

Transcription of Laetitia Monson's Will

Note: the original spellings have been retained. The original is held at HALS ref DP/24/25/9. The microfilm copy is almost impossible to read. The Will was proved at London with two codicils May 1734.

Whereas the Vicar churchwarden and overseers of the poor of the parish of Broxborn in the County of Hertfordby and with the consent and approbation of the Parishioners of the said parish in vestry which have lately granted and confirmed to me and my heirs and assigns forever a peice or parcel of wast ground whereon time out of mind a tenement or two stood over against the Bull Inn in Broxborn aforesaid and made use of as a town house or almshouse belonging to the said parish but burnt down and the said ground for many years [lastpart] hath lain wast and useless containing near half a rood called the Town Orchard abutting toward the east on Churchfield the [west] side thereof containing sixty two foot little more or less and the north side thereof length seventy eight foot little more or less and at the north east corner there is an outlet containing [twenty] four foot in length and eight foot in breadth little more or less as by a [.....] under the social hands of the vicar churchwardens and overseers with several of the said parishioners dated the fifteenth day of January one thousand seven hundred and twenty seven and the reasons for which grant herein contained as also by an entry thereof in the Vestry book of the said parish being relation being thereunto severally had may appear and whereas I the said Dame Lettitia Monson out of a deep sense of the blessings I have received from Almighty God and of my boundon duty to relieve the distressed have lately erected and built caused to be erected and built on the said peice or parcel of ground above mentioned an almshouse or almshouses for the perpetual habitation and relief of six poor decayed widows of and belonging only to the several parishes of Broxborn aforesaid and Hoddson in the said County of Hertford I do hereby give and devise the said peice or parcel of ground almshouses and buildings thereupon unto my nephew lord monsoon his heirs and assigns forever in trust nevertheless to and for the perpetual admission habitation and relief of the [six] poor widows from time to time as above and hereinafter more particularly mentioned and declared and I do hereby further give and bequeath unto my said nephew Lord Monson and assign the sum of one thousand pounds capital stock in the bank of England in trust nevertheless that the said capital bank stock or sum of one thousand pounds shall always be and remain in the said Bank of England as a fund and security to and for the said perpetual relief of such poor widows and other the several uses following that is to say in trust that any trustees of the said almshouses and of this my intended charity herein after named or such other person or persons as he or she shall direct or appoint to and shall from and after my decease receive and who is and are hereby accordingly to have take and receive of the Governor and Directors of the bank of England for the time being of the annual or half yearly interest profits dividend or dividends of or for the said capital bank stock of one thousand pounds above mentioned and thereout to pay or cause to be paid to each of the said [six] poor widows in the said almshouse or almshouses for and during their several and expective lives or continuance therein the several sums following that is to say to each poor widow twenty pence weekly and every [....] and also twenty shillings yearly for fireing and likewise fifteen shillings more yearly to employ the said poor widows severally in spinning for their own benefit and [....] likewise to [.....] find and provide for each of the said poor widows once in every two years a gown such as my

trustees shall think fit and my further will and desire is that all and every poor widows shall be from time to time appointed and put into the said almshouse or almshouses by my said trustee only for the time being and as often as any of them shall dye then in like manner the vacancy or vacancies of her or them so dying shall immediately from time to time shall be filled up with full power to my said trustee for the time being to put and remove out of the said almshouse or almshouse at all times all or any of the said poor widows at his her or their discretion who shall misbehave themselves and thereupon in her or their room to admit and put in any other widow or widows of the said several parishes aforesaid as to my trustees for the time being shall seem meet and that all and every of the six poor widows appointed or admitted in the said almshouse or almshouses shall always be of the full age of fifty years and upwards and that no widow or widows under the said age shall be admitted or intitled to have any benefit of this my intended charity and that before admission each poor widow shall take and receive the Blessed Sacrament in the parish church of Broxborn aforesaid being first examined by the minister of the said parish for the time being and further that all and every such poor widow to be admitted as aforesaid shall be always of and belonging to the several parishes of Broxborn and Hodsdon aforesaid and of no other parish or place whatsoever and my further mind and expressed will is that if there shall be from time to time poor widows of the several ages aforesaid of and belonging to the said parish of Broxborn then such poor widow and widows as occasion offers shall be preferred and taken into the said almshouse or almshouses before any poor widow or widows of the said parish of Hodsdon the poor widows for the time being of the said parish of Broxborn always to have the preference and to be preferred before the widows of Hodsdon afore. But in case there is or are not such widows or widows qualified as aforesaid to be found of and belonging to the said parish of Broxborn at any time upon any death vacancy removal or otherwise as occasion offers to be admitted into the said almshouse or almshouses that then and not otherwise my mind and will is that my trustee for the time being do appoint and admit any widow or widows being of the age or ages aforesaid of and belonging to the said parish of Hodsdon into the said almshouse or almshouses aforesaid and further that all and every one of the said widows so to be admitted shall furnish her and their room or rooms at her and their own charges with bed and bedding and afterwards shall continually reside in the said almshouse or almshouses and shall bring no child or children nor suffer any person or persons to live or cohabit with them in the said almshouse or almshouses aforesaid and my further will is that the school master of the free school of Broxborn aforesaid for the time being shall be appointed by my said trustee to read to the said poor widows in the said almshouse when no Divine Service is performed at the parish church of Broxborn to which church when any divine service is all and every the said widows shall go unless of sickness or other just reason to the contrary the morning and evening prayers daily out of the book called The Whole Duty of Man and also the Psalms morning and evening appointed for the day and one chapter in the morning out of the Old Testament and in the evening another chapter out of the New Testament saying afterwards the Apostles Creed or Beliefe and concluding with the Lord's Prayer and on every Sunday after Divine Service is done a chapter of [...] the said Whole Duty of Man morning and afternoon to the said poor widows in the said almshouses aforesaid and for the said school masters attending reading and performing as above I will and direct that the sum of twenty six shillings per annum shall be paid and given to him by my said trustee for the time being out of the money aforesaid and to the minister of Broxborn for the time being I also will and direct that

five shillings yearly thereout shall be paid to him by my said trustee to buy a pair of gloves as an acknowledgement of the care [.....] to him to take and which I desire he will take in observing that all and every of the poor widows do severally discharge their several dutys and in every respect behave and [...] themselves severally as they ought to do and in default or neglect of these to make known the same to my said trustee for the time being and my further will is that after the several weekly and annual payments above mentioned shall be made by my said trustee for the time being out of the said money to be received [...] and are above mentioned and directed my said trustee from and out of the overplus thereof shall be in the first place reimburse himself herself or themselves all such charges and expenses which he she or they shall or may sustain or [...] in or about the execution or performance of the trust herein and hereby [...] in him her or them and afterwards to pay and apply the remainder for and towards the repair and repairs of the said almshouse or almshouses from time to time as need shall or may require and also for and towards the relief of any of the said poor widows who shall or may be at any time or hour [afflicted] with sickness or any other disposition and also for defraying of the charges attending the [...] in case of death for the burial and interment of such poor widow or widows as from time to time as occasion shall require and as to my said trustee for the time being shall seem most [.....] and in order that no deficiency may happen upon my death in all or any of these payments to the said poor widows above mentioned and directed [...] that my said trustee may in any wise be in disburse thereupon before any receipt of the money of and from the Bank of England aforesaid. I the said Dame Lettitia Monson shall save in a little [.....] box the sum of twenty pounds in money with a paper with writing under my hand of [...] and direction concerning the said poor widows to be observed and of which I desire my executor hereinafter named immediately upon my decease immediately to deliver and pay to my trustees aforesaid for the uses a purposes above mentioned and I do hereby nominate constitute and appoint my said neice the Lady Margarett Monson of Broxborn Berry in the said County of Hertford during her residence there the sole trustee of the said almshouses and of my [herein....] intended charity and after her decease the Lady of Broxbourn Berry aforesaid for the time being in like manner and if after the death of my said nieces there shall be no lady of Broxbourn Berry aforesaid or if any not residing there then and not otherwise I do nominate constitute and appoint the heir of Broxbournberry aforesaid for the time being trustee of the said almshouse and of this my said intended charity or such other person or persons such as the said lady or heir shall direct nominate and appoint But my earnest desire is that no such appointment or nomination should be made but that the said trustees hereby appointed for the time being would accept of the said trust [.....] the end of my said intended charity to the poor widows aforesaid in the direction and performance thereof recommending [...] to my said nieces the said Lady Margaret Monson her acceptance of the said trust.