



books

Make Your Will: The Irish Guide to Putting your Affairs in Order

John G Murphy and Jason Dunne. Liberties Press (2009), Guinness Enterprise Centre, Taylor's Lane, Dublin 8. ISBN: 9781905483594. Price: €9.99.

I was struck by the dedication in this publication to the memory of Nuala O'Faolain, whose last will and testament, the reader is advised, should be an inspiration to us all. My curiosity has been aroused, and I feel I should go to the Probate Office to take up a copy.

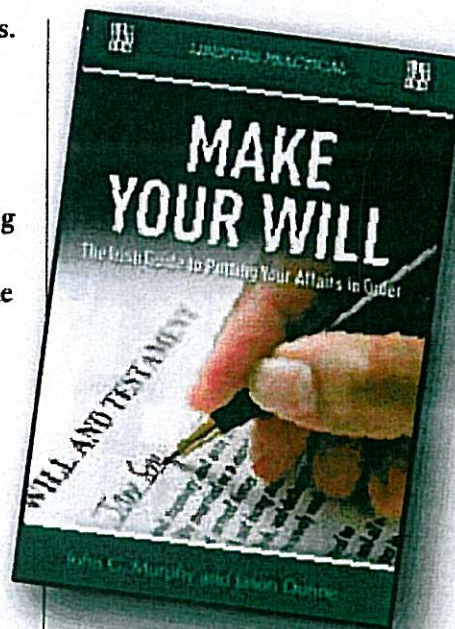
This little book is a handy item for clients who ask too many questions. It is a waffle-free account of what constitutes a will, what a will looks like, and how it should be written. The authors also correctly take the view that a will should be seen as a number of building blocks, and the essence of a successful will is simplicity and understanding the elements of those blocks. Less than 100 pages long, its physiognomy takes us through the contents in a systematic way, culminating in suggested sample wills based on

particular living circumstances.

It begins by stressing the role of the solicitor, and if every client presented with the knowledge that this book contains, then the job of taking instructions would be all the lighter. We are invited to make our wills in one of two ways: in five steps or in one. The one step way is to see your solicitor.

Choosing two people whom you trust with your life to act as your executors may be an anachronism, but the message is there. I would have liked to have seen a little more on this vital aspect of will making. There is no reference to the role of professional executors.

The delicate subject of conflict of interest is touched upon, and the hazardous area of tax is given respectful



treatment without labouring the subject. Reference to tax thresholds, *Settled Land Acts* and *Conveyancing Acts* in a year of expected law reform illustrates the publisher's dilemma in producing a book like this. It is likely to be out of date in many respects before Christmas.

As a practising solicitor, reviewing a book like this in its simplicity, one cannot help but draw attention to the few items that are not mentioned, such as the mischievous effects of section 98 (relating to grandchildren and predeceased children) and section 63 (advancements) contained in the *Succession Act*. The idea of a discretionary fund in favour of the executors is not considered, and neither is the idea of a letter of wishes. Perhaps matters like these just serve to complicate the subject.

For what it is, the book is good value and should find favourable readership among the curious and the conscientious.

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