

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 6 April 1527, together with a codicil dated 11 April, proved 25 May 1527, of Isabel Worsley Culpeper Leigh (d. 18 April 1527), whose grandchildren included Queen Katherine Howard; Oxford's friend, Sir George Howard; and Margaret Howard, the mother of Oxford's one-time friend and later bitter enemy, Charles Arundel (d.1587).

For details concerning the testatrix and the family members mentioned in her will, see the will of her grandson, Sir John Leigh, TNA PROB 11/48/372.

It should be noted that the testatrix uses the term 'cousin' to refer to her grandchildren, and the word 'daughter' to refer to both her biological daughters and to Elizabeth (nee Darcy) Leigh, the wife of her grandson, Sir John Leigh.

RM: Test{amentu}m D{omi}ne Isabelle Leigh vidue

[f. 143r] In the name of God, Amen. The 6 day of April the year of Our Lord God 1527 and in the 18th year of the reign of King Henry the 8th, I, Dame Isabel Leigh of Stockwell in the county of Surrey, widow, the late wife of Sir John Leigh, knight, deceased, being whole of mind and feeble in my body, make, ordain and declare this my present testament and last will in manner and form following:

First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, Our Blessed Lady Saint Mary, to all the holy company of heaven, my body to be buried in the chapel of Saint Nicholas in the parish church of Lambeth in the same tomb where the said Sir John Leigh, my husband, now lieth buried;

Item, I give and bequeath to the high altar of the parish church of Lambeth in recompense of my tithes by any means withholden 10s;

To the brotherhood of Saint Christopher in the said church 6s 8d;

To the reparations of(?) necessities of the said church 20s;

To the reparations of the necessities and ornaments of the chantry in the said church 10s;

And to the reparations of necessities and ornaments of the chantry in the chapel at Stockwell 20s;

And I will that every of the said legacies be implowed [=employed?] and bestowed by the oversight of my executors;

Item, I will that my executors do spend and bestow in and about my burial and month[‘s] day without worldly pomp of excess of black gowns or black cloth £40, whereof I will they give in alms-deeds within the month after my decease to the poor parochians of Lambeth and inhabitants of Stockwell £5, and other five pound in alms-deeds, as to poor people and prisoners, with other;

Item, I give and bequeath to my daughter, my Lady Howard, the wife of my Lord Sir Edmund Howard, knight, my best chain of gold with the cross hanging upon the same, my last wedding ring, a ring with the diamond enamelled, my gown of black velvet lined with crimson velvet, my gown of camlet furred with martens, one gilt salt without the cover, a harness of gold for a girdle with a double buckle, a basin and an ewer of silver, a plain gilt piece, a standing mazer with a foot, and a pair of very fine sheets, my black beads gauded with gold;

And of that stock which she hath of mine in her hands, I will she shall have 8 oxen, 12 kine, one bull, 37 wethers, 75 ewes, 48 young sheep, 4 old hogs, 4 yelts, 2 small barrow-hogs, one boar, 15 quarters of wheat, 10 quarters of barley, 9 load of hay, one mill-horse and 2 cart-horses with 10s, the one half of the said stock;

Also I give and bequeath to my daughter, Margaret Cotton, the wife of William Cotton, squire, my collar of gold, with 6 pieces, parcel of the same, now hooken(?) from it, my gown of black velvet furred with white, a gown of black camlet lined with buckram [f. 143v] and black velvet, a kirtle of tawny satin, my first wedding ring, a harness of gold for a girdle with drops on it, £10 in ready money, a pair of beads of gold;

Also I give to my daughter, Elizabeth Leigh, wife of my cousin, John Leigh, my second chain of gold, a tablet of gold with a[n] image of Our Lady of mother of pearl, a ring with a ruby, a ring with a pointed diamond, a pair of beads of coral, and a large fine sheet of 4 leaves;

Item, I give to my cousin, John Leigh, squire, the silver salt that I bought with the cover thereto, a gilt salt with the cover thereto, 6 great silver spoons, a pot of silver, a standing gilt cup pounced with the cover gilt, my best tablecloth of diaper, all my goats in Leigham Park, all my years’ interest and to me which I have in the moors, land and meadow in the parish of Battersea holden to farm of th’ abbot and convent of Westminster, the one-half of all the stock which my said Lady, my daughter, hath of mine in her hand, and all the residue of my household stuff by me not bequeathed which at this day remain not parted nor divided between him and me;

Item, I give to my cousin, Ralph Leigh, 2 featherbeds to be delivered at the discretion of my executors with 2 bolsters, 2 pair of blankets, 4 pillows, 2 mattress[es], 2 bolsters for them, 2 pair of blankets, 4 pair of fine sheets, 4 pair of coarse sheets, three plain tablecloths, a diaper tablecloth, 3 diaper towels, one long, 2 short, 3 plain fine towels, 3 coarse towels, 2 brass pots, a more and a less, one great spit, a middle spit, 2 brass pans, a kettle, a garnish of whole(?) pewter vessel, 2 pewter basins, a more and a less, a basin and an ewer of pewter, a salt of silver parcel gilt with the cover to it, 12 silver spoons, 6

great and 6 small, a flat cup of silver with a foot and the cover thereto, a standing cup of silver parcel gilt pounced with the cover thereto, a Saint Anthony's cross of gold, 2 rings of gold called hoops, a purse with rings of silver, the second coverlet that was my husband[*'s*], one of the little coverlets with conies, one coverlet with imagery, and one coverlet of red and black;

Item, I give to Elizabeth Leigh, if she be not married at my departing, my cross of gold with the 4 Evangelist[s], a ring with a tablet diamond, a sergeant's ring, the best that I have, a signet of gold graven with the name of Jesus, a pair of beads of exula(?), 2 pairs of fine sheets, 2 fine tablecloths plain, 2 diaper towels, one long, another short, and one plain towel;

Item, I give to Margaret Metcalfe, my servant, one mattress, a bolster, a pair of blankets, a coverlet, 2 pair of whole coarse sheets, 3 platters, 3 dishes, 3 salts & 3 kine upon condition she remain in service with my Lady my daughter for reasonable wages till she come to her marriage;

Also I will that if my foresaid cousin, John Leigh, disturb, inquiet or vex my executors in executing this my present testament or apparently disagree to the same, that then every legacy in the same to him made, given or bequeathed be utterly void and of none effect, and the same to be divided amongst his brother & sisters then living after the discretion of my executors;

Item, I give to my cousin, Joyce Stanney, 20s;

To my cousin, Joyce Carleton, 20s;

To my god-daughter, Joyce Welbeck, 20s;

Item, I will that £5 sterling money be equally divided and given between Margaret Welbeck and those children which my said daughter Cotton hath by her husband, William Cotton;

Item, I give to my children [sic for 'chaplain'?] and every of my serving-men being with me in service at my departing a black gown and 6s 8d in money, every of my servants' gowns price 20s, and my chaplain 3 yards for a short gown;

Also I will that my said Lady my daughter have 40s in money, therewith to find Richard Leigh and Agnes Leigh if they or either of them be living at time of my decease;

Item, I give to every wife in Stockwell one ell of linen cloth, price 12d, or else 12d in money;

Item, I give to Charles Howard, Henry Howard, George Howard, Margaret Howard and Katherine Howard, to every of them 20s;

And to Mary Howard, my god-daughter, 40s;

Item, I give to the said Elizabeth Leigh, wife to John Leigh, my long harness of gold with a pearl at th' end of it;

Also I give to Margaret Leigh if she be not married at my departing £10 in ready money, a black gown lined with black velvet, a black gown furred with budge, a kirtle of black damask, a kirtle of black camlet, a sergeant's sygne [sic for 'ring'?] with knots, a pair of beads of white, 3 goblets of silver of divers sorts, a plain mazer, a long spruce coffer standing by my bedside with all the linen cloths in the same, and a tablet of gold that was wont to hang at my second chain;

Item, I give to my Lord Sir Edmund Howard, knight, to have my soul in his remembrance and to pray for me, £10 sterling;

To my son-in-law, William Cotton, to like intent, 66s 8d;

To Humphrey Sharroff's wife, 6s 8d;

To my niece Nokes(?), 20s;

To my niece Welden, 20s;

To Cicely and to Savage's wife which [+were?] my late servants, to every of them one cow;

Item, I give to the reparations of the highway from the end of Harrys field to the cross toward Lambeth, if the same highway be not amended and reprov'd by me in my life, £5 sterling;

Item, I give to my said Lady, my daughter, all and every part of my linen cloths afore not bequeathed;

And I will that my executors shall sell as much of my cattle being at Lagham and elsewhere, and no part of the stock that my said Lady Howard hath, that as of necessity shall be required for and to the performance of my said will and not otherwise, and that all the cattle that then so shall remain shall be and remain to my said cousin, John Leigh, to his own use;

All the residue of my goods above not bequeathed, after that this my present testament and last will be in everything clearly and fully performed, I give and bequeath to my said daughter, my Lady Howard, upon condition that her said husband and she within 4 months next after my decease redeem and buy again all the lands, rents, services and hereditaments which [+were?] the inheritance of her, my said Lady my daughter, in the county of Kent, and that after and incontinent upon such redemption had of the same lands the said Lord Edmund and she do put and establish all the inheritance of her, my

said daughter, in the said county of Kent which to her descended from her father, Richard Culpeper, or from her brother, Thomas Culpeper, in such way and order by the due order of the law that immediately after her decease all the said inheritance shall descend to the next heirs of her body begotten, and so to the heirs of that heirs according to the last will of Sir John Culpeper, knight;

And further I will that the said Lord Edmund and Joyce, his wife, shall find good and sufficient surety to my executors for the true performance of this my last will as touching to this article of redemption and establishment of the said inheritance before that he or she or either of them have any part of the said residue of all my said goods, and that if they do not find such surety within 2 months next after my decease, that then this legacy and gift of the said residue of all my said goods toward her, my said Lady my daughter, be void and of none effect, and that then all the said residue of my said goods shall be bestowed & given by my executors in charitable wise and in good deeds after their discretion and as I have secretly between them & me declared to my said executors, whom I do make and ordain my nephew, Edward Leigh, clerk, the King's almoner, John Carleton, gentleman, John Leigh, squire, and to every of them I give for their labour 5 marks in money;

Item, I give to every of my said Lord's waiting servants to pray for me 40d the piece, and to every servant of husbandry 20d, and to every woman servant not afore remembered 20s;

In witness whereof I, the said Dame Isabel, to these presents have put my seal, these men being present, the day and year abovesaid [-abovesaid]: my Lord Edmund Howard, knight, John Leigh, squire, Ralph Leigh, gentleman, Sir Richard Dean, priest, John Carleton, my Lady Howard, Mrs Elizabeth Leigh, & Joan Kelycke.

[f. 144r] Be it known to all men that I, Dame Isabel of Stockwell, widow, being in whole and perfect mind, have this present day the 18 day of April the 18 year of King Henry the 8th, made one John Leigh, squire, of one [sic?] executors of my last will written with the hand of John Carleton bearing date the 11 day of April the year of Our Lord God 1527, the which said testament I will shall stand in his full strength and be observed in every point, except that I will that Thomas Argall be put out of my said will and to be none of my executors, and in eny [sic?] other article whereas I willed that the Lord Edmund Howard should be bounden to put in sufficient surety within 3 months after my decease for the recovering of all such lands as one Thomas Kellesett of London, tailor, had and hath in a bargain made between him, the said Lord Edmund, and Dame Joyce, his wife, be void and crossed out;

Furthermore I will that my executors shall pay threescore pound for the redeeming again of all the lands that the said Kelleset hath as is aforesaid if it be possible that it may be recovered by any means, the said Lord Edmund, Dame Joyce, his wife, finding no sureties, notwithstanding as afore is rehearsed;

And also I will if the said lands cannot be again recovered, then I will that the said £60 to be delivered and paid as my free gift unto my daughter, Joyce Howard, wife to the said Lord Edmund;

In witness whereof I, the said Dame Isabel Leigh, hath desired the said Lord Edmund to write this my will and mind with his own hand, and all these persons following to bear witness thereof: my Lord Edmund Howard, Dame Joyce Howard, John Leigh, squire, Elizabeth Leigh, Mrs Margaret Leigh, Sir John Dabe(?), her ghostly father, Sir Richard Dene, chaplain, Sir George Wallington, chaplain, John Dalle, John Thornbery, Johan [=Joan?] Kellecke, Master Ralph Leigh, and divers other.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum Testamentum in ecclesia Cathedralli diui Pauli London coram commissariis prefatorum Reverendissimo patrum xxvto die mensis Maii Anno domini Millesimo Quingentesimo xxvijo Ac approbatum et insinuatum Commissaque fuit auctoritate prefatorum Reverendissimorum peratrum administrationum et singulorum bonorum Iurium et creditorum dictam defunctam & concernentium Iohanni Leigh Executori & c In persona Richardi ffelde notarij publici procuratoris sui & c De bene et fideliter administrationem eadem Ac de pleno et fidei Inventario & c concificiendum necno de plano et vero compoto calculo siue raciocinio in ea parte Ad sancta dei Evangelia Iurat Resuat potestate similem commissione faciendam Magistro Edwardo Lee clerico et Iohanni Carleton Executoribus in huiusmodi Testamentum nominatis cum venerint in debitum Iuris forma eos admissuris

[=The above-written testament was proved in the Cathedral Church of St Paul at London before the Commissioners of the forenamed Most Reverend Fathers on the 25th day of the month of May in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 27th, and probated and entered, and administration was granted by the authority of the forenamed Most Reverend Fathers of all and singular the goods, rights and credits concerning the said deceased etc. to John Leigh, executor etc., in the person of Richard Field, notary public, his proctor etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same and to prepare a full and faithful inventory etc., and also [+to render] a plain and true account, calculation or reckoning in that respect, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to Master Edward Leigh, clerk, and John Carleton, executors named in the same testament, when they shall have come to be admitted in due form of law.]