

2011/2012

Tax-Efficient Wills SIMPLIFIED

Carl Islam

A new edition of Carl Islam's book Tax Efficient Wills SIMPLIFIED has been published for 2013/2014. This was a book which I had not come across previously but the fact that the book is now in its fourth edition suggests its popularity. Part of a range of books by the publishers intended to simplify taxation issues, it is essentially a guide to preparing Wills while taking account of the taxation of the estate. There are, however, no precedent clauses for Wills. The book bridges the gap between books on Will writing which concentrate on precedents and such tomes as Tolley or Ray & McLaughlin, which cost in the region of £100.

The author is a registered public access barrister who specialises in Inheritance Tax planning and related Will, trust, and professional negligence disputes. He is also a Full Member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, as well as having qualified as a solicitor (non-practising).

Although Carl Islam indicates that the book is primarily written for practitioners, he suggests it is also suitable for lay readers. This might be seen as one of its weaknesses as it is neither one thing nor the other. Practitioners may bemoan that it is short on detail in some regards, but the book provides a good starting point at reasonable cost. Its 300 pages are packed with a wealth of references to statute and case law. You may not want to treat this book as your sole source, but it might be helpful for getting the basics before diving into the dryer texts. It may be particularly useful when trying to explain the complexities of Inheritance Tax to

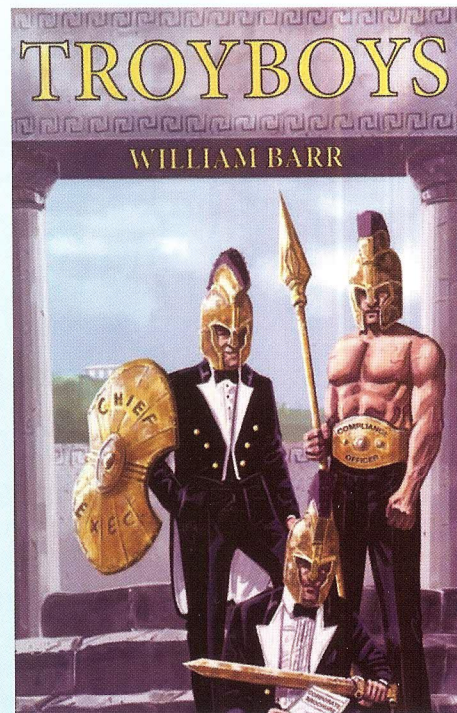
clients. I liked the diagrammatic examples in the Appendices, and found the general style and layout clear.

Areas covered:

- How to go about preparing and writing a Will
- How to set up trusts to minimise the tax burden on the estate
- How to select and appoint executors, guardians and trustees
- How the inheritance tax rules will be applied
- Gifts and chargeable transfers
- Traps to avoid which may compromise the effectiveness of the Will.

The book is published by Management Books 2000 Ltd at £14.99 (ISBN9781852527303).

Richard Lane, Hunt & Coombs



TROYBOYS BY WILLIAM BARR

This is, I thought, William Barr's first book, on receiving the manuscript. I realised later he's an old hand, and has at least three books in print – all of them humorous. I am sure he had a lot of fun writing it. For the reader of a certain age it is littered with cultural jokes, but you'll only get them if you have a smattering of a classical education, from the likes of the Bronte sisters (in the opening line, if you please!) to the Greek myths and legends. It also

helps if you remember Woodstock and Flower Power, and have a healthy contempt for modern management theories, with all their talk of "paradigm shifts" and what have you.

Basically, anything currently in vogue is fair game, from Ponzi schemes and managerial mantras to fashion follies. Even bottled sparkling water and a certain coca-flavoured soft drink get a couple of passing digs in the ribs. Some of the jokes may miss the mark with younger readers, although I've got too many turns on the coil. I'm not convinced that anyone under 30 knows what 'B.U.R.M.A.' or 'N.O.R.W.I.C.H.' mean: jokes have a sort of humorous half-life, like radioactivity.

The plot: The year is 2000BC, in what will later be the holiday resort destination coastal strip of Turkey, facing the Adriatic. The Greeks have besieged Troy for ten years, and have nothing to show for it. The Gods decide to have some fun at the expense of the human race, and unleash a new and deadly plague: modern business management techniques. Odysseus returns from Athens Business School and sets about preaching his new notions to the Greek forces, from King Agamemnon downwards, with evangelical zeal.

Events unfold – I'm not giving anything away by saying it doesn't all go according to the legends – Odysseus eventually gets sacked, but too late, the poison spreads, management theory has infected the rest of the Greeks, with the Gods are gleefully hoping that the whole of humanity will "catch a dose".

It reaches the island of the giant Polyphemus, who gets his comeuppance in a new slant on the old story. It's all here as Odysseus blunders on around the Mediterranean, from one adventure to the next, and the fun doesn't stop when he gets home, older, fatter, and unrecognisable to his family.

William's style had me thinking: "Terry Pratchett goes out on the lash with the bastard love-child of Monty Python" (I think I can get that past the censors...). I'd be surprised if he didn't have a bookshelf full of Pratchett's works at home, or if he couldn't recite the 'Four Yorkshiremen' sketch. He strikes me as a very merry soul, and at the end of this book I find myself intrigued enough to want to read some more of his work. If there's any criticism it is that the book loses pace a little in places, but Greek mythology is a rich area for lampooning, a subject obviously dear to the William's heart, and he sets to it with a Will (oops).

This is a good stocking-filler for Christmas. It is available through Morrow & Co Publishing, ISBN 978-0-948903-02-1.

Will Cowell, Miller Sands