

Will of Elizabeth Halhed 1829

PCC Canterbury PROB 11/1761

The Will of Elizabeth Halhed suffered an unusual fate, as can be seen from the material following the Will itself, which explains how it came to suffer burn damage when being read by candle light. Elizabeth out lived her husband Robert by more than forty years, dying at the age of ninety-two. Sadly, her only son died just over a month after his father, aged only thirteen years six months and twenty-one days. All three were buried in the East Cloisters of Westminster Abbey. Her husband's closest connections in England appear to have been with his cousin William Halhed and his descendants who were beneficiaries under Elizabeth's Will.

This is my l ***Burnt off in the Original***

In the Name of

I Elizabeth

in the County of Middlesex Widow being indispose

sound mind memory and understanding do make and ordain

my last Will and Testament that is to say First I commend my Soul to Almighty God My body to the Earth to be [illegible] buried in the Grave with my said Husband and my dear **child Robert Spencer Halhed deceased** in the Cloisters Westminster Abbey Then I order all my just debts Funeral expenses attending this my last Will to be fully paid and satisfied I give devise and bequeath to **Robert William Halhed Esqr** living at the Priory near Reading Berkshire Five hundred pounds and I give to his daughter **Luiza Beauchamp** living with him my Diamont Year rings and also a diamont Ring with the letter S sett in diamonds And I give to **John Halhed Esq of Yateley** in Hampshire Five hundred pounds I give to his wife **Anna Maria Halhed** Five hundred pounds for her sole use not liable to her present husband but in case of his death to any future husband but in case of her death

to be divided between her Children as may stand most in need of assistance I give to **Mrs Eliza Sneed** Widow Daughter of John Halhed Esq [blank] hundred pounds and also a diamont Ring sett with three diamonts I give to **Ellen Halhed** Spinster 500 pounds I give to **Mrs Ann White** wife of William Henry White Esq of Camden Street Camden Town Two hundred pounds 3 per cent consols for her sole use not liable to her present husband or in case of his death to any future husband but in case of her death to be equally divided between her two Daughters and I give to the two Daughters of Mrs Ann White living with their Mother to **Caroline Ann White** Five hundred pounds 3 per cent consols and to **Emeline Ellen White** Two hundred pounds 3 per cent consols

Burnt off in the original

Esq and to William

Consols cash

of Thomas John Richardby

Devonshire Forty pounds

two and in case of her death to be equally divided between

Children I give to **Sarah Ballard Spinster** now living near Eden (?) Chappel Pimlico Eighty pounds a year Long Annuitie but in case of her death to go to her Sister the above mentioned **Ann Brown** and in case of her death to be equally divided between her Children [rest of line blank
"Original so" written in margin]

is living with me [blank space in original] I give to **Mrs Frances Bonnet Widow** who [insertion point possibly indicating erased section above] One hundred and fifty pounds a year for her life Long Annuitie and in case of her death to the above-mentioned Ann Brown and in case of her death to be equally divided between her Children I give to **Ann Andrews** my old Servant who has left my service on account of bad health Thirty pounds a year of Long Annuitie and that her death to Mrs Frances Bonnet Widow for her life and in case of Mrs Frances Bonnet's death to Mrs Ann Brown above mentioned and in case of the death of Mrs Brown to be equally divided between her children I have before wrighting this my last will give hundred Mrs Frances Bonnet all my household Furniture Plate Linnen and Furniture and all such Articles as is not mentioned in my will China I wish all the best of

my cloths to be divided between Ann Brown and her Sister as before mentioned and I wish Mrs Bonnet to divide then the rest to the woman Servants who are living with me and I wish Mrs Bonnet to continue in my house three months after my death as the house is not to be given up for that period and to continue the Servants if they behave well for that time allso the Carriage and Horses and all expenses attending the same to be paid out of my propperty And I give my gold watch Chain and Seals to John Halhed Esq and my diamont Broach to Mrs Anna Maria Halhed his wife and I give to **Mrs Luiza Halhed wife of Nathaniel Brassey Halhed Esq** of West Square Lambeth a diamont Ring that was for my Husband's Father and also Two hundred pounds three per cent Consols and I give to my Woman Servants Five pounds each for Mourning and also to my Servant Ann Andrews and I request Mrs Bonnet to purchase their Mourning and I give to each of my Man Servants one Suit each and I give all the rest of my property either in money or Stocks or Navigation to Mrs Frances Bonnet as before mentioned and it is my request that if my propperty is not sufficient to defray all the amount of each persons Legacy that an equall deduction should be taken from each persons except those in [illegible] the Long Annuities and Servants And I wish the Stone on our Grave fresh ingraved with all our names and I appoint **Robert William Halhed Esqr of the Priory near Reading Berkshire and John Halhed Esqr of Yateley his Brother my Executors** to this my last Will and it is my wish that the following persons may attend me to the Grave Robert William Halhed Esquire and his Brother John Halhed Esqr and his Son Barrett White Esq and his Brother Frederick White Esq and Rings to the following persons Robert William Halhed Esqr [insertion point, inserted above "a mistake having wrote it". John Halhed Esqr Mr and Mrs Brown(?) then [Marginal note "Original so"] John Halhed Esq and his Wife and Sons and Daughters that are in England Mrs Ann White and her Sons and Daughters Mrs Bonnet Mrs Martha Whitehorn(?) Mrs [illegible] and her Son and Daughter John Wright Esqr and I desire all legacy duties and for Stamp shall be paid out of my propperty that every person shall have the full amount of their legacies Rings also to Mrs Luiza Halhed of West Square Lambeth and to Rowland Southall Esqr I have not mentioned Nathaniel Brassey Halhed Esq in this my Will knowing the state of mind he has been in for some time as not to be able to manage his own

affairs for some time I also give Rings to **Sarah Ballard Spinster** and to her Sister **Mrs Brown** and to her husband **Thomas Richardby Brown** of Devonshire as before mentioned [inserted in margin "The Rings not exceed five guineas each"]

Signed sealed published and declared by the said Elizabeth Halhed the Testatrix as for her last Will and Testament in the presence of us who at her request in the presence of each other here onto subscribe our names as witnesses whereunto this twenty second day of August One thousand eight hundred and twenty nine Elizabeth Halhed **Sarah Smith Henry Stone Smith** Smith Square Westminster.//.

In the prerogative Court of Canterbury

In the Goods of Elizabeth Halhed Widow deceased

Appeared Personally Robert William Halhed of the Priory near Reading in the County of Berk and John Halhed of Yateley in the County of Southampton Esquires and jointly made of that they are the Executors named in the last Will and Testament of Elizabeth Halhed late of Abingdon Street in the County of Middlesex and at Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent Widow deceased bearing date the twenty-second day of August now last past And the said John Halhed for himself further saith that having received [?] Intelligence in the latter end of last Month that the said Deceased was very ill he proceeded to Tunbridge Wells aforesaid and called upon the said Deceased at her Lodgings at that place on Friday the second day of October instant and was introduced into the Deceased's Bed Room where she was then lying in bed speechless and to all appearance in a dying state That Deponent having reason to believe that his Brother and fellow Deponent Robert William Halhed was appointed joint executor with this Deponent of the said Deceased's Will he wrote a Letter by that Evening's post to his said Brother pricing him of the dangerous state of the Deceased and his [illegible] that she would not Live Long That Deponent on the following Morning to wit Saturday the third day of October Instant called again at the Deceased's Lodgings and was then informed by Mrs Frances Bonnet an intimate friend of the said Deceased who lived with her that she the said

Deceased had died very early that morning and the said Frances Bonnet then handed to him a tin case which he opened and therein found the said last Will Testament of the said Deceased now hereunto annexed and bearing date as aforesaid and he then read and perused the said Will That Deponent being anxious to inform his said Brother of the said Deceased's death and of the contents of her said Will wrote a Letter to his Sister in Law Mrs Louisa Halhed of West Square Lambeth in the county of Surry (the said Letter being by mistake dated the 2d instead of the 3rd day of this instant month of October) informing her of the said Deceased's death therein copied from the said Will the names of Legatees and amount of the several Legacies thereby bequeathed added a postscript to such Letter directed the same to be forwarded by an early Coach to his this deponent's Wife and thro' her to his brother the said Robert William Halhed and Deponent sent the said Letter to the said Louisa Halhed by the Servant of the Deceased who proceeded to London in the following morning Sunday the fourth day of the said Month of October That on the next day Monday the said Frances Bonnet and this Deponent left Tunbridge Wells and arrived at the house of the said deceased in Abingdon Street where the (sic) found the said Robert William Halhed who had not then received the said Letter sent to Mrs Louisa Halhed and directed to be forwarded to him but had come there in consequence of the Letter written by Deponent informing him of the dangerous state of the Deceased as aforesaid And these Departments further jointly say that on the said Monday evening they retired to a Room in the said Deceased's house for the purpose of reading the said Will And of Making a List or Schedule of the Legacies Contained Therein for such purpose the said John Halhed read the said Will aloud and particularized the names of the Legatees and the amount of each of Legacy and thereby bequeathed in the order in which the said Legacies stood in the said Will and he said Robert William Halhed wrote such names and the amount of the said Legacies as the same were so read on the second half sheet of the said Letter he had received from the said John Halhed which he tore off for that purpose and also wrote the words "Legacies life [?]" As the same now appear at the top of the said List or Schedule and as they further made oaths that immediately after the said Schedule of the said legacies was compleated and the [illegible] of Mrs Ann Brown and

Mrs Sarah Ballard two of the Legatees were added at the foot thereof by him the said Robert William Halhed and whilst the said John Halhed was still perusing the said Will near to a Candle then standing upon a Table in the said Room the said Will accidentally took fire from the said Candle and the right hand corner at the top of the first half sheet of the said will was thereby burned and destroyed in manner as the same now appears And these Deponents now viewing the said Will & particularly observing that portion of the top of the first and second sides thereof by for each part of the first four lines of the first side and also part of the first six lines of the said second side have been burnt or effaced as aforesaid they further say they are enabled from correlation to depose that the said first four lines of the said first side originally stood and were previously to the same being burnt as follows to wit

“This is my last Will and testament

“In the name of God Amen

“I Elizabeth Halhed of Abingdon Street

“in the County of Middlesex Widow being indisposed in Health but of”

And Deponents having also compared the said Will with the aforesaid Letter written by the said John Halhed to his Sister and likewise with the List or Schedule of the said Legacies so as aforesaid written by the said Robert William Halhed the said Letter & List or Schedule being also now hereunto annexed respectively marked with the Letters A & B They further say they are thereby enabled to depose and do from their correlation also of that part of the said Will verily and in their consciences believe that the said first five lines and part of the sixth line of the said second side the Will originally stood

“I give to Charles Barrett White Esq and to William

“Frederick White Esq Sons of Mrs Ann White One hundred pounds 3 pr cent Consols each

“I give to Mrs Ann Browne the wife of Thomas John Richardby Browne

“Esqr of Bittendon near Barnstable Devonshire Forty pounds

“a year Long Annuities and in case of her death to be equally divided between her children”

And both the Deponents further say that the said Will is all in the said Deceased's own handwriting and that the same was at the time when the said List or Schedule of the said Legacies was written as aforesaid perfect and entire and they lastly say that they have made a careful search amongst the said Deceased's Private and other papers but have not found or discovered any Draft or Copy of the said Will and they verily believe that no Draft or copy thereof was left by her the said Deceased. Robt Willm Halhed John Halhed

On the fifteenth day of October 1829 the said Robert William Halhed and John Halhed Esquires were duly sworn to the truth of this affidavit before me John Daubeny Sur pst Geo M Box Noty Publk.//
Proved at London 24th October 1829 before the Worshipful John Daubeny Dr of Laws or Surr by the own words of Robert William Halhed & John Halhed Esquires the Executors named in the Will limited until the original parts of the said Will which are burnt & be faced or a more authentic intire Copy of the said Will shall be brought into & left in the Registry of our Prerogative Court of Canterbury to whom Add morn was granted having been first sworn duly to administer Frances Bennett Widow the Residuary Legatee as to the deceased's property either in Money or Stocks or Navigation and Charles Barrett White and Frederick White the legatees named in the second part of the said Will so burnt & effaced having first consented.