

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 31 July 1579 and proved 17 November 1579 of Richard Cooke, the second, but first surviving, son of Sir Anthony Cooke (1505/6–1576) and his wife, Anne Fitzwilliam (d.1553), and brother of Oxford's mother-in-law, Lady Burghley.

The testator was a Groom of the Privy Chamber by 1551-3. By 1559, he had married Anne Cawnton, the daughter of the London haberdasher, John Cawnton, esquire, alderman of Bishopsgate Ward from 1523-8, and sheriff in 1525-6, who is said to have been among those 'reduced to extreme poverty after exercising the offices of sheriff and mayor, or even one of them' (see Beaven, Alfred B., *The Aldermen of the City of London*, Vol. II, (London: Eden Fisher, 1908), pp. 11-60, available online at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67234>). See also the will of John Cawnton's mother-in-law, Dame Elizabeth Thurston, dated 21 March 1520, in Bloom, J. Harvey, *Wayman Wills and Administrations* (London: Wallace Gandy, 1922), pp. 6-10, available online.

The testator mentions two children living at the time of the making of his will, his son and heir, Sir Anthony Cooke (d.1604), and his unmarried daughter Philippa. After the testator's death, Philippa married Hercules Meautys (d.1588?) of West Ham, Essex, the son of Sir Peter Meautys (d.1562) of West Ham, a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber who was descended from an ancient French family which had come from Normandy with Henry VII. In 1608, their daughter, Jane Meautys (1580/81–1659), married, as his second wife, Sir William Cornwallis (c.1551-1611) of Brome, Suffolk, eldest son and heir of Sir Thomas Cornwallis (1518/19-1604). Sir William Cornwallis (c.1551-1611) purchased Oxford's lease of the mansion of Fisher's Folly in the parish of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate. His daughter, Anne Cornwallis (d.1635), has been identified as the 'Anne Cornwaleys' of the short anthology of sixteenth century poetry known as the Cornwallis-Lysons manuscript, now in the Folger Library (Folger MS V.a.89).

For the will of Sir Peter Meautys, see TNA PROB 11/45, ff. 160-1. For the will of Hercules Meautys, see TNA PROB 11/73, f. 73. For the will of Sir William Cornwallis (c.1551-1611), see TNA PROB 11/118, ff. 93-5. For the will of Sir Thomas Cornwallis (1518/19-1604), see TNA PROB 11/105, ff. 85-6. See also the entries in the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography* for Jane Meautys (1580/81–1659) and Sir William Cornwallis (c.1551-1611), and the pedigrees of Cornwallis and Meautys in *The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis 1613-1644* (London: S. & J. Bentley, 1842).

The testator appoints as one of his overseers his brother-in-law, John (d.1584), Lord Russell, the second son of Francis Russell (1526/7-1585), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Bedford. The testator's sister, Elizabeth Cooke (1528-1609), had married, firstly, Sir Thomas Hoby (1530-1566), who translated Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* into English as *The Courtier*. By him she had two sons, Edward Hoby and Thomas Posthumous Hoby (born after his father's death), and two daughters. On 23 December 1574, she married John (d.1584), Lord Russell, and by him had two daughters, Anne Russell, who on 16 June 1600 married Henry Somerset (b. before 1590, d. 18 December 1646), son of Edward Somerset

(d.1550-1628), 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Worcester, and his wife Elizabeth Hastings (d.1621), fourth daughter of Francis Hastings (1513/14–1560), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Huntingdon, at the Blackfriars with the Queen in attendance, and Elizabeth Russell, who died unmarried shortly after her sister's wedding. Elizabeth Hastings (d.1621) was one of the two daughters of Francis Hastings (1513/14–1560), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Huntingdon, intended as Oxford's bride under the marriage contract entered into on 1 July 1562 by the 16<sup>th</sup> Earl and Henry Hastings (1536?-1595), 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Huntingdon (see HAP o/s Box 3(19), and the entry for Elizabeth (nee Cooke) Hoby Russell (1528-1609) in the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography*.

The testator died at the age of forty-eight on 3 October 1579 and was buried at Romford on 12 October 1579. For the pedigree of the Cooke family of Gidea Hall, see *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society*, Vol. III (London: J.B. Nichols, 1870), p. 306, available online.

RM: Testamentum Richardi Cooke

In the name of God, Amen. The last day of July 1579 and in the one and twentieth year of the reign of our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth etc., I, Richard Cooke of Gidea Hall in the county of Essex, esquire, being of good and perfect memory and remembrance, thanks be to God therefore, do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First, I commend my soul into the most merciful custody and protection of th' Almighty, assuring myself through the precious death and passion of our only Saviour, Christ Jesus, to have free remission and pardon of all my sins, and after this transitory life ended, to be made partaker of the life everlasting with him and his elect, and my body I commend to the earth to be reverently and comely buried according to the discretion of my executors;

And as touching the disposition of my worldly goods and chattels, first I give and bequeath to my well-beloved wife, Anne Cooke, my best coach with two coach geldings and six other of my geldings, which she shall choose, and four hundred pounds of lawful money of England of such money and debts as I am possessed of or shall be due to me at the time of my death;

Item, I give and bequeath to my said wife my manor-house of Gidea Hall and divers other lands, tenements and hereditaments lying within the Liberty of Havering for the term of her natural life according to a former conveyance thereof made to her use by indenture made between me, the said Richard, on thone party, and George Noodes and Robert Badby, gentlemen, on thother part;

And I further give and bequeath to my said wife all my lands, tenements and hereditaments lying and being in Thetford [=Tetford?] in the county of Lincoln, to have and to hold to her and to her heirs forever;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Anthony Cooke, all my armour and weapons at Gidea Hall, with my whole library of books there, all the residue of my horses, mares, geldings and colts not before bequeathed, thone half of all my beds, bedding, linen and other household stuff whatsoever, the one half of all my plate, all my stock of sheep in Dorsert(?) in the county of Warwick, and all such other cattle as I shall have going in my grounds in Warwickshire at the time of my decease, thone half of all my milch kine, five score of such wethers as are going in my grounds within the Liberty of Havering, whereof fifty shall be of the fattest and the residue as they shall fall out one with another, ten steers or runts of the best, two yokes of oxen of my best draught oxen, one cart with all the furniture thereto, thone half of all my white meales(?), thone half of all my brass, pewter and of all other furniture of my kitchen, thone half of all my household stuff, and thone half of all my swine, and also five hundred pounds of lawful money of England;

Item, I give and bequeath to my daughter, Philippa Cooke, towards th' advancement of her marriage, the sum of one thousand three hundred thirty-three pounds six shillings eight pence of lawful English money, so that she be ordered and ruled by my executrix and overseers hereafter named touching her marriage, to be paid within three months next after my decease, if it may be so soon levied of my money, debts and revenues to the hands of my said wife and of my overseers hereafter named, to th' use of my said daughter, and by them to be employed to her use for her maintenance until some convenient marriage may by their good means, procurement and furtherance be had and provided for her according to my especial trust reposed in them;

Item, I give and bequeath to the right honourable the Countess of Oxford one basin and ewer of silver of the value of fifty pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my brother, William Cooke, esquire, the sum of one hundred pounds of lawful money of England;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister Killigrew a basin and ewer of silver of the value of fifty pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, Mr Robert Cecil, the sum of twenty pounds, and to my niece, Mrs Elizabeth Cecil, twenty pounds;

Item, I give to my nephew, Mr Anthony Bacon, twenty pounds, and to my nephew, Mr Francis Bacon, twenty pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, Mr Edward Hoby, twenty pounds, and to my nephew, Mr Thomas Posthumous Hoby, twenty pounds;

Item, I give to Mr Thomas Foster, my son-in-law, two of my garments, which he shall choose;

Item, I give to Mrs Mabell Brighte a mourning gown;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mr Francis Rame twenty pounds of lawful English money [+and] a mourning gown;

Item, I give to George Toone twenty marks;

And I give and bequeath to Mr Robert Badbye one mourning gown and one annuity of ten pounds by year, yearly during his life to be taken out of my manor of Chaldwell in the county of Essex at two usual terms or feasts in the year by even portions;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of my menservants hereafter named if they remain and continue with me at the time of my death as followeth: to William Hobson, five pounds; to Thomas Couwty, ten pounds; to Ralph Dickon, twenty marks; to Thomas Plompton, twenty marks and the choice of all such books as I have which were none of my father's; to Richard Gresham, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence; to Evans, forty shillings; to Stilman, five marks; to little Will Cooper, ten pounds, and fifty-three shillings four pence by year yearly during his life to be paid to him out of my manor of Rydden Court [=Redencourt?] in the Liberty of Havering at two usual terms in the year by even portions; to Thomas Browne, five marks; to John Turke, five pounds; to Horsnaile, five pounds; to Edward Savage, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence; to Stephen Brighte, six pounds thirteen shillings four pence; to Robert Fulwood, five pounds; to John Estcott, five marks; to Humphrey Wright, five marks, and to every other of my menservants being in household with me at the time of my death and which have served me by the space of one year or more the sum of forty shillings, and to every woman-servant not hereafter named which shall be in household with me at the time of my death and hath served me by the space of one year or more the sum of twenty-six shillings eight pence;

Item, I give to Mrs Ursula Norton five marks;

And to Mr Francis White, parson of Chaldewell, the sum of twenty pounds, in consideration that he shall preach yearly at Romford during the space of [-space of] five years next after my decease as often as he shall think convenient for the godly instruction of such as shall be there present;

And of this my present testament and last will I make and ordain my said wife, Anne Cooke, my sole and only executrix;

And further I do constitute and appoint the right honourable and my very good Lords the Lord Treasurer of England and the Lord Russell to be overseers of this my last will and testament, and I further give and bequeath to the said Lord Treasurer one jewel of the price of fifty pounds, and to the said Lord Russell the sum of fifty pounds, in consideration of their grave and faithful advice, counsel and pains to be employed and taken by them about the execution of this my will, and especially towards my daughter, Philip[pa] Cooke;

And all the residue of my goods, chattels, ready money, plate, jewels and else whatsoever, my debts and legacies paid and funerals deducted, I wholly give and bequeath the same to my said wife;

And further I revoke and declare void all other my former wills and testaments heretofore by me made, and ordain that this my present will and testament shall be only in force and take effect. Richard Cooke.

Memorandum: That this was delivered and acknowledged by the within-named Richard Cooke, esquire, for his last will and testament the second day of August 1579, and then he revoked all former wills by him made in the presence of us, Francis Rame, Robert Gadby, Thomas Plumpton.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi Testamentum Apud London Coram magistro Willelmo Drury legum Doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis Commissario Decimo septimo Die mensis Novembris Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentesimo Septuagesimo nono Iuramento Thome Willett notarij publici procuratoris Anne Cooke Relicte et executricis in huiusmodi Testamento nominate Cui commissa fuit Administracio &c De bene &c Ad Sancta Dei Euangelia Iurati

[ =The same testament was proved at London before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the seventeenth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-ninth by the oath of Thomas Willett, notary public, proctor of Anne Cooke, relict and executrix named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc.]