

The WILL of HENRY

ROBINSON : 1642

The will was drawn up on the 13th May 1642 and proved 13th June 1643. The farm at that time was in the tenancy of John Underdowne. In the will it stated that some of the land was in the parish of Birchington and some in St Nicholas-at-Wade. The majority of it was, however, in Birchington parish.

The will designates Henry Robinson as "gentleman of Mouncton in the Isle of Thanet". He requests that he is:-

To be buried in the Parish Church of Mouncton.

To the poor of Mouncton - 50s

To the poor of Birchington - 50s

Debts to be paid from the revenue of land in Mouncton, St Giles (Sarre) and St Nicholas Atwade

Lands left to his cozen Thomas Everard, one of the sons of Valentine Everard of the city of Canterbury, deceased

In default of heirs, to Thomas Beake, "my cozen living near Windsour", and then to Cozen Stephen Huffam, eldest son of Stephen Huffam, late of Ash near Sandwich, deceased

To Samuel Pownall of Alkeham, Kent, Clerk, and Frances his wife, an annuity of £30 from the lands at Birchington, now in the occupation of John Underdowne

To his sister Millescent Hughes, wife of the late Leonard Hughes, late of Woodnesborough, gentleman, an annuity of £30 to cease if she should marry Robert Sutton of Canterbury, merchant

His lands at Birchington and St Nicholas Atwade to St John's College Cambridge, to found two Fellowships and two Scholarships for men born in the Isle of Thanet and brought up at King's School Canterbury. If none such, those born in Kent to be eligible

[The bequest was UPPER GORE END FARM.]

To the Vicar of Mouncton and his successors, 5 acres of arable land called Sleete Close, in the parish of St Lawrence, now occupied by Thomas Crosse, and five acres of meadow ground, now occupied by Thomas Heath in the parish of Chislett, the rents to be used to relieve and maintain four poor widows, two in Mouncton and two in Birchington

16 further lines of bequests to a number of different people follow this section, including his own servants and his physician. The bequests are all in the form of money or actual goods rather than land.

One Fellowship and Scholarship were to become operative at the death of the first annuitant, with the second pair to start at the death of the second annuitant. By 1652 St John's College had valued the estate at just £50 a year, a sum that was not going to be able to sustain the two Fellowships and the two Scholarships. As they were unable to gain the informal co-operation of Henry Robinson's heir-in-law, the husband of one of the annuitants, to limit the benefaction to four Scholarships, St John's College petitioned for, and received, a Chancery decree to allow them to do this. The cost of funding Scholarships was considerably smaller than funding Fellowships, so this move was essential to make the bequest a workable one.

On the west wall of St Mary's Church Monkton, there is a brass memorial plate to NICHOLAS ROBINSON who died 1595. This could well be Henry Robinson's father, but more research on this will be needed.