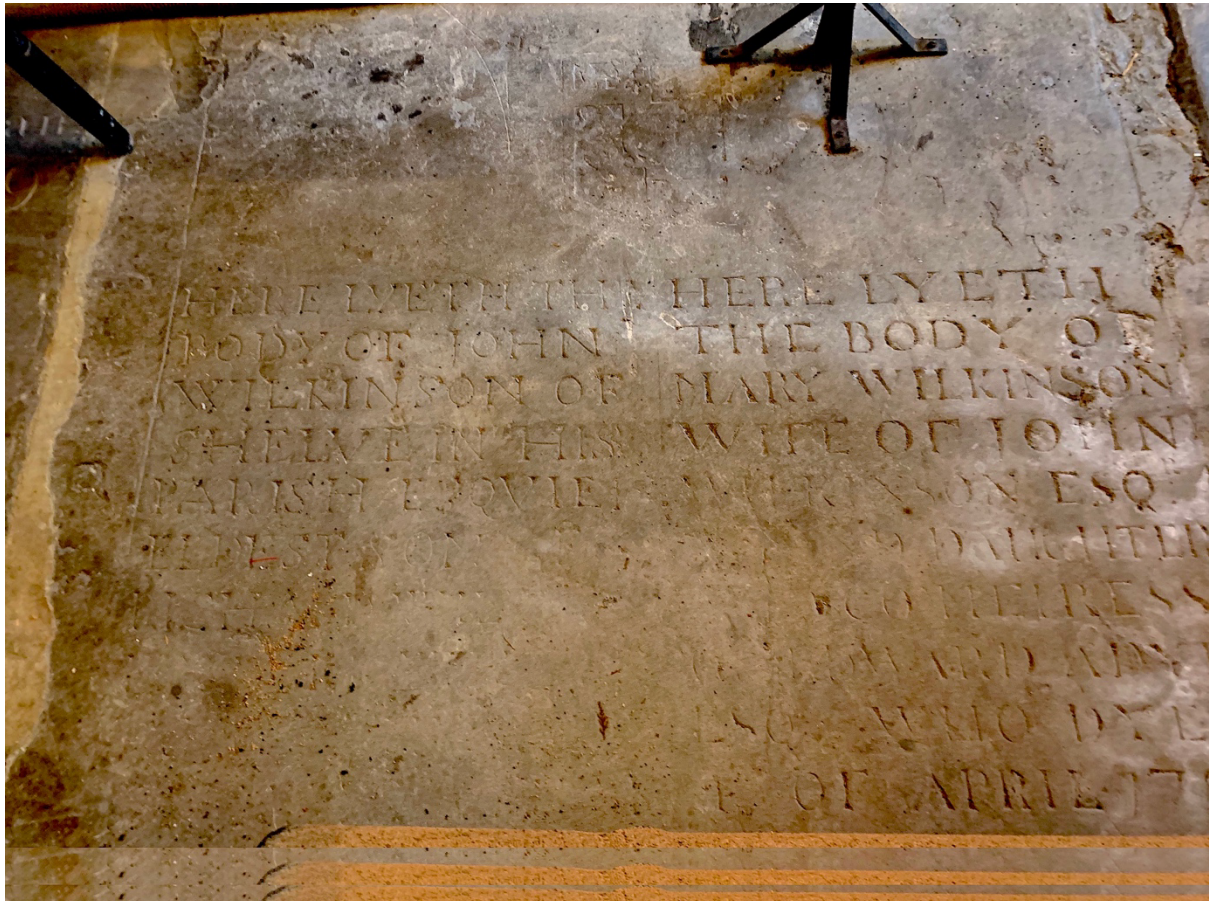


John Wilkinson, Lord of the Manor of Shelve who is buried next to his wife in St. Edmund's chapel in St. Mary's church in Lenham died shortly after his wife in 1713. Their only son who is also remembered in the chapel had died in London. This meant they had no direct descendant. John Wilkinson wrote a will (The National Archives' reference PROB 11/536/17) in which he leaves everything to his cousin, John Dering of Chalk.

The ledger stone in front of the altar in St. Edmund's chapel



Transcript ¹of the will of John Wilkinson

In the Name of God Amen

this twentieth day of January 1712. I John Wilkinson of Shelve in Lenham in the County of Kent Esq & being in my very best health and soundest disposing Mind and memory, blessed be the Lord for the same make this my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking and making null and void all other my last Wills and Testaments whatsoever as well written as nuncupative First recommending my Soul into the hands of Almighty God my Creator trusting through free grace the free pardon and remission of all my sins and that

¹ By Annette Tomarken and Henny Shotter

I may by the precious Death (10)² and merits of my blessed Saviour and only Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ be saved and that after this Life ended I shall live with him eternally in Glory most humbly pray to God that he will of his great mercy strengthen and continue this faith in me till my last breath My body I (15) commit to the Earth to be decently and frugally buried by my executor hereafter named next the Body of my dear Wife in my Chancell in Lenham Church And as for the disposal of all my reall and temporal Estate whatsoever with which it hath pleased God to bless me withall in this (20) Life. I give devise bequeath and dispose of the same as follows First I give to my Cousin John Dering of Chalk near Gravesend in Kent

(grandson to my own Mother her only Brother Thomas Dering) my Mannor and Lordship of Shelve where I now Live and all my Lands Tenements (25) and hereditaments woods pastures and ffordings in my own occupation

and all the Quitrents and perequisites of Court to my Court Leet and Court Baron of my said Mannor of Shelve together with Roytons fforstal and Roytons heath that's to say so much of them as is in the Borough of Shelve and Hundred of Eyhorne and the yearly Cutt of five Roods and three Roods of hay grass yearly and every year in a Meadow of the Lord of the Mannor of Lenham near Burnt Mill in Lenham which Cuts of hay grass were lett by Lease fer'oll to Spain for Seven years And also all my Goods and Chattles whatsoever and wheresoever together with (35)

my dear Wifes Box of Dressing Plate with the plate belonging to it my Silver Chimney Line and Silver Servers and all other my Silver Plate Spoons Tankards Canns Snuffers Snuffdish in my dwelling house where I now live As also all those my lands Tenements and hereditaments in the occupation of John Winder (40) by Lease in writing And also all my Lands Tenements and hereditaments. Staffed and hired out with waterditch at waterditch with all the Lands Tenements and hereditaments therewith belonging and therewith used being by Lease in writing to the late Goodman Miles and now in the occupation of his Widow and Aministratrix And all my two pieces of land called Cryall Downs now in the occupation of John Castle and all my right and Tithes to a house and Land called Coldharbour near Waterditch which as well as Waterditch was bought by my ffather of Mr Slaughter late of Coldharbour then a Lease in (50) being not yet out the Rent a pepper Corne a year which is paid when called for And also all my Mannor and Lordship of Cobham alias Shelve Cobham with all the Capitall Mannor house and all other Lands Tenements and hereditaments woods pastures and ffordings thereto belonging or therewith used now in the tenure and occupation of the foresaid John Castle and all the

² The numbers in brackets refer to the numbered lines of the original will

Quitrents and prequists of Court belonging to said Manor and Court Baron of the Mannor of Cobham alias Shelve Cobham aforesaid And all those my Mortgages on the late Mr. Wolletts Estate of Eleham called Baldbin in Elham the occupation of (60) myself and Goodman Howell and all my right title and interest therein and thereunto And all those my houses and Lands called the Smythes forges in Lenham Towne with the Barns and buildings thereto belonging together with fforge Croft lately purchased of the Widow Hamilton all which are in the tenure and occupation of myself and Peter Eps (65) And all other my Lands and Tenements and hereditaments Meadows pastures woods commons ffordings any where within the County of Kent and all the title and interest I now have and hereafter may have to all and every the above mentioned premisses and all my goods plate ffurniture householdstuff in my houses called Shelve, Shorne Cobham Water Ditch John Winders house my fforge houses and my house at Baldbinn and also all my Shelves Benches Tables Forms Shutters Roombaths Iron Oven Lids and all other my Goods in my foresaid houses my two Coach Mares and all my Books and furniture in the Rooms called my Studdy near my great hollowed Oak and all manner of Money and Debts that now I have or that hereafter shall be [80] owing me and also all other my reall and personal Estate whatsoever and wheresoever and also my right title and interest I now have and hereafter may have to a ffarme [?] late my fathers now my Brother Wilkinson his ffarme called Old Shelvein Lenham (which now is in his own and the Widow Bennets occupation) as by a deed of settlement my ffather [85] Richard Wilkinson Esqr made on me on my Marriage in which settlement my said Brother joined To have and to hold to the said John Dering (who I hereby constitute and appoint sole Executor of this my last Will and Testament) and to his heirs the said John Dering keeping and maintaining my Aunt Katherin Wood in all necessaries with what she has of her own during her life and burying her decently when she dyes in her own Mother grave in my Chancell in Lenham Church under her Mothers Gravestone there and paying my Godaughter Marianne Milles and my Godson Richard Steevens at their several Ages of Eighteen years ten Guineas apieces of Gold each of them and letting Mrs Judith Crisp live she till the Age of Thirty ffive years old a virtuous virgin have the sole use of my parlour and my house and Garden called Watklins his House and Garden and the use (100) of the Well and house of Easement to live in together with one single virtuous female only so long as the said Judith Crisp continues a Virgin and leads a virtuous Life she letting no Bakeing [nor Brewing be had or made in nay part of the house which house to be kept repaired all but the shutters and Glass windows out of the rent of Peter Eps and his Spouse and she is to have the use of all the furniture in the house at the time of my death But to have nothing longer than she the said Judith Crispe continues a virtuous virgin and (110) lives in it in her own proper

person and with no one with her save one virtuous female Reserving notwithstanding what is said before a free liberty for the Inhabitants of Shelve house where I now live to have come and stay in the said parlour on Sundays holydays and prayer and preaching days for about half an hour before and half an hour after church time please they And I do hereby order Mr William ffinch of Maidstone the Apothecary Mr and Mrs Stevens of Culham and Mr and Mrs Milles have each of them a plain Gold Ring in memory of me the gold of each Ring not to weigh less than three penny weight And that this is my last Will and Testament I sign seal publish and declare and the same to be dated the day and year first above written/ John Wilkinson to be his last Will and Testament in the presence of us who witnessing the same in the presence of the said John Wilkinson which Will is all of his own handwriting and contains one side of this sheet of paper besides that it ends on which is this the words ["a virtuous[" towards the middle of the ninth line of this side being lined [?] out before the publishing and declaring this to be his Will Peter Epps John Epps Peter Epps³

Dated 17 July 1713

³ A Peter Epps is buried in Lenham churchyard grave no 331 row 71 died 1761 aged 59n