

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the undated will, proved 13 October 1539, of Thomas Campion, whose son-in-law, William Blackwell (d.1570?), granddaughter, Anne (nee Blackwell) Bacon, and great-grandson, Mathy or Matthew Bacon (d.1639) of Gray's Inn, are mentioned in the indenture by which William Shakespeare (1564-1616) of Stratford upon Avon purchased a dwelling-house or tenement and plot of ground in the precinct of the Blackfriars on 10 March 1613 (see Folger MS Z.c.22(45) and London Metropolitan Archives CLC/522/MS03738 for the purchaser's and vendor's copies of the indenture, respectively).

For the will of the testator's daughter, Margaret (nee Campion) Blackwell (d.1586), see TNA PROB 11/69, ff. 284-5. For the will of the testator's son-in-law, William Blackwell (d.1570?), see TNA PROB 11/52, ff. 214-15. For the will of the testator's son and heir, William Campion (d.1576), in which he leaves bequests to 'my sister Blackwell' and 'her son William Blackwell', see TNA PROB 11/58, ff. 230-2.

For the pedigree of Campion, see Howard, Joseph Jackson and Joseph Lemuel Chester, eds., *The Visitation of London Anno Domini 1633, 1634 and 1635*, (London: Harleian Society, 1880), p. 134.

For the testator's lease of Leyton Grange, see 'Leyton: Manors and estates', *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 6* (1973), pp. 184-197. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42768>:

A house called Leyton Grange was occupied by John Hanger, husbandman, in the 1470s. In 1535 Thomas Campion, merchant tailor of London, obtained a 60-year lease of the manor-house of Leyton, in which the parlours, buttery, stable, and hayhouse were mentioned. This lease of the 'grange of Leyton' was bequeathed by him in 1539 to his son, William, subject to his widow's life interest.

The testator's sister, Joan Campion, was the mother of Bishop Thomas Thirlby. It was from Bishop Thirlby that the testator's son-in-law, William Blackwell (d.1570?), purchased a mansion house opposite the Blackfriars, as well as the property in the within the Blackfriars precinct which was later purchased in 1613 by William Shakspeare of Stratford upon Avon. From the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online:

Thirlby, Thomas (c.1500–1570), bishop of Westminster and of Ely, was born in Cambridge where his father, John (d. 1539), was town clerk. His mother, Joan (d. 1557), was the daughter of William Campion of London.

See also the Loseley manuscripts at:

<http://titania.folger.edu/findingaids/dfoloseley2002.xml>

L.b.391

Modern spelling transcript copyright ©2011 Nina Green All Rights Reserved
<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

Blackwell, William. d. ca. 1569. Letter, signed. To Sir Thomas Cawarden. London. June 21, 1554.

Blackwell says that the Bishop of Norwich (Thomas Thirlby, later Bishop of Ely) wishes to buy a piece of ground in the Blackfriars which adjoins his property, that he is sending a deed drawn up for Cawarden's signature, "together with his saide Originall draughte thereof in paper". Shakespeare later bought the house erected over the great gate leading to Mr. Blackwell's mansion house.

LM: T{estamentum} Thome Campion

In the name of God, Amen. I, Thomas Campion, citizen and Merchant Taylor of London, whole in mind and sick in body, make my testament and last will in this manner and form following:

First, I commit my soul to the mercy of Almighty God etc., and my body to be buried in place convenient where it shall please Almighty God to call me;

Also I commit the order of my burial with th' exequies accustomed to the discretion of my executrix;

Also I will that my executrix shall distribute amongst the poor people inhabiting within the ward called Cornewell Street ward 40s;

Also I bequeath to the poor people of Sawston 40s;

Also to the poor people of Leyton 20s;

Item, I bequeath to the poor prisoners of the four prisons in London, that is, to Ludgate, Newgate, the Marshalsea and the King's Bench, to every of the said prisons 6s 8d;

Also I give to my sister, Joan Thirlby, five pounds;

Item, I give to every one of her daughters 40s apiece;

Item, I give to Thomas Thirlby, my sister's son, ten pounds, so be it the said Thomas Thirlby will be ordered by my wife and his brother, or else to have never one penny;

Also I give to the daughter of my sister, Christian Este [=East], five marks;

Also I forgive my brother, Robert Campion, all such debts as he doth owe unto me;

Also I bequeath unto my said brother 40s;

Also I give unto Joan Watson, my brother's daughter, 40s;

Also I will that at the day of my burial my executrix do prepare 14 black gowns, and do distribute the same to these persons following, viz., to my son Blackwell and his wife, to Christopher Campion and to his wife, to Walter Campion and to his wife, to Robert Campion and to his wife, to Ralph Preston and to his wife, to Thomas Gye and to his wife, to the vicar of Leyton, and to the wife of Robert Lee;

Also I bequeath to my brother, John Rake, 20s;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Blackwell, my nephew, five pounds;

Also I bequeath to William Blackwell, my nephew, five pounds;

Item, I bequeath to Richard Blackwell 40s;

Also I bequeath to Edward Blackwell 40s;

Also I will that all my goods and debts shall be divided into three parts according unto the custom of the City, whereof thone part I give to my wife, thother to my children equally to be divided amongst them, and the third to the performance of this my testament and last will;

Provided alway that where in marriage of my daughter, Margaret, unto William Blackwell, I promised two hundred pounds, whereof I have paid £88 13s 4d, that if the said William Blackwell will have the residue of the said £200 and make a sufficient release for his wife's child's part, then I will that my executrix shall pay unto him the rest of the £200, or in case that the said William Blackwell will not so do, but doth claim his child's part, then I will that the same shall be made up unto him, the said £88 13s 4d that he hath already received to be always accounted as a portion of the same child's part;

Also I forgive my cousin, Edmund Campion of Sawston, all the debts that he oweth me;

Also I give and bequeath my lease of the grange of Leyton unto my wife, she to have, enjoy and hold the same during her life, and after her decease, if it shall fortune the same lease to endure, I will it shall remain unto my son, William Campion, and in case he shall die before my wife, then I will it shall remain to Christian, my daughter, and after her decease, unto my daughter Margaret and her children;

The residue of my goods not bequeathed I give unto my wife, whom I make my sole executrix, and I make Thomas Thirlby, clerk, overseer of this my testament. By me, Thomas Campion. By me, Edward Crome. By me, Robert Dawbeney. By me, Walter Yong.

Probatum fuit sup^{ra}scriptum testamentu^m coram d^{omi}no Apud London xiiijo die mens^{is} Octobris Anno d^{omi}ni Mill^{es}imo quingentesimo Tricesimo nono Iuramento Relicte et executric^{is} in h^{uius}mo^di testamento no^miⁿat^e Ac approbatum et insinuatum Et comissa fuit admiⁿⁱstracio omⁿi^{um} et singulor^{um} bonor^{um} iuriu^m et creditor^{um} dictⁱ defunctⁱ p^{re}fat^e executricⁱ de bene et fideli^{te}r admiⁿⁱstrand^o &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c conficiend^o Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddend^o Ad sancta dei Eu^angelia Iurat^e

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord [+Archbishop] at London on the 13th day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred thirty-ninth by the oath of the relict and executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executrix, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., and to prepare a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account.]