

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Count of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 16 February 1599 and proved 28 July 1600 of William Colles, uncle of Humphrey Martyn, the addressee of the *Langham Letter* which describes Leicester's entertainment of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth in the summer of 1575. See the Langham page on this website.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the Colles family, see the pedigree in Phillimore, W.P.W., ed., *The Visitation of the County of Worcester Made in the Year 1569*, (London: Harleian Society, 1888), Vol. XXVII, p. 41 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ECoeEAAAIAAJ&pg=PA41>

See also the pedigree of Colles in Fetherston, John, ed., *The Visitation of the County of Warwick in the Year 1619*, (London: Harleian Society, 1877), Vol. XII, p. 247 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationcount01camdgoog/page/n271>

See also the pedigree of Colles of Bradwell in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitation of Buckinghamshire in 1566*, (Exeter: William Pollard, 1883) p. 11 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationofbuck00harvrich/page/11>

See also Grazebrook, H. Sydney, *The Heraldry of Worcestershire*, Vol. I, (London: John Russell Smith, 1873), p. 124 at:

<https://archive.org/details/heraldryworcest00grazgoog/page/n184>

See also the pedigree of Colles of Parkbury in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Hertfordshire*, (London: Harleian Society, 1886), Vol. XXII, p. 43 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=gqwKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA43>

In the will below, the testator mentions his cousin, Henry Jackman, likely the son of Edward Jackman (d.1569?), second husband of the testator's sister-in-law, Anne Pakington (d.1578). For the will of Edward Jackman, see TNA PROB 11/52/55.

Testator's parents

The testator was the third son of William Colles (d.1558) and Margaret Hitch (born 1497) of Gloucestershire. According to the pedigrees in Phillimore, *supra*, and Fetherston, *supra*, he had three brothers and six sisters:

-Edmund Colles (1528-1606) of Leigh, Worcestershire, who married firstly Jane Somerville, the daughter of Robert Somerville of Edstone, Warwickshire. by Mary Greville, sister of Sir Edward Greville, and secondly Anne Townshend, the daughter of Sir Robert Townshend. See the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/colles-edmund-1528-1606>

Jane Somerville was the aunt of John Somerville (d.1583), who married Margaret Arden, the daughter of Edward Arden (1533–1583) of Park Hall. See the *ODNB* entries for John Somerville and Edward Arden, and the Somerville pedigree in Fetherston, *supra*, p. 33 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationcount01camdgoog/page/n57>

-Michael Colles, second son, of Bradwell, Buckinghamshire, who married Mary Grant, the daughter of Edward Grant (d.1592), gentleman, of Northbrook and Snitterfield, Warwickshire, by whom, according to the pedigree in Metcalfe, *supra*, he had two daughters, Anne Colles and Katherine Colles. For the Grant family, see:

'Parishes: Fulbrook', in *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 3, Barlichway Hundred*, ed. Philip Styles (London, 1945), pp. 91-94. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol3/pp91-94> [accessed 1 July 2019].

At Northbrook, south-west of the modern house, are the shallow remains of the south-west angle of another moat. Here stood the manor-house of the Grants, a centre of Catholic disaffection in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Edward Grant of Northbrook was described in 1564 as 'an adversary of true religion'. (fn. 29) He married Anne Somerville of Edstone (fn. 30) and the house was searched in November 1583 after the discovery of his nephew John Somerville's plot against the Queen. (fn. 31) His grandson John Grant was drawn into the Gunpowder Plot through his marriage with Mary Wyntour, sister of Robert, Thomas, and John Wyntour of Huddington. Northbrook was the scene of frequent meetings of the conspirators during 1605. (fn. 32). . .

A parcel of land called Northbrook was granted by Edward IV to St. Mary's College, Warwick, in 1461 in recompense for certain rents and portions in Fulbrook which they had lost by the inclosure of the park forty years earlier. (fn. 84) The College held this property until the Dissolution, it being valued in 1490 (fn. 85) and 1508 (fn. 86) at £4 15s. 10d., and at £5 6s. 8d. c. 1540–4. (fn. 87) In 1545, having reverted to the Crown, it was given to Edward Grant, son of Richard Grant of Snitterfield. (fn. 88) Edward died in 1592, leaving Northbrook to his widow Anne with remainder to his eldest son Thomas, to whom he bequeathed in succession the rest of his property, consisting of Briary Lands and tenements in Snitterfield and Droitwich. (fn. 89) Anne died in 1596. (fn. 90) Thomas married Alice Ruding (fn. 91) and was the father of John Grant the conspirator. In 1603 John granted a 21 years' lease of Northbrook to his cousin Sir William Somerville and his brother-in-law John Wyntour. (fn. 92) After his execution in 1606 the property was

forfeited to the Crown, though his widow was still in occupation in 1608. (fn. 93) In 1611 it was leased for 21 years to Ellis Rothwell. (fn. 94) Wyntour Grant son of John Grant recovered his father's estates in 1623 and sold them to Sir Thomas Puckering of the Priory, Warwick. (fn. 95)

-John Colles of Hatfield, Hertfordshire, fourth son, who married Margery Archer, the daughter of Humphrey Archer (d. 24 October 1562), esquire, of Tamworth. See the Colles pedigree in Fetherston, *supra*, p. 247, and the pedigree of Archer of Tamworth in Fetherston, *supra*, p. 309 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationcount01camdgoog/page/n333>

For the marriage of John Colles and Margery Archer, see also Collins, Arthur, *The Peerage of England*, Vol. VII, (London: H. Woodfall, 1768), p. 373 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=IWdUAAAACAAJ&pg=PA373>

See also *Memorials of Families of the Surname of Archer*, (London: John Russell Smith, 1861), pp. 19-20 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=35sOAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA20>

-Alice Colles (1528?-1607?) who is said to have married firstly Edward Archbold, and secondly Fulke Wodhull, esquire, of Thenford, Northamptonshire, son of Nicholas Wodhull (d.1482 – 6 May 1531), esquire, and Elizabeth Parr. For the Archbold family, see Grazebrook, Vol. I, *supra*, p. 16 at:

<https://archive.org/details/heraldryworcest00grazgoog/page/n76>

For Nicholas Wodhull, see Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 523,

For the marriage of Alice Colles and Fulke Wodhull, see also the pedigree of Wodhull of Thenford in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Northamptonshire Made in 1564 and 1618-19*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1887), p. 56 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=wLgEAAAIAAJ&pg=PA56>

See also:

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Wodhull-39>

-Jane Colles, who married Edmund Ruding, gentleman, the second son of John Ruding of Martin Hussingtree, Worcestershire, and Alice Lyde. See the Ruding pedigree in Phillimore, *supra*, p. 115 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ECoeEAAAIAAJ&pg=PA115>

-**Mary Colles**, who married Ralph Underhill (c.1514-1557?), gentleman, of Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, the second son of Thomas Underhill and Anne Wynter, by whom she had no issue. See the Underhill pedigree in Fetherston, *supra*, p. 31 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationcount01camdgoog/page/n55>

See also:

<http://jliptrap.us/gen/underhill.htm>

For a demise dated May 31 May 1556 by Ralph Underhill of Stoneleigh, gentleman, and Mary, his wife, see DR18/1/1114 on the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust website at:

http://collections.shakespeare.org.uk/search/archive/view_as/list/page/780

-**Anne Colles**, who married firstly Richard Pitcher [=Picard?] of Cradley, Herefordshire, and secondly a husband surnamed Fox. For the marriage of Anne Colles and Richard Pychard of Cradley, see the pedigree in *The Picards or Pychards*, (London: Golding and Lawrence, 1878), p. 167 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=gzwXAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA167>

-**Ursula Colles** (1540-1615), who in 1562 married William Hawes (d. 29 October 1611) of Solihull, Warwickshire. See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, p. 382 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=8JcbV309c5UC&pg=RA1-PA382>

See also:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/103478772/william-hawes>

-**Elizabeth Colles**, unmarried in 1566. She is said to have married Lawrence Romney of Knightwick, Worcestershire. For the Rumney family, see Grazebrook, H. Sydney, *The Heraldry of Worcestershire*, Vol. II, (London: John Russell Smith, 1873), p. 477 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=CFQBAAAQAAJ&pg=PA477>

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Margaret Pakington, the daughter of Humphrey Pakington and Elizabeth Harding, on 6 November 1564 at St Mary le Bow. For the will of Humphrey

Pakington, see TNA PROB 11/38/212. For the will of Elizabeth (nee Harding) Pakington, see TNA PROB 11/46/444.

As noted above, the testator's sister-in-law, Lettice Pakington (d. 23 December 1552), married Sir Roger Martyn (d.1573), by whom she was the mother of Humphrey Martyn, addressee of the *Langham Letter*. See the will of Sir Roger Martyn, TNA PROB 11/56/48, and Hughes Clarke, A. W., ed., *The Registers of St Mary Magdalen Milk Street 1558-1666 and St Michael Bassishaw London 1538-1625*, Part I, (London: Harleian Society, 1942), Vol. LXXII, p. 137.

Another of the testator's sisters-in-law, Alice Pakington (d.1609?), married firstly Richard Lambert (d.1567), and secondly Clement Paston. For the will, dated 20 December 1608 and proved 24 February 1609, of Alice (nee Pakington) Lambert Paston, see TNA PROB 11/113/201. For the will of Richard Lambert, see TNA PROB 11/49/267. For the will of Clement Paston (c.1515-1598), see TNA PROB 11/91/242.

The testator's children received bequests in the will, dated 7 January 1586 and proved 16 January 1586, TNA PROB 11/70/23, of Alice Pakington's son, Edward Lambert. In his will, Edward Lambert mentions his mother, Alice Paston; his brothers, Edmund Lambert of Boyton, Wiltshire, Richard Lambert, Giles Lambert and William Lambert; his 'sister Jackman'; his 'sister Reppes'; his sister Lambert of Boyton; and his cousins, William Colles, Martha Colles, Sarah Colles, Blanche Colles, Anne Colles and Rebecca Colles.

See also Brown, Frederick, *Abstracts of Somersetshire Wills*, Third Series, (Privately printed, 1889), p. 3 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=LSYVAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA3>

By Margaret Pakington, the testator had a son and six daughters:

* **William Colles** (d.1618) of Parkbury, who married Susan Mayne of Bovington, Hertfordshire. See the pedigree of Colles of Parkbury, in Metcalfe, *supra*, p. 43.

* **Sarah(?) Colles**, wife of Thomas Annesley. It seems likely the testator's son-in-law, Thomas Annesley, was the third son of George Annesley (d.1608), esquire, of Tickford in Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, and Elizabeth Dove (buried 1603), the daughter of Robert Dove, esquire, of Moulsoe, Buckinghamshire. See the Annesley pedigree in Metcalfe, *supra*, p. 1 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationofbuck00harvrich/page/n13>

See also Burke, John, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. I, (London: Henry Colburn 1834), p. 8 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=uo9AAAAAcAAJ&pg=PA8>

* **Martha(?) Colles**, who married a husband surnamed Barnaby. In light of the marriage of Alice Colles and Fulke Wodhull (see above), it seem likely that the testator's son-in-law was related to Richard Burnaby (buried 10 January 1602), esquire, of Watford and Mount Sorel, Northamptonshire, son of Thomas Burnaby (1558?-1609-10), gentleman, of Watford by Elizabeth Taylor, who married firstly Anne Wodhull, second daughter of Nicholas Wodhull, esquire, of Warkworth, Northamptonshire, and Elizabeth Parr. See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 349 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=8JcbV309c5UC&pg=PA349>

For the will of Richard Burnaby (c.1530 – 10 January 1602, see TNA PROB 11/101/101.

See also the pedigree of Burnaby of Watford (which contains some errors) in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Northamptonshire*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1887), pp. 7, 172 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=wLgEAAAIAAJ&pg=PA172>

Thomas Burnaby (1558?-1609/10) was the dedicatee of three works by Robert Greene: *Greene's Never Too Late* (1590), *Francesco's Fortunes* (1590) and *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier* (1592). He contributed commendatory verses to Greene's *Ciceronis Amor* (1589) and Greene's *Ciceronis Amor* (1589), and was at one time the lessee of the Bear Garden in Southwark.

* **Blanche Colles**, under 21 years of age when the testator made his will.

* **Anne Colles**, under 21 years of age when the testator made his will.

* **Rebecca Colles**, under 21 years of age when the testator made his will.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

For the testator's aunt, Margaret Borneford (or Burnford) see the Colles pedigree in Phillimore, *supra*, p. 41 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ECoeEAAAIAAJ&pg=PA41>

Item, I do give unto Margaret Borneford the great gilt bowl and cover which her grandmother gave unto her.

RM: T{estamentum} Will{elm}i Coles

In the name of God, Amen. The sixteenth day of February Anno Domini one thousand five hundred ninety-eight and in the one and fortieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith etc., I, William Colles of Parkbury within the parish of St Stephen in the county of Hertford, gentleman, being in perfect mind and memory, praised be God therefore, do ordain & make this my present last will and testament in manner and form following:

First and before all things I do commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God and his son, Jesus Christ, the second person in Trinity, by whose death and precious bloodshedding I hope and fully assure myself to be saved and to inherit everlasting life, and by faith in Christ I do assure myself after this life ended to arise again and to sit amongst them to whom it shall be said, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, and possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning etc.';

And my body I do commit unto the earth to be buried in such decent place as is fit for a Christian at the discretion of mine executor hereunder named;

And as concerning the disposing of my goods and chattels and other my worldly substance which it hath pleased God to lend me, I do will and devise the same in manner and form following:

First I will that all such debts as I shall owe unto any person or persons being due unto them by law or equity shall be justly and truly paid unto them as the same shall become due unto them or any of them;

Item, I do give and bequeath unto my three daughters, that is to say, to Blanche, to Anne and to Rebecca, to every of them the sum of three hundred pounds apiece of current money of England, which said several sums of three hundred pounds apiece so to every of them severally given I do appoint shall be paid to every of them by mine executor as they or either of them shall severally accomplish the age of twenty and one years or be married, which first shall happen;

And if death shall happen to any of my said three daughters before they shall accomplish their said age of one and twenty years or be married, then my will and true meaning is that the legacy, part and portion of her so deceasing shall remain and be equally divided betwixt her other two sisters above-named which shall then be living and my son, William, if he be then alive;

And if it shall happen two of my said daughters to decease and die before their day of marriage or age of one and twenty years, then I will that this my legacy and portion so to them bequeathed shall be and remain to the other of my said three daughters surviving and to the said William, my son, if he be then living, equally to be divided between them;

Item, I do give and bequeath unto my daughter Annesley the sum of twenty marks current English money;

And I do forgive the twenty pounds which her husband doth owe unto me, hoping that he will assure unto my daughter, his wife, the lease which he promised me he would make unto her whereupon I paid unto him two hundred pounds in marriage with her;

Item, I do give and bequeath unto my daughter, Blanche, a great gilt standing cup which my cousin, Mr Henry Jackman, gave unto her at her christening;

Also a great gilt salt-cellar with a cover gilt, six silver spoons parcel gilt, two open plain silver drinking-pots, one silver bowl parcel gilt to drink wine in, and my best featherbed and best coverlet;

Item, I do give and bequeath to my daughter, Anne, two silver bowls gilt, six silver spoons parcel gilt, two open drinking-pots of silver daily used, two gilt spoons, my featherbed next the best, and my best coverlet saving one;

Item, I give and bequeath to my daughter, Rebecca, a little white cup of silver plain & called the children's cup, one open drinking-cup of silver and was parcel gilt, daily used, two gilt spoons, and the best featherbed saving two, and the best coverlet saving two;

Item, I give unto my daughter, Martha, one small salt-cellar with a cover gilt, one small gilt bowl, one gilt spoon, and also the standing cup of silver which I lately gave unto her;

Item, I do give unto Margaret Borneford the great gilt bowl and cover which her grandmother gave unto her;

Also a little gilt cup with lowe [sic for 'two?'] ears and twenty Edward shillings and also five pound more of my gift when she shall accomplish the full age of one and twenty years or at the day of her [f. 115v] marriage which first shall happen;

Item, I do give and bequeath unto my daughter Berneby [=Barnaby?] a chain of gold which my wife desired me to give her for a remembrance;

Also I do give unto her a bowl of silver parcel gilt for wine;

Also I do freely give unto my three daughters, Blanche, Anne & Rebecca, the two gilt chains and great pair of bracelets gilt which my wife desired me to give them;

Item, I do give to my brother, Michael Colles, for a remembrance the sum of five pounds of current English money;

Also I do give to William Barton, my servant, the sum of five marks current English money;

Also I do give unto Timothy Gould, my servant, twenty-six shillings eight pence;

Item, I give unto Dorothy Tanner, my servant, twenty shillings;

Item, I give Sybil Baily, my maidservant, twenty shillings;

All which said legacies last above-named, that is to say, to my brother, to Barton, Timothy, Dorothy and Sybil, I will shall be paid by mine executors within two months next after my decease;

item, my will & true meaning is that my son, William Colles, whom I have hereunder named to be mine executor, shall within six months next after my decease put in two sufficient sureties unto my brother, Michael Colles, and to his brother [=brother-in-law], Thomas Annesley, to be bound with himself in one thousand pounds current English money to pay unto his said three sisters the above-named several legacies unto them given in such sort, manner and form and at such time and times as is before appointed by this my will;

And also my said son, William, himself to be bound within one month next after my decease unto his brother [=brother-in-law], Thomas Annesley, in two hundred pounds to pay unto his said three sisters towards their maintenance yearly the sum of five pounds for every hundred pounds, that is to say, fifteen pound a year to every of them by seven pound ten shillings every half year until the said several legacies shall be due and payable as is aforesaid;

Item, I do give and bequeath unto my said son, William Colles, all the rest of my goods and chattels, plate, jewels, leases and household stuff whatsoever so as he do justly according to my mind and true meaning pay all my debts and legacies as I hope he will;

And I do ordain and make my said son, William, my full and sole executor of this my present last will and testament;

And I do appoint my brother, Michael Colles, and my son [=son-in-law], Thomas Annesley, overseers of this my will, and I do give to either of them for their pains therein to be taken twenty shillings apiece;

And for divers good causes me moving, I do utterly revoke and disannul all former wills by me heretofore made, and none to stand in force or effect but only this my last will and testament whereunto I have set my hand and seal the day and year before-written.

By me, William Colles. Sealed and subscribed in the presence of me, Andrew Collman(?), Timothy Gould.

Probatum fuit Testamentu{m} suprascriptu{m} apud London coram venerabili viro magistro Iohanne Hone Legum D{o}c{t}ore Surrogat{o} venerabili viri Iohannis Gibson Legum etiam D{o}c{t}oris Cur{ie} p{re}rogatiue Cantuariensis m{ag}istri Custodis siue Comissarij L{egi}time constitut{i} Vicesimo Octauo die mensis Iulij Anno D{omi}ni

milesimo Sexcentesimo Iuramento Will^{el}mi Colles filij dⁱc^ti defuncti et Executor^{is} in huiusmodi Testamento nominatⁱ Cui com^missa fuit Administratio bonaru^m Iuriu^m et Creditor^{um} eiusdem Defuncti de bene et fideliter administrand^o &c Ad sanc^ta Dei Evangelia Iuratⁱ

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master John Hone, Doctor of the Laws, Surrogate of the worshipful John Gibson, also Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the twenty-eighth day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundredth by the oath of William Colles, 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.]