

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated both 25 September and 25 December 1557 and proved 8 January 1558, of Gertrude (nee Blount) Courtenay, Marchioness of Exeter.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testatrix's father, William Blount (c.1478-1534), 4th Baron Mountjoy, married four wives. The testatrix was his daughter by his first wife, Elizabeth Say, the daughter and coheir of Sir William Say (d. 4 December 1529). For Sir William Say, see Nichols, John Gough, ed., *The Topographer and Genealogist*, (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Son, 1846), Vol. I, p. 412 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=CBwIAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA412>

Sir William Say was twenty-four years of age at his father's death in 1478, and died himself an old man, on the 4th Dec. 1529. He married first Genevieve, daughter and heiress of John Hill, Esq., and secondly Elizabeth, widow of Sir Thomas Waldegrave, daughter and coheiress of Sir John Fray (see the narrative pedigree in Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica, Vol. I, p. 409). By the second lady he had issue two daughters and coheiresses, Elizabeth wife of William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, and Mary, wife of Henry Bouchier, Earl of Essex. The former had issue Gertrude, married to Henry Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire, and Marquess of Exeter; and the latter had issue Anne, married to Sir William Parr, afterwards created Earl of Essex and Marquess of Northampton, but she had previously been divorced in 34 Hen. VIII.

For Sir William Say, see also the will, dated 26 January 1525 and 6 July 1525 and proved 6 March 1528, TNA PROB 11/22/294, of Sir William Waldegrave (c.1465 - 30 June 1527), one of the executors of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testatrix married, on 25 October 1519, as his second wife, Henry Courtenay (1498/9-1538), 2nd Earl of Devon and Marquess of Exeter, beheaded for treason on 9 December 1538, for whom see the *ODNB* entry.

By Henry Courtenay, the testatrix had two sons:

* **Henry Courtenay**, who died young.

* **Edward Courtenay** (1526-1556). He was a great-grandson of Edward IV, whose daughter, Katherine (1479–1527), had married his grandfather, William Courtenay, Earl of Devon. After his father's execution he spent fifteen years imprisoned in the Tower. He was released on the accession of Mary Tudor, and efforts were made to persuade the

Queen to marry him. He was imprisoned again for alleged involvement in Wyatt's rebellion. After his release on 6 April 1555, he went abroad, and died unmarried in Padua.

TESTATRIX' EXECUTOR

The testatrix' executor, Anthony Harvey, had been her husband's surveyor. See the *ODNB* entry for the testatrix' husband.

TESTATRIX' HEIRS

There is no indication in the testatrix' will as to her heirs. However the testatrix' father, William Blount, 4th Baron Mountjoy, had a sister, Constance Blount, who married Sir Thomas Tyrrell of Heron in East Horndon, Essex.

By Sir Thomas Tyrrell, the testatrix' niece, Constance Blount, had six sons and three daughters, including John Tyrrell (d.1540), esquire, who married Anne Browne (1509 – 10 March 1582), the daughter of Sir William Browne (d. 3 June 1514), Lord Mayor of London, by his second wife, Alice Keble (d.1521), the daughter of Sir Henry Keble, and granddaughter of Sir John Browne (d.1547) and his wife, Anne (nee Belwood). For the will of Anne (nee Browne) Tyrrell Petre, see TNA PROB 11/64/153.

John Tyrrell (d.1540) and Anne Browne (1509-1582) had a daughter, Katherine Tyrrell, whose children were the testatrix' heirs at law. See the pedigree in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Essex*, Part I, (London: Harleian Society, 1878), Vol. XIII, p. 12 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationsofess13byumetc#page/12/mode/2up>

This is the pedigree of the children of the Lady Anne Petre by her first husband, John Tyrrell of Heron, which children be the right inheritors to Gertrude Blount, late Marquess of Exeter.

John Tyrrell of Heron, son and heir to Sir Thomas Tyrrell of Heron, wedded Anne, daughter of William Browne, Mayor of London, and had issue Mary, that died sans issue, Katherine, wedded to Richard Baker, son and heir to Sir John Baker of Sissinghurst in the county of Kent, knight, and had issue John, Thomas and Anne.

See also Essex Record Office D/DP Z30/3.

Copy of a pedigree made ?c.1570 to show that John Baker, son of Richard Baker and his wife Katharine, was the heir of Gertrude [Courtenay], late Marchioness of Exeter [died 1558], Katharine being daughter and heir of John Tyrell of Heron, esquire - through his mother a grandchild, like the marchioness, of John Blount [3rd] Lord Mountjoy [died 1485].

Witnessed by R. Ryche, Will'm Petre, Anne Petre, Henry Tyrell, Edmund Tyrell, John Baker knight, Susan C. and Thomas Argall having 'signed this writing with our owne handes'.

LM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ne Gertrude Marchionissa Exon'

In the name of God, Amen. Forasmuch as mortality is to all and every person and persons most certain and sure, and the hour of death most uncertain, it is therefore most requisite that every person should in time of health foresee for worldly affairs, that in time of sickness they should have no care thereof;

I, therefore, Lady Gertrude, Marquess of Exeter, in good and perfect memory, thanks be unto Almighty God, this 25th day of September in the year of Our Lord God 1557 and in the 4th and 5th years of the reigns of our Sovereign Lord and Lady Philip & Mary by the grace of God King and Queen of England, Spain, France, both Sicilies, Jerusalem and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, Archdukes of Austria, Dukes of Burgundy, Milan and Brabant, Counties of Hapsburg, Flanders and Tyrol, do make my testament and last will of all my goods movable and unmovable in manner and form following:

First of all I commit my soul to Almighty God, my Redeemer and Maker;

And my body to be buried in the chancel or parish church where it shall happen me to pass from this transitory life, there to have dirge and a trental of Masses and other orations and prayers said and sung for me at the time of my death as shall be thought meet by mine executors;

And I will that my executor shall distribute amongst the poor at that time of my burial the sum of fifty marks, and at my month's mind to have there dirge and a trental of Masses with like orations and prayers said and sung there as shall be thought meet by my executor, and he to distribute among the poor the sum of £10 to pray for me, my husband, my father and mother;

Item, I bequeath to my nephew, James Mountjoy, Lord Mountjoy, a basin and an ewer of silver and gilt;

Item, I bequeath to my cousin, his wife, a gown of satin figuredd [figured?] furred with jennet;

Item, I bequeath to my sister, Katherine Berkeley, a gown of black wrought velvet furred with jennets;

Also a ring with a diamond by the discretion of my executor;

Item, I bequeath to my sister Blewett a [f. 3r] gown of velvet furred and a cup of silver and gilt by the discretion of mine executor;

I bequeath to my cousin, Sir Richard Blount, knight, a standing bowl gilt with a cover;

Item, I bequeath to my brother, Mr John Blount, £20, with a cup of silver and gilt according to the discretion of my executor;

Item, I bequeath to Margaret Paulet, daughter and heir to Anthony Harvey, esquire, two flagons of silver gilt, with a gown of black velvet furred with sables;

Item, I bequeath to my cousin Anne Keble, £20;

Item, I bequeath to Elizabeth Cotton, my servant, £6 13s 4d;

Item, I bequeath to Agnes Reede, my servant, 20 nobles;

Item, I bequeath all such linen belonging to my body and that I do commonly wear egally to be divided amongst my women being my chamberers at the time of my death;

Also I will that every of my servants have a black coat and his whole year's wages;

Also I will that my house be continued and my servants to have meat and drink and lodging sufficient by the discretion of my executor for forty days if they list to take it;

The residue of all my goods and chattels movable and unmovable not before given neither bequeathed I give and bequeath to my trusty and well beloved friend, Anthony Harvey, esquire, whom I ordain and make my sole executor, and he to dispose the same as he shall think best by his discretion;

In witness whereof I have subscribed my testament and last will with mine own hand and set to my seal, given the day and year above-written, these persons whose names they have themselves subscribed being present and were witness at th' ensealing, signing and delivery of this testament the 25th day of December 1557. Per me, Stephanum White, clericum. Per me Dominum Thomam Griffith clericum. Per me Robertum Goodhyn. Per me Richardum Clynton. Per me Edwardum Beverley. Per me Willelmum Harvye.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum cora{m} d{omi}no apud London octauo die mens{is} Ianuarij Anno dominj Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo septimo Iuramento mag{ist}ri Iohannis Talkarne no{ta}rij publici procur{ator}is Anthonij Harvye executoris in h{uius}mo{d}i test{ament}o no{m}i{n}at{i} Ac approbat{um} et insinuat{um} &c Com{m}issaq{ue} fuit admi{ni}stracio o{mn}i{u}m et singulor{um} bonor{um} iuriu{m} et creditor{um} d{i}c{t}e D{omi}ne Gertrude prefat{o} executori

De bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c conficiend{o} &c Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddend{o} &c iurat{i}

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at London on the eighth day of the month of January in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-seventh by the oath of Master John Talkarne, notary public, proctor of Anthony Harvey, executor named in the same testament, and probated and entered etc., and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said Lady Gertrude to the forenamed executor, sworn to well etc., and to prepare a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account etc.]