

SUMMARY: The document below summarizes a letter dated 9 January 1564 from Sir William Cecil to Bridget (nee Hussey) (d. 12 January 1601), then Countess of Rutland. For her will, dated 2 and 14 June 1600 and proved 12 January 1601, see TNA PROB 11/97/10.

Bridget Hussey married firstly Sir Richard Morison (c.1510-1557), by whom she had a son and two daughters; secondly Henry Manners (1526-1563), 2nd Earl of Rutland; and thirdly Francis Russell (1527-1585), 2nd Earl of Bedford.

Bridget Hussey's second husband, the 2nd Earl of Rutland, married his first wife, Margaret Neville (c.1525-1559), the daughter of Ralph Neville (1498-1549), 4th Earl of Westmorland (1498-1549), and Lady Catherine Stafford, at a triple wedding ceremony on 3 July 1536 at which the other two bridegrooms were Neville's eldest son and heir, Henry Neville (1524/5-1564), 5th Earl of Westmorland, and Oxford's father, John de Vere (1516-1562), 16th Earl of Oxford, who married Margaret Neville's sister, Dorothy Neville (d.1548).

Bridget Hussey's stepson, the subject of the letter, was Edward Manners (1549-1587), 3rd Earl of Rutland, the eldest son of the 2nd Earl of Rutland by his first wife, Margaret Neville (c.1525-1559). He became a ward of the Queen after his father died of the plague in 1563, and was placed at Cecil House, where Oxford was also the Queen's ward at the time.

The letter indicates that Oxford was then at Hitcham in Buckinghamshire, and it seems likely that he was at the home of Sir William Cecil's servant, Roger Alford (d.1580) of Hitcham.

For details of Roger Alford's lengthy service with Cecil, see Barnett, Richard C., *Place, Profit and Power; A Study of the Servants of William Cecil, Elizabethan Statesman* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), pp. 24-8. For the will of Roger Alford, dated 14 February 1579 and proved 29 October 1580, see TNA PROB 11/62/442. For the will of Roger Alford's wife, Elizabeth Ramsey Clerke Alford, see TNA PROB 11/92/437.

In the letter Cecil refers to 'my cousin Disney, your officer'. Bridget Hussey's half brother, Sir William Hussey (d. 19 January 1557), had a daughter, Nele Hussey, who married Richard Disney (d. 30 March 1578) of Norton Disney. See the History of Parliament entry for Richard Disney at:

<http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1509-1558/member/disney-richard-1505-78>

Cecil was himself distantly related to the Disneys: in a letter to the Countess of Rutland in 1564 he refers to 'my cousin Disney, your officer', probably Richard's cousin Thomas Disney[†].5

See also the History of Parliament entry for Thomas Disney (d. 17 April 1568) at:

<http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1558-1603/member/disney-thomas-1510-68>

For Sir Robert Tyrwhitt (d.1572) of Leighton Bromswold, Huntingdonshire, see the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/tyrwhitt-sir-robert-i-1504-72>

[Sir Robert Tyrwhitt's] position was greatly strengthened when his cousin by marriage became Henry VIII's last Queen: it was about this time that he was knighted and by 1544 he was Catherine's master of the horse. . . .

Tyrwhitt and his wife remained in attendance on Catherine Parr after the death of Henry VIII and so became involved with her new husband Thomas Seymour. Lady Tyrwhitt witnessed Seymour's neglect of Catherine during the last year of her life, and after her death told the story to the Privy Council. Thus in January 1549 the Council, alarmed at Seymour's wooing of Princess Elizabeth, sent the Tyrwhitts to Hatfield as overseers to the princess in place of Catherine Astley and Thomas Parry, who were suspected of promoting Seymour's cause. At the Council's direction Tyrwhitt questioned the princess about Seymour while Lady Tyrwhitt plied her with 'good advices ... especially in such matters as [the Council] appointed'. Although the Tyrwhitts treated her gently Elizabeth never forgave them their part in the affair.

The summary of the letter below is taken from *Historical Manuscripts Commission. Twelfth Report, Appendix, Part IV. The Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Rutland, G.C.B., Preserved at Belvoir Castle*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1888), Vol. I, p. 89, at:

<https://archive.org/details/hists52199677/page/n115/mode/2up>

1563 [=1564] January 9, Windsor. I wrote lately to you that Lord Rutland, your son-in-law [=stepson] might be brought up hither by my cousin Disney, your officer, and I wrote the like to him. I understand by the steward of my house near Stamford that my letters have miscarried. I therefore pray that either Mr Disney, or any other whom you shall think meet, may forthwith conduct my said Lord hither or to a place within three miles, near Maidenhead Bridge, where Lord Oxford is. It is called Hitcham next to Burnham.

In my letter to my cousin Disney I offered this manner of journey for my Lord. First, to my house near Stamford; next to Sir Robert Tyrwhitt's house or Mr Cromwell's near Huntingdon; on the third day to Sir Robert Chester's near Royston; on the fourth either to Mr Sadler's, or to my house by Waltham. I would meet him at Mr Sadler's or at my own

<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

house. Because the charge is mine, beside mine own goodwill to that house, I cannot forbear to be somewhat curious herein.

If it shall be thought meeter for my Lord to come by Northampton, let him be led to lodge in gentlemen's houses, and not in any inns for danger of sickness. If the things necessary for his chamber and for his own person cannot be brought with him or before him, I shall make some shift to content his Lordship, although I lodge in another's [sic] man's house and am somewhat distant from mine own.

I will give order for the payment of the charge sustained by you since the death of my Lord's father, as also for his conduction hither. I thank you for your token of the New Year.