

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 29 September 1570 and proved 23 November 1570, of Anne Vernon, whose half-brother, John Vernon (d.1591), was the father of Elizabeth Vernon, wife of Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), 3rd Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

The testatrix was the daughter of George Vernon (d.1554) of Hodnet, Shropshire, by his second wife, Mary (nee Lacon).

The testatrix' mother, Mary (nee Lacon), married firstly Thomas Acton (d. 2 January 1547), esquire, of Sutton, Worcestershire. By her mother's first marriage the testatrix had a half-sister, Joyce Acton (1532 – 10 February 1596), who married Sir Thomas Lucy (d. 7 July 1600) of Charlecote, Warwickshire, from whose park William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon is alleged to have poached deer.

For the inscription on the monument of Joyce (nee Acton) Lucy, see Wilson, James G., 'Stratford-upon Avon', in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. XXIII, No. CXXXVI, September 1861, p. 445 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=fm0-AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA445&lpg=PA445&dq=%22Joyce+Lucy%22+%22inscription%22&source=bl&ots=0S7OZT7LWK&sig=uDqLGK08Ymcj9w4eVUuIMISghwg&hl=en&sa=X&ei=kEXZU8iGOub6igKFyoGYDg&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22Joyce%20Lucy%22%20%22inscription%22&f=false>

The testatrix' mother married secondly George Vernon (d.1554), who, by his first marriage to Elizabeth Pigott, had two sons, Richard Vernon (d.1560?), who died young without issue, and John Vernon (d.1591). See the pedigree of Vernon (which, however, does not show the second marriage of George Vernon (d.1554) to Mary Lacon) in Grazebrook, George and John Paul Rylands, eds., *The Visitation of Shropshire Taken in the Year 1623*, Part II, (London: Harleian Society, 1889), Vol. XXIX, pp. 472-4 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationshrop01grazgoog#page/n202/mode/2up>.

By her second husband, George Vernon (d.1554), the testatrix' mother had two sons, George Vernon (d.1604) and Edward Vernon (d.1616), and two daughters, the testatrix and her sister, Dorothy Vernon (d.1599).

For the will of the testatrix' mother, Mary (nee Lacon) Acton Vernon (d. 27 April 1563), see TNA PROB 11/46/222. For the will of the testatrix' father, George Vernon (d.1554), see TNA PROB 11/37/222. For the will of the testatrix' brother, George Vernon (d.1604), see TNA PROB 11/104/161. For the will of the testatrix' brother, Edward Vernon (d.1616), see TNA PROB 11/128/313. For the will of the testatrix' sister, Dorothy Vernon (d.1599), see TNA PROB 11/93/301.

In her will the testatrix' mother directed that her two daughters, the testatrix, Anne Vernon, and her sister, Dorothy Vernon, be placed in the care of her daughter, Joyce (nee Acton) Lucy (1532 – 10 February 1596), and her son-in-law, Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote:

And the said nine hundred marks to be paid within one year next after my decease by my son, George Vernon, who I will shall only administer my goods and chattels unto the hands of my son-in-law, Thomas Lucy, and Joyce Lucy, my daughter, to the use, behoof and preferment of my said 2 daughters' marriages, whom I will shall have the rule, custody and government as well of my said daughters as of their said £900 marks money till it shall fortune either of them to be married or else to be of th' age of 21 years, and in the meantime I will that my said son and daughter Lucy [] to use and set the said £900 marks to the best profit and advantage of my said 2 daughters.

LM: T{estamentum} Anne Vernon

In the name of God, Amen. The 29th day of September anno d{omi}ni 1570, I, Anne Vernon of Charlecote in the county of Warwick, gentlewoman, being sick in body but whole of mind and memory, do ordain and make this to be my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First I give and bequeath my soul to Almighty God, trusting by the merits of Christ's passion to be saved and to be one of his elect number;

Item, I give and bequeath my body to be buried in the church of Charlecote;

Item, I do ordain and make to be executor of this my testament and last will my brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Lucy, knight;

Item, I give unto my sister [=half-sister], my Lady Lucy, my border or upper billiment of goldsmith's work, to have th' use thereof during her life, and after her decease I bequeath the same unto my niece, Anne Lucy, her daughter;

Item, I give farther unto my said sister, my Lady Lucy, one little gold ring being made like unto hand in hand;

Item, I give farther unto my nephew, Thomas Lucy, one cambric handkerchief edged with black silk;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my nephew, Thomas Lucy, and to my niece, Anne, his sister, out of such money as was bequeathed unto me by my late mother, deceased, one hundred marks, to be equally divided betwixt them, and the said sum to be bestowed of

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one cupboard of plate or else upon fair hangings to that value, and those to be bestowed in the great chamber at Sutton;

Item, I give unto my brother, George Vernon, one ring of gold enameled which was my late mother's;

Item, I give unto my brother, Edward Vernon, one hundred marks, to be paid to him out of the said sum of money which was bequeathed unto me by my late mother, deceased;

Item, I give and bequeath farther unto my said brother, Edward Vernon, twenty marks of lawful English money which remaineth in th' hands of my brother, Sir Thomas Lucy, knight;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my niece, Anne Lucy, a gold ring enameled with murrey colour;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister, Dorothy Vernon, all the rest of my money unbequeathed which was given unto me by my late mother;

Item, I bequeath farther unto my said sister, Dorothy, my little chain of gold with two of my best gowns and kirtles;

Item, I farther give unto my said sister, Dorothy Vernon, 2 of my best partlets, one pair of drawn sleeves unwrought, and one new coif of drawn-work, my best petticoat, my cloak and safe-guard;

Item, I give and bequeath unto her two little caskets, one coffer, certain samplers, 2 smocks, and 2 yerd [=yard?] kerchiefs, all which things were my late mother's;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my niece, Anne Lucy, and to my cousin, Martha Lucy, all the rest of my linen, to be equally divided betwixt them, and the choice thereof to be taken by my said niece, Anne Lucy;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Mistress Joan Jennings one crown of gold, one gown, either of black damask or russet taffety, to be taken at her choice, with one petticoat of red mockado, one partlet, and a pair of ruffs edged with black and white silk, one French hood, one old crepine;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Mary Nocke one straight-bodied gown of mockado, one partlet edged with black lace of the coarse sort;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Margery Bell half a crown in money, my old mockado gown, and one old partlet plain;

Item, I will that the legacy before bequeathed unto my brother, Edward Vernon, remain in th' hands of my brother, Sir Thomas Lucy, knight, till my said brother, Edward, come to th' age of 21 years, and then my said brother to receive the same;

Witnesses hereof: Martin Pursey, George Burdette, Joan Jennings, with other.

Probatum fuit Testamentum huiusmodi coram Domino Cantuariensis Archiepiscopo xxiiio die mensis Novembris Anno Domini 1570 Iuramento magistri Christopheri Robinson Notarij publici procuratoris Domini Thome Lucye Militis Executoris in huiusmodi Testamento nominati Cui comissa fuit Administratio omnium et singulorum bonorum dicte defuncte De bene & iurato

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury on the 23rd day of the month of November in the year of the Lord 1570 by the oath of Master Christopher Robinson, notary public, proctor of Sir Thomas Lucy, knight, executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods of the said deceased, sworn to well etc.]