

SUMMARY: The document below is the deposition, dated 31 January 1623, of Mary Strelley, given in response to interrogatories in a lawsuit brought in the Court of Chancery by the family of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), who had leased the land on which the Globe playhouse was built to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon and other members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men on 21 February 1599, against Sir John Bodley, landlord of the Globe from 1601-1622, claiming that Bodley had unduly enriched himself as a trustee appointed under the will of Nicholas Brend. For Bodley's role in the financial affairs of Nicholas Brend and as landlord of the Globe after Brend's death, see TNA C 54/1682, mm. 10-11.

The Brends' bill of complaint and Sir John Bodley's answer have not survived. For the Brends' replication, see TNA C 2/ChasI/Z1/6. For the interrogatories, see TNA C 24/496/114, m. 9. For the depositions given by three other witnesses, William Fellows, George Archer and Mercy Brend Frobisher, see TNA C 24/496/114, ff. 1-2, 5-8.

After a full hearing on 26 June 1626, the case was dismissed with costs against the Brends, the Court having determined that Sir Matthew Brend had no standing since the properties concerned were not part of his inheritance. For orders in the case, see TNA C 33/147, ff. 932-3; TNA C 33/149, f. 537; TNA C 33/149, f. 936; TNA C 33/151, f. 485; and TNA C 33/151, f. 528.

Mary Strelley was the sister of Nicholas Brend's wife, Margaret Strelley. In the deposition she gives her age as 30, and was therefore born in 1592, and since she states that none of her sister Margaret's children was older than 9 when Nicholas Brend died in 1601, Mary was apparently no older than her sister Margaret's eldest child. See Berry, Herbert, *Shakespeare's Playhouses*, (New York: AMS Press, 1987), p. 89.

In the deposition she is said to have been the daughter of Humphrey Strelley, esquire, of Strelley, Nottinghamshire, deceased. The grant and sale of the White Friars in Nottingham suggests that Humphrey Strelley may have been the son of James Strelley of Nottingham. After the death of her first husband, Thomas Rich (d. 3 March 1531), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/24/36, Rachel Newburgh married James Strelley of Nottingham, gentleman. See:

D J Keene and Vanessa Harding, 'St. Mary le Bow 104/12', in *Historical Gazetteer of London Before the Great Fire Cheapside; Parishes of All Hallows Honey Lane, St Martin Pomary, St Mary Le Bow, St Mary Colechurch and St Pancras Soper Lane* (London, 1987), pp. 252-255 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-gazetteer-pre-fire/pp252-255>

In 1541 James Strilley of Nottingham, gentleman, and his wife Rachel, widow of Thomas Riche, gentleman, leased their messuage or tenement with cellars, solars, warehouses and yard adjoining, in Bow churchyard in the parish of St. Mary le Bow to George Robynson, citizen and mercer, for 40 years at £8 rent. The lessors covenanted to repair, maintain, pave and cleanse during the term if Rachel should live so long, and the lessee

agreed to pay all quit-rents. In 1543 James Strilley and Rachel, with Edward Riche, gentleman, son and heir of the said Thomas Riche, granted and quitclaimed to Anthony Marker (? recte Marler), citizen and haberdasher, in their messuage in Bow churchyard, in which Marker lived.

It would appear that this is the James Strelley to whom Henry VIII granted the White Friars in Nottingham in 1541. See:

'Henry VIII: November 1541, 21-30', in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 16, 1540-1541*, ed. James Gairdner and R H Brodie (London, 1898), pp. 629-644 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol16/pp629-644>

64. James Sturley, of Notyngham, Notts Grant, in fee, of the late priory of Whyte Fryers in Notyngham; a garden and other lands in the parish of St. Nicholas; and certain lands in the parish of St. Mary in Notyngham (tenants named). Westm. Palace, 21 Nov. 33 Hen. VIII. Del. Westm., 25 Nov.—P.S. Pat. p. 4, m. 8.

In 1573 Humphrey Strelley, presumably James Strelley's son, sold the White Friars to Sir John Manners (c.1534 – 4 June 1611), younger son of Thomas Manners, 1st Earl of Rutland. See:

<http://www.nottshistory.org.uk/articles/tts/tts1930/itinerary1930p6.htm>.

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Mary Strelly, the daughter of Humphrey Strelly of Strelly in the county of Nottingham, esquire, deceased, aged 30 years & upwards, etc.

1 That she very well knoweth all the parties named for plainants and defendant in [-in] this suit, and she hath known them all for divers & several years past.

2 That she doth not know any of the particular manors, farms, lands or tenements in this interrogatory inquired of, nor the yearly values of any of them, saving only she knoweth certain tenements situate upon St Peter's Hill, London, which were reputed to be the tenements of Nicholas Brend, esquire, deceased, but of what value by the year the same were or are this deponent knoweth not, nor [-nor] can she more depose to this interrogatory.

3 That she is utterly ignorant of the several matters contained in this interrogatory, nor can she anything at all depose to the several questions thereof.

4. That Sir Matthew Browne, knight, deceased, died in or about the second or third year of his now Majesty's reign of England, and the said Nicholas Brend died about 2 years before him, as she remembereth the time.

5. That she verily believeth and partly knoweth that the defendant, Sir John Bodley, is now of far better ability in lands and goods & money than he was about the time of the death of the said Mr Nicholas Brend, for he hath since bestowed much money in building and hath also purchased divers lands in Derbyshire as she hath heard, but how much better his estate is now than then it was this deponent plainly knoweth not; howbeit she hath heard that his estate at the said Mr Brend's death was not worth £200 a year, and that now it is worth £500 per annum, but this deponent saith she cannot certainly depose anything of her own knowledge touching the value of the said defendant's estate, nor can she otherwise estimate the same than by report of divers persons who have affirmed it to be now worth £500 a year as aforesaid.

6 That she doth not remember that she hath heard the said defendant speak of any sum of money that he had so made or raised as by the interrogatory is set down, nor that he used any such speeches as by the interrogatory is supposed, nor can she to her now best remembrance depose anything to this interrogatory either of her own knowledge or by any report of others.

That she well remembereth that the plainants John Brend, Jane Brend, Mercy Meese & Frances Brend at the time of the death of the said Nicholas Brend, their late father, were all very young, and that the eldest of them was not then above 8 or 9 years of age [f. 4r] or thereabouts, as she believeth, but what their several ages were this deponent saith she cannot remember particularly to set down, nor can she tell whether the said plainants or any of them demanded their several portions of the said defendant before he paid them or no, as by the article is questioned, nor can she more depose to this interrogatory.

8 That she neither knoweth or to her remembrance hath she certainly heard anything touching the several questions of this interrogatory, nor can she depose anything at all to this interrogatory.

Mary Strelly