

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 8 March 1536 and proved 12 May 1536, of Brian Annesley, father of Sir Brian Annesley (d.1604), whose wife, Anne, appears to have been an illegitimate daughter of Henry Polstead.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the testator's family background, see Ireland, W.H., *A New and Complete History of Kent*, Vol. IV, (London: G. Virtue, 1830), pp. 688-9 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=NQ0HAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA688>

The liberty of Kidbrooke, usually so called, lies adjoining to Charlton . . .

Queen Elizabeth granted a lease of the site of the manor, the rectory, and parcel of the manor woods . . . to Bryan Annesley, of the adjoining parish of Lee, grandson of Bryan, who was the second son of William Annesley, esq., of Rodington in Nottinghamshire, ancestor to the earls of Anglesea and viscount Valentia, by Robert Annesley, his fourth son, a younger brother of Bryan, last mentioned. But the fee of this estate remained in the crown till James I. granted it to Sir William Garway, of London, by whom it was soon afterwards conveyed to his son-in-law, Edward Blount, esq. of Wricklesmarsh, who sold the fee simple (the above lease still subsisting,) to Bryan Annesley, esq. He left three daughters his coheirs; Christian, married to William lord Sandys, of the Vine, Southampton; Grace, to Sir John Wildgoose, of Iridge court, in Sussex; and Cordelia, to Sir William Hervey, who conveyed this estate to her husband as part of her inheritance.

Sir William Hervey, of Kidbrooke, . . . married first, Mary, relict of Henry Wriothesley, earl of Southampton, by whom he had no issue; secondly, Cordelia, daughter and heir of Bryan Annesley, esq., as before mentioned, by whom he had three sons, who died before him, all without issue, and three daughters, of whom only Elizabeth survived him . . .

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

In the will below the testator mentions a wife named Anne, and unnamed children.

Lands were left to Anne, mother of Sir Brian Annesley (d.1604) and Nicholas Annesley (d.1593), and to two other women, Elizabeth, the wife of John Hemingway, and Julian Both, widow, and their children, in the will of Henry Polsted (d. 10 December 1555) without any mention of a family relationship between Henry Polsted or the three women, or any indication as to why the lands in question were being left to them and their children. The History of Parliament entry for Henry Polsted states that he had at least one illegitimate child, and on 23 September 2017 the author of this website put forward the hypothesis that Anne and the other two women, Elizabeth and Julian, who were left

lands in Henry Polsted's will were his three illegitimate daughters. See his will, dated 1 August 1555 and proved 16 May 1556, TNA PROB 11/38/39:

Item, I will & devise that if it happen at any time me, the said Henry Polsted, to be deceased without issue of my body lawfully begotten, that then all my lands, tenements, woods, meads and pastures commonly called Kingsfield and Hobbis and Southland in the parish of Ridgewick in the county of Sussex with the close there of Okewood land, and all that my parcel of land and wood in Billingshurst in the same county, sometime obit land, and all my messuages, lands, woods, mead, pastures, rents, reversions and services as well called Okewood lands in the county of Surrey, sometime parcel of the free chapel of Okewood, and all other my lands and tenements in the parishes of Wootton, Okeley and Abinger in the county of Surrey and in Ridgewick in the county of Sussex, and all [f. 34r] that my coppice wood commonly called Tillinges Hokey in the parish of Shere aforesaid, and all that my messuage with appurtenances in Lombard Street within the county of London, all which I do extend by estimation to the yearly value of £20 6s 8d or thereabouts, shall wholly remain to Anne, the wife of Robert Clerke, gentleman, for term of her life (only my wife's interest appointed by this my will in any part thereof only excepted), the remainder thereof to Bryan Annesley, her son, and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue the remainder thereof to Nicholas Annesley, his brother, and to th' heirs of his body lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue the remainder thereof to Henry Berde and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue, the remainder thereof to the same Anne forever.

It appears from the foregoing clause that after the death of her first husband, Brian Annesley (d.1536), Anne had married Robert Clerke, gentleman.

For Henry Polsted, whose will states that he was a cousin of Sir William More (d.1600) of Loseley, and whose son, Richard Polsted (24 June 1545 – 31 March 1576), married Sir William More's daughter, Elizabeth More, see also the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/polsted-henry-1510-55>

For Nicholas Annesley (1535-1593), Sergeant of the Cellar to Queen Elizabeth for 33 years, see Brayley, Edward Wedlake, *The Beauties of England and Wales*, Vol. VIII, (London: Thomas Maiden, 1808), p. 1361 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=wYtCAAAYAAJ&pg=PA1361>

He is said to have entered the Queen's service at the age of 25, and died in 1593 at the age of 58. See Urban, Sylvanus, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 112, (London: Nichols, Son and Bentley, 1812), p. 106 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=6rHPAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA106>

See also certificates from 1572 to 1590 showing Nicholas Annesley as resident in the royal household, including TNA E 115/8/184 (1572); TNA E 115/3/144 (1585); TNA E 115/2/38 (1588); and TNA E 115/12/116 (1590)

See also mention of Nicholas Annesley and Brian Annesley in East Sussex Record Office DUN 48/2, a document dated 14 October 1587 concerning the marriage of Grace Annesley to John Wildgoose.

For Henry Berde, see Hewerdine, Anita, *The Yeomen of the Guard and the Early Tudors*, (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2012), p. 153 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=kSeEw68die8C&pg=PA153>

For the testator's executor, Nicholas Statham, see Statham, S.P.H., *The Descent of the Family of Statham*, (London: Times Book Company Limited, n.d.), p. 48 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=UwsUAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA48>

For the parish church of Darent in which the testator requested burial, see Hasted, Edward, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, Vol. II, (Canterbury: W. Bristow, 1797), p. 382 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=9S0tAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA382>

For Elizabeth More, daughter of Sir William More (d.1600) of Loseley, whose godmother at her christening on 1 May 1552 was Alice Polsted, and who married firstly, on 3 November 1567, Richard Polsted (1545-1576), the only son of Henry Polsted and Alice Polsted; secondly Sir John Wolley (d.1596), later Oxford's trustee; and thirdly, Thomas Egerton (1540-1617), Lord Chancellor, see also McCutcheon, Elizabeth, 'Playing the Waiting Game: The Life and Letters of Elizabeth Wolley', *Quidditas*, Vol. 20, 1999, pp. 31-54, available online.

LM: Test{amentu}m Brian Annesley

In dei nomine Amen. Be it known to all men that I, Brian Annesley, being in perfect memory, the 8th day of March the 27th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8th witness this to be my last will:

First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, the Father of heaven, and my body to be buried within the parish church of Darent;

Also I make mine executors Master Nicholas Statham of Soton [=Sutton at Hone?] and my wife, Anne, of all such goods and chattels, my debts paid, the rest to be divided egally to my wife and my children;

Also I give to my brother, John, a doublet of crimson satin;

Also I bequeath to my brother, Robert, of Charlaton [=Charlton], a doublet of yellow velvet;

And to my cousin, Hugh, my tawny coat guarded with velvet, and a mark in money;

Also I bequeath to Edmund Wright my new red coat and 10s in money.

I, George Gower, know and affirm this to be the last will of Brian Annesley written with his own hand. Per me, George Gower, servant with Nicholas Statham, mercer.

I knowledge this same to be Brian Annesley's own hand, and received of him, by his own hand delivered to me. Per me, Vincent Randyll.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum xij^o die mensis Maij Anno d^{omi}ni Mill^{es}imo quingen^{tes}imo xxxvj^o apud London coram Domino auctoritate d^{omi}ni n^{ost}ri Regis Henrici octavi Anglie & francie Regis &c Brian Annesley defuncti h^{ab}ent^{is} &c Iurament^o Nich^{ola}i Statham executoris in h^{uius}mo^di testament^o no^miⁿatⁱ ac p^{er} eundem [sic?] auc^{torita}te^m dⁱc^ti d^{omi}ni n^{ost}ri Regis approbatu^m & insinuat^{um} Com^missa que fuit admiⁿⁱstracio o^{mn}i^um & singulorum bonoru^m Iuriu^m et creditorum dⁱc^ti defuncti p^{re}fat^o executori De bene et fidel^{ite}r admiⁿⁱstrand^o Ac de pleno et fideli In^{uent}ario secundo die post festum s^{an}c^te Trinitat^{is} prox^{im}um futur^{um} exhibend^o Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddend^o Ad s^{an}c^ta dei Eu^{an}gelia Iurat^o Reseruat^a p^{otes}tate alteri executori in h^{uius}mo^di testament^o no^miⁿatⁱ cum venerit &c

[=The above-written testament was proved on the 12th day of the month of May in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 36th at London before the Lord by the authority of our Lord King Henry the Eighth, King of England & France etc., Brian Annesley, deceased, having etc., by the oath of Nicholas Statham, executor named in the same testament, and by the same authority of our said Lord the King probated & entered, and administration was granted of all & singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executor, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory on the second day after the feast of Holy Trinity next to come, and also to render a plain and true account, with power reserved to the other executor named in the same testament when he shall have come etc.]