

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 22 April 1607 and proved 14 November 1607, of Mary (nee Browne), Countess of Southampton, mother of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

The testatrix was the daughter of Anthony Browne (1528-1592), 1st Viscount Montagu, by his first wife, Jane Radcliffe (1531/2-1552), daughter of Robert Radcliffe (1482/3-1542), 1st Earl of Sussex, and his second wife, Margaret Stanley, daughter of Thomas Stanley (b. before 1485, d. 1521), 2nd Earl of Derby, by his third wife, Margaret Barlow (d.1559). See the *ODNB* article on Edward Stanley (10 May 1509 – 24 October 1572), 3rd Earl of Derby.

The testatrix married firstly Henry Wriothesley (1545-1581), 2nd Earl of Southampton, by whom she had one son, Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, and two daughters, Jane Wriothesley, who died before 1573, and Mary Wriothesley (c.1567-1607), who married, by settlement dated 19 June 1585, Thomas Arundel (c.1560 – 7 November 1639), 1st Baron Arundel of Wardour. The testatrix married secondly, on 2 May 1594, Sir Thomas Heneage (c.1532 – 17 October 1595); and thirdly, in 1598, Sir William Hervey (d.1642), later Baron Hervey of Kidbrooke and Baron Hervey of Ross.

After the testatrix' death, Sir William Hervey married, on 5 February 1608, Cordelia Annesley or Ansley, daughter of Brian Annesley of Lee and Kidbrooke, Kent, gentleman pensioner to Queen Elizabeth. See the *ODNB* articles on the 2nd and 3rd Earls of Southampton and Sir William Hervey; Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 45; and the entry for Sir William Hervey in Cokayne, George Edward, *The Complete Peerage*, Vol. VI, (London: St Catherine Press, 1926), p. 516, and:

<http://archive.org/stream/cu31924092524374#page/n143/mode/2up>.

For the testatrix' friend and overseer of her will, George Carew (1555-1629), Baron Carew of Clopton and later Earl of Totnes, who on 31 May 1580 married Joyce Clopton (baptized 1562, d.1637), eldest daughter and coheir of William Clopton (1538-1592), of Clopton near Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, owner of New Place, later purchased by William Shakespeare of Stratford, see the *ODNB* article and the will of Sir Richard Wingfield on this website, TNA PROB 11/22/51.

LM: T{estamentum} Honorande ffem{i}ne D{omi}ne Marie Comitisse Sowth{amp}t{on}

In the name of God, Amen. I, Marie, Countess of Southampton, being at this present in reasonable estate of body and of perfect remembrance (praise be given to God therefore), calling to mind the frailty of this mortal life and how certain death is, and that there is

nothing more incertain than the time thereof, and how expedient it is for all men to settle their worldly estates and to prepare for the life to come, which is eternal, do therefore make and declare this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, hoping assuredly through the merits, death and passion of my dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, to be made partaker of life everlasting, and my body I commend to the earth whereof it was made, and do direct the same to be interred at Titchfield, there to be laid as near as may be unto the body of my honourable and dearly-beloved lord and husband, Henry, late Earl of Southampton, enjoining my executor to see the same performed, and therewithal inhibiting him to use any pomp, vain ostentation, idle ceremony, or any superfluous charge at or about my funeral, neither yet any more blacks to be bestowed for mourning garments than only upon those my household servants which I shall have at the time of my departure;

Concerning such worldly substance as God hath blessed me withal, I do leave and commend the same as followeth:

First, I give and bequeath unto my honourable and dear son, Henry, Earl of Southampton, ten pieces of hangings of the story of Cyrus, six pieces of hangings in the which the months are described, two pieces of hangings with gold wrought in them and Sir Thomas Heneage his arms, a scarlet bed with gold lace with all the furniture, as stools, chairs and cushions and all other things belonging unto it, a white satin bed embroidered with the stools, chairs, cushions and all other furniture belonging to the same, all my chairs, stools and cushions of green cloth of gold, two of my best down beds with the bolsters, pillows and blankets appertaining unto them, four of my best Turkey carpets whereof one of them is of silk, two of my best and fairest basins and ewers of silver with four great pots of silver belonging unto them, six of my best and greatest candlesticks of silver, a ring of gold with a fair table diamond in it which Sir Thomas Heneage had of Sir Walter Raleigh, sixteen loose diamonds, which my desire is that my said dear son should set in a George of gold and wear it in memory of me, his loving mother;

Also I give and bequeath unto my good and loving daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, Countess of Southampton, my double rope of round pearls which myself did accustom to wear about my neck, my best tissue kirtle, and six pair of my finest sheets with twelve pillow-beres unto them;

Also I give & bequeath unto my good daughter, the Lady Arundel, wife unto the Lord Arundel, my jewel of gold set with diamonds called a Jesus, if she happen to be living at the time of my decease;

Also I give and bequeath unto Katherine Poole, one of my waiting gentlewomen, one hundred pounds in ready money, to be paid unto her by my executor at one entire payment within one year after my death;

And farther unto the said Katherine Poole and Katherine Gates, my other waiting gentlewoman, I do give and bequeath all my wearing apparel excepting garments of

tissue or such as have pearl in them, and all my wearing linen, to be indifferently divided between them by my executor;

Also I give and bequeath unto John Brooke, my servant, twenty pounds in ready money, to be paid unto him by my executor within six months after my decease;

Amongst the rest of my servants, as well men as women, I give and bequeath forty pounds in money to be distributed amongst them as my executor in his discretion shall think meet;

Also I give and bequeath unto George, Lord Carew, Baron of Clopton, one gilt standing christening cup with a cover unto it;

All the rest of my goods, chattels, debts, ready money, plate, jewels, household stuff and personal estate whatsoever I do give and bequeath unto my dear and well-beloved husband, Sir William Harvey, knight, whom I make sole executor of this my last will and testament, praying him, as an argument of his love unto me, that he will be careful of my page, Robert Jones, his sister's son, and in his discretion at my request so to provide for him that he may be enabled to live, and know that I had a care of him;

Lastly, I do nominate and appoint my good and loving friend, George, Lord Carew, Baron of Clopton, aforesaid to be the overseer of this my last will and testament, desiring him to lend his friendly care, aid and assistance to see this my will performed, revoking, disannulling, frustrating and making void all former wills by me made at any time heretofore;

In witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name, set my seal, and publish the same as my last will and testament, dated the two and twentieth day of April in the year of our Lord God one thousand six hundred and seven. M. Southampton.

Memorandum. I do also give unto my dear son, Henry, Earl of Southampton, all the pictures which are in the little gallery at Copt Hall. M. Southampton.

In witness that this will was signed and sealed by the above-named Marie, Countess of Southampton, we whose names ensue have hereunto subscribed: G. Carew, John Brooke, John Godsonne.

Probatum fuit Testamentu{m} Suprascr{iptum} apud London cora{m} venerabili viro D{omi}no Iohanne Bennett Milite legu{m} D{o}c{t}ore Curie Prerogative Cantuar{iensis} Mag{ist}ro Custode sive Com{m}issario l{egi}time constituto Decimo quarto die Mens{is} Novembris Anno D{omi}ni millesimo sexcentesimo septimo Iuramento D{omi}ni Will{el}mi Harvey Militis nuper mariti d{i}c{t}e defunct{e} et executoris in huiusmodi testamento nominati Cui com{m}issa fuit ad{ministra}c{i}o

omniu{m} et singulorum Bonorum Iuriu{m} et Creditoru{m} eiusdem defuncte De bene et fidel{ite}r administrand{o} eadem Ad sancta dei Evangelia iurat{i}

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Sir John Bennet, knight, Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the fourteenth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred seventh by the oath of Sir William Harvey, knight, late husband of the said deceased and executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same.]