

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated in the 27th year [=1584/5] of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, with a codicil in the 39th year [=1596/7] of the Queen's reign, and proved 16 June 1597, of Thomas Cornwallis (d. 13 May 1597), esquire, of East Horsley, Surrey, Gentleman Pensioner and Groom Porter to Queen Elizabeth, uncle of Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), 3rd Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was the son of Edward Cornwallis (d. before 17 May 1568), a younger brother of Sir John Cornwallis (c.1491 - 23 April 1544), Steward of the Household of Prince Edward from 1538 to 1544.

The testator was thus a first cousin of the children of Sir John Cornwallis, including Sir Thomas Cornwallis (1518/19–1604) of Brome, whose eldest son and heir, Sir William Cornwallis (c.1549 – 13 November 1611), purchased Oxford's lease of the mansion of Fisher's Folly, and Richard Cornwallis (d. before 1581). For the will of Sir John Cornwallis, see TNA PROB 11/30/155. For the will of Sir Thomas Cornwallis of Brome, see TNA PROB 11/105/106. For Sir William Cornwallis (c.1549 – 13 November 1611), see his will, TNA PROB 11/118/441, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/cornwallis-sir-william-1549-1611>

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

About 1567 the testator married Katherine Wriothesley (d. 16 August 1626), the daughter of Thomas Wriothesley (1505–1550), 1st Earl of Southampton, by whom he had two sons, Robert Cornwallis, who died in France aged about 20, and Henry Cornwallis, who died at 3 or 4 years of age. See the will of Katherine Wriothesley Cornwallis, TNA PROB 11/150/418; Akrigg, G. P. V., *Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1968), pp. 6, 27; and the testator's funeral certificate in Nichols, *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Son, 1836), Vol. III, p. 294 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=PicAAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA294>

For the monumental inscription to the testator and his wife, Katherine Wriothesley, in the church of St Martin's in East Horsley see Manning, Owen and William Bray, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, Vol. III, p. 34 at:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=UWw-AQAIAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=Cornwallis>

See also:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/sic_itur_ad_astra/8625306262

According to the funeral certificate, the chief mourner was Sir Thomas Cornwallis (d. 13 November 1618) of Portchester, assisted by Sir William Cornwallis (c.1549 - 13 November 1611), who purchased Oxford's lease of Fisher's Folly, and Sir Henry Neville (1561/2–1615), whose relationship to the testator is unknown. The pennon was borne by another of the testator's 'cousins', John Cornwallis (d. 13 June 1615) of Soham Lodge, Suffolk, elder brother of Sir Thomas Cornwallis of Portchester. The testator bequeaths a gelding to John Cornwallis in a codicil to the will below.

FAMILY MEMBERS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

In the will below, the testator leaves to his first cousin, Sir Thomas Cornwallis (1518/19-1604) of Brome, 'two suits of my best apparel', and to Sir Thomas' eldest son and heir, Sir William Cornwallis (c.1549 - 13 November 1611), 'my best great horse with his furniture, and two of my best mares'.

The testator leaves the lands he had purchased in East Horsley to his 'cousin', Sir Thomas Cornwallis (d. 13 November 1618) of Portchester, Hampshire, son of the testator's first cousin, Richard Cornwallis (d. before 1581). Sir Thomas Cornwallis of Portchester succeeded the testator in the office of Groom Porter to Queen Elizabeth. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/132/705.

The testator also leaves an annuity of £10 to his first cousin, William Cornwallis, the son of the testator's uncle, Francis Cornwallis (buried 10 April 1568) of Peckham, Surrey, another of the younger brothers of Sir John Cornwallis (c.1491 - 23 April 1544).

For the foregoing relationships, see the Cornwallis pedigree in *The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis, 1613-1644*, (London: S. & J. Bentley, 1842), p. xxxiv at:

<https://archive.org/stream/privatecorrespon00baco#page/n43/mode/2up>

In a codicil, the testator bequeaths his best armour to his nephew, Sir William Sandys (c.1575 - 28 October 1628), of Mottisfont, Hampshire, the son of Sir Walter Sandys (d.1609) by Mabel Wriothesley, sister of the testator's wife, Katherine Wriothesley, and grandson of William Sandys (c.1470–1540), 1st Baron Sandys. See the *ODNB* entry for the latter, the inquisition post mortem of Sir Walter Sandys, TNA C 142/312/134, and the History of Parliament entry for Sir William Sandys at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/sandys-sir-william-1575-1628>

Sir William Sandys married Elizabeth Cornwallis, the granddaughter of the testator's first cousin, Sir Thomas Cornwallis (1518/19–1604) of Brome, and the daughter of Sir William Cornwallis (c.1549 - 13 November 1611) by his first wife, Lucy Neville (c.1549-1608), fourth daughter and coheir of John Neville (d.1577), 4th Baron Latimer. See the will of John Neville, 3rd Baron Latimer, TNA PROB 11/29/303, whose first wife was Dorothy de Vere (d. 7 February 1527), sister and co-heir of John de Vere (1499-1526), 14th Earl of Oxford, and whose third wife was Katherine Parr, later the sixth wife of Henry VIII.

Elizabeth Cornwallis and the testator's nephew, Sir William Sandys were married at the house of her father, Sir William Cornwallis, in St Botolph's, Bishopsgate (i.e. Oxford's former mansion), on 23 November 1592. See the Cornwallis pedigree, *supra*, p. xxxvii at:

<https://archive.org/stream/privatecorrespon00baco#page/n45/mode/2up>

See also Chester, Joseph Lemuel, ed., *The Marriage, Baptismal and Burial registers of the Collegiate Church or Abbey of St. Peter, Westminster*, (London, 1876), p. 150 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/marriagebaptism02chesgoog#page/n168/mode/2up>.

Mabel Wriothesley's son, Sir William Sandys (c1575 - 28 October 1628), must be distinguished from Lord William Sandys (d.1623), who along with Mabel Wriothesley's nephew, Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), 3rd Earl of Southampton, took part in the Essex Rebellion in February 1601.

LM: T{estamentum} Thome Cornewalleis

[f. 434v] In the name of God, Amen. The (blank) day of (blank) & in [f. 435r] the seven and twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., I, Thomas Cornwallis of East Horsley in the county of Surrey, esquire, being whole of mind and in good and perfect remembrance, thanks be unto Almighty God, do make and ordain this my present testament and last will in manner and form following:

First I give and bequeath my soul wholly to the infinite mercy of Almighty God, trusting assuredly to be saved by the merits of the passion of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, his only Son, and our only Mediator, the second person in Trinity;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my cousin, Thomas Cornwallis, the son of Richard Cornwallis, if God shall call me before I have issue of my own body lawfully begotten,

and after the decease of my wife, all the lands that I bought of Mr Stanton in East Horsley, to him and his heirs forever, with the house and houses and all things appertaining in that purchase for as he do use himself kindly towards my wife, and if she shall so think good;

Also I do bequeath to my said cousin, Thomas Cornwallis, two suits of my best apparel;

I do give also to my cousin, William Cornwallis, the son of Sir Thomas Cornwallis, my best great horse with his furniture, and two of my best mares;

I do give and bequeath to my cousin, William Cornwallis, the son [-son] of my uncle, Francis Cornwallis, ten pounds by the year during his life;

I do also give to my servant Barnes twenty pounds;

To Rowland, my man, twenty pounds;

To every household man I have, his year's wages if he have served me one whole year before my decease;

I do make my well-beloved wife, the Lady Katherine Cornwallis, my full and only executrix, and I do give her all that I have, both lands, leases and goods, only these things excepted which I do give by name;

I do give to my god-daughter, Anne Barnes, ten pounds, to be delivered her at the day of her marriage;

To the poor, to be distributed by my executors, forty pounds;

RM: xvij februarij 1597 lata(?) est Summa(?) providere testamenti et codicilli dicitur

A codicil to the said last will and testament of the said Thomas Cornwallis, and by him declared by word of mouth the day (blank) of (blank) in the nine and thirtieth year [=1596/7] of the reign of our said Sovereign Lady the Queen's Majesty that now is as hereafter followeth, viz.

First he did give and bequeath to his nephew, Mr William Sandys, his best armour;

Item, he did bequeath to Sir William Cornwallis his second armour;

Item, he willed and bequeathed to his cousin, Thomas Cornwallis, his third armour and second horse;

Item, he did bequeath to his cousin, John Cornwallis, a gelding, if his wife would consent thereunto;

Item, he bequeathed to Scott, his servant, five pounds, a white satin doublet and a pair of leather hose laid with gold lace;

Item, he bequeathed to Greele four pound or five pound at the choice of his executrix;

Item, he bequeathed to Bagnall his year's wages if his said wife and executrix did like thereof.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro Magistro Will{el}imo Lewyn legum Doctore Curie Prerogatiue Cantuariensis Magistro Custode siue Commissario legitime constituto Decimo sexto die mensis Iunij Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentesimo Nonagesimo Septimo Iuramento Rich{ard}i Stubbes notarij publici procuratoris D{omi}ne Catherine Cornwalleis Relicte et Executricis &c Cui commissa fuit administratio bonorum &c De bene et fideliter administrand{o} &c Ad sancta Dei euangelia Iurat{e}

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master William Lewin, Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the sixteenth day of the month of June in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred ninety-seventh by the oath of Richard Stubbes, notary public, proctor of the Lady Katherine Cornwallis, relict and executrix etc., to whom administration was granted of the goods etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc.]