

Croome Collection Coventry Family History

Thomas Coventry, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England, 1st Baron Coventry

Born 1578, he was the first son of Sir Thomas Coventry and his wife, Margaret. He was married to his first wife Sarah Seabright, daughter of Sir Edward Seabright, Knight, of Besford, Worcestershire, in 1606. Together they had a son and heir, Thomas Coventry (later the 2nd Baron Coventry) and a daughter, Elizabeth, who went on to marry Sir John Hare of Stow Bardolph, Norfolk. After the death of his first wife, he was remarried to Elizabeth Pitchford, daughter of John Aldersley of Spurstow, Cheshire and widow of William Pitchford. Together they had four daughters: Anne, Joane, Margaret and Dorothy, and four sons; John, Francis, Henry and Sir William.

Sir Thomas Coventry was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, with the intention of pursuing a career in Law. He moved to the Inner Temple in 1595 where he later took on the role of Treasurer. He was called to the Bar in 1603. In 1606 he became judge to the Sheriff's court. Sir Thomas had a very busy career in Law, including positions such as Counsel for the Company of Apothecaries; Justice of the Peace in Surrey and Middlesex; Autumn Reader and High Steward for Cambridge, Coventry, St Albans, Kingston-upon-Hull and Bath. In November 1616 he was appointed as Recorder of London and at various times in his life he also held the position of Recorder for Coventry and Boston. In March 1617 he was appointed as Solicitor General, the same year in which he was Knighted. He was elected as MP for Worcestershire in 1621 and later that year was appointed as Attorney General. In 1622 he purchased part of the manor of Pershore. He became Custos Rotulorum for Worcestershire in 1624. In 1625 he was appointed to perhaps his most prestigious position, that of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England. He continued in this role until his death. In 1627 he was admitted as brother of the Company of Apothecaries, the first lawyer to have received this honour. On 10th April 1628 he was made Baron Coventry of Allesborough by Patent. Sir Thomas died 14th January 1640. He was buried at Croome D'Abitot.