

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 23 May 1560 and proved 26 August 1564, of Sir Richard Blount (d. 11 August 1564), whose nephew, Richard Lyster (b. 23 November 1532, d.1558?), esquire, married Mary Wriothesley, aunt of Henry Wriothesley (1573-1624), 3rd Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was the second son and eventual heir of Richard Blount (d.1506/7), of Iver, Buckinghamshire. and Mapledurham, Oxfordshire, by Elizabeth Delaford, daughter and heir of William Delaford of Iver. According to the History of Parliament, 'the Blount family of Iver and Mapledurham was a cadet branch of the baronial family of Mountjoy'. See also the History of Parliament entry for the testator at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/blount-sir-richard-1506-64>.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

In 1526 or 1527 the testator married Elizabeth Lyster (d.1582), daughter of Sir Richard Lyster (c.1480 – 16 March 1553), and sister of Sir Michael Lyster (d. 1 August 1551). For the will of Elizabeth Lyster (d.1582), see TNA PROB 11/64/289. For the will of Sir Richard Lyster, see TNA PROB 11/36/390. For the will of Sir Michael Lyster, see TNA PROB 11/34/405.

As noted above, Sir Michael Lyster's eldest son and heir, Richard Lyster (b. 23 November 1532, d.1558?), married Mary Wriothesley (buried 13 December 1561), daughter of Thomas Wriothesley (1505-1550), 1st Earl of Southampton. See Hants. RO 5M53/932, TNA C 54/830, and the will of Thomas Wriothesley, 1st Earl of Southampton, TNA PROB 11/34/154. By Mary Wriothesley, Richard Lyster (b. 23 November 1532, d.1558?) had a son, Michael Lyster, who married Elizabeth Southwell, eldest daughter of Richard Southwell (d.1600), illegitimate son of the Privy Councillor Sir Richard Southwell (1502/3-1564), and sister of the Jesuit, Robert Southwell (1561-1595). For Elizabeth Southwell's grandfather, Sir Richard Southwell (1502/3-1564), see the *ODNB* entry, his will TNA PROB 11/43/577; and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/southwell-richard-15023-64>.

For Elizabeth Southwell's father, Richard Southwell (d.1600), see his will, TNA PROB 11/96/175, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/southwell-richard-1531-1600>.

For Elizabeth Southwell's brother, the Jesuit, Robert Southwell (1561-1595), see the *ODNB* entry.

By Elizabeth Lyster, the testator had two sons and two daughters:

* Sir Michael Blount (d. 11 November 1609), who married Mary Moore, the daughter and eventual coheir of Roger Moore of Bicester, by whom he had five sons, including his eldest son and heir, Richard Blount (1564-1628), another son, Charles Blount (1563-1606), 8th Baron Mountjoy and Earl of Devonshire, who married Penelope Devereux (1563-1607), sister of Robert Devereux (1565-1601), 2nd Earl of Essex, and six daughters, including a daughter, Catherine Blount, mentioned in the will of her grandmother, Elizabeth Lyster Blount, TNA PROB 11/64/289. See the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/blount-michael-1529-1609>.

See also the History of Parliament entry for Richard Blount (1564-1628) at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/blount-richard-iii-1564-1628>.

* Richard Blount (d.1628), who married Mary West (living 1625), the daughter of William West (c.1519-1595), 1st Baron de la Warr, nephew of Thomas West (1472-1554), 8th Baron West and 9th Baron de la Warr, by whom he had one son, who predeceased him, and six daughters. See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. IV, pp. 323-5, and the History of Parliament entry for Richard Blount at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/blount-richard-ii-1628>.

The life of Richard Blount's father-in-law, William West (c.1519-1595), was a complicated one. According to the *ODNB*, in 1549, Thomas West, 9th Baron de la Warr:

. . . placed a private bill before parliament to disinherit his nephew William West, first Baron De La Warr (c.1519–1595). The latter was the son of the ninth baron's half-brother Sir George West of Warbleton (d. 1538) and his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Robert Morton of Lechlade, Gloucestershire. His uncle was childless, and had at some time adopted William as his heir. However, West tried to gain the de la Warr estate early by poisoning his uncle. The attempt was unsuccessful and he was in the Tower by October 1548. He was disinherited by an act of parliament in 1550, although he had been reinstated as heir by the time of his uncle's death. . . .

Now reinstated as his uncle's heir, William West was unable to inherit the barony owing to the act of parliament. Some time previously he had married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Strange of Chesterton, Gloucestershire; after her death he married Anne, widow of Thomas Oliver and daughter of Henry Swift of Andover, Hampshire, who survived him. Involved in the Dudley conspiracy, West was arraigned in the Guildhall on 30 June 1556. He insisted on answering the charge as William, Lord de la Warr, forcing the heralds to prove that he had no right to the title. He was convicted of treason and sentenced to death. The punishment was not carried out, however, and he was pardoned in 1557, shortly before fighting for the queen at St Quentin. In 1563 he was restored in blood by Elizabeth I, and on 5 February 1570 he was knighted and created Baron De La Warr. This was regarded as a new creation, and in his lifetime he sat in the House of Lords as junior baron. Like his uncle before him he was the government's agent in Sussex, serving at times as lord lieutenant. Unlike his uncle he was a protestant and was particularly active in the prosecution of recusants. No doubt for that reason he took part in the trials for treason of the duke of Norfolk in 1572 and the earl of Arundel in 1589. He died at Wherwell, Hampshire, on 30 December 1595, and his son Thomas succeeded to the barony, successfully claiming the precedency within the peerage that had belonged to his title before his father forfeited it.

As noted above, Richard Blount's father-in-law, William West (c.1519-1595), 1st Baron de la Warr, was involved in the Dudley conspiracy. In February 1556 he and his cousin, Edward Lewknor (d. 6 September 1556), were asked by Henry Peckham (d.1556) to obtain a copy of Henry VIII's will in order to disprove Queen Mary's right to the crown. Lewknor took the copy of the will to West's house, where it was given to Henry Peckham, who was later executed for his part in the conspiracy. For Henry Peckham, said to have been a cousin of Jane Cheyne Wriothesley (d. 15 September 1574), Countess of Southampton, see her will, TNA PROB 11/56/535, and the will of Henry Peckham's father, Sir Edmund Peckham, TNA PROB 11/47/325. See also the History of Parliament entry for Edward Lewknor at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/lewknor-edward-151617-56>.

Richard Blount's brother-in-law, Captain William West, immigrated to Virginia, where he was killed by Indians in 1610. See 'Jamestown Rediscovery' at:

<http://historicjamestowne.org/archaeology/chancel-burials/founders/william-west/>.

Richard Blount's sister-in-law, Jane West, married firstly Thomas Wenman, esquire, secondly James Cressy, thirdly Thomas Tasburgh, and fourthly Ralph Sheldon of Beoley. For the will of Ralph Sheldon of Beoley, whose daughter, Katherine Sheldon, married Oxford's brother-in-law, Francis Trentham, and whose daughter, Elizabeth Sheldon, married the brother of Thomas Russell, overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford, see TNA PROB 11/121/345. For the will of Thomas Russell, see TNA PROB 11/65/424.

* Elizabeth Blount (c.1540 - 11 August 1587), who married Nicholas St John (born c.1526, d. 8 November 1589), esquire, of Lydiard Tregoze, by whom, according to their monumental inscription dating from 1592, she had three sons and five daughters:

-John St John, eldest son and heir, who married Lucy Hungerford, the daughter of Sir Walter Hungerford.

- Oliver St John (1559 - 29 December 1630), first Viscount Grandison of Limerick, who married Joan Roydon (d.1631), widow of Sir William Holcroft, and daughter and heir of Henry Roydon of Battersea, by whom he had no issue. See the *ODNB* entry.

-Richard St John, living and unmarried in 1592.

-Elizabeth St John, who married St George [=Gorges?] of Cambridgeshire.

-Catherine St John, who married a husband surnamed Webb. She is not mentioned in the 1582 will of her grandmother, Elizabeth Lyster Blount, TNA PROB 11/64/289.

-Eleanor St John, who married a husband surnamed Cave of Northamptonshire.

-Dorothy St John, who married a husband surnamed Egiocke of Warwickshire.

-Jane St John, who married a husband surnamed Nicholas of Wiltshire.

See also:

<https://goodgentlewoman.wordpress.com/2014/06/25/the-other-elizabeth-blount/>.

See also *The New England Genealogical and Historical Register*, (Boston, 1900), Vol. LIV, p. 342 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ONyBYniOsxwC&pg=PA342&lpg=PA342&dq=%22Elizabeth+Blount%22+%22Nicholas+St+John%22&source=bl&ots=APwktAlrRr&sig=TKPqQwMNT04xaQoHZEoDXOg9cb8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj0nsnhtuTKAhUFxGMKHS80Cjc4ChDoAQgfMAE#v=onepage&q=%22Elizabeth%20Blount%22%20%22Nicholas%20St%20John%22&f=false>.

* Barbara Blount (d. 28 February 1564), who married Francis Shirley (d. 24 March 1578) of West Grinstead, Sussex, the son of Sir Thomas Shirley (born by 1489, d.1544). Their children Richard Shirley, Thomas Shirley, and Eleanor Shirley are mentioned in the will of their grandmother, Elizabeth Lyster Blount, TNA PROB 11/64/289. For Francis Shirley, see the History of Parliament entry at:

See also the entry for Barbara Blount (c.1538-1563/4) at:

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenB-B1.htm>.

RM: T{estamentum} Richardi Blounte

[f. 193r] In the name of God, Amen. The 23rd day of May in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred and threescore, I Richard Blount, knight, of Mapledurham, gentleman, in the county of Oxford, make and ordain this my present testament and last will in form following, revoking and annulling all former testaments and wills heretofore by me had, made, written or spoken, and this to be my firm and last will:

First I bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, my only Maker and Redeemer, my body to the earth according to the laudable custom;

As concerning the disposition, order and assignment of all my manors, lands, tenements and all other my hereditaments, whatsoever they be, set, lying and being in the counties of Sussex, Oxford, Buckingham, Middlesex, Devonshire, Somersetshire [f. 193v] or elsewhere within the realm of England, and of all the issues and profits of the same, I declare by this my present testament and last will the order and disposition thereof in manner and form following:

First, I will to th' executors of this my last will and testament the manor of Fremington for the term of six years to th' intent that with the issues and revenues thereof they shall pay my debts, and if my said executors shall or may pay my debts with the issues and revenues thereof in any shorter time, then I will that the said manor shall go in course of descent presently to mine heir;

To Michael Blount, mine eldest son, I give the lease of my house at the White Friars in London with all my stuff that is therein, and all my apparel, wheresoever it be;

I give to my said son my interest and lease of Hornesey [=Hornsea?] in the county of York;

I give to my said son, Michael Blount, my best basin and ewer of silver and parcel gilt that I have;

Also I give and bequeath to my son, Richard Blount, my manor and lordship of Dedisham with the park to the same belonging in the county of Sussex, to have to him and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

To Richard Blount, my son, I give my next best basin and ewer of silver and parcel gilt;

To my wife, Dame Elizabeth Blount, I give my best basin and ewer of silver and double gilt;

To my son St John I give the best gelding that I have;

To my daughter, his wife, I give one ring of fine gold weighing thirty shillings;

And to every one of their children one ring of fine gold weighing twenty shillings;

To my son Shirley I give the next best gelding that I have;

And to every one of my son Shirley's children by my daughter I give one ring of fine gold weighing twenty shillings;

To Edmonde Wilde and Thomas Aprice I give either of them forty shillings in reward;

To every one of the rest of my men and women servants, as well retainers as others, I give six shillings and eight pence in reward;

All the rest of my goods, cattle [=chattels?] and plate I give and will unto my well-beloved wife, Dame Elizabeth Blount;

I make, ordain and appoint my wife, Dame Elizabeth Blount, my sole executrix;

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my sign and seal the day and year above-written.
By me, Richard Blount.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi testamentum coram Magistro Waltero Haddon Legum Doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis Commissario apud London Vicesimo sexto Die mensis Augusti Anno Domini Millesimo quingentesimo Sexagesimo Quarto Iuramento magistri Thome Willet procuratoris Domine Elizabeth Blount relicte et executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominatim Cui commissaria fuit Administratrix &c de bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario Necnon de vero et plano computo Reddendo Ad sancta Dei Evangelia Iuratim

[=The same testament was proved before Master Walter Haddon, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the twenty-sixth day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred sixty-fourth by the oath of Master Thomas Willet, proctor of Lady Elizabeth Blount, relict and executrix named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., and [+to exhibit] a full and faithful inventory, and also to render a true and plain account.]