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### Appendix II Sir Nicholas Mosley – The Will and “The Epitaph”

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Appendix II

Sir Nicholas Mosley – The Will and “The Epitaph”



The section of Sir Nicholas Mosley’s will concerning The Queen’s Gift

“ . . . Ffirst my will and mynde is, that Dame Elizabeth, nowe my wief, shall have soe muche, if shee bee contented therewith, as my sonne Rowlande and myself have covenanted to paye her yearlie; wich is, the some of three hundred poundes ev’rie yeare duringe her n’rall lief, and the some of XXX li. a yeare more, to be payde duringe her widowhood for her house rente, in such sorte as my said sonne Rowland Mosley and myself have covenanted shee shall have.

Also I give and bequeath to my said wief in lieu of her chamber two of my beste beddes with the ffurniture accordingle, except the best tapestry cov’ringes, and the best bedstocke, the Queen’s gift, also excepted.

Also I give and bequeath to my said wief, all such plate as shee had att the tyme I married her, save

onlie one pott which was stoolene away in the tyme of my mayroltie in London.

And also I give and bequeath unto my said wief her chaine and brasletts, and her wearing apparell and all things thereto belonginge.

And also I give and bequeath unto my saide wief my coache and coache horses, with the furniture thereof, and alsoe all such lynnens as were my said wiefes before I married her, and a restinge in the house . . . “

Quoted in Mrs W.C. Williamson, *Sketches of Fallowfield and the Surrounding Manors Past and Present* (Manchester & London, John Heywood, 1888), pp.39-43. Or, see *An index to the wills and inventories now preserved in the court of probate at Chester, from A.D. 1545 to 1760, [1545-1620]*, by John Parsons Earwaker, Church of England, Diocese of Chester Consistory Court (The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents: Lancashire and Cheshire, Volume II, 1879), II, 315.

### EPITAPH OF SIR NICHOLAS MOSLEY <sup>1</sup>

(From the Harleian MS no. 2113, f.64b)

Here lyes the worthy wight which once was poore and bare,  
Yet after prov'd a Knight by being London's Meare;  
Here lyes that worthy clothiar whose cloth was dyde in grayne –  
It bootes not who was loser soe he therby did gayne;  
Here lyes Sir Nicholas Moseley, as you shall understande,  
Heye Shereffe once of Lancaster wheyrin he bought much lande,  
Fower hundred pound in gold he had within his bed they toke it from<sup>2</sup>,  
A thousay pound a year perforce he left behinde hym  
Unto his sonne and heir, affection soe did bynde him.  
Two other sonnes he had; the one well seene in lawe,  
Rich enough in goods; th' other not worth a strawe<sup>3</sup>,  
Nor nothing woulde he him because he nothing had,  
But often rayle oppon him as though he had been madde,

---

<sup>1</sup> Taken from *Family Memoirs* by Sir Oswald Mosley 2<sup>nd</sup> Bt., Appendix II.

<sup>2</sup> Note the survival of a story that, like the bed supposedly left at the inn in Leicester by Richard III (before the battle of Bosworth *The White Boar*, and after it *The Blue Boar* - a badge of Henry VII's victorious general John de Vere, 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford), The Queen's Gift had a double bottom; was this a feature of late 15<sup>th</sup> century royal beds, similar to many on the continent ?

<sup>3</sup> In contrast to Edward the youngest son, Anthony Mosley led a dissolute and debt-accumulating life in London and fathered an illegitimate son who tried to claim part of the estate.

Because he would not frame as he before had doone,  
 Who lyvid in miser's name, and dyed as hee begonne.  
 Naked his beginning, and naked did hee dye,  
 And naked was he lyvinge, and naked he doth lye.  
 He that was poore and riche, and now is poore agayn,  
 Yet left two welthie sonnes – God make them honest men.

Death, like a slave, his lyfe would have –  
 Gould could not save him from the grave.

By honest steppes to honnour hee did tende –  
 Prosperous his course, and heavenly his ende.  
 Here was he born, at London he was bredde,  
 Hence drewe he trade, which thence he uttered.  
 To Russe, to Tartasie, Fraunce, and Italy,  
 Your home spunne cloth hee yearly made to see.  
 Here he did dwell, hence London did him take,  
 And honoared him with Mayor and Shrievall state.  
 There he so rul'd that London ever will  
 Honor his memorie with triumphant scill.  
 Thence he returned to his native place,  
 Whom shrievall honour welcoumb'd with embrace,  
 Where he long lived, and eightie fyve yeares spent –  
 And thence with joy to heavenly places went.  
 Three Sonnes hee left; to the eldest landes he gave;  
 The youngest by lawe more lands to gett and have;  
 The mydle through misfortune could not keepe  
 That which he gave whom he bequeathed to weepe,  
 This country cyttie heavens and earthe divided  
 Him hee his sonnes in place, in harte united.

MOS LEGEM REGIT



THE ANCIENT BALLAD OF TARQUIN

1

Within this ancient British land,  
In Lancashire I understand,  
Near Manchester there liv'd a Knight of fame,  
Of a prodigious strength and might,  
Who vanquish'd many a worthy Knight,  
A giant great, and Tarquin was his name.

2

And in those days sprang up a precious gem  
Who wore the golden diadem,  
Prince Arthur lawful heir of Britain's king,  
Who for the honour of all Christendom,  
Twelve bloody battles fierce he won,  
Whose name and fame throughout this world did ring.

.....

6

From Winchester he's [ Sir Lancelot] gone with speed,  
Well mounted on his stately steed  
Until at length to the Hoozend he came,  
Where he good entertainment found,  
At noble Moseley's there renown'd,  
Who livèd there in great repute and fame . .

Probably from one of the many collections of "Garlands" or popular ballads circulating early in the reign of James I. This ballad of Sir Lancelot overcoming the evil Sir Tarquin (whose castle was supposed to be in the wasteland of Castlefield near the old Roman campsite) already existed early enough in a slightly different version to be familiar to playgoers at *Henry IV Part II*, where in Act II Falstaff sings the first lines;

"When Arthur first in court began,  
And was accounted king . . ."

For the grossly anachronistic reference to Sir Nicholas Mosley to be inserted however, this version must date from after he retired to Hough End, and be either local to Manchester or to the circle of his son Edward Mosley of Gray's Inn in London; stylistically it shows signs of being updated in the later 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## Dorothy Davenport's Paradise Bed



William and Dorothy Davenport of Bramall Hall were friends of Sir Nicholas Mosley and his family, and Dorothy fabricated her own "Paradise Bed". William Davenport V, son of William Davenport IV and Margaret, daughter of Richard Assheton of Middleton, inherited Bramhall Hall, Cheshire in 1585 and Dorothy, daughter of John Warren and Margaret Molyneux, is believed to have worked a bed set depicting Adam and Eve's Fall and exile from Paradise for their marriage bed from about 1610 to 1636 (the dates embroidered at the end of the top valence – now at Capesthorpe Hall).

Both Dorothy and William's initials are worked into a pattern of flowers and leaves with a continuous text around the lower edge urging the reader, or the bed's occupier(s), to "Feare God and sleep in peace", avoid the "greefe and sorrowes" of hell and win "joy and happiness" in heaven.

Adam and Eve and moralising to sleepers were popular themes in the early 17th century (see also the bed at High House, Stafford), but it is tempting to think that Dorothy was inspired for her project by a visit to Hough End.

The verses in full read:

Feare God and Sleepe in Peace: That thou in Christe mayste reste:

To passe theis dayes of Sinne: And raigne with him in blisse:

Where angelis do remayne:

And bless and praise his name:

With songs of Joy and hapines: And live with him for ever:

Therefore O Lord in thee is my full hope and truste:

That thou wilt mee defende from Sinne, the world and Divile:

Who goeth about to catch poore sinners in their snare:

And bring them to that place where greefe and sorrowes are:





Dorothy Davenport's bed and needlework are now at Capesthorpe Hall, Cheshire. She finished embroidering her bed hangings in 1636 when she was 75. She will certainly have seen *The Queen's Gift* at Hough End.

Soe now I end my Lynes and worke that hath been Longe

To those that do them reade: In hope they will be pleased:

By mee Dorothy Davenport 1636.

The initials and dates W.D. 1610 and D.D. 1614 are also worked into the hangings on the foot of the bed. Dorothy Davenport seems to have been very similar in outlook to Grace, Lady Mildmay, if of a slightly lower social strata; again the same preoccupation of avoiding the consequences of sin and expecting to achieve bliss only through Christ in the next world: a sobering message for bedtime, as on the updated royal bed. This time the triple strip of needlework on the fabric tester only tells the story of *Paradise Lost*, as no royal saviours can be present as substitutes for Christ and Mary to achieve *Paradise Regained*.

Footnote: the well-known mid C17th London publisher (especially of play texts) Humphrey Moseley may well have been a cousin of the Hough End Mosleys. One of his apprentices was a Langford, and one of the lost plays he registered was by William Shakespeare and a mysterious Robert Davenport. It was a *Henry II* – of which the

only known copy so far was used as a firelighter or pie dish liner in the next century by antiquarian John Warburton's cook.



*Bramhall Hall*

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