

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 28 May 1565 and proved 4 December 1565, of Richard Newport of Hunningham, Warwickshire, father-in-law of Dorothy (nee Hatton) Newport Underhill (d.1566x70), who had several connections to Oxford, and whose stepson sold New Place to William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon. See the will of the testator's daughter-in-law, Dorothy (nee Hatton) Newport Underhill (d.1566x70), TNA PROB 11/52, f. 10, for her family background and connections to Oxford.

The testator was a first cousin of Sir Richard Newport (d.1570), who owned a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* possibly annotated by Shakespeare. See issue No. 32 of *The Edward De Vere Newsletter* on this website, and Keen, Alan, 'In the Quick Forge and Working-House of Thought', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 33, No. 2, March 1951, pp. 256-70 at p. 257:

*It may be imaged with what alacrity those of us who believed in the probability of Shakespeare being the annotator leapt, if prematurely, upon the task of identifying our Rychard Newport with one of that name who was owner of Hunningham in the County of Warwick from 1544 to the date of his death, 11th November, 1565. This Rychard Newport, through marriage of his daughter and various other ties, was closed connected with the prominent Warwickshire family of Underhill, one of whom, his son-in-law, in 1567, when Shakespeare was three years old, bought New Place in Stratford-on-Avon. His son sold New Place to Shakespeare in 1597. However attractive this identification seemed to be, the return of the public records at the end of the second world war, and comparison of autographs, blew our neatly-laid provenance sky high. The owner of our annotated Chronicle, the other Sir Rychard Newport – was of High Erccall in Shropshire, and, curiously enough, a cousin to the Sir [sic] Rychard of Warwickshire.*

Unfortunately Keen does not identify the precise family relationship by which Sir Richard Newport (d.1570), owner of the annotated copy of Hall's *Chronicle*, and Richard Newport (d.1565) of Hunningham, the testator in the will below, were cousins. However it appears from the pedigree of Newport of High Erccall and from other documents that Thomas Newport (d.1548x51), father of Sir Richard Newport (d.1570) of High Erccall, had a brother, Richard Newport, living in 1512, and it seems likely that Richard Newport, living 1512, who appears to have resided in Droitwich and been known as Richard Newport the elder, gentleman, was the father of the testator in the will below, Richard Newport (d.1565) of Hunningham. See:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/records.aspx?cat=143-ms3312&cid=-1#-1>

The testator's first wife was Ursula Ferrers, the daughter of Sir Edward Ferrers (d.1535) and his wife, Constance Brome (d.1551). For the will of Sir Edward Ferrers (d.1535), see TNA PROB 11/25, ff. 212-14. For the will of Constance (nee Brome) Ferrers (d.1551), in which the testator, Richard Newport, was appointed one of the overseers, see TNA PROB 11/34, ff. 220-1. See also Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., Vol. II, (Salt Lake City, 2011), pp. 242-3.

The testator appoints his five children by Ursula Ferrers as his executors, and as overseers he appoints members of Ursula Ferrers' family:

*my cousin, Richard Knightley, esquire; Ralph Brome, esquire; my son-in-law, Edward Ferrers of Bevington, esquire; my brother-in-law, George Ferrers, gentleman; Thomas Hawes of Solihull, gentleman, and William Hawes, his son & heir.*

The testator's overseers can be identified as follows:

-Sir Richard Knightley (1533-1615) of Fawsley was the son of Sir Valentine Knightley (1501-1566) and his wife, Anne Ferrers (d. 12 December 1554), sister of the testator's first wife, Ursula Ferrers. From the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

*Knightley, Sir Richard (1533–1615), politician and patron of puritans, was the eldest son of Sir Valentine Knightley of Fawsley, Northamptonshire, and his wife, Anne, the daughter of Edward Ferrers of Warwickshire. The family fortunes were based on sheep farming, for which the lands on their estates were enclosed, and on the death of his father in 1566 Sir Richard inherited an extensive property said to be worth £13,000 a year.*

-Ralph Brome was the son of Nicholas Brome or Browne (d. 10 October 1516), esquire, of Baddesley Clinton by his third wife, Lettice(?) Catesby, daughter of Nicholas Catesby, esquire, of Baddesley Clinton, and was thus the uncle (by the half blood) of the testator's first wife, Ursula Ferrers;

-the identity of Edward Ferrers of Bevington, esquire, whom the testator calls his 'son-in-law', is unclear;

-George Ferrers was the brother of the testator's first wife, Ursula Ferrers;

-Thomas Hawes of Solihull was the son of Elizabeth Brome, the daughter of Sir Nicholas Brome (d. 10 October 1516) and his second wife, Katherine Lampeck, and thus a first cousin (by the half blood) of the testator's wife, Ursula Ferrers.

For the will of the testator's son and heir, John Newport (d.1566), see TNA PROB 11/48, ff. 347-8.

The family background of the testator's second wife, Alice Newport, mentioned in the will below, is unknown. It seems possible that she was Alice (nee Saunders) Hatton. Alice Saunders and her husband, William Hatton (d.1546) of Holdenby, were the parents of Sir Christopher Hatton (c.1540-1591) and of the testator's daughter-in-law, Dorothy Hatton (d.1566x70).

For the testator's lease of the parsonage & tithe of Milverton, see:

'Parishes: Milverton', *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 6: Knightlow hundred* (1951), pp. 164-167. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=57119>

*Just before the Dissolution, in March 1538, a lease of the rectory for 60 years was made to Richard Newport at a rent of £8 6s. 8d. on condition of his paying the chaplain's stipend of £5 6s. 8d.*

RM: T{estamentum} Rich{ard}i Newporte

In the name of God, Amen. The 28th day of May in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred threescore and five and in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith, the seventh, I, Richard Newport of Hunningham in the county of Warwick, esquire, whole of body & perfect of memory, lauds I give unto God, remembering the mutability & uncertainty of this frail & transitory world, and most specially the casual and sudden death that daily appeareth, and willing therefore to prepare & make in readiness myself as in that behalf appertaineth, I make & ordain this my present last will & testament as well concerning my lands, tenements & other hereditaments lying and being in the counties of Warwick and Worcester as also all my goods and chattels in manner & form following:

First I betake and commit my soul to Almighty God, my Maker, Saviour and Redeemer, by the merits of whose bitter passion my trust is to be saved, and I beseech Our Lady Saint Mary & all the holy company of heaven to be my mediators that I may be partaker with the elect of the fruition of the incomparable joys & felicity as he hath prepared for me & all mankind such as have true faith in him and be truly penitent for their sins;

And I will that my body be buried in the chancel of the parish church of Hunningham aforesaid as [+to?] my executors & overseers shall seem best;

Also I give to the mother church of Lichfield 20d, & to the said parish church of Hunningham 20s towards the repairing of the same church;

And I will that my executors & overseers shall at their discretions within eight days next after my decease give and bestow in alms to the poor people in Hunningham aforesaid & other towns next adjoining £10 of lawful money to pray for my soul;

Also I will & leave to descend & come to John Newport, my son & heir apparent, all that my manor of Hunningham with th' appurtenances in the county of Warwick, and the parsonage of the said church of Hunningham with all the tithes, oblations, emoluments & profits to the same parsonage appertaining and belonging which I late purchased of our said Sovereign Lady the Queen, and also all other my messuages, cottages, saltfats, lands, meadows, pastures, feedings, commons, waters, fishings, woods, underwoods, rents, reversions, services & all other my hereditaments with all & singular their appurtenances set, lying & being in Hunningham aforesaid & in Droitwich in the county of Worcester or

elsewhere in the realm of England, except & reserved all such annuities or yearly rents underwritten as I have given & bequeathed in this my last will & testament yearly to be paid & go out of all my said lands & tenements in manner and form following, to have and to hold the said manor, lands & tenements, hereditaments and all other the premises with all & singular their appurtenances, except before excepted & reserved, unto the said John Newport and his heirs forever in manner & form following;

Out of all which manors, lands, tenements & other the premises with their appurtenances I give unto Walter Egleston alias Newport one annuity or annual rent of six pounds thirteen shillings four pence of [f. 249v] lawful money of England, to be paid unto him at two usual feasts in the year, that is to wit, at the feast of St Michael th' Archangel & th' Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady the Virgin by even portions during his natural life, the first payment thereof to begin at the first feast of the said feasts which shall first happen after my decease, and for non-payment of the said annuity or yearly rent after any of the said feasts by the space of a month, being lawfully asked, it shall be lawful to & for the said Walter Egleston alias Newport and to his assigns into all my said lands & tenements or into any parcel of them to enter, & there to distrain for the said annuity and th' arrearages of the same if any shall happen to be & as often as need shall require during the life of the said Walter;

Moreover I will & give to Alice, my wife, one annuity or yearly rent of twenty pounds of lawful money of England going & to be paid yearly to her out of my said manor of Hunningham with all and singular the appurtenances during her natural life in recompense of her jointure and dower of and in all my lands and tenements, to be paid unto her or her assigns by my said son at two feasts in the year, that is to wit, at the feast of Saint Michael th' Archangel and th' Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady the Virgin by even portions, the first payment thereof to begin at the first feast of the said feasts which shall first happen after my decease, and for non-payment thereof after any of the said feasts by the space of a month, being lawfully asked, it shall be lawful to & for the said Alice, my wife, and to her assigns into all my said lands and tenements or into any parcel of the same to enter, & there to distrain for her said annuity & th' arrearages of the same if any shall happen to be and as often as need shall require during the life of the said Alice;

And I give and bequeath unto my said wife one hundred pounds of lawful money of England, and six of my best kine, and two geldings;

Also I give and bequeath to her one featherbed which was hers, a mattress, a pair of blankets, a coverlet of tapestry-work with images, a bolster & pillows to the same bed belonging, four pair of sheets whereof two pair to be flaxen & thother hurden, a board-cloth of diaper, & one fair long carpet which she brought with her, and all my household stuff whatsoever it be which is at Holdenby or Holdenbury in the county of Northampton;

Also I give and bequeath to my said son, John, my lease of the parsonage & tithe of Milverton in the said county of Warwick and all other my leases and tacks which I have

of any person or persons for term of years yet to come of & in my lands, tenements & hereditaments within the counties of Warwick and Worcester;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of my daughters, that is to wit, Constance, Mary, Elizabeth & Ursula, four hundred marks apiece of lawful money of England towards the preferment of their marriages, and I will that if it shall fortune any of my said daughters to die (as God forbid) at any time before they or any of them shall be married, that then the part and portion of the 4 hundred marks & every part thereof of her that so departeth shall remain and come to the rest of her said sisters then living equally to be divided among them;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of my said 4 daughters one featherbed and mattress with bolsters, pillows, blankets and coverlets thereunto decent & belonging, & two pair of sheets whereof one pair to be flaxen & thother hurden, and I give to every of my said daughters a cow;

Item, I give and bequeath to my said wife a salt with a cover of silver parcel gilt, a goblet of silver without a cover parcel gilt, and an ale cup of silver without a cover parcel gilt;

And I will that Constance, my said daughter, shall have the goblet of silver which was her grandmother's or the value thereof, and her gilt spoon which was given unto her by her grandmother at her christening;

And I give unto the same Constance and to every of her said sisters a spoon of silver with a knob of a lion gilt;

[f. 250r] The rest of all my plate I give to my said son, John;

Item, I give to the said Walter Egleston alias Newport one hundred marks of lawful money of England, to be paid unto him within one year next after my decease by my said son, John;

Item, I give to Sir John Todd, curate of Hunningham aforesaid, forty shillings to pray for me over and above his wages due at my decease;

And I will that every of my servants as well men as women being my servants at the time of my decease shall have their half year's wages over and above their wages then due;

Item, I will that if my said son, John, or any other of my executors at any time or times hereafter do alter, transpose, wrest, change or deny this my present will or any part thereof whereby the same cannot be performed, or if the said John, my son, do not or cause not to be done for his part & behalf all & every act and acts, thing and things for the due and true execution & performance of this my last will according to the true meaning of the same, or if he or they or any of them do make or cause to be made any deed of release or acquittance, or deliver any speciality to any person or persons being indebted to me at the time of my decease without the consent of the rest of my executors

otherwise than is underwritten, that then he or she so doing to lose the benefit of my legacies to him or her bequeathed and not to be any of my executors, anything in this my last will contained to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding, and the same legacy or legacies so to them or any of them bequeathed I give & bequeath to the other of my executors indifferently to be divided between them;

Provided always and my will is that all such sums of money & debts as shall be owing unto me at the day of my death in th' hands or custody of Thomas Lucy, esquire, Clement Throckmorton, esquire, Thomas Fisher, esquire, Thomas Wodwalle of Killingworth [=Kenilworth], William Hudson of Warwick, gentleman, Richard Wodwall within the county of Leicester, yeoman, John Norton of Cowndon [=Condon?] in the county of Warwick, Edward Ferrers of Bevington, esquire, Thomas Dudley, Richard Smithe & John Saunders of Coventry, Mr Dannett of Worcester, Richard Townshend of Warwick, Mr Brome of Wethbroke, William Radnett of Atherstone, Thomas Bowfield of Warwick, Christopher Hatton, esquire, Thomas Cockes, Edmund Worley, Thomas Wagstaff, Robert Wirall and Henry Edmunds shall be paid to my said 4 daughters, Constance, Mary, Elizabeth and Ursula, and they shall receive the same sums of money & debts in part of payment of such legacies as be given & bequeathed to them in this my last will & testament indifferently divided amongst them;

And also my will is that my said son, John, shall deliver or cause to be delivered to my said four daughters all the specialties and writings appertaining to all the said debts & sums of money, and that he shall quietly permit them to receive all the said debts according to this my last will;

And also it shall be lawful to & for my said daughters upon the receipt of the said sums of money & debts jointly to make acquittances and discharges thereof to my said debtors & every of them for the payment of the said debts to them without interruption, let, contradiction or impediment of the said John, my son, anything in this my present last will contained to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding;

The rest of all my goods, chattels and debts unbequeathed, my legacies performed to my said daughters and to all other before-named and my funerals discharged, I give and bequeath to my said son John Newport, whom and my said four daughters, Constance, Mary, Elizabeth & Ursula, I ordain & make my executors to execute & see this my last will & testament truly performed, and I ordain and make my cousin, Richard Knightley, esquire; Ralph Brome, esquire; my son-in-law, Edward Ferrers of Bevington, esquire; my brother-in-law, George Ferrers, gentleman; Thomas Hawes of Solihull, gentleman, and William Hawes, his son & heir, my overseers, desiring them in the honour of God to see this my last will & testament performed in all godly & quiet manner as my special trust is in them and as God shall reward them;

And I give to every of my overseers twenty shillings to buy every of them a saddle, and I pray them to extend their goodness to the said poor maidens, their kinswomen, truly to be dealt withal and to have their legacies as is before rehearsed [f. 250v] and appointed by this my last will and testament;

In witness whereof I have subscribed my name in the presence of per me Richardu{m} Newporte, Richard Smithe, per me Thomas Hickman, William Saunders, per me Ric{hard}u{m} Townesende.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentum coram Mag{ist}ro Waltero Haddon Legu{m} Doctore Curie Prerogatiue Cant{uariensis} Custode siue Com{m}issario apud London Quarto die mens{is} Decembris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Qui{n}gesimo Sexagesimo quinto Iuramento Richardi Denton notarij pub{li}ci procuratoris Ioh{ann}is Newporte filij et heredis ac Constancie Marie Elizabethhe et Vrsule Newporte filiar{um} et exector{um} in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento nominator{um} Quib{us} com{m}issa fuit admi{n}strac{i}o de bene &c Iurat{i}

[=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 fourth day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred sixty-fifth by the oath of Richard Denton, notary public, proctor of John Newport, son and heir, and Constance, Mary, Elizabeth and Ursula Newport, daughters and executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted, sworn to well etc.]