

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the undated will, proved 13 October 1539, of Thomas Campion, whose son-in-law, William Blackwell (d.1570?), granddaughter, Anne (nee Blackwell) Bacon, and great-grandson, Mathy or Matthew Bacon (d.1639) of Gray's Inn, are mentioned in the indenture by which William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford upon Avon purchased a dwelling-house or tenement and plot of ground in the precinct of the Blackfriars on 10 March 1613 (see Folger MS Z.c.22(45) and London Metropolitan Archives CLC/522/MS03738 on this website for the purchasers' and vendor's copies of the indenture, respectively).

From London Metropolitan Archives CLC/522/MS03738 on the Shakespeare Documented website at:

<http://www.shakespearedocumented.org/exhibition/document/shakespeare-purchases-blackfriars-gatehouse-copy-bargain-and-sale-signed-buyers>

. . . part of which said tenement is erected over a great gate leading to a capital messuage which sometime was in the tenure of William Blackwell, esquire, deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupation of the right honourable Henry, now Earl of Northumberland;

And also all that plot of ground on the west side of the same tenement which was lately enclosed with boards on two sides thereof by Anne Bacon, widow, so far and in such sort as the same was enclosed by the said Anne Bacon

Which said dwelling-house or tenement and other the premises above by these presents mentioned to be bargained and sold the said Henry Walker late purchased and had to him, his heirs and assigns forever of Mathie Bacon of Gray's Inn in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, bearing date the fifteenth day of October in the year of Our Lord God one thousand six hundred and four.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the Campion pedigree, see Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Essex, Part II*, (London: Harleian Society, 1879), Vol. XIV, p. 556 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=8vsUAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA556>

See also the Campion pedigree in Howard, Joseph Jackson and Joseph Lemuel Chester, eds., *The Visitation of London Anno Domini 1633, 1634 and 1635*, (London: Harleian Society, 1880), p. 134 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationoflond01stge#page/134>

According to the will below, the testator had a brother and two sisters:

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-Robert Campion, who is mentioned in the will below, as are his wife, and his daughter, Joan Watson.

-Joan Campion (d.1557) who married John Thirlby (d.1539), by whom she was the mother of several children, including Bishop Thomas Thirlby. It was from Bishop Thirlby that the testator's son-in-law, William Blackwell (d.1570?), purchased a mansion house and other property in the Blackfriars, part of which was later purchased by William Shakspeare of Stratford upon Avon. From the *ODNB*:

Thirlby, Thomas (c.1500–1570), bishop of Westminster and of Ely, was born in Cambridge where his father, John (d. 1539), was town clerk. His mother, Joan (d. 1557), was the daughter of William Campion of London.

-Christian Campion, who married Henry East of Needingworth in the parish of Holywell, Huntingdonshire (now Cambridgeshire). See his will, dated 30 July 1521 and proved 28 May 1522, TNA PROB 11/19/474.

The testator also mentions his 'cousin, Edmund Campion of Sawston', as well as Christopher Campion and his wife, and Walter Campion and his wife. The Jesuit, Edmund Campion, is thought to have been related to the Campions of Sawston. From the *ODNB*:

Campion, Edmund [St Edmund Campion] (1540–1581), Jesuit and martyr, was probably one of the Sawston branch of the Campion family and was born in London on 25 January 1540, son of a citizen and bookseller.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Saintz Rake, who survived him. Her parents are unknown. For the Rack family, see Hanks, Patrick et al, *The Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland*, Vol. I, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 2200 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=0AyDDQAAQBAJ&pg=PA2200>

In the will below, the testator leaves a bequest to his brother-in-law, John Rake:

Also I bequeath to my brother, John Rake, 20s.

By Saintz Rake, the testator had a son and two daughters:

* **William Campion** (d.1576). For his will, in which he leaves bequests to 'my sister Blackwell' and 'her son William Blackwell', see TNA PROB 11/58/432.

* **Margaret Campion** (d.1586), who married William Blackwell (d.1570?), Town Clerk of London. For the will of Margaret Campion Blackwell, see TNA PROB 11/69/398. For the will of William Blackwell (d.1570?), see TNA PROB 11/52/400.

* **Christian Campion.**

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

The testator bequeaths a black gown to Ralph Preston, who may have been the Ralph Preston whose funeral on 12 October 1558 is described by Machyn. See Nichols, John Gough, ed., *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, (London: Camden Society, 1848), p. 176 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/henrymachyncit00camduoft#page/176>

It seems likely there was a family connection between Ralph Preston and Katherine (nee Preston) Carus, who in 1577 died at Margaret Campion Blackwell's house in the Blackfriars. See Chambers, E.K., *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, Vol. II, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1930), pp. 165-6 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/in.ernet.dli.2015.182554/2015.182554.William-Shakespeare-Voll-Ii#page/n177>

See also Woolrych, Humphry William, *Lives of Eminent Serjeants-at-law*, Vol. I, (London: Wm. H. Allen & Co., 1869), p. 144 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=aPMKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA144>

Katherine Carus, the late Justice's wife, my countrywoman, with all her pride and popery, is this week gone, I trust, to God. She died in Bishop Thirlby's chamber, in Mrs. Blackwell's house in the Blackfriars.

See also the Preston pedigree in Wilson, LA., ed., *The Preston Genealogy*, (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1900) pp. 13-14 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/prestongenealogy1900pres#page/13/mode/2up>

For Katherine Preston's husband, Thomas Carus, see Foss, Edward, *The Judges of England*, Vol. V, (London: Longman, Brown, Green, 1857), p. 471 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=6U5jAAAACAAJ&pg=PA471>

TESTATOR'S LANDS

For the testator's lease of Leyton Grange, see:

'Leyton: Manors and estates', A History of the County of Essex: Volume 6 (1973), pp. 184-197. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42768>

A house called Leyton Grange was occupied by John Hanger, husbandman, in the 1470s. In 1535 Thomas Campion, merchant tailor of London, obtained a 60-year lease of the manor-house of Leyton, in which the parlours, buttery, stable, and hayhouse were mentioned. This lease of the 'grange of Leyton' was bequeathed by him in 1539 to his son, William, subject to his widow's life interest.

LM: T{estamentum} Thome Campion

In the name of God, Amen. I, Thomas Campion, citizen and Merchant Taylor of London, whole in mind and sick in body, make my testament and last will in this manner and form following:

First, I commit my soul to the mercy of Almighty God etc., and my body to be buried in place convenient where it shall please Almighty God to call me;

Also I commit the order of my burial with th' exequies accustomed to the discretion of my executrix;

Also I will that my executrix shall distribute amongst the poor people inhabiting within the ward called Cornewell Street ward 40s;

Also I bequeath to the poor people of Sawston 40s;

Also to the poor people of Leyton 20s;

Item, I bequeath to the poor prisoners of the four prisons in London, that is, to Ludgate, Newgate, the Marshalsea and the King's Bench, to every of the said prisons 6s 8d;

Also I give to my sister, Joan Thirlby, five pounds;

Item, I give to every one of her daughters 40s apiece;

Item, I give to Thomas Thirlby, my sister's son, ten pounds, so be it the said Thomas Thirlby will be ordered by my wife and his brother, or else to have never one penny;

Also I give to the daughter of my sister, Christian Este [=East], five marks;

Also I forgive my brother, Robert Campion, all such debts as he doth owe unto me;

Also I bequeath unto my said brother 40s;

Also I give unto Joan Watson, my brother's daughter, 40s;

Also I will that at the day of my burial my executrix do prepare 14 black gowns, and do distribute the same to these persons following, viz., to my son Blackwell and his wife, to Christopher Campion and to his wife, to Walter Campion and to his wife, to Robert Campion and to his wife, to Ralph Preston and to his wife, to Thomas Gye and to his wife, to the vicar of Leyton, and to the wife of Robert Lee;

Also I bequeath to my brother [=brother-in-law], John Rake, 20s;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Blackwell, my nephew [=grandson], five pounds;

Also I bequeath to William Blackwell, my nephew [=grandson], five pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Blackwell 40s;

Also I bequeath to Edward Blackwell 40s;

Also I will that all my goods and debts shall be divided into three parts according unto the custom of the City, whereof thone part I give to my wife, thother to my children equally to be divided amongst them, and the third to the performance of this my testament and last will;

Provided alway that where in marriage of my daughter, Margaret, unto William Blackwell, I promised two hundred pounds, whereof I have paid £88 13s 4d, that if the said William Blackwell will have the residue of the said £200 and make a sufficient release for his wife's child's part, then I will that my executrix shall pay unto him the rest of the £200, or in case that the said William Blackwell will not so do, but doth claim his child's part, then I will that the same shall be made up unto him, the said £88 13s 4d that he hath already received to be always accounted as a portion of the same child's part;

Also I forgive my cousin, Edmund Campion of Sawston, all the debts that he oweth me;

Also I give and bequeath my lease of the grange of Leyton unto my wife, she to have, enjoy and hold the same during her life, and after her decease, if it shall fortune the same lease to endure, I will it shall remain unto my son, William Campion, and in case he shall die before my wife, then I will it shall remain to Christian, my daughter, and after her decease, unto my daughter Margaret and her children;

The residue of my goods not bequeathed I give unto my wife, whom I make my sole executrix, and I make Thomas Thirlby, clerk, overseer of this my testament. By me, Thomas Campion. By me, Edward Crome. By me, Robert Dawbeney. By me, Walter Yong.

Probatum fuit sup^{ra}scriptum testamentu^m coram d^{omi}no Apud London xiiijo die mens^{is} Octobris Anno d^{omi}ni Mill^{es}imo quingentesimo Tricesimo nono Iuramento Relicte et executric^{is} in h^{uius}mo^di testamento no^miⁿat^e Ac approbatum et insinuatum Et comissa fuit admiⁿⁱstracio omⁿi^{um} et singulor^{um} bonor^{um} iuriu^m et creditor^{um} dictⁱ defunctⁱ p^{re}fat^e executricⁱ de bene et fideli^{te}r admiⁿⁱstrand^o &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c conficiend^o Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddend^o Ad sancta dei Eu^angelia Iurat^e

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at London on the 13th day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred thirty-ninth by the oath of the relict and executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executrix, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., and to prepare a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account.]