

Richard Anyon of Bispham

The times which Richard Anyon lived and farmed in saw arable land being let at about six or seven old pence an acre, and pasture at a shilling (5p) or so per acre, per annum. Day labour could be hired for four to six old pence a day. Money had much more actual value then.

When he died in 1560, Richard made provision in his will for his widow by charging his son William, to whom he bequeathed the goodwill of his house, to provide a home for her (providing she did not remarry) for her natural life. All the ploughgear, harrowgear, and waingear was left to William, but to be in the "occupation of" mother for life. They had five children altogether, and the remainder of "his goods" was to be divided equally amongst them. The term "his goods" is very significant, as is explained below.

Until 1857 the proving of wills was in the hands of the ecclesiastic authorities and until 1692 the northern regions were subject to the

Custom of the Province of York. This custom applied to males, and his personal goods and chattels were divided into three parts, one third to the widow, one to the children, and the remaining part was the deceased's own (ie his goods) to be distributed as he would.

As was normal, Richard Anyon seemed to have money out at interest. Included amongst his four debtors were two members of the Allen family who held Rossall Grange and one became a cardinal. Master Alan (sic) owed 6 shillings and fourpence (32p). Would this debtor be the recent incumbent of Bispham parish church?

The valuation of his goods for probate gives us the picture of a reasonably prosperous farmer of the day, although in monetary terms it only amounted to fractionally over £25. The farm stock and equipment comprised of a yoke of oxen, three kine (milk cows), a bullock and a calf. There were three cabs (horses) and a colt, a sheep (poss with lamb), a pig, geese, hens and ducks. All the husbandry gear is lumped together as harrow, wain and plough gear. There was also corn to the value of £3.80.

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