

SOME STOCK WILLS

Charles Phillips

John Rimar (of Ramsden), 1574 (A. of E., Gyll, 79) :

'Item I giue to Alice Williams my daughter by lawe whether I live or dye one bleake Cowe called Nutte.'

Ellene Newball, 1638 (A. of E., Whitehead, 1638-53, p. 34).

'Item I giue my wel beloued sonne John Newball in respect of the great affection he hath showne towards me by tending and releiveing me in the tyme of my necessitie and sicknesse two cowes, the one a whitefaced grimble Cowe and the other a red cow.'

Sometimes a bequest is expressed in very candid language :

Richard Palmer (of Stock), 1554 (A. of E., Bastwych, 224).

'Item I do geve and bequethe unto my wife iiii loades of wood yt ys in the yeard 11 trees yt is in the common of the best and one of the worst.'

The clergy were frequently called upon to act as supervisors or witnesses of wills :

John SSaul, 1431 (A. of E., Winterburn, 167).

'I ordain and make sir John Rector of harvardstoke aforesaid supervisor'

Robert Hyd, 1500 (A. of E., Stephyn, 1).

'These beryng wittenessthe the parson Thomas Baly water brygges of Ramesdon belhous.'

It was quite a common occurrence for bequests of rings to be made :

Richard Alderman, of Stock, in a nuncupative will of 1607 (P.C.C., Wingfield, 49).

'gaue also to his Mistres the wife of Thomas Purslowe marchaunte sometyne his Master tenne shillings to make her a Rynge.'

William Pindar, Rector of Stock, making his will in 1625 (P.C.C., 13 Skinner), made this bequest :

'Item I give to the said Mr. John Newton my auncient Curate there fortie shillings to make him a ringe with a deathes head to weare for my sake to be paid unto him at such time as to the poor people there.'

And eighty years later, Joshua Nun, previously Rector of Ramsden Bellhouse, made the following bequest to a neighbouring Rector :

Joshua Nun, 1705 (Commissary of London, Essex and Herts, Backhouse, 13).

'Item I give and bequeath unto Mr. Thomas Harvey, Rector of Downham, the sume of Twenty shillings to buy him a ring wth all.'

From the will of Ellen Stokwoode of London, 1503 (P.C.C., Holgrave, 12), we get to know about some gifts made to the church of Ramsden Bellhouse, of which there is no mention elsewhere.

She was evidently a very rich woman, for she made many bequests of a most generous character. What her connection with Ramsden was does not appear :

'Item I will that myne executours under written cause to be bowght iiii tapers of wax, of a convenyent wheyt to be holden by iiii poure men and to brynne abowght my body the day of my buryng, and on the morrow after

at masse, and that donne I bequeath oune of the sayed tapurs towarde the Renuyng of the lyght of saint Kateryne ouerthwart the saied church of seint benet and another taper to the beme lyght of the same church of seint benet the iiide tapur to the parish church of Rammesdon in the Countye of Essex and the iiiith taper to be at the disposicyon of my Executours.'

'Item I wull that my saied Executours make or cause to be made a chales of a pece of siluer of mine parcels gilt with a mark lyke a taborer which chales so made I bequeth to the saied parish church of Ramesdonne belhouse.'

There is something rather charming about the following, from a Stock will of 1512 :

Thomas Blackmore (Lord Petre's Collection, A. 422).

'Also I give and beqwethe to Thomas my sun . . . a parte of euery thyng yt belongythe to houshold as my wyfe and her assaignes shall thinke most nedfull for hym to have when he begynythe housholde.'

We are brought into touch with medieval armour through the will of Richard Twedy, of harward Stoke, of 1521 (A. of E., Sell, 85).

'Item I bequethe to Robert dage my best breggyndars my best sallat and a payr of splents wt fold and such things as longe to the said bryggyndars.'

There is the mention of a Tile Kiln and a Pot Kiln in Stock, in wills of the sixteenth century :

John Twedy, 1522 (Lord Petre's Collection, A. 377).

'Item I bequeth unto Margery my weyf xiiis. iiid. ought of the tylkell at Stocke dewrying her lyffe (after the desces of Margery my weyf Than I wyll the same Tylkell be sould bemyne Executor and dysposed in dedes of Charyte ffor the helth of my soule.'

Edward Hankin, 1598 (A. of E., Stephen, 256).

'Item I give to my sonne William Hankin all my boordes with the Pottekell and other owtwarde thinges abowte the Kellhowse or workehowse.'

The bequest of John Ponder of Stock, in 1527 (A. of E., Rypton, viii), seems to recall more happy days of the past :

'Item I geve to young Wylliam Croxton a fetherbed that y dyd send to haueryng on the boure to lye on at my beyng ther and the bolster yrunto be to haue yt at hys marryge dai yff he have and yff he decease then his syster Edithe to haue theyme.'

The bequest of Andrew Croxton of Ramsdon Bellowses in 1536 (A. of E., Bretton, 41), is a little unusual :

'Also I will yt x bushells of whete be gyven to poore folkes to pray for my soule.'

The will of Edward Knyghtbrydge of Ramsden Bellhouse, 1550 (A. of E., Thonder, 69), leads us to think of him as a fine character :

'Item I gyve to my lovinge mastres for her gentyllnes shewyd unto me xxs.

'Item I gyve to eury Seruaunte in my masters howse both men and wemen xiiid. A pece.'

Robert Clayton was a relation of Oliver Clayton, Rector of