

WILLIAM SHORE, MERCHANT OF LONDON AND DERBY

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William Shore is usually remembered only as the divorced husband of Edward IV's mistress, Elizabeth (Jane) Shore. In his own right he was a prosperous merchant of London and Derby with family connections among the squirearchy of Derbyshire and the Duchy of Lancaster and with trading contacts and friends in Suffolk and the Low Countries.¹

William was born in Derby about 1435-7.² His father may have been the Robert Shore mentioned in the churchwardens' accounts of All Hallows Derby; of his mother nothing is known. He had, at least, one sister, but her Christian name is not known. There were probably other Shore cousins and uncles because Shores represented Derby in Parliament during the early 1400s and there was a flourishing family there in the late sixteenth century.³

William's parents lived in the central parish of All Hallows, a fine and wealthy collegiate church. It had a Trinity Guild, a chapel of the Virgin Mary, altars to the Trinity, the Passion and St. Catherine, with vestments, books, jewels and ornaments, including painted cloths showing the 'olde' and the 'newe lawe' hanging above the choir stalls. The parishioners supported many 'sepulchre serges', great wax candles lit before particular altars or images of the Virgin Mary, the Rood, St. Mary of Pity, St. John the Baptist, St. Christopher, St. Edmund, St. Clement and St. Loy. Some were supported by individuals, including the Robert Shore who may be William's father, and others by the crafts of Farriers, Barbers and Shoemakers. Four of the cierges of St. Nicholas were supported by a 'gederyng' made by the town's schoolmaster among his pupils for that purpose and another twelve by a 'gederyng' by the parish clerk made in the parish 'of Sancte Nicholas nyghte'. As a child William must have contributed to the support of St. Nicholas' cierges, the patron saint of children, for presumably his early schooling was in the town's ancient grammar school. He was later in life to establish the service of a priest at St. Nicholas' altar in All Hallows, a service which lasted until the Reformation.⁴

In 1451-2 he was apprenticed to John Rankyn, a citizen and mercer of London (warden of the Mercers 1446, 1455, 1461 and 1473), and made the long journey south. The elder Shore may have had many London connections or he may have relied on connections among his fellow parishioners to establish his son — Richard Claver, another wealthy London mercer of this time, had relatives in Derby.⁵ The apprenticeship to a mercer gives some idea of the elder Shore's status for the trade of mercer (and the closely associated one of merchant adventurer) required capital. Heavy premiums were taken by masters from the parents or guardians of apprentices, and as much as ten years could be spent learning the trade in luxury fabrics of silk, linen, as well as worsted, and other mercery goods. This would usually include a period in the Low Countries acting as an agent for his master selling and buying goods, travelling to the great fairs, seeing wares on and off ships and learning the necessary languages. In his will William was to remember a Sister Lisbet of a house of nuns in Ghent whom he had known 'more thanne xxx yere a gone', perhaps during his term as a young

man learning his trade in Flanders. He issued from his apprenticeship in 1458-9, was admitted to the Mercers' Company, and was clothed in its livery in 1463-4. He presumably set up business on his own soon after his admittance. In March 1463 he made his first independent appearance in the Mercers' records as one of those chosen to represent his Company, dressed in blue, in the procession of London citizens which greeted Edward IV on his return from the North.⁶ With him rode William Redeknappe and Thomas Chaterley who, as they are frequently found associated with him, may be classified as his friends.

In the mid 1460s Shore is also to be found in the records of Bergen-op-Zoom where one of the great Fairs of the Low Countries was held. In 1465 he was among the English buyers at the Coldmarket (November — early December), purchasing ninety-seven pieces of linen made in the province of Utrecht from Margaret Brunix of Nijmegen. Shore's name posed the Dutch scribe considerable difficulties and he rendered it as 'Tsoer'. In 1466, on 20 June, a Cornelis Copdane sold two rooms (or sheds) with a courtyard in the Raemstraethen (probably no more than an alley) on behalf of Henric Stoeldrayer to Jorick Diederick and 'Willem Schoir' from England. Copdane was a native of the town, who was frequently authorised by foreign merchants to look after their businesses, and Diederick was presumably another Englishman, perhaps a partner or factor of Shore. Foreign merchants did not merely buy or rent property in the Fair towns to have somewhere to stay and store their goods, they also did so in order to ensure they looked solvent to their fellow merchants. These references, the brief sentence in Shore's will leaving 12s to the church works of Middleburgh in Zealand, and the one mentioned above referring to Ghent, unfortunately tell us little of the scope of Shore's trade in the Low Countries beyond the fact that it was carried on in the traditional places of mercer and merchant adventurer interest.⁷

William prospered in his trade, and was able to take a house in London at the south end of Bow Lane on the east side, from a William Constantine, the eldest son and heir, although a priest, of a long line of Constantine owners of the property.⁸ The house was close to the 'mercery' area which centred near the church of St. Mary Le Bow. Shore was not yet among the greatest mercers but he may have had good hopes of becoming one of them.

In 1462-3 William had taken his first apprentice, John Colet, the son of John Colet another London mercer, and in 1466 he was one of the sureties for the £600 estate of the elder John Colet's six children, including his own apprentice, with three other mercers, Thomas Chaterley, William Redknappe and Robert Gregory. William already knew his fellow sureties, for in 1464 he had been the last named of six persons, including these three men, receiving the conveyance of property in Wood Street from a Nicholas Ellerbek.⁹ He was already being considered a reliable and prosperous associate.

William continued to take apprentices until about 1473 — John Salford, John Hawe, John Knotte, Thomas Riche and John Daubeney.¹⁰ Of these, John Hawe also came from Derbyshire and was to be a life-long friend of Shore and the overseer of his will, and Thomas Riche, the son of the exceptionally wealthy mercer, Richard Riche (died 1464), was to be famous primarily for his wife, like his master. Before 1465 this Thomas married Elizabeth Croke, daughter of a London alderman and granddaughter of William Gregory, a mayor accredited with the compilation of one of the better City chronicles. Riche himself died in 1474 and Elizabeth remarried William Stonor, among whose family papers her letters survive to show her masterful, busy character, a merchant in her own right.¹¹ Among Shore's other apprentices, John Salford, whom he took on in 1463-4, brought him trouble, for on 3 February 1473, the year Salford was admitted to the Mercers' Company, Shore appeared before the wardens at the Company's Hall and promised to present all 'his greffe, clayme and misrekenyng or what thyng he can laye or avouche upon the said John Salford'

before the following Michaelmas. He held Salford's obligation in £300, due to expire at Christmas, and this the wardens decreed was to be void if he could bring nothing against Salford before the agreed date. On the same day Salford promised that if Shore should bring in any accounts 'not goode and true' he would make them good.¹² The outcome is not recorded, probably indicating a settlement 'out of court', but it is worth noting that Salford was again in trouble throughout 1485 for breaking the Company's ordinances. On this occasion he was impertinent to the wardens, landed himself in prison and the matter had finally to go to award.¹³

By the early 1470s William Shore was a respected member of his Company. On 5 November 1472 the Court of Assistants of the Mercers agreed that Shore should negotiate with John Benyngton, grocer, an executor of Richard Haywarde about £19 received from the ship, the 'John of Newcastle'.¹⁴ In August of the next year he and his friend, Thomas Chaterley, and a John Malburgh esquire, were receiving the gift of his goods and chattels from John Smyth, armourer, possibly to raise a loan for Smyth or to enable him to avoid probate duties in an ecclesiastical court.¹⁵

At about this time two marriages took place of great importance to Shore's life. His sister married John Agard of Foston, Derbyshire, and he himself married Elizabeth Lambert. His own marriage must have taken place in the late 1460s and certainly before March 1473,¹⁶ when he was in his early thirties and his bride possibly as much as fifteen years younger. Such a difference of ages was not unusual when a wealthy merchant father was able and anxious to secure a wealthy son-in-law already established in trade. Elizabeth was the daughter of John Lambert, a mercer, and Amy Marshall, his wife, and was apparently the only daughter. Lambert had been sheriff 1460-1, a warden of his Company, and from 1460 to 1470, he was alderman of the ward of Farringdon Within. An alderman was expected to be worth £1000 in goods at this time so Lambert was well able to provide his daughter with a good dowry, apprentice his sons, Robert and John, to mercers and educate another son, William, for the priesthood. Apart from the trade of mercery Lambert seems to have been regularly involved in financial transactions and loans; in 1457 he was one of several London merchants advising Henry VI on how to repay his debts and in the 1460s he was making loans to Edward IV.¹⁷ There were two incidents in his career that show Lambert to have been a lively, assertive, even difficult, man. He was ousted from the Court of Aldermen on 15 September 1470 and fined 500 marks for contempt and disobedience, the details of his offence discreetly concealed by his fellows who thrust him out.¹⁸ He was involved in a second quarrel in 1472-3 when the Goldsmiths' Company prosecuted him in the Mayor's Court for removing the fittings from their house in Wood Street when his tenancy ended. The matter finally went to the arbitration of Richard Hadley, grocer, and Richard Frere, armourer, with obligations, drawn up on 13 January 1474, to abide by the award. Lambert was found guilty of taking down bars of iron above the counter, the ironwork of the windows, removing panes of glass from the summer parlour, and removing the chapel ceiling, as well as twenty-seven windows of 'estrichbord'. He was ordered to restore the goods and pay damages. On the 20 January Alderman Robert Basset acted as 'umper' and the settlement was drawn up in Lambert's presence. It is worth speculating whether another detail of this quarrel had an unpleasant consequence, nine years later, for Lambert's daughter, for also present at the award was Edmund Shaa, goldsmith, to whom Lambert had sold one of the purloined fittings, a great pewter laver, 'stonding by the hall to wassh mennys handes', which William Walton, a previous occupier, had left to the house and the Goldsmiths. Shaa agreed to forego his share in the laver and returned it to the rightful owners before the award was made;¹⁹ he cannot have acquired much respect for Lambert. He

was to be mayor when Elizabeth Lambert was imprisoned in 1483 and it may well have been he who saw that she did public penance as a harlot in October of that year when she was proclaimed as the mistress of the Marquis Dorset, one of the rebels about to march on London from Kent.²⁰ On the evidence of these two quarrels it seems possible that William Shore married into a family unlikely to afford him much tranquillity.

The marriage of his sister to John Agard of Foston probably took place in the early 1470s.² Of Shore's sister nothing is known, not even her Christian name. John Agard of Foston, born 1427, had already been married to Jane, the sister of Ralph Wolseley of Staffordshire, a lawyer and baron of the Exchequer 1478-84, who died in 1504, and the daughter of Thomas Wolseley (died 1478).²¹ Jane was the mother of John Agard's heir, Ralph, and of his other children Nicholas, Clement and Margery. It may also have been Shore's sister's second marriage. She was certainly marrying to become the step-mother of young children and, from the evidence of the close relationship that grew up between her brother and John and Ralph Agard, it seems possible that she was successful in that role. The marriage lasted until her death, 1490-5, when John Agard married, for a third time, Maud, daughter of Sir John Stanley and the widow of the Sir John Ferrers who died in 1490.²³ John Agard, himself, was a powerful figure in local affairs and the Shore marriage may reflect something of the status and wealth of the Shore family in Derby and William Shore's own position as a mercer of London and merchant adventurer.²⁴ Agard's second wife must have had a substantial dowry to attract him, a sum possibly increased by her brother; she may have been a wealthy widow. The Agard family had a long tradition of royal service in the honour of Tutbury, part of the Duchy of Lancaster, and was associated through marriage and Duchy service with all the major families of the area: Blount (the lords Mountjoy), Gresley, Wolseley, Fitzherbert, Powtrell and Babington. Agard was closely involved with the Duke of Clarence's administration of Tutbury from 1464 and that of William Lord Hastings, the honour's steward from 1472 to 1483. John Agard and Nicholas, his brother, were retained by Hastings in 1474 and Ralph Agard in 1480. When he founded his chantry at Scropton in 1515, John Agard was to remember his patrons, Lord Mountjoy, the Duke of Clarence and Lord Hastings in the prayers established there.²⁵ He was to display similar loyalty to his brother in law, William Shore, after his death.

It is impossible to say how the circle of Shore's connections in the early 1470s, spreading out on one hand through the local squirearchy of Derbyshire, the Duchy of Lancaster administration to Lord Hastings, Edward IV's friend and lord chamberlain, and on the other hand through rich London mercers and merchant adventurers, suppliers of luxuries to the court and nobility, finally involved William Shore in the scandal that made him famous. At some date his wife, Elizabeth, met the King, Edward IV.

The only source of information about the break-up of the marriage is Elizabeth's petition to the Pope, the terms of which were recited in the papal mandate of 1 March 1476.²⁶ The mandate stated that Elizabeth had claimed that she had married William Shore, cohabited with him for the lawful time (three years), found him frigid and impotent, that she was desirous to be a mother and have children and had requested the Bishop of London's official to cite William before him. This the official had apparently refused to do and she had consequently appealed to the Pope. The Pope ordered the three Bishops of Hereford, Sidon and Ross to hear both parties and come to a just decision. It has usually been assumed that Elizabeth's petition was brought as a consequence of her liaison with Edward IV and was fraudulent. This was not necessarily so, however.²⁷ With a wealthy father (only identified by historians in 1972) she cannot now be seen as a woman unable to make an appeal to the Pope without the help of a royal protector; the quarrelsome John Lambert may not have

tolerated a son in law incapable of giving him grandchildren and he had the means to support his daughter in her suit. The wills of both her parents indicate a strong bond between them and Elizabeth.²⁸ Nor was her suit necessarily fraudulent. The church courts did not encourage claims which could not be substantiated and it should be remembered that she was finally successful in her suit, that Shore never remarried, and that the fear of God and the dictates of conscience were powerful deterrents against bringing false claims before an ecclesiastical court.²⁹ The refusal of the Bishop of London's official to take up her petition before 1476 is open to two interpretations —that he thought her suit false or that her husband was able to bring greater pressure to bear. The Pope chose three bishops, not including London, to hear her case. Her petition was exactly in accordance with the procedure expected for a divorce on the grounds of impotence, the cohabitation of three years being one of the proofs required by canon law to try the matter.³⁰ The three years could have been completed long before the date of the Pope's mandate, and, indeed, before the liaison with the King began.³¹

The relationship with Edward IV was probably a fact before 30 November 1474 when Shore made a gift of his goods and chattels to John Shelley, mercer, Thomas Rygby and Hugh Ince, gentlemen (lawyers), Hugh Broune, another mercer, and William Palmer, a tailor.³² A possible explanation of the purpose of this deed is that he was raising money for a loan, perhaps expecting legal expenses or perhaps with a view to going abroad. John Shelley was an old associate of Shore's, for Shore had become one of his feoffees in 1470 for the manor of Chelsyn, Hertfordshire;³³ he was older than Shore by about ten years and had been a warden of the Mercers' Company 1463 and 1471. This gift of his goods was followed by another on 28 March 1475 to Sir Richard Illingworth (a former chief baron of the Exchequer), John Shelley, again, and John Agard, with Henry Davers, and another former associate, Thomas Chaterley, both mercers.³⁴ At this time Shore was living in the ward of Colman Street, which lay to the east and north of Guildhall, for on 3 February 1475 the Mercers appointed him one of their commissioners 'to make streighter inquerry' into the financial standing of members of the Company in connection with the benevolence required by Edward IV.³⁵ By the date of his next appearance in the records he must have been divorced. On 4 December 1476 he obtained letters of protection for his lands and goods in England and elsewhere under the great seal.³⁶ He then disappears from the records of London and Chancery for nearly eight years. The divorce suit for impotence meant, essentially, that Shore could not remarry; both the divorce and his wife's affair with the King may have made London intolerable for him.

Shore does, however, appear in records outside London, preoccupied with trade in East Anglia and the Low Countries. In July 1481 Lord Howard bought a pipe of white wine from Shore as part of the stores he was taking with him on his expedition against the Scots in July 1481.³⁷ Later the same year, on 21 September, William Shore and other merchants, including Thomas Caldwell of Ipswich, chartered two of Lord Howard's ships, the *Barbara* and the *Paker*, to go to Bordeaux. Shore took fifteen tons in the first and five tons in the second. 'My lord also leted to William Shore and the others 200 crowns by exchange —my Lord to bear the adventure and to deliver them at Bordeaux'.³⁸ On 15 March 1482 William Parker, one of Howard's ship masters, brought a ship into Ipswich laden with ten tons of Gascony wine belonging to Shore, other wine for his lord and himself and woad for Thomas Caldwell.³⁹ In this year Shore not only accounted for a third of Ipswich's wine imports but was busy exporting a variety of goods, particularly English woollen cloths, through the port. In April his exports and re-exports were in two major shipments and included 208 ells

of Isyngnam cloth, kettles of copper and other metal, a basket of haberdashery, barrels of Swedish iron, malt, barley, butter, honey, old wine, wax, pitch and tar, fifteen dozen bonnets, silk and rosin. The destination of the goods is not recorded.⁴⁰

Shore's connections with East Anglia dated from at least 1476-7 when he is to be found as the prosecutor in several suits of debt in Colchester. The most interesting case noted is one in February 1477 when he was described as citizen and mercer of London and sued jointly with Ralph Agard, his 'cousin', a certain Roger More of Colchester, miller, for four marks. More was amerced for a licence to agree on 8 May of the same year.⁴¹ It seems possible that Agard was engaged in trade with Shore. In the same year Shore found it worthwhile to invest in land in the Colchester area for, on 11 May 1477, he received the release from John Algood and his wife and William Martyn of certain land in West Donyland, a hamlet near Colchester, called 'Algoodez' and before that 'Bulbekkez'. His feoffees who received the land with him were Sir John Howard (not yet a Lord), Sir William Pyrton, Ralph Agard again, John Daubeney (a relative of Shore's apprentice of the same name?) and Richard Hervy. Shore was in fact purchasing 170 acres from John Algood, senior, and Eleanor, his wife, their feoffee being Edmund Martyn, a fletcher of Colchester.⁴² Either before the sealing of this deed or later Edmund Martyn proved difficult, refusing to make over the estate to Shore and forcing Shore to take the matter to Chancery. The Lord Chancellor deputed the Abbot of St. John's Colchester, who held the manor of West Donyland, and John Sulyard, the eminent lawyer with East Anglian (and Ipswich) connections, to inquire into the matter at the local level. The precise order of events and the results of the Chancery case are not known but the status of Shore's feoffees must have stood him in good stead.⁴³ He did not, however, leave any Essex land in his will and it was to be his Derbyshire property that really mattered to him in the end. Suffolk and Essex were great producers of English cloth and, as Shore was a merchant adventurer, that may have been the main and original reason for his interest in the area.

The 1480s saw the end of Shore's ex-wife's liaison with the King. Edward IV died on 9 April 1483, Elizabeth Lambert was imprisoned in June, during the Protectorship of Richard of Gloucester, and at some date before the end of October she may have suffered public penance as a harlot, having been proclaimed as held in adultery with Marquis Dorset. She was not without protectors, however, and she was released, on Richard III's order, from Ludgate, the gaol for freemen of the City, into the custody of her father while the Chancellor made enquiry whether it was lawful for her to marry the King's solicitor, Thomas Lynom. The marriage duly took place. In the wake of these events, William Shore arrived in London from Flanders in July 1484 with a letter on trade matters for the King from the Governor of the Merchant Adventurers, John Wendy. The Merchant Adventurers in the City immediately appointed persons to ride to the Lord Chancellor, who had left London to join the King, with instructions to negotiate that the King should forbid to denizens the buying of both goods in the Duke of Burgundy's lands and all such goods arriving in England after a certain date.⁴⁴

It is possible that Shore had been running his business all these years predominantly from Colchester or the Low Countries, but his activities are so various that one cannot be certain when he may have chosen to travel himself or use factors.⁴⁵ He expanded further outside the more usual concerns of the mercer and merchant adventurer (cloth and trade with Flanders) into the Iceland trade in the latter part of the reign of Richard III and the reign of Henry VII, and such a trade may be indicated in his April 1482 exports via Ipswich, mentioned above, as well. He received two licences, one with Robert Chapman, merchant of Kingston-upon-Hull, in December 1484, and the other with Thomas Grafton in April 1486,

to send two ships to Iceland and take cargo there.⁴⁶ He received only two royal appointments in his life, but they show the status and competence he had achieved in trade: in November 1485 he was appointed a searcher of ships in the ports of Ipswich and Yarmouth, and in March 1486 he was commissioned to collect alien customs on cloth in the port of London.⁴⁷

On 7 May 1487 he made another gift of his goods and chattels, for an unknown purpose, possibly this time to set up a trust as two of his future executors were among the three recipients, John Agard of Foston and John Hawe, mercer.⁴⁸ The third was William Caxton, established as a printer in Westminster by this date, and undoubtedly a past associate of Shore, both as a mercer and as a previous Governor of the Merchant Adventurers at Bruges. The last reference to Shore in the records of the Mercers is his discharge, in June 1489, with others, of a debt still partially owed to Edward IV.⁴⁹

He continued to be active in East Anglia for on 13 January 1490 he delivered to the bailiffs of Colchester a copy of a proclamation under Henry VII's signet requiring them to proclaim at the next market that all creditors of the king's purveyors from the first day of his reign to 1 October last should bring their documents to the cofferer of the royal household to receive payment 'according to justice'.⁵⁰ There is unfortunately no further information about this episode.

It is clear from Shore's will of 21 November 1494 that he never lost contact with his home town of Derby. He inherited property there from his father and seems to have been involved in some litigation concerning it. He had come into further property at the death of his mother, notably a stable and a garden with a fish-house. He appears to have bought another house in Iron Gate, where he lived, and he certainly bought another in St. Mary's Gate. He had no property to leave in London and only mentions one person there, John Hawe, his previous apprentice, who was to become a sheriff in 1500, alderman in 1501 and master of the Mercers 1502 and 1510. John was one of the overseers of his will and was given his salt with the columbine flower which was to pass to John's daughter, Anne, and her heirs.⁵¹ Shore's closest associate in Derby itself appears to have been his 'cousin', Richard Strenger, whom he chose as one of his executors. Strenger was a regular auditor of the accounts of the All Hallows' churchwardens, a churchwarden himself and bailiff in 1494 and 1496. William Shore also acted as an auditor in the early 1490s.⁵² Strenger was a grocer by trade and, unlike Shore, had plenty of relatives to refer to in his will of 1510. He did not forget that Shore had requested that his largest maser without a foot was to pass after Richard's own death to his son, William, and his heirs. This William was Shore's godson and presumably named for him; he became a priest, being placed in the care of Henry Hudson, the vicar of Ashbourne in Dovedale, by his father. The wills of Richard Strenger and his brother, John, both show considerable, if conventional, devotion to their parish and its concerns,⁵³ and so does that of William Shore. Shore left the property coming to him from his father to the use of the church of All Hallows, and his dwelling house and the property coming to him via his mother to the parish's Holy Trinity Guild to support a perpetual service for his own and his mother's souls, regular gifts of coal to the poor and the support of the morning Trinity mass. It also received a chalice and vestments of black camlet and embroidered with flowers.

Shore's only close relation at the time of his death appears to have been his sister, wife to John Agard. To John he left his 'flat pece' with cover and specified that after John's death and that of 'his wyf now lyvyng' it should pass to John's male heirs. This may refer to John Agard's third wife, Maud Stanley, but it may be that Shore is reserving his plate to his sister and to no other wives of John Agard. Shore's trust lies with his Derbyshire associates, John and Ralph Agard, Richard Strenger and John Hawe, with an additional overseer in the person



Plate 1 The incised alabaster tomb of William Shore at Scropton, Photograph by Canon D. H. Buckley

of William Smith, Bishop of Coventry, Chester and Lichfield (1492-6).⁵⁴ From his executors he requested 'a litill tombe' of their choice, and that he be buried where he died. He died on 28 February 1495 at Scropton, the parish of the Agards, presumably while on a visit to his brother-in-law's house. The Agards buried him in their church and there his 'litill tombe' remains with their grander monuments. John Agard was also to later remember Shore in the prayers of his perpetual chantry at Scropton.⁵⁵ The tomb slab was presumably of the local alabaster and carved locally, perhaps at Chellaston. It is a conventional representation

of a late medieval merchant in his furred gown, his livery 'hood' over his shoulder and a purse hanging from his belt.⁵⁶ Most important, however, it shows the merchant's mark which differentiated Shore's goods as they travelled over Europe. The tomb slab is a substantial proof that his executors observed his last wishes. The service that he established with the Trinity Guild in All Hallows, Derby, was similarly observed, and lasted until the Reformation destroyed all such foundations.⁵⁷

APPENDIX: WILL OF WILLIAM SHORE 21 NOVEMBER 1494

PRO., PCC 10 VOX. PROB. 11/10

[f.77b] In Dei nomine, Amen. The xxj day of November in the yere of Owre Lord M^l.iiiij.Clxxxiiiij, I, William Shore, mercer of London, begynne my testament and last wyll in maner and fourme folowing. Fyrste I bequeith my soule to Almyghty God and to his Modre Saint Mary and to all the saintys in heven, and my dettys [f.78] to be paide of my propur goodis, my body to be buried wher I shall happe to dye. Also I will and ordayne that there be made over me at convenient tyme a litill tombe aftur the wyll of myne executurs. Also I bequeith according to the wyll of my fadre, all suche lyvelod as come to me by the meane of my fadre, except the stable with the gardeyne and ffysshe howse which was gebyn to my modre at the partycion by twene my fadre and my eme [uncle]. This lyvelod to be sold by myne executurs and oversears and the churche wardeins of the parysh of Alhalowyn in Darby for the tyme being and the money to be spent to the use of the said church by myne executurs and oversears, and yf the saide churche wardeyns for the tyme beyng be not content with this my wrytyng, then, forasmoche as all such feoffees [trustees] as were enfeoffed by my fader to the use of his will have all releasyd to other and not to me accordyng to my fadys will and sens by me recovered and bilded, I will that myn executours and overseer make sale of the seid lyvelode, and the money thereof receyved by reason of the seid lyvelode so sold be myne executours and overseer to be spent in other dedes charitable as myn executours and overseer cann think most expedient for the relese of those soules of whom this lyvelode camme, and my predecissors, for my soule. Also I bequeith to the brother gylde of the Trynite in Derby my dwelling place in the Iron Gate in Derby, and my stable with the gardyn and ffisshouse that standyth therin, they there for to sey evermore for my modurs sowle and myne a dyrige and a masse the xiiijth day of September, and to dele every Crystmas Evyn to pouer people xxx quarters of charecollis, the lest a styke a pece, and to suche as be pouer howseholders and have charge of children moo strykis aftur theyr discrecion, so that none passe a quarter. The residew of the money commyng of the sale of the said place, stabyll, garden and fyshous, a bove the reparacion suffyshently borne and yche of the wardens to have for his labour xijd, to the meyneteyning of the Trynite masse on mornynge. And yf this be not performed by reson of the bretherhed of the said Trynyte yeld, then hit shall be lefull for the chamburleyns of Darby to entur in the same dwelling place, stabull, gardeyn and fyshowse and put the money thereof commyng to the reparacion of hy wayes a myle a bout Darby on every syde, and yche on the said chamburleyns to have yerely xijd for there labur. Also I bequeith to my brothur in law, John Agard of Fostone, my flat pece with the cover dobull gylt, and aftyr his decese and his wyf now lyvyng, to remayne for evermore to his heyres males of the Agardys. Also I bequeith to my said brothur Agard xls in money and my best gowne that he wyll chose. Also I bequeith to John Haw, mercer of London, myne image gilt called a salt with a collumbyne flowre to hym and to his wyf now lyvyng, and aftyr their decese to remeyne to ther doughtur, Anne, and to the heires of here body lafully begoten for evermore yf she be thanne lyvyng, and yf she decese be fore her fadur and modur thanne they to do their plesure therwith. Also I bequeyth to my cossen Richard Strenger of Darby my largest maser now being at Darby with owte a fote, and aftur his decease to remeyne to William his sone and my godson and his heire, so long as hit wyll endure, and yf the said William decese be fore his fadre hit shall be

lefull his fadre to do his best therewith. Also I bequeith to the said Richard Strenger yf he take the adminstracion aponn him for me xls in money for his labor and my blew gowne furd with boge shankys [the black fur of lambs' legs]. Also I bequeith to the Observautes of Grenwych x marke sterlinges toward the bying of the clothe for theire habettes ad they were, for I am brothur with theyme. Also I bequeith to the bretherhed of the Trynyte for ever more a chalesse and a vestment of blake chamelet powdurd with flowres and all aparell therto redy halowed. Also a prynted portuus to Sir John Dayll'. Also to the church werkys at Myddylbrough in Zeland xijs sterlinges. Also to a susturhowse within Gaunte in Flandres wherin was a sustur called Sister Lisbet more thanne xxx yere a gone xxs sterlinges. Also I will that my new howse in Saint Mary Gate in Darby be sold or dysposed at the wyll off myne executurs. The residew of all my goodys moveable and unmoveable not bequeythid I geve and bequeith to myne executours, they to dispose them for my soule and my frendes soulys after there discrecion. Also I ordeigne and make my true executours my brother in lawe John Agard of Foston and my cosen Rafe Agard his sonne and heyre, my cosen Richard Strynger of Darby for the performacion of this my last will, and my most speciall good lord, my lord of Chestur Bishop, and John Haw mercer of London oversears of this my last wyll, and him I bequeith a tabull clothe of dyaper conteying x Flemmysh ellis. Also I bequeith to my cossen Raff Agard for his gret labor xls.

[f.78b Probate clause not completed]

Punctuation, capitals, and the use of u and v have been modernized.

REFERENCES

1. Generally William's career has received little attention but brief summaries of the main facts were given in Nicholas Barker, 'The Real Jane Shore', *Etoniana* no. 125 (1972), 387-8, and Jessica Freeman, 'London — Derbyshire Links in the Fifteenth Century', *Derbyshire Family History Branch News* March 1984, 11-12. I am grateful to Miss Sinar, County Archivist of Derbyshire, for pointing out Miss Freeman's work to me.
2. His date of birth is approximate, based on the assumption he was about fifteen when he was apprenticed in London.
3. Shore's will refers to an uncle, but he is not necessarily a Shore. The records of the town of Derby are too poor to permit any real assessment of the Shore family in the fifteenth century. Freeman op. cit. notes the MPs but gives no source. Maxwell Craven, 'The Ancient Families of Derbyshire no. 6: The Shores', *Derbyshire Life and Countryside*, December 1981, 40-2.
4. Derby Central Library, Churchwardens' Accounts of All Hallows 1466-1505, ff. 1-13 passim (the reference to Robert Shore occurs twice, ff. 4 and 6b; he was clearly dead by 1466). I am indebted to Miss Bown of the Central Library for her assistance over these accounts. *Victoria County History : Derbyshire* vol. 2, 87-92, 208-215. There appears to have been no real attempt to write a history of medieval Derby.
5. A John 'Clavar' was auditor of the All Hallows Churchwardens' Accounts 1474-5, 1475-6 and 1494 and must have been a younger relative of Richard's. Richard's mother was buried at All Hallows before 1456, his father at Edlaston. For a biography of his wife, Anne F. Sutton, 'Alice Claver, silkwoman of London . . .' *The Ricardian* vol. 5, no. 70, September 1980, 243-7, reprinted in James Petre (ed.), *Richard III: Crown and People*, London 1985, 397-402.
6. L. Lyell and F. Watney (eds.), *The Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company 1453 - 1527*, Cambridge 1936, 59.
7. C.J.F. Sloomans, *Paas-en Koudemarkten te Bergen op Zoom 1365-1565*, *Býdragen tot de Geschiedenis van het Zuiden van Nederland* LXIV, 3 vols, Tilburg 1985, vol.1, 375, vol. 2, 728. I am indebted to Mrs Livia Visser-Fuchs for these references and to her

translation and comments. She has also kindly searched other likely records for Shore but found nothing; the records of Middleburgh were destroyed in 1941.

8. P.E. Jones (ed.) *Calendar of the Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London 1458-82*, Cambridge 1961, 72. Shore had left the house by the end of 1472. I am indebted to Dr. Derek Keene, Director of the Social and Economic Study of Medieval London, for the precise location of this house.
9. R.R. Sharpe (ed.), *Calendar of the Letter Books of the City of London, L* (London 1913), 66. The two eldest boys, Robert and John, came of age in 1475 and received their £100s. Corporation of London Records Office, Hustings Roll 194 (30).
10. Mercers' Company : Wardens' Accounts 1463-4; *Register of Freemen from 1347*, the years 1473-83 showing the admissions of his apprentices.
11. C.L. Kingsford (ed.), *The Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483*, Camden Society 1919, vol. 1, xxvi-xxx.
12. *Acts of Court op. cit.*, 66-7.
13. *Ibid.*, 163-4, 166-72, 177, 178, 181-2.
14. *Ibid.*, 63.
15. *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1468-71*, no 1147. It is probably Shore who is meant by William 'Shoreman', mercer of Cheapside, who was to be paid 33s under the will of Ralph Snaith in 1473, *Testamenta Eboracensia* vol 3, Surtees Society 1864, 203-4. (There was no mercer called Shoreman at this date.)
16. See below page 129 and no.30.
17. Nicholas Barker, 'The Real Jane Shore' *op. cit.* 385-6. S.L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Later Medieval London*, Michigan 1943, 352. *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1452-1460*, 339. Public Record Office, Warrants to the Exchequer, E404/72/4, no. 30.
18. Corporation of London Records Office, Journal of Common Council, 7, f. 221.
19. Goldsmiths' Company, Minute Book A, 170-2.
20. Anne F. Sutton and P.W. Hammond (eds.), *The Coronation of Richard III*, Gloucester 1983, 23, n. 86.
21. The first recorded association of Shore with John Agard was on 28 March 1475, P.E. Jones (ed.), *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London 1453-1482*, *op. cit.*, 172, see below page 129.
22. For the Wolseleys, see J.C. Wedgwood, *The History of Parliament 1439-1509 : Biographies*, HMSO 1936.
23. It is only Shore's will of 1494, printed here, that gives us the detail that John Agard was his brother in law. He calls John Agard's son and heir, Ralph, his cousin. He does not refer to his sister specifically and only refers to John Agard's wife 'now living'. This may suggest that his sister was dead and John already remarried to Maud Stanley (she was free from 1490), but it could be a means of keeping Shore's bequest of plate out of the possession of any wife of John Agard other than Shore's sister. Maud was still being referred to as Sir John Ferrers' widow as late as 20 May 1495, *CCR 1485-1500*, 264-5. I am indebted to Dr. Ian Rowney for this reference and for giving me the benefit of his research into the confused Agard genealogy, including his identification of Maud's husband, Sir John Ferrers (correcting that in S.M. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in Fifteenth Century*, Derbyshire Record Society vol. 8 (1983), 91). J. Wedgwood *op. cit.* is unreliable on the Agards.

Miss Freeman (cited above n. 1) suggests that the 'in law' relationship resulted from a first marriage of Shore to an Agard. Such a marriage would have to be put in the 1460s when Shore would not have had the wealth to attract a gentry wife; an Agard would have been able to do much better. It is also improbable that a short lived marriage based in London in the 1460s could have generated what appears to have been, on the evidence of Shore's will and the tomb at Scropton thirty years later, a close, well-established relationship in Derbyshire. The reference to Ralph Agard as Shore's 'cousin' suggests

tantalizingly that Ralph might have been the son of the Shore marriage.

24. Marriages between wealthy mercers and the Derbyshire squirearchy were not unknown: John Sutton, mercer of London, originally from Gnosall, Staffs., married as his third wife, Beatrice Cokayne, in the 1470s, and his will of 1479 shows he probably regretted his expensive purchase of gentility, PRO., PROB. 11/6, ff. 282b-286b. (PCC. 37 Wattys).
25. S.M. Wright, *op. cit.*, 79, 90-1. I. Rowney, 'The Hastings Affinity in Staffordshire and the Honour of Tutbury', *The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol. 57 (1984), generally, and in particular 37, 42 n.32.
26. J.A. Twemlow (ed.), *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland : Papal Letters*, vol. 13, part 2, 1471-1484, HMSO 1956, 487-8.
27. Barker *op. cit.*, 388 examines the matter more sympathetically to Elizabeth.
28. *Ibid.*, 389-90.
29. R.H. Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation in Medieval England*, Cambridge 1974, 163-4, on the importance of conscience and the fear of God. The success of her suit is indicated by the letter of Richard III about her proposed remarriage to Thomas Lynom, his solicitor, and the fact that she did marry Lynom before Shore's death, Barker *op. cit.*, 388-90. The suit is not recorded in the Register of Thomas Myllyng, Bishop of Hereford, (edited A.T. Bannister, Canterbury and York Society vol. 26, 1920), but this was probably not unusual, see Helmholz, 161.
30. The procedure and proofs are set out in Helmholz *op. cit.*, 87-9.
31. The suggested scenario is a marriage *circa* 1471, three years cohabitation, a liaison established by November 1474, and divorce proceedings completed in 1476.
32. *CCR 1468-71*, no. 1147, repeated in P.E. Jones (ed.), *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls 1453-82 op. cit.*, 171. For the purpose of such 'gifts', *ibid.*, 1437-57, Cambridge 1954, xx-xxvi.
33. *CPR 1467-77*, 182.
34. *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls 1453-82 op. cit.*, 172.
35. *Acts of Court op. cit.*, 79-80.
36. *CPR 1476-85*, 9.
37. J.Payne Collier (ed.), *The Howard Household Books*, Roxburgh Club 1844, 273.
38. *Ibid.*, 112.
39. PRO., E122/52/58, m.4 (Customs Account, Ipswich 1481-2). I am greatly indebted to Anne Crawford for this reference and details about Howard's shipping activities.
40. *Ibid.*, ms. 4, 4b, 5b, 6, 7, and see R.H. Britnell, *Growth and Decline in Colchester 1300-1525*, Cambridge 1986, 177. Isyngam cloth is probably the linen produced at Isegem in the Low Countries, but it might also be the fustian produced as Weissenhorn in the Ulm region of Germany. I am grateful for the latter suggestion to Dr. Britnell, see H. Kellenbenz, 'The Fustian Industry of the Ulm region in the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Centuries', in N.B. Harte and K.G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Europe*, London 1983, esp. 264 and note. Fustian (linen and cotton mix) was a mercery cloth.
41. Colchester Record Office, CR 76/15r. I am indebted to Dr. Brinell for the references to the Colchester debt cases involving Shore; the references to the other cases are CR 76/3r (17 October 1476), CR 76/25r (9 June 1477, Piepowder Court), CR 77/3r (16 October 1477).
42. W.G. Benham (ed.), *The Oath Book or Red Parchment Book of Colchester*, Colchester 1907, 131. The archivist of the Colchester Branch of the Essex Record Office, Mr. Coverley, most kindly provided a copy of the original enrollment and provided the Colchester references.

Eleanor was examined *sole* by the bailiffs of Colchester before the deed was enrolled to ensure that she was not being forced to agree to the transaction by force, so the land

- may have been part of her inheritance. The Algoods figure in the Colchester records from the late fourteenth century and John Algood senior from 1461, several of his deeds being enrolled by the borough, *Oath Book, passim.*, and W.G. Benham (ed.), *The Red Paper Book of Colchester*, Colchester 1902, 81.
43. PRO., CI/57/324-6. The suit is not dated but must fall between 1475-80 or 1483-5. It is unlikely to have taken place after 1484 when Sulyard became a justice of King's Bench. And see Philip Morant, *History and Antiquities of Essex*, 2 volumes, London 1768, vol. 1, 137. For Edmund Martyn see also *The Red Paper Book*, 112-113.
 44. *Acts of Court*, 156-7.
 45. I am indebted to Mr. Harry Cobb for the information that Shore did not export in the 1480-1 customs account for London which he is editing. (He may, of course, have imported).
 46. R. Horrox and P.W. Hammond (eds.), *British Library MS. Harleian 433*, (4 vols., London and Upminster 1979-83), vol. 1, 241, and W. Campbell, *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII*, (2 vols., Rolls Series, London 1873-7), vol. 1, 408-9. Shore's fish-house in Derby may be significant in connection with this trade interest, it would have been used for curing or smoking fish.
 47. *Calendar of Fine Rolls 1485-1509*, nos. 91 (1485) and 37 (1486).
 48. *CCR 1485-1509*, no. 203.
 49. *Acts of Court*, 190-1.
 50. *The Red Paper Book, op. cit.*, 107.
 51. A.B. Beaven, *The Aldermen of the City of London*, 2 vols. London 1910 and 1913, vol. 2, 20. His will of 1516 (PRO., PCC. 31 Holder, PROB.11/18, ff. 240-241) shows that his daughter Anne, remembered in Shore's will, had married William Fitzwilliam (alderman 1504-11) and since died leaving four children. Hawe's father was buried at Taddington in the Peak and his mother at Chelmerston, and he had land in Derby to leave to his son, Roger.
 52. Churchwardens' Accounts *op. cit.* ff. 3b-12b, and f.12 for William Shore's term of office (probably 1493).
 53. Richard Strenger, PRO., PCC.35 Bennet, PROB. 11/16, f277- 277b. He established a ten year annuity to contribute to All Hallows' steeple, as well as a perpetual obit there for his parents and himself.
John Strenger, PRO., PCC. 10 Aylofffe, PROB. 11/19, f.7b, also left money to the steeple, besides a *Golden Legend* and an eagle lectern for the chancel. A perpetual obit was established for his parents in law, himself, his wife and children.
 54. Smith was one of the founders of Brasenose College, Oxford, and a member of Henry VII's Council from 1486, A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Dictionary of the University of Oxford to AD. 1500*, Oxford 1957-9. There is no indication as to whether Shore was well acquainted with him.
 55. Agard's chantry is set out in detail in his will of 1516, the beginning of which is badly damaged. Agard did not apparently remember his Shore wife in his chantry; Jane his first wife (no surname specifically given) and Maud Ferrers are mentioned. I am grateful to the Archivist of the Lichfield Joint Record Office for advice on the will.
 56. J.C. Cox, *The Churches of Derbyshire* (4 vols. Chesterfield 1875-9), vol.3, 266 gives details of the alabaster slab and its inscription but is puzzled as to why a London merchant should be at Scropton. F.A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, 2 vols. London 1976, 11, 20. It probably cost about 30s., *ibid.*, 7-18. I am most grateful to the Reverend B. Freer, Vicar of Scropton, who most kindly arranged for the photography of the tomb and to Canon D.H. Buckley for undertaking it, and for their advice generally. I am also indebted to Mrs Pauline Routh and her knowledge of alabaster tombs in the Middle Ages.
 57. See n. 4 above.