

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 2 October 1526, together with a codicil dated 27 September 1527, proved 29 January 1528, of Richard Verney (d. 28 September 1527), esquire, whose grandson, Sir Richard Verney (c.1516 – 26 July 1567), was accused in *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584) of responsibility for the murder of Leicester's first wife, Amy Robsart (1532-1560):

But Sir Richard Verney, who by commandment remained with her that day alone, with one man only, and had sent away perforce all her servants from her to a market two miles off, he (I say) with his man can tell how she died, which man, being taken afterward for a felony in the marches of Wales, & offering to publish the manner of the said murder, was made away privily in the prison. And Sir Richard himself, dying about the same time in London, cried piteously & blasphemed God, & said to a gentleman of worship of mine acquaintance not long before his death that all the devils in hell did tear him in pieces. The wife also of Bald Butler, kinsman to my Lord, gave out the whole fact a little before her death. But to return unto my purpose, this was my Lord's good fortune to have his wife die at that time when it was like to turn most to his profit.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the Verney pedigree, see Dugdale, William, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, (London: Thomas Warren, 1656) p. 435 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/antiquitiesofwar00dugd#page/434/mode/2up>

See also Collins, Arthur, *The Peerage of England*, Vol. VI, (London: W. Strahan, 1779), pp. 398-401 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=zfk-AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA398>

Testator's parents

The testator was the son of Edmund Verney (c.1440 – 26 February 1494) by Elizabeth Fielding (d.1507), the daughter of Sir William Fielding (d.1471), slain at the Battle of Tewkesbury. See Fielding, J.E.M., *Some Hapsburghs, Feildings, Denbighs and Desmonds*, (Privately printed, 1895), pp. 3-4 at:

<https://archive.org/details/somehapsburghsfi00fiel/page/2/mode/2up>

Testator's siblings

According to Collins, *supra*, p. 398, the testator had two brothers and a sister:

-**Leonard Verney**.

-**Michael Verney**.

-**Elizabeth Verney**, who married Thomas Grey, esquire, of Enville, Staffordshire.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

The testator married Anne Danvers, daughter of Sir William Danvers (1428-1504), Justice of the Common Pleas. See Collins, *supra*, pp. 398-9, and Macnamara, F.N., *Memorials of the Danvers Family*, (London: Hardy & Page, 1895), pp. 154-5, 175, 181 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/memorialsodanve00macn#page/n207/mode/2up>

Dugdale's depiction of the monumental brass to the testator and his wife at Compton Verney shows nine sons and five daughters, of whom only three sons and a daughter are mentioned in the will below:

* **Sir Thomas Verney** (d.1557), eldest son and heir, who married Alice Tame (d.1549), sister and coheir of Sir Edmund Tame (d. October 1544) of Fairford. See the inquisition post mortem taken after the death of Thomas Verney, TNA C 142/115/71; and Holt, Henry F., 'The Tames of Fairford', *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, (London, 1871), pp. 110-148 at p. 146:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=_RUrAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA146

For Sir Edmund Tame, see also Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 434.

By Alice Tame, Sir Thomas Verney was the father of:

-**Sir Richard Verney** (c.1516 – 26 July 1567), who, as noted above, was accused in *Leicester's Commonwealth* of responsibility for the murder of Leicester's first wife, Amy Robsart. Sir Richard Verney married Frances Raleigh, the daughter of George Raleigh, esquire, of Farnborough, Warwickshire, by Jane Coningsby, the daughter of Sir Humphrey Coningsby (d. 2 June 1535). See TNA C 1/1358/18-20, a Chancery suit brought against Sir Thomas Verney and Sir Richard Verney, his son; and TNA C 1/1389/40, a Chancery suit brought by Sir Richard Verney, son of Sir Thomas Verney and Alice, his wife, against his brother-in-law, Vincent Goddard. See also 1720/1097 in the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, a bond by Vincent Goddard to Sir Simon Raleigh of Farnborough, Warwickshire, concerning Goddard's married to Elizabeth Verney, daughter of Thomas Verney. For the marriage of George Raleigh and Jane Coningsby, see also Waters, Robert Edmund Chester, *Genealogical Memoirs of the*

Extinct Family of Chester of Chicheley, Vol. I, (London: Robson and Sons, 1878), p. 263 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=OaxCAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA263>

By Frances Raleigh, Sir Richard Verney was the father of:

--**George Verney** (d. 8 April 1574), esquire, who married Jane Lucy, the daughter of William Lucy (d.1551) of Charlecote, Warwickshire (father of Sir Thomas Lucy, from whose park William Shakespeare is alleged to have poached deer), by whom, according to Dugdale's copy of the inscription on the monumental brass at Compton Verney, he had one son and four daughters. One of George Verney's daughters, Elizabeth Verney, married Sir John Bouchier (d. 1626?). See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 290.

George Verney's only son, Sir Richard Verney (1563-1630) became the ward of Sir John Huband (d. 24 December 1583). See the will, dated 1 April 1583 and proved 11 February 1584, TNA PROB 11/66/331, of Sir John Huband:

Item, I will, give and bequeath unto my executors all that my manor of Hillborough with all lands, tenements and hereditaments thereunto belonging, together with all other lands, tenements and hereditaments lying in the said county of Warwick being the inheritance of Richard Verney, the Queen's Majesty's ward, and which I had by the assignment of the lease thereof from her Majesty to the right honourable the Earl of Leicester during the minority of the said Richard Verney, and also the moiety or one half of all those tithes, as well great tithes as small tithes, which I had by the lease from the bailiff and burgesses of the town of Stratford in the county of Warwick and which I now hold by lease thereof made from the late College there to one William Barker, gentleman, and assigned over unto me by John Barker, gentleman, to my executors to the performance of this my last will and testament.

See also the History of Parliament entry for Sir Richard Verney (1563-1630), where Huband is referred to as 'Sir John Hibbett' at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/verney-richard-1563-1630>

See also the *ODNB* entry for Sir Thomas Lucy (c.1532-1600); the will, dated 2 April 1546 and proved 10 February 1547, of George Raleigh (d.1547?), TNA PROB 11/31/397. See also the articles of agreement for the marriage of George Verney's son, Sir Richard Verney (1563-1630) dated 1568, Warwickshire County Record Office CR 580/349/3:

Articles of Agreement between George Verney of Compton, Glos., esq., son and heir of Richard Verney, late of the same, kt., and Ludovic Grevyll of Milcote, esq., before the proposed marriage to be had when George Verney's son and heir Richard reached the

age of 14 and Ludovic Grevill's daughter Anne reached the age of 12. By this agreement George Verney settled the manors and farms of Compton Murdocke, Kington and Combrook on them, subject to the dower of his wife Jane, and paid £100 yearly for their maintenance. Ludovic Grevill paid £1,000, 6th February 1568.

* **John Verney.** He is mentioned in the will of his brother, George Verney (see below).

* **George Verney,** gentleman. In 1540 he was in the service of Edward Seymour (c.1550-1552), then Earl of Hertford, and in his will, dated 4 August and proved 14 August 1540, TNA PROB 11/28/179, mentions his 'chattels in my leasings called Odelles field' (for which see the will below). In his will George Verney leaves bequests to his brother, John Verney, and to his nephew, Richard Verney, presumably the Sir Richard Verney (c.1516 – 26 July 1567) who was later accused in *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584) of responsibility for the murder of Leicester's first wife, Amy Robsart (see above).

* **Anne Verney** (c.1523), who married Edward Odingsells of Long Itchington, and predeceased the testator. See Dugdale, *supra*, p. 437, and Collins, *supra*, p. 399.

The testator is also said to have had a daughter who married John Greswold. See Burke, Bernard, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain & Ireland*, Vol. II, (London: Harrison, 1882), p. 1749 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=WLVCAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA1749>

TESTATOR'S EXECUTOR

For the testator's executor, Roger Wigston (d. 27 November 1542), see his will, dated 4 November 1542 and proved 3 February 1543, TNA PROB 11/29/275. See also the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/wigston-roger-148283-1542>

b. 1482/83, yst. s. of John Wigston of Leicester, Leics. by Elizabeth, da. of one Gillot. educ. I. Temple, adm. 1514. m. by 1509, Christian, da. and coh. of Edward Langley, wid. of William Pye, 2s. inc. William 4da.4

See also the History of Parliament entry for his son and heir, Sir William Wigston (c.1509 – 27 September 1577) at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/wigston-william-1509-77>

b. by 1509, 1st s. of Roger Wigston. educ. prob. I. Temple. m. by 1536, Elizabeth, da. of Sir Robert Peyton of Isleham, Cambs., 4s. 7da. suc. fa. 27 Nov. 1542. Kntd. 19 Oct. 1553.2

See also the inquisition post mortem taken after the death of Sir William Wigston, TNA C 142/183/95.

See also Spencer, John and Thomas Spencer, eds., *Leicestershire and Rutland Notes and Queries and Antiquarian Gleaner*, Vol. III, (London: Elliot Stock, 1895), pp. 298-9 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/leicestershirea00unkngoog#page/n353/mode/2up>

In July 1589 the last two Marprelate tracts, the *Theses Martinianae* and the *Just Censure and Reproof of Martin Junior*, were printed on a secret press at Wolston Priory, the home of Roger Wigston (c.1537 - 1608), grandson of the testator's executor, Roger Wigston (d. 27 November 1542).

WITNESSES TO THE WILL

The witnesses to the testator's will included John Dabridgecourt, gentleman, William Cooksey, gentleman, and George Gillott, all of whom were connected to the testator's executor, Roger Wigston. Roger Wigston's mother was surnamed Gillott, while John Dabridgecourt and William Cooksey were Roger Wigston's sons-in-law. See the Wigston pedigree in Fetherston, John, ed., *The Visitation of the County of Warwick in the Year 1619*, (London: Harleian Society, 1877), Vol. XII pp. 36-8 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationcount01britgoog#page/n60/mode/2up>

These relationships suggest that there may have been a marriage between the testator's family and the family of Roger Wigston which has not yet come to light.

TESTATOR'S LANDS

For the testator's manor of Compton Murdak alias Compton Verney, see:

'Parishes: Compton Verney', in *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 5, Kington Hundred*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1949), pp. 58-60. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol5/pp58-60> [accessed 3 November 2017].

The manor of Kington mentioned by the testator in the will below may be the manor of Kington alias Little Chesterton, for which see Dugdale, *supra*, p. 384:

<https://archive.org/stream/antiquitiesofwar00dugd#page/384/mode/2up>

LM: Test{amentu}m Ric{hard}i Verney armig{er}i

In the name of Almighty God, Amen. The second day of October in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred twenty and six and in the 18th year of the reign of King Henry the Eight, I, Richard Verney of Compton Verney, esquire, being of whole mind and perfect memory, make my testament and last will in manner and form following:

First I commit and betake my soul to Almighty God, our Blessed Lady Saint Mary, and all the holy company of heaven;

And my body to be buried in the new chapel in the north side of the parish church of Compton Verney aforesaid;

Item, I will and bequeath to the mother church of Coventry 12d;

And to every house of the order of friars in Coventry 20d;

And to the house of friars of Aderston 20d;

And to the house of friars in Warwick 6s 8d;

Item, I give and bequeath to the high altar in Our Lady church of Warwick 12d;

Item, I will and bequeath to my two sons, John and George, to every of them one hundred marks in money to be delivered by th' hands of mine executors after they shall come to the age of 24 years, or before that age by the will and discretion of mine executors as they see the order, rule and governance of them;

Item, I will that Edward Grey, knight, William Fielding, William Boughton, Edward Conway, esquires, Richard Willes, William Willes, gentlemen(?), and John Venor, yeoman, my feoffees, with one John Hopper, deceased, of two closes or [f. 211r] pastures within the manor and lordship of Compton Verney aforesaid, whereof the one is called Odelles field and the other is called Millefeld, stand and abide seised of and in the same two closes to this intent and use following, that is to wit:

That of the rents, issues and profits of the same two closes or leasows they do content and pay unto every of my two sons, John and George, for term of their lives yearly ten marks to be had and taken and to them paid every half year by even portions;

And when it shall happen any of my foresaid sons to decease, that then I will he that overliveth of them have, perceive and take of the revenues, issues and profits of the said closes the portion of his brother deceased, so that in all the overliver to have 20 marks during his life;

And if it happen the said rents of 10 marks to either of them, or 20 marks to the overliver if it happen one of them to decease, or any parcel thereof to be behind unpaid by the space of 15 days next after any of the days that it ought to be paid on, then, I will that my said feoffees permit and suffer mine aforementioned two sons and every of them to enter into the said two closes and there to distrain, and the distresses to enchase and put in pound and there to remain to the time that they and every of them be contented and paid of all such rents as pertain to every of them;

And I will that my said feoffees permit and suffer mine eldest son and heir, Thomas Verney, to perceive and take all the residue of all the issues, revenues and other emoluments and profits rising, coming or growing of the said two closes over and above the said 20 marks limited to my said two young sons to his own use, and to have like liberty and advantage to distrain for the same overplus as is given by this my will unto my sons for their yearly rent of 20 marks;

And further I will that after the decease of my said two sons, John and George, that my said feoffees stand and abide seised of the foresaid two closes to the use of mine heir;

And further I will that my son and heir have the lease and occupation of the said two closes before any other, paying the said 20 marks unto his two brethren, and the rest to his own use according to the effect and purport of this my will;

Also I will that all my household stuff, implements and standards within my manor of Compton wholly remain as they now be unto the same manor to the use of mine heir, and that mine executors intermeddle not therewith;

Also I will and bequeath unto John Venor a black gown and 40s in money;

Also I will that my sons and my daughters and mine executors and overseers have of my gift every of them a black gown to wear at my burial;

And I will every one of my menservants have black cloth to make them black coats, and women servants to make them gowns at the discretion of mine executors;

Also where Anne, my wife, hath estate made to her of the manor of Kingston with the appurtenances for term of her life to the yearly value of one hundred marks, which is the half of all my lands over £9 that I have assigned to th' exhibition of a priest, if so be that she therewith be content and make no claim nor title of dower in the manor of Compton with the appurtenances nor in no parcel thereof, but such time after my decease as my son and heir shall require or desire her to make and seal a sufficient release of all manner title or interest of dower that she hath or may have in the said manor of Compton with the appurtenances without denial or negation, that then and upon this condition I give unto her all the residue of my goods and chattels over & above that I have ordered and bequested by this my will to dispose and order after her discretion;

And also upon the same condition depute and make her to be mine executrice jointly with my trusty friend, Roger Wigston, esquire, whom I depute and make mine other executor;

And if it so be that my said wife after my decease refuse and deny to seal such release unto my said son as before is rehearsed, and will stand to her claim of dower in the said manor of Compton or any part thereof or in any of the lands that I have assured unto the priest that shall sing for me after my decease over and above her jointure of Kingston, then I will that my said wife in no condition have no interest in none of my goods or chattels movable or unmovable, nor yet meddle or have any interest to meddle with th' execution of this my last will and testament, but clearly to be excluded thereof;

And that then all my said goods and chattels appertain unto my said eldest son, Thomas, as of my gift, and that he join in her place and stead to be co-executor with the said Roger Wigston for th' execution and performance of this my last will, whom I ordain, make and depute mine executors;

Also I will further that if my wife renounce all pretence of title of dower, and immediately after my decease make release thereof unto my said eldest son in manner and form as before is expressed, and also take upon her to execute and perform this my last will with the said Roger, that then and upon that condition I will that my said eldest son permit and suffer her to remain and dwell in my said manor of Compton with all such grounds as be now in mine own hands and occupation by the space of one whole year after my decease, paying therefore unto my said eldest son £10 for the same, so always that she make no manner of waste;

Also I depute and make mine overseer Sir Edmund Tame, knight;

In witness hereof I, the said Richard Verney, have to this my last will set my seal and subscribed my name the day and year abovesaid in the presence of John Dabridgecourt, gentleman, William Cooksey, gentleman, and George Gillott, with other.

RM: Codicill{us} eiusd{em} Ric{hard}i

This is the codicil of me, the said Richard Verney, made the 27th day of September the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred twenty and seven:

I will that Anne, my [f. 211v] wife, have and enjoy all the goods and chattels that were my daughter Anne Odyngselles, late the wife of Edward Odyngselles, freely given unto her by my said daughter, Anne, and that mine executors have no meddling nor interest therein;

Also I will and bequeath unto my especial friend, Roger Wigston, mine executor jointly with my said wife, £5 with such reasonable expenses as he shall sustain in and about th' execution of my said will;

These witness: Sir George, the chantry priest, Leonard Savage, yeoman, John Woodward, yeoman, John Veynors, and other.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascripti defuncti vna cum Codicillo eiusdem Coram prefatis Commissarijs in ecclesia Cathedrali Diui Pauli london xxix die mensis Ianuarij Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo xxvijo Iuramento Relictæ & Rogeri Wigston executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatim In persona Ricardi ffelde procuratoris in hac parte Approbatum & insinatum Et commissum fuit administratio auctoritate prefatorum Reverendissimorum patrum omnium & singulorum bonorum Iurium & creditorum dicti defuncti prefatis executoribus in persona dicti procuratoris De bene & fideliter administratio Ac de pleno & fideliter Inuentario secundo die post festum sancti Valentini proximum futurum exhibendo necnon de plano et vero compoto reddendo Ad sancta dei Evangelia in debitam iurata forma Iurat

[=The testament of the above-written deceased, together with the codicil of the same, was proved before the forenamed Commissioners in the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul in London on the 29th day of the month of January in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 27th by the oath of the relict & Roger Wigston, executors named in the same testament, and probated & entered, and administration was granted by the authority of the forenamed most Reverend Fathers of all & singular the goods, rights & credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executors in the person of the said proctor sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to well & faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full & faithful inventory on the second day after the feast of Saint Valentine next to come, and also to render a plain and true account.]