

Original Documents.

WILL OF NICHOLAS BRAYBROKE, CANON OF EXETER.

A.D. 1399-1400.

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NICHOLAS BRAYBROKE was a member of a family which in his time was of some distinction. The Rev. G. Oliver¹ describes him as the "brother" of Robert Braybroke, Bishop of London (1381—1404), which was probably the case, though there does not appear to be any direct evidence of the fact. He was certainly a near kinsman of the Bishop, who was for a short time (1382—83) Chancellor of England, and whose career has elsewhere² been traced by the present writer. By him Nicholas was appointed Prebendary of Neasdon, in the diocese of London, on the 4th June 1395,³ and with him he had exchanged the rectory of Bideford and the archdeaconry of Cornwall, on 26 July 1381.⁴ In the subjoined will, Nicholas leaves twenty shillings to be divided "among the clerks of my lord of London, for my exequies solemnly to be celebrated in the cathedral church of St. Paul," and other liberal bequests for the same purpose. He also appoints "the most reverend and ever most beloved father in Christ, the lord Robert Braybroke by the grace of God, Bishop of London" one of the principal executors of his will, with Robert Wyndesore, prior of Merton, both of whom took out probate of the will. He also bequeaths a silver cup with a cover, from a chest in the Palace of the Bishop of London to one Master Robert Hallum.

Upon the assumption that Nicholas was, as suggested, brother to the Bishop of London, they were sons of Sir Gerard Braybroke, the second of that name, by his wife, Isabella Hampden; and the head of their family at the date of this will was their brother, Sir Gerard, the 3rd, who died in 1403. The family sprang from one of the coheiresses of Ivo de Newmarch, temp. Hen. II., whose husband, Ingelbart, possessing in right of her, the lands of Bradebroc (in Northamptonshire)⁵ assumed that name. His son, Sir Robert le May, or Braybroke, built Braybroke castle,⁶ and, in the reign of John was a Justicier, as was his son Sir Henry, who was dead in 1234, and left two sons, Wischard and John. Wischard, the heir, took the name of Ledet, and from him, through various female descents, are traced the present Griffin-Nevilles, Barons Braybrooke. From the younger son, John, were descended five Gerards de Braybroke in succession, in the last of whom, who died 1422, the line terminates in coheiresses.⁷

¹ Ecc. Ant. Dev. iii. 39.

² Transactions of the London and Mid-dlesex Archaeological Society, vol. iii.

³ Newcourt: Dugdale: Le Neve's Fasti, by Hardy, i. 398.

⁴ Oliver, loc. cit.

⁵ Domesday.

⁶ Camden, ii. 167.

⁷ Pedigree in Tr. of Essex Arch. Soc. v. 297.

At the time when Nicholas Braybroke lived, the branch of the family to which he belonged had extended its influence by several brilliant marriages. His brother, Gerard III., married (1) Margaret, heiress of J. de Lungeville, and widow of Sir Peter de Salmershe, and (2) as her sixth husband, Isabella Bassett, whose previous husbands had been John Peverel, R. de Bradestone, Robert Rigge, Sir T. Shirley, and Sir J. de Wodhull. His nephew, Gerard IV., son to Gerard III., married (1) the heiress of St. Amand, and (2) probably another de Longueville.⁸ A remarkable dispensation, given by the Pope to Gerard IV. and his second wife, was found in their tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral.⁹ Another nephew, Sir Reginald, married Joane de-la-Pole, Baroness Cobham, and their brasses are at Cobham Church, Kent. A niece, Joan, married Sir William Thirnyng, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, who was selected to convey to Richard II. the message of his deposition. A grand-nephew married (before 1407) Petronilla de Grey. Reginald Kentwode, Dean of St. Paul's, whose rapid promotion in the church testifies to his family influence, was also probably a nephew of Nicholas, the subject of our remarks. A niece, "Alice," is mentioned in the will, but of her we have no other trace.

These particulars relate rather to the family connections of Nicholas Braybroke than to his personal history. As to that, the subjoined will furnishes nearly all that we know. It shows that he was a brother of the abbey of Merton in Surrey (where Walter de Merton,¹ the founder of Merton College, Oxford, had been educated). His affection for Robert Wyndeshore,² its then Prior, (elected 27 October, 1368, died 6 May 1403) is amply testified. That abbey probably enjoyed a high degree of efficiency at this time under the wise regulations which had recently been made by William of Wykeham for its government.³ We have already stated that Nicholas had been rector of Bideford. The will points also to some connection with, or at least a benevolent interest in, Chertsey Abbey, Newark Abbey, the College of St. Mary at Ottery, and the churches of Glasney, Bosham, Guildford, and Horsley.

Nicholas Braybroke was Canon of Exeter, under Edmund de Stafford, Bishop of the see, and twice Chancellor of England. He leaves to the Chapter a piece of ground which he had purchased as an open court or addition to his residential house, with all the materials upon it, on condition that they make no claim upon his executors for dilapidations. For the repairing and maintaining of the bridge at Bideford and the chapel thereon he leaves ten pounds. This was an object which seems at that time to have been of great interest in the diocese of Exeter. On the 5th December 1396, Bishop Stafford had granted an indulgence to all true penitents who should assist "ad constructionem seu reparationem longi pontis de Bydeford."⁴

Besides the gift by Nicholas Braybroke in his will of real estate to the church of St. Mary at Ottery, his family appear to have been also benefactors to that church; indeed, their gifts to it were more liberal than any after those of its founder, Bishop Grandison (1339). By a deed dated 5th April 1404, the aged Bishop Braybroke joined Sir William Thirnyng, Sir

⁸ See the will of this Gerard, edited by the present writer, in *Tr. Essex Archæol. Soc.*, vol. iv.

⁹ See the text of it in App. to Dugdale's *Hist. of St. Paul's*.

¹ Foss, *Lives of the Judges*, iii. 129.

² Aubrey, v. 358. Manning and Bray, i. 253.

³ Chron. Merton Abbey, in the Bodleian Library., quoted, Manning and Bray, i. 257.

⁴ Oliver, iii. 44.

Gerard Braybroke, and others in a grant of certain messuages in the Old Jewry, London, viz., the Blossoms Inn, a shop on the north side thereof, a garden in the parish of St. Lawrence Jewry, a garden in All Saints Parish, Honey Lane, a warehouse adjoining the "Blossoms Inn," and 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* a year from tenements on the north side of the Blossoms Inn, formerly belonging to W. Cavendish, citizen and mercer, and afterwards to William Gore, citizen and founder:—With condition that the college should keep yearly on the 2nd day after the Epiphany the obit of Nicholas Braybroke, and of Sir Theobald de Mounteney, whose name occurs in this will, and who probably had some family connection with the Braybrokes, as in 13 Ric. 2, the manor of Mounteneys in Essex was demised to Robert Braybroke, Bishop of London, and Sir Gerard Braybroke.

Nicholas Braybroke made his Will on the eve of the Epiphany, 1399—1400, and was succeeded in his prebend of Neasdon, in the diocese of London, on the 4th January in the same year. The will was proved on the 20th January. On the 1st May, 1404, Sir Gerard Braybroke (IV.) and others founded a chantry in St. Paul's London, for the welfare of Robert, Bishop of London, and for his soul when he has departed this life, also for the soul of Master Nicholas Braybroke, late canon of St. Paul's.⁵ The will is found in the Register of Archbishop Arundel at Lambeth Palace, and through the liberal regulations recently made by his Grace the present Archbishop, we have been able to obtain the present transcript.

ARCHBISHOP ARUNDEL'S REGISTER, Vol. II., f. 1656 b. (1396 *et seq.*)

Testamentum Domini Nicholai Braybrok canonici dum vixit Exoniensis defuncti.

In nomine sanctæ et individuæ trinitatis patris et filii et spiritus sancti. Ego Nicholaus Braybroke indignus ecclesiae Exoniensis canonicus, compos mentis meæ, in vigiliâ epiphaniæ domini nostri Jesu Christi anno dominicæ incarnationæ millesimo tercentesimo nonagesimo nono, condo testamentum meum sive ultimam voluntatem meam exprimo in hunc modum. Imprimis lego Deo omnipotenti creatori meo et omnium creaturarum, animam meam et corpus meum sepeliendum quam citius honeste sepeliri potuit, moderatis sumptibus juxta discretionem et conscientiam executorum meorum, in Ecclesia Cathedrali Sancti Pauli London'. Item lego ad fabricam ecclesie de Horsley xl s.', et parvum psalterium in choro ejusdem imperpetuum cathehandum, et unum parvum calicem, et unum missale, et vestimentum integrum pro sacerdote celebraturum, in ala boriali noviter facta. Item lego cuilibet pauperi venienti ad sepulturam meam j. d'. Item lego Priori et Conventui de Merton', ubi confrater existo, pro exequis meis devote et solemniter faciendis, xx. s.', et domino Roberto Wyndeshore nunc Priori ipsius loci et successoribus suis unam cuppam argenteam cum cooperculo. Item Abbatii et Conventui de Chertseye, pro exequis eiam ibidem ut prefertur celebrandis, xx^{ti}. s'. Item Priori et Conventui de Newerk, xij. s'. iij. d'. ex causa supradicta. Item ex eadem causa, fratibus predicatoribus de Gilleford' xx. s'. Item leprosis hospitalis ibidem dimidiā marcam. Item lego inter clericos domini mei London', pro exequiis meis ibidem solemniter celebrandis, xx. s'. et cuilibet canonico in hujusmodi exequiis presenti, xl d', et executori officii ipsarum exequiarum

⁵ Dugdale, Hist. of St. Paul's, 357.

quinque solidos, et cuilibet vicario duos solidos, cuilibet clero et anumellar⁷ xij. d', cuilibet puer, vj. d', et pro brevi classico duos solidos, et ad faciendum et ad vitriandum unam fenestram in claustro ibidem, x. marcas. Item volo et ordino quod illa arria⁸ domui mee, quam propriis sumptibus michi in feodo simplici adquisivi, cum lapidibus et meremio ibidem existentibus, remaneant capitulo vel cui voluerit dare vel assignare, ita tamen quod reparacio hospicij mei ab eis nichil penitus exigatur. Item lego Collegio Beate Marie de Otery pro exequiis meis solemniter celebrandis ibidem, x. s'. distribuendos more solito inter eos, et pauperibus parochie venientibus ad ecclesiam illam die hujusmodi exequiarum mearum, cuilibet j. d'. Item lego custodi, ministro, cantori, et sacriste qui nunc sunt, cuilibet xl. s'. Item lego preposito et canoniciis, ac aliis ministris ecclesie collegiate de Glasnei x. s'. in exequiis meis debite ibidem faciendis, et pauperibus de parochia illa venientibus dicto die, cuilibet j. d'. Item lego ecclesie quandam mee de Bydeford, pro libris et ornamentis, x. libras, et reparacione et sustentacione capelle ad pontem et pontis ibidem, x. l'. Item inter pauperes parochianos ejusdem, presertim in subsidium eorum quando imposiciones regie contingent exigendas, juxta discretionem executorum meorum. Item libere capelle de Bosham l. s'. si communem habitacionem vicarii ibidem edificatam contigerit, et ministris ibidem presentibus ad celebrandum exequias meas, dimidiad marcam, et pauperibus parochie illic⁹ dicto die venientibus, cuilibet j. d'. Item lego ecclesie Beate Marie de Otery unum calicem aureum cum ampullis¹ aureis, ut ibi remaneant imperpetuum. Item lego unum messuagium sive tenementum quod nuper adquisivi a Petro Plenti in Civitate Exon, Magistro Johanni Cheyne et domino Willielmo Trendelber, ut ipsi illud vendant et pecuniam inde receptam distribuant inter pauperes ministros ecclesie de Otery prediche, vel alio modo ordinent ibidem juxta discretionem eorundem, pro salute animarum domini Johannis de Grandissoni et domini Teobaldi Mountenay militum. Item lego domino nunc Archiepiscopo Cantuar' ut sit graciosus huic testamento, unum par cirotecarum que fuerunt quandam domini mei Johannis Grandissoni episcopi Exon, si placeat ei illis uti. Item lego Magistro Roberto Hallum unum pulcrum par decretorum, et unam cuppam argenti cum cooperculo secundam meliorem in cista que est in Palacio Episcopi London'. Item lego dicto Roberto Priori de Marton' meliorem ciphum cum cooperculo in eadem cista, ut sit unus executorum meorum in partibus istis, simul cum reverendissimo et carissimo semper patre in Christo domino Roberto Braybrok dei gratia London' Episcopo, quos constituo principales executores meos in partibus Lond'. Omnia alia bona mea que sunt in Exon' et apud Otery pono et fidei committo Magistri Johanni Cheyne² Willielmi Trendelber³ et Rogeri Smyth, ut ipsi sint executores mei et disponant de illis melius et salubrius quo sciverint, secundum dispositionem

⁷ Qy. annueller, a priest employed in singing anniversary masses, and having no cure of souls. Stat. 2. Hen. 5 st. 2 s. 2.

"In London was a priest, an annueller." Chaucer, 12940.

⁸ Arria, pro area. (Ducange 414) Charta ann. 1237 ex Tabul. Corbeiensi. Ego W. de Aigunille Miles legavi ecclesie. S. Petri de Corbeia unam arriam straminii in grangia de Meneriis capiendam, &c.

⁹ Illic seems to be for illuc, and was

probably a clerical error; the evident meaning is "coming thither (i.e. to my funeral) on the said day."

¹ Ampul, a small vessel, vial, or crewett, used for containing consecrated oil or wine and water for the Eucharistic sacrifice. Pugin's Glossary. See note, page *infra*. See also Ducange in 'Ampulla.'

² The Cheyney family were settled at Up-Ottery for several generations from the time of Hen. 3. Lybry vi. 382.

ordinacionem et discrecionem reverendi patris domini Roberti Episcopi Lond' et domini Roberti Prioris de Merton' predicti, pro salute anime mee, simul cum consilio et auxilio Alicie neptis mee, de cuius fidelitate summe confido. In cuius rei testimonium sigillum meum presentibus apposui. Datum apud Merton' die et anno supradictis.

Insinuacio ejusdem.

Tenore presencium noverint universi quod suprascriptum testamentum coram nobis permissione divina &c. in manerio nostro de Lamhith³ xx.^{mo} die mentis Januarij Anno Domini Millesimo CCC^{mo} Nonagesimo nono fuit exhibitum et legitime probatum, ac pro valore ejusdem per nos pronunciatum, administracionemque bonorum testamenti hujusmodi, vigore et auctoritate prerogative ecclesie nostre Cantuarien', venerabili fratri nostro domino Roberto Episcopo Londonien', domino Roberto priori de Merton' ordinis Sancti Augustini, et Domino Willielmo Trendelbear executoribus in dicto testamento nominatis, commisimus in forma juris, potestatem attamen Magistro Johanni Chene et Rogero Smyth executoribus in ipso testamento nominatis, committendi administracionem una cum aliis bonorum hujusmodi si se ad hoc obtulerint et voluerint nobis specialiter reservantes. Data in manerio nostro predicto die et anno domini supradictis. Presentibus tunc ibidem, venerabilibus viris Domino Gerardo Braybrok milite, et Magistro Johanne Botlesham Cancellario nostro, cum multis aliis.

Commissio eiusdem testamenti.

Thomas permissione divina &c. dilecto in Christo filio Decano ecclesie Exonien', salutem, graciam et benedictionem. Ad committendum in forma juris Magistro Johanni Chene et Rogero Smyth' executoribus testamenti Magistri Nicholai Braybrok defuncti, administracionem bonorum ejusdem in Exonia et Otery tempore mortis ejusdem existentium, si onus predictum juxta vim et formam testamenti predicti in se recipi voluerint. Vobis de cuius fidelitate scientia et discrecio in domino confidimus tenore presencium commitimus facultatem. Et si prefati Magister Johannes et Rogerus onus predictum in se susceperint aut recusaverint, seu alter eorum suscepit aut recusaverit, nobis ubicunque in nostris Civitate dioecesi aut provincia fuerimus, citra festum Pasche proxime sequens certificare curetis, literis vestris patentibus sigillo autentico consignatis habentibus hunc tenorem. Data in manerio nostro de Lamhith' xx.^{mo} die Mensis Januarii Anno domini Millesimo CCC^{mo} Nonagesimo nono, et nostre translacionis anno quarto.

³ "Lamhith." This spelling shows the transition from the early name "Loamhithe"—the muddy landing place—to the present Lambeth. [See "Words and Places" by Rev. Isaac Taylor.]