

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 27 October 1558 and proved 10 June 1559, of Sir Anthony St Leger (c.1496 – 16 March 1559), grandfather of Anne St Leger, whose son, Leonard Digges, wrote commendatory verses for the *First Folio* and the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*.

The testator was the son of Ralph St Leger, esquire, and Isabel Haute, the daughter of Richard Haute (d. 8 April 1487), esquire, of Bishopsbourne, Kent, by Elizabeth Tyrrell. For the will of the testator's maternal grandmother, Elizabeth (nee Tyrrell), who married firstly Sir Robert Darcy (c.1420 - 2 November 1469) of Maldon, Essex, and secondly Richard Haute (d. 8 April 1487), see TNA PROB 11/15/363.

The testator married, before 1525, Agnes Warham (d. 24 March 1559), niece of William Warham (1450?-1532), Archbishop of Canterbury, and daughter and heiress of Hugh Warham, esquire, of Croydon, Surrey, by Marian Colle, daughter of Geoffrey Colle, by whom he had three sons who can be identified with certainty:

\* William St Leger (d.1582?), whom the testator disinherited, allegedly for his dissolute lifestyle, although he granted him the manors of Belgar and Bilsington in Kent. Extant documents in the archives of Canterbury Cathedral concerning these manors mention William St Leger and his wife, Isabel Keyes, the daughter of Thomas Keyes (by 1524 – before 5 September 1571), Sergeant Porter to Queen Elizabeth, who without the Queen's consent married, as his second wife, Lady Mary Grey (c.1545 – 20 April 1578), who had a claim to the throne. For the pedigree of Thomas Keyes, see Sherwood, George, ed., 'Keyes, by R.J. Fynmore', *The Pedigree Register*, (London, 1907-1910), Vol. I, pp. 196–8 at:

<http://archive.org/stream/pedigreeeregister01sociuoft#page/196/mode/2up>.

\* Sir Warham St Leger, for whom see his will dated 20 July 1593 and proved 28 January 1598, TNA PROB 11/91/61. He married firstly Ursula Neville (d.1575), fifth daughter of George Neville, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Bergavenny, by his third wife, Mary Stafford, youngest daughter of Edward Stafford (1478-1521), 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buckingham, and secondly, Emmeline Goldwell, by whom he had a son, Walter St Leger. By his first wife, he had at least one son and daughter who can be identified with certainty:

---Anthony St Leger (d.1603) of Ulcombe and Leeds Castle, who married Mary Scott, the daughter of Sir Thomas Scott (1535 – 30 December 1594) of Scott's Hall in Smeeth, Kent, by Elizabeth Baker, daughter of Sir John Baker (d.1489-1558) of Sissinghurst Castle in Cranbrook, Kent, Speaker of the House of Commons; after the death of Anthony St Leger in 1603, she married Sir Alexander Culpeper (d. 15 April 1636) of Wigsell, Sussex, son of Sir Alexander Culpeper of Bedgebury, Kent. See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 81-3, and Vol. III, pp. 481-2.

---Anne St Leger (1555-1636), who married firstly Thomas Digges (d.1546 – 24 August 1595), and secondly Thomas Russell, the overseer of Shakespeare's will. For details of the marriages of the testator's daughter, Anne (nee St Leger) Digges Russell, see the *ODNB* entries for Sir Warham St Leger and Thomas Digges; the will, dated 10 June 1591 and proved 1 September 1595, of Thomas Digges of St Mary Aldermanbury, TNA PROB 11/86/204; the will, dated 3 October 1633 and proved 5 May 1634, of Thomas Russell, TNA PROB 11/165/424; Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 81-3, and Vol. III, pp. 481-2; Hotson, Leslie, I, *William Shakespeare, Do Appoint Thomas Russell, Esquire*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), pp. 126, 132-40, 203, 210; and Palmer, Alan and Veronica, *Who's Who in Shakespeare's England*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 209-10, at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=6BK1Vu6pw84C&pg=PA209&dq=Thomas+Russell#v=onepage&q=Thomas%20Russell&f=false>.

\* Nicholas St Leger, who married Katherine Moyle, widow of Sir Thomas Finch, and daughter of Sir Thomas Moyle (d.1560), Speaker of the House of Commons. For the will of Sir Thomas Moyle, dated 1 August 1560 and proved 14 November 1560, see TNA PROB 11/43/593. According to Richardson, *supra*, Vol. II, p. 170, Sir Thomas Finch was Knight Marshal of the army sent to Newhaven [=Le Havre] in 1563, and was drowned on 19 March when his ship, the *Greyhound*, went aground at Rye, Sussex.

The testator's great-grandson, Leonard Digges (1588 – 7 April 1635), wrote commendatory verses for the *First Folio* of Shakespeare's plays (1623) and for the 1640 edition of his *Poems*:

*This Booke,  
When Brasse and Marble fade, shall make thee looke  
Fresh to all Ages.*

*Briefe, there is nothing in his wit fraught Booke,  
Whose sound we would not heare; on whose worth looke  
Like old coynd gold, whose lines in every page,  
Shall passe true currant to succeeding age.*

See Hotson, *supra*, p. 126, and the *ODNB* article on Leonard Digges.

RM: T{estamentum} Anthonij Seintleger ordinis gartorij Milit{is}

[f. 200r] In the name of God, Amen. The 27<sup>th</sup> day of October and in the fifth and sixth years of the reigns of our Sovereign Lord and Sovereign Lady Philip and Mary by the grace of God King and Queen of England, Spain, France, both the Sicilies, Jerusalem and Ireland, Defenders of the Faith, Archdukes of Austria, Dukes of Burgundy, Milan and Brabant, Counties of Hapsburg, Flanders and Tyrol, I, Sir Anthony St Leger of the Order

of the Garter knight, being sick in body but of perfect remembrance, thanks be unto God, do make and ordain this my testament and last will in manner and form following:

First I commit my soul into the hands and tuition of Almighty God, trusting assuredly by his mercy and by the passion of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to attain remission of my sins and the place of eternal salvation;

Item, I will my body, my soul departed, to be buried in Our Lady's aisle at Ulcombe;

Item, I will there be distributed to the poor and other necessaries at my funeral according to the discretion of my executors;

Item, I will and bequeath to Warham St Leger, my son, all such sums of money as be owing to me by any person or person, the which Warham St Leger I ordain and make to be my sole executor of this my testament and last will, willing and charging him of my blessing and as he will answer before God and his angels at the last day of judgment that he will pay all my debts and also discharge all such person and persons as be bound for me for the payment of any manner of sum or sums of money;

And further I, the said Sir Anthony St Leger, do adnichlate(?) and revoke all other wills by me before this made, and do publish this to be my last will and testament in the presence of: per me, William Darrell; William Hydney; by me, William Thwaites; per me, Jacobus Pory(?). By me Anthony St Leger.

Decimo die mensis Iunij Anno d{omi}ni mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo nono emanavit Com{m}issio Warram Seyntleger filio naturali et l{egi}timo Anthonij Seyntleger preclari ordinis garterij Militis defunct{i} ad administrand{um} bona ip{s}ius defuncti ad viam intestati deceden{tis} p{er} eo q{uo}d idem Warram executor vnicus &c renu{n}ciauit de bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario Necnon de vero et plano compot{o} reddend{o} &c Iurat{i}

[=On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month of June in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-ninth a grant issued to Warham St Leger, natural and legitimate son of Anthony St Leger, of the most honourable Order of the Garter knight, deceased, to administer the good of the same deceased by way of an intestacy by reason that the same Warham, sole executor etc., renounced, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., and to [+prepare] a full and faithful inventory, and also to render a plain and true account.]