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Archaeological Desktop Study

Shocklach Wills and Inventories

For Community Interest

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Shocklach Wills and Inventories 1603–1625

Wills and/or inventories survive for eleven Shocklach residents for the period 1603-1625. These are likely to represent the wealthier residents, although several wills mention the poor of the parish. As might be expected in this agricultural area, the most valuable assets are the livestock. The animals owned are consistently recorded first on the inventories, often followed by a list of farming equipment and implements. There was clearly mixed farming in Shocklach, not just dairy, and it appears that flax and hemp were grown, judging by the number of spinning wheels mentioned. The flax and hemp would have been made into sacks or a coarse material used for clothing. There is no mention of fishing equipment, such as eel traps or fish nets, which implies that the local farmers did not exploit the resources of the nearby river. This could be because they were not allowed to fish for the salmon, fishing rights being controlled by a wealthy landowner. The poorer residents of Shocklach may have supplemented their diet by fishing, possibly illegally.

The value of the inventories of the deceased ranges from £7 18s to £256 15s 10d, with nine of the estates worth less than £89. Jewellery is only mentioned in one inventory and two silver spoons are mentioned in another. Specific items of clothing are mentioned such as cloaks, a doublet, hats, stockings, suits and coats. Possibly on account of the remote nature of Shocklach, informal lending of money seems to have been common. Wealthy widow Elizabeth Povey was particularly generous to rich and poor alike.

The only resident described as a gentleman is Master Frauncis Broughton and his estate was worth significantly more than others. He is the only person out of the eleven to have a collection of books. He also owned two lutes. One book is also owned by John Kerrison the younger, a yeoman. Frauncis and John were the only ones to own weapons, with Frauncis owning two rapiers, two daggers, a pistol, a musket and armour and John owning a sword, a dagger and two knives. Law enforcement seems to have been carried out by husbandman Richard Tayler, despite him not owning any weaponry.

1. Thomas Baker of Shocklache, husbandman

Will of 1603: Body to be buried in the parish churchyard at Shocklache.

Leaves 12 pence and a large brass pot to his son John Baker, 12 pence each to his daughters Elleyn Wattsonn, Joane Beckett, Marie Baker and Anne Lloyd and 12 pence to his other son Thomas Baker. The residue of the estate goes to wife Elleyn Baker.

Inventory (post mortem) 1612: includes 1 cow, 10 sheep, geese, poultry, a pig, a side of bacon, textiles and bedding, trestle table and benches, brass and pewter, corn and hay, clothing, two coffers, bed frames, money lent to daughter Anne and the above-mentioned brass pot.

Total value of goods: £7 18 s.

Buried: 5th December 1612.

2. Randle Povey of Castletowne, Shocklach, yeoman

Will of 1605: To be buried in Shocklach churchyard.

Bequeaths to wife Margaret his best bed, best cow and ten bushels of barley towards her housekeeping. He leaves his best horse and all his carts, ploughs, harrows, yokes, iron chains and farming implements to his son Richard Povey. His daughter Jane Povey is to receive the best heifer which has not already calved. One bushel of barley is to be distributed amongst the poorest folk of Shocklach parish. All his god children are to receive 12d each. Half of the

residue of the estate is to go to wife Margaret and the other half is to be shared equally between their children.
Inventory 1605: includes oxen, cows, calves, bull, mares, a colt, heifers, eleven sheep, poultry, wheat in the barn, corn, hay, barley, various beds, carts and agricultural implements, cupboards, brass pots and pans, kettle, candlesticks, pewter dishes, sheets, towels, bedding, four coffers, bed frames, two sides of bacon, butter, cheese, iron ware, a silver spoon, clothes, tables, benches, chairs, wheat, rye, compost, manure and the lease of the house and two meadows.
Total value of the goods: £88 3s 2d
Buried: 20th February 1605.

3. Master Frauncis Broughton of Shockledge, gentleman

Inventory 1610: cows, twelve ewes and ten lambs, various horses, clothing, tables, chairs, stools, cupboard, fire grate with shovels, bellows, tongs, racks, hooks and dripping pans, two rapiers and two daggers, two lutes, two brushes, clothing, bedding and textiles, including twenty-three yards of flaxen cloth, pair of silk curtains, twelve bed frames, glasses, twelve trunks, boxes and chests, a musket, a pistol, armour, brass and iron kitchenware, a food safe, 5 sides of bacon, malt, wheat, barley, butter, cheese, tubs, baskets, dishes, poultry, gorse, manure, timber, slates, stone and bricks, corn, books, and the lease of the Tithe of Shockledge.
Total value of goods: £256 15s 10d
[His books were worth £6. Compare this with £27 9s 10d for his clothing and £23 12s 4d for his buttery equipment. Of greatest value was his livestock, amounting to a total of £63 6s 8d.]
Buried: 10th April 1610.

4. Richard Mazon of Shocklach, husbandman

Will of 1610: To be buried in the parish churchyard of Shocklach.
Wife Margaret was to receive his pied heifer and half of his house and grounds (leased from Sir Randle Brereton, Knight). His son John Mazon was to receive the other half of the lease. The rest of the estate was to be shared between mother and son, "hopinge they will Agree well togeather and Love one an other as mother and sonne ought to Doe".
[Is this just a platitude or a hint that mother and son did not always get on?]
Inventory 1610: the aforesaid pied heifer, cows, calf, horses, pig, poultry, salt, bricks, corn in the ground, in the barn and threshed, hay, clothing, beef, bacon, brass ware, coals, bedding, iron ware, tables, chairs and benches, cushions, chests, bed frames, compost, implements, butter, cheese, goose and swine grease, flax and yarn.
[The most valuable item was the cattle. The goose and swine grease was worth 7s 4d, the salt was worth 12d, his clothing was worth just 10s (compare with Frauncis Broughton above).]
Total value of goods: £31 8s
Buried: 4th February 1610

5. Thomas Moyle of Schocklach-Ovyat, yeoman

Will of 1611: To be buried in the parish churchyard of Shocklach.
His wife Anne was to act as executrix, overseen by the "Right Worshipfull Lady Dame Mary Egerton". Bequests of 3s 4d for Shocklach Church, 3 s 4d for the highways, 12d to Captain Moyle (his eldest brother's son, 12d to John Dod (his eldest sister's son), 12d to Randle Kelsall (his sister Margaret's son) and 2s to his servant Homfrey. Also 3s to Katheren and 12d to Maude. He owed 42s to Richard Smyth of Broxon and John Hopley of Malpas owed him 42s.

Inventory of 1612: cows, a nag, heifers, calves, sheep, pigs, poultry, brass, pewter, iron ware, crockery, bedding and household linen, cupboard, coffers, chests, bed frames, tables, stools, benches, a pair of bellows, bacon, beef, baskets, ladder, corn, compost, half of two colonies of bees, butter, cheese, pair of boots with spurs, saddle and bridle, clothing, hair cloth for a kiln (a coarse open fabric made from horse hair and used for drying malt over a kiln), spinning wheel, cushions, curtains, two iron wedges, three swine troughs, flax and yarn, two hetchewes (for combing flax or hemp), 2 ripple combs (for cleaning flax and hemp from the seeds). [The half of two colonies of bees were worth 5 s, the boots, saddle and bridle were valued at 6s 8d, the bedding and household linen were worth £3 16s 8d. The livestock was most valuable at £20 7s 4d.]
Total value of goods: £39 7s 4d
Buried: 8th April 1612.

6. Richard Tayler of Church Shocklache, husbandman

Will of 1612: Bequeathes to his son George Tayler four cows and his corn and barley in order to discharge a debt to John Mylton at the next Michaelmas. Bequeathes to his grandson Richard Tayler all his tables, benches, bed frames, ploughs, irons, carts, harrows, chains, axes, working tools and implements, brass, pewter, bedding and household linen, the interest title of the house and the ground lease. If Joane Tayler, wife of his son John Tayler, should die before John, the said John shall have a bedroom in the house until his death and be provided with food and drink by George Tayler. Bequeathes to John Tayler his best suit. Willie Tayler is to have the bed he used to lie in but not the cover. He is to choose another cover from the loft.

Executor George Tayler is to "Cause the pavemente by the Castle bridge to bee taken upp and newe paved And the hedge to be made streight for the better ease of passengeres".

The remainder of the estate is to go to grandson Richard Tayler after debts have been paid and other outstanding payments received.

He owes 18s to Hughe Ap Robarte [Hugh Robert(s)]

Raphe Pova [Ralph Povey] owes him 20s which he spent "in the Exchequor".

Also owed to him is 3s 6d for arresting and keeping Randull Kelsall, 10s for serving an execution in Chester, 20s for expenses for him and the bailiff in Handbridge, 4s for expenses at the Saracens Head in Chester.
Inventory of 1612: cow, calves, horses, a pig and a hen, cart, cart rope, wagon, two ploughs, two yokes, a harrow, farming implements, brass and pewter ware, two candlesticks, an iron grate and fire tongs, trivet, pot hooks, wooden stands for barrels, a barrel, a churn, an ash tub [often used for milk], a bucket, drinking vessels, dishes, a ladle, cheese vats, a hand basket, pillows, covers, two coffers, an old churn and tub, a feather bed and bolster with covers, another coffer, clothing, seven sheets and two tablecloths, two sacks, a large cloth for winnowing corn on, benches, shelves, stools, manure, the lease, corn.
Total value of goods: £18 2s 10d
Buried 29th April 1612.

7. Richard Reade of Shocklach-Oviatt, husbandman

Will of 1617: Bequeathes 3s 4d for repairs to Shocklach Church. Wife Rosse is to receive half of his house and land, which is leased from Sir William Brereton of Brereton for 21 years, provided she does not remarry. The other half is to go to son John Reade. All will go to him if Rosse remarries. John is to pay £5 to his sister Margaret, wife of William Dudley, within two years of inheriting. Richard's other daughter, Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Heskye, is to receive 10s, his daughter Elleyn, wife of David Ellis, is to receive his great pied cow, and Rosse Reade,

the daughter of son John, is to receive one heifer calf. Godson Richard Heskye is to be given 2s and all other god children are to be given 12d. Any remaining monies to be divided into three parts, one part to go to daughter Margaret, the other two parts to go to wife Rosse, who is to give 40s to his illegitimate son Thomas Reade.

Debts owing: £5 to John Mason of Church Shocklach

£10 to son-in-law Thomas Heskye

40s to Hughe ap Robert.

Inventory of 1621: three cows, one bullock, one calf, one weaning calf, one sow and three weaned pigs, poultry, brass, pewter, bedding, household linen, cupboard, table and benches, oak panelling in the house, wooden items including planks and shelves, cart and implements, two chests, bed frames, chairs, stools, ladders, spinning wheels and sacks, corn on the ground and in the house, lease for the house and grounds, clothing, manure, iron ware, a side and a piece of bacon.

[The sow and 3 weaned pigs were worth 20s, the lease was worth 13s 4d and the bacon was worth 4s.]

Total value of goods: £27 2s

Buried: 31st May 1621.

8. Anne Moyle of Shocklach-Oviatt, widow

Will of 1618: Bequests of 10 shillings to Shocklach Church for repairs and purchase of ornaments for Divine Service and 6s 8d towards the making and repairing of the highways within Shocklach parish, 12d to Godson Richard Kerrison, one cow each to Elizabeth Egerton and Barbara Egerton her sister, 10s to Humphrey Thyckebroome, one heifer to Jane Weaver alias Heskye, one weaning heifer cow to Elizabeth Dawby. Richard Kerrison is to be released from his debts owing to her. Tenant John Baker is to receive one bushel of barley and one bushel of oats for harvesting her land. The residue of the estate is to go to Richard Crosbye, gentleman, and his wife Margarett, his wife and Anne's niece. "I owe nothinge to Any man but Love and goodwill."

Inventory of 1618: nine cows, two heifers, a weaning heifer calf, swine, poultry, brass and pewter, iron grate and iron ware, shovel and tongs, saw, spade and axes, harrows, yokes and other implements, wooden items, tables, benches, stools, chairs, loose boards, glass, bedding and household linen, clothing and jewellery, hay, corn, bed frames, chests, coffers, cupboards, cheese press, baskets, spinning wheels, earthenware pots, butter and cheese, compost, ladders, firewood, cushions, fodder racks, saddle, swine troughs, grindstone, ready cash, yarn with combs and implements, mustard quern, one swarm of bees.

[The clothing and jewellery was valued at £5, the butter and cheese was worth £4, but the swarm of bees was worth only 2s.]

Total value of goods: £62 10s

Buried: 27th August 1618.

9. John Kerrison the younger of Shocklach, yeoman

Will of 1622: 3s 4d left to Shocklach Church for repairs, then the rest of the estate to be split into two. One half to go to his wife Katheren and the other half to go to his wife's cousin Katheren Birchenshaw. Brother Richard Kerrison is to receive his brown cloak, his son John is to get his doublet (close-fitting jacket), his sword, his dagger, his hat and his stockings.

Debts due to him:

£13 3s owed by John Povey, £9 owed by Richard Jackson, £4 owed by Thomas Griffith of the Warne, 7s owed by Richard Walker of Farndon.

Debts owed by him:
To Randle Moyle the elder (illegible sum)
To Randle Moyle the younger 27 s
Brother Roger Kerrison is to receive John's old suit and blue coat.
Servant Owen Pulford is to receive John's white hat and 2s 6d.

Inventory of 1622: four oxen, cows, calves, mares, one filly colt, swine, poultry, corn, hay malt, cart with ploughs, harrows, yokes, iron chains and other implements, butter and cheese, four sides of bacon, bedding, household linen, pewter, brass, sword, dagger, clothing, wooden items, table, stools, chairs, a truckle bed, a coffer, eight pikels (pitchforks), a bill (for lopping trees and hedges), 2 long barrel staves (flat pieces of shaped wood), 2 spinning wheels with sacks, baskets and sieves, yarn and tow cards (tow = short fibres of flax or hemp), small iron pan and pudding plate, coals and gorse, one book and two knives.

[The clothes, sword and dagger were worth 56s 8d, the butter and cheese were worth 53s 4d, the book and 2 knives were valued at 12d.]

Total value of goods: £66 2s 4d

Buried: 7th January 1622.

10. Elizabeth Povey of Shocklach, widow

Will of 1624: 3s 4d bequeathed to Shocklach Church for repairs, 3s 4d for "amendinge" of the highways in Shocklach.

William Lloyd of Halghton, Esquier and his heirs are to invest 40 shillings into a fund in order to give 4 shillings worth of white bread each year to the poor of Shocklach parish on Christmas Day and a further 2 shillings worth on Easter Day after the church service.

Roger Thomas to receive £4, sister Ermyne £3, John Peers 5s, old servant Rauffe 5s, William Phillipps 5s, servant Elizabeth Bennian one 2 year old heifer, Robert Downes Clearke 5s (this sum to go to Robert's daughter Anne if Robert dies before Elizabeth).

The rest of the estate to be divided into two parts. Half to go to son Richard Povey, half to go to John Thomas, brother of the aforementioned Roger.

Debts due to Elizabeth:

£14 from Sir Richard Egerton, Knight
£9 from Richard Kerrison
£8 13s 4d owed by bond from John Povey and his son John Povey, of which 33s 4d had already been paid
20s from Master Thomas Calcott
20s from cousin Raphe Yeardley
20s from Richard Browne
£3 from Rondle Orton the elder and Rondle Orton of Old Castle
26s from cousin Rauffe Povey
8s from John Dod of Cudington
7s 6d from William Povey of Church Shocklach
2s from John Farmer of Cudington
18d from Barbara Pulford, widow

Inventory of 1624: Six oxen, four bulls, eight cows, two bullocks, seven calves, a heifer, a mare, a colt, a nag, swine, poultry, corn, carts, ploughs, harrows, yokes, implements, bedding, linen, brass, pewter, two silver spoons, iron grate and iron ware, bed frames, pair of curtains, chests, coffers, two carpets, cupboard, tables, benches, chairs, stools, wooden items, loose boards, yarn, winnow sheets, sacks, baskets, sieves, spinning wheels, beef and bacon, butter

and cheese, bed curtains and cushions, clothes, compost, coals, gorse, ladders, five year lease of ground, £5 for a mare and colt already sold.
Total value of goods: £153 13s
Age at death: 86 "or thereaboutes".
Buried: 3rd July 1624 within the parish church of Shocklach near the chancel door in the same grave where her eldest son Edward Povey had been buried. She was well beloved by rich and poor and her neighbours.

"She kept her house with great regard
To please both rich and poore
That none that came to aske Reliefe
Went hungry from her door"

11. David Povey of Church Shocklach, yeoman

Will of 1624: Bequeathed one cow each to sisters Dorothee Povey, Elnour Paynter and Julian Paynter. Brother Owen Paynter [probably brother-in-law] to receive all David's clothes, Thomas Yeardley gentleman to receive 44s. A debt of £6 owed by father-in-law Arthur Paynter and sister Dorothee to be written off. Dorothee to receive the residue of the estate.
Inventory of 1624: Three cows, clothes, 1 bill of debt of £6 3s 4d, bill of debt due 28th January next 44s, 10s owed by his 'Mistris Crwe'.

[His 3 cows were worth £7, his clothing was worth 30s.]

Total value of goods: £17 7s 4d
Buried: 20th October 1624.