

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 24 February 1556 and proved 18 August 1557, of Katherine (nee Geddyng) Hall, mother of Edward Hall (1497-1547), whose Hall's *Chronicle* was a major source of Shakespeare's English history plays. A copy of Hall's *Chronicle* owned by Sir Richard Newport containing annotations thought to have been made by Shakespeare was formerly Loan 61 in the British Library, and is now in the hands of a trustee, Lord Hesketh. See Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator*, (London: Putnam, 1954). For the will of Sir Richard Newport, dated 11 September 1570 and proved 12 October 1571, see TNA PROB 11/53/456.

According to some sources, the testatrix was the daughter and coheir of Thomas Geddyng of Norfolk, while according to others she was the daughter of John Geddyng, great-grandson of William Geddyng of Lackford, Suffolk, and Mirabel Aspale, daughter and heiress of Sir John de Aspale.

The testatrix married John Hall (d. 22 February 1528) of Northall in Kynnersley, Shropshire, a London grocer and Merchant of the Staple who resided in the parish of St Mildred in the Poultry. Hall served as Warden of the Grocers in 1512. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/23/60.

By John Hall the testatrix had two sons, Edward Hall, author of Hall's *Chronicle*, who predeceased her, and a second son, William Hall, who, as he is not mentioned in the will below, appears also to have predeceased the testatrix. It would also appear that neither of the testatrix' two sons married or left surviving issue.

The testatrix' burial on 19 June 1557 in the church of St Benet Sherehog was recorded by the diarist Henry Machyn.

According to some sources, the testatrix was the 'Mistress Hall' who in 1555 was imprisoned in Newgate for her faith, and with whom the religious reformer John Bradford corresponded.

The testatrix' executor, Sir William Garrard (c.1510–1571), became Lord Mayor of London in 1555.

The testatrix appoints as supervisor of her will Dame Joan Warren (d. 8 February 1573), great-grandmother of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. Dame Joan Warren was the daughter of John Lake (d.1522) and Dorothy (nee Trotter) Lake (d.1545). She married firstly, as his second wife, Sir Ralph Warren (c.1483–1553), Lord Mayor of London in 1536 and 1544, and secondly Sir Thomas White (1495? – 12 February 1567), the founder of St John's College, Oxford. For the will of John Lake (d.1522), see TNA PROB 11/20/370. For the will of Dorothy (nee Trotter) Lake (d.1545), see TNA PROB 11/30/349. For Sir Ralph Warren, see the *ODNB* article and his will, TNA PROB 11/36/217. For Sir Thomas White, see the *ODNB* article and his will, TNA PROB 11/49/377.

Sir Ralph Warren's first wife was Christiana Warcop, the daughter of Richard Warcop of Sinnington, Yorkshire, and widow of Roger North (d.1509), by whom she had a son, Edward North, 1st Baron North, and a daughter, Joan North (d.1556), who married William Wilkinson (buried 6 September 1543), mercer and Sheriff of London. See Chester, Joseph Lemuel and George J. Armytage, eds., *The Parish Register of St. Antholin, Budge Row, London*, (London: Harleian Society, 1883), Vol. VIII, p. 4 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/parishregisters02pargoog#page/n15/mode/2up>.

Joan North is mentioned in the will below as the Mistress Joan Wilkinson who owes the testatrix £250 for the lease of her house. Joan (nee North) Wilkinson was silkwoman to Anne Boleyn, and became an exile in the reign of Queen Mary. She died at Frankfurt in 1556 at the house of her cousin, Cuthbert Warcop, who is also stated in the will below to have been a cousin of the testatrix. Joan North Wilkinson's daughter, Jane Wilkinson, was the first wife of Michael Lok, who persuaded Oxford to invest heavily in Martin Frobisher's second expedition in search of a route to Cathay.

For the foregoing, see the entries for Edward Hall, Sir Ralph Warren, Sir Thomas White, Joan Wilkinson, Edward North, 1st Baron North, Sir William Garrard and Michael Lok in the *ODNB*; Bindoff, S.T., *The House of Commons 1509-1558*, Vol. II, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982), pp. 279-82; Grazebrook, George and John Paul Rylands, eds., *The Visitation of Shropshire Taken in the Year 1623*, Part I, Vol. XVIII, (London: Harleian Society, 1889), pp. 207-8; Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, p. 505; Rokewode, John Gage, *The History and Antiquities of Suffolk; Thingoe Hundred*, (London: Samuel Bentley, 1838), pp. 46-8; Sutton, Anne F., *The Mercery of London: Trade, Goods and People, 1130-1578*, (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), pp. 392-4; and *A Who's Who of Tudor Women: G*, at:

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenG.htm>.

RM: d{omina}(?) Katherine Hall

In the name of God, Amen. The 24th day of February in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred the 55 and in the second and third years of the reigns of our Sovereign Lord and Lady Philip and Mary by the grace of God King and Queen of England, France, Naples, Jerusalem and Ireland, Defenders of the Faith, Princes of Spain and Sicily, Archdukes of Austria, Dukes of Milan, Burgundy and Brabant, Counties of Hapsburg, Flanders and Tyrol, I, Katherine Hall, widow, of the parish of Saint Benet Sherehog in London, late wife of John Hall, citizen and grocer of London aforesaid, deceased, being whole in body and in good and perfect memory, laud and praise be given to Almighty God, do make and ordain this my present testament concerning herein my last will in form following:

First and principally I commend my soul unto the hands of Almighty God, my Creator and Maker, trusting and believing steadfastly through the only merits, precious death and bloodshedding of my Saviour, Jesus Christ, to have full and perfect remission and free forgiveness of all my sins and offences, and my body to be buried in such decent place as shall be though[t] most necessary and convenient by the discretion of my executors;

And I will that all such debts and duties as I owe of right to any person or persons, and cannot [sic?] be sufficiently provided [sic?] by two indifferent probable testimonies at the least, be well and truly contented and paid by mine executors hereafter named;

And after my debts paid, my legacies performed and my funerals discharged, I will that my goods and chattels movable and immovable which were mine at the time of my departure [f. 212v] this present life be distributed and bestowed according to the true purport, intent and meaning of this my present last will and testament;

First, where the Mayor and commonalty and citizens of the City of London, in consideration that I have before this time granted unto them my whole estate, terms of years and interest of and in the site of the late monastery of Luffield and of and in the manor of Luffield and other lands, tenements and hereditaments to me granted in lease for term of 41 years by the late Abbott and convent of the late monastery of Saint Peter of Westminster, have by indenture covenanted to pay to mine executors or administrators after my decease £15 yearly for and during such years of the said term of 41 years as shall be then to come after my decease, as by indentures made between me, the said Katherine Hall, of thone party and the said Mayor and commonalty and citizens of thother party bearing date the 18th of February in the second and third year of the King and Queen's Majesties' reign it doth and may appear;

Item, I will that my executor after my decease shall yearly bestow five pound of the said £15, as long as the said lease shall continue, towards and upon the relief of poor married couples where most need shall be according to his discretion;

Also I will that other £5 of the said £15 be bestowed yearly during the years yet to come of the said term of 41 years towards the reparations and amending of highways hereabout London [+where?] it shall be thought most necessary and needful to my executor;

And I will that the other five pound residue of the said £15 be bestowed yearly during the continuance of the said lease by mine executor to and amongst scholars and poor householders at the discretion of mine executor;

Moreover I will that one hundred pounds, parcel of the two hundred fifty pounds which Mistress Wilkinson owes me, be delivered unto two such young occupiers of honest name and fame that are poor artificers or merchants within the City of London by the appointment of my said executor, all partiality and affection utterly set apart, that is to William Smyth, apprentice unto my cousin, Cuthbert Warcop, and to Walter Stoane, grocer, to every of them fifty pounds, to occupy the same in the fear of God and with an upright conscience to their own commodity and most advantage by the space of the first

five years next after my decease, putting in good and sufficient bonds with sufficient sureties unto my said executor for the true payment of the same;

And upon the expiration of the said five years, I will that two other young occupiers free of the said City of London, whereof the one to be of the Company of the Grocers, the other to be of the Company of the Haberdashers, to have the occupying of the said hundred pounds to be equally divided between them upon such sufficient bonds, sureties and like years as is above-mentioned;

And my mind and will is that the said two occupiers shall, if they of their charity and conscience will so vouchsafe, bestow yearly toward the relief of the poor within the said City by the advice of my said executor or the executors or administrators of my executor for the time being between Hallow-tide and Candlemas two loads of coals;

Also I will that all the ready money coming of the sale of my implements of household and silver plate, being valued and praised by good indifferent men according to the just value thereof, unto what sum of money soever [-soever] the same shall amount unto, be bestowed as hereafter more particularly is mentioned and declared;

Whereof I bequeath and give unto Margaret Rayman, my kinswoman, forty pounds whensoever she shall be married, and if she happen to depart this present life before the time of her said marriage, then I will the said forty pounds to be equally divided amongst her other sisters that shall then survive and overlive the said Margaret Rayman;

Also I bequeath and give unto my late servant, Elizabeth Osborne, ten pounds in ready money, and moreover certain household stuff according to that rate it shall be praised amounting to the value of other ten pounds by the assent of my said executor;

Also I bequeath unto Joan Cutche(?), daughter unto Richard Cutch, five pounds, & if she fortune to depart this present life before she accomplish the age of 20 years or else be married, then I will the said five pounds to be distributed and equally divided amongst her children if any survive and overlive, and for default of the same children, I will the said five pounds to be bestowed upon the poor and needy people inhabiting within the City of London or elsewhere by the discretion of my said executor;

Also I [f. 213r] give unto one Anne Hall dwelling in Kent five pounds, and if she happen to die before she accomplish the age of 20 years or else be married, then I will the same to be bestowed amongst poor people as is aforesaid by the discretion of my said executor;

Also I bequeath unto my late husband Hall's kin dwelling in Shropshire, namely unto such as my cousin Mosyer doth know, six pounds 13s 4d, to be equally divided amongst them by his discretion;

Also I bequeath unto my poor tenants dwelling within the several shires and counties of Northampton, Buckingham and Oxford 6 pounds 13s 4d to be equally divided amongst them by Mr William Jessoule(?);

Also I will that £50 remaining in the hands of Mrs Joan Wilkinson and due unto me, the said Katherine Hall, for the lease of my house which I sold unto her shall be after my decease bestowed by the discretion of my said executor in five years upon the most poor, needy and impotent householders inhabiting as well within the parish of Saint Benet Sherehog, Saint Anthony's [=Antholin's?] and Saint Mildred's in the Poultry as elsewhere within the City of London;

Also I will that immediately after my departure this life there be provided and made by my executor 20 gowns of plain cloth at 7s every yard, to be divided and bestowed upon ten poor men and ten poor women as have greatest need of the same;

Also I will that my said executor immediately after my decease shall cause to be made shirts and smocks of good canvas to the value of ten pounds, and to give and bestow the same upon the most poor and needy people by his discretion;

Also I give and bequeath unto William Garrard, my godson, £20;

Also I give to George Garrard, John Garrard and to Peter Garrard, to every of them six pounds 13s 4d, and if any of them happen to decease or they come to their full age of 21 years, then his part so deceased to remain equally to the other being alive;

Also I give unto my Lady Warren a ring of gold of the value of forty shillings;

Also I give unto Joan Warren and Richard Warren and other my friends and godchildren certain remembrances according as it is mentioned in a schedule hereunto annexed subscribed with mine own hand;

The residue of all my goods, chattels and debts, after my funerals discharged, my debts paid and these my legacies contained in this my last will and testament performed, I will that my said executor bestow the same in relieving and succouring the great lack and necessity of poor householders of honest name and fame being decayed by wrongful vexation, loss of goods by fire or other casualties, and also upon such impotent, lame, bedrid and sore diseased people as may be found within the precinct of the City of London and suburbs of the same or elsewhere by the diligent search of my executor;

And of this my present last will and testament I make and ordain the right worshipful Mr William Garrard, alderman of the City of London, my executor, and I bequeath to him for his labour and pains to be sustained in that behalf ten pounds;

And for due execution of the same I constitute and appoint Dame Joan Warren, widow, supervisor and overseer of this my present testament and last will;

And also I utterly revoke and annul by these presents all and every former wills, testaments, legacies and bequests, executors, administrators and overseers before this said

24th day of February the year of Our Lord God aforesaid at any time written or made. Per Richard Pelter, by me Peter Bristowe, John Barne.

The codicil of Katherine Hall, deceased, made the 27th day of June 1557

More, where I, the said Katherine Hall, have in my will bequeathed and given [f. 213v] to Anne [sic?] Raymond, my kinswoman, forty pounds whensoever she shall be married, in consideration that she is already married and my ability since the making of the same will much decayed, I will now that the said Margaret Raymond shall have but twenty pound. Witness to the premises, William Mosier and Elizabeth Osborne.

More, I give to my Lady Warren a featherbed and a bolster of down;

Also I give her one of my cypress chests;

First I give unto Joan Warren one gilt spoon;

More, I give unto Richar[d] Warren one tablet of gold;

More, I give unto Leonard Warcop and to Anne, his sister, my godchildren, to every of them one silver spoon;

More, I give to Edward Bery and Katherine Bery, my godchildren, to every one of them one silver spoon;

More, I give unto Elizabeth Osborne two silver spoons;

More, I give unto William Mosier, my servant, 20s;

More, I give to Mary, the carpenter's wife, two silver spoons;

More, I give to Mr Everington's two children, being my godchildren, to every of them a silver spoon;

More, I give to Peter Bristowe's daughter, my godchild, a silver spoon;

More, I give to Anne Raymond a round hoop of gold;

More, I give to Elizabeth Osborne a ring with a scutcheon;

More, I give to Mrs. Argall a little flagon to cast rose water;

More, I give to William Mosier, draper, the twenty pounds which he oweth me;

More, I give to the said William Mosier's wife my toothpick of gold;

More, I give to Anne Garrard a tablecloth and a towel of diaper, the best that she can choose;

More, I give to Massy, a poor woman, forty shillings;

More, to Margaret, my maid, forty shillings;

More, I give to Christina Hunter forty shillings;

These being witnesses: Henry Berns, grocer. Per me, William Mosier. Per me Petrum Bristowe.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentu{m} Coram d{omi}no Cantuarien{sis} Archie{pisco}po apud London decimo octavo die mens{is} Augusti Anno d{omi}ni mill{esi}mo quingen{tesim}o quinquagesimo septimo Iurament{o} Will{el}mi Garratt millit{is} exe{cuto}r{is} is h{uius}mo{d}i Testament{o} no{m}i{n}at{i} Ac approbatum &c cui com{m}issa admi{ni}strac{i}o de bene et fideli{te}r admi{ni}strand{o} eadem &c ad sancta dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{i}

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the eighteenth day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-seventh by the oath of Sir William Garrard, executor named in the same testament, and probated etc., to whom administration was granted, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same etc.]