

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 30 April 1570 and proved 1 December 1571, of Robert Robotham, father of Mary Robotham, wife of William Leveson (d.1621), who acted as trustee for William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the allocation of shareholdings in the Globe Theatre in 1599. For the will of William Leveson, see TNA PROB 11/137/600.

The testator's parentage is uncertain. It has been suggested that he was descended from John Robotham, who in 1458 'married into the Riber (Ribergh) family of Riber Hall near Matlock, Derbyshire, by whom he had a daughter, Margaret Robotham, who married William Wolley'. See 'Derbyshire 1400s and 1500s' at:

<http://robathan.blogspot.ca/2009/03/derbyshire-1400s-and-1500s.html>.

See also the pedigree of Robotham of St. Alban's in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Hertfordshire*, (London: Harleian Society, 1886), Vol. XXII, p. 87 at:

http://books.google.ca/books?id=a_wUAAAQAAJ&pg=PA87#v=onepage&q&f=false.

See also Robathan, Paull, 'The Robothams of St Albans' at:

<http://robathan.blogspot.ca/2011/08/robothams-of-st-albans-their.html>.

According to the History of Parliament, by the autumn of 1549 the testator was a Yeoman of the Robes, and 'closely associated' with Lord Burghley's father, Richard Cecil. See:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/robotham-robert-1522-71>.

The testator married Grace Paget, the daughter of Lady Anne Yorke (d.1575) by her first marriage (for the will of Lady Anne Yorke, see TNA PROB 11/57/581). At the time of her marriage to the testator, Grace Paget was the widow of Robert Bull (d.1551). For the licence, dated 30 November 1550, for the marriage of Robert Bull of St Clement Danes, London, gentleman, and Grace Paget of St. Stephen's Walbrook, London, see Armytage, George J., ed., *Allegations for Marriage Licences Issued by the Bishop of London 1520-1610* (London: Harleian Society, 1887), Vol. XXV, p. 13 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/allegationsform01londgoog#page/n19/mode/2up>.

See also the will of Robert Bull, dated 11 July 1551 and proved 19 July 1551, TNA PROB 11/34/224, which suggests that he was in the service of an unnamed lord, mentions money lent him by 'my Lady Yorke', and leaves his goods to his wife, Grace, who was granted administration of his estate.

See also several lawsuits arising from the estate of Robert Bull: TNA C 78/7/41, dated 20 February 1553, a suit by the testator and Grace, his wife, against Armagil Wade (d.1568), Thomas Wilton of London, scrivener, and others concerning debts of Robert Bull; TNA C 78/14/39, dated 22 June 1556, a suit by the testator and his wife, Grace, widow of Robert Bull, against Armagil Wade and others for a debt of £200 owed to Robert Bull; TNA C 3/149/92, a suit by the testator and Grace Robotham, his wife, administratrix of Robert Bull, against Thomas Wotton and another; TNA C 1/1319/36, a suit by Richard Walker, clerk, against the testator and Grace, his wife, executrix and late the wife of Robert Bull; TNA C 1/1383/48, a suit by John Stephens against the testator and Grace, his wife, late the wife of Robert Bull and administratrix of his goods.

After the testator's death, Grace Paget married thirdly, Godfrey Fanshawe (d. 12 February 1588), a younger brother of the Queen's Remembrancer of the Exchequer, Thomas Fanshawe (c.1533–1601). In the will of Lady Anne Yorke (d.1575), Grace is referred to as 'my daughter Fanshawe'. See the will of Godfrey Fanshaw, TNA PROB 11/85/252; and *The Memoirs of Ann, Lady Fanshawe*, (London: John Lane, 1907), p. 271 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/memoirsofanlady00fansuoft#page/272/mode/2up>.

See also Howard, Joseph Jackson, ed., *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, (London: Hamilton Adams, 1876), pp. 288-9, at:

http://books.google.ca/books?id=PSQFAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA288&lpg=PA288&dq=%22Will+of+Godfrey+Fanshawe%22&source=bl&ots=i-u4z4qPCF&sig=MeyMJqn2ulsgYIClvKwvYPO_65k&hl=en&sa=X&ei=nVxIVOCbGtDxigKi3IH4DA&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Will%20of%20Godfrey%20Fanshawe%22&f=false.

According to Metcalfe, *supra*, the testator had a son and three daughters by Grace Paget:

* John Robotham, who married firstly Margaret Grace, and secondly Sarah Powell, the daughter of Thomas Powell of St Alban's. The testator purchased the wardship of Margaret Grace, the daughter of the London goldsmith, Richard Grace (d.1560) and his wife, Mary (nee Mathew), and married her to his son, John Robotham, on 13 August 1570. After the death of Richard Grace, his widow, Mary, married Nicholas Leveson (d.1568). See the will of Richard Grace, TNA PROB 11/43/172; the will of Nicholas Leveson, TNA PROB 11/50/162; the will of Mary (nee Mathew) Grace Leveson, TNA PROB 11/62/540; and the will of John Robotham, TNA PROB 11/126/395.

* Elizabeth Robotham, who married Robert Bainbridge of Calke, Derbyshire, by whom she had several children. See his will, dated 30 July 1613, TNA PROB 11/142/128, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/bainbridge-robert-1623>.

*Elizabeth Robotham (d. 18 December 1583), who married Nicholas Spencer, Customer of Sandwich, but died without issue. See Baker, Oscar, *History of the Antiquities of Sandwich and Richborough Castle in Kent*, (London: Savill & Edwards, 1848), p. 54 at:

http://books.google.ca/books?id=TkcGAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA54&lpg=PA54&dq=%22Nicholas+Spencer%22+%22Kent%22+%22Elizabeth%22&source=bl&ots=wcNXt28evq&sig=xI_CtpPSFDEqq_eJuCoLEvE8x_A&hl=en&sa=X&ei=k65nVOngCtGaigLP4oC4Ag&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22Nicholas%20Spencer%22%20%22Kent%22%20%22Elizabeth%22&f=false.

See also Hasted, Edward, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, (Canterbury: Simmons and Kirkby, 1794), Vol. IV, p. 237 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=kaI0AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA237&lpg=PA237&dq=%22Nicholas+Spencer%22+%22Kent%22+%22Elizabeth%22&source=bl&ots=Jg0iJxAqhX&sig=KVik8Jl3f4HmaFMvLSi1Y0OK27M&hl=en&sa=X&ei=k65nVOngCtGaigLP4oC4Ag&ved=0CDIQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=%22Nicholas%20Spencer%22%20%22Kent%22%20%22Elizabeth%22&f=false>.

* Mary Robotham, who married William Leveson (d.1621), trustee of the Globe shareholders, as noted above.

For the testator's will, see also *North Country Wills*, (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1912), Vol. II, pp. 57-8.

As administrators, the testator appoints his wife, his brother-in-law, William Paget, and his cousin, Thomas Gee.

For the testator's overseers, Henry Hastings, 3rd Earl of Huntingdon (d. 14 December 1595), Sir Walter Mildmay (d. 31 May 1589) and Sir Henry Neville (d. 1 January 1593) see the *ODNB* articles.

LM: Rob{er}tu{s} Robotham

[f. 342v] Forasmuch as all men that are born into this world are most assured of death, but when or at what time no man knoweth, therefore I think it most requisite for all Christian men to be in a readiness when it shall please the Lord to call them, and not to be as the evil servant was, eating and drinking and dealing evil with his fellows, and said it would be long ere his master came, nor yet as the unwise virgins were, unprovided; when I remember these scriptures and a great number moe sore and terrible threatenings unto all them that fall into like dangers, I am determined at this present by God's help to make here my last will and testament, and therein to declare the whole effect of my faith as hereafter ensueth, that is to say:

I do believe the holy Catholic faith that is contained in my creed, first in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God;

I believe that God the Father created and made the whole world and all creatures that are therein all for man's use and comfort, and to obey and serve man, and man only to serve him;

I believe that the fall of Adam was so great and grievous in the sight of God the Father that there could be found no creature in heaven nor in earth, neither angel nor man, to pacify the wrath of God the Father towards man until it pleased him of his unspeakable mercy to promise his Son to be born of a woman;

I do believe that when the fullness of the time was come, that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a pure virgin, and was here upon earth as man in all points saving ignorance and sin;

Also that he suffered death under Pontius Pilate and was crucified, dead and buried, and descended into Hell, and the third day he rose again from the dead, by whose death and by whose rising again from death I believe he hath purchased eternal redemption and salvation unto all those that steadfastly believe his holy promise, amongst whom I, as one most unworthy of all men, steadfastly believe to have clear remission and forgiveness of all my sins as though I had never done them through the unsearchable mercy of Jesus Christ;

And here I renounce and forsake all mine own works and arts, and also all the works and arts of all other men, and account them as the scripture teacheth me, no better than dung in any respect of any part of my salvation;

But here I would have no man to judge or think that I would have no good works done, for I believe assuredly that all Christian men are bound to do good works as time and occasion doth serve while they be in this mortal life, but not for hope of heaven nor yet fear of hell, but of pure love, knowing that God doth crown and reward his own works done in his elect people, not for the works' sake but for his promise;

As for my goods that the Lord hath made me a minister of here, like as I found them in the world so I leave them unto the world, desiring that what place God doth call me, I may be buried in the same parish with a small stone upon my grave and these words of Saint Paul written thereon, that is to say, *Non permanentem ciuitatem sed futura viue vt viuas, Mors Lucru{m}*;

Item, I give unto my wife five hundred pounds, her apparel and jewels, and a chamber furnished, three white bowls, all of one fashion, weighing 36 ounces 3 quarters, three white pots, all of one fashion, weighing 36 ounces 3 quarters, one salt of silver and gilt weighing 9 ounces quarter(?), all such sums of money as are owing unto me for my lease of Berry Pomeroy in the county of Devon;

Item, I give unto my two daughters, Elizabeth th' elder and Elizabeth the younger, and to every of them, three hundred pounds apiece;

Item, I give unto my elder daughter three bowls of silver and gilt, all of one fashion, weighing 48 ounces;

Item, I give unto my younger daughter Elizabeth three bowls of silver and gilt, all of one fashion, with a cover, weighing 41 ounces 3 quarters;

These legacies to my said daughters to be as well in recompense to them and either of them, both Elizabeths, for such money and interest as I had devised for them unto certain feoffees of trust out of my leases of Raskelf and Warwick Inn, as it doth appear by indenture between me and the said feoffees of trust bearing date the first day of July in the fourth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth [=1562], and if they or any of them will claim anything by force of the said indentures, that then I will the party so claiming to be excluded of those benefits;

Item, I will that my daughters shall not have their portions until they come to the age of 16 years, and if they be married before the age of 21 years, that then their husbands and they and sufficient sureties with them shall be bound in a greater sum than their legacy is unto my son, John, that they shall discharge him of all such sums of money as I have devised for them out of my said lease of Raskelf in the county of York, and my lease of Warwick Inn in London;

And if they or any of them be not married until they come to th' age of 21 years, that then he shall take their own bond, not being married, to th' effect abovesaid to discharge him of that money that I had before devised for them out of my said leases of Raskelf and Warwick Inn;

Item, I give unto my youngest daughter, Mary, two hundred pounds and three bowls of silver and gilt of bell(?) fashion with white leaves weighing 35 ounces dimidium, and also one hundred pounds to be paid out of my lease of Raskelf by forty pounds a year until the said hundred pound be paid or ought to be paid, the first payment to begin immediately after my death, and when that is fully satisfied or ought to be fully satisfied, I will that my wife shall have £20 a year half yearly by even portions to be to her paid out of the same lease during her widowhead and no longer;

And I will that my son, John, shall suffer my wife to have the use of my house of Warwick Inn in London during her widowhead, she for the time that she shall so enjoy it paying the rent and no longer, and the rest of the years and the [f. 343r] profits of both the said leases of Raskelf and Warwick Inn I give unto my son, John;

I will that my daughters shall have their legacies at the age of 21 years or at the day of marriage, which shall first happen, provided always that if they or any of them happen to marry before 16 years of age, that then they shall not receive their said legacies before

she so marrying shall accomplish their said age of 16 years and sureties put in as is abovesaid;

Item, I give unto the right honourable th' Earl of Huntingdon mine own armour;

Item, I give unto Sir Walter Mildmay, knight, one cup of silver and gilt worth ten pounds;

Item, I give unto Sir Henry Neville, knight, one cup of silver and gilt worth ten pounds;

Item, I give unto John Lathom, my servant, ten pounds and a black coat;

Item, I will that my wife shall give and deliver unto my men such apparel as was mine as she shall think meet;

Item, I give unto the rest of my men, every one of them, a quarter's wages and a black coat;

Item, I give unto Mr Robert Bell a ring of gold worth three pounds and a black gown, and all such money as remaineth of an obligation which my Lord of Loughborough, Sir John Chechester [=Chester] and Sir John Pollard stands bound unto me for;

Item, I give unto all those whose names hereafter ensue, unto every one of them a ring of gold worth ten shillings, and the same scripture written in every ring that is in my pomander, viz., *Viue ut viuas, Mors lucrum*: First, my Lady Yorke, Drew Drury, my cousin Thomas Gee, Peter Yorke, Edmund Pigeon, John Butts th' elder, Edward Turner, Mr Thomas Sampson;

Item, I give unto my brother-in-law, William Paget, £4 12s which he doth owe me, and a black gown;

Item, I give unto John Butts th' elder a black gown;

Item, I give unto Henry Botham, my nephew, ten pounds that he doth owe me, and a black gown;

Item, I give unto Edmund Pigeon three yards of black satin;

Item, I give to 12 poor men, to every one of them a black gown;

Item, I give unto my cousin, Thomas Gee, a black gown;

Item, I give unto Katherine Berner, the daughter of Augustine Berner, five pounds;

I desire Sir Walter Mildmay to keep my leases, two of Raskell and two of Warwick Inn, to the use of my children according as I have devised and made unto divers feoffees of trust, and the same leases to be locked in a small chest and two small keys to the same

wherein my leases remain, and my wife to keep the one key and Sir Henry Neville thother during the minority of my children, that is to say, until they or any of them shall come to the age of 21 years, and no longer;

Item, I ordain and make the right honourable th' Earl of Huntingdon, Sir Walter Mildmay and Sir Henry Neville, knights, overseers of this my last will, most humbly requiring them to take upon them the same, and that they will see my children brought up in good erudition, and every of them to have their part according to this my last will;

I require my wife, my brother-in-law, William Paget, and my cousin, Thomas Gee, to take a letter of administration of all my goods and chattels with my will annexed unto the same during the minority of my children, that is to say, until my son come to the age of 21 years, if he live so long, and if he die before that age, then until my daughters then living or any of them shall come unto the same age of 21 years, to such uses as is expressed in this my last will, and further that they shall for all my children's parts put in good and sufficient sureties to mine overseers or the survivors of them to the use of my children for their portions within three months next after my death, to answer the same unto my children and to every of them, that is to say, to my son when he shall come to th' age of 21 years, and to every of my daughters as they shall accomplish their several ages of 16 years or be married, as is above expressed;

I will that my wife and other that taketh the letter of administration of my goods to my children's use shall take my said children's parts and put it into some honest merchantman's hands, one, two or three, as they shall think good, taking good sureties for the same that it may be ready within two or three months' warning whensoever that it shall be called for, and as for the profit that shall rise by the occupying of the same stock during the time, to be referred to the conscience of them that occupy the same, whether it be more or less, and that portion, if any do rise, to be employed to the use of all my children equally;

And if they, my said administrators, shall fail thus to do within the time above limited, that then I will that my overseers and the survivors of them shall take upon them th' administration in manner aforesaid until my children shall come unto their ages afore limited, and shall take the whole portion of my said children into their hands and to use it as my administrators should have done for the use of my children until they come to lawful years aforesaid, that is to say, my son to 21 and my daughters to the same age of 21 or be married, as is above declared, and then to deliver to every one of them being of the said age their portion according to this my last will, and that they be bound or else put in bonds unto the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper of the Great Seal for the time being to the same effect and such uses as my administrators should have done;

Item, I give unto the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper for the time being for his pains five marks for the taking of those bonds for the use of my children according as I have devised unto certain feoffees of trust;

Item, where I have received of the Lord Mayor and his brethren the sum of eight hundred forty pounds and odd money which was due unto my son, John Robotham, by the marriage of his wife, for the which money I [f. 343v] stand bound in an obligation of the sum of nine hundred pounds to the Mayor and his brethren that my son, John, and his wife shall, when he accomplish the full age of 21 years or within six months next after, if he live so long, shall come and his wife before the Mayor and his brethren for the time being and knowledge himself satisfied of the same eight hundred forty pounds, provided always that if he do so, and discharge me of my bond, that then he shall have the same money at those years, or else to lose such benefit and commodity as is given unto him by this my last will and testament;

Item, I make my son, John Robotham, my full executor upon such conditions as are hereinbefore mentioned, unto whom I give all the rest of my goods, chattels and debts, my legacies performed and my debts paid, upon like conditions as also is before expressed;

Provided always that he shall not meddle with th' execution of this my last will until he shall accomplish his age of 21 years, but shall suffer mine administrators or overseers to have th' administration of my goods as is aforesaid until he shall accomplish his said age, neither shall at any time after that take or meddle with his sisters' portions;

Item, that if God do will out of this world any of my children before they accomplish the years or times before expressed, that is to say, my son 21 and my daughters the same age of 21 or be married, as is above expressed, that then the part and portion of them so departed shall be divided amongst all the residue of my children then living;

And if my son die before he come to the age of 21 years, then I make all my children then living my full executors, and if he die without issue of his body lawfully begotten before the same age, then I give the rest of my said children all such portions as my said son, John, should have had, so that notwithstanding my said daughters shall not meddle with th' execution of this my will until each of them severally shall accomplish the full age of 21 years or else shall be married, as is abovesaid;

Provided always that if my son shall after my death fall to wanton and loose or dissolute living or any ways behave him wantonly or dissolutely at any time until he come and accomplish the years of 24, so as the same his behaviour or doings be deemed by my overseers or the survivors or survivor of them to be wanton or dissolute behaviour, or if he will not be admonished, advised and ruled by my overseers and every of them or the survivors or survivor of them in the ordering of himself in his conversation or government of his life, that then he shall lose the benefit of all that portion that he should enjoy in this my last will, and that then and as soon as he shall in any of these points offend in misbehaving himself as aforesaid contrary to the plain intent of this my last will, I will that from thenceforth he shall be as no longer mine executor, and that all acts that he shall in the mean season do by virtue of this my last will other than the payment of my debts & legacies and of my funeral expenses shall be utterly void, and that then and from thenceforth I will that all the rest of my children then living shall be my only

executors, and that then also all the benefits of this my last will and testament appointed to him shall cease and be equally divided amongst the rest of my children then living, the part and portion that came by his wife only excepted;

I require that my household stuff, my wife's said portion deduct, may be praised and not sold, but kept to the use of my son upon the condition before limited, or else to them that shall be mine executors;

Provided always that after my son shall come to the full age of 21 years, and before he shall take upon him th' executorship and proving of this my last will, that he shall enter into bond with his mother in such a convenient sum as my overseers or the survivors of them shall think good that she shall enjoy the lease of Warwick Inn and twenty pounds a year out of my lease of Raskell quietly and peaceably during her widowhead according to this my last will, and if he refuse this to do at the request of his mother and mine overseers, that then he shall lose all such benefits and commodities as she should enjoy by this my last will;

And if God do call all my children before they accomplish the years before expressed, that then I give unto my wife all such parts & portions as should be due unto them, always provided that she shall give unto my nephew, Henry Botham, £20, and unto my servant, John Lathom, twenty pounds or else four pounds a year during his life;

Item, I leave a schedule annexed unto this my last will of all my money, plate and debts that are owing unto me, which schedule is signed with my hand and seal;

I leave a copy of this my last will and the schedule likewise with Sir Henry Neville, knight, and one other with my cousin, Thomas Gee;

In witness whereof I have subscribed my name and put to my seal the 30th day of April in the twelfth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc. R. Robotham. Henry Neville, Anthony Higgins, notary. Witnesses: Robert Bell; Rowland Yorke; per Thomas Gee; Ralph Waddington scholem(er)(?); by me, James Yonge; by me, William Paget.

Gilt plate

Inprimis, three bowls all of one fashion weighing 48 oz.

Item, three bowls all of one fashion with a cover weighing 41 oz. 3 quarters.

Item, 3 bowls of bell(?) fashion with white leaves weighing 35 oz. di.

Item, 3 pots, two plain and one graven, and one cover weighing 35 oz.

Item, one Maudlin cup with a cover weighing 8 oz. di. & di. quarters.

Item, 2 casting-bottles weighing 11 oz. 3 quarters.

Item, three gilt salts weighing with the covers 36 oz.

Summa of the gilt plate, 226 oz. di. & di. quarters.

The white plate

Imprimis, a basin and an ewer weighing 74 oz.
 Item, three white pots all of one fashion weighing 37 oz. 3 quarters.
 Item, 2 white pots with covers weighing 31 oz. 1 quarter.
 Item, 3 white bowls all of one fashion weighing 36 oz. 3 quarters & di. quarter.
 Item, one little white poute [=pot?] parcel gilt weighing 7 oz. 3 quarters.
 [f. 344r] Item, one pepperbox 4 oz. 2 quarters.
 Item, ten spoons white like slips weighing 21 oz.
 Item, one dozen of spoons, 6 apostles and 6 with square knobs gilt, weighing 22 oz. di.
 Item, two tankards weighing 36 oz. di.
 Item, one salt parcel gilt weighing 3 oz. quarter;
 Summa of the white plate, 272 oz. di. & di quarters.

 Summa of all the plate, 498 oz. quarter.

All these good debts following are owing unto me

Sir William Chester, knight, and John Gardener, £400
 Thomas Smyth & (blank) Yonge, £400
 Thomas Smyth and John Barnes, £400
 John Gresham, £200
 Mistress Tratte [=Trott?] and her son, William Ryvett, £600
 John Gardener £200
 Mr John Marshe, Governor of the Merchants, £200
 Sir Henry Neville, knight, £100
 Elizabeth Freer, widow, £100
 William Newman, £100
 Peter Yorke £6
 Henry Botham £10

I have in ready money in my house £400.

Summa totalis £3121. Robert Robotham

Primo decembris 1571 Emanavit Commissio Gracie Robotham relicte Roberti
 Robotham defuncti h[ab]ent[is] &c Ad adm[ini]strand[um] bona iura et credita
 eiusdem defuncti s[ec]und[um] tenorem et effectum testamenti sui huiusmodi
 minori etate Ioh[ann]is Robotham filij et executoris duran[te] de bene &c Iurat[ur] &c.

[=On the first of December 1571 a grant issued to Grace Robotham, relict of Robert
 Robotham, deceased, having etc., to administer the goods, rights and credits of the same
 deceased according to the tenor and effect of his same testament during the minority of
 John Robotham, son and executor, sworn etc. to well etc.]