

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 12 July 1565 and proved 6 November 1565, of Thomas Saunders of Uxbridge, whose daughter, Margery Saunders, was the mother-in-law of Sir Maurice Berkeley, half brother of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon. For the will of Thomas Russell, see TNA PROB 11/165/424.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Nothing appears to be known of the testator's family background. In the will below he mentions 'my cousin, Thomas Saunders of Hillingdon End', who may have been the father of Drew Saunders (by 1525-1579), gentleman, who in 1585 held the manor of Cowley Hall in Hillingdon, and married Anne Hutton, by whom he had a daughter, Sarah Saunders, who married Henry Chapman. See Lysons, Daniel, *An Historical Account of those Parishes in the County of Middlesex which are not Described in The Environs of London*, (London: T. Cadell, 1800), p. 155 at:

<https://archive.org/details/historicalaccoun00lyso/page/154>

For Drew Saunders see also his will, dated 21 June 1577 and proved 23 June 1579, TNA PROB 11/61/306, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/saunders-drew-1525-79>

Drew Saunders was evidently a kinsman, perhaps a brother, of his fellow-Member Robert Saunders. He was a merchant of the staple who appears in 1546 in the correspondence of Robert Saunders's brother-in-law Otwell Johnson, with whom he joined in making a loan to the treasurer of Calais. . . . A suit brought in the court of requests by John Hutton, his brother-in-law and fellow-stapler, against Henry Chapman, his son-in-law and executor, shows Saunders trading in 1570 through Hamburg and maintaining a factor there.

For the will of Robert Saunders of Flore, Northamptonshire, see TNA PROB 11/43/474.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Elizabeth Wolman, by whom he had a son and three daughters:

* **Nicholas Saunders**, baptized 19 July 1552 at St Margaret's, Uxbridge, died 7 April 1605. See the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/saunders-nicholas-i-1605>

Nicholas Saunders never married, but by Dinah Hutton, perhaps the wife of his servant, Henry Councill, had an illegitimate son:

(1) Nicholas Councill.

For the will of Nicholas Saunders, said to date from September 1604, see TNA PROB 11/105/567. According to the History of Parliament, the will was contested by his younger sister, Elizabeth Saunders.

The testator's son, Nicholas Saunders, should not be confused with Nicholas Saunders (c.1532 – 17 December 1587) of Ewell, Catholic recusant, for whose undated will, proved 18 January 1588, see TNA PROB 11/72/42.

* **Anne Saunders**, baptized 12 April 1542 at St Margaret's, Uxbridge. On 31 July 1564 at St Stephen's, Coleman Street, London, she married Edward Nalson, of Hillingdon, Middlesex, by whom she appears to have had no issue. For the will of Edward Nalson, dated 27 March 1584 and proved 23 May 1584, see TNA PROB 11/67/108.

* **Margery Saunders**, baptized 4 December 1543 at St Margaret's, Uxbridge. Her son-in-law, Sir Maurice Berkeley, was the half brother of Thomas Russell, overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon. For her will, dated 22 May 1623 and proved 14 June 1625, see TNA PROB 11/146/44. See also the entry at:

http://www.tudorwomen.com/?page_id=707

Margery or Margaret Saunders (1545-June 1625) was the daughter of Thomas Saunders of Uxbridge, Middlesex and Elizabeth Wolman. On June 25, 1563, she married Robert Wolman or Woolman (1538-1571), a London mercer. In 1572, she married John Leigh of Coldrey in Froyle, Hampshire (1534-January 19, 1576). They had a son, John Leigh (April 1575-January 6, 1612). In 1576, Margaret enclosed the cemetery in Windsor Street Green in Uxbridge. In 1577, she married Sir William Killigrew of Lothbury, London and Hanworth, Middlesex (1545-November 23, 1622), gentleman pensioner and later vice chamberlain to Elizabeth Tudor. Their children were Robert (1578/9-May 1633), Catherine (1579-1641), and Elizabeth (1580-May 1626). The Killigrews were always in debt but they kept a large house in Lothbury.

* **Elizabeth Saunders**, baptized 28 September 1549 at St Margaret's, Uxbridge, buried 25 April 1612 at St Bartholomew's by the Royal Exchange, London. She is referred to as unmarried in the will below. On 26 May 1567 at St Margaret's, Uxbridge, she married, as his second wife, William Onslowe, gentleman. He was buried 10 February 1613 at St Bartholomew's. See his will, dated 19 January 1609, TNA PROB 11/121/9, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/onslow-william-1612>

4th s. of Edward Onslow of Onslow, Salop by Anne, da. and h. of Richard Houghton. m. (1) a da. of one Kynaston; (2) Elizabeth, da. of Thomas Saunders of Uxbridge, Mdx., sis. of Nicholas Saunders, ?2s.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

For the testator's overseer, John Newdigate (1514 – 16 August 1565), see the Newdigate pedigree in Crisp, Frederick Arthur, ed., *Visitation of England and Wales*, Vol. 7, (1907), p. 34 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationofengl28howa/page/34>

See also the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/newdigate-john-1514-65>

b. 9 Oct. 1514, 3rd but 1st surv. s. of John Newdigate of Harefield by Anne, da. and h. of Nicholas Hilton of Cambridge; bro. of Francis[†], Nicholas and Robert[†]. educ. L. Inn, adm. 7 Aug. 1538, called 1548. m. (1) settlement 4 Feb. 1541, Mary, da. of Sir Robert Cheney of Chesham Bois, Bucks., 2s. inc. John[†] ida.; (2) 19 Nov. 1559, Elizabeth, da. of Thomas Lovett of Astwell, Northants., wid. of Anthony Cave of Chicheley, Bucks., 1s. suc. fa. 19 June 1545.2

It appears from the Newdigate pedigree, *supra*, that the testator's overseer died 16 August 1565, only a month after the testator made his will.

John Newdigate's daughter, Anne Newdigate, was hanged for complicity in the death of her husband, George Saunders, murdered on 25 March 1573 by Oxford's former servant, George Browne. The murder was the subject of a pamphlet by Oxford's uncle, Arthur Golding (1535/6-1606), *Brief Discourse of the Late Murther of Master George Saunders*, and an anonymous play, *A Warning for Fair Women*, performed by the Lord Chamberlain's Men.

For the marriage of Anne Newdigate and George Saunders, see the Saunders pedigree in Howard, Joseph Jackson and George John Armytage, eds., *The Visitation of London in the Year 1568*, (London: Harleian Society, 1869), p. 34 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationoflond00cook/page/34>

The murdered George Saunders was a cousin of both Sir Edward Saunders (1506-1576), Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and Alice Saunders, mother of Sir Christopher Hatton (c.1540-1591). See Orlin, Lena Cowen, *Locating Privacy in Tudor London*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 209 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=gkITDAAAQBAJ&pg=PA209>

For John Newdigate see also the will, TNA PROB 11/59/572, of his second wife, Elizabeth (nee Lovett) Cave Newdigate Weston (d. 20 August 1577).

See also the *ODNB* entry for his son:

Newdigate [Newdegate], John (1542?–1592), landowner, was born at Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, probably on 2 February 1542, the eldest and only surviving son of John Newdigate (1513–1565), lawyer, of Lincoln's Inn and of Harefield, Middlesex, and of his first wife, Mary, daughter of Robert Cheney of Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire.

The testator's overseer, Thomas Hughes (d. 27 March 1587), appears to have been the son of Dr John Hughes (1550-1543) of Uxbridge. See the will of Dr. John Hughes, TNA PROB 11/29/364, in which he mentions his wife, Margaret, and his four children, Thomas Hughes, Nicholas Hughes, Justinian Hughes and Anne Hughes. See also the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/hughes-john-1500-43>

b. by 1500. educ. Oxf. BCL 20 Feb. 1514, BCnL 1 Mar. 1514, DCL sup. 26 Feb. 1528; adv. Doctors' Commons 9 Dec. 1532. m. Margaret, 3s. 1da.2

See also Cussans, John Edwin, *History of Hertfordshire*, Vol. III, (1972 reprint), p. 293 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=VR0qAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA293>

Here lieth the body of Thomas Hewes, late of Uxbridge in the county of Middlesex, esquire, who departed this life the 27 of March Anno Domini 1587. And also the body of Elizabeth, his wife, sole daughter and heir of Sir Griffith Dune, knight, who deceased the second day of December Anno Domini 1590.

For the will of Oxford's kinsman, Sir Griffith Don, see TNA PROB 11/30/109.

RM: T{estamentum}Thome Saunders

In the name of God, Amen. The 12th day of July 1565, I, Thomas Saunders of Uxbridge in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, being sick in body but whole in mind, and having good & perfect memory, God be thanked, do ordain & make this my last will & testament in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I commend my soul into the hands of the Almighty God, my Maker & Redeemer & Saviour, and my body to be buried in the church of Hillingdon at the discretion of Elizabeth, my wife, my executrix, and overseers;

Item, I give to the relief of the poor folks within the town of Uxbridge aforesaid at the discretion of my said executrix and overseers the sum of six pounds thirteen shillings four pence of lawful money of England;

Item, I give to Nicholas Saunders, my son, to be paid him at his age of four and twenty years, the sum of one thousand marks of lawful money of England;

Item, I will that my son-in-law, Robert Wolman th' elder, mercer, and my son-in-law, Edward Nalson, and the overliver of them by these presents shall have authority to receive into their hands all such sums of money as by a short note in my book of reckonings the[y] shall find be owing me at such times as the said note & writings thereof made shall declare them to be due;

And my will & mind is that thirteen hundred pounds of the same money shall be from time to time employed in such manner and form as shall be thought best by my overseers or the survivor [f. 241v] of them for the better execution and performance of this my last will, and that the same Robert Wolman and Edward Nalson upon the receipt thereof shall stand bound by good and lawful obligations in the law to my overseers, John Newdigate, esquire, and to Thomas Hughes, esquire, and to their executors in such manner and form as my said overseers or the survivor of them shall think most meet and convenient for the better performance of this my last will in that behalf;

Of the which foresaid sum of 13 hundred pounds I will and bequeath unto Nicholas Saunders, my said son, the said sum of one thousand marks thereof that I have before given him to be paid at his said age of 24 years;

And also my will & intent is that my said son, Nicholas, shall be in the meantime brought up in virtue & learning by th' advice of Elizabeth, my wife, who shall have full power & authority to allow him such reasonable exhibition as she shall think meet and convenient, not minishing his said foresaid legacy, but otherwise to be levied by the discretion of my said overseers or the survivor of them;

Item, I will that if by the employment of the said thirteen hundred pounds there shall happen to rise any more money over and above the same sum of 13 hundred pounds and besides the foresaid charges of th' exhibition of the said Nicholas, then I will and bequeath the same overplus unto Elizabeth, my wife, to be paid her half yearly until the said Nicholas shall come to his age of 24 years;

And I will & bequeath that then, that is to weat at the said age of the same Nicholas of 24 years, the same Elizabeth shall have all the residue of the said 13 hundred pounds to be well and truly to her contented and paid;

Item, I give to Elizabeth, my daughter, to be paid her upon the day of her marriage or at her age of 21 years if she marry not before by the hands of my said wife the sum of two hundred marks of lawful money of England if my said wife do live unto any of the days above specified;

And my will is that if it shall fortune my said wife to depart this world before any of the said days of payment before specified, that then the said hundred marks shall be paid unto her upon such of the said days as shall first happen by my said two sons-in-law, Robert Wolman and Edward Nalson, or by their executors or assigns out of such sums of money as they shall have then in their hands by virtue of this my last will;

Item, my will is that my said sons, Robert Wolman and Edward Nalson, shall also be bound to my overseers or the survivor of them by good and lawful writing obligatory in the law to pay all my debts whatsoever they be that I do truly owe, and also truly to pay all my said gifts and legacies as are aforesaid by them to be paid according to the discretion of my said overseers or the survivor of them;

Item, all my other sums of money that my said two sons-in-law shall receive into their hands as is aforesaid over and besides the said sum of 13 hundred pounds I freely give to my said two sons-in-law aforesaid upon condition that they shall truly pay the said sum of 13 hundred pounds and shall bind themselves by sufficient and lawful writing to my said overseers or to the survivor of them in manner and form aforesaid, and to pay th' increase and profit that shall grow upon the employment aforesaid, and that they shall pay all my debts and legacies in this my last will contained in manner and form as in this my last will & testament is limited & declared, the same bonds to be made of and in such competent sum of money as my said overseers or the survivor of them shall think convenient;

The residue of all my goods, chattels and debts whatsoever they be unbequeathed I give to Elizabeth, my wife, whom I make my full and sole executrix of this my last will & testament to this intent, that she shall by th' advice of my overseers or the survivor of them cause me honestly to be brought on earth, and that she shall truly pay to Elizabeth, my said daughter, the said sum of two hundred marks that I before have [f. 242r] given her and bring her up and find her convenient meat and drink & apparel and other necessaries till she be married, and that she, the same Elizabeth, my wife, shall at her decease bestow such goods as she shall then leave equally among our children;

Item, I will that if it shall fortune my said wife to depart out of this world before my said son, Nicholas, shall accomplish his age of 24 years, that then the portion of the said 13 hundred pounds bequeathed to the same Elizabeth, my wife, shall be and remain unto the said Nicholas, my son, with the increase thereof, if any shall happen after her decease;

And if the said Nicholas shall fortune to depart this world, which God forbid, before his said age of 24 years, then my will is that his portion of the said 13 hundred pounds with the like increase shall be equally divided between his mother and other his sisters then living;

Item, I will that my said wife upon a reasonable request after my decease shall be bound by sufficient obligation as my said overseers or the survivor of them shall devise unto my said overseers or the survivor of them in two hundred pounds for the sure payment of the said two hundred marks unto my said daughter, Elizabeth, at such time as is limited by this my last will, and if she refuse so to do, then my will is that my said two sons-in-law shall defalk and abate two hundred pound of her part and portion of the said 13 hundred pounds which they shall pay unto the said Elizabeth, my daughter, at such time as my wife should have paid the said 2 hundred marks to the same Elizabeth, and they to be acquitted & discharged thereof against my said wife;

And I ordain my loving friends, the said John Newdigate and Thomas Hughes, esquires, to be my overseers of this my last will and testament, desiring them and also hereby giving unto them and the survivor of them full power & authority, for the better performance of this my present testament and other orders herein not perfectly considered, to cause this my last will to be truly performed and to order, dispose and amend the order herein from time to time as their wisdoms shall seem most best, meet and convenient by all and all manner of ways whatsoever they shall most surely devise;

And I give to each of them for their such counsel and pains to be taken therein the sum of ten pounds apiece;

These being witnesses: Thomas Field, Fraunces Wolman, John Kirton, writer hereof, John Rayner, Michael Welde alias dict{us} Welles, Thomas Cholmeley and others.

Item, John Rayner and Brian Hesketh, curate, witnesseth that he reserveth all things to his overseers for the surety of the payment of all his legacies to be devised by their discretions;

Item, the said testator the 13th day of July 1565 did further give these legacies following in the presence of the witnesses under-named:

Item, I give to my cousin, Thomas Saunders of Hillingdon End(?), in money the sum of £6 13s 4d, and to him I give my black furred cloth gown furred with budge afore and with lamb behind, and also my black furred cloak;

Item, I give to William Kent in money six pound thirteen shillings & four pence;

Item, I give to Thomas Cholmely that which he oweth me, which is in money four pound, and I give to him my coat & cloak of sheep's colour;

Item, I give to John Cutler, my servant, all that my part of the bargain of wood that Jasper of Stanwell and I have now between us at the great hedge;

These being witnesses: Robert Wolman, Edward Nalson, Alice White.

Probatum fuit H{uius}mo{d}i testamentu{m} Coram Mag{ist}ro Waltero Haddon Legu{m} doctore curie Prerogatiue cant{uariensis} custode siue com{m}issario apud London Sexto die mensis Novembris anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Qui{n}gesimo Sexagesimo qui{n}to Iurame{n}to Elizabethe Rel{ic}t{e} et executric{is} in H{uius}mo{d}i test{ament}o no{m}i{n}at{e} Cui comissa fuit admi{n}istracio de bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario Necnon de plano et vero comp{ot}o redend{o} Ad sanct{a} Dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{e}

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