

Will of Curtis Brett 1784

PCC Prob 11/1119

Curtis Brett was born about 1720 in Dublin and apprenticed to a bookseller and printer. Having been given his indentures early, after the death of his father and the failure of his master's business, he moved to London where for several years he worked under the printer William Strahan. In October 1748 he left London for Jamaica where he worked for a while as a storekeeper in Kingston, briefly as an overseer on a plantation and as a clerk in a merchant house in Spanish Town. Here his printing experience led to his involvement in setting up as the first printer in Spanish Town, printing on behalf of the Jamaican Assembly. By 1761 he sold out and once again became a merchant, returning eventually to London. His brother Richard and nephew Robert Keeling were silk manufacturers in Dublin.

In the Name of God Amen

I **Curtis Brett** now resident in Chancery Lane London formerly Merchant in the Jamaica Trade being in sound mind and memory Do make this my last Will and Testament vizt. I give and bequeath to my dear **Wife Ann Brett** all my Plate China Books all my Household Furniture of every kind and all my Jewels to her sole use I give and bequeath to my said dear Wife Ann Brett and to my dear **Son Curtis Brett** all my Cash all my Money and Property in the Public Funds all my Property and Interest in Bonds and other Securities all my Property Right and Interest in Milwr Mine near Holywell Flintshire North Wales, all my Property Right and Interest in Pwlle Coshion Mine in Carnarvonshire and all other Mines whatever and all the rest of my worldly Substance whatever to be equally divided between them the said Ann Brett and Curtis Brett share and share alike Except twenty Guineas to my **brother Richard Brett** and five Guineas to my **Nephew Robert Keeling** (?Reeling) for Mourning Rings and excepting also one hundred Pounds to my said Brother in Trust to be by him divided amongst his Poor Friends as he may think Proper and I do hereby appoint my said dear Wife

Ann Brett and my said son Curtis Brett (he being 17 years old the 8th of last October) Executors of this my last Will and Testament hereby revoking all others formerly made wrote with my own hand this 27th February 1783 C. Brett

Codicil should my Son Curtis Brett die before he is of the Age of twenty one years (which he will be the 8th October 1786) in that case I give and bequeath to my Brother Richard Brett (Manufacturer of Francis Street Dublin) Three Fourths of my said Son Curtis Brett's Moiety or Share bequeathed him as above and the remaining one fourth of my said Son Curtis Brett's Moiety or share I also bequeath to my said Brother Richard Brett in Trust to be by him divided amongst his Poor Friends as he shall think Proper And I hereby appoint my aforesaid dear Wife Ann Brett and my said Brother Richard Brett Executors of this Codicil should it happen to take place by the Death of my Son Curtis as aforesaid wrote by me this 28th February 1783. Curtis Brett./.

Codicil 2d Should my Wife die before me or she and myself happen to die at same time or nearly together before my Son Curtis Brett is of Age in such case I leave my said Son my sole Heir and **Francis Ruddle** Esqr of Great Russell Street Bloomsbury Stock Broker Executor of this part of my last Will and Testament jointly with my said Son and also his Guardian and for his Trouble herein I bequeath him one hundred Guineas and to his Wife Mrs Ruddle I also bequeath a Silver Tea Urn of the value of fifty Guineas should this Codicil take Place by our dying as aforesaid And in that case request Mr Ruddle to allow my Son annually what he think proper for his Expenses till of Age and to Place the remainder of my Dividends arising from my Property in the Public Funds to such Stock in said Funds half yearly as he may judge best till my said Son is of Age wrote by me this 28th February 1783. Curtis Brett./.

6th July 1784

Appeared Personally **John Allwood of Five Field Row in the Parish of St George Hanover Square in the County of Middlesex Painter** and **Thomas Allwood of the same Place Carver** and jointly and severally made oath that they knew and were well acquainted with Curtis Brett late of the parish of Saint Andrew Holborn in the County of Middlesex Esquire deceased for many years before and to

the time of his Death and having often seen him write and subscribe his name of them by become well acquainted with his manner and character of handwriting and subscription and having now carefully observed and perused the Paper writing here to annexed purporting to be and contain the last Will and Testament and to Codicils in writing of the said deceased the said Will beginning thus "In the Name of God Amen I Curtis Brett now resident in Chancery Lane London formerly Merchant in the Jamaica Trade" and ending thus "hereby revoking all others formerly made wrote with my own hand this 27th February 1783" and thus subscribed "Cs.Brett" the first Codicil beginning with us "Codicil should my son Curtis Brett die before he is of the Age of twenty one years" and ending thus "should it happen to take place by the Death of my Son Curtis as aforesaid wrote by me this 28th February 1783" and thus subscribed "Curtis Brett" the second Codicil beginning thus "Codocil 2d should my Wife die before me or she and myself happen to die at same time" and ending thus "till my said Son is of Age wrote by me this 28th February 1783" and thus subscribed "Curtis Brett" they these deponents do verily and in their consciences believe the whole series Body and Contents of the said Will and Codicils and the Names severally set and subscribed thereto to be or of the proper handwriting and subscription of the said Curtis Brett Esq deceased John Allwood Tho. Allwood. Same Day the said John Allwood and Thomas Allwood were sworn to the truth of this Affidavit before me Wm. Compton Surrogate Present John Beard Not.Pub./.

This Will was proved at London with two Codicils the Seventh Day of July in the year of our Lord 1784 before the worshipful William Crompton Doctor of Laws Surrogate of the Right Worshipful Peter Calvert Doctor of Laws Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury lawfully constituted by the Oaths of Ann Brett Widow the Relict and Curtis Brett the Son of the deceased the Executors named in the said Will to whom Administration of all and singular the Goods Chattels and Credits of the said deceased was granted they having been first sworn duly to Administer.

Transcribed by Anne M Powers

November 2012.