

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 9 February 1617 and proved 28 June 1617, of Margaret Lygon, mother of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon. See the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, TNA PROB 1/4 (original) and TNA PROB 11/127/771 (PCC copy).

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testatrix was the daughter of William Lygon (d. 29 September 1567), esquire, of Madresfield, Worcestershire, and Eleanor Dennis, the daughter of Sir William Dennis of Dirham, Gloucestershire, by his first wife, Anne Berkeley, the daughter of Sir Maurice Berkeley. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, p. 407. See also Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 23. For the will of William Lygon, see TNA PROB 11/50/246.

According to Richardson, the testatrix had seven brothers. However in two entails in his will, TNA PROB 11/50/246, William Lygon mentions only three sons:

-Richard Lygon (d.1584), his eldest son and heir, for whose will see TNA PROB 11/67/499;

-Thomas Lygon, who married Frances Dennis, by whom he had five sons and three daughters, including Katherine Lygon, mentioned in the will below as the wife of Robert Gerard;

-Ralph Lygon.

The testatrix' bequest to her nephew, Hugh Lygon, son of Hugh Lygon of Hanley Castle, suggests that she also had a brother, Hugh, who predeceased her, and may also have predeceased her father since he is not mentioned in her father's will.

The testatrix had three sisters:

-Cecily Lygon, who married firstly Edward Gorges (d. 29 August 1568), esquire, of Wraxall, Somerset, by whom she was the mother of Sir Edward Gorges and Sir Ferdinando Gorges (1568–1647). She married secondly John Vivian, esquire. See *Plantagenet Ancestry, supra*, p. 408 and *Magna Carta Ancestry, supra*, p. 24.

-Katherine Lygon (mentioned in the will below), who married Thomas Foliot of Pirton, Worcestershire. See *Plantagenet Ancestry, supra*, p. 408 and *Magna Carta Ancestry, supra*, p. 25.

-Elizabeth Lygon (d.1548 – 16 April 1598), also mentioned in the will below, who on 18 October 1569 married William Norwood (d. 23 September 1632), esquire, of

Leckhampton, Gloucestershire, son and heir of Henry Norwood (1523?-1556) by Katherine Throckmorton, the daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton (d.1581). See the will of Sir Robert Throckmorton, TNA PROB 11/63/176; the will of William Norwood, TNA PROB 11/163/627; *Plantagenet Ancestry, supra*, pp. 408-9, and *Magna Carta Ancestry, supra*, p. 25.

MARRIAGES AND ISSUE

Testatrix' first marriage

The testatrix married firstly, as his second wife, Sir Thomas Russell (d. 9 April 1574) of Strensham, by whom she had an only son, Thomas Russell, the overseer of Shakespeare's will. See the will of the testatrix' first husband, Sir Thomas Russell, TNA PROB 11/57/83, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/russell-sir-thomas-1520-74>

The testatrix' son, Thomas Russell (1570-1634), overseer of Shakespeare's will, married firstly, at Bruton on 7 September 1590, Katherine Bampffield (d. by 1596), the daughter of Hugh Bampffield, esquire, of North Cadbury, Somersetshire, and Cecily White, by whom he had two daughters who died young, and secondly, on 26 August 1603, Anne St. Leger (1555-1636), widow of Thomas Digges (c.1546 – 24 August 1595), and daughter of Sir Warham St. Leger (1525?-1597) by Ursula Neville (d.1575), fifth daughter of George Neville, 5th Baron Bergavenny. See the *ODNB* entries for Sir Warham St. Leger and Thomas Digges; Richardson, *supra*, Vol. II, p. 82 and Vol. III, p. 482; the will of Thomas Digges, dated 10 June 1591 and proved 1 September 1595, TNA PROB 11/86/204; the will of Sir Warham St Leger, dated 20 July 1593 and proved 28 January 1598, TNA PROB 11/91/61; the will of Thomas Russell, dated 3 October 1633 and proved 5 May 1634, TNA PROB 11/165/424; and Palmer, Alan and Veronica, *Who's Who in Shakespeare's England*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 209-10, at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=6BK1Vu6pw84C&pg=PA209&dq=Thomas+Russell#v=onepage&q=Thomas%20Russell&f=false>

By her husband's first marriage, the testatrix had a stepson and stepdaughter:

-Sir John Russell (1551-1593), who married, by 1575, Elizabeth Sheldon, the daughter of Ralph Sheldon of Beoley. Elizabeth Sheldon was the sister of Oxford's sister-in-law, Katherine Sheldon. See the will of Sir John Russell, TNA PROB 11/92/96; the will of Ralph Sheldon, TNA PROB 11/121/345; the will of Katherine (nee Sheldon) Trentham, TNA PROB 11/163/485; and the History of Parliament entry for Sir John Russell at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/russell-john-ii-1551-93>

-Mary Russell, who married, as his first wife, the testatrix' brother, Richard Lygon (d.1584) of Madresfield (see above).

Testatrix' second marriage

The testatrix married secondly, Sir Henry Berkeley (d.1601) of Bruton, son of Sir Maurice Berkeley (d. 11 August 1581) of Bruton and his first wife, Catherine Blount (c.1518 - 25 February 1559), daughter of William Blount (c.1478-1534), 4th Baron Mountjoy, by his third wife, Alice Keble (d. 8 June 1521), widow of Sir William Browne (d. 3 June 1514), Lord Mayor of London in 1513, and daughter of Henry Keble of St Mary Aldermanbury, Lord Mayor of London in 1510, by whom she had three sons and a daughter:

* **Sir Maurice Berkeley** (c.1577 – 1 May 1617, who married Elizabeth Killigrew, the daughter of Sir William Killigrew (d. 23 November 1622) and Margery Saunders (d. in or after 1623), daughter of Thomas Saunders (d.1565), gentleman, of Uxbridge, and widow firstly, of Robert Wolman (d.1571), and secondly, of John Leigh (d. 19 or 20 January 1576), esquire, son of Ralph Leigh (d. before 1563), and grandson of Ralph Leigh (d. 6 November 1509), esquire, and Joyce Culpeper, mother of Queen Katherine Howard. See Richardson, *supra*, Vol. IV, pp. 108-10; the will of Thomas Saunders, dated 7 July 1565 and proved 6 November 1565, TNA PROB 11/48/283; the will of Robert Wolman, mercer of London, dated 17 January 1571 and proved 2 February 1571, TNA PROB 11/53/53; the will of Margery (nee Saunders) Killigrew, dated 22 May 1623 and proved 14 June 1625, TNA PROB 11/146/44; the will of Sir Maurice Berkeley, dated 26 April 1617 and proved 28 July 1617, TNA PROB 11/30/179; the will of Elizabeth (nee Killigrew) Berkeley, dated 18 April 1626 and proved 23 May 1626, TNA PROB 11/149/253; and the History of Parliament entry for Sir Maurice Berkeley at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/berkeley-sir-maurice-1577-1617>

For Sir Maurice Berkeley, see also the will of Nicholas Saunders (d. 7 April 1605), esquire, TNA PROB 11/105/567.

* **Sir Henry Berkeley** (d.1657) of Yarlinton, Somerset, who married, before 12 February 1610, Elizabeth Neville, widow of William Glover, and daughter of Sir Henry Neville (1561/2–1615) of Billingbere, Berkshire, by Anne Killigrew (d.1632), the daughter of Sir Henry Killigrew (1525x8–1603) and Katherine Cooke (c.1542-1583), sister of Mildred (nee Cooke), Lady Burghley. After Sir Henry Berkeley's death, Elizabeth Neville married thirdly Thomas Duke. See the *ODNB* entry for Sir Henry Neville (1561/2–1615), and the History of Parliament entry for Sir Henry Berkeley at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/berkeley-sir-henry-1579-1667>

* **Sir Edward Berkeley** (d. before 3 February 1654) of Pylle, Somerset, who married, on 29 January 1616, Margaret Holland, the daughter and coheir of John Holland of Steyning, Sussex, by Susan Withens, daughter of the London alderman, Robert Withens;

* **Margaret Berkeley**, who married, at Bruton on 22 April 1600, Sir Lewis Pollard (1578 – 19 November 1641), 1st Baronet Pollard, of Kings Nympton, Devon, created a baronet 21 May 1627, by whom she had several children, including Sir Hugh Pollard (1603 – 27 November 1666), 2nd Baronet Pollard, Comptroller of the King's Household and Governor of Dartmouth, who married, as her second husband, Oxford's daughter, Bridget Vere (1584-1631), widow of Francis Norris (1579 – 31 January 1622), 1st Earl of Berkshire.

For the foregoing see also the *ODNB* entries for William Blount, 4th Baron Mountjoy, Sir Henry Killigrew; and Katherine (nee Cooke) Killigrew; Brown, James Roberts, "Jno. and Wm. Browne, Sheriffs and Lord Mayors of London", *Notes and Queries*, 7th series (London: John C. Francis, 1888), pp. 151–3; and Crisp, Frederick Arthur, ed., *Visitation of England and Wales*, 1911, Vol. IX, pp. 154-7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofengl30howa#page/154/mode/2up>

See also Hayward, Douglas L., ed., *The Registers of Bruton*, Vol. I, p. 11 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/registersofbruto60brut#page/10/mode/2up>

See also the pedigree of Pollard of Kings Nympton in Burke, John and John Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England*, (London: Scott, Webster and Geary, 1838), p. 418 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=K1kBAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA418>

See also the History of Parliament entry for Sir Hugh Pollard at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/member/pollard-sir-hugh-1610-66>

See also the entry for Sir Hugh Pollard at:

http://en.wikipedia.org.advanc.io/wiki/Sir_Hugh_Pollard,_2nd_Baronet

See also the record of the burial in Westminster Abbey of Sir Hugh Pollard in December 1666 in Chester, Joseph Lemuel, ed., *The Marriage, Baptismal and Burial Registers of the Collegiate Church or Abbey of St. Peter, Westminster*, (London, 1876), p. 164:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=0RAwAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA164>

For the foregoing see also Keen, Alan & Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator*, (London: Putnam, 1954), p. 118 and Chart 3; Hotson, Leslie, *I, William Shakespeare, Do Appoint Thomas Russell, Esquire* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), pp. 21-6, 29, 112-13, 124-7, 203, 210, 260 and pedigree chart; Phillimore, W.P.W., ed., *The Visitation of the County of Worcester Made in the Year 1569*, (London: Harleian Society, 1888), Vol. XXVII, pp. 90-1; the will of Sir Henry Berkeley, dated 30 May 1600 and proved 21 October 1601, TNA PROB 11/98/283; and the History of Parliament entry for Sir Henry Berkeley at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/berkeley-henry-ii-1547-1601>

For an earlier transcript of the testatrix' will, see 'Virginia Gleanings in England', *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (October 1910), pp. 440-1 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/jstor-4243091/4243091#page/n5/mode/2up>

RM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ne Margarete Barkley vid{ue}

[f. 216r] In the name of God, Amen. The ninth day of February in the years of the reign of our Sovereign Lord James by the grace of God of England, Scotland, France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith etc., that is to say, of England, France and Ireland the fourteenth and of Scotland the fiftieth, I, Dame Margaret Berkeley of Bruton in the county of Somerset, widow, being weak of body but of good and perfect memory, praise be given to Almighty God, do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First and principally I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, my Maker & Redeemer, and my body to be buried in the vault within the parish church of Bruton aforesaid the next day after my decease or as conveniently as shall be thought fit by mine executors if I depart this life at Wells in the said county; if not, then to be buried the next day after where it shall please God I shall depart this life;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Sir Maurice Berkeley, knight, my wedding ring which I had of his father, my late husband, Sir Henry Berkeley, knight, deceased, which ring he hath already, and all such household stuff as shall remain and be in my house at Bruton at the hour of my death not given and bequeathed;

Also I give and bequeath to my said son all my household stuff remaining and being in the lodge at Norwood Park in the county of Somerset praised at £40 in his father's inventory, which household stuff is in his possession already;

Item, I give and bequeath to my daughter-in-law, the Lady Elizabeth Berkeley, wife to my said son, Sir Maurice Berkeley, knight, my best border, which she hath already, and my best large damask tablecloth;

Item, I give to my son, Thomas Russell of Rushock in the county of Worcester, esquire, one basin and ewer of silver which was his father's, Sir Thomas Russell, deceased;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Sir Henry Berkeley, knight, the sum of one hundred pounds of current English money, which he hath already in his hands;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Edward Berkeley, esquire, my best scarlet bed in my best chamber at Wells, together with the furniture that belongs to him, that is the bedstead, the curtains and double valence of scarlet laced with crimson silk & fringe[d](?) with crimson silk, the bed and bolster, one pair of blankets, one rug, and one pair of new pillows;

Item, I give and bequeath to my daughter, Margaret Pollard, wife of Lewis Pollard of Kings Nympton in the county of Devon, esquire, one hundred pounds' worth of my plate;

Also I give and bequeath to my said daughter Pollard my great gold chain and my great pearl, both which are in her keeping already;

Also I give and bequeath to my said daughter Pollard my coach and my coach-horses, and my leading gelding, with all the furniture thereunto belonging, which she shall have presently after my decease, part of which plate before given is in my said daughter Pollard's keeping;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister, Katherine Foliot, the now wife of Thomas Foliot of Pirton in the county of Worcester, esquire, my best gown at the time of my decease if she happen to outlive me;

Item, I give and bequeath to my said daughter Pollard my second best gown;

[f. 216v] Item, I give and bequeath to my niece, Katherine Gerard, the wife of Robert Gerard of Sandford in the county of Somerset, gentleman, my third best gown;

Item, I give and bequeath to my grandchild, Elizabeth Pollard, daughter of the said Lewis and Margaret Pollard, the sum of two hundred pounds of current English money, which said sum of 2 hundred pounds is already in her father's hands, and my will and intent is that the before-mentioned sum of two hundred pounds shall remain and be in the keeping of her said father for her and to her only use till such time as she shall be married or accomplish the age of one and 20 years, & in the meantime to give her yearly allowance of the use of the said money towards her maintenance;

Item, I give and bequeath to my said grandchild, Elizabeth Pollard, presently after my decease my green mockado chest standing at the end of my cupboard in the drawing-

chamber at Wells, with all such things as shall be in the said chest at the hour of my death unsight or unseen;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, Hugh Lygon, the son of Hugh Lygon of Hanley Castle in the county of Worcester, esquire, the sum of threescore pounds of current English money presently upon my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mrs Moore of Wells one piece of stammell to make her a petticoat, containing two yards or thereabouts;

Item, I give and bequeath to Doctor Bourne of Wells 40s to bestow in a ring;

Item, I give and bequeath to Doctor Wright, treasurer of the church of Wells, 40s to bestow in a ring;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mr Henry Southworth 40s to bestow in a ring;

Item, I give & bequeath to Mrs Wright, the wife of Doctor Wright aforesaid, 40s to bestow in a ring with a death's head;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mrs Hughes of Wells 10s to be bestowed as aforesaid;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mrs James, widow of Wells aforesaid, 10s to be bestowed as aforesaid;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mrs Jane Southworth of Wells 10s;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mr Henry Southworth his wife ten shillings in rings with death's heads as aforesaid to be bestowed;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, William Cuffe, the sum of twenty pounds of current English money;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, William Cole, the sum of twenty pounds of current English money;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, Thomas Tyce(?) alias Rogers the sum of £10;

Item, I give & bequeath to my servant, William Lennis, the sum of £10;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, William Gillen(?), the sum of £5;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, Humphrey Greene, the sum of £5;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, Edward Labrum, the sum of £5;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, Thomas Bigges, the sum of three pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, Henry Shee, an Irishman, the sum of three pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, Dorothy Cole, the wife of William Cole aforesaid, the sum of five pounds of current English money and my little silver salt and four silver spoons and my new pewter at Bruton, which plate and pewter is in her keeping already, and the same to have presently after my decease;

Item, my will and intent is that my executors do pay those legacies given and bequeathed to my menservants as aforesaid within one quarter of a year next after my death;

Item, I give and bequeath to the rest of my maidservants which shall be dwelling in house with me at the time of my death one whole year's wages besides that which shall be due to them at the time of my decease, to be paid by mine executors within one month next after my death;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, William Lennis, my grey ambling nag;

Item, I give and bequeath to the town of Bruton towards the relief and maintenance of the poor within the said parish the sum of twenty pounds of current English money, to be distributed in such manner as my executors shall think most fittest;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor of the town of Wells aforesaid ten pounds of current English money, to be delivered by the discretion of my executors as is aforesaid;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor of the town of Great Witley in the county of Worcester the sum of £10 of current English money, to be delivered according to the discretion of my executors as aforesaid;

Item, my will and intent is that my now dwelling-house at Wells with all houses of office, gardens, orchards and close thereunto belonging shall be by my executors sold to the uttermost towards the payment of all those legacies in this my will given & bequeathed;

All and singular the residue of my jewels, plate, goods, chattels, debts, goods movable and unmovable not given nor bequeathed with all and singular such household stuff, utensils and implements as shall be remaining in my said house at Wells at the time of my decease, after my debts paid and the legacies in this my said will performed and my funeral discharged, I give and bequeath to my two sons, Sir Henry Berkeley, knight, and Edward Berkeley, esquire, whom I do ordain and make executors of this my last will and testament, hoping they will see this my said last will truly performed and my body decently buried;

And I utterly revoke & annul all and every former wills, testaments, legacies and bequests heretofore made and bequeathed;

In witness to this my present last will & testament I have set to my hand and seal the day and year first above-written. M.B.

Signed and sealed this my last will & testament in the presence of Henry Southworth, Francis Cottington, William Cole.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro domino Iohanne Benet milite Legum Doctor Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis magistrum Custode siue Commissario legitime constituto vicesimo octavo Die Mensis Iunii Anno domini millesimo sexcentesimo decimo septimo iuramento Henrici Barkely militis et Edwardi Barkley armigeri filiorum et executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum Quibus comissa fuit Administratio bonorum iurium et creditorum eiusdem defuncti De bene et fideliter administrando &c Ad sancta Dei Evangelia alias vigore Commissionis in ea parte emanat(?) Iuratis

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Sir John Benet, knight, Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the twenty-eighth day of the month of June in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred seventeenth by the oath of Henry Berkeley, knight, and Edward Berkeley, esquire, sons and executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the same deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., by force of a grant in that regard elsewhere issued.]