

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated November 1591 and proved 22 August 1592, of Sebastian Bryskett (1536 - 5 August 1592).

The testator was the eldest son and heir of Anthony Bryskett (d.1574) and his wife, Elizabeth, whose surname is unknown. For the will of the testator's father, see TNA PROB 11/56/381. In the will below the testator also refers to the will of his mother, Elizabeth Bryskett (d.1579); however that will has not been found.

The testator's brother, Thomas Bryskett, mentioned in the will below, appears to have taken over the lease in the Blackfriars held by the master of fence, Rocco Bonetti (d.1587). See Folger MS L.b.357.

For other members of the testator's family, see the will of his father, *supra*.

The testator married a wife named Jane, whose maiden name is unknown. According to Jones, she was still living in 1607. See Jones, Deborah, 'Lodowick Bryskett and His Family' in Sisson, Charles J., ed., *Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans*, (New York: Octagon Books Inc., 1933, reprinted 1966), pp. 243-362 at p. 272.

It appears from the will that the testator was a Catholic recusant.

The testator's friend and overseer, Arden Waferer, a barrister of the Inner Temple disbarred for his Catholic recusancy, also acted as a lawyer for the testator's brother, Lodowick Bryskett, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney. See Jones, *supra*, p. 257. For Arden Waferer, see his will, proved 11 February 1610, TNA PROB 11/115/87. Arden Waferer is said to have been the son of Francis Waferer and Mary Arden, the sister of William Arden of Park Hall, for whose will, dated 7 July 1544 and proved 14 April 1546, see TNA PROB 11/31/109. See also the *ODNB* entry for Edward Arden and the pedigree of Arden in Fetherston, John, ed., *The Visitation of the County of Warwick in the Year 1619*, (London:Harleian Society, 1877), Vol. XII, pp. 73, 181-2 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationcount01britgoog#page/n96/mode/2up>.

For Arden Waferer, see also Enis, Cathryn, 'The Dudleys, Sir Christopher Hatton and the Justices of Elizabethan Warwickshire', *Midland History*, Vol. 39, No. 1, Spring 2014, pp. 1-35, available online:

Arden Waferer. who became one of Christopher Hatton's closest legal advisors and men of business. Arden Waferer connects Hatton with one of Warwickshire's most controversial figures, Edward Arden, who was Waferer's first cousin. Edward Arden, for whom Waferer acted as legal counsel at the same time as he was working for Hatton

The testator's friend, Robert Brokesby, has not been definitively identified. It seems likely that he was the Catholic recusant Robert Brokesby (d.1615) of Shoby,

Leicestershire, the son of Anthony Brokesby (d.1552) and Anne Sapcote. See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 330. If so, he was a first cousin of Alice Saunders, mother of Sir Christopher Hatton (d.1591), and daughter of Lawrence Saunders (d.1544) and Anthony Brokesby's sister, Alice Brokesby. For the will of Lawrence Saunders, see TNA PROB 11/30/232.

Robert Brokesby married firstly Dorothy Congreve, and secondly Jane Beaumont. See the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/brokesby-robert-1615>.

See also Fetherston, John, ed., *The Visitation of the County of Leicester in the Year 1619*, (London: Harleian, Society, 1870), Vol. II, p. 49 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofcoun02camd#page/48/mode/2up>.

See also:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/survey/i-men>

Another puritan magnate, the 3rd Earl of Huntingdon, nominated Robert Brokesby at Leicester in 1563, with whose family he had long been on good terms, though Brokesby was later an open recusant.

See also the entry for Elizabeth Hastings (d. 29 July 1588), the daughter and coheir of Sir William Hastings (1470-1514) and Jane Sheffield (1474-March 16, 1528) at:

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenH-He.htm>.

Sir William Hastings (1470-1514) was a younger son of William Hastings, first Baron Hastings, executed 13 June 1483 by order of Richard III. Elizabeth Hastings married, as his second wife, Sir John Beaumont (d.1557), by whom she was the grandmother of the playwright, Francis Beaumont (1584/5–1616).

Elizabeth Hastings' stepdaughter, Jane Beaumont, married, as his second wife, Robert Brokesby of Shoby, who was likely the Robert Brokesby named in the will below.

The testator's friend and overseer, Francis Alford, has not been definitively identified. It seems likely he was the Francis Alford (buried 3 September 1592) who was a younger brother of Lord Burghley's servant, Roger Alford, and whose wife was a Catholic recusant. See the will of Roger Alford, TNA PROB 11/62/442, and the History of Parliament entry for Francis Alford at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/alford-francis-1530-92>.

For the inquisition post mortem taken after the testator's death, see:

'Inquisitions: 1592', in Abstracts of Inquisitiones Post Mortem For the City of London: Part 3, ed. E A Fry (London, 1908), pp. 160-171 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquisition-post-mortem/abstract/no3/pp160-171>.

RM: T{estamentum} Sebastiani Bruskett

[fol. 126r] In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen. Remembering the frailty of this mortal life, and finding myself much decayed in bodily health, it pleaseth Almighty God to put me in mind to dispose of my poor estate and to declare my last will and testament in this manner following:

First, acknowledging my salvation through the merits of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, according to the true Catholic faith, and knowing myself as a wicked sinner unworthy of any God's favour but so much of his infinite mercy and goodness it shall please him to pour upon me, I bequeath my body to Christian burial, the same to be laid to rest in St Gabriel Fenchurch as near unto my parents as the same may be laid conveniently, or if the place will not suffer the same, that then my said body may be bestowed where to my executors hereunder to be named it shall seem best;

Item, I bequeath to my dear beloved wife, Jane Bruskett, all my lands and tenements set, lying and being in St Sithes Lane, London, which are six houses or tenements in number, the one in the occupation of Peter Van Lore, jeweller, the great messuage house in the occupation of (blank), the other tenements in the tenure of A. B. C. D. E. F and G. H., all the same houses and tenements to remain until the marriage of my only daughter and child, Elizabeth Bruskett, begotten on the body of my said wife, Jane Bruskett;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my said wife, Jane Bruskett, the use and profit of [f. 126v] two thousand marks during her natural life, whereof five hundred pounds I leave to her freely to dispose at her will and pleasure to whom she shall think good at such time as it shall please God to call her out of this mortal life, my meaning [-a] wherein(?) is that she shall not alien any part of that five hundred pound which I give her freely to dispose of but only by her last will, to th' end she may have sufficient to maintain herself withal in the time of her widowhood, and herein I earnestly pray her for the love she beareth me to observe this my will and desire;

Item, I bequeath unto my sweet beloved daughter, Elizabeth Bruskett before named, one thousand marks to be delivered unto her at the time of her marriage;

Item, unto my said daughter I bequeath the residue of the two thousand marks which shall remain in the hands of my said wife, Jane Bruskett, at the time of her death, which deducting the five hundred pounds aforesaid which I give freely to my said wife to

dispose of as aforesaid, I reckon to be eight hundred thirty-three pound six shillings eight pence, and the same my meaning is shall come to my said daughter as the full portion of her marriage money besides such lands as descend unto her according to the devise of the last will and testament of Elizabeth Bruskett, my late mother, deceased;

Item, I bequeath unto my brother Michael and brother Thomas Briskett as a remembrance of brotherly love and affection, unto each of them fifty pound apiece;

Unto each of my sisters, viz., Lucrece Wrightington, Joan Eglesfeild and Marie Atkinson, twenty nobles apiece, to be bestowed on rings of that value to wear for a remembrance of me, their loving brother;

And to my faithful friends, Mr Robert Brokesby and Mr Francis Alford, to each of them one ring of the like value of twenty nobles apiece;

Item, to my cousin, John Antonie, I bequeath as a token of friendly remembrance the sum of twenty pound sterling;

The executors of this my last will and testament I appoint my said dearly beloved wife, Jane Briskett, and the aforesaid Mr Robert Brokesby, whom I earnestly pray to vouchsafe to accept on him this friendly charge for my sake, and likewise to take in good part the gift of ten pound as a token of my poor thankfulness for these his pains;

Item, to my servant, Ellen Browne(?), I give ten pound;

To my servant, Leonard Hawes, three;

And to the rest of my poor servants and other friends, I leave to my wife's disposition to consider them as she shall think good;

The overseers of this my last will and testament I earnestly pray and appoint to be Mr Arden Waferer and Mr Francis Alford aforesaid, and the same to be faithfully executed by my said executors and overseers according to the trust I repose in them as my true and very loving faithful friends, whom I commend all to the blessing of the Lord God Almighty;

Written with mine own hand the (blank) of November one thousand five hundred ninety-one.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum apud London coram m{agist}ro Ioh{ann}e Hone legum doctore Surrogato m{agist}ri Will{el}imi Lewin legum etiam Doctoris curie Prerogative Cant{uariensis} magistri Custodis siue Commissarij l{egi}time constituti vicesimo secundo viz(?) die mensis Augusti anno Domini Mill{es}imo Quingen{tes}imo Nonagesimo Secundo in p{er}sona m{agist}ri Rich{ard}i Gooddall notarij publici procuratoris Jane Brisket et Roberti Brokesbie armigeri exequutorum in h{uius}mo{d}i

testamento nominatorum quibus commissa fuit ad {mi}n{istrac}io omnium et singulorum bonorum iurium et creditorum eiusdem defuncti de bene et fidel{ite}r administrando eadem omnia et singula iuxta iuris in hac p{ar}te exigenciam et tenorem dicti testamenti ad sancta dei evangelia in debita iuris forma iurati

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before Master John Hone, Doctor of the Laws, Surrogate of Master William Lewin, also Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the twenty second viz.(?) day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred ninety-second in the person of Master Richard Goodall, notary public, proctor of Jane Bryskett and Robert Brokesby, esquire, executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the same deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to well and faithfully administer all and singular the same according to the law in that respect required and the tenor of the said testament.]