

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 29 December 1574 and proved 8 December 1575, of Margaret Butler (d. 2 June 1575), wife of Edward North (c.1504-1564), 1st Baron North, whose niece, Jane Wilkinson (d.1571), married, as his first wife, Michael Lok (c.1532–1620x22), who persuaded Oxford to invest heavily in Martin Frobisher's 1577 expedition in search of a route to Cathay. See the will of Edward North, 1st Baron North, TNA PROB 11/48/64.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Provisions in the will, dated 27 November 1528 and proved 11 February 1534, TNA PROB 11/25/123, of Sir William Butler, Lord Mayor of London in 1515, indicate that the testatrix was his niece, the daughter of his brother, Richard Butler:

Item, I bequeath to Margaret, my brother Richard's daughter, 10 marks to her to be delivered within 2 years after my decease. [f. 63v]

Item, I bequeath to Andrew Fraunces a ring or 15s and a black gown.

MARRIAGES

The testatrix married firstly the London clothworker, Andrew Fraunces (1495 – March 1543); secondly, in 1544, the London alderman and mercer, Robert Chertsey (1498 – October 1555); thirdly, in 1557, Sir David Broke (by 1491 – 1559/60), Chief Baron of the Exchequer, whose first wife was Catherine Brydges (d.1556), the daughter of Sir Giles Brydges of Coberley, widow of Leonard Poole (d. 30 September 1538) of Sapperton; and fourthly, Edward North (c.1504-1564), 1st Baron North.

For Andrew Fraunces, see his will, dated 22 January 1542 and proved 9 March 1543, TNA PROB 11/29/301, in which he bequeaths to his wife, Margaret:

. . . my lease of certain houses and waste ground lying in the nether end of Paris Garden belonging to the Bishop of Winchester during her life, and after her decease I bequeath the said lease and the residue of the years then to come in the same to William Johnson, haberdasher, and to Alice, his wife, during their lives, and after their decease to the children of the said Alice.

It is possible that there is a connection between this William Johnson and the William Johnson who was associated with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the mortgage of the Blackfriars gatehouse in 1613. See Halliwell, James Orchard, *The Life of William Shakespeare*, (London: John Russell Smith, 1848), p. 252 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=OFczAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA253&lpg=PA252>

For Robert Chertsey, see his will, TNA PROB 11/37/450, and the entries for Robert Chertsey and Margaret, Lady North, in Sutton, Anne F., *The Mercery of London: Trade, Goods and People, 1130-1578*, (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), pp. 527-8, 544-5, 652.

For Sir David Broke, see his will, TNA PROB 11/43/91; the will of Sir William Morgan, TNA PROB 11/29/194; and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/broke-david-1491-155960>

OTHER PERSONS NAMED IN THE WILL

The testatrix appoints as executor ‘my well-beloved Robert Halton, gentleman’. On 13 September 1582, administration was granted to Robert Halton’s widow, Jane, described in the grant as Lady North’s next of kin.

According to the Halton pedigree, Jane was the daughter of John Drayner of Hoxton, Middlesex, and his wife, Elizabeth Butler, the daughter of (blank) Butler of Rydenham [sic for ‘Biddenham’?], Bedfordshire. See Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitation of the County of Lincoln in 1562-4*, (London: George Bell & Sons, 1881), p. 37 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofcoun00cook#page/n393/mode/2up/search>

Elizabeth Butler appears to have been the daughter of Edward Butler mentioned in the will of Sir William Butler, *supra*, and if so, was the testatrix’ first cousin.

For the testator’s overseer, Sir Gilbert Gerard (d.1593), see the *ODNB* entry.

RM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ne Margarete North

This is the last will and testament of me, Lady Margaret North, of the Charterhouse near London in the county of Middlesex, late wife of the right honourable Sir Edward North, knight, Lord of Kirtling in the county of Cambridge, deceased, made the twenty-ninth day of December in Anno Domini 1574 in the seventeenth year of the reign of our most dear Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith etc., being in perfect memory, for the which with all other God’s manifold and merciful benefits bestowed and showed on me I do give most hearty thanks unto my Lord God, and I do most heartily beseech Almighty God for his son Jesus Christ Our Lord and Saviour his sake that he would vouchsafe to take my body and soul unto his everlasting mercy, and that I may be partaker of the joyful resurrection which he hath prepared for his elect before all worlds in the blood of his dear Son, Jesus Christ Our

Lord and Redeemer, and upon his cross I do lay as [sic?] my sins and offences, utterly refusing mine own works as unprofitable to salvation;

And I do bequeath my body to be buried in the parish church of Saint Lawrence in the Old Jewry of London;

Item, I give and bequeath ten pounds unto the marriage of twenty poor maidens, viz., to every of them ten shillings to be distributed according to the discretion of mine executor;

Item, I give and bequeath unto the relief of the poor people within the hospitals and poor prisons hereafter herein named forty shillings unto every house, viz., to and amongst the poor within the hospital of St Bartholomew's in West Smithfield forty shillings; to and amongst the poor within the hospital of Christ's Church forty shillings; to and amongst the poor people within th' hospital of St Thomas in Southwark forty shillings; to and amongst the poor prisoners within Newgate forty shillings; to and amongst the poor prisoners within Ludgate forty shillings; to and amongst the poor prisoners within the Counter in Wood Street forty shillings; to and amongst the poor prisoners within the Counter in the Poultry forty shillings, to be paid to them by mine executor within one fortnight after my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Anne Walden one hundred pounds to be paid unto her by mine executor immediately after my burial, and one other hundred pounds I give to the said Anne to be paid to her at the day of her marriage upon condition that she do clearly acquit and discharge forever her brothers, Valentine Walden, Robert Walden and John Allyn, their heirs and executors, of the sum of threescore pounds that they owe unto her, which said threescore pounds she had of my gift;

And if the said Anne die before she be married, then I will that mine executor shall pay the said hundred pounds last to her limited to her brother, Valentine Walden;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my godsons and god-daughter, Roger Halton, William Halton, John Halton and Frances Halton, twenty pounds apiece to be paid unto them within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my cousin, Elizabeth Drayner, thirty pounds, and to her son, Thomas Drayner, thirty pounds, to be paid unto them within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my cousin, Margaret Sare, ten pounds to be paid unto her within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Dorothy Comberforde fifty pounds, and my will is that the same fifty pounds shall be [f. 388v] delivered by mine executor into the hands of my cousin, William Brend, to and for th' use of the said Dorothy within one month after my burial, desiring him to put forth the same towards the bringing up of her until the day of

her marriage or until the time that she be able to give a sufficient discharge for the said fifty pounds;

And if it fortune the said Dorothy to decease before the times aforesaid, then my will is and I give and bequeath the same fifty pounds to Francis Comberforde and Elizabeth Comberforde, her brother and sister, equally to be divided and paid unto them within one year after the decease of the said Dorothy;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Walter Barnard six pounds thirteen shillings four pence to be paid unto the father or mother of the said Walter to the use of the said Walter within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my cousin, Jane Clarke, now the wife of George Wheler, twenty pounds to be paid unto her within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin, Susan Walshe, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence to be paid unto her within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my godchildren, Jemes [=James?] Necton and Margaret Necton, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence apiece to be paid unto their father or mother to their use within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my servant, Michael Henrison, twenty pounds to be paid unto him by mine executor within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my servant, Mary Jukes, twenty pounds to be paid unto her within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my servant, Lawrence Smyth, five pounds to be paid unto him within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto John Edwards three pounds, and to his wife forty shillings, to be paid unto them within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Anthony Smythson forty shillings to be paid unto him within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto John Bower forty shillings to be paid unto him within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Henry Martyn forty shillings to be paid unto him within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto John Leeming twenty shillings to be paid unto him within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Francis Lancaster twenty shillings to be paid unto him within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Anne Tisdall forty shillings to be paid unto her within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Prudence, Jane and Susan Walton, the children of my cousin, Andrew Walton, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence apiece to be paid unto their father and mother within one month after my burial, they putting in assurance to mine executor to pay the same to the said children or the survivor of them at their several ages or marriages;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Elizabeth Slye six pounds thirteen shillings four pence;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Anne Hall, the daughter of my cousin, Thomas Hall, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence to be paid unto her father or mother within one month after my burial;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my maidservant, Anne Bell, three pounds yearly rent to be paid and taken out of all that my messuage, tenement and tavern with th' appurtenances called the King's Head set and being in the parish of St Sepulchre's without Newgate in the suburbs of the city of London during her life, to be paid at four terms in the year, that is to say, the feast of th' Annunciation of Our Lady, the birth of St John Baptist, St Michael th' Archangel and the Nativity of Jesus Christ by even portions, the payment to be made to my cousin, Elizabeth Drayner if she so long live, and after her death to such honest person as the said Anne Bell shall abide withal;

And after the death of the said Anne Bell, I will that three pounds [+to?] be taken out of the said tenement shall be bestowed yearly forever in bread, viz., every Sunday in the year thirteen pence to be delivered to thirteen of the poorest prisoners in the prison of Ludgate;

And I give unto my cousin, Jane Halton, and to her heirs forever all that my said tenement and tavern with th' appurtenances called the King's Head, willing and charging her and her heirs to see the said payment made and the said money bestowed in bread truly according to the true intent of this my present last will as she will answer at the Last Day;

Item, I give unto my cousin, Robert Lightfoot, and his heirs forever all that my messuage and tenement with th' appurtenances set, lying and being in Deptford in the county of Kent with all my lands belonging to the same and all my household stuff and implements of household being in the house there at this present;

Item, for the great goodwill, love and affection that is and hath been reciprocally between me and the parishioners of St Lawrence Jewry in London, which on their parts hath been lately showed in freely granting and giving unto me a place and stone for my dead corpse

to be buried and entombed in the north side and east end of the choir in their parish church, and for a small token of my thankful mind and like goodwill towards the said parish and parishioners, I do by this my last will and testament give and bequeath unto the vicar and churchwardens of the said parish church and to their successors all that my lease, estate and term of years to come of and in one messuage [f. 389r] or tenement brewhouse called the Half Moon with all tenements, fish houses and wharves thereto belonging with their appurtenances set and being in the parish of St Lawrence Poultry in Thames Street in the city of London granted by John Palmer, clerk, Warden and Master of the College of Petty Canons of the Cathedral Church of St Paul in London and the Fellows of the same to Robert Myller, citizen and grocer of London, by indenture bearing date the two and twentieth of June in the year of Our Lord God 1522 from the feast of St John Baptist then next coming for the term of 99 years, and all rents and reversions reserved upon any lease or leases made of the premises or of any part or parcel thereof sithence the date of the said indenture, and all my writings, counterpanes and bonds touching the same together with the same indenture, which lease is for the yearly value of thirteen pounds six shillings eight pence above all charges;

To have and to hold to the said vicar and churchwardens and their successors forever to th' uses and intents hereafter expressed, viz., to th' intent that the said vicar and churchwardens and their successors during all the said term weekly and every week on the Sunday shall pay and deliver to six honest poor householders of the said parish, whereof the parish clerk of the said church for the time being always to be one, for and in my name two shillings in money, viz., to every one four pence, the residue of which persons shall be named and appointed by the vicar and churchwardens and the residue of the vestry of the said parish for the time being, and so from time to time during all the said term when one shall die another to be by them appointed in his or their place;

And that all the residue of the said sum of £13 6s 8d shall be bestowed upon and towards the reparations of the said parish church and other charitable deeds at the good discretion of the said vicar, churchwardens and residue of the vestry of the said parish for the time being;

Item, I will that my executor shall bestow in and about my burial and funeral charges the sum of five hundred pounds or more if he and mine overseers think it so meet;

And I ordain and make my whole executor my well-beloved Robert Halton, gentleman;

And overseers of this my last will and testament I ordain and make the honourable Lord North and Gilbert Gerard, esquire, the Queen's Majesty's Attorney-General;

And I give unto the said Lord North the hangings in the parlour below as they do hang which I bought of my Lord his father's executors, and I give unto Mr Gerard a ring of gold with a pointed diamond, desiring them to take some pains to assist mine executor in th' execution of this my last will;

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my seal the day and year first above-written Sealed and subscribed in the presence of Robert Lightfote, William Lightfoote, Henry Sutton, Lawrence Smythe and Michael Henryson.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentum ac per S{ente}nc{ia}m diffinitivam approbatum et insinuatam coram mag{ist}ro will{el}imo Drewrye legum doctore Curie Prerogative Cant{uariensis} Commissario apud London Octavo Die mens{is} Decembris Anno D{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo Septuagesimo quinto Iuramento Roberti Halton generos{i} Executoris in h{uius}mo{d}i Testamento no{m}i{n}at{i} Cui Commissa fuit Administrac{i}o &c De bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario &c Necnon de plano et vero Comp{ot}o Calculo siue rac{i}ocinio inde reddend{o} Ad S{an}c{t}a Dei Evangelia rite(?) Iurat{i}

[=The same testament was proved and by definitive sentence probated and entered before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the eighth day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-fifth by the oath of Robert Halton, gentleman, executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels [rite?] to well etc., and [+to exhibit?] a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account, calculation or reckoning thereof.]

xiiij Septembris 1582 ema{nauit} com{m}issio Janne Halton vid{ue} prox{ime} cons{anguinee} d{i}c{t}e def{uncte} ad admi{n}istrand{um} bona etc p{er} Rob{er}tum Halton ex{ecuto}rem def{uncte} non admi{n}istrat{a} De bene etc in p{er}sona Petri Johnson no{ta}rij pu{bli}ci procu{rato}ris etc Iurat{i}

[=On the 13th of September 1582 a grant issued to Jane Halton, widow, next cousin of the said deceased to administer the goods etc. by Robert Halton, executor of the deceased, not administered, sworn to well etc. in the person of Peter Johnson, notary public, proctor etc.]