

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 24 July 1548 and proved 11 June 1551, of Thomas Newport, father of Sir Richard Newport (d. 12 September 1570), owner of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* containing annotations thought to have been made by Shakespeare. The volume was Loan 61 in the British Library until 2007, was subsequently on loan to Lancaster University Library until 2010, and is now in the hands of a trustee, Lady Hesketh. According to the Wikipedia entry for Sir Richard Newport, the annotated Hall's *Chronicle* is now at Eton College, Windsor. See:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Newport_\(died_1570\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Newport_(died_1570))

Newport's copy of his chronicle, containing annotations sometimes attributed to William Shakespeare, is now in the Library at Eton College, Windsor.

For the annotated Hall's *Chronicle*, see also the will of Sir Richard Newport (d. 12 September 1570), TNA PROB 11/53/456; Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator*, (London: Putnam, 1954); and the Annotator page on this website:

<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/annotator.html>

The testator's brother-in-law, Roger Corbet, was a ward of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford. For the will of Roger Corbet, see TNA PROB 11/27/408.

The testator's daughter, Elizabeth Newport, married John Pakington (1530-1578), and was the aunt of Humphrey Martyn (d.1587?), the addressee of the *Langham Letter* describing Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575. See the Langham page on this website.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For early generations of the Newport family, see Bridgeman, Ernest R.O. and Charles G.O. Bridgeman, 'History of the Manor and Parish of Weston-under-Lizard, in the County of Stafford', William Salt Archaeological Society, ed., *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, Vol. XX, Vol. II, New Series, (London: Harrison and Sons, 1899), p. 146 at:

<https://archive.org/details/collectionsfora14socigoog/page/n189>

See also the Newport pedigree 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, pp. 372-4 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationshrop01grazgoog#page/n100/mode/2up>

See also *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, Vol. IX, 4th Series, (London: J. Parker, 1878), p. 41 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/archaeologiacam43assogoo#page/n66/mode/2up>

Testator's parents

The testator was the son of John Newport (d. October 1512), esquire, of High Ercall, Shropshire, and Alice Swynnerton (living 17 November 1526), the daughter of Sir Thomas Swynnerton (d.1542). John Newport (d. October 1512) was heir to his grandfather, Sir John Burgh, in 1471. See Bridgeman, *supra*, pp. 169-70 at:

<https://archive.org/details/collectionsfora14socigoog/page/n217>

See also Bridgeman, George T.O., *History of the Princes of South Wales*, (Wigan: Thomas Birch, 1876), pp. 275-9 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/historyofprinces00bridiala#page/274/mode/2up>

Alice Swynnerton's mother was Alice Stanley. In one source she is said to have been the daughter of Robert Stanley of Lancashire. See Swynnerton, Charles, 'Notes on the Family of Swynnerton' in Llewellynn Jewitt, ed., *The Reliquary Quarterly Archaeological Journal and Review*, (London: Bemrose & Sons), Vol. XX, 1879-80, p. 107 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=qJs1AAAAMAAJ&pg=PA107>

However see TNA C 1/358/57, a Chancery suit brought by Thomas Swynnerton, esquire, between 1504 and 1515 against his mother, Joan Swynnerton, concerning manors settled on him when he married Alice Stanley, daughter of Sir Humphrey Stanley. It thus appears that Alice Stanley was the daughter of Sir Humphrey Stanley (d. 12 March 1505/6) of Clifton and Pipe, Staffordshire, knight banneret. See *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, (London: Harrison and Sons, 1886), Vol. VII, p. 55-6 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=V204AAAIAAJ&pg=RA1-PA55>

See also the brass commemorating Sir Humphrey Stanley in Westminster Abbey at:

<https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/commemorations/sir-humphrey-stanley>

On the floor of the chapel of St Nicholas in Westminster Abbey is a brass to Sir Humphrey Stanley, of Clifton and Pike [sic] in Staffordshire. It shows him in plate armour with sword but no helmet. At the top three shields of arms remain showing the arms of Stanley (argent, on a bend azure, three stags heads cabossed or) quartering

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<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

Lathom, Stanley and Lathom quartering Stafford, Pypes and Camville, and the arms of Stafford. Two shields at the base are now blank. The Latin inscription can be translated:

Here lies Humphrey Stanley, Knight, Esquire of the Body to the most excellent Prince Henry VII King of England, who died the 12th March A.D. 1505, on whose soul God have mercy. Amen

He was the son of Sir John Stanley Knight of the Garter, and his wife Elizabeth and took part in the battle of Bosworth. After this he received a knighthood and was sheriff of the county of Stafford and knight of the body [or chamber] in the royal household. His son was John. The family derived their origin from the house of Audley who acquired the manor of Stanleigh or Stanley and the surname of Stanley was taken.

For the testator's siblings, see the will of his father, John Newport (d. October 1512), TNA PROB 11/18/166.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Anne Corbet, the daughter of Sir Robert Corbet (c.1477 – 11 April 1513) and Elizabeth Vernon, the daughter of Sir Henry Vernon (c.1441 – 13 April 1515) of Haddon, Derbyshire. See the pedigree of Corbet of Morton in Grazebrook, George, and John Paul Rylands, eds., *The Visitation of Shropshire Taken in the Year 1623*, Part I, (London: Harleian Society, 1889), Vol. XXVIII, pp. 136-7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationshrop00britgoog#page/n190/mode/2up>

The testator appoints his mother-in-law, Elizabeth (nee Vernon) Corbet, as one of his executors, together with his brother-in-law, Sir Reginald Corbet (c.1510 - 9 November 1566). For the will of Sir Henry Vernon, see TNA PROB 11/18/121. For the will of Sir Robert Corbet, see TNA PROB 11/17/471. For the will of Sir Reginald Corbet, see TNA PROB 11/49/18.

Sir Robert Corbet's sister, Elizabeth Corbet, and her husband Thomas Trentham (d.1518/9) of Shrewsbury, were the great-grandparents of Oxford's second wife, Elizabeth Trentham (d.1612). For the will of Thomas Trentham (d.1518/9), see TNA PROB 11/19/252.

The testator's wife, Anne Corbet, was the sister of Roger Corbet (1501/2 – 20 December 1538), ward of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford.

According to the pedigree of Newport of High Ercall and Weston-under-Lizard, by Anne Corbet the testator had seven sons and three daughters, all of whom, with the exception of Hugh Newport, are mentioned in the will below:

* **Sir Richard Newport** (d. 12 September 1570), eldest son and heir, owner of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* thought to have been annotated by Shakespeare (see above). He married Margaret Bromley (d. 11 August 1598), the only daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Bromley (d. 15 May 1555), Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. For the will of Sir Richard Newport, see TNA PROB 11/53/456. For the will of Margaret (nee Bromley) Newport, see TNA PROB 11/93/149.

According to Keen, Sir Richard Newport (d. 12 September 1570) was a cousin of Richard Newport (d. 11 November 1565) of Hunningham, Warwickshire. See Keen, Alan, 'In the Quick Forge and Working-House of Thought', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 33, No. 2, March 1951, pp. 256-70 at p. 257:

It may be imagined with what alacrity those of us who believed in the probability of Shakespeare being the annotator leapt, if prematurely, upon the task of identifying our Rychard Newport with one of that name who was owner of Hunningham in the County of Warwick from 1544 to the date of his death, 11th November, 1565. This Rychard Newport, through marriage of his daughter and various other ties, was closely connected with the prominent Warwickshire family of Underhill, one of whom, his son-in-law, in 1567, when Shakespeare was three years old, bought New Place in Stratford-on-Avon. His son sold New Place to Shakespeare in 1597. However attractive this identification seemed to be, the return of the public records at the end of the second world war, and comparison of autographs, blew our neatly-laid provenance sky high. The owner of our annotated Chronicle, the other Sir Rychard Newport – was of High Ercall in Shropshire, and, curiously enough, a cousin to the Sir [sic] Rychard of Warwickshire.

For the will of Richard Newport (d. 11 November 1565), see TNA PROB 11/48/318.

* **Robert Newport**, who was appointed as one of the testator's executors, but died between the making of the testator's will on 24 July 1548 and the date of probate, 11 June 1551.

* **Reginald Newport** (d.1561) of Sibdon Carwood, Shropshire, who married Elizabeth Banastre, daughter of Edward Banastre, and widow of a husband surnamed Perott, by whom he had no issue. In his will Reginald Newport refers to his wife as deceased, and leaves bequests to Edward Perott, Mary Perott, Dorothy Perott, Thomas Perott, Jane Perott and William Perott, her children by her first husband. In his will he also mentions his brothers, Thomas, Edmund, Hugh and Andrew. For the will of Reginald Newport, see TNA PROB 11/44/366.

* **Thomas Newport** of Stoke on Tern, Shropshire, buried at High Ercall 15 October 1599. He appears to have been in the service of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex.

* **Edmund Newport** of Sibdon Carwood, Shropshire, who died without issue. For his will, dated 14 December 1600 and proved 11 July 1601, in which his residuary legatee was his 'cousin, John Pakington', see TNA PROB 11/98/116.

* **Andrew Newport**, who was living in 1561, but of whom nothing further seems to be known.

* **Hugh Newport** (d.1587) of Corsham, Wiltshire, for whose will, dated 13 February 1587 and proved 31 May 1587, see TNA PROB 11/70/366. He may have been born after the testator made his will on 24 July 1548. He is mentioned in the will of his eldest brother, Sir Richard Newport. According to the pedigree of Butler of Langley he married Jane Butler, the daughter of Thomas Butler, gentleman, of Hanger in the parish of Bremhill, Wiltshire, by Joyce Godridge, daughter of John Godridge, esquire, of Pyrton, Gloucestershire. See Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitation of Wiltshire 1565*, (Exeter: William Pollard & Co., 1897), p. 11 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationofwilt00harvrich/page/10>

* **Ursula Newport**, who married Thomas Adams of Longdon, Shropshire.

* **Katherine Newport**, who in 1563 married John Leighton of Leighton, Shropshire. See *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, (Shrewsbury, Adnitt and Naunton, 1886), Vol. IX, pp. 408-9 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/transactionsofsh09shro#page/n861/mode/2up>

* **Elizabeth Newport**, who married John Pakington (1530-1578), and, as noted above, was the aunt of Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* describing Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575.

For the testator's children, see also *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, *supra*, p. 173 at:

<https://archive.org/details/collectionsfora14socigoog/page/n219>

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

In the will below the testator mentions an indenture entered into with Sir Thomas Bromley (c.1530–1587), father-in-law of the testator's son, Sir Richard Newport, to provide for payment of his debts and the preferment in marriage of his daughters Ursula, Katherine and Elizabeth.

RM: T{estamentum} Thome Newporte

[f. 112r] In the name of God, Amen. The 24th day of July in the year of Edward the Sixth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, and of the Church of England and also of Ireland immediately under God Supreme Head, the

second, I, Thomas Newport of High Ercall in the county of Salop [=Shropshire], esquire, make my demise of testament and last will concerning my lands in manner and form following:

First, according to the power and authority that I have in the indenture of covenant of marriage betwixt me and Thomas Bromley, knight, made for twenty pounds of my lands towards the payment of my debts and advancement of my daughters in marriage, I, the said Thomas Newport, do give, devise and grant parcel of my lands, tenements and hereditaments called Bickmarsh set, lying and being in the county of Warwick to the clear yearly value of twenty pounds unto Andrew Corbet, knight, Richard Corbet and Reynold Gwilliams, esquires, to them and their assigns during such term and years as they of the profits and revenues ensuing and coming of the same lands and tenements shall have perceived and taken the full sum of two hundred marks, which sum of two hundred marks I, the said Thomas Newport, do will and devise shall be employed and converted to the advancement and marriage of my daughters, Ursula & Katherine, each of them one hundred marks apiece, and if it fortune the said Ursula and Katherine to die before she shall be married, then I devise and will the said two hundred marks to her that shall survive, to the advancement of her marriage, and if it fortune the said Ursula and Katherine to die before they be married, then I devise and will the said two hundred marks to th' advancement of marriage of Elizabeth, my daughter;

Furthermore I, the said Thomas Newport, do devise and will all the residue of my said lands in Bickmarsh aforesaid and in the said county of Warwick amounting to the sum of four pounds with also all my lands and tenements, rents, hereditaments, services with th' appurtenances set, lying & being in Newport in the county of Salop to the clear yearly value of six pounds, all which said lands amount in th' whole unto the sum of ten pounds, I devise and give unto my younger sons, Thomas, Edmund and Andrew Newport, to them and their assigns during their natural lives, and the longest liver of them rent, free from mine heir & heirs for th' advancement and living of each of them;

And furthermore I, the said Thomas Newport, do will and devise that if this present testament & last will be broken by mine heir or heirs hereafter of any entailment of the lands so devised or otherways whereby my said children cannot enjoy this my devise according to my last will, then I, the said Thomas Newport, do further will, devise and give unto the said Andrew Corbet, Richard Corbet, Reynold Gwilliams, Thomas Newport, Edmund and Andrew Newport as much of the other lands, tenements and hereditaments set, lying and being in Ercall, Walton and Shrewsbury with their appurtenances in the county of Salop as shall [f. 112v] amount to the clear yearly value of thirty pounds, to be taken and chosen by the said Andrew, Richard, Reynold, Thomas, Edmund and Andrew in all my said lands, to be employed to the same intents, devises, wills and considerations aforesaid, and in like estate, condition & degree as the said former lands so devised unto them or every of them was given, willed or devised, and after by my said heir or heirs evicted or otherwise taken away;

And as concerning my testament and last will of all my goods and chattels, reals and personals, I, the said Thomas Newport, do bequeath and give to Elizabeth Newport, my

daughter, to the preferment of her in marriage or otherwise to be used at her pleasure, the sum of one hundred pounds to be levied and taken of all my said goods and chattels;

The residue of all my said goods, both reals and personals, my debts being paid, I give and bequeath to Robert Newport and Reginald Newport, my sons;

And of this my present testament and last will I ordain and make my Lady Dame Elizabeth Corbet, my mother-in-law, and Reynold Corbet, my brother-in-law, and Robert Newport, my son, my executors.

In witness whereof unto this my present last will and testament I have set my seal and subscribed my name the day & year above-written. Thomas Newport

Probatum fuit test{amentu}{m} coram d{omi}no Cant{uariensis} Archie{pisco}po apud london xj die Mens{is} Iunij Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo primo Iuramento Reginaldi Newport procurator{is} d{omi}ne Elizabeth{e} Corbet et Reginaldi Corbet Executor{um} in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento nominat{orum} quibus com{m}issa fuit admi{n}istrac{i}o om{n}i{um} bonor{um} &c d{i}c{t}i defuncti De bene &c Ac de pleno Inuentario &c exhibend{o} ad s{an}c{t}a dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{is} Roberti Newport alter ex{ecuto}r &c demortui

[=The testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the 11th day of the month of June in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-first by the oath of Reginald Newport, proctor of the Lady Elizabeth Corbet and Reginald Corbet, executors appointed in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all the goods etc. of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., and to exhibit a full inventory etc., Robert Newport, the other executor etc., having died.]