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## **Some Ecclesiastical Wills**

by G. Baskerville  
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## SOME ECCLESIASTICAL WILLS

by G. BASKERVILLE

THE importance of wills for the elucidation of local history, topography and genealogy need hardly be insisted upon. They have great value also for ecclesiastical history, especially for a time of transition like the 16th century. The wills here printed are those of the abbots and priors of the suppressed monasteries in Gloucestershire which seem to be extant. Missing are those of abbot Munslow of Winchcombe (died as prebendary of Gloucester, October 1558), of abbot Segar of Hayles (died as prebendary of York, between 1547 and 1551), and of prior Jenyns of St. Oswald's, Gloucester (died as dean of Gloucester, 11 November 1565).

The first in date is that of MORGAN WILLIAMS. It gives no indication that he had ever been abbot of St. Augustine's, Bristol, but as Richard Carsy, one of the witnesses, had been a canon there the identification is almost certainly correct, while the date makes it also probable that the abbot became rector of Yaverland in the Isle of Wight. The register of Bishop Gardiner (Canterbury and York Society, p. 122) shows that Mr Morgan Guilliems was instituted to this living 7 February 1543-4 on the presentation of Morgan Cotesmore, gentleman, and that Sir William Wayde was instituted 13 May 1544 'on the death of Mr Morgan Gwilliams'.

The next will is that of RICHARD HART, prior of Lantony. He evidently divided his time between his house at Brockworth and another in Gloucester. The reference to the Theares (or Thayers) confirms Anthony Wood's statement (see *note*) as to Hart's relationship

to that family. The 'Lord Suffragan of Bartilmewes' was Dr Andrew Whitmay, bishop of Chrysolopolis, and suffragan successively to the bishops of Worcester and Gloucester. He was also archdeacon of St. Davids (1528-1546), and had the Gloucestershire rectories of Newington Bagpath and Beverstone from 1515 and 1521 respectively until his death in 1546. The Gilbert Burne, clerk, who witnesses the will, was then prebendary of Worcester, and later (1554-1559) bishop of Bath and Wells. He was a strenuous upholder of the old learning and so, as the religious bequests and directions show, was prior Hart himself.

The will of ABBOT WARE, of Flaxley, throws little light on his own career. From the reference to 'comyns' it would seem that he had been living with the vicar of Aston Rowant (Nicholas Astley, vicar by 1526, buried there 8 February 1554-5) as a 'paying guest', but what connexion the abbot had with this part of the country does not appear. The Raff Johnson, priest, who witnesses the will, was the last prior of the Oxford Austin Friars, then rector of Easington, Oxon (1547, died as rector 1563).

Although the fourth will says nothing about Kingswood, there can, I think, be little doubt that the testator may be identified with its last abbot, WILLIAM BEWDLEY *alias* FRENCH, vicar of Hawkesbury by 1540 to his death. Abbot Bewdley had previously (to 1532) been abbot of Flaxley. Consequently there are in the will bequests to persons living in the Forest of Dean, as well as to others living at Kingswood. There are practically no religious directions in this will, but the reference to a married daughter suggests that the abbot was of the new learning. Presumably he had, like Cranmer, anticipated a change in the law and married before the marriage of clerks had been legalized by Convocation and Parliament.

Bishop WAKEMAN'S religious position would seem from the preamble to his will to have been of the new order :

at any rate it is in striking contrast to that of prior Hart. Of the two chaplains mentioned in the will, William Didcot had been a monk of Tewkesbury; Hugh Whytington was rector of St. Michael, Gloucester, 1546–1548 and rector of Staunton 1551 (buried there 10 March, 1558–9).

The last abbot of Cirencester's will exhibits no religious indication whatsoever. The large staff of servants shows the state in which it was possible for a retired abbot to live. The chaplain, John Wall, had been a canon of Cirencester. Matthew Glave, the curate, was curate of Bisley in 1551 and later vicar of Swalcliffe, Oxon (1557 died 1563).

#### NOTE

The opportunity is taken to add a few details, and to make some corrections, to my article on the dispossessed religious of Gloucestershire in vol. XLIX of the Society's *Transactions*.

- p. 84. William Didcot (see above). The Worcestershire chantry certificates show that in 1548 he was Lady priest of Redmarley, Worcestershire, 'aged 50, competently learned and of honest conversation'.
- p. 93. The will of Edmund Burford, as vicar of Alvescot, was proved in the archdeacon of Oxford's court, 26 February 1576–7.
- p. 95. Richard Kersey or Carsy, (see above) was presumably identical with the brotherhood priest of St. Peter's, Cornhill, London, in 1548 and with the curate of Beddington, Surrey, who was restored to office in 1556 after giving up his wife. (Register of Cardinal Pole, folio 42a).
- p. 66, line 6, *for* Wakeman *read* Bell.
- p. 68, note 25, *for* Field *read* Martin.

- p. 71, line 9, *for* Brockworth and Fairford *read* Fairford and Brockworth.
- p. 84. Bishop Wakeman's death, *for* 1548 *read* 1549.
- p. 86. List of Winchcombe monks, *for* 1529 *read* 1539.

### I. MORGAN WILLIAMS

In the name of god Amen the Twentith daye of Marche, the yere of our Lorde god a thowsande ffyve hoondred fforty and three I Morgan Gwilliams Clerke beyng sicke of body but of good and perfecte memory thanckes be to God Almighty make and ordeyn this my Laste will and testament yn manner and foorme folowing ffirste I bequeath my soule to God omnypotente to our Lady saint Mary and to all the holy saycntes yn heaveñ and my bodye to be buried where it shall please god Item I give and bequeath all my goodes to maister Richarde Newton gentleman whome I make and ordeyn my sole Executour he to bestowe them as he shall thincke beste, for the wealth of my soule and all xpen soules. Thies being wytnesses Richarde Bromlay and Richarde Carsy Clerke withe oother moe there unto specially requiered and desyered.

Proved 30 May 1544. P.C.C. Pynning 8.

### 2. RICHARD HART

In dei nomine amen. The first day of August 1545. I Richard Hart priest abiding within the parishe of Saint Nicholas in Saint Bartilmewes hospitall within the shire of Gloucetur being of good and parfite remembraunce and hole in bodye howe be it for diverse good causes and consideracons moving me do make my last will and testament in manner and fourme folowing First I bequeth my soule to almightie god to our lady saint mary and to all the blissed company of heaven. And my body to be buried in the hospitall of Saint Bartilmewe before the

Rode there. Item I bequeth to the high aulter of Saint Nicholas my best Redde paire of vestmentes with albe and apparelles amicke stole and fannell with a fyne corporall and a cace of Redde velvet with a splayde Egle of golde and my best pall of arrasse of our lady and gabriell with my best frontlett of Redde with whyte and Red fringes with twoo sudaries of silke with strakes. I bequeth to the high aulter of saint Bartilmewes my white paire vestmentes with their apparelles with a corporall and a cace of green velvet and my great silken grene pall with my best aulter cloth. I bequeth to my Suster Annes and to her twoo sonnes Richard and Thomas theare foure silver spones twoo fetherbeddes twoo bolsters twoo paire of blankettes twoo paire of shetes twoo Tabill clothes twoo good Towelles twoo coverlettes of Dornyckes sixe platers sixe potagers sixe sawcers my great brasse pott that I brewe in and my great coffer, which hath a bourde nayled on it with all my hanginges in the hall at Brockeworth with the Tabull Trestils and forme in the same hall. I bequeth to Richard Vaughan my servant my best flocke bedde with his bolster and a Pyllowe of fethers, a paire of blankettes, a paire of newe shetes of his owne making a coverlet of grene and yelowe with all the yarne and flaxe which is in his warde with a litill Twerne and all other Instrumentes to make lynnyn Cloth, a litill brasse pott with a litill Cauldern and a brode Coffe with a lock which is in his Chamber at Brockeworth. I bequeth to Richard Stevyns all the bedde which he lyeth on and one of my best Cricke horses and a pack saddell with all thapptennces. I bequeth to William Coke my servant oon of my Cricke horses with a pack saddell and thapptennces with a flocke bedde a bolster a paire of blankettes with a coverlet of a grene carpet. To my mother Neale of London my best cupp with a cover all gilt with a byrrall. I bequeth to xxxii pour people in the Bartilmewes the day of my burial x s viii s And at every monethis mynde within the yere the

forsaid xxxii to have ii s viii d paid by myn executour. I will that myn executour shall provide xv priestes to be at my dirige masse and buriall and to every of them for their labour I geve xii d sm<sup>a</sup> xv s I will that my executour shall fynde a priest to singe for me Richard Harte Thomas Harte and Marian and all xpen soules oon hole yere and to geve him for his labor fyve poundes sterling. I bequeth to Thomas Morgan the heire of hurst<sup>1</sup> all my bookes of Latyn and my bowe and arrowes. I will and desire my lord Suffragane of saint Bartilmewes to be Overseer of this my last will and testament to be performed and doon. And for his paynes taken I geve to him my best golde Rynge with a saphire my Cloke and all my wood here and at Brockworth. All other goodes and debtes not bequethid my buriall and funeralls and this my last will perfourmed I geve to John Morgan of Ocle to marrye his doughters whom I do make my sole executour to see this my last will and testament fulfilled and doon. In witesse whereof I haue written this with myn owne hande the day and yere aboue written subscribed my name and sette my seall the xxxviith yere of our most soueraigne lorde king henry the eight of Englande Fraunce and Irelande supreme head and of this Church of Englande Immediatly under god which I pray Jesu longe to preserve in healte. Amen. By me Richard Hart, priest.

In dei nomine amen This scedule made the xxv day of Septembr In the xxxvii yere of the reign of . . . king henry the eight witnesseth that I Richard Hart Clerk late Priour of Lanthonie beside Gloucetur whole of mynde and sicke in body doo approve allowe and conferme all the poyntes and articles conteyned in my testament whiche lieth in my casket, in the warde and custodye of my lord Suffragan maister of the hospitall of sainte Bartilmewe in Gloucetur. And further for as moche as in the said

<sup>1</sup> In Lydney parish.

testament I have constituted and ordered my cosyn John Morgan of Ogle in the countie of Gloucetur my sole and onoly executour yet for sundrye causes moving me I doo by vertue of this my present Scedule constitute and ordeyn also my brother in lawe Thomas Theare of Brockworth in the countie of Gloucetur my other executour geving him for his paynes xl s. Item I bequeth to my servant Richard Wayte his yeres wages xxvi s viii d and xiii s iiii d for his gowne and my litill baye nagge and myn owne saddell and brydell And also I bequeth to Richard Vaughan Richard Stevyns and William Coke my servantes for their blak cootes xiii s iiii d a pece and to every of them beside their other bequest of my former testament witnesse hereof Gilbert Burne clerk Richard Wayte and Joane Scalon The yere and day before written. Item I bequeth to my mother Isabell Neale tenne pounds for my charges that I have putt her unto Also I bequeth to Richard Scalon xiii s iiii d Item to his wife Joane Scalon x s Item to every servant in my mothers house xii d All other my goodes moveable and unmoveable my debtes and legacies paid and my funerals perfourmed I geve and bequeth to my cosyn John Morgan one of myn executors foresaid witnesse whereof Gilbert Burne clerk Richard Vaughan and Joane Scalon. Proved 19 December 1545 by John Morgan; power reserved to Thomas Theare. P.C.C. Pynnyng 45.

In his account of John Theyer, born at Coopers Hill, Brockworth, about 1597, died 25 August 1673, Anthony à Wood says (*Athen. Oxon.*, ed. Bliss, III, 996) he 'was buried among his ancestors in the church-yard at Brockworth, particularly near to the grave of his grandfather Theyer who had married the sister of one Hart the last prior of Langthony near Gloucester. He then left behind him a library of ancient manuscripts consisting of the number of about 800, which he himself had for the most part collected. The foundation of it was laid by his

grandfather who had them from prior Hart, and he from the library of Langthony when it was dissolved, besides household-stuff belonging to that priory. Afterwards Charles Theyer (grandson to our author John Theyer who in his last will had bequeathed them to him) did offer to sell them to the university of Oxon, but the price being too great, they were sold to Robert Scot of London bookseller, who soon after sold them to his majesty king Ch. II to be reposed in his library at S. James's, he having first, as I have been informed, cull'd them '.

### 3. THOMAS WARE

In dei noīe amen the viij daye of September in the yere of o<sup>r</sup> Lorde God a thowsande fyve hundred fortie syxe I Thomas Ware preist late abbot of Flaxley in the cowntie of Glocestre of good and pfet mynde being ordayne and make this my last wyll and testament in maner and forme as folowith ffyrst I gyve and bequeth my sowle to allmyghtie God my savyour and redemer my bodie to be buried in the church or church yarde of Aston Rowant w<sup>h</sup>in the Dioces of Oxforde Itm to the Mother Church of Oxon iij. d. Itm to the light before the sacrament xvj. d. Itm I gyve to Ales Kyng the dowghter of Thomas Kyng my frocke of worsted Itm I wyll that master vicar of Aston shall have my best gowne of fyne puke for xxs which I owe hym for my comyns or els the gowne to be solde by my executor and to paye the money Itm I wyll that John Clercke shall have my frocke of Bristow fryse. Itm to Ales Mctimer my blacke gowne w<sup>t</sup> whight furre. Itm to Symonde the clarke my iacket of the same fryse. Itm to Thomas Flyght my better blacke hose Itm to Thomas Latimer a payr of sloppes The resydew of my goodes and dettes not bequested and gyven I gyve unto Robert Belson of Aston whome I make and ordeyne my full executor of this my last wyll and testament that he dispose them after his best discretion and mynde these

being wytnes s<sup>f</sup> raff Johnson preist Thomas Whytton  
Christofere Felow and John Lyncke.

[*No probate act*]. Oxford wills and admons. Ser. 1,  
vol. 2, f. 190b.

#### 4. WILLIAM FRENCH

Abstract of the will of William French, clerke, of  
Hawkesbury in the diocese of Gloucester, dated 20 March  
2 Edward VI.

My boddy to be buried in such convenyent place  
accustomed for the bodies of Christian people to be buried  
in. I give to Anne my daughter, wife of John Roulles  
of Malmesbury 45 li to her marriage, a new feather bed,  
one bolster, 1 coverlet, 1 pair of sheets, one cupboard,  
two syluer spones, 1 pillow of down and my great kettle  
etc ; to Elizabeth Afoule wife of William Afoule of Gawlet  
in the forest of Deane 4 li and one litle brasse pott ;  
to Elizabeth Acton the wyfe of Philipp Acton of kyngs-  
wood 3 li. one coffer that standeth in my parlor with one  
candelstycke of the myddle sorte ; to every of my god-  
children in the said parish of Hawkesbury 3s 4d except  
to the daughter of William Mabbot to whom I give 7s  
which is in the handes of her mother ; to Henry  
Townysend clerke my curat my goune one Jackett of  
tawny wursted & 20s ; to Michaell Jonys the mony he  
doth owe unto me and my russet hosse and russet cote ;  
to William Cole my servaunt one flockbedd & 20s ;  
to Nicholas Richardes my done nage with sadle and bridle  
and 40s in mony ; to Anne my servant my long syngle  
gowne ; to William Shorte all such debtes as he doth  
owe unto me & all my pewter and brasse except as  
hereafter followeth that is to say to William Cole one  
possnet to Michaell Jones one candelstycke 2 great  
candelstyckes to the said William Shorte ; also to the  
same William one great featherbed, 1 boulster, one pillowe  
of downe a pair of sheets and one duble coverlet ; to the

vicar as shall succede me in this benefyce of Hawkesbury to the reparacion of the vicarege uppon condycon that he doth not demaunde no delapidacions or other charges of the same benyfyce of my executors 4 li one beddstedd in the parlor one table bourd with the formes standing in the same parlor and the bordes in the hall. I make Nicholas Marten Alexander Marten gentylnen and Nicholas Came my executors. The residue of my goods I give to the parson of Aldrley my gowne furred with fychewe. Signed:—Per me Willum French clericum.

Witnesses:—Henry Townsend, my curet & William Cole. Proved:—24 April 1548, by Thomas Dockwrey proxy for the exors. named, in the prerogative court. P.C.C. 7 Populwell.

##### 5. JOHN WAKEMAN

Abstract of the will of John Wakeman, bishop of Gloucester, dated 30 July 3 Edward VI.

In the name of God Amen The xxx<sup>th</sup> daye of July in the thirde yere of the reign of . . . Edward VI . . . I John Wakeman by the goodnes of god busshop of Gloucester being in parfytt remembrance fealing and perceving moche debilitie and weaknes daylie to encrease more and more in my bodie, Knowing my saide bodye to be subjecte to death and mortalitie and being uncertayne of the tyme daye and houre thereof willing therefore at all tymes to be in a readynis do make this my last testament as hereafter folowithye.

First I bequeathe my soule to the mercifull handes of the most glorious Trinitie trusting stedfastly through the merits of Christes precious bloud sheding my onelye Redemer to be partaker of his eternall kyngdome and glorious fruycion. I bequeath my bodye to be buried where yt pleasith God at the discrecion of my executors. First before all other thinges I will that my executors do trewlye satisfie and paye to my Creditours all such dewe

debtes that I do justlye owe. And that none of the lagatories do make request in lawe or otherwyse for the payment of their legacies or of any part thereof untill my debtes be fully paide and I will my legacies to be paid justly of that porcion of goodes that doth remayne in thus order folowing.

First I bequeath to John Wakeman, son to Thomas Wakeman my brother, a bedsted cordyd a fetherbed with all thappurtennce being nowe at Gloucester and 5 poundes; to Edward Rubbry my servant, my bedsted with the fetherbed mattes cordes materesse couering blankettes of fustian bolster pillowe and testor upon the whiche bedd I lye upon in Forthampton a coofer with one locke, a gelding named George and fyve marks; to William Wakeman sonne to Thomas Wakeman my brother my bedsted with the bedd being in the square chambr at Gloucester with all the appurtenances pertaining to the same; to Anne Wakeman wyfe to the saide William 40s; to Thomas Wakeman son of the saide William 40s at the age of 16; to Elizabeth Barber alias Williams 40s; to Johan Balcokes 40s; to Raffe Wallys and Elizabeth his wyfe the bedsted etc. standing in the chambr where I lye at Gloucester; to John Wakeman my godsonne sonne to Richard Wakeman my brother the bedsted etc. being in the greate chambr at Forthampton and twentie nobles; to Richard Wakeman his brother the bedsted etc. in the second Chambr next to the greate Chambr at Forthampton; to Thomas Poyner student in Magdalen College at Oxeforde twentie nobles to be delivered by my executors by portions from time to time for his necessaries as nede dothe require; to Joane Wakeman doughter to Richarde my brother twentie nobles to be delivered at the day of her marriage; to John Alie 5s; to Phillip Porter 5s; to Thomas Broke 5s; to Henry Kyteley 3s 4d; to Margerie of the kechyn 20d. I appoint Thomas Wakeman and Richard Wakeman my brethern my lawfull

executors to each of whom I give 5 pounde and I make Hugh Whytington my chaplen, overseer to whom I give 5 pounde. All rest of my goodes I give to John Wakeman my godson son to Richard Wakeman my brother. If the said John Wakeman, my godson, Richard his brother, Johane his syster or any of theym three do departe from this lyfe before the yeares of discretion, viz. xviii the legacy of hym or any of them so departing shall be divided amongst all the children surviving of Richard Wakeman my brother.

Witnesses :—Sir William Dydcothe my chaplen, Thomas Evans, John Rascell.

I bequeath to doctor Williams my chauncellor a greate cubbord being in the grete chamber at Gloucester ; to William Wakeman of Longford all the sawed boordes and the rounde table that be in my house at the Wyneard.

Proved :—16 December 1549 in the prerogative court, by Hugh Whittington proxy for the exors named in the will. P.C.C. 44 Populwell.

## 6. JOHN BLAKE

Abstract of the will of John Blake of Feyreford, diocese of Worcester, clerk, dated 2 January 1552 [-3].

To the poor mens box in Feyreford	3s 4d		
To John Wall, my chaplain	6 pounds & a gown		
To Thomas Liggen gentilman	40s & his livery		
To Thomas Clark my servant	20s & his livery		
To Richard Merynge	35s 4d & his livery		
To William Carter	34s	''	''
To Roger Wyett	26s	''	''
To Richard Hill	26s 8d	''	''
To John Faregose	30s	''	''
To Raynold Hooles	30s	''	''
To Richard Woodward	20s	''	''
To Margery Lewcy	25s and one petycote		
To Feith Bryxter	23s	''	''
To Katheryn Gwen	23s	''	''

Residuary legatees & exors :—John Hill & John Dawbeney Junr my servants

Overseers :—Sir Anthony Kyngston knight Sir Walter Buckeler knight and John George gent. to each of whom I give 4 marks

Witnesses :—Mathew Glave then being curate  
Richard Stychall, Richard More  
Thomas Sunnetes, Willyam Grene

[Signed :—] By me John Blake prest

Proved :—4 April 1555, in the prerogative court, by John Dawbeney one of the exors. named in the will ; John Hill the other exor. being dead. P.C.C. 23 More.