

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the nuncupative will, dated 27 May 1604 and proved 8 June 1604, of George Vernon of Hodnet, son of George Vernon (died c.1554) of Hodnet by his second wife, Mary (nee Lacon). The testator was the uncle (by the half blood) of Elizabeth Vernon, wife of Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

For the testator's family background, see the will of his father, George Vernon (died c.1554), TNA PROB 11/37/222; the will of his mother, Mary (nee Lacon) Aston Vernon (d. 27 April 1563), TNA PROB 11/46/222; the will of his brother, Edward Vernon (d.1616), TNA PROB 11/128/313; the will of his sister, Anne Vernon (d.1570), TNA PROB 11/52/492; and the will of his sister, Dorothy Vernon (d.1599), TNA PROB 11/93/301.

See also 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, p. 474 at:

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

The testator's sole legatee and executor, Sir Robert Vernon, Comptroller of the Household to Queen Elizabeth I, was the grandson of George Vernon (died c.1554) by his first wife, Elizabeth Pigott, and was thus the testator's nephew of the half blood. After his father's death in 1591, Sir Robert Vernon became a ward of Robert Devereux (1565-1601), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex. He was knighted by Essex in Ireland in 1599, and joined Essex' rebellion in February 1601.

Sources differ as to the dates of Sir Robert Vernon's birth and death. According to Burke, he was born in 1577 and died in 1625. See *Burke*, John and John Bernard, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England, Ireland and Scotland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (London: Scott, Webster and Geary, 1891), p. 546 at:

[https://books.google.ca/books?id=DqkTAAAYAAJ&pg=PA546&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=DqkTAAAYAAJ&pg=PA546&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false).

The same dates of birth and death are found in *Notes and Queries*. See W.F.V., 'Sir Robert Vernon', *Notes And Queries*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, Vol. V, 5 March 1964, p. 200 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=iso1AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA200&lpg=PA200&dq=%22Sir+Robert+Vernon%22+%221625%22&source=bl&ots=o1OyGnSPjI&sig=B3NMhbMdX6gjwg2awMbc4u25UCE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjy-aK94qTTAhUS5mMKHfEbDkYQ6AEIMjAD#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

However the History of Parliament states that Sir Robert Vernon was born in 1576 and died between 1636 and 1640:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/vernon-sir-robert-1576-163640>.

A bill of complaint in the Court of Requests by Sir Robert Vernon as executor and nephew of George Vernon against Henry Vernon concerning an unpaid debt appears to relate to the testator's estate. See TNA SP 46/181/105.

LM: T{estamentum} Nuncupativu{m} Georgij Vernon

Memorandum, that on the seven and twentieth day of May in the year of Our Lord God one thousand six hundred and four George Vernon of Hodnet in the county of Shropshire, gentleman, being sick in body but of good and perfect remembrance, did make his last will and testament in manner and form following, viz.:

Item, he gave and bequeathed all and singular his goods and chattels whatsoever to Sir Robert Vernon, knight, his nephew, and also did commit them to his disposing to bestow so much as shall please him of his said goods unto his brothers & sisters, and to bestow upon the poor of the parish of Hodnet what he in his discretion shall think meet, and did appoint his said nephew, Sir Robert Vernon, knight, his true and lawful executor in the presence of Martha Carye, William Deacon, John Vernon, Galb{er}te Walkys(?), William Endley, Hugh Hill and others.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram m{agist}ro Roberto Master, Legum D{o}c{t}ore Surrogat{o} venerabilis viri d{omi}ni Iohannis Benett milit{is} legum etiam D{o}c{t}oris Curie Prerogatiue Cantuar{iensis} mag{ist}ro Custodis sive Com{m}issarij l{egi}time constituti Octavo Die Mens{is} Iunij Anno D{omi}ni Millesimo sexcentesimo quarto Iuramento Iohannis Price Notarij publici procuratoris D{omi}ni Roberti Vernon militis Nepotis dicti defuncti et Executoris in huiusmodi testamento no{m}i{n}ati Cui com{m}issa fuit administratio omniu{m} et singulorum bonor{um} Iurium et Creditorum eiusdem defuncti de bene et fidel{ite}r administrand{o} eadem Ad sancta dei &c iurat{i}

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before Master Robert Master, Doctor of the Laws, Surrogate of the worshipful Sir John Bennet, knight, also Doctor [+of the Laws], lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the eighth day of the month of June in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred fourth by the oath of John Price, notary public, proctor of Sir Robert Vernon, knight, nephew of the said deceased and executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and

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credits of the same deceased, sworn on the Holy [+Gospels] etc. to well and faithfully administer the same.]