

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 6 October 1581 and proved 1 July 1583, of Elizabeth Martyn, stepmother of Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes the Earl of Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575.

The testatrix was an investor in the 1578 Frobisher voyage in search of the Northwest Passage (see Huntington Library HM 715, ff. 1-3); Oxford invested in the 1577 voyage, and suffered heavy losses. The testatrix' brother, Edward Castelyn, was Michael Lok's deputy in connection with the Company's affairs after the ships had returned from the 1578 voyage and the ultimately worthless ore from the 1577 and 1578 voyages was being refined at Dartford (see TNA SP 12/131/20, ff. 72-91). Edward Castelyn appears to have had a long association with the Lok family. See *The Second Voyage to Guinea set out by Sir George Barne, Sir John Yorke, Thomas Lok, Anthony Hickman and Edward Castelyn in the year 1554, the Captain Whereof was Mr John Lok* at:

<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/h/hakluyt/voyages/v11/chapter31.html>

### ***FAMILY BACKGROUND***

The testatrix was the daughter of the London mercer, William Castlyn or Castelyn, and Angelet Vlacho, the eldest daughter and heir of Michel Vlacho of Chios, Greece. See the will of William Castlyn, TNA PROB 11/32/39, and *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>

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>

According to the will below the testatrix had three brothers, Edward Castlyn, Thomas Castlyn and John Castlyn, and a sister, Bennet Hammerton, for whose marriage to William Hammerton on 16 March 1548 see Chester, Joseph Lemuel and George J. Amytage, eds., *Allegations for Marriage Licences*, (London: Harleian Society, 1886), Vol. XXIV, p. 12 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/allegationsforma00cant#page/12/mode/2up>

### ***MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN***

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The testatrix married firstly the London mercer, Thomas Knolles (d. 11 July 1550), said to have been a descendant of Sir Thomas Knolles, twice Lord Mayor of London, by whom she had two sons, Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles. For the will of the testatrix' first husband, see TNA PROB 11/34/212. For his epitaph, see Stow, p. 515, *infra*:

*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.*

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

The testatrix married secondly, as his second wife, Sir Roger Martyn (d.1573). By his first wife, Lettice Pakington (d. 23 December 1552), Sir Roger Martyn had two sons, Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* (see above), and Edmund Martyn (d.1596), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/87/460, and two daughters, Susanna Martyn, who married Robert Bee of London, gentleman, and Martha Martyn, who married the testatrix' brother, the London mercer, John Castlyn. See the pedigree of Martyn in Howard, John Jackson and George John Armytage, eds., *The Visitation of London in the Year 1568*, (London: Harleian Society, 1869), Vol. I, p. 2 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationoflond00cook#page/2/mode/2up>.

By Sir Roger Martyn the testatrix had three daughters:

\* **Mary Martyn** (baptized 20 November 1557, d.1574), who on 8 June 1573 married Alexander Denton of Hillesden, Buckinghamshire, son of Thomas Denton (d. 30 October 1558), esquire, and Margaret Mordaunt, widow of Edmund Fettiplace, and third daughter of John Mordaunt (d. 18 August 1562), 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Mordaunt, by Elizabeth Vere, eldest of the four daughters and coheirs of Henry Vere (d.1493) of Great Addington, Northamptonshire. For William Mordaunt, a younger son of John Mordaunt (d. 18 August 1562), 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Mordaunt, and thus the brother of Margaret Mordaunt, see the will, TNA PROB 11/50/19, of Joan Farrington Booth Beconsall Browne, widow of Sir

Anthony Browne (d. 16 May 1567), Justice of the Common Pleas, who circa 1554 was a member of the council of John de Vere (1512-1562), 16<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. See also the *ODNB* entry for John Mordaunt, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Mordaunt, his will, proved 1 September 1562, TNA PROB 11/45/213, and Cokayne, George Edward, *The Complete Peerage*, (London: The St Catherine Press, 1936), Vol. IX, pp. 193-5.

For the dates of Mary Martyn's baptism and marriage, see Chester, Joseph Lemuel and George J. Armytage, eds., *The Parish Registers of St. Antholin, Budge Row, London*, (London: Harleian Society, 1883), Vol. VIII, pp. 12, 23 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=wzfvAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA12>

See also the will of Margaret (nee Mordaunt) Fettiplace Denton, TNA PROB 11/87/357; and Rylands, W. Harry, ed., *The Four Visitations of Berkshire*, (London, 1907), Vol. I, p. 28 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/fourvisitationso5657ryla#page/n51/mode/2up>

For the will of Alexander Denton in which he appoints 'my Lady Martyn' as one of the overseers, see TNA PROB 11/60/379. By Alexander Denton, Mary Martyn had an only son, Sir Thomas Denton (c.1574-1633), mentioned in the will below as the testatrix' godson and the son of her daughter, Mary. The History of Parliament entry for Sir Thomas Denton (c.1574-1633) erroneously states that he was the son of Alexander Denton by 'a daughter of Richard Willison of Sugwas, Herefordshire. See:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/denton-sir-thomas-1574-1633>

However this error is corrected by Willis, who states that Alexander Denton had no surviving issue by his first wife, Anne Willison (d.1566), and that he married secondly, Mary Martyn, the daughter of Sir Roger Martyn, by whom he had a son, Sir Thomas Denton. See Willis, Browne, *The History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred and Deanry of Buckingham*, (London, 1755), p. 194 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=kRAtAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA194>

According to the will below, Mary (nee Martyn) Denton predeceased the testatrix. There is a portrait of her at age fifteen in the York City Art Gallery. See:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/60861613@N00/3787879041/>

\* **Joan Martyn** (baptized 24 June 1561, d.1621), who married Anthony Smith (d.1611) of Campden, Gloucestershire, in 1593. According to the inquisition post mortem taken after Anthony Smith's death, on 20 March 1602 Thomas Russell (who was later overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon), conveyed to Smith lands in Broad Campden. For the date of Joan Martyn's baptism, see Chester, *supra*, p. 14. For

Joan Martyn's marriage, see Gwilt, *infra*, p. 12, and McManaway, James G., *The Authorship of Shakespeare*, (Folger Shakespeare Library, 1962), p. 25 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=c52SjdRjFpIC&pg=PA25&lpg=PA25>

For the will of Joan (nee Martyn) Smith, see TNA PROB 11/137/584. For Anthony Smith, see the will of John Fitzherbert (d.1502), Remembrancer of the Exchequer, TNA PROB 11/13/461:

*Eustace Fitzherbert, grandson of John Fitzherbert (d.1502), Remembrancer of the Exchequer, had two daughters and coheirs, Joan and Elizabeth. Elizabeth Fitzherbert (d. 1 December 1559) married firstly Edward Smyth, a younger son of Sir John Smith of Cressing Temple, Essex, Baron of the Exchequer, and secondly, about 1539, Thomas Smyth (d. 31 October 1593). After the death of Elizabeth Fitzherbert, Thomas Smyth married Katherine Throckmorton, the daughter of Sir George Throckmorton (d.1552) and widow of Robert Winter (d.1549), by whom he had seven sons and seven daughters, including Anthony Smith (d.1611) of Campden, Gloucestershire, who married Joan Martyn (d.1621), daughter of Sir Roger Martyn (d.1573), Lord Mayor of London. See Gwilt, Charles Perkins, Notices Relating to Thomas Smith of Campden and to Henry Smith, Sometime Alderman of London, (London: George Woodfall, 1836), pp. 2-12 at:*

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=eScAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA8&lpg=PA8>

\* **Anne Martyn** (baptized 4 April 1563), who on 8 June 1579 married Sir Anthony Culpeper (1560-1618) of Bedgebury, Kent, son of Sir Alexander Culpeper (d. 19 January 1599) by Mary Dacre, daughter of William Dacre (29 April 1500 – 18 November 1563), Lord Dacre of the North, and grandson of Thomas Culpeper (d. 13 May 1558) by his first wife, Elizabeth Haute, the daughter of Sir William Haute (d.1539) and Mary Guildford. For the dates of Anne Martyn's baptism and marriage, see Chester, *supra*, pp. 15, 27. For Mary Dacre, see CP 129/54; and

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenD.htm>

For Sir William Haute, see his will, TNA PROB 11/26/240, and:

<http://gen.culpepper.com/ss/p8595.htm>

For the settlement by indenture of 5 June 1579 between Sir Alexander Culpeper and the testatrix for the marriage of Anne Martyn and Anthony Culpeper see Harleian Charter, 77 A 53 in *Papers Read Before the Juridical Society 1855-1858* (London: V. & R. Stevens, 1858), pp. 57-63, available online at:

[http://books.google.ca/books/about/Papers\\_Read\\_Before\\_the\\_Juridical\\_Society.html?id=iTBPAAAAYAAJ&redir\\_esc=y](http://books.google.ca/books/about/Papers_Read_Before_the_Juridical_Society.html?id=iTBPAAAAYAAJ&redir_esc=y).

The Culpeper tomb is at Goudhurst in Kent:

<http://gen.culpepper.com/archives/uk/places/goudhurst3.htm>

For the will of the testatrix' second husband, Sir Roger Martyn, Lord Mayor of London, see TNA PROB 11/56/48.

The testatrix was buried 8 March 1583 (see Chester, *supra*, p. 29). For her epitaph, see Stow, p. 515 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=nGVZAAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA515>

*Here lies the Lady Martyn eke  
Of Grecia soil and Castlyn's race.  
Both constant, virtuous, wise and meek  
That showed herself in any place.  
And God endued her so with grace  
That she both lived and died with praise.  
Two husbands had she in her days  
Whose corps are both enclosed here  
Together with the aforesaid Dame;  
Her love to them was aye so dear,  
Her cost and charge sustained the same.  
These three, their deeds will show their fame,  
Who as she lived in amity,  
So here she sleeps in unity.*

RM: T{estamentum} domine Elizabethe Martyn viduae

[f. 288r] In the name of God, Amen. The sixth day of October in the year of Our Lord God one thousand five hundred fourscore and one, and in the three and twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., I, Dame Elizabeth Martyn of London, widow, remembering with myself that all flesh is mortal and must die, but the hour and time thereof is uncertain, and being desirous that in the time of my sickness or weakness of body that my mind may not be troubled with the cares of this world to bestow those transitory goods which it hath pleased God of his mercy and goodness to bestow upon me, but that then, I say, in the time of my sickness even to my death, whensoever and howsoever it shall please God to send it, I may the more quietly call upon God for the forgiveness of my sins by the only mediation and redemption of Jesus Christ, my only Saviour, I do make and ordain this my present testament containing herein my last will in this manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and my body to be buried in the parish of Saint Antholin's in London where I am now a parishioner;

And as touching the disposition of all my goods and chattels wherewith it pleased God of his bountiful goodness to lend and bestow upon me (my debts which I owe in law or in conscience being paid and my funerals discharged), I wholly give and bestow in this manner and form following, that is to say:

First, I will to the Wardens of the Company of Mercers of London one hundred pounds, to remain with them and their successors forever as a stock to be delivered to two young men free of that Company in occupying for five years, and so from th' end of those five years the same money to be delivered to other two young men of the same Company for other five years, and so from five years to five years forever, and that the same two young men that so shall have the same money in occupying shall yearly give and pay to the said Wardens in respect of the occupying of the same money six pounds thirteen shillings four pence, which sum of six pounds thirteen shillings four pence I will shall be bestowed forever by the said Wardens in this manner following, that is to say:

To the churchwardens of the parish of Saint Antholin[<sup>s</sup>], to the intent that they shall every Sunday give and distribute to twelve poor householders of the said parish at the discretion of the same churchwardens, to every one of the said poor householders one penny loaf and one penny in current money, and that those twelve persons do come every Sunday into the chancel of the said parish church immediately after the pistle and Gospel read, and there kneeling down do give God thanks for all his benefits, and after to receive the same benevolence or alms;

And to the clerk or sexton of the said parish, to the intent he shall make clean my tomb every month, six shillings yearly forever;

And to the preachers that do and shall read every morning in the said parish as is used, ten shillings forever;

And the thirteen shillings four pence residue I will that the said Wardens of the Mercers shall retain to their own use in respect of their pains to see this my will and mind in this behalf performed, as my trust is they will;

Item, I will that my executors hereafter named within six months next after [f. 288v] my decease shall pay and deliver to the said Wardens of the Company of Mercers five hundred marks [=£333 6s 8d] of lawful money of England, to the intent that they shall have the use and occupying thereof, and that during the life of Sir Alexander Culpeper, knight, the said Wardens shall yearly pay unto Anne Culpeper, my daughter, twenty pounds half yearly by equal portions, and after the decease of the said Sir Alexander, I will that the said Wardens shall pay the said five hundred marks within six months next after the decease of the said Sir Alexander in this manner following, viz.:

To the said Anne Culpeper, my daughter (if she be then living) four hundred marks, and the other hundred marks residue shall be paid to Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, my sons, and the said Anne being deceased at the decease of the said Sir Alexander, then I will that the said whole five hundred marks shall be paid to my said two sons, Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, equally between them to be divided;

Item, I give to Alexander Culpeper, the son of my said daughter, Anne Culpeper, one hundred marks of lawful money of England to buy him a chain of gold, to be paid to him at his lawful age of one and twenty years;

Item, I give to my loving daughter, Joan Martyn, five hundred pounds of lawful money of England in respect that yet I have not been at any charges in the advancement of her as I have been with my daughter, Anne Culpeper;

Item, I give all my jewels to my two daughters, Joan, and Anne Culpeper, equally between them to be divided by my executors hereafter named, whom I do desire to divide the same jewels between my said two daughters, Anne Culpeper, and Joan, as indifferently as they can;

Item, I give and bequeath to my godson, Thomas Denton, the son of my daughter, Mary, one hundred marks of lawful money of England to buy him a chain of gold at his lawful age of one and twenty years;

Item, I give to Elizabeth Knolles, my god-daughter, thirty pounds, and to Samuel Knolles, Mary Knolles and Castlyn Knolles, and to the child that my daughter (blank) Knolles, wife of my son, Thomas Knolles, goeth with, to every one of them twenty pounds, to be paid at their lawful ages of one and twenty years or days of marriage, which shall first happen, and if any of them die before their said ages of one and twenty years or days of marriage, then the survivor of them to have the part and portion of him, her or them so deceasing equally amongst them surviving to be divided;

Item, I give to my sister Hammerton forty pounds of lawful money of England, and to my brother, Edward Castlyn, ten pounds;

Item, I give to Christ's Hospital in London ten pounds of the lawful money of England to be bestowed toward the relief of the poor children there;

Item, I give to the four prisons in London, that is to say, the two Counters, Newgate & Ludgate, also to the poor prisoners in the Fleet, and to the prisons in Southwark, that is to say, the Marshalsea, the King's Bench and the White Lion, to every one of the same prisons forty shillings apiece, to be bestowed amongst the poor there;

Item, I will shall be distributed to threescore poor persons of Hoxton in the county of Middlesex, to every one of them four pence apiece, and to threescore poor persons in East Ham in the county of Essex, to every one of them four pence the day of my burial;

Item, I give to have ten sermons to be made by discreet and learned persons within the parish of Saint Antholin[‘s] aforesaid five marks of lawful money of England, which sermons I will shall be made monthly next after my decease;

Item, I will that my executors do make five and twenty small gems or rings of gold of the value of five shillings apiece, and bestow them to every one of my good sisters, the Aldermen’s wives of London, in token of a remembrance of my goodwill;

I will and give to my cousin Yonge, Mistress Fanshawe, Mistress Osborne, wife of Peter Osborne of th’ Exchequer, Mistress Abram, my two daughters-in-law, the wives of Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, my sister Hammerton, my two daughters, Anne Culpeper, and Joan, and to the wife of William Onslowe, to every one of them a gem of gold of the value of five shillings for a remembrance;

Item, I give to the wife of William Rawlyns a ring of gold which her husband did give me;

Item, I give to the wives of my brethren, Thomas Castlyn and John Castlyn, to every of them a gem of gold to the value of five shillings;

Item, I give to every one of my household servants being with me at the time of my decease one year’s wages;

Item, I give unto William Hammerton ten pounds, and unto Goodwife Smith twenty shillings;

And as touching the disposing of all my lands and tenements whereof I am seised, I do devise them [f. 289r] in this manner, videlicet:

Item, I give to my son, Thomas Knolles, and his heirs forever all that my house in London wherein the said Thomas Knolles now dwelleth, and also all my messuages, lands & tenements situate and being in the parish of East Ham in the county of Essex, saving and except one messuage with a garden at Northend in the said parish of East Ham now in the occupation of the said Samuel Knolles and Thomas Knolles, which house and garden I do give and bequeath to the said Samuel Knolles and his heirs forever, and also I do give and devise unto the said Samuel Knolles and his heirs forever all that messuage or tenement in London wherein the said Samuel Knolles now dwelleth;

Item, I do leave the ordering of my funerals and the bestowing of blacks to the discretion of my two sons, Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, whom I make and ordain my sole and only executors of this my last will;

And I do give and bequeath equally to be divided between them all my goods and chattels not before bequeathed, and I do charge them, as ever they will be thought to bear any loving affection towards me, that they do live lovingly together and like brethren, without any contention for anything to be moved between them, doing as much as in them shall



be to see my mind and meaning contained in this my last will truly performed as I have reposed my trust in them, as they will answer to God to the contrary;

In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hands and seal the day and year first above-written. Elizabeth Martyn.

Memorandum: The sixth day of October one thousand five hundred eighty-one in the afternoon of the same day, the said Dame Elizabeth Martyn did pronounce these seven sheets of paper sealed with her seal to contain her last will and testament in the presence of me, William Onslowe, notary public, and Samuel Doddessole(?), Robert Diconson, Humphrey Corbet, Thomas Halton.

These words were spoken by the above-named Dame Elizabeth Martyn about the first or second day of February 1582:

Also my will and mind is that my two sons, Thomas and Samuel Knolles, shall have those two rings with diamonds parted betwixt them which I had of Mr Topliff [=Topcliffe?], and for the other rings which be in the said box where they, the said rings are at the time of my decease, my mind is that my said two sons shall bestow them at their discretions amongst my friends. Witnesses to this: Benet Hammerton, sister to my Lady, and Elizabeth Knolles and Samuel Knolles.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum apud London coram venerabili viro magistro Will{el}imo Drury legum Doctore curie prerogatiue cantuarien{sis} commissario etc primo die mensis Iulij Anno Domini mill{es}imo quingentesimo octogesimo tertio Iuramento Thome Knoll{es} et Samuelis Knoll{es} filiorum et executorum etc. Quibus commissa fuit administracio bonorum etc De bene etc Iurat{is}

[The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary etc. of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the first day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred eighty-third by the oath of Thomas Knolles and Samuel Knolles, sons and executors etc., to whom administration was granted of the goods etc., sworn to well etc.]