

Will of Stephen Blankett 1765

PCC Canterbury Prob 11/907

Stephen Blankett was born about 1702 and was buried on 29 March 1765 at St Mary Rotherhithe. In June 1740 he was recorded as Captain of the Landoverly which was ready to sail for Jamaica from Deptford. The ship was detained for three months waiting for a naval escort. By October the Landoverly had made it as far as Portsmouth but was still waiting for a convoy. Stephen Blankett seems to have made a regular run to Jamaica for a number of years and also to have conducted business on his own account as a merchant. In June of 1765, two months after the death of Stephen Blankett, Princes Street in Rotherhithe where he owned a house, was largely destroyed in a terrible fire caused when a pitch kettle boiled over. More than two hundred houses, numerous warehouses and other buildings were destroyed and 250 families were made homeless. Of Stephen Blankett's eight children, at least four appear to have lived to grow up. William became a shipbuilder, Esther married Samuel Meek a ship owner, and Elizabeth married George Dominicus an East India merchant. His son John had an interesting naval career. At one point condemned to death in Gibraltar for a murder, he was later reprieved and attempted to gain support for various voyages of exploration but was turned down in favour of Captain Cook. By 1799 John Blankett had become a Rear- Admiral and commander of the Leopard. He died on the Leopard near Mocha on 14 July 1801. According to the Dictionary of National Biography, he was described as 'an unusually good linguist, having a perfect mastery of French, Italian, and Portuguese. Seen by many as a good officer and an accomplished and amiable gentleman, he was criticized by others for his bad temper and eccentricity during his last days in the Red Sea.' Elizabeth Blankett outlived her husband by a decade, and was buried at St Mary Rotherhithe on the 8th January 1775.

In the name of God Amen

I **Stephen Blankett** of the parish of Rotherhithe in the county of Surry Merchant do make this my last Will and Testament and I hereby declare that my Will and Intention is that my loving **wife Elizabeth Blankett** may enjoy all my incomes of all kinds whatsoever for the Maintenance of herself and Family and that she may continue and keep all such Stock but I am or may be possessed of or that can or might be added thereto in the Public Funds whole and intire not to be sold (except for portions for my Children as hereafter directed) and that after the death or marriage of my said Wife the whole to be divided among my Children Part and Share alike in order thereto I desire and direct as follows I give devise and bequeath unto my loving wife Elizabeth Blankett all that my House Messuage or Tenement wherein I now dwell with all the Appurtenances thereto belonging Situate in the West side of Princess Street in the said parish of Rotherhithe and commonly known by the Number (26) to hold unto her my said Wife and I also give unto her all the Rents Interests of Money Incomes or profits of all my Goods and Chattels rights and adventures and of all my Estate real and personal and also the use of all my Household Goods Plate Linnen and Furniture for and during so long time of her natural Life as She shall remain my Widow Sole and unmarried and further that whereas I have invested part of my Money in and hath appropriated such parts of the public funds or Stock commonly called three p cent Consolidated Annuitys for the purposes of my Family and for paying the respective portions to my Children I do hereby Impower my said Wife Elizabeth to Sell Transfer or Allow Five hundred pounds Share or Part of the said Stock or Fund as a Portion to Each of my Children upon or within three Months after their first Marriage provided such Marriage be with her Approbation and Consent and I do hereby Impower her my said Wife to Collect Sell and Convey such property as I may have invested in Ships or debts owing in parts beyond the sea and I direct that the Money arising from such Sale or Conveyance be added and Joined to my other moneys or Stock in the Publick Funds and my Will and desire is that after the decease or Marriage again of my said Wife which shall first happen that the said Dwelling House may be sold to the Highest Bidder

and that the Money arising from such Sale be added to the Credit of my Estate I then give all my Goods Chattels and Estate real and personal unto such of my Children as shall be then living provided nevertheless that if any or Either of my Children shall have been married and be then dead and shall have left Lawfull Issue then living the said Issue shall and are hereby intituled to that part or portion of my Estate which his her or their parent would have had if he she or they were then living but that the said proportion to be kept and remain in the Public Fund of 3 p cent Consolidated Annuity untill the said Issue shall arrive at the age of twenty one years in which interval the Interest arising therefrom to be appropriated to their use but in case the said Issue should dye before he she or they doth arrive at the age of twenty one years that immediately after such decease the said proportion to be divided part and share alike among such of my Children or their Issue as shall be then living In Order to divide my Estate I hereby desire that such of my Children as may be then unmarried nor has received any money as a portion that before any dividends be attempted such Children shall be entitled to the Transfer of Five hundred pounds share or Parts of three p cent Consolidated annuitys to be distinct and separate for their use before and Exclusive of their Share of the General Dividend of my Estate and that all moneys that has been advanced to any of my Children for any other (than the purposes aforesaid) shall be duly accounted for with Interest at 5 p Ct. thereon and Esteemed equal to any part of my Estate and passed and accounted for as such and be deducted from such Child or Childrens proportion and I name Constitute and Appoint my Wife Elizabeth Blankett to be my Sole Executrix of this my Last Will Dated the 20th day of February 1762. Stephen Blankett. Witness **James Gillam. Jn^o Stokes. Jn^o Sheppard**

This Will was proved at London on the Second Day of April in the Year of our Lord One thousand Seven hundred and Sixty Five before the Worshipful George Harris Doctor of Laws and Surrogate of the Right Worshipfull George Hay also Doctor of Laws Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury Lawfully Constituted **by the Oath of Elizabeth Blankett Widow** the Relict of the Deceased and Sole Executrix named in the said Will to whom Administration was

granted of all and Singular the Goods Chattels and Credits of the said deceased She having been first sworn duly to Administer.