

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*.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the St Leger pedigree, see Robertson, Herbert, *Stemmata Robertson et Durdin*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1893-95), pp. 70-1 at:

<http://archive.org/stream/stemmatarobertso00robe#page/70/mode/2up>

The St Leger family was descended from both King John (by his mistress, Clemence), and Robert de Vere (d. before 1221), 3rd Earl of Oxford, and his wife, Isabel de Bolebec (d.1245).

Among the descendants of Robert de Vere, 3rd Earl of Oxford, were Philippa Arundel (d.1399) and Sir Richard Serjeaux (d.1393). See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 126 (hereafter *PA*).

Of the three daughters of Sir Richard Sergeaux and Philippa Arundel (d.1399), Alice Sergeaux (d.1452) married Richard Vere (d.1417), 11th Earl of Oxford, Philippa Sergeaux married Robert Pashley, and Elizabeth Sergeaux married William Marney (d. 21 or 24 August 1414). Oxford was thus a direct descendant of Alice Sergeaux, while the testator was a direct descendant of Elizabeth Sergeaux.

The testator was the great-great-grandson of Sir William Marney and Elizabeth Sergeaux. For the will of Sir William Marney, proved 22 August 1414, see TNA PROB 11/2B/21.

The testator was the great-grandson of Sir Thomas Tyrrell (d. 28 March 1477) and Anne Marney. For the will of Sir Thomas Tyrrell (d. 28 March 1477), see TNA PROB 11/6/417.

The testator was the grandson of Richard Haute (d. 8 April 1487), esquire, of Bishopsbourne, Kent, and Elizabeth Tyrrell. For the will of Elizabeth Tyrrell, who married firstly Sir Robert Darcy (c.1420 - 2 November 1469) of Maldon, Essex, and secondly Richard Haute, see TNA PROB 11/15/363.

The testator was the son of Ralph St Leger (d. 9 August 1518), esquire, and Isabel Haute.

The testator is said to have had seven brothers and three sisters, for whom see the pedigree in Robertson, *supra*.

MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN

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, according to the pedigree in Robertson, *supra*, he had five sons and two daughters:

* **William St Leger** (d.1582?), eldest son, 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/pedigreeregister01sociuoft#page/196/mode/2up>

See also the will of Nicholas Crispe, TNA PROB 11/56/44, in which he bequeaths to his 'cousin, Thomas Keyes, Sergeant Porter', a colt, and a mourning gown.

* **Sir Warham St Leger**, second son, 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, 5th Baron Bergavenny, by his third wife, Mary Stafford, youngest daughter of Edward Stafford (1478-1521), 3rd Duke of Buckingham, and secondly, Emmeline Goldwell, by whom he had a son, Walter St Leger. By his first wife, he had, according to the pedigree in Robertson, *supra*, five sons and four daughters, including:

-**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*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 81-3, and Vol. III, pp. 481-2 (hereafter *MCA*).

-**Anne St Leger** (c.1555-1636), who married firstly Thomas Digges (d.1546 – 24 August 1595), and secondly Thomas Russell, overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon. 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; See *PA, supra*, Vol. I, p. 657; *MCA, supra*, 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**, third son, 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 *PA, supra*, Vol. II, p. 50, and *MCA, 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.

* **Sir Anthony St Leger** (d.1612), youngest son, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, who married firstly Elizabeth Markham (d. 2 February 1598), daughter of Richard Markham, and secondly Mary Southwell (d. 19 December 1603), daughter of Francis Southwell, 'widow of three husbands'. See the monument in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

* **Robert St Leger** (d.1564)

* **Jane St Leger** (d.1562)

* **Anne St Leger**, married Francis Harrington of Dover.

TESTATOR AND SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST FOLIO

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 Seyntleger ordinis gartorij Milit{is}

[f. 200r] In the name of God, Amen. The 27th 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 [=annihilate?] 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 10th 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.]