

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 7 January 1568 and proved 17 October 1570, of William Blackwell, father of Anne (nee Blackwell) Bacon, wife of the 16th Earl's bailiff of Lavenham, Thomas Bacon (d.1577), who held leases from Oxford. The testator, his daughter, Anne (nee Blackwell) Bacon, and his grandson, Mathy or Matthew Bacon of Gray's Inn, are all 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 for the purchaser's and vendor's copies of the indenture, respectively).

See also the Loseley manuscripts at:

<http://titania.folger.edu/findingaids/dfoloseley2002.xml>

*L.b.391*

*Blackwell, William. d. ca. 1569. Letter, signed. To Sir Thomas Cawarden. London. June 21, 1554.*

*Blackwell says that the Bishop of Norwich (Thomas Thirlby, later Bishop of Ely) wishes to buy a piece of ground in the Blackfriars which adjoins his property, that he is sending a deed drawn up for Cawarden's signature, "together with his saide Originall draughte thereof in paper". Shakespeare later bought the house erected over the great gate leading to Mr. Blackwell's mansion house.*

For the will of the testator's wife, Margaret (nee Campion) Blackwell (d.1586), see TNA PROB 11/69, ff. 284-5. For the will of the testator's father-in-law, Thomas Campion (d.1539), see TNA PROB 11/27, f. 247. For the will of the testator's brother-in-law, William Campion (d.1576), see TNA PROB 11/58, ff. 230-2. For the will of the testator's second son, Thomas Blackwell (d.1573), see TNA PROB 11/55, f. 23. For the will of the testator's son-in-law, Thomas Bacon (d.1577), see TNA PROB 11/59, ff. 271-2. For the will of the testator's grandson, Mathy or Matthew Bacon (d.1639), see TNA PROB 11/180, ff. 413-14. For the will of the testator's son-in-law, William Walpole (d.1587), see TNA PROB 11/71, ff. 313-14. The testator's daughter Saintes or Sence Blackwell married Matthew Draper on 13 June 1559, and was buried 24 August 1571. For the will of the testator's son-in-law, Matthew Draper (d.1577), see TNA PROB 11/59, ff. 254-5. For further information on the Draper family see *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, Vol. III, (London: John Bowyer Nichols, 1836), pp. 150-1, available online.

For further information on the testator's family, see:

(1) <http://histfam.familysearch.org/getperson.php?personID=I68550&tree=London>.

(2) Jessopp, Augustus, *One Generation of a Norfolk House*, (Norwich: Miller and Leavins, 1878), pp. 117-29, available online at <http://books.google.com/books?oe=UTF-8&id=fjI2AAAAMAAJ&q=blackwell#v=snippet&q=blackwell&f=false>.

(3) Questier, Michael C., *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 319-320. Questier states that the Blackwells were retainers of the Earls of Northumberland, and that the testatrix's son, Thomas Blackwell, was the 7th Earl's steward and receiver. Note that Questier mistakenly states that the Archpriest George Blackwell (1547-1613) 'was one of the sons of Margaret Blackwell'. However as indicated in the will of Thomas Blackwell (see reference above), Margaret Blackwell's son George was dead by 1573.

RM: Will{el}mi Blackwell

In the name of God, Amen. The 7th day of January in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred threescore and 7th, I, William Blackwell of London, gentleman, being in good and perfect health of my body and also of good and safe mind and memory, thanked be Almighty God, do make and ordain this my testament and last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I bequeath and recommend my soul unto the infinite mercy of Almighty God, my Creator, Saviour and Redeemer, and to the most Blessed and Immaculate Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Our Lady Saint Mary the Virgin, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body I bequeath to his natural resting place, the earth, to be buried where it shall seem to mine executrice hereafter named meet and convenient;

And for my tithes and oblations negligently or otherwise forgotten or withholden, I give and bequeath to the parson of the parish church of Saint Andrews in the ward of Castle Baynard whereof I am a parishioner 3s 4d;

Item, I give to every poor godchild that [+I] shall have living at the day of my death, 12d;

Item, I give to my brother-in-law, Edward Warton [=Wharton?], gentleman, a black coat, and to his wife a black gown;

Item, I will that my said executrice shall give and bestow for me 12 black gowns with hoods, that is to say, 6 of them to 6 men, whereof I will my son, Edward Blackwell, my son Bacon, my son Draper, my son Walpole and my brother Campion to be five, if it shall please them to use the same at my burial as mourners, the other 6 to the 6 women hereunder named that shall then likewise mourn for me after the accustomed manner, that is to say, my said son Edward's wife, my daughter Bacon, my daughter Draper, my daughter Walpole, my cousin, Ursula Patrick, and my sister Campion, if they shall be living and be contented so to mourn, and to every of my children and servants that I shall

have at the time of my decease that shall not be accounted any of the said 12 mourners I give and bequeath a black gown or a black coat at and by the discretion of my said executrice;

Item, I will that my said executrice at the time of my burial or very shortly after shall distribute and give or cause to be given to the poor people of the places hereafter mentioned five pounds, that is to say, to those that shall resort to the place where I shall depart this present life at the time of my burial or before, 40s by penny dole or otherwise by her discretion, to the prisoners of either of the Counters in London 5s in bread, to the prisoners in Ludgate 5s in bread, and to the prisoners in Newgate 5s in bread, to the poor people of Edgware in the county of Middlesex where I was born, 20s in ready money, to be given to the poor householders there by eight pence apiece or more or less by the discretion of my said executrix, to the poor people of Hendon in the said county of Middlesex, 6s 8d, to the poor people of Enfield in the same county, 6s 8d, and to the poor people of Syverdestone and Waltham Holy Cross in the county of Essex, 6s 8d;

Item, I give and bequeath to the Right Reverend Father in God and my most singular good Lord, Thomas Thirlby, late Bishop of Ely, for a poor token or remembrance of good heart and will towards his Lordship, one ring of gold of the value of five marks, and to my cousin, Henry Thirlby, son of my cousin Thomas Thirlby, his Lordship's brother, I give and bequeath 40s, and to every other child of my said cousin Thomas I give 10s, and to James Parkyns and Alexander Graunt [=Grant], my said Lord's servants, I give and bequeath 20s, viz., to either of them ten shillings;

Item, I give to John Arland [=Ireland?], my sister's son, twenty shillings;

Item, I give to every of my said son Edward Blackwell's children twenty shillings, and to my sister Ewer I give twenty shillings, and to every of her children 20s, to every of the children of my cousin Henry Spurling, deceased, and of his sister, now wife of Richard Nicoll of Rydewaye, 10s, and to every of my said son Bacon's children born of the body of Anne, my daughter, his wife, 20s, and to every of his other children 10s, and to my cousin Agnes Spurling, widow, 10s;

The residue of all my part of my movable goods, chattels and money, the same my whole goods, chattels and money, after my debts paid and mine ordinary funeral charges borne and allowed, divided according to the laudable custom of the said City of London into three equal parts, I wholly give and bequeath in manner and form following, that is to say:

To my wife, one hundred pounds;

To every of my sons, Thomas, William, George and Richard, such portion and so much of my said part as shall make up every of their parts and portions of my said goods one hundred pounds;

And to my daughter, Margaret, I do also give and bequeath of my said part and portion so much as shall make up her part and portion of my said goods [ ] to her comfort and

advancement in marriage, so always that she do use and behave herself honestly and obediently towards her mother and do not marry or contract matrimony with any person without the consent and goodwill of her said mother;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my Company of the Scriveners, 26s 8d;

Item, where my said son, Edward, standeth and is bound to me by his obligation bearing date the 7th day of April in the 5th year of the reign of our said Sovereign Lady the Queen's Majesty that now is in the sum of one hundred and forty pounds for the sure payment of one hundred twenty-seven pounds and ten shillings by ten pounds by year, to be paid at the four usual feasts of payment of the year by even portions, as by the condition of the said obligation more plainly it doth appear, I do clearly remit, release and forgive to him, the said Edward, his executors and administrators, by this my last will and testament the moiety or one-half of all that and as much of the said sum of £127 10s as shall fortune to remain and be due unto me at the day of my death;

And as for and concerning the disposition, ordering and bestowing of such poor lands and tenements as it hath pleased the goodness of God to send me which I have not already or shall not otherwise give, dispose and bestow, I will and bequeath to the above-named Margaret, my wife, my two parcels of land or meadow with their appurtenances commonly called Dooles lying and being in the common field within the parish of Hendon in the county of Middlesex called Sheveshill, to have, hold and enjoy the same to her and her assigns during her natural life;

Item, I give and bequeath to Thomas Blackwell, my second son, after the decease of my said wife, all that my manor, lands, tenements and hereditaments with their appurtenances in Epping in the county of Essex called or known by the name of Campions, and also all mine own mansion house with all the meses or tenements thereunto adjoining, with all and singular their appurtenances set, lying or being either within the parish of Saint Andrew in the ward of Castle Baynard in the said City of London or else within any other parish or ward of the same City, to have and to hold the said manor and other the premises with their appurtenances in Epping and London aforesaid immediately after the decease of his said mother to him, the said Thomas Blackwell, his heirs and assigns, forever;

Item, I give and wholly bequeath after the decease of my said wife, to George Blackwell, my fourth son, and to his heirs and assigns forever all that my farmhouse or messuage, with all and singular the lands, tenements and hereditaments thereunto belonging now in the several holdings or occupations of Robert Mershe the younger, William Rolf and John Mersh the younger of Hendon in the county of Middlesex, yeomen, or of their assigns, set, lying and being in the same parish of Hendon, and also those two parcels of land or meadow of mine with their appurtenances lying and being in the said parish of Hendon in the common field there called Sheveshill which I before by this my present last will and testament have given and bequeathed to Margaret, my wife, for term of her life, to have and to hold all the same lands, tenements and hereditaments with all and singular their

appurtenances immediately after the decease of his said mother to him, the said George Blackwell, and to his heirs and assigns forever;

Item, I give and wholly bequeath to Richard Blackwell, my youngest son, after the decease of my said wife, his mother, all my lands and tenements with their appurtenances set, lying and being within the parish of Hendon aforesaid which now are in the several holdings and occupations of John Gibbes, Robert Mershe th' elder and Robert Rippen, yeomen, or of their assigns, to have and to hold all the same lands and tenements with their appurtenances immediately after the decease of his said mother to him, the said Richard, and his heirs and assigns forever;

And of this my present testament and last will I make and ordain my said well-beloved wife, Margaret, my sole executrice, to whom I wholly give and bequeath all the residue of my goods and chattels, whatsoever they be, not before by this my last will and testament given or bequeathed, not doubting but that she of her good conscience and for the love she beareth towards me will bestow some portion thereof in charitable deeds for the comfort of my soul, my friends' souls, and hers, and all Christian souls;

And of the same my said last will and testament I do make and ordain my said son, Thomas Blackwell, mine overseer, to whom I give and bequeath for and in consideration of such pains as my faithful trust is that he will take in helping forward my said wife for the due and quiet execution of this my last will and testament, five marks;

In witness whereof I have sealed and subscribed these presents with mine own hand the day and year first above-written in the presence of the persons hereunder named. Matthew Draper, Thomas Went, Richard Burne, Richard Pyckering, Robert Hartford, Richard Blake.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentu{m} cora{m} Domino Cant{uariensis} Archie{piscop}o apud London xvij die mens{is} Octobris Anno d{omi}ni mill{esi}mo qui{n}gen{tesim}o lxxo Iurament{o} ffrancisci Clerke Notarij p{ubli}ci p{ro}cur{ator}is Margaret{e} Rel{i}c{te} et ex{ecutricis} in h{uius}mo{d}i testament{o} no{m}i{n}at{e} Cui com{m}issa fuit administrac{i}o om{n}i{um} bonor{um} d{i}c{t}i defunct{i} de bene &c Ad sancta dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{i}

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the 17th day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 70th by the oath of Francis Clerke, notary public, proctor of Margaret, relict and executrix named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all the goods of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well, etc.]