

# THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF DAVID RAMAGE, FARTHING MAKER IN THE TOWER

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AMONG the papers left by the late Robert Thompson was his transcript of the will of David Ramage, the entrepreneurial moneyer, engraver and coining equipment proprietor responsible both for a very large proportion of the dies from which the mid seventeenth-century token coinage was struck, and for the actual manufacture of most of the tokens struck from the dies in question. The will is dated 6 October 1661 and probate of it was granted on 2 November 1661. This, as Thompson explained in a paper read to the BANS Congress in Belfast in 2002, was enough to show that David Ramage had died at some date between signing his will and the date of its probate, rather than in 1662 as all previous scholars had believed. The failure of previous scholars to recognise this must have been due in some part to the fact that in the index to the register of wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury for that period the will in question is described as that of ‘David Ramadge, Mariner [sic], of Tower of London, Middlesex’, whereas in the will itself Ramage’s occupation is clearly given as ‘monier’, and Thompson deserves every credit for identifying the will as that of the most notable individual among all those responsible for the seventeenth-century token coinage.

In his paper of 2002, now posthumously published in the *Token Corresponding Society Bulletin*,<sup>1</sup> Thompson used the evidence of the date of the will and of the provision in it that Ramage’s coining equipment and tools should pass to his widow Elizabeth, with a reversion to his son David Ramage junior, to argue that if (as seemed to Thompson almost certain) the production of dies by Ramage’s workshop continued into 1662, the manufacture of the dies in question and the striking of coins from them is likely to have been managed by David Ramage junior, by then just past the age of majority.

It was Thompson’s intention to publish the text of the will as an appendix to the more extensive publication on Ramage that he had long intended but which existed only in preliminary note form at his death, and it seems proper that the text of the will should now appear in print, partly because it is informative about Ramage’s family and his personal circumstances but also because the provisions in it that relate to the bequest of his coining equipment and to a potential legal liability in which his heirs might be caught up ‘upon the Irish [sic] Account’ are both of some importance in the context of Ramage’s business operations.

A verbatim transcript of the will, taken from the contemporary registered copy in the National Archives (PROB 11/306/125), follows. In the contemporary copy itself, the entirety of the will is set out in one continuous block of text, but for the convenience of readers the present writer has broken up the text into a number of separate paragraphs. Capitalisation, applied irregularly in the copied will, has been brought into line with present-day conventions, while the addition of punctuation, minimal in the copied will, has seemed unnecessary in the light of the present writer’s rearrangement of the text. Comments by the present writer on issues arising out of the text of the will are set out under a succession of headings below.

<sup>1</sup> Thompson 2018. The present writer is grateful to Michael Dickinson for providing him with a text of Thompson’s paper prior to its publication and for loaning him a folder of Thompson’s research notes relating to Ramage. Michael Dickinson and Gary Oddie have also kindly read, and commented on, an early draft of the present article.

*The last will and testament*

In the Name of God Amen. the sixth day of October Anno Domini 1661 and in the thirteenth yeare of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lord Charles the Second by the grace of God King of England Scotland France and Ireland Defender of the Fayth I David Ramadge of the Tower of London monier being sick and weake in body but of good sound and perfect minde and memory prayse be given unto God but considering with my selfe the brevitie and uncertaintie of this life and that all flesh must yeild to death when it shall please God to call doe therefore make and ordaine this my last will and testament in writing in manner and forme followinge

That is to say, first and principally I commend my soule into the hands of Almighty God my maker hoping assuredly through the only sake and meritts of Jesus Christ my Saviour to be made partaker of life everlasting and my body I committ to the earth where of it was made to be decently buried in the discretion of my executrix hereunder named

And as touchinge and concerninge that estate both reall and personal which God of his mercie and goodness hath bene pleased to allott unto me in this life I give and bequeath as followeth

Inprimis I hereby give and bequeath unto my sonnes Edward, John, Thomas, and Charles the summe of one hundred pounds apeece to be paid unto them at such time as they shall attaine unto their severall and respective ages of one and twenty yeares

Item I hereby give and bequeath to my daughters Mary Elizabeth and Rebecca the like summe of one hundred pounds apeece of the lawfull money of England to be paid unto them at such time as they shall attaine unto their severall and respective ages of one and twentie yeares or dayes of marriage which shall first happen

And in case that any of my said children shall happen to dye and departe this life before the legacie or legacies hereby by me given and bequeathed unto them respectively shall become due and payable that then my will and meaninge is and I doe hereby give and bequeath the legacie and portion of him or her soe dying unto the survivor and survivors of their part and portion alike

Item I hereby give and bequeath unto my sister Elizabeth Start the summe of thirtie pounds of lawfull money of England and to her sonne John Starte I give and bequeath the like summe of thirtie pounds of like money

Item I hereby give and bequeath unto Joane Shergale my wifes sister the summe of thirtie pounds of lawfull money of England to be paid unto her within twelve months next ensueing the day of my decease

Item I hereby give and bequeath unto my much esteemed friends Mr Thomas Davis and his sonne James Davis tenne pounds apeece to be paid unto them within twelve months next ensueing the day of my decease

Item my will and minde is and I doe hereby give and bequeath unto Elizabeth my wellbeloved wife and her heires all my messuages lands tenements and hereditaments whatsoever with their and every of their appurtenances scituate lying and beinge in the parish of Barnes and elsewhere in the county of Surrey to the intent and purpose that my said wife and her heires shall sell all my said messuages lands tenements and hereditaments with their and every of their appurtenances for payment of the legacies by me hereby given and the debts that I shall owe at the time of my decease

Item my will and meaninge is that all the legacies hereby given and bequeathed to my said children shall within twelve months next ensueing the day of my decease be put forth upon good and safe securitie such as my overseers hereunder named shall approve of for the use and benefitt of my said respective children and that my said wife shall receive and take the interest of all my said childrens portions and the profitt and proceed that shall be made by my engines tooles and instruments for the education breeding and bringing up of my said children dureing their minorities

And my will and meaninge is and I doe hereby give all my said engines tooles and instruments after the death and decease of the said Elizabeth my wife or her next marriage of any person to my said sonne David Ramadge

And I doe hereby declare my will and minde to be that if it shall be by just course in law be adjudged and condempned to pay all or any part of my obligations or engagements for any money borrowed or goods bought in partnership betweene mee Mr James Hoare and Mr [blank left here in copy] Cogan

upon the Irish Accompt that then the summe and summes of money soe to be had and recovered of or against me my executors or administrators shall be equally paid borne and discharged out of my estate hereby by me given and bequeathed to my wife and children in equall parts and portions

All the rest and residue of my estate goods chattles househould stuffe thing & things whatsoever not herein or hereby bequeathed my debts being payd and funerall charges discharged I hereby give and bequeath unto the said Elizabeth my deare and wellbeloved wife whome I hereby make and ordaine whole and sole executrix of this my last will and testament and of the execution of the same I desire nominate and appoynt my much esteemed freinds Mr Walter Taylor and Mr Abraham Beckner overseers, desireing that in as much as in them lye they will see this my will performed to whome I give and bequeath forty shillings apeece as a token of my love unto them

And I do hereby utterly revoake and renounce all former wills guifts legacies and bequests by me heretofore made or spoken

In witness whereof the said David Ramadge to this my present last will and testament have hereunto put my handseale the day and yeare first above written David Rammadge

Signed sealed published declared and delivered by the said David Rammadge for and as his last will and testament in the presence of Benjamine Sheppard scr: John Dibbs his servt:

*Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro Domino Gulielmo Merrike milite Legum Doctore Curiae Prerogativae Cant Magistro Custode sive Commissario legitime constitutus secundo die mensis Novembris Anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo sexagesimo primo juramento Elizabethae relictae dicti defuncti et executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominatus cui commissa fuit administratio omnium et singulorum bonorum jurium et creditorum dicti defuncti de bene et fideliter administrando eadem ad Sancta Dei Evangelia in debita iuris forma iurat:*

### **Ramage's early career and membership of the Company of Moneyers**

Ramage's description of himself in his will as being 'of the Tower of London monier' reflects the fact that in addition to his own personal business in engraving dies for the token coinage and in striking tokens from the dies that he had engraved, he remained at his death a member of the Company of Moneyers, the self-perpetuating body responsible for the day-to-day manufacture of the official royal coinage. As Thompson set out in his paper of 2002, Ramage's initial involvement with the coinage process seems to have been as 'servant formerly [to] the late deceased Master Briot, for whom he forged his tools, and marked his brass counters'.<sup>2</sup> their relationship perhaps beginning while Briot was employed at the Edinburgh mint between 1635 and 1639.<sup>3</sup> By the end of 1640 Ramage was domiciled in London, as evidenced by the birth in the parish of St Katherine's by the Tower on 25 November 1640 of his eldest son David.<sup>4</sup> Although the earliest dated record of him as a moneyer is on 14 March 1649/50,<sup>5</sup> it seems not unlikely that he had joined the Company of Moneyers rather earlier, and perhaps, as the present writer suggested to Thompson at some point in the past, about 1639/40.<sup>6</sup> This would accord with the fact that in a complete listing of the then moneyers dated 27 January 1652/3, most probably arranged in order of seniority, Ramage's name appears 44th out of fifty-nine moneyers in all, suggesting that although he was at the time a relatively junior member of the Company of Moneyers, there were fifteen moneyers then living who had lesser seniority within the Company than he did.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> As stated in a printed memorandum by Peter Blondeau drawn up in June 1650 (Wing 1988, T1582).

<sup>3</sup> Thompson 2018, 244.

<sup>4</sup> Robinson, 1882–3, I, 203.

<sup>5</sup> *Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1651–2*, 238 (where Ramage's surname is wrongly transcribed as Rainage).

<sup>6</sup> Thompson 2018, 245.

<sup>7</sup> *Answer of the Corporation of Moniers in the Mint*, 1653, 40–1 (Wing 1988, V579).

### Ramage's children

Ramage's will records the existence of five sons, David, Edward, John, Thomas and Charles, and of three daughters, Mary, Elizabeth and Rebecca. David, who is discussed at greater length below, appears in the registered copy of his father's will only as the reversionary heir to his father's 'engines tooles and instruments', but the others, all like David under twenty-one years of age at the time that the will was drawn up, were each to receive a legacy of £100 under the will, the boys to receive it on attaining the age of majority and the girls either on attaining the age of majority or on the date of their marriage if that occurred sooner.

Of the children involved, Edward Ramage, the second son, was born in the parish of St Katherine's by the Tower on 10 June 1642 and went on to education at Merchant Taylors' School, to which he was admitted in 1650/1 at the same time as David.<sup>8</sup> John Ramage, the next son, was baptised at St Katherine's by the Tower on 10 May 1646, while Mary, presumptively the eldest daughter, had already been baptised there on 30 May 1644.<sup>9</sup> No further baptisms for Ramage's children are recorded in the St Katherine's by the Tower parish register, and it is divivable that at some point after 10 May 1646 Ramage might have moved out of the parish, settling his family either within the Tower of London or maybe at the property in Barnes, Surrey, mentioned at a later point in his will.

Apart from David and Edward, the only one of Ramage's children of whom anything at all has so far been discovered is John, who was apprenticed to Richard Cloudesley, vintner, on 4 March 1661/2.<sup>10</sup> He may perhaps be identified as John Rammage, 'victualler at the Iron Gate in the Tower',<sup>11</sup> for whom an undated token is known (BW 1547, Norweb 8252), but the baptismal date of May 1646 recorded for John and the presumptive end date of John's apprenticeship would make the identification unlikely if the token was struck any earlier than the end of the 1660s.

### Ramage's wider family

Legacies left by Ramage to his sister Elizabeth Start, to his sister's son John Starte (his surname spelled thus in the copy will), and to his wife's sister Joane Shergale offer prospective clues to a nexus of family connections. It may be speculated that Ramage's wife Elizabeth's maiden name had been Shergale, but a preliminary search by the present writer has failed to find any very obvious Shergale family into which Ramage might have married.

The absence of any bequests to individuals with a Ramage surname other than Ramage's own children, or to individuals with stated or divivable Scottish connections, is disappointing in the light of Thompson's otherwise plausible suggestion that David Ramage might have been the individual of that name baptised at Inveresk, Midlothian, on 22 January 1614/15, where there was a well-established resident family with that surname.<sup>12</sup> An Inveresk origin for Ramage would obviously accord well with the theory that Ramage's employment with Nicholas Briot had commenced while Briot was attached to the nearby Edinburgh mint.

### David Ramage junior

The only reference made by David Ramage in his will to his son, David Ramage junior, is, as mentioned above, as the reversionary heir to the 'engines tooles and instruments' bequeathed by Ramage to his widow. Curiously, David Ramage junior is described in the relevant clause as 'my said sonne David Ramadge', despite the fact that there had been no mention of him earlier in the registered copy of the will.

<sup>8</sup> Robinson 1882–3, I, 203.

<sup>9</sup> Hughes Clarke 1946, 53, 57.

<sup>10</sup> Webb 2006, 243.

<sup>11</sup> Coldham 1987, 308 (recording this John Ramage's alleged involvement in January 1670/1 in spiriting children and servants out of England by ship to the Americas).

<sup>12</sup> Thompson 2018, 244.

It was Thompson's view that Ramage's failure to leave any cash legacy to his eldest son 'might indicate that he was already working to support his family' by taking a role in the token manufacturing business,<sup>13</sup> and there are attractions in a theory under which when drawing up his will Ramage would have anticipated that his eldest son was to take over the management of the token manufacturing workshop and that David Ramage junior would therefore have an income stream deriving from the token business which would have made a cash bequest to him less necessary.

An involvement by David Ramage junior with his father's business after his father's death is indeed clear from an order dated January 1661/2 that David Ramage – the reference must be to the son rather than to the father – should surrender the house and buildings in the Tower of London wherein he 'doth now inhabit and work'.<sup>14</sup> A further order by the Privy Council, issued on 1 August 1662, instructed Sir William Parkhurst, Warden of the Mint, 'to require all persons to deliver up into his custody all original punches, stamps, dies, or any irons for coining, formerly made by one Nicholas Briot, his late Majesty's engraver, or any other engravers, some whereof, their Lordships were informed, were then in the custody of Monsieur D'Avaux, Monsieur Le Roy, and Mr. Ramage', and here again the reference must be to David Ramage junior.<sup>15</sup>

What Thompson was unaware of was that David Ramage junior had been apprenticed to Martyn Johnson, goldsmith, for seven years from 9 November 1655, and would thus in the normal course of events still have been one of Johnson's apprentices at the time that Ramage was making his will.<sup>16</sup> This is however by no means fatal to Thompson's explanation for the absence of a cash legacy to David Ramage junior, for David Ramage junior never took up the freedom of the Goldsmiths' Company, to which he would have been entitled on completing his apprenticeship, and it may be that by the time of his father's death he had either already left his apprenticeship with Johnson or was planning to do so.

The present writer's own alternative hypothesis, stemming from the fact that David Ramage junior is described as 'my said sonne' in the only mention of him in Ramage's will, is that the copyist of the will for the Prerogative Court of Canterbury's register might inadvertently have missed out the word 'David' before the given names of Ramage's other sons at the earlier point in the will where Ramage gives each of his named sons a cash sum of £100 to be paid when each of them reached their respective ages of majority.

It is relevant here that David Ramage junior was still a month and a bit short of the age of majority at the time that his father's will was drawn up, so would at that time have been in the same legal position as his younger brothers. It is also relevant that Ramage's bequest to his widow, David junior's mother, of the 'profits and proceed that shall be made from my engines tooles and instruments', was specifically tied to her spending the resulting money 'for the education breeding and bringing up of my said children during their minorities', so that there would have been a legal obstacle to making any significant payment out of this income stream to David Ramage junior once he had reached the age of twenty-one.

A further reason for supposing that David Ramage junior might in fact have been named in the will as a cash legatee alongside his younger brothers arises from the provision in Ramage's will that if he or his executors or administrators were to be adjudged to be liable for any sum or sums of money arising out of Ramage's partnership with Hoare and Cogan 'upon the Irish Accompt' (discussed below), the money in question 'shall be equally paid borne and discharged out of my estate hereby by me given and bequeathed to my wife and children in equall parts and portions'.

<sup>13</sup> Thompson 2018, 251.

<sup>14</sup> Stride 1957, 334.

<sup>15</sup> Ruding 1817–19, I, xxxii–xxxiii (in his addenda and corrigenda to vol. I, citing minutes of the Privy Council reported to him by William Bray).

<sup>16</sup> This information is taken from the London Roll website ([www.londonroll.org](http://www.londonroll.org)). Martyn (or Martin) Johnson, a London goldsmith, may well have been the seal engraver and landscape painter of that name who was a professional rival of the coin engraver Thomas Simon (see *ODNB*, s.v. Martin Johnson; the *ODNB* article on Johnson is a wholly inadequate one, and it does not seem to have occurred to its author that Johnson might have been a member of the Goldsmiths' Company, although a clue to the possibility of this is that he was commissioned at the end of 1666 to engrave the Company's Common Seal).

It is certainly the case that if David Ramage junior received no legacy under the will other than a reversionary interest in his father's coining equipment, he would not have been obligated to share in any financial losses arising out of this provision in his father's will, and it might possibly be argued that his father's apparent decision not to leave him a cash legacy was therefore deliberate. At the same time it is very difficult to credit that Ramage would have contemplated that all the potential financial downside arising from his share in the partnership with Hoare and Cogan should be met out of the bequests made under his will to his widow and his younger children, while his eldest son, the most obvious future breadwinner in the family, would be wholly unaffected. That, in the present writer's opinion, is fairly decisive for it having been Ramage's intention to give a cash legacy of £100 to David Ramage junior of the same amount as, and on the same terms as, those given to his younger brothers, even if, unfortunately, this is not recorded in the registered copy of the will.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Ramage-Hoare-Cogan partnership upon the 'Irish Accompt'**

This previously unsuspected partnership, now revealed by the relevant passage in Ramage's will, involved two individuals well-known to historians of the English coinage, Ramage himself and James Hoare (1614–96), who had entered the service of the Tower Mint as one of the Clerks to the then Master of the Mint in the 1620s and who had been appointed Comptroller of the Mint in 1660, effectively running the Mint's day-to-day business from then until disabled by extreme old age in the mid 1690s.<sup>18</sup>

The identity of the third member of the partnership, 'Mr. Cogan', is rather more uncertain, for this individual's given name is left blank in the registered copy of Ramage's will, presumably because the copyist could not read it in the original will itself. The most obvious identification would be that the individual concerned was Henry Cogan, a predecessor of James Hoare's as Comptroller of the Mint, who had occupied this position either on his own or jointly with a colleague between 1636 and 1649, but the difficulty here is that Henry Cogan had died in 1651, making it necessary that the partnership referred to in Ramage's will would have related to a period ending in that year.<sup>19</sup>

Additionally, it is not probable that such a partnership would have been entered into later than 1649, when Cogan left office at the Mint, and to push the start of the partnership back to 1649 or earlier would both make it earlier in the careers of Ramage and Hoare than their status at that time makes likely, and date its commencement to a period when there seems no reason for a partnership of this nature concerned with the provision of coinage for Ireland, if that is what the reference to the 'Irish Accompt' involves. Nor indeed is it very likely at all that in 1661 there would still have been a prospect of as yet unquantified losses arising out of a partnership that would have been terminated by Henry Cogan's death.

A much more plausible context for such a partnership arises from the fact that, as Thompson has convincingly argued,<sup>20</sup> it was David Ramage whose initial R appears on the dies for the so-called Armstrong farthings, struck for intended circulation in Ireland under the terms of a patent granted to Sir Thomas Armstrong on 14 December 1660. Previous writers have assumed that these tokens never got properly into circulation, which may indeed have been the case,

<sup>17</sup> It may be that the original will from which the registered copy was taken does in fact survive among bundles of original wills and sentences preserved in the National Archives (PROB 10), but there is currently no easily accessible on-line listing of these.

<sup>18</sup> For the dates of Hoare's service in various capacities at the Mint see Challis 1989, 167. The existence of *An Elegy on the death of James Hoare, Esq. Master Controller of his Majestys Mint at the Tower, who departed this life November the 24<sup>th</sup> 1696*, a poem running in all to sixty-two lines (Wing 1988, E372A), does not appear to have been noted by historians of the Mint. In his will, dated 30 June 1695 (proved PCC 9 December 1696), Hoare refers to his 'owne great age', and it is no surprise to find that only eight days later, on 8 July 1695, the Treasury approved the appointment of Hoare's grandson, Henry Hoare, as Hoare's assistant, to qualify him for the employment, i.e. for the succession to Hoare's post, but without pay (*Calendar of Treasury Books 1693–6*, 1391–2).

<sup>19</sup> For the dates of Cogan's employment at the Mint see Challis 1989, 162–3. He died on 3 May 1651 (Smyth 1849, 30) and was buried at St Vedast, Foster Lane, on 6 May 1651 (Littledale 1903, 176).

<sup>20</sup> Thompson 2018, 249–50. Rather strangely, the Armstrong farthing coinage does not appear to have been the subject of any significant numismatic publication, and it is an obvious target for future scholarly research.

but, as Thompson has pointed out,<sup>21</sup> the extant specimens are struck from at least eighteen obverse dies and nineteen reverse dies, suggesting that the issue was planned as a substantive one, evidently struck by Ramage within the Tower of London for Sir Thomas Armstrong, from the dies that Ramage had himself engraved. The financing of the manufacture of such an issue could thus readily have been an operation in which Ramage needed the support of partners with larger financial resources than his own.

Who then was Mr Cogan? No other member of the Cogan family features in Dr Challis's extensive lists of Mint personnel in the Stuart period that have previously been published in this *Journal*, but the report of an enquiry into the Mint held in the winter of 1677–8 records that Henry Cogan, the Comptroller of the Mint, had been James Hoare's uncle,<sup>22</sup> and it might thus have been a natural step for James Hoare to have been joined in a partnership with Ramage in 1660–1 by one of his Cogan relatives. The only son of Henry Cogan recorded to have survived infancy, Henry Cogan junior, born in 1622 and alive in 1640, seems to have been the Henry Cogan who was buried at St Martin's in the Fields on 3 April 1655, and if so cannot have been the individual involved.<sup>23</sup>

A suitable alternative candidate exists in the shape of Edmund Cogan, a son of Thomas Cogan, an 'innholder' in Oxford, who was apprenticed to John Perrin, a London goldsmith, on 31 May 1633, and took up the freedom of the Goldsmiths' Company in 1642, practising his trade in the London parish of St Clement Danes and dying in January 1674/5.<sup>24</sup> His relationship to Henry Cogan, and thus to James Hoare, is a little speculative, but when Henry Cogan, the future Comptroller of the Mint, had been apprenticed as far back as 3 May 1611 to another London goldsmith, Edmund Wheeler (or Wheeler), he had been described as a son of Edmund Cogan, of Oxfordshire, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that he might have been a brother of the Thomas Cogan just mentioned, whose father was likewise an Edmund Cogan.<sup>25</sup>

What points more firmly to Edmund Cogan, the London goldsmith, having been the third member of the Ramage-Hoare-Cogan partnership is a warrant issued by the Commonwealth Council of State on 6 August 1650 ordering a Serjeant Dendy and Capt. Bishop 'to seize and bring before Council Edm. Cogan, late of the Mint, for corresponding with the enemy, and to seize his letters and papers, horses, arms, &'.<sup>26</sup> Here is the evidence that an Edmund Cogan had in the past worked at the Mint, despite his absence from the Challis lists, his employment there having presumably come to an end when Henry Cogan, who would on the arguments already outlined have been his uncle, ceased to be Comptroller in 1649. It scarcely needs saying that a record of 'corresponding with the enemy', i. e. with Royalist supporters, which may have seemed reprehensible during the Commonwealth period, would have been a badge of honour after the Restoration, and that Cogan would thus have been a very acceptable partner in any post-Restoration financial consortium. Further, the assumption in the terms of the warrant that Edmund Cogan would have possessed 'horses, arms, &.' points to the Edmund Cogan involved having been a person of significant means, as the London goldsmith of that name evidently was.

<sup>21</sup> Thompson 2018, 250.

<sup>22</sup> *HMC Lindsey* 1942, 167.

<sup>23</sup> This Henry Cogan, of the parish of St Martin's in the Fields, was named as one of the overseers of the will, dated 22 July 1650, of the celebrated architect Inigo Jones, under which he received a legacy of £10. He was also the author of various translations of books from foreign languages into English.

<sup>24</sup> The information given in this paragraph about the respective apprenticeships and parentages of Edmund Cogan and of Henry Cogan is taken from the London Roll website. The approximate date of Edmund Cogan's death can be calculated from the fact that his will (PROB 11/347/72) is dated 6 January 1674/5 and was proved PCC 22 January 1674/5.

<sup>25</sup> For Thomas Cogan's parentage see Wood 1889–99, III, 171.

<sup>26</sup> An earlier order by the Council of State, on 8 May 1650, had instructed that Edmund Cogan, not identified at this reference as being a former Mint employee, should 'be committed to the Peterhouse [a London prison] for delinquency, in being in town contrary to the Act, and for holding correspondence with the enemies of the commonwealth' (*Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1650*, 148). An Edmund Cogan is also one of three individuals to whom William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, addressed a warrant dated 8 November 1646 'for the apprehension of coiners in Lancashire' (*HMC Portland* 1894, 147), and as one of the other two addressees of the warrant was Peter Fenton, readily to be identified as Henry Cogan's recorded salaried clerk in 1649 (Challis 1989, 164), it is likely that this is confirmatory evidence that Edmund Cogan had been employed at the Mint in some capacity in the mid 1640s.

### The overseers and witnesses

Ramage nominates two overseers of the provisions made by the will, each of whom is bequeathed 40 shillings by him, ‘as a token of my love unto them’. The first overseer named, Walter Taylor, can reasonably be identified as a fellow member of the Company of Moneyers, his name appearing as 34th on the list of moneyers as of 27 January 1652/3 cited earlier.<sup>27</sup> The second overseer, Abraham Beckner, appears to have been a London haberdasher, and the circumstances of his friendship with Ramage remain to be established.<sup>28</sup>

No such difficulty arises with the names of the will’s two witnesses, Benjamin Sheppard and Sheppard’s servant John Dibbs, for a listing of deponents to the High Court of Admiralty in 1659–60 includes ‘Benjamin Shephard of the parish of All Hallowes Barking London scrivener aged 38 yeeres’ and ‘John Dibbs servant and apprentice to his precontest Benjamin Sheppard scrivener aged 19 yeeres’.<sup>29</sup> Their occurrence as witnesses to Ramage’s will suggests that Ramage, as might have been expected from the business-like way in which he seems to have conducted his multi-faceted coining enterprises, had called in Sheppard, as a scrivener by occupation, to draw up the will in a proper manner, and that Sheppard’s apprentice was there to provide the necessary additional witness signature.

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<sup>27</sup> Thompson 2018, 245.

<sup>28</sup> That Abraham Beckner was a haberdasher is a deduction from the existence of a will for an individual of this name, described as a haberdasher of London, proved PCC 12 February 1666/7 (PROB 11/323/228). Additionally, a daughter of an Abraham Berkner (surname transcribed thus), described as a haberdasher, and of his wife Mary, was baptised at St.Helen’s, Bishopsgate, on 14 April 1654 (Bannerman 1904, 33). An Abraham Berkner, his surname again transcribed thus, had been a member of the Haberdashers’ Company earlier in the century, taking on apprentices between 1624 and 1641, but it seems improbable that he would have had a newly born child as late as 1654 or have been considered by Ramage as a suitable overseer of his will as late as October 1661, and a reasonable conjecture, bearing in mind the extreme rarity in seventeenth-century England of a surname spelled Beckner or Berkner, is that the overseer of Ramage’s will was a son of this older Abraham Beckner or Berkner. The situation is complicated by the fact that a further entry in the St Helen’s Bishopsgate parish register, for a male child baptised on 27 June 1656, describes the child’s father as Abraham Beckner (transcribed thus), ‘watchmaker’ (Bannerman 1904, 35), while the mother’s given name is again recorded as Mary, and it seems probable that Abraham Beckner, although a haberdasher by origin, is to be identified as the individual of that name who was admitted to the Clockmakers’ Company in 1652, served as Warden of that company in 1665, and died in 1667 (cf. the probate date of 12 February 1666/7 given above for the will of Abraham Beckner, ‘haberdasher’).

<sup>29</sup> This listing, on the Marine Lives website ([www.marinelives.org](http://www.marinelives.org)), relates to a volume of witness statements or depositions submitted in the High Court of Admiralty in the years 1659 and 1660 (reference HC13/73).