

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 5 January 1551 and proved 2 November 1551, of Sir Anthony Cope, whose grandson, Sir Walter Cope (1553?-1614), a long-time servant of Lord Burghley, employed Shakespeare's fellow Globe Theatre shareholder, Cuthbert Burbage (1564/5-1636). See the *ODNB* articles on Sir Walter Cope and Cuthbert Burbage, and Barnett, Richard C., *Place, Profit, and Power; A Study of the Servants of William Cecil, Elizabethan Statesman*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), pp. 50-1.

The testator was Chamberlain to Queen Katherine Parr, and the author of *The History of Two of the Most Noble Captains of the World*, and *A Godly Meditation Upon 20 Select and Chosen Psalms of the Prophet David*.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Testator's parents

The testator was the eldest son of William Cope (c.1440 - 7 April 1513), esquire, cofferer to Henry VII, by his second wife Jane (nee Spencer), widow of William Saunders (d.1493), and daughter of John Spencer (d.1496/7) of Hodnell, Warwickshire, by Anne Empson, the sister of Sir Richard Empson (c.1450-1510). For the will of the testator's father, dated 7 February 1513 and proved 24 May 1513, see TNA PROB 11/17/2. For the will of the testator's mother, Jane (nee Spencer) Saunders Cope, dated 20 January 1526(?) and proved 2 May 1526, see TNA PROB 11/22/125.

The testator's year of birth is not known; however he was likely born between 29 January 1494 (the date on which the will of his mother's first husband, William Saunders of Banbury, was proved), and 1500. See Cope, William H., ed., *Meditations on Twenty Select Psalms by Sir Anthony Cope, Chamberlain to Queen Katharine Parr*, (London: John Ollivier, 1848), pp. ix-x at:

<https://archive.org/stream/meditationsontwe00copeuoft#page/n11/mode/2up>.

There is documentary evidence (Inquis. post mortem 5 Henry VIII) that he was not twenty-six years old at his father's death in 1513; and he must have been married before 1518, for his son was thirty-three years of age when he succeeded him (Inquis. post mort. 4 Edward VI). It appears from the will of his grandfather, John Spencer, that his mother was married before 1496, and he was her eldest son.

Testator's siblings

The testator had an elder half-brother, Stephen Cope (d. 20 March 1534), the son of his father's first marriage to Agnes Harcourt, and two younger brothers, William Cope, and Sir John Cope (d. 22 January 1558). For the will of Stephen Cope, dated 10 August 1533

and proved 12 November 1534, see TNA PROB 11/25/240. For the will of Sir John Cope, dated 2 July 1557 and proved 21 May 1558, see TNA PROB 11/40/278.

The testator also had four half-sisters, Anne, Isabel, Joyce and Alice, the daughters of his mother's first marriage to William Saunders (d. 1493). For the will of William Saunders, dated 17 October 1492 together with a codicil dated 22 November 1493, proved 29 January 1494, see TNA PROB 11/10/83.

The testator's eldest half-sister, Anne Saunders, married the testator's half brother, Stephen Cope (see above).

The testator's youngest half-sister, Alice Saunders (d.1510), married John Cooke (d. 10 October 1515), esquire, of Gidea Hall, by whom she was the mother of Lady Burghley's father, Sir Anthony Cooke. From the *ODNB*:

Cooke, Sir Anthony (1505/6–1576), educator and humanist, was the only son of John Coke or Cooke (1485–1516) of Gidea Hall, Essex, within the liberty of Havering-atte-Bower near Romford, and Alice Saunders (d. 1510), daughter of William Saunders of Banbury, Oxfordshire.

See also Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. IV, p. 141.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator's father states in his will that he had arranged a marriage between the testator and Jane Burnby:

Item, where I lately bought the custody and marriage of Jane Burnby, daughter & heir apparent of Thomas Burnby, I will that mine executors shall marry the said Jane to the said Anthony Cope if the said Anthony and Jane will thereto assent and agree.

Nothing further is known of the heiress Jane Burnby, and the testator married Jane Crews, the daughter of Matthew Crews of Pynne in Stoke English, Devonshire, 'a younger son of the ancient family of Cruwys of Cruwys Morchard in that county'. See Cope, *Meditations, supra*, p. xii, citing Vincent's Collections for Northamptonshire, no. 114, f. 91, in the College of Arms. For the will of the testator's wife, Jane, dated 1 April 1569 and proved 4 July 1570, see TNA PROB 11/52/287.

The testator's son, Edward (d.1557), and daughter, Anne (d.1602), are mentioned in the 1526 will of the testator's mother:

Also I give to my godson, Edward Cope, which is son and heir to my son, Anthony Cope, £10 sterling and a little ring of gold with a pointed diamond set therein and two Anthony crosses of rich clere(?) on the same ring.

Item, I give to Anne Cope, sister to the said Edward, a gown of black cloth furred with grey, and a ring of gold fashioned like bead-stones, and God's blessing and mine to them all.

Edward Cope (d.1557) married Elizabeth Mohun (d. 1587), the daughter of Walter Mohun of Overstone, Northamptonshire. After Edward Cope's death, Elizabeth Mohun married George Carleton (1529-1590) of Overstone, Northamptonshire, by whom she had a son, Castle Carleton, and two daughters, Elizabeth Carleton, who married Anthony Berners of Thoby, Essex, and Joyce Carleton, who married a husband surnamed Plumsted. See the Carleton pedigree in Turner, William Henry, ed., *The Visitations of the County of Oxford*, (London: Harleian Society, 1871), pp. 122-4.

After the death of Elizabeth Mohun, George Carleton married the 'Mistress Crane' of the Marprelate tracts, who was born Elizabeth Hussey, the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Hussey (d.1546) of Linwood, Lincolnshire, and his second wife, Jane Stydolf, the daughter of Thomas Stydolf of Surrey.

George Carleton's involvement with the publication of the Marprelate tracts is described in the *ODNB*:

In the last year of his life Carleton's connections with the tightly knit puritan gentry of the midlands involved him in the puritan literary conspiracy of the Marprelate tracts. Also in 1589 he married Elizabeth Crane, daughter of Sir Robert Hussey of Linwood, Lincolnshire, and widow of Anthony Crane of St Martin-in-the-Fields. It was at her house at East Molesey, Surrey, that the first Marprelate tracts were printed, and she was to be heavily fined in the Star Chamber for her involvement. The Marprelate press then moved to Fawsley, the Northamptonshire seat of Sir Richard Knightley, an enthusiast not entirely compos mentis, whose affairs were in Carleton's hands. Several elusive references in the tracts themselves suggest that Carleton's involvement in this illicit venture may have been more than merely managerial.

For the will of the testator's son, Edward Cope, esquire, dated 20 June 1557 and proved 28 July 1557, see TNA PROB 11/39/306.

For the will of George Carleton, dated 1 January 1590 and proved 16 January 1590, see TNA PROB 11/75/14.

The testator's daughter, Anne Cope (d.1602), married Kenelm Digby (by 1518 - 1590) of Stoke Dry, Rutlandshire, by whom she was the grandmother of Sir Everard Digby (c.1578-1606), executed for his part in the Gunpowder Plot, and the great-grandmother of the philosopher, Sir Kenelm Digby (1603-1665). See Cope, *Meditations*, *supra*, p. xix, and the History of Parliament entry for Kenelm Digby at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/digby-kenelm-1518-90>

For the monument to Anne Cope and Kenelm Digby, see:

'Parishes: Stoke Dry', in *A History of the County of Rutland: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1935), pp. 221-227. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/rutland/vol2/pp221-227> [accessed 6 December 2019].

RM: Anthonij Coope mi{li}t{is}

In dei nomine Amen. The fifth day of January in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred and fifty, I, Anthony Cope of Hanwell in the county of Oxford, knight, sick in body and of perfect and good memory, do ordain and make this my last will and testament as hereafter followeth:

First I bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, and my body to be buried within the chancel of the parish church of Hanwell aforesaid;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Jane Cope, my wife, one hundred marks in yearly revenues to be paid in money out of my lands during her natural life, and one hundred pounds in good and lawful money of England to be paid unto her by th' hands of my executors within the space of one year after my death or else th' one half thereof to be paid to her in cattle or household stuff as she shall think best, and that to be indifferently praised;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Elizabeth Mounford, my wife's gentlewoman, four pounds' annuity during her natural life;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Thomas Hill, mine old servant, four pounds annuity during his life natural;

The rest of all and singular my goods and chattels, my debts paid and this my will performed, I do give and bequeath unto Edward Cope, my son, whom I do constitute, ordain and make my sole and only executor of this my last will and testament subscribed with mine own hand the day and year above specified. Witnesses hereof: John Wolseley, clerk, & Walter Mone [=Mohun], gentleman. Anthony Cope.

Probatum fuit test{amentu}m coram d{omi}no Cant{uariensis} Archiep{iscop}o apud London secundo die Mensis Nouembris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo primo Iuramento Edwardi Cope Executoris in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento no{m}i{n}at{i} Ac approbatu{m} et insinuat{m} Et comissa fuit admi{n}istrac{i}o o{mn}i{u}m bonoru{m} &c d{i}c{t}i defunct{i} De bene et fideli{te}r administrand{o} eadem Ac de pleno Inuentario &c Exhibendo Ad sancta dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{o}

[=The testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the second day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-first by the oath of Edward Cope, executor named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all the goods etc. of the said deceased [+to the said executor], sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full inventory etc.]