

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 27 October 1491, of Richard Bodley, grocer of London, great-grandfather of Sir John Bodley of Streatham, landlord of the Globe playhouse from 1601-1622. For Sir John Bodley's role as landlord of the Globe, see TNA C 54/1682, mm. 10-11.

The testator's family was from Devon, and bore the same coat of arms as Sir Thomas Bodley, founder of the Bodleian Library, 'Gules, five martlets argent on a chief indented or three crowns azure'. See the coat of arms in BL Add. MS 45131, f. 151 at:

http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002017819&vid=IAMS_VU2&indx=1&dym=false&dscnt=1&onCampus=false&group=ALL&institution=BL&ct=search&vl%28freeText0%29=040-002017819.

See also Sutton, Anne F., 'Lady Joan Bradbury (d. 1530)' in Barron, Caroline M. and Anne F. Sutton, eds., *Medieval London Widows 1300-1500*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 208, 211 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=uc3RLXFANoMC&pg=PA211&lpg=PA211&dq=%22Nicholas+Leveson%22+%22William+Strete%22&source=bl&ots=91-CgadHEH&sig=Z2EpsIAd2E-DdqOcyE5Ta2znd-w&hl=en&sa=X&ei=hSZqVNTMIsevogSemICQAg&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Nicholas%20Leveson%22%20%22William%20Strete%22&f=false>.

The testator's brother and overseer, Thomas Bodley (d.1492), married Joan Leche (d.1530), daughter of Denis Leche of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/9/374. After Thomas Bodley's death, Joan Leche married Sir Thomas Bradbury (d.1510), who was Lord Mayor of London in 1509. For Joan Leche, see her will, TNA PROB 11/23/272, and the Wikipedia article edited by the author of this website.

The testator was the uncle of Dionyse Bodley (d.1560), who married Nicholas Leveson (d.1539), and was the grandmother of William Leveson (d.1621), one of two trustees employed by William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon and other members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men in the allocation of shares in the ground lease of the Globe Theatre in 1599. For the will of Dionyse Bodley Leveson, see TNA PROB 11/43/645. For the will of William Leveson (d.1621), see TNA PROB 11/137/600. For Dionyse Bodley Leveson's coat of arms, which indicates that she, too, was of the same family as the founder of the Bodleian Library, see 'Nicholas Leveson' in *Proceedings of the Evening Meetings of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, Session 1871*, (London: J.B. Nichols and Sons, 1872), pp. 46-55 at pp. 46 and 55:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=6hEVAAAAQAAJ&pg=RA1-PA55&lpg=RA1-PA55&dq=%22gules+five+martlets+argent%22+%22Bodley%22&source=bl&ots=-OuodjcieN&sig=uZKxMVWSbxq3_kMyILKxf9Vw_7s&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCEQ6A

EwAWoVChMI3JbEoMjDyAIViy-
 ICh3NogZs#v=onepage&q=%22gules%20five%20martlets%20argent%22%20%22Bodley%22&f=false.

The testator married Joan Warde of Hinxworth, whose brother, John Warde, was Lord Mayor of London in 1485.

For the wills of the testator's son, Thomas Bodley (d.1537), vicar of South Weald, Essex, see TNA PROB 11/27/81 and TNA PROB 11/26/118. For the will of the testator's son, William Bodley, see TNA PROB 11/28/311. For the will of the testator's son, Ellis Bodley, see TNA PROB 11/32/83. For the testator's daughters, see the will of the testator's son, William Bodley, *supra*.

For the will of the testator's grandson, Francis Bodley (d.1566), father of Sir John Bodley of Streatham, landlord of the Globe playhouse, see TNA PROB 11/48/415.

For the contents of the testator's will, see also Sutton, *supra*, pp. 210-12. The testator bequeaths all his English books to his son, William, and according to Sutton:

A volume of Nicholas Love's Life of Christ and a life of St Katherine, probably made in London in the 1480s, inscribed: 'Thys Booke ys Wylliam bodleys & Elizabethe hys wyffe', and 'Thys ys betrys beverleys book' may have originally been one of Richard Bodley's books, now Cambridge Corpus Christi College, MS 142. Another may be a very fine London made book of hours, which records the birth of Francis, son of William and Beatrice, C.R. Borland, A Descriptive Catalogue of the Western Mediaeval Manuscripts in Edinburgh University Library (Edinburgh, 1916), MS 39.

See also the pedigree of Bodley in Bannerman, W. Bruce, ed., *The Visitations of the County of Surrey*, (London: Harleian Society, 1899), Vol. XLIII, p. 147 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationscoun01banngoog#page/n160/mode/2up>.

In the name of God, Amen. I, Richard Bodley, grocer, of sound mind and good memory, make my testament in this manner:

Item, first I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, my Creator & Redeemer, my body to be buried in my parish church in the chapel of the Holy Trinity, viz., in the place where the body of Richard Phillips is buried;

Item, to the high altar of the said parish church I give and bequeath 6s 8d;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Bodley, my eldest son, £33 6s 8d;

Item, to each of my other sons and daughters not yet married I bequeath £33 6s 8d;

Item, my immovable possessions, viz., lands and tenements, I bequeath to Joan, my wife, for term of her life, after whose decease I will [+they?] be divided by equal portions among my sons and daughters not yet married;

And if it happen my wife to make any alienation of the said possessions for term of her life, I will that at least half of my said possessions remain always whole and saved, to be divided by equal portions(?) among my sons and daughters not yet married, as is aforesaid, and it is therefore not permitted to my said wife to alienate more than half of my foresaid possessions;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Bodley, my brother, my best gown and best hose;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Warde, my wife's brother, my second best gown;

Item, I bequeath to William Boteler, husband of Isabelle, my daughter, my third best gown and best doublet;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Bodley, my son, my deep red/blue gown and the tawny gown furred with fox;

Item, I bequeath to the same Thomas, my son, my beads(?) of amber;

Item, I bequeath to William, my son, all my English books;

Item, I bequeath to Isabelle, my daughter, my finest psalter;

Item, I bequeath to Emme, my daughter, my primer;

Item, I bequeath to Sir William Claryvaunce my beads(?) of bloodstones;

Item, I bequeath to Sir Ellis, anchorite in London wall, my two best gold rings or their value in money;

Item, I leave to William, my servant and apprentice, all the beams, scales or(?) weights which I lately had for the debt of William Clerke, grocer, and I bequeath to the same William forty shillings on condition that he bear himself humbly and courteously towards my wife, his mistress;

Item, I remit to Nicholas, my apprentice, three years of his apprenticeship, to whom I also bequeath 20s on condition that he bear himself well to my wife, his mistress;

Item, I bequeath to Agnes, my servant, 13s 4d;

Item, I will that some honest priest be found to celebrate [=sing?] for the space of two years in my parish church to pray specially for my soul, the souls of my parents and for

the souls of all my benefactors, to which priest, celebrating [=singing?], as is aforesaid, for the said years, I bequeath £3 6s 8d;

Item, I bequeath to Sir Ellis, anchorite at London wall, to specially celebrate [=sing?] and pray for my soul, as is aforesaid, for the term of one year £6 13s 4d;

Item, I will that in all and singular bequests to my sons and daughters, one be the other's heir;

The rest of my true(?) goods whatsoever I bequeath and commit to the disposition of Joan, my wife, my debts fully paid, which said Joan I make and constitute my executrix;

And overseers of this my testament Master John Ward, alderman, and Thomas Bodley, my brother;

Made(?) this 7th year of the reign of King Henry the Seventh on the 27th day of the month of October, in testimony of which thing my seal is affixed to these presents, these witnesses: Thomas Bodley, William Scaldler & Richard Rogers.

1 In dei nomi{n}e amen Ego Richardus Bodley Grocerus compos ment{is} et

2 [-et] sane memorie condo testamentum meum in hunc modum Item in primis lego animam

3 meam deo omnipotenti creatori & Redemptori meo Corpus meum sepeliend{um} in eccl{es}ia mea

4 p{ar}ochiali in capella sancte Trinitat{is} viz in loco vbi corpus Richardi Philippi sepelitur

5 Item sum{m}o altari dicte eccl{es}ie p{ar}ochialis do et lego vj s viij d Item lego Thome Bodley

6 filio meo seniori xxxiiij li vj s viij d Item vnicuiq{ue} ceterorum filiorum et filiaru{m} mear{um}

7 non dum marit{atarum} lego xxxiiij li vj s viij d Item possessiones meas immobiles viz

8 terras et tenementa lego Iohanne vxori mee pro termi{n}o vite sue post cuius decessu{m}

9 volo p{er} equales porciones diuidi int{er} filios et filias meas non dum maritat{es} Et si

10 contingit vxor meam aliqua{m} vendicione{m} D{i}c{t}arum possessionu{m} pro termi{n}o vite sue

11 facere volo q{ue} vna saltem medietas D{i}c{t}arum possessionu{m} semper integra et salua rema

12 neat int{er} filios et filias meas ut p{re}fert{ur} p{er} equales possessiones [sic for 'portiones?'] diuidenda Ita q{ue} non

13 liceat D{i}c{t}e vxori mee vlt{ra} medietatem de p{re}dict{is} possessionib{us} meis facere alienacionem

14 Item lego Thome Bodley f{rat}ri meo optimam togam meam et optimas caligas Ite{m}

15 lego Thome Warde f{rat}ri vxori mee secundam togam meam optimam Item lego Will{el}mo

16 Boteler sponso Isabelle filie mee terciam togam meam optima{m} et optimam deploidem

17 Item lego Thome Bodley filio meo togam meam blodiam et le Tawney togam furratas

18 cum le ffox Item lego eidem Thome filio meo p{ro}culas meas de Ambyr Item lego Will{el}mo

19 filio meo omnes libros meos anglicos Item lego Isabelle filie mee meam pulchrum psalt{er}em

20 Item lego Emme filie mee primarium meum Item lego domino Will{el}mo Clarions pro

21 culas meas de le Blodestonys Item lego Domino Elisee anachorite In muro London

22 duos optimos anulos meos aureos aut eorum valorem in pecunia Item, lego Will{el}mo fa

23 mulo meo et app{re}nticio om{n}ia le Bemys scalys or(?) weyghts que nup{er} habui pro debito

24 Will{el}mi Clerke groceri et eidem Will{el}mo lego quadraginto solidos ea condicione q{ue} humi

25 lit{er} et officiose se habuerit penes vxorem meam magistram suam Item Remitto

26 Nicholao app{re}enticio meo tres Annos app{re}enticiatus sui Cui eciam lego xx s ea condi

27 cione q{ue} vxori mee magistre sue bene se habuerit Item lego Agneti famule mee

28 xiiij s iiiij d Item volo ut conducatur aliquis honestus presbiter ad celebrand{um} p{er} duor{um}

29 Annorum spaci{m} in eccl{es}ia mea p{ar}ochiali ad orand{um} singularit{er} pro a{n}i{m}a mea animab{us}

30 p{ar}entium meorum et pro a{n}i{m}abus o{mn}i{um} benefactorum meor{um} Cui p{re}sbitero sic ut p{re}fert{ur}

31 celebranti pro quolibet annorum ip{s}orum lego iij li vj s viij d Item lego Domino

32 Eliseo anachorite apud murum London ad specialit{er} celebrand{um} et orand{um} pro a{n}i{m}a

33 mea ut p{re}fertur p{ro} vnus anni terminu{m} vj li(?) xiiij s iiiij d Item volo q{ue} in o{mn}ib{us}

34 et singulis legat{is} filijs et filiab{us} meis vnus sit alterius heres Cetera vero

35 bona mea quecunq{ue} lego et com{m}itto disposicioni Iohanne vxoris mee debit{is} meis

36 pennitus p{er} solut{is} Quam quidem Iohannam facio et constituo meam executrice

37 Prouisores quoq{ue} huius testamenti mei magistrum Iohannem Ward aldermanu{m}

38 et Thomam Bodley fratrem meum Acta sunt hec Anno Regni Reg{is} Henrici

39 septimi vijo xxvijo Die mensis Octobris In cuius rei testimoniu{m} sigill{um} meum

40 p{rese}ntib{us} est appensum hijs testib{us} Thoma Bodley Will{el}mo Scaldar & Richardi

41 Rogers

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum Coram et c{etera} ap{u}d Lamehith