

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 1 August 1576 and proved 16 July 1579 of Joan (nee Hunt) Collett, whose daughter, Mercy Collett (d. 13 April 1597), son, John Collett, and grandson, Sir John Bodley of Streatham, were involved in the early operation of the Globe theatre.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Testatrix' parents

According to the History of Parliament, the testatrix was the daughter of Thomas Hunt of Wallington, Surrey. See:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/colet-humphrey-1517-58>

Testatrix' siblings

A bequest in the will below indicates that the testatrix had a brother, Christopher Hunt, who predeceased her, whose daughter, Agnes Hunt, married firstly a husband surnamed Peacock, by whom she had a son and two daughters, and secondly, John Wood:

Also I give and bequeath unto Thomas Peacock, Joan Peacock and Helen Peacock, children unto Agnes Wood, now wife of John Wood and daughter of my brother, Christopher Hunt, deceased, seven pounds in money, that is forty-six shillings eight pence apiece in lieu and recompense of so much money which they claim of my gift heretofore,

In his will, the testatrix' husband, Humphrey Collett (d.1558), also mentions Joan Hunt and Charles Hunt, who were likely also the children of Christopher Hunt:

I will that Joan Hunt shall have all such money as her grandfather bequeathed her at the day of her marriage.

I will that Charles Hunt shall have all such money as was bequeathed him by the will of his grandfather, Thomas Hunt.

In his will, Humphrey Collett mentions the testatrix sister, Margaret Hunt, who married John Shawcross:

Item, I will unto Margaret Shawcrose [=Shalcross?], my wife's sister, 40s, & to John Shawcrosse, her husband, one of my gowns.

For a John Shalcrosse and his wife, Margaret, who may have been the testatrix' sister and brother-in-law, see DD/4P/52/18:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/9ecc2431-5424-4da4-96d1-17947fbd74b4>

For the Shalcross family of Derbyshire, see also:

<https://geesofderbyshire.wordpress.com/front-cover/index-2/the-shalcross-family/the-royal-link/>

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testatrix married, perhaps as his second wife, Humphrey Collett (d.1558) of the parish of St Saviour, Southwark, for whom see his will, TNA PROB 11/42A/115, and the History of Parliament entry, *supra*.

Humphrey Collett had eight sons and four daughters:

***Thomas Collett**, eldest son, appointed executor of his father's 1558 will. He is mentioned in the 1567 will of his brother, Humphrey Collett, but is not mentioned in the will below.

* **Robert Collett** (living 1576), second son. In his father's 1558 will he is said to be 'already of the age of 21 years and upward'.

* **Humphrey Collett** (d.1567), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/49/25. In his will he requested burial at St Mary Overies, Southwark.

* **William Collett**, for whose will, dated 7 March 1574 and proved 25 January 1576, see TNA PROB 11/57/647. In his will he states that he is 'pretending to sail to Danske in Spruceland', the contemporary English name for Prussia. It seems likely he did not return from the voyage.

* **John Collett**, merchant tailor, named as an executor of the will of his brother-in-law, William Slywright (d.1578). For the financial transactions entered into in connection with the Globe playhouse by John Collett and the testator's grandson, Sir John Bodley of Streatham, see TNA C 54/1682, mm. 10-11 and the other documents listed there.

* **Stephen Collett** (living 1576).

* **Peter Collett** (living 1576).

* **Nicholas Collett** (living 1576), youngest son.

* **Margery Collett** (living 1576), who married John Pigeon, by whom she had issue. A 'Mr Pigion' is mentioned in the will of Rowland Maylard, TNA PROB 11/88/255.

* **Joan Collett** (living 1576), who married William Slywright (d.1578), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/60/518. William Slywright was appointed as one of the overseers of the 1558 will of the testatrix' husband. In the will of Anthony Wayte (d.1559), TNA PROB 11/42B/217, he is referred to as 'my hearty loving brother'. He is also mentioned in the 1558 will, TNA PROB 11/41/4, of Anthony Wayte's son-in-law, the London grocer, Henry Mynge.

* **Agnes Collett** (living 1576?), who married a husband surnamed Curtys, who may have been related to the London merchant, John Cortys (d.1540), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/28/160. She is mentioned in the 1574 will of her brother, William Collett.

* **Mercy Collett** (d. 13 April 1597), who married firstly Francis Bodley (d.1566), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/48/415, by whom she had two sons:

(1) Sir John Bodley of Streatham.

(2) William Bodley.

After the death of Francis Bodley, Mercy Collett married Thomas Brend (for whose will see TNA PROB 11/93/316), and became the stepmother of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), who leased the ground on which the Globe was built by lease dated 21 February 1599 to Richard Burbage (1568-1619), Cuthbert Burbage (1564/5-1636), William Kempe, Augustine Phillips (d.1605), Thomas Pope (d.1603) John Heminges (1566-1630) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford upon Avon (see TNA REQ 4/1/2):

for the said gardens and grounds whereupon the said playhouse & galleries were afterwards builded were demised & letten by the said Nicholas Brend by his indenture of lease tripartite bearing date in or about the 21st day of February in the 41st year of the reign of the late Queen Elizabeth [=21 February 1599] unto Cuthbert Burbage, Richard Burbage, William Shakespeare, the said Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, the said John Heminges, one of the said defendants, and William Kempe, to have and to hold the one moiety of the said garden plots and ground to the said Cuthbert Burbage and Richard Burbage, their executors, administrators & assigns, from the feast of the birth of Our Lord God last past before the date of the said indenture [=25 December 1598] unto the end & term of 31 years from thence next ensuing [=24 December 1629] for the yearly rent of seven pounds & five shillings, and to have & to hold the other moiety of the said garden plots & grounds unto the said William Shakespeare, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, the said John Heminges, one of the said defendants, & William Kempe, their executors, administrators & assigns, from the said feast of the birth of Our Lord God then last past before the date of the said indenture unto the said full end & term of 31 years from thence next ensuing for the like yearly rent of seven pounds & five shillings.

For the Collett family see also:

<http://www.collettfamilyhistory.net/Part-52-The-England-to-Baltimore-and-Ohio-Line-Rev.12.htm>

LM: T{estamentum} Joanne Collett

In the name of God, Amen. The first day of August Anno Domini 1576 and in the 18th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth etc., I, Joan Collett of the parish of the Holy Trinity in Trinity Lane in London, late the wife of Humphrey Collett, late citizen of [sic] bowyer of London, deceased, being at this present whole of mind and memory and also in good health of body, God be thanked therefore, do declare, ordain and make this my present testament containing therein my only last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I bequeath, will and commend my soul to Almighty God the Father, my Creator, to his son, Jesus Christ, my only Saviour and Redeemer, and to the Holy Ghost, three persons and one eternal God, trusting and steadfastly believing to be saved and to have full pardon of all my sins by the only merits of my Saviour Christ;

My body to the earth from whence it came, to be buried where it shall please God to call me to his mercy at the discretion of mine executor under-named, to whom I refer the charges of my burial; notwithstanding I will he shall bestow thereon ten pounds or thereabouts;

And I give to some godly learned preacher for a sermon to be made at my burial six shillings eight pence;

Also I give to the livery of the said Company of Bowyers in London for a recreation or repast among them to be had twenty shillings, so that they accompany my corpse to the church;

Item, I will that all my debts shall be truly paid by my said executor;

Also I give and bequeath unto my son, Nicholas Collett, if he be living at the time of my decease, twenty pounds in money;

Also I give and bequeath unto my son, Robert Collett, one of my small silver pots parcel gilt;

Also I give and bequeath unto my son, John Collett, a dozen of silver spoons with apostles' heads, and to his wife my stone pot covered and footed with silver and gilt;

Also I give and bequeath to my daughter Pigion my nut set with silver and gilt and the cover thereunto belonging;

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<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Stephen Collett, the featherbed, bedstead, coverlet and the rest of the furniture thereto belonging in the chamber over the kitchen of my now dwelling-house wherein he now lieth;

Also I give to my daughter Slywright my plain hoop ring of gold which I am accustomed to wear;

And to my daughter Brend my other hoop ring of gold graven with chequerwork;

Also I give to my daughter Curtys if she shall be living at the time of my decease 20s in money;

Also I give and bequeath unto Thomas Peacock, Joan Peacock and Helen Peacock, children unto Agnes Wood, now wife of John Wood and daughter of my brother, Christopher Hunt, deceased, seven pounds in money, that is forty-six shillings eight pence apiece in lieu and recompense of so much money which they claim of my gift heretofore;

And I give to my son Robert Collett his wife ten shilling[s] to buy her a ring for a remembrance of me;

The rest of all my goods and chattels whatsoever not before given or bequeathed, after my debts paid and my funerals discharged, I do fully give and bequeath unto Peter Collett, my son, which Peter my son I make and constitute my full and sole executor of this my last will and testament;

And overseers of the same I make and appoint my said sons, Robert Collett and John Collett;

And as touching the order and disposition of all and singular my messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments with their appurtenances in the parish of St Saviour in Southwark in the county of Surrey and within the city of London, I make and declare my last will and testament thereof in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I give, will and devise unto my said son, Stephen Collett, his heirs and assigns forevermore all those my two messuages or tenements with their appurtenances within the said parish of St Saviour, thone whereof is called and known by the name of the sign of the Maidenhead; the other adjoineth over the south side thereof;

Also I give and devise unto the said Peter Collett, my son, his heirs and assigns forever more all that messuage or tenement with th' appurtenances wherein I now dwell in Trinity Lane aforesaid;

In witness whereof to this my present testament and last will I, the said Joan Collett, have put my hand and seal given the day and years first above-written.

Memorandum: That this last will and testament was read, sealed and subscribed the sixth day of August Anno 1576 in the presence and hearing of us, Thomas Wood, pewterer, Robert Preston, scrivener. By me, Thomas Wood. Et mei Thome Lucas servien{te}{?} dicti Scrivenor.

Probatum fuit suprascriptu{m} coram Mag{ist}ro Will{el}mo Drury legu{m} doctore Curie prerogatiue Cant{uariensis} Comissario apud London decimo sexto die mens{is} Iulij Anno D{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Quingentesimo Septuagesimo Nono Iuramento Edwardi Barker No{ta}rij pu{bli}ci procuratoris Petri Collett executoris in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento no{m}i{n}at{o} cui com{m}issa fuit admi{n}istrac{i}o bonoru{m} &c De bene &c iurat{i}

[=The above-written [+testament?] was proved before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the sixteenth day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-ninth by the oath of Edward Barker, notary public, proctor of Peter Collett, executor named in the same testament, to whom administrator was granted of all the goods etc., sworn to well etc.]