as of right appertaineth to every one of them;

Item, I bequeath the sum of threescore six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence to be given to two hundred poor householders dwelling in the town of Long Melford in Suffolk where I was born, that is to say, to every householder six shillings and eight pence, to be given them within one year after my death;

Item, I bequeath to the most poorest people dwelling in the parish of Saint Antholin's in London six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence, to be given them within one month after my death;

Item, I bequeath the sum of ten pounds to be given to the most poorest people which dwell in these three parishes, that is to say, of Saint Michael's in Bassishaw in London three pounds six shillings and eight pence, and to the poor in the parish of Saint Leonard's in Hoxton three pounds six shillings and eight pence, and to the poor in the parish of West Ham in Essex three pounds six shillings and eight pence which I will shall be distributed within one month after my death;

Item, I bequeath to the University of Cambridge the sum of fifty pounds to be given to the most poorest scholars within one year after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to the University of Oxenford the sum of fifty pounds to be given to the poorest scholars there within one year after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to these six prisons in London, that is to say, to Newgate, Ludgate, the two Counters, the Marshalsea and the King's Bench, the sum of forty pounds, that is to every of them six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence to be distributed amongst the most poorest prisoners within the said prisons within three months after my death;

Item, I bequeath to the four hospitals in London and Southwark, that is to say, to Christ's Church, Saint Bartholomew's, Saint Thomas Spittle and Bridewell, the sum of one hundred pounds, that is to every one twenty and five pounds of the said hospitals;

Item, I bequeath to the Wardens and Company of the Mercers the sum of forty pounds for a dinner to be made at the Mercers' Hall for the whole Company with as many of their wives as they can conveniently place there to be made at the day of my burial, which said forty pounds I will to be delivered to such as shall be then Wardens, and they to have their ordering of it;

Item, I bequeath to the said Company of the Mercers in London the sum of £200, I say two hundred pounds in money, to be delivered to the Master and Wardens of the said Company within one year next after my death, which said sum of £200 I will shall be with the consent of the said Wardens and Assistants delivered into the hands of four honest young men that be not in the livery of the said Company, that is to every one of them fifty pounds, and they to have and occupy the same for the space of five years, and after the five years expired, then other four young men to have it in like manner for other five years, and so from five years to five years forever up this condition, that they, the said four young men and every one of them shall put in besides themselves three sufficient sureties to be bound jointly with them for the sure payment thereof to the Wardens and Company of the Mercers, and also shall pay every one of them yearly during the time they shall have the said money in their hands forty shillings, I say forty shillings, to the Wardens for the time being, which amounteth to yearly eight pounds, which eight pounds I will shall be given yearly to these four prisons, that is Newgate, Ludgate and the two Counters in London, by the said Wardens;

Item, I bequeath to Mrs Bennett Hammerton, my wife's sister, twenty pounds;

Item I bequeath to William Rawlins, mercer, now my servant, one hundred marks in money, trusting that he will be as faithful & true to my wife and children as he hath been to me;

Item, I bequeath to Roger Rawlins, my godson, five pounds, and to Susan Rawlins other five pounds, to be paid them at the age of twenty and one years or at the day of their marriage, and if any of them happen to die, to thother to have his or her legacy, I mean if any of them both die before marriage or before the age of twenty and one years;

Item, I bequeath to Joan Perle, the wife of Richard Perle, dyer, of London, that was my maid, the sum of twenty-five pounds thirteen shillings and four pence if she be living at the time of my death, or else to be given equally amongst all her children;

Item, I bequeath to Robert Lawley, my apprentice, twenty pounds;

Item, I bequeath [+to] Richard Jonson and to Gabriel Leye, now my apprentices, to every one of them ten pounds, sum to them both twenty pounds;

Item, I bequeath to every one of my servants, I mean my serving-men and maids that do take wages of me and dwell with me at the time of my departing, to every one of them

clearly a full whole year's wages to be paid unto them in money within one month after my burial, as well to men-servants as to maidservants according as every one of them do take wages (except James Elnyke and William Rawlins and my prentices);

Item, I bequeath to my godson, Roger Cheke, the son of John Cheke, mercer, ten pounds;

Item, I bequeath to all the rest of my said cousin John Cheke's children to be equally divided amongst them ten pounds, and if any happen to die, then his or their part so dead to be divided amongst the rest that be living;

Item, I bequeath to the Company of Mercers a standing cup with a cover gilt of the value of twenty pounds with my arms to be graven upon it by the discretion of my executors, which cup I will shall be given within one year next after my death;

Item, I bequeath to the Company of Merchants Adventurers a standing cup with a cover gilt of the value of ten pounds;

Item, I bequeath to the Company of Merchants of the Staple of England a standing cup gilt with a cover of the value of six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence, which two standing cups I will shall remain to the said Companies forever, and my mark or arms to be graven upon the said cups;

Item, I bequeath to Nicholas Hearne, my beadle in Bread Street ward, forty shillings;

Item, I bequeath to my wife's two sons, Thomas and Samuel Knowles, betwixt them both two hundred marks, that is to every of them threescore six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence;

Item, I bequeath one hundred thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence to make threescore and ten rings to be given to such threescore and ten persons, men and women, as be written in a schedule their several names and annexed to this my will, and every ring to be worth forty shillings, and if any of those persons that I have appointed to have rings happen to die before me, then I will that those rings which they should have had shall be given to some other of my loving friends which I have forgotten by the appointment of my wife and my sons;

Item, I bequeath to all the children of my late brother, Edward Martyn of Mownsill in Suffolk, one hundred pounds to be equally divided amongst them all, and if any happen to die before he or she have their parts paid them, then I will that the same be divided to the rest of them that be living;

Item, I bequeath to all the children of my late brother, Robert Cooper of Much Waldingfield(?) in Suffolk, the sum of twenty pounds to be equally divided amongst them, and if any happen to die that be now living, then their part of the said twenty pounds to be remaining to the rest living;

Item, I bequeath more to Roger Cooper, the eldest son of my said brother Robert Cooper, ten [-ten] pounds, and if he happen to die before me, then I will the same ten pounds to be given amongst all his children, and if he have no children, then to be given to his wife;

Item, I bequeath to Alice Pollard, the wife of Edward Pollard, cloth-worker, five marks, and if she happen to die, then the same three pounds six shillings and eight pence to be given amongst all her children;

Item, I will that both she and her husband shall have every of them a black gown, if they be living;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Lowmas, my serving-man, if he remain and dwell with me at the time of my death, the sum of six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence over and besides the part and portion of that I have before bequeathed to all my servants;

Item, I bequeath to Robert Leye, my godson, thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence, and if he happen to die, then I will that the said thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence be given to the other children of my son, Robert Leye, if he happen to have any, or for lack of children to remain to my daughter, his wife;

Item, I bequeath to Margaret Smyth, widow, if she be living at my death, forty shillings, and if she happen to die before me, then I will that the same forty shillings be giving [sic] to the children of Edward Pollard amongst them all equally to be divided;

Item, I bequeath to all the children of Anthony Hakemann, late mercer, twenty-six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence;

Item, I bequeath to the poor Water-bearers' Company in London for a dinner to be made for them and their wives at their accustomed hall within one year next after my death six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence;

Item, I bequeath to the poor porters in Cheap that use to bind merchants' fardels [bequest omitted];

Item, I bequeath to Susan Leye, my daughter, and to Mary [sic?] Castelyn, my daughter, betwixt them both four hundred marks, that is to every of them one hundred thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence, and if any of them happen to die, then the other to have her part and portion, and if they happen to die both, then to be paid to Humphrey and Edmund Martyn or to the longest liver of them both if any happen to die before me, and if they die both, then to all my children's children equally amongst them all;

Item, I bequeath to Edmund Martyn, my son, and to Humphrey Martin, my eldest son, the sum of four hundred pounds betwixt them both, that is, to every one of them two

hundred pounds, and if any of them happen to die before me, then the other to have his part and portion;

Item, I bequeath to Mary Denton, my daughter, if she be living at my decease, two hundred pounds, I say two hundred pounds, and if she happen to die before me, then I will the same two hundred pounds to Joan Martyn and Anne Martyn, my two youngest daughters, and the one of them to be the other's heirs if any of them happen to [+die] before the other;

Item, I bequeath to Joan Martyn and to Anne Martyn, my youngest daughters, to every one [+of] them a standing cup gilt with a cover of the value of twenty marks every cup, that is twenty-six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence for them both the cups;

Item, I bequeath more to them, two basins and two ewers parcel-gilt to be of the value of thirty pounds every basin and ewer, that is threescore pounds for both, and if any of them happen to die then the other of them to have the said basin and ewer and cup, and if they happen to die both before the age of twenty and one years or of marriage, then I will that the said two basins and ewer[s] and the standing cups before bequeathed shall be given to the children of my daughter, Mary Denton, if God send her any, or in default of such children to the said Mary Denton, if she be living;

Item, I bequeath to Humphrey Martyn and Edmund Martyn, my two sons, to every of them a basin and a ewer parcel-gilt of the value of thirty pounds apiece, sum threescore pounds;

Item, I do bequeath to Thomas and Samuel Knowles, my wife's sons, to every one of them a standing cup with a cover of the value of seven pounds and ten shillings, sum fifteen pounds for both;

Item, I bequeath to Joan Clerke that nursed Anne Martyn, my daughter, forty shillings;

Item, I bequeath to Elizabeth, my well beloved wife, out of my third part the sum of five hundred marks, I say three hundred thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence, and the lease of my house, garden and orchard in Hoxton during her natural life if she will keep it in her own hands and not let it out for rent, and after her decease then I will that my son, Humphrey Martyn, shall have the same, and if he happen to die, then my son Edmund Martyn to have it;

Item, I will that my wife shall have and enjoy the lease of my house in Soper Lane so long as she will dwell in the same, and if she will not dwell in it nor keep it for her own proper use, then I will that ye residue of the years of the same house to be given to my son, Edmund Martyn;

Item, I bequeath to Joan Martyn and to Anne Martyn, my youngest daughters, out of my third part, besides their own portions for their child's part, the sum of five hundred

pounds, I say five hundred pounds of good and lawful money of England, that is to every one of them two hundred and fifty pounds, and if any of them happen to die before the age of twenty and one years or before her marriage, then the other living to have her part that is departed, and if they happen both to depart before the age of twenty and one years or before their marriage, then I will that the said sum of five hundred pounds to them bequeathed shall be indifferently divided amongst all three [sic] rest of my children then living, that is to every one of them an equal part and portion;

Item, I bequeath to the ward of Bread Street where I am now alderman in London a standing cup of the value of six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence, which cup with the cover I will shall be gilt with my arms graven upon the top of the cover as my executors shall devise, and I will that the said cup shall forever remain to serve at the time of the wardmote inquest during their sitting upon the same quests yearly, and shall be called and accounted for the cup pertaining to the wardmote inquest of Bread Street ward, and I will that the said cup be given to them within three months after my decease;

Item, I bequeath to Joan Frende, the wife of Richard Frende that now keepeth my house in Hoxton, forty shillings to be paid to her own hands to her relief as she shall require it;

Item, I bequeath to my loving son-in-law, Alexander Denton, to bestow upon a chain of fine gold for his own wearing, fourscore pounds, I say fourscore pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Mary Denton, my daughter, his wife, to buy her a biliment of gold, thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence;

Item, I bequeath to my loving sister, Mistress Margaret Denton of Hillesden, a standing cup gilt with a cover of the value of thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence;

Item, I bequeath to William Hammerton, my sister Hammerton's son, ten pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Mistress Munns, the wife of [] Munnes, forty shillings;

Item, I will that Elizabeth, my wife, shall have and enjoy to her use during her natural life the lease of my house, garden and orchard of Hoxton which I bought of Master Shakerley, if she will keep it for her own use and not let it out, and she to pay only the accustomed yearly rent of the value of the lease for her time, to be deducted out of my third part as my bequest unto her;

Item, I bequeath more to my said well beloved wife, all my household stuff that is presently usual there or shall be at the time of my death, my plate and jewels only excepted, trusting that when she shall leave the same house she will leave it reasonably furnished for my son, Humphrey Martyn, mercer;

Item, I bequeath the sum of six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence for twenty sermons to be made in the Mercers' Chapel by some godly man within two years next after my death by the appointment of my executors;

Item, I ordain and make for my executors of this my last will and testament these four persons, that is to say, my dear and well beloved wife, Dame Elizabeth Martyn, my well beloved son, Humphrey Martyn, my loving son-in-law, Master Alexander Denton of Hillesden, esquire, and my trusty friend and cousin, John Cheke, mercer, and I bequeath to them four for their pains in the executing of this my last will fourscore pounds, I say fourscore pounds, that is to every of them twenty pounds;

Item, I ordain to be overseers of this my last will and testament these four persons, that is to say, my well beloved son, Edmund Martyn, my loving son-in-law, Robert Bye [sic?], mercer, my loving son-in-law, John Castelyn, mercer, and my trusty and loving servant, William Rawlins, mercer, and I bequeath to them for their pains forty pounds, I say forty pounds, that is to every one of them ten pounds, trusting that they will be loving to my wife and children;

And if it should happen, as God defend, that my eldest son, Humphrey Martyn, should depart this world before me, that [sic?] I do make and ordain in his place for one of my four executors my son, Edmund Martyn, mercer;

Item, I bequeath for a dinner to be made in some convenient house within the parish of Saint Antholin's where I now dwell in London for such my good and living neighbours as my executors cannot conveniently convite to my house, the sum of ten pounds, I say ten pounds, which I will shall be delivered to such two honest men in the parish in ready money to be bestowed at the day of my burial in token of my goodwill towards them as my executors shall appoint meet for that purpose;

Item, I bequeath to Anne Fairfax, that was sometimes my maid, forty shillings;

And the rest of the third part of my goods unbequeathed I will and bequeath to be divided into three equal portions, that is to say one third part to my well beloved wife, Dame Elizabeth Martyn, and the other two third parts to be equally divided part and part like amongst all my children that shall be then living, but first before any such partition shall be of the said remainder, I will that my executors shall be allowed out of my said third part for the better furniture of my burial as to their good discretions, considering my vocation and state of aldermanship, shall be thought meet and convenient, without any interruption or impeachment of any of my children living that might by virtue of this my last will claim any part or portion thereof;

In witness hereof I, Roger Martyn, knight, citizen and alderman of London have written this my last will and testament with my own hand, and sealed [-the] it with my usual seal of arms the day and year above-written, and for a further testimonial that this is my last will and deed, I have required those persons whose names be hereunder written to

subscribe their names as witnesses to the same. Per me, Roger Martyn, knight and alderman of the city of London, being in good and perfect memory (God be lauded therefore).

I, Thomas Knowles, [-Knolles] mercer of London, was with my father-in-law, Sir Roger Martyn, knight and alderman of London, when he did seal and subscribe this his last will and testament.

I, Francis Robinson of London, grocer, do affirm and witness that upon this 28th day of October, being called by Sir Roger Martyn, knight, that this his last will and testament signed and sealed with his own hand and seal is also delivered in my presence as his deed. Per me, Franciscus Robinson.

Per me, Henricum Campeon.

Item, I give and bequeath unto Anne and Joan, my daughters, over and above that which I have already given them, one hundred marks apiece, and I will that if any of the said Anne and Joan shall die before the receipt of the said sum of one hundred marks, that then the survivor of them shall have the part of her deceasing;

Item, I give unto William Onslowe, my attorney at the common law, five pounds and a black gown;

Item, I give unto Roger, Humphrey, Anthony and Robert Cheke, sons of my cousin, John Cheke, forty pounds over and above that I have already bequeathed them, to be paid them at their several ages of twenty and one years, and I will that if any of the said four children shall die before their said ages of twenty and one years, that then I will the part of him that deceaseth unto the other living, equally amongst them surviving to be divided, and I will further that if all the said four children shall die before their age of twenty and one years, that then I will the said forty pounds unto the other children or child that the said John Cheke shall have living at the time of the decease of the said four children.

Teste Willelmum Onslowe

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum in Curia Prerogatiue Cantuariensis apud London vicesimo Octauo die mensis Ianuarij Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentestimo Septuagesimo Tertio Iuramento Magistri Willelmi Babham notarij publici Procuratoris Domine Elizabethhe Relicte &c et Humfridi Martyn filij &c Quibus &c de bene &c Iurato &c Reseruata potestate &c Ceteris Executoribus cum venerint &c Admissuri &c

[=The above-written testament was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury at London on the twenty-eighth day of the month of January in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-third [=28 January 1574] by the oath of Master William

Babham, notary public, proctor of the Lady Elizabeth, relict etc., and Humphrey Martyn, son, etc., to whom etc., sworn to well etc., with power reserved etc. to the rest of the executors when they shall have come etc. to be admitted etc.]

RM: Sexto die mensis ffebruarij 1587 emanauit commissa Edmundo Marten filio naturali et legitimo dicti defuncti Ad administrandum bona iura et credita eiusdem iuxta tenorem testamenti per Dominam Elizabetham eius relictam et Humfridum eius filium executores iam defunctes non plene Administrata De bene &c Iurato Alexander Denton antequam onus execucionis eiusdem testamenti in se acceptauit ab hac Luce migrauit Iohannes Cheek alter executor superstes ex certis causis animum suum in hac parte iuste moventibus oneri executionis eiusdem testamenti omniumque Administracionem bonorum iurium et creditorum dicti defuncti expresse renunciauit

[=On the sixth day of the month of February 1587 [=6 February 1588] a commission issued to Edmund Martyn, natural and legitimate son of the said deceased, to administer the goods, rights and credits of the same according to the tenor of the testament by the Lady Elizabeth, his relict, and Humphrey, his son, executors, now deceased, not fully administered, sworn to well etc., Alexander Denton having died before he took upon himself the burden of the execution of the same testament, John Cheke, another executor surviving, for certain causes his mind in this regard justly moving, expressly renounced the burden of the execution of the same testament and the administration of all the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased.]