

# The Heyron Chantry in the Church of All Saints, Langport.

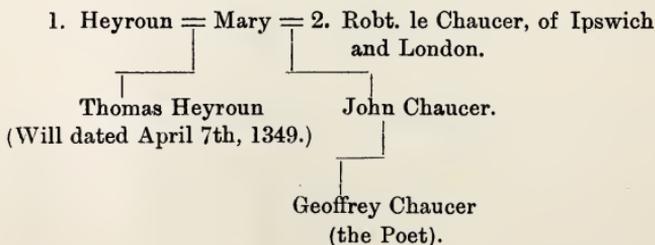
BY THE REV. F. W. WEAVER, M.A.

THE three wills, which follow, have never been printed before, and were discovered by the writer at Somerset House. They determine the date of the foundation of the Heyron Chantry.

The connection of the Heyron family with Langport seems only to have lasted for two generations, and I have not been able to discover the parentage of John Heyron, senior.

Thomas Hayron, vintner, whose will is dated April 7th, 1349, left all his tenements in the city of London to be sold by John le Chaucer, his half-brother.<sup>1</sup>

The accompanying pedigree by Mr. Walter Rye shews the connection between the Heyron and Chaucer families.



(1) Calendar of Wills, Court of Husting I, 544.

Mary's third husband was Richard Chaucer, vintner, whose will is dated April 12th, 1349.<sup>2</sup>

It is right to add that I have found no proof of connection between these Heyrouns and the Somerset family.

We are told, too, that temp. Hen. II, the manor of Beer Crocombe was held of the family of Lovell, by Wimund de Craucumbe and Reginald Heirun,<sup>3</sup> which shews that the name was known in the county at an early date (1154-89). In *Somerset Fines* (S.R.S. vi, 106) Thomas Hayrun and Maria, his wife, are defendants in a suit about some land in Fernberghe and Barwe (23 Hen. III).

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I.—The Will of Richard Langport, archdeacon of Taunton, dated June 20th, 1490.

This is in Latin [Somerset House, 27 Milles] of which the following is a translation.

“I will that my body shall be buried in the chancel of the church of All Saints in Langport: to the fabric of the church of Wells xij<sup>d</sup>: to five poor men five black gowns with hoods to hold torches on the day of my burial: to Thomas Wodehill, vicar of Langport, one scarlet hood fringed with fur (*capicium penulatum*): to Sir John Gourde, chaplain, one breviary to pray for my soul. *Residue* to John Shepard my brother (ex<sup>or</sup>).<sup>4</sup> *Supervisor*. John Heyron, ‘generosus.’”

II.—The Will of John Heyron, dated August 8th, 1499, proved at Lambeth, Sept. 26th, 1501.

It is in English [S. H. 4 Blamyꝛ].

“I give my body to be buried in ‘the new Ile of Langport at the awter ende.’”

(2) *Ibid.* I, 590.

(3) *Collinson*, I, 14.

(4) It will be noticed that the Archdeacon's name was Richard Shepard: he assumed the name of Langport (probably his birthplace) on taking holy orders: this was the usual custom with clerics, whether secular or regular.

“I will that my son give ten marks’ worth land to a priest and his successors to pray for me, ‘my fader and my moder,’ all my children and their children, for the souls of Ays [? Avys] my wife, Thomas Wodeholl, John Smyth, John Hugons, and Richard, and for all the souls that I have taken any goods wrongfully of, and for all Christian souls. And at every mass to turn his back to the ‘awter at the lavatory’<sup>5</sup> and say *De Profundis* for my soul and for all the souls afore-said.

“I will that this chantry endure for ever, and that my next heir present a Conable<sup>6</sup> priest to the same. If he omit to do this, then I will that the Portreve of Langport and the Constables of the same present a Conable priest to the same.

“I will that the said priest say *Placebo* and *Dirige* ‘ij tymes in the Wike, with a masse of Requiem to wit Wenysday and Friday.’

“To the mother church of Wells xx<sup>d</sup>.

“To the church of Langport xl<sup>s</sup>.

“To the Abbot of Mochelney xs, and to every brother there xvii<sup>d</sup>. to say *Placebo* and *Dirige* for my soul, the day of my obit and month’s mind. Similar bequests to the abbot and Convent of Athelney, and to the Prior and Convent of Taunton.

“To the Friars of Briggewater to say like prayers for me xs.

“To every chantry priest of Langport ijs. vjd.

“To every priest that shall be at my dirige and mass viijd. To five poor men in the worship of the five wounds of Our Lord ‘xv brode yerds of blacke to make them v gownes and

(5) This is a not uncommon word for the Ablutions: other instances of its use are to be found in *Testamenta Vetusta*, 459, 501, 506.

“I will that the prest, whan that he hath said *Masse*, shall stand affore my grave in his albe, and ther to say the psalme *De Profundis* with the Colettes; and then caste holy water upon my grave.” (1497, *Test. Ebor.* iv, 121.)

(6) *i.e.*, suitable; Late Latin *convenabilis* (see New Eng. Dict.).

howds,' and to each of them iiij<sup>d</sup> in money to bear five torches for me at my burial.

"To every man, woman and child that shall be at my burial jd.

"To every 'of my sustren a pype of wode.'

"To Agnes Grendale xx marks.

"To every servant of mine vjs viij<sup>d</sup>.

"I will that the feoffees of my land in Chelworthe,<sup>7</sup> Pyse Mersshe,<sup>8</sup> Illaygh,<sup>8</sup> Hilcombe,<sup>8</sup> Doniet, Seynt Mary Buckland, Muddesley in Wedmor, Wynegodds place in Est brent make an estate thereof to John Heyron my son and to the heirs of my (? his) body begotten, for default of such issue the remainder thereof to John Hoskyn son of Thomas Hoskyn and to the heirs of his body ; for default the remainder thereof to my right heirs. And all the 'remayne' of my lands to be to John and his heirs in fee simple.

"The remainder of my goods I give to John my son, desiring him to perform this my will in all things upon pain of my curse.

"I ordain John Heyron and the parson of Hamme executors.

"I make Sir Amys Powlet<sup>9</sup> supervisor.

"I give to my Lord Chamberlayne to be good lord to my said son xx marks."

III.—The Will of John Heyron, junior, dated June 24th, 1507, proved at Lamethith (Lambeth), October 24th, 1507.

(7) Chilworthy Farm in Ilminster.

(8) These places are in or near Ilminster.

(9) Sir Amias Paulett was knighted for his valour at the battle of Newark on Trent, June 16th, 1487, when the Earl of Lincoln and Lambert Simnel were defeated. He is reported to have once committed Cardinal Wolsey to the stocks when the latter was resident at Lymington. He built much at Hinton St. George, but resided chiefly in London, where he was treasurer to the Society of the Middle Temple. He died June 25th, 1538 : his will is given in *Test. Vet.*, 681 : he was buried at Chaffcombe. His arms are in the chancel window of Langport church. (See *Collinson*, ii, 167 ; iii, 116.)

It is in Latin [S. H., 27 Adeane]. The following is a translation.

“I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, the Blessed Mary, and all the Saints, and my body to be buried in my own chapel (*in meâ capellâ propriâ*).

“to the cathedral church of Wells ijs.

“to the church of Langport to purchase a chasuble cs.

“to each priest who celebrates a mass for my soul xij<sup>d</sup>.

“to every Christian who is present on the day of my burial jd.

“to Sir Thomas, my chaplain, one silver goblet.

“Moreover, in all things am I desirous that my chantry, not yet founded, shall be founded in accordance with my father’s will.<sup>10</sup>

“I leave each of my servants (amount not specified.)

“The residue of my goods I give to Elizabeth my wife whom I make my executrix.”

This will is a short one, and there is every appearance of its being drawn up in haste. John Heyron, junior, seems to have died a young man and to have left no family. He was, I believe, the only son of his father, so that the Heyron connection with Langport did not last long.

The chantry was founded, and an account of its lands with the tenants’ names will be found in *Somerset Chantries*. (Somerset Record Society, ii, 114, 229.)

The last incumbent was named John Benet, clerk: he was formerly a monk of Glastonbury, and it is here (*Ibid*, p. 115) distinctly stated that he “hathe also a yearly pencion out of the house of Glaston of iiijli.”

Dr. Gasquet (*Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, ii, 457) says that no pensions were given to members of houses which were made to fall into the king’s hands by the attainder of the superior. “Thus no monks at monasteries such as

(10) He came perilously near meriting the curse mentioned in his father’s will; the latter had been dead six years or more.

Kirkstead, Jervaulx or Whalley in the northern parts, and Glastonbury, Reading, Colchester or Woburn in the south, obtained anything.”

The foregoing quotation as to John Benet’s pension, shews that at Glastonbury at any rate some of the monks *did* receive pensions.

It would be interesting to know whether any site still exists in Langport bearing the name of *The Chantry*.

In 1548, a tenant whose name is not given, is said to hold a little garden or piece of vacant land at Langport, on which the dwelling house of the Cantarist of the said chantry was built, and he rendered for it vjd. per annum.

The dwelling house would seem to have been taken down.

In cases where the incumbent of the chantry is still dwelling in the chantry house, as at Crewkerne, the fact of his doing so is expressly stated (S.R.S. ii, 176).

According to Collinson (III, 153) the Heyron arms in Langport Church are :—

“1. Per fesse argent and sable, a pale counterchanged, three herons of the first.<sup>11</sup>

2. On a roundle gules, a hernshaw argent.”

And Marshall’s *Genealogists’ Guide* informs us that the family had branches in the counties of Durham, Essex, Hertford, Kent, Northumberland, Nottingham, and York.

(11) Mr. Edmund Buckle kindly writes (Sept. 17, 1894) that this should be—  
“Party of six, sa. and arg., three herons’ heads erased counterchanged.”