

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 24 January 1505 and proved 9 April 1505, of George Peckham, whose niece, Jane Drayton, was the mother of Thomas Wriothesley (1505-1550), 1st Earl of Southampton, grandfather of Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), 3rd Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

A Chancery suit, TNA C 1/75/68, provides an abbreviated pedigree of the Peckham family which suggests that the testator was the eldest son and heir of Peter (or Piers) Peckham (d.1501), esquire, the son of Robert Peckham, the son of Piers Peckham, and that the latter was the brother of John Peckham of Caversham, who had a daughter, Agnes, who was the mother of Robert Strangbou, gentleman. Another document in Latin dated 16 August 1455 and held by the Berkshire Record Office, D/EZ 125/36/2, mentions the earlier Piers Peckham and Robert Strangbou, and describes the earlier Piers Peckham as citizen and 'bladsmyth' of London.

Although the testator's father, Peter Peckham (d.1501), esquire, was of Denham, Buckinghamshire, a number of documents in the National Archives indicate that the Peckham family was originally from Kent.

In his Latin will, TNA PROB 11/12/315, Peter Peckham states that his first wife, Agnes, was buried at St Michael Bassishaw in London. Her maiden name is unknown, but may have been Crowton. Before she married Piers Peckham, she was the widow of John Broun or Browne, the son of Stephen Browne, Lord Mayor of London in 1439. See:

<http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/26th-may-1866/11/the-brownes>.

Agnes' first husband, John Broun, appears to have died young, predeceasing his father, and leaving two daughters, Rose Broun and Agnes Broun, who also appear to have died young.

For a 1463 indenture mentioning the marriages of Agnes firstly to John Browne and secondly to Peter Peckham (d.1501), see Myers, A.R., ed., *English Historical Documents 1327-1485*, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd., 1969; reissued Rutledge, 1996), pp. 1160-1 at:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=dL12K__XzoAC&pg=PA1160&lpg=PA1160&dq=%22Agnes%22+%22Piers+Pekham%22&source=bl&ots=jaqL1ljeXO&sig=3bA29mt8eptb1JUV2zB42V-Ystc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjLi8iNzOPSAhUUXWMKHbDbDHsQ6AEIGjAA#v=onepage&q=%22Agnes%22%20%22Piers%20Pekham%22&f=false.

Further evidence for Agnes' marriages to John Browne and Peter Peckham (d.1501) is found in an entry in the London Calendar of Letter-Books, which states that on 5 March 1465, Peter Peckham and Agnes, his wife, administrators of the goods of Rose and Agnes, daughters of John Broun, appeared at the Guildhall to acknowledge satisfaction for the third part of the goods and chattels of the said John Broun, appertaining to the said Rose and Agnes when alive. See Sharpe, Reginald R., ed., *Calendar of Letter-Books Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall*, (London: John Edward Francis, 1912), p. 58 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/lcalendaroflette00londuoft#page/58/mode/2up>.

For further evidence of Agnes' two marriages to John Broun and Peter Peckham, see TNA C 1/73/51, TNA C 1/28/143.

An original grant of arms made to Peter Peckham in 1494 is held by the College of Arms.

For the inquisition post mortem taken in Middlesex after the death of the testator's father, Peter Peckham (d.1501), see TNA C 142/15/93.

TESTATOR'S BROTHER AND SISTERS

In his will, the testator's father, Peter Peckham (d.1501), mentions two sons and three daughters. By his first marriage to Agnes, widow of John Broun, Peter Peckham had a son and a daughter:

* George Peckham, the testator.

* Joan Peckham, who married Robert Drayton, but appears to have died by the time her father, Peter Peckham, made his will in 1501. For two Chancery suits c.1475-1485 in which Peter Peckham sued his son-in-law(?), Robert Drayton, see TNA C 1/57/104 and TNA C 1/63/147. The testator is mentioned in the will of his brother-in-law, Robert Drayton. See TNA PROB 11/14/4.

By Robert Drayton, Joan Peckham had a son and a daughter, both mentioned in the testator's will below:

-Peter Drayton (d.1518), a cleric, for whose will, in which the chief beneficiary is his sister, Joan York, at that time the widow of William Wriothesley (d.1513?), York Herald, see TNA PROB 11/19/121.

-Jane Drayton (b.1482, d.1538?), who married firstly Richard Lucy, secondly William Wriothesley (d.1513?), York Herald, by whom she had two sons and two daughters, Thomas Wriothesley (1505-1550), 1st Earl of Southampton, Edward Wriothesley (who died young), Elizabeth Wriothesley (who also died young), and Anne Wriothesley (who married firstly Robert Breton and secondly Thomas Morrene), and thirdly a husband

surnamed Beverley, by whom she had two daughters, Ellen Beverley Pounce (d.1589) and Anne Beverley Knight Lawrence (d.1610), for whose wills see TNA PROB 11/74/301 and TNA PROB 11/116/231. For notes written by Jane Drayton Lucy Wriothesley Beverley (b.1482, d.1538?) in her own hand recording her own birthdate, that of her brother, Peter Drayton, and the birthdates of her four children by William Wriothesley (d.1513?), see BL Add. Charter 16194.

By his second marriage to Elizabeth Eburton, the daughter of Henry Eburton (for his will, see TNA PROB 11/10/197), the testator's father, Peter Peckham (d.1501), had a son and two daughters:

* Sir Edmund Peckham (b. in or before 1495, d. 29 March 1564), who married Anne Cheyne or Cheney, the daughter of John Cheyne of Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire. For Sir Edmund Peckham see the *ODNB* entry, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/peckham-sir-edmund-1495-1564>.

* Margaret Peckham, unmarried in 1501.

* Margery Peckham, unmarried in 1501.

After the death of the testator's father, Peter Peckham (d.1501), Elizabeth Eburton married John Micklowe, for whose will, proved 29 July 1522, see TNA PROB 11/20/363.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

The testator's executor was the judge and legal writer, Sir Anthony Fitzherbert (c.1470-1538), who in 1507 married Dorothy Willoughby (died c.1507), second daughter of Sir Henry Willoughby (1451-1528) of Wollaton, Nottinghamshire. See:

[https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/collectionsindepth/family/middleton/biographies/biographyofsirhenrywilloughby\(1451-1528\).aspx](https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/collectionsindepth/family/middleton/biographies/biographyofsirhenrywilloughby(1451-1528).aspx).

RM: Test{amentum} Georgij Pekh{a}m

In the name of God, Amen. The 24th day of the month of January the year of Our Lord God 1500 and 4 and in the 20th year of the reign of King Henry the 7th, I, George Peckham, clerk, being in my good and whole mind, laud and praising be unto Almighty God, make and ordain this my present testament in manner and form following:

First and principally I bequeath and recommend my soul to Almighty God, my Maker and Redeemer, to his most Blessed Mother and Virgin, Our Lady Saint Mary, and to all the saints in heaven;

And I will that my body my [sic] buried in the parish church of Saint Michael in Bassishaw of London where the body of my mother, Agnes Peckham, lieth buried, as nigh unto her grave and sepulture as can be thought convenient;

And for my sepulture there so to be had I give and bequeath 20s;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of the same parish church 3s 4d;

Item, I will that mine executors underwritten provide and ordain 8 new torches and 4 new tapers of wax of a convenient assize to burn about my body during the time of mine exequies for me to be done, and I will that 12 poor men hold the same 8 torches and 4 tapers as long as my dirge & Mass of Requiem endureth, and I bequeath unto every of the same 12 poor men for their labour in that behalf and to pray devoutly for my soul 4d;

Item, I will that I have a solemn high dirge and Mass of Requiem by note done for my soul in the said parish church of Saint Michael by 12 honest priests of good conversation, and I bequeath unto every of the same priests being present at all the same dirge & Mass of Requiem 6d;

Item, I will that there be distributed and dealt after my decease in bread amongst the [f. 221v] poor prisoners being in every of the prison-houses underwritten, that is to say, Newgate, Ludgate, the 2 Counters being in Bread Street and the Poultry, and in the King's Bench and Marshalsea in Southwark by the good discretion of mine executors when they shall think most needful the sum of 30s;

Item, I bequeath to Master Peter Drayton, my sister's son, to pray for my soul, my gown furred with foin-backs;

Item, I bequeath to Joan Lucy, sister of the same Peter, to pray for my soul, my gown furred with foin-wombs;

Item, I bequeath toward the building of the chapel in Grays Inn now decayed where I have had relief and comfort in my most need 40s;

Item, I bequeath to Mr Anthony Fitzherbert my register of written hand, limned with gold;

Item, I bequeath to John Spylman a base lute, the which he hath in his possession;

Item, I bequeath to little Thomas Forman my gown of tawny medley lined with new white cotton;

Item, I bequeath to the same Thomas Forman towards a fustian coat for his own wearing 3s 4d;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Farman, brother to Sir [-Sir] John Farman, my black gown lined with black, the which I use to wear daily;

Item, I bequeath to the same Richard Farman towards a doublet for his wearing 4s;

Item, I bequeath unto Katherine Farman, wife of the said Richard Farman, 3s 4d;

The residue of all my goods, chattels and debts, whatsoever they be, above not bequeathed, after my debts that I owe of right truly paid, my funeral expenses well and honestly done, and this my present testament and all things concerning the same truly fulfilled, I will that mine executors underwritten set unto the most advantage and profit that can be made thereof, and I will that the money thereof coming shall be distributed and disposed in deeds and works of mercy, pity and charity most needful to the pleasure of Almighty God and salvation of my soul;

Also it is my will, mind and intent that mine executors hereunder written shall have, hold, occupy and possede to them and their assigns for one whole year next after my decease all the rents, revenues and profits coming and growing of all my lands and tenements with their appurtenances set and lying in Coleman Street in London to this intent, therewith to perform and fulfil this my present testament and my legacies therein contained and to bear and pay all other charges concerning or appertaining;

And after the same so done, I give and bequeath all the same lands and tenements with th' appurtenances unto the parson of the parish church of Saint Michael in Bassishaw in London and to the wardens of the same church and their successors forever more, like as I have ordained, willed and devised in my last will hereafter following;

And of this my present testament I make and ordain mine executors Sir John Forman, priest, and Anthony Fitzherbert, gentleman;

And I revoke and utterly disannul all testaments, wills, legacies and grants by me afore this time in any wise named or made, and I will that this my present testament and executors therein named shall stand in full strength and effect, and this to be my very testament and last will, and none other.

Probatum fuit suprascript^{um} test^{amentu}m coram d^{omi}no apud Lamehith nono die mensis Aprilis Anno dominj Mill^{es}imo quingeⁿtesimo quinto Iur^{amento} dominj Ioh^{ann}is fforman cap^{illa}nj executoris in h^{uius}mo^di test^{ament}o no^miⁿati Ac approbat^{um} et insinuat^{um} Et com^missa fuit administracio o^{mn}i^um bonor^{um} et debit^{orum} dicti defuncti prefato executori De bene et fideliter Administrand^o Ac de pleno et fideli Inueⁿtario citra f^{estu}m Penthec^{oste}p^{ro}x^{imum} futur^{um} exhibend^o Necnon de plano et vero co^mpoto reddend^o

ad s{an}c{t}a dei eu{a}ng{elia} iurat{o} Res{er}uat{a} p{otes}tate si{mi}lem
com{m}issione{m} faciend{i} Anthonio ffitzherbert executori etiam in h{uius}mo{d}i
test{ament}o no{m}i{n}ato cum ven{er}it &c

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at Lambeth on the ninth day of the month of April in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifth by the oath of Sir John Forman, chaplain, executor named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all the goods and debts of the said deceased to the forenamed executor, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory before the feast of Pentecost next to come, and also to render a plain and true account, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to Anthony Fitzherbert, executor also named in the same testament, when he shall have come etc.]