

TESTAMENT OF ALICE BLAKBURN, DYING AT THE CORNER IN THE LANE
WITH A WELL IN STONEGATE¹

In the name of God, amen. On the 20th day of March in the year of the Lord 1469, I Alice Blakburn of York, sound of mind, compose my testament in this manner. First, I leave and commend my soul to almighty God my creator, and my body to be buried in the high choir of my parish church of St Michael of the Belfrey in the grave of Hugh Wormod, goldsmith, once my husband.² Item I leave to my curate of the said church of St Michael my best cloak with a hood for my mortuary.³ Item I leave 2lb of wax for burning around my body on the day of my burial. Item I leave for my burial 3s 4d. Item I leave to the parish chaplain of the said church 8d. And to each other chaplain of the same church present at my funeral and masses on the day of my burial 4d; to the parish clerk 4d; to the sub-clerk 2d. Item I leave for the use of the shrine of St John of Beverley 1 pair of coral beads containing 50 in number.⁴ Item I leave to the guild of Corpus Christi in York 1 silver spoon.⁵ Item I leave to d. Elizabeth Garton 1 pair of coral beads containing 50 in number with silver and gilt gauds.⁶ Item to m. Edmund Wartre my brother, 1 pair of coral beads containing 50 in number with silver and gilt gauds. Item I leave to Agnes, wife of William Greves, mason, [fo 323^v] my best gown after called *werkes*.⁷ Item I leave to Isabella Brush my best kirtle. Item to Katherine, daughter of the said Isabella, my small mazer with a narrow band.⁸ Item I leave to Alice Waterhous my god-daughter my best gown of green. The residue of my goods I give and bequeath to my executors to dispose therefrom for the salvation of my soul as they would wish me to do for them in like case. And I make and appoint d. William Colyer and the said d. Elizabeth Garton my executors of this my testament and I leave to the same d. William for his work my best cloth of twill and to the said d. Elizabeth one towel of twill.⁹ With these witnesses, William Burgh and John Burton.

PROOF OF IT The present testament was proved on the 28th day of April in the year of the Lord 1470 and administration of the goods was granted to the executors named in the same testament sworn in form of law.
[Y.M.A. Probate Register 1, fo 323]

NOTES

¹ It is unusual for the exact location of the testator's dwelling to be given in a York will; this house was at the northern end of Stonegate, where the street meets Minster Gates (formerly Bookland Lane), once a gated entry to the Minster precinct. *Fons* is here translated 'well', though Raine (p. 34) prefers 'drinking fountain'. Subterranean water-courses run beneath the Minster towards the Ouse; there was at least one other well in Stonegate (at the western side of the south end; excavated in 2002 but not yet published).

² The church is usually known as St Michael le Belfrey.

³ *Mortuary*, see p. 11, n.3.

⁴ Coral beads, see p. 36, n.23.

⁵ Corpus Christi guild, see p. 22, n.5.

⁶ A rosary consisted of a number of small beads, usually ten, at the holding of which the user recited the prayer '*Ave Maria*'; in between each set of small beads would be one large bead, a 'gaud', at which the *Pater Noster* would be said.

⁷ A William Greves, mason, became free in 1464-5. *Werkes*; Alice, once married to a goldsmith, may have known exactly what this meant (for methods of gold working, see M. Campbell 'Gold, silver and precious stones' in *English Medieval Industries*, ed. J. Blair and N. Ramsey (1991)).

⁸ *Mazer*, see p. 35, n.19.

⁹ *Twill*, see p. 36, n.28.