

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the nuncupative will, made 11 July 1551 and proved 17 July 1551, of Thomas Knolles, first husband of Elizabeth Castelyn Knolles Martyn, stepmother of Humphrey Martyn (d.1587?), the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575. See the Langham page on this website.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator is said to have been a descendant of Sir Thomas Knolles (d.1435), Lord Mayor of London in 1399 and 1411. See *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, (London: J.B. Nichols and Sons, 1870), Vol. III, p. 7 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=5joQAAAAYAAJ&pg=RA2-PA7>

For Sir Thomas Knolles (d.1435), see also Jones, Thomas Wharton, 'The Knolles or Knollys Family of Rotherfield Greys, Oxfordshire', in Nichols, John Gough, ed., *The Herald and Genealogist*, Vol. VIII, (London: R.C. Nichols and J.B. Nichols, 1874), pp. 289-302 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=CDI9AQAIAAJ&pg=PA290>

See also 'A short history of the Knolles and Frowick families' at:

<https://www.northmymshistory.uk/2018/03/a-short-history-of-knolles-and-frowick.html>

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Elizabeth Castelyn, the daughter of the London mercer, William Castelyn (d.1545), and Angelet Vlacho (d.1570), eldest daughter and heir of Michel Vlacho of Chios, Greece. See the will, dated 17 April 1545 and proved 7 February 1548, of William Castelyn, TNA PROB 11/32/39, and *Transactions, supra*, p. 7.

See also Harris, Jonathan and Heleni Porfyriou, 'The Greek Diaspora: Italian Port Cities and London', in Calabi, Donatella and Stephen Turk Christensen, eds., *Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 65-86 at p. 79:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=ZQJMIQEJZAC&pg=PA79>

William Castelyn was buried 19 April 1545 in the church of St Pancras, Soper Lane. See Bannerman, W. Bruce, ed., *The Registers of St. Mary le Bowe, Cheapside, All Hallows*,

Honey Lane, and of St. Pancras, Soper Lane, London; Part I: Baptisms and Burials, (London: Harleian Society, 1914), Vol. XLIV, p. 285 at:

<https://archive.org/details/registerstofstmar44stma/page/284>

William Castelyn's widow, Angelet Vlachó Castelyn, was buried 19 August 1570. See Bannerman, *supra*, p. 289 at:

<https://archive.org/details/registerstofstmar44stma/page/288>

By Elizabeth Castelyn, the testator had two sons:

* **Thomas Knolles.**

* **Samuel Knolles.**

For the will of Hercules Meautys, in which he bequeaths gold rings to the testator's two sons, Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, see TNA PROB 11/73/110.

For the will of Elizabeth Castelyn Knolles Martyn, see TNA PROB 11/65/430. For the will of her second husband, Sir Roger Martyn, see TNA PROB 11/56/48.

For the testator's epitaph, see Seymour, Robert, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, Vol. I, (London: T. Read, 1733), p. 515 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=nGVZAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA515>

*And Thomas Knowles is placed here,
Whose bones from Bow were hither borne.
His godly life did well appear
In helping those that were forlorn,
And virtue did him so adorn
That he beloved was of all.
Mercer he was when Death did call
In prime of years his life away,
Who dying like a worthy wight
Did hope in Christ to live for aye.
His wife him wails in woeful plight,
And for mere love him here she pight
With her second spouse to sleep in peace,
And she with them when life shall cease.*

LM: T{estamentum} Thome Knoll{es}

Thomas Knolles, citizen and mercer of London, being of good & perfect memory, laud and praise be given to God, made and declared his last will and testament the 11th day of July Anno Domini 1551 et anno quinto Edwardi Sexto as hereafter followeth, that is to say:

First, he gave and bequeathed to Elizabeth, his wife, the third part of all his goods and chattels & debts;

Also he gave to Rowland Groeane(?), his servant, twenty pounds;

Item, to every other his servants, five pounds;

And the residue of all his goods, chattels and debts he wholly gave and bequeathed to Elizabeth, his wife, and to Thomas and Samuel, his children;

And he ordained and made the said Elizabeth, his wife, his full and whole executrix, these being witness: John Baron, mercer, and Rowland Greane(?)

Probatum fuit testamentum coram domino Cantuariensis Archiepiscopo apud London xvijmo die Mensis Iulij Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo quinquagesimo primo Iuramento Elizabeth Relicte et Executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominatim Ac approbatum et insinuatum Et commissum fuit administratione omnium bonorum &c de bene &c Ac de pleno Inuentorio &c Ad satisfactionem dei Evangelia Iurat

[=The testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the 17th day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-first by the oath of Elizabeth, relict and executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all the goods etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., and a full inventory etc.]