

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 26 July 1608 and proved 6 January 1609, of Humphrey Milward, who owned the Red Lion, site of the ‘first purpose-built [playhouse] in the British Isles since Roman times’.

From the *ODNB* article on the builder of the Red Lion playhouse, John Brayne:

*Brayne, John (c.1541–1586), grocer and financier, was the eldest child of Thomas Brayne (d. 1562), a tailor (nominally a girdler), and his wife, Alice Barlow (d. 1566), of the parish of St Stephen, Coleman Street, London, who married on 22 January 1541. John Brayne was apprenticed on 13 March 1554 to John Bull, a grocer in Bucklersbury, London. He completed his apprenticeship, married Margaret Stowers (d. 1593) at St Dionis Backchurch on 14 January 1565, and became a successful grocer with a house and business in Bucklersbury. By 1573 the Braynes had had four children, Robert (b. 1565), Roger (b. 1566), Rebecca (b. 1568), and John (b. 1573). All were baptized at St Stephen Walbrook, the church for the eastern half of Bucklersbury, and all soon died, at least three of them in infancy. Fatefully for Brayne, his sister Ellen had married the joiner turned player James Burbage, also of St Stephen, Coleman Street, on 23 April 1559.*

*Brayne undertook financial ventures that had nothing to do with groceries, and it is for two of these that he is remembered. The earlier of the two was the building in 1567 of a professional playhouse, apparently the first purpose-built one in the British Isles since Roman times. It was east of Aldgate, near Mile End, in a court or yard belonging to a farmhouse called the Red Lion. Brayne hired one carpenter to build scaffolds for spectators and another to build the stage, and he quarrelled with both. The playhouse was not elaborate, since he probably spent only about £15 on it. It was to be ready by 8 July 1567 so that a play called *The Story of Sampson* could take place there, but nothing more is known about the place, or whether James Burbage had anything to do with it.*

See also Red Lion Theatre, Whitechapel Documentary Research Report at:

[http://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=8&ved=0CEMQFjAH&url=http%3A%2F%2F74f85f59f39b887b696f-ab656259048fb93837ecc0ecbcf0c557.r23.cf3.rackcdn.com%2Fassets%2Flibrary%2Fdocument%2F0%2Foriginal%2F0004-r-redliontheatre.pdf&ei=mqLmU\\_fPBNacygSspoCACg&usg=AFQjCNGqOFuZwe7tFsmNus7WkwjL96wRTg&sig2=7Qy9M-c-ftl5R\\_GSdtCn6Q&bvm=bv.72676100,d.b2U](http://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=8&ved=0CEMQFjAH&url=http%3A%2F%2F74f85f59f39b887b696f-ab656259048fb93837ecc0ecbcf0c557.r23.cf3.rackcdn.com%2Fassets%2Flibrary%2Fdocument%2F0%2Foriginal%2F0004-r-redliontheatre.pdf&ei=mqLmU_fPBNacygSspoCACg&usg=AFQjCNGqOFuZwe7tFsmNus7WkwjL96wRTg&sig2=7Qy9M-c-ftl5R_GSdtCn6Q&bvm=bv.72676100,d.b2U)

LM: T{estamentum} Humfridi Milward

In the name of God, Amen. The six and twentieth day of July one thousand six hundred and eight and in the sixth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord James by the grace of

God King of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., and in the one and fortieth year of his Highness' reign of Scotland, I, Humphrey Milward, citizen and vintner of London, being at this present in health of body and of good and perfect mind and remembrance (praise and thanks be given to Almighty God, therefore), do make and declare this my present testament containing herein my last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, my heavenly Father, steadfastly believing to have remission and forgiveness of all my sins and offences and to inherit the kingdom of heaven by his only and free mercy through Jesus Christ, my only Saviour and Redeemer;

And as for my body when it shall please God to call me out of this transitory life, I commend the same to the earth, requiring that it may be buried in decent and seemly order in the parish of Saint Christopher, London, where I am now a parishioner, according to the discretion of my executor and overseers hereafter named;

And as touching such lands and tenements, as well freehold as copyhold, whereof I now stand seised of any manner of estate, I do dispose and leave the same to descend and remain unto my children in manner and form following, that is to say:

Inprimis, my will and mind is that all that my messuage or tenement at Mile End called or known by the name of the Redd Lyon [=Red Lion], and all my freehold lands with th' appurtenances set, lying and being in the parish of Saint Mary Matfellow alias Whitechapel and Stepney alias Stebonheate in the county of Middlesex shall according to the common laws of this realm descend and come after my decease unto my son, John Millward, and to his heirs and assigns forever;

And further my will and mind is that all my copyhold land with th' appurtenances set, lying and being in the said parishes of Saint Mary Matfellow alias Whitechapel and Stepney alias Stebonheate or in either of them shall after my decease descend and come unto my said children or any of them according to the custom of the manor whereof the same copyhold land is holden;

And my will and mind is that my executor hereafter named [f. 50r] shall receive the rents and profits both of my freehold and copyhold lands to the use of my children or of such of them to whom the same shall descend as aforesaid until they shall accomplish their full ages of twenty-one years, and that then my said executor shall be accountable and pay the same rents and profits unto my said children;

And as for the ordering and disposing of such goods and chattels as it hath please God of his great goodness to bestow upon me, I do will and require that the same may be truly valued and praised after my decease and set down in an inventory thereof to be taken by my executor, he making my overseers acquainted therewith;

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And then after that my debts that I shall truly owe to any person or persons and my funeral charges shall be paid and deducted or defalked out of my whole estate, I do will and devise that the remainder of my estate shall be parted and divided into three equal parts and shares according to the ancient and laudable custom of the City of London, one full third part whereof I do willingly leave to remain to Susan, my loving wife, as due and belonging unto her by the custom of the City of London, one other third part thereof I leave to remain to my children equally to be divided amongst them, and the other third part hereof I reserve to myself to dispose in such manner as in and by this my present last will I have limited and set down, that is to say:

[REMAINDER OF WILL NOT YET TRANSCRIBED]