

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 22 July 1603 and proved 13 February 1604, of Thomas Pope, one of the original shareholders in the ground lease of the Globe with William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon.

Little is known of the testator's background. The *ODNB* suggests that he was a stepbrother of Augustine Phillips (d.1605), another of the original shareholders in the ground lease of the Globe, and that his mother, referred to in the will below as 'Agnes Web', married four times. In the will below he mentions his brothers, John Pope and William Pope, and their children, who, together with his mother, are his residuary legatees.

The testator refers to himself as 'gentleman', as did Augustine Phillips, and seals his will.

It appears the testator never married. In the will below he states that he had brought up one of his legatees, Suzan Gasquine, 'ever since she was born', and it seems possible she was his illegitimate daughter. She was still a minor at the time the testator made his will, and in the legal dispute following the testator's death was represented by Laurence Litler as guardian ad litem (for his will, proved 24 October 1620, see TNA PROB 11/136/340).

In the will below the testator leaves his share in the Curtain playhouse and his share in the Globe playhouse (including his share in the ground lease of the Globe) to Marie Clarke alias Woode, and Thomas Bromley, who may have been his mistress and illegitimate son. Marie Clarke later married the actor John Edmonds. Thomas Bromley's interest in the Globe was administered during his minority by Pope's executor, Basil Nicholl (1576-1648), a London scrivener and member of the Company of Haberdashers.

The testator states in the will below that he held a lease of Francis Langley (buried 9 July 1602), builder of the Swan playhouse. Ingram mentions Pope's houses built on Langley's property in Southwark; see Ingram, William, *A London Life in the Brazen Age: Francis Langley 1548-1602*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 110, 280.

*Mr Pope has four new-built houses new built in Mr Langley's ground*

Langley had financial dealings with the London scrivener, William Nicholl or Nicoll, father of Pope's executor, Basil Nicholl. See Ingram, *supra*, p. 41-3. For the wills of Basil Nicholl and his father, William Nicholl, see TNA PROB 11/206/9 and TNA PROB 11/150/147.

For the will of the testator's friend, John Wrench, dated 26 October 1603 and proved 29 November 1603, in which Wrench describes himself as 'John Wrench of the parish of St Saviour in Southwark in the county of Surrey, gentleman, servant of our Sovereign Lord, the King', see TNA PROB 11/102/630.

In addition to property acquisition, Pope also appears to have been involved in money lending. In his will he stipulates that payment of his legacies be delayed by six months since 'much of this money is out upon bonds'. It is possible that Pope was the 'friend' mentioned in a letter dated 28 October 1598 from Richard Quiney to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon requesting help with arranging a loan of £30 to pay debts incurred while Quiney was pursuing a suit at court on behalf of the Corporation of Stratford. See SBTRO 27/4. It is also possible that the 'friend' referred to in that letter was Francis Langley, for whose activities in bringing lenders and borrowers together see Ingram, *supra*, pp. 38-50.

RM: T{estamentum} Thome Pope

[f. 95r] In the name of God, Amen. The two and twenty of July in the year of Our Lord God one thousand six hundred and three and in the first year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, I, Thomas Pope of the parish of Saint Saviour in Southwark in the county of Surrey, gentleman, being at this present in good and perfect health, laud and praise be given to the Almighty God therefore, do make, ordain and declare this my present testament and last will in manner an[d] form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, my Maker, Saviour and Redeemer, hoping and assuredly believing to be saved through the merits, death and passion of my Saviour, Jesus Christ, and to enjoy eternal blessedness in the kingdom of heaven;

And my body I commit to the earth to be buried in Christian burial in the church called Saint Saviour where now I dwell, and I give towards the setting up of some monument on me in the said church and my funeral twenty pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor of the liberty where now I dwell three pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Suzan Gasquine, whom I have brought up ever since she was born, the sum of one hundred pounds of lawful money of England and all my household stuff, my plate only excepted;

Item, I will that the said Suzan Gasquine shall have the use and occupation of all that house or tenement wherein I now dwell in the parish of Saint Saviour aforesaid during her natural life if the lease and term of years which I have in the same shall so long continue and endure, so as the said Suzan or her assigns do pay the one half of the rent reserved by the lease to me thereof from time to time and at such time as is limited in and by the same lease, amongst others, made by [f. 95v] Francis Langley, draper, deceased, and do also perform such covenants touching the said tenement as are to be done by force of the said lease;

And if the said Suzan shall happen to die before the expiration of the said term, then I will that my brother, John Pope, shall have the use and occupation of the said tenement during the residue which at the time of the decease of the said Suzan shall be to come and unexpired of the said term, he doing for the same and paying from thenceforth as the said Suzan should or ought to have done if she had lived to the full end of the said term;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my brother, John Pope, the tenement adjoining to the east side of my said dwelling-house wherein John Moden now dwelleth, and during all such term of years as I have to come and unexpired of and in the same by virtue of the lease aforesaid, so as the said John Pope and his assigns during the continuance of the said term do pay thone half of the rent reserved by the said lease from time to time and at such days and times as is limited by the same lease, and do perform such covenants touching only the said tenement to him, my said brother, bequeathed, as are to be done by force of the said lease, and also that my said brother do within one month next after my decease enter into bond of a reasonable sum of money to my executors for payment of the said moiety or one half of the said rent and performance of the covenants touching the same tenement as aforesaid according to my true meaning and intent in that behalf;

Item, I will and devise unto Marie Clarke alias Woode all that tenement adjoining to the west side of my said dwelling-house wherein John Holland now dwelleth for and during the continuance of the term of years which I have in the same, amongst others as aforesaid, by force or virtue of the said lease to me made by the said Frances Langley, to be by her holden and enjoyed from time to time free of any rent to be paid for the same so long as she lives;

And after her decease I give and bequeath my interest and term of years then to come and unexpired of and in the said tenement unto Thomas Bromley who was heretofore baptized in the parish of Saint Andrews Undershaft in London;

Item, I give and bequeath to the said Marie Clarke alias Woode and to the said Thomas Bromley as well all my part, right, title and interest which I have or ought to have of, in and to all that playhouse with the appurtenances called the Curtain situated and being in Holywell in the parish of Saint Leonard's in Shoreditch in the county of Middlesex, as also all my part, estate and interest which I have or ought to have of, in and to all that playhouse with the appurtenances called the Globe in the parish of Saint Saviour in the county of Surrey;

Item, I give and bequeath to the said Thomas Bromley the sum of fifty pounds and my chain of gold, being in value thirty pounds and ten shillings, to be paid and delivered unto him at such time as he shall have accomplished his full age of one and twenty years, provided in the meantime his mother shall receive these legacies in regard the use thereof may bring up the boy, putting in good security for the delivering in the foresaid legacies at his full years of one and twenty, and if the said Thomas shall happen to die and depart this mortal life before he shall have accomplished his said age of one and twenty years, then I will, give and bequeath the said sum of fifty pounds and the said chain of gold unto the said Marie Clark alias Woode to her own use;

Item, I give and bequeath to the said Marie Clark alias Woode the sum of fifty pounds more, provided always and my will and mind is that if the said Marie shall happen to die and depart this mortal life before the said Thomas Bromley, then the said fifty pounds shall remain to the said Thomas [f. 96r] Bromley, to be paid to him at such time as he shall accomplish the full age of one and twenty years;

Item, I give and bequeath to Agnes Web, my mother, the sum of twenty pounds of lawful money of England;

And to my brother, John Pope, the sum of twenty pounds;

And to my brother, William Pope, other twenty pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to the children of my said brethren [-of] John and William Pope the sum of ten pounds to be paid and distributed equal[ly] amongst the same children, part and part like;

Item, I give and bequeath to Robert Gough and John Edmans [=Edmonds] all my wearing apparel and all my arms, to be equally divided between them;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin, Thomas Owen, five pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my loving friend, John Jacson [Jackson], one ring with a square diamond in it;

Item, I give and bequeath to Marie Clark alias Woode half my plate, and to Suzan Gasquine the other half, being equally divided between them;

Item, I give and bequeath to Dorothy Clarck, sister to Marie Clark alias Woode, one gold ring with five opals in it;

All the rest of my rings I give to goodwife Willingson who is now the keeper of my house;

Item, I give and bequeath to my loving friend, Bazell Nicholl, scrivener, the sum of five pounds;

And to my neighbour and friend, John Wrench, the sum of five pounds;

The residue of all my goods, rights and chattels not before bequeathed, my debts and funeral charges being first satisfied, I wholly give and bequeath to my mother, my brothers and their children, to be equally divided between them;

And I do ordain and appoint my well-beloved friends, Bazell Nicholl and John Wrench, to be the executors of this my last will and testament, earnestly praying and desiring them

to see the same performed in all things according to my true meaning therein, and for because much of this money is out upon bonds, I do limit for the performance of this my will six months;

And thus not doubting but they will perform the trust in this behalf by me in them reposed, in witness whereof I have set my hand and seal, Thomas Pope. Sealed in the presence of John Wrench, John Edmans.

Probatum ac p{er} S{ente}n{c}iam diffinitiuam approbatu{m} et insinuat{m} fuit testamentum h{uius}mo{d}i apud London coram ven{erabi}li viro d{omi}no Iohanne Bennett milite legum d{o}c{t}ore surrogato ven{erabi}lis viri D{omi}ni Iohannis Gibson milit{is} legumq{ue} Doctoris curie Prerogatiue Cant{uariensis} mag{ist}ri custodis siue Com{m}issarij l{egi}time constituti decimo tertio die mens{is} ffebruarij Anno Domini iuxta cursum et computac{i}o{n}em eccl{es}ie Anglicane mill{es}imo sexcentesimo tertio Iuramento ffrancisci Wallis notarij pub{li}ci procur{ator}is Basilij Nicholl{es} vnus executor{um} in h{uius}mo{d}i Testamento nominat{orum} Cui com{m}issa fuit Administrac{i}o bonor{um} iuriu{m} et creditor{um} dicti defuncti De bene et fidel{ite}r administrand{o} eadem Ad sancta Dei Evangelia iurat{o} Ioh{nn}es Wrench alter executor in h{uius}mo{d}i Testament{o} no{m}i{n}at{us} antequam onus execuc{i}o{n}is testamenti h{uius}mo{d}i in se acceptarat [=sic for acceptauit?] ab hac luce migravit

[=The same testament was proved and by definitive sentence probated and entered at London before the worshipful Sir John Bennet, knight, Doctor of the Laws, Surrogate of the worshipful Sir John Gibson, knight and Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the thirteenth day of the month of February in the year of the Lord according to the course and reckoning of the English church the thousand six hundred third by the oath of Francis Wallis, notary public, proctor of Basil Nicholls, one of the executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, John Wrench, the other executor named in the same testament, having died before taking on the burden of execution of the same testament.]

[NOTE: Definitive sentence which follows the will not yet transcribed.]