

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testatment, dated 17 May 1589 and proved 12 November 1589, of Henry Compton (1544-1589), 1st Baron Compton, the dedicatee of *The Paradise of Dainty Devises* (1576), which contains eight songs by Oxford (see STC 7516).

Had the marriage contract for Oxford made between John de Vere (1516-1562), 16th Earl of Oxford, and Henry Hastings (1536?-1595), 3rd Earl of Huntingdon, not lapsed on the 16th Earl's death, Oxford would have been the testator's brother-in-law, since Oxford's intended bride, Elizabeth Hastings (d.1621) or Mary Hastings (d. c. 1589), was a sister of the testator's first wife, Frances Hastings (1513/14-1560). See Huntington Library HAP o/s Box 3(19).

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was the son of Peter Compton and Anne Talbot (1524-1588), and the grandson of the courtier Sir William Compton (1482?-1528), son and heir of Edmund Compton of Compton, Warwickshire. When Sir William Compton died of the sweating sickness in June 1528, his son, Peter Compton, was six years of age.

The testator's mother, Anne Talbot, was the daughter of George Talbot (1468-1538), 4th Earl of Shrewsbury, and his second wife, Elizabeth Walden (d.1567). George Talbot was a minor at his father's death, and his wardship was granted to King Edward IV's favourite, William Hastings (c.1430-1483), 1st Baron Hastings, who married George Talbot to his daughter, Anne Hastings. By Anne Hastings George Talbot had a son, Francis Talbot (1500-1560), 5th Earl of Shrewsbury, and three daughters who survived to adulthood: Margaret Talbot, who married Henry Clifford (c.1493-1542), 1st Earl of Cumberland; Mary Talbot, who married Henry Percy (c.1502-1537), 6th Earl of Northumberland; and Elizabeth Talbot (d. c. 1559), who married William Dacre (1500-1563), 3rd Baron Dacre of Gilsland (their daughter, Anne Dacre, married Henry Clifford (1517-1570), 2nd Earl of Cumberland, who married Eleanor Brandon (1519-1547), the daughter of Charles Brandon (c.1484-1545), 1st Duke of Suffolk, and Henry VIII's sister, Mary Tudor (1496-1533)). After the death of Anne Hastings, George Talbot married, about 1512, Elizabeth Walden (d.1567), the daughter and co-heir of Sir Richard Walden of Erith, Kent, by whom he had a daughter, Anne Talbot, who was married firstly to Peter Compton, son and heir of Sir William Compton (1482?-1528), and secondly to William Herbert (1506/7-1570), 1st Earl of Pembroke.

See also the History of Parliament entry for the testator at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/compton-henry-i-1544-89>

b. 14 July 1544, posth. s. and h. of Peter Compton of Compton Wyniatas by Anne, da. of George Talbot, 4th Earl of Shrewsbury. educ. G. Inn 1563. m. (1) Frances (d.1574), da.

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of Francis Hastings, and Earl of Huntingdon, by Katherine, da. and coh. of Henry Pole, Lord Montagu, 1s.; (2) Anne, da. of Sir John Spencer of Althorp, Northants. by Katherine, da. of Sir Thomas Kitson of Hengrave, Suff., wid. of William Stanley[†], 3rd Lord Monteagle, 2s. inc. Henry Compton II. suc. fa. 1544. Kntd. 1567. summ. to Lords as Lord Compton 1572.

MARRIAGES AND ISSUE

Testator's first marriage

The testator married, firstly, Frances Hastings (d.1574), the daughter of Francis Hastings (1513/14-1560), 2nd Earl of Huntingdon, by Katherine Pole (d.1576), a descendant of George, Duke of Clarence (1449-1478).

By Frances Hastings the testator had two sons:

* **William Compton** (d. 24 June 1630). In 1618 he was created Earl of Northampton.

* **Sir Thomas Compton** (d.1626), who married, as her third husband, Mary (nee Beaumont) Villiers, (c.1570–1632), Countess of Buckingham, mother of James I's favourite, George Villiers (1592-1628), 1st Duke of Buckingham. See the *ODNB* entry for Mary (nee Beaumont) Villiers, (c.1570–1632), Countess of Buckingham.

Testator's second marriage

The testator married secondly, Anne Spencer (d. 22 September 1618), the fifth of the eight daughters of Sir John Spencer (d.1586) of Althorp, Northamptonshire, by Katherine Kitson, eldest daughter of Sir Thomas Kitson (1485–1540) of London. Anne Spencer was a sister of Alice Spencer (1559–1637), who married firstly Ferdinando Stanley (1559?–1594), 5th Earl of Derby, and secondly Thomas Egerton (1540–1617), 1st Viscount Brackley. Another of her sisters was Elizabeth Spencer (29 June 1552 - 24 or 25 February 1618), who married firstly George Carey (1548-1603), 2nd Baron Hunsdon, and secondly Ralph Eure (d.1617), 3rd Baron Eure.

Prior to her marriage to the testator, Anne Spencer married, in 1575, William Stanley (1528-1581), 3rd Baron Monteagle, son of Thomas Stanley (25 May 1507 – 25 August 1560), 2nd Baron Monteagle, by his first wife, Mary Browne, the daughter of Charles Brandon (c.1484–1545), 1st Duke of Suffolk, and his first wife, Anne Browne (d.1510), the daughter of Sir Anthony Browne (d.1506) of Calais. Thomas Stanley, 2nd Baron Monteagle, was a ward of John Hussey (executed 29 June 1537), 1st Baron Hussey of Sleaford, and others, and Charles Brandon purchased his wardship and marriage about 1527.

For the will of Anne Spencer, see TNA PROB 11/132/298.

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By Anne Spencer, the testator had one son:

* **Sir Henry Compton** (c.1584-c.1649), who married firstly Cecily Sackville, daughter of Robert Sackville (1560/1-1609), 2nd Earl of Dorset, by his first wife, Margaret Howard (1562-1591), daughter of Oxford's first cousin, Thomas Howard (1538-1572), 4th Duke of Norfolk. For Sir Henry Compton, see the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/compton-henry-ii-1584-1649>

b. c.1584, 3rd s. of Henry Compton I, Lord Compton of Compton Wyniates, Warws. being 1st by 2nd w. Anne, da. of Sir John Spencer^r of Althorp, Northants. educ. Christ Church Oxf. 1599; L. Inn 1602. m. (1) Cecily, da. of Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset, ?3s. 3da.; (2) Mary, da. of Sir George Browne of Battle, 4s. 2da. KB 1603.

See also Cokayne, George Edward, *The Complete Peerage*, (London: St Catherine Press, 1936), Vol. IX, pp. 115-17, and Vol. III (1913), pp. 390-1; and Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk c. 1484-1545*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 28.

See also the *ODNB* entries for Sir William Compton (1482?-1528); George Talbot (1468-1538), 4th Earl of Shrewsbury; William Herbert (1506/7-1570), 1st Earl of Pembroke; Francis Hastings (1513/14-1560), 2nd Earl of Huntingdon; Sir Thomas Kitson (1485-1540); Charles Brandon (c.1484-1545), 1st Duke of Suffolk; Alice Spencer (1559-1637), Countess of Derby; Elizabeth Spencer (1552-1618), Lady Hunsdon; and Robert Sackville (1560/61-1609), 2nd Earl of Dorset.

The poet Edmund Spenser dedicated separate long poems to three of the Spencer sisters, with whom he claimed kinship: 'Prosopopoia, or Mother Hubberd's Tale' to Anne Spencer; 'Muiopotmos, or the Fate of the Butterfly' to Elizabeth Spencer; and 'The Tears of the Muses' to Alice Spencer. See Oram, William, ed., *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 268, 334, 412.

RM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ni Henrici Compton

[f. 292r] In the name of God, Amen. The seventeenth day of May in the year of Our Lord God one thousand five hundred four score and nine I, Sir Henry Compton, knight, Lord Compton, being whole in body and of good and perfect memory, thanks be therefore given to Almighty God, do ordain, constitute and make my testament and last will in form as followeth etc.:

First, because I have nothing more precious than my soul, nor anything presentable to the majesty of God besides it, I therefore do present and bequeath the same to his mercy,

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most humbly beseeching him of his infinite goodness not to impute to me the multitude of my sins, but that it will please him to forgive and pardon me the same;

Also I commend my body to the earth from whence it came, and to be reverently and comely buried in the church of Compton Wynyates in the county of Warwick in such sort as shall be seemly and requisite for a Christian and my calling at the discretion of my executor in this my present will to be nominated, and that there shall be a tomb made for me with my picture and both my wives;

As touching the disposition of my worldly goods, chattels and debts of whatsoever nature, I do dispose and bequeath the same in form ensuing:

First, I will and devise unto my Lady Anne Compton, my loving wife, all her jewels and apparel whatsoever and these parcels of plate and household stuff ensuing, that is to say, sheep five hundred, one half of my mares and colts, two black nags, three coach-horses, two nags bought of John Spragges, Gray Beckett, and all my ambling [f. 292v] nags with the coaches and coach harness with their usual furniture for riding, women's saddles and pillions, and all such plate that she brought with her, and one basin and ewer bought of Mr Smith which were Mr Fisher's, twelve silver dishes, a charger and saucers;

Also I give and bequeath to my said Lady and wife the bed of murrey velvet with talbots and men, and the furniture which are quilt(?), and all hangings, coverlets and furniture for beds which she hath made or caused to be made since she was married, and the white bed which my said wife was brought to bed in with the furniture thereunto belonging, with the two crimson canopies that were then made, the hanging of the story of Moses and the fine hanging of verders that were used in the russet chamber, the bed of yellow satin embroidered with green velvet and red, with the bedstead and all furniture to the same, and ten ordinary beds for the servants with twelve coverlets and blankets, and my murrey cloth field bed furnished, with the use of all the boards, stools, forms, cupboards, bedsteads at Tottenham, to be used there by my said wife and there to be left by her at her death;

Also I give my said Lady and wife the one half of my household linen; the other half I give and bequeath to William Compton, esquire, my son and heir apparent;

And I give to my said wife the third part of my pewter and brass;

And my farther will and mind is that none of the legacies here in this my last will and testament devised or given to my said wife, children, friends and servants shall be charged to and for the payment of my debts for that I have otherwise sufficiently provided by writing in my lifetime for the discharge thereof;

And I do will and devise unto William Compton, esquire, my son and heir apparent, five hundred sheep, all my armour and all my pistols, calivers, muskets, and all my steel saddles, my velvet saddles and my great horses, and ten trotting geldings, horsemen's staves, coats and pendants [=pennants?];

And my mind and will is that in consideration of the said legacy he pay or cause to be paid unto Jones, the saddler, his debt due to him for saddles and other furniture if the same [-same] shall be unpaid at my death;

Also I give to my son and heir, William Compton, a bed bought of Sir George Peckham and the furniture to the same bed, and the white bed my Lady of Huntingdon gave me, and the furniture, the hanging being of the story of Billamas and Pryamus, the russet damask bed and the hangings of the story of Sampson;

And also I give him half my mares and colts, and twelve livery beds and their furniture, a cloth field bed furnished, two parts of my pewter and brass, and the other third part as before devised by me to my wife;

Further I do will and devise unto my son, Thomas Compton, a white silver basin and ewer graven, two little flagons with the Comptons' coat, two low footed bowls with the like arms, four white salts pounced, and two white cups, and in case this plate aforesaid amount not to the sum of one hundred pounds, then my will and mind is the same to be made up an hundred pounds;

Also I give my said son, Thomas Compton, one bed of white velvet embroidered with black and red, with all the household stuff at London which I bought of my Lady my mother's executors (except the new murrey bed, bedstead and furniture which I have given my wife by my deed in writing in my lifetime, with divers other things);

Item, I give to my son, Henry Compton, a double salt gilt, a gilt horse(?), a basin and ewer the Lord Chancellor gave at his christening;

Item, I give to Daniel Asheton, my servant, forty pounds, to be paid unto him within three months next after my death, and fifty pounds the Earl of Essex oweth me;

Item, I give and bequeath to Charles Goldwell the sum of one hundred pounds, to be delivered and taken out of such money that is due and owing unto me by William Cleake, which sum I will shall be put out by my executor to his use until he be one and twenty years of age, and then to be [f. 293r] delivered unto the said Charles;

Item, I do will and devise to every of my household servants that hath dwelt with me three years, and remaining with me at the time of my decease, one year's wages over and above their wages then due;

And I will my executor shall keep house at my mansion house at Compton for my servants until my burial and one month longer, to be accounted from the time of my funerals, for so many of them as will there remain;

And I do ordain, constitute and make William Compton, my son and heir, my sole executor of this my last will and testament, to whom I give and bequeath the residue of

all my goods and chattels, plate, debts and utensils whatsoever not in this my will bequeathed of this trust and confidence that I have in him, and I charge him upon my blessing that he peaceably permit my children, servants and tenants to have and quietly enjoy their several estates, leases, grants and annuities to them granted by me;

And my will is, and I charge him upon my blessing, that he do confirm their estates to them severally made, and that for their indemnity he enter bond to the overseers of this my will in four thousand pounds within one month after my death;

And I do constitute and appoint the right honourable Sir Christopher Hatton, knight, Lord Chancellor of England, the right honourable Sir William Cecil, knight, Lord Treasurer of England, and the right honourable Sir Francis Walsingham, knight, Chancellor of her Majesty's Duchy, the overseers of this my last will and testament, and I give to each of them a bowl of ten pounds which I will my executor shall deliver to him in token of my goodwill, most earnestly requiring them to be careful of my wife and children;

In witness whereof I, the said Lord Compton, to this my said last will and testament have set my hand and seal the day and year aforesaid. Henry Compton.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence to William Brent, John Taylor, Matthew Groome, Simon Scudamore.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro magistro Willmo Drury Legum doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis magistro Custode siue Commissario &c duodecimo die mensis Novembris Anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo octogesimo nono iuramento Thome Wheler notarij publici procuratoris honorandi viri domini Willmi Compton filij dicitur defuncti et executoris in huiusmodi testamento nominati Cui commissaria fuit administratio bonorum iurium et creditorum eiusdem defuncti de bene et fideliter administrando &c ad sancta dei evangelia iuratus

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Master, Keeper or Commissary etc. of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the twelfth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred eighty-ninth by the oath of Thomas Wheeler, notary public, proctor of the right honourable Lord William Compton, son of the said deceased and executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the same deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc.]