

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 1 January 1590 and proved 16 January 1590, of George Carleton (1529-1590) of Overstone, Northamptonshire, the second husband of 'Mistress Crane' at whose manor of East Molesey across the Thames from Hampton Court Palace the first of the Marprelate tracts was printed on a secret press by Robert Waldegrave in October 1588.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was the second son of John Carleton of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, and Brightwell Baldwin, Oxfordshire, and Joyce Welbeck. The testator's mother, Joyce Welbeck, was the daughter of Richard Welbeck and Margaret Culpepper (b. about 1481), the daughter of Richard Culpepper (b. about 1430, d. 4 October 1484), esquire, of Oxenhoath (in West Peckham), Kent, by his second wife, Isabel Worsley (b. about 1460, d. 18 April 1527), the daughter of Otewell Worsley of Southwark, Surrey. The testator's maternal grandmother, Margaret Culpepper (b. about 1481), was the aunt of Henry VIII's Queen, Katherine Howard, and of Oxford's friend, Sir George Howard. See the *ODNB* entry for George Carleton; Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, vol. II, p. 242 and Vol. IV, p. 107; Burke, John, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry*, (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), vol. II, p. 1309; and Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Northamptonshire*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1887), p. 9 at:

<http://archive.org/stream/visitationsofnor00harvrich#page/8/mode/2up>.

The testator's elder brother, Anthony Carleton (d. 18 January 1576) of Brightwell Baldwin, married as his second wife, Joyce Goodwin, widow of Robert Saunders (d.1559) and sister of Sir John Goodwin (d.1596/7), by whom he was the father of Bridget Carleton, who married Sir Hercules Underhill, from whom William Shakespeare of Stratford purchased New Place, and of the diplomat, Sir Dudley Carleton (1574-1632), Viscount Dorchester. For the will of Anthony Carleton, see TNA PROB 11/58/192.

MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN

The testator married firstly, in 1559, Audrey Gainsford, the daughter of Sir John Gainsford (d.1540) of Crowhurst, Surrey, by his fifth wife, Audrey Shaa, daughter of Sir John Shaa (died c.1503), Lord Mayor of London, and widow successively of George Taylor (died c.1543) of Lingfield, Surrey, and George Harper (d.1558) of Sutton, Kent. She died early in 1560. See the will of Sir John Gainsford (TNA PROB 11/28/264); the will of George Taylor (TNA PROB 11/30/20); the will of Sir George Harper (TNA PROB 11/42A/75); and French, G.R., "A Brief Account of Crowhurst Church, Surrey, and Its Monuments", *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, (London: Lowell Reeve & Co., 1865), Vol. III, pp. 39–62.

The testator married secondly, Elizabeth Mohun (d. 1587), the daughter of Walter Mohun of Overstone, Northamptonshire, and widow of Edward Cope (d.1557), esquire, of Hardwick, Oxfordshire, by whom he had a son, Castle Carleton, and two daughters, Elizabeth Carleton, who married Anthony Berners of Thoby, Essex, and Joyce Carleton, who married a husband surnamed Plumsted. See the will of Edward Cope, dated 20 June 1557 and proved 28 July 1557, TNA PROB 11/39/306, and the Carleton pedigree in Turner, William Henry, ed., *The Visitations of the County of Oxford*, (London: Harleian Society, 1871), pp. 122-4.

The testator married thirdly Elizabeth Hussey, the ‘Mistress Crane’ of the Marprelate tracts. Elizabeth Hussey was the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Hussey (d.1546) of Linwood, Lincolnshire, by his second wife, Jane Stydolf, the daughter of Thomas Stydolf of Surrey. Her father was a younger brother of John Hussey (executed 29 June 1537), 1st Baron Hussey of Sleaford. Her paternal grandparents were William Hussey (d.1495), Chief Justice of the King’s Bench, and Elizabeth Berkeley, the daughter of Thomas Berkeley of Wymondham, Leicestershire. For the will of Elizabeth Hussey’s father, Sir Robert Hussey (d.1546) of Linwood, see TNA PROB 11/31/244. For the will of Elizabeth Hussey’s brother, Charles Hussey (d.1587), in which Elizabeth and her daughter Mary are both left bequests, see TNA PROB 11/70/89. For the will of Elizabeth Hussey’s brother, Nicholas Hussey (d.1551) of Gray’s Inn, see TNA PROB 11/34/459. See also the Hussey pedigree in Maddison, A.R., *Lincolnshire Pedigrees* (London: Harleian Society, 1908), pp. 526-30 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/lincolnshirepedi51madd#page/526/mode/2up>

See also ‘The Hussey Manuscript’ at:

http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~gowenrf/husseyms_003.html

Elizabeth Hussey’s first husband was Anthony Crane (d.1583), Master of the Queen’s Household, for whose will see TNA PROB 11/65/507. See also the will of Francis Clopton (d.1559), who married Anthony Crane’s niece, Bridget Crane, TNA PROB 11/42B/359.

The printing of Martin Marprelate’s *Epistle* at Elizabeth Crane’s manor of East Molesey resulted in Star Chamber proceedings against her on 17 May 1590. According to the *ODNB*, she was fined 1000 marks for refusing the oath *ex officio* and a further £500 for sheltering the secret press, and was confined during the Queen’s pleasure, although the records do not reveal how long she remained in prison. Her then husband, George Carleton, was called before the Privy Council in April 1589 and ordered to attend daily until otherwise advised. His death in January 1590 forestalled further proceedings against him if any were intended. For the identification of Elizabeth Hussey as ‘Mistress Crane’, see McCorkle, Julia Norton, ‘A Note concerning “Mistress Crane” and the Martin Marprelate Controversy’, *The Library* 1931 s4-XII(3):276-283. For the will of Elizabeth (nee Hussey) Crane’s brother, Charles Hussey (died c.1586), in which she and her daughter, Mary Crane, are both left bequests, see TNA PROB 11/70/89.

The testator's involvement with the publication of the Marprelate tracts is described in the *ODNB*:

In the last year of his life Carleton's connections with the tightly knit puritan gentry of the midlands involved him in the puritan literary conspiracy of the Marprelate tracts. Also in 1589 he married Elizabeth Crane, daughter of Sir Robert Hussey of Linwood, Lincolnshire, and widow of Anthony Crane of St Martin-in-the-Fields. It was at her house at East Molesey, Surrey, that the first Marprelate tracts were printed, and she was to be heavily fined in the Star Chamber for her involvement. The Marprelate press then moved to Fawsley, the Northamptonshire seat of Sir Richard Knightley, an enthusiast not entirely compos mentis, whose affairs were in Carleton's hands. Several elusive references in the tracts themselves suggest that Carleton's involvement in this illicit venture may have been more than merely managerial.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

Sir Anthony Cope (1548-x50-1614), referred to in the will by the testator as his 'son', was the son of the testator's second wife, Elizabeth (nee Mohun) Cope Carleton (d.1587), and thus the testator's stepson. Another of the testator's stepsons was Sir Walter Cope (1553?-1614), gentleman usher and later secretary to Lord Burghley, an official in the Court of Wards by 1574, and a trusted friend of Lord Burghley's son, Sir Robert Cecil. For further details of the testator's strongly Puritan sympathies and those of his stepson, Sir Anthony Cope (1548-x50-1614), see the entries for both men in the *ODNB*.

The testator's overseers were Peter Wentworth (1524–1597), brother-in-law of Sir Francis Walsingham (c.1532-1590), and the clergyman, William Fludd.

LM: T{estamentum} Georgij Carleton

The name of the Lord God be blessed now and forever. I, George Carleton of Overstone in the county of Northampton, esquire, do ordain and make this my last will and testament of all such my lands, leases, goods and chattels as God hath given me in manner and form following:

First and above all, concerning the debts I owe, I do will and bequeath thirty pounds of lawful English money to the Mayor and Corporation of Knockfergus in Ireland, to be paid to them within one year next after my death, to this end and to no other but that with the said money the said Mayor and Corporation shall enter into band to mine executor or overseers of this my will in the sum of one hundred pounds within one year after such payment made, to cause to be builded up and erected an hospital-house of stone within the walls of Knockfergus aforesaid, to receive the poor wearied soldiers at their coming

from their journeys to lie dry in, and that over the door thereof it be graven upon a freestone 'The Legacy of Robert Smyth';

Item, I will that all my household stuff, goods and chattels moveable, other than such as I leave to my wife and I had by her marriage, be sold to the payment of my debts and legacies of this my will, and if they will not be sufficient thereunto, then this my will also is that so much of my lands in Holland within Lincolnshire be added in sale by my executor as will fully satisfy and discharge all my said debts and legacies, and I do charge the executor of this my will, as it shall be answered before God, that concerning the foresaid £30 by me above bequeathed to Knockfergus according to my said bequest thereof, and concerning the full payment of all my debts and legacies hereby given, within one year after my death the same to be fully and justly paid and performed;

Item, concerning my leases not bequeathed hereby, I will that they remain to the use and payment of one annuity of ten pounds granted to John Bartholomew, my servant and kinsman, and one other annuity of fifty-three shillings and four pence granted also by me unto James Wharton, and that my executor hereafter named and her assigns during the said years shall pay the same annuities, and for so long time discharge my lands from the payment thereof;

Item, concerning my lands in Holland aforesaid that shall remain unsold to the payment of my debts and legacies as above, I will have so much of them also sold by my executor as will redeem one rent-charge of thirty pounds by year by me granted unto Anthony Berners and his heirs, but whereas there is five hundred pounds due to me by Anthony Cope, esquire, in next Easter term by a band now remaining in the hands of Anthony Irby, esquire, I will the same be employed to the payment of my said debts and legacies, and besides the same five hundred pounds no more of my lands in the said county of Lincoln be sold than will make even with all men;

Item, concerning the residue of my lands in Holland aforesaid that shall remain unsold to the fulfilling of this my will, I give them wholly unto the now wife of my son, Castle, during her life;

Item, I give my manor of Ouldham with all other my lands in the Isle of Ely wholly to Elizabeth, my wife, during her life, and after her decease I give the same with all my lands else wheresoever unsold (the estate to my said son Castle's wife reserved) to the heir male of my son Castle (if he have any) and then the same to remain to mine heirs general forever;

Item, I give to Matthew Glover my short lease of Wollaston Islands;

Item, I give to John Bartholomew, to be a faithful dealer to my said wife concerning any question of suit that may grow out of this my will, ten pounds of lawful English money;

Item, I give to all my servants having wages one year's wages clear, but to Robert Dugdale, by reason of his travail in my sickness about me, three years' wages clear;

Item, I do give to Mr Settle and Mr Homes, the Lord's ministers, five pounds apiece;

And I give the wardship of William Hugonbothon concerning his lands and government of his body to my son Anthony Cope, but his marriage I give to William Hugonbothon himself;

And whereas there hath late been communication between the said Anthony Cope and me concerning the manor of Ouldham and all other my lands in fee simple lately purchased and added thereunto, and concerning one annuity or rent-charge issuing out of the same manor purchased by the said Mr Cope of one Mr Humphrey Michell, I either to have the same annuity or rent-charge to me and mine heirs for so much as he bought it for, or else I to pass over all my said manor and the land added to the same to him and his heirs for one hundred marks by year to me and my heirs *de claro* out of the same manor, now my will is that if it shall seem good unto my said executor to accept of the sum of one hundred marks for her life, and after her decease the same hundred marks to my heirs, and also the said Anthony to accept assurance of the said manor and lands according to our former communication, then I will and appoint that my said executor shall have full power and authority to convey and assure the said manor and lands to the said Anthony and his heirs, so that there be perfectly assured and conveyed one good and perfect assurance out of the said manor and lands of one annuity or rent-charge of one hundred marks per annum to the said executor for her life, and after her death to the heirs of me, the said George Carleton, forever, according to this my will aforesaid, with *nomine poena* and re-entry for non-payment in as strong and ample sort as the said Humphrey Michell had his said annuity or rent-charge out of the said manor;

Item, I will yet further that what leases, lands or goods soever she, my said wife, did bring unto me, the same be made clearly and freely hers again as in her former estate, whatsoever notwithstanding is or may be to the contrary;

Of this my said will I make Elizabeth, my said wife, my sole executrix, and overseers to the same my beloved in the Lord, Peter Wentworth, esquire, and Mr William Fludd, giving to Mr Wentworth my best garment and to Mr Fludd my ransome(?) gelding;

Dated the first day of January in the two and thirtieth year [=1 January 1590] of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth etc. George Carleton.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro Mag^{ist}ro Joh^{ann}e Hone Legum Doctore Surrogat^o vererabilis viri Mag^{ist}ri Will^{elm}i Lewin Legum etiam Doctoris ad exercend^{um} officium Mag^{ist}ri Custod^e siue Comissarij Curie Prerogatiue Cant^{uariensis} l^{egi}time Deputat^o Decimo sexto die Ianuarij Anno d^{omi}ni s^ec^{un}d^um cursum et computacⁱoⁿem Eccl^{es}ie Anglicane Millesimo Quingentesimo Octogesimo Nono Iuramento Xpoferi Smythe No^{ta}rij Publici Procur^{ator}is Elizabethe Relicte et

Executric{is} d{i}c{t}i def{uncti} Cui com{m}issa fuit &c de b{e}ne et fidel{i}t{er} &c
Iurat{o}

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master John Hone, Doctor of the Laws, surrogate of the worshipful Master William Lewin, also Doctor of the Laws, lawfully deputed to exercise the office of Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the sixteenth day of January in the year of the Lord according to the course and reckoning of the English Church the thousand five hundred eighty-ninth by the oath of Christopher Smyth, notary public, proctor of Elizabeth, relict and executrix of the said deceased, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn to well & faithfully etc.]