

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 13 May 1557 and proved 14 September 1557, of Sir John Clere (c.1511-1557) of Ormesby, whose only surviving son, Sir Edward Clere, purchased Oxford's manor of Weybourne in Norfolk. For the licence dated 20 April 1580 authorizing Oxford to alienate his manor of Weybourne to Sir Edward Clere, see TNA C 66/1197, mm. 15-16.

In the inquisition post mortem of Oxford's father, the 16th Earl, the testator is mentioned as having surrendered rents to the 16th Earl, in return for which his son, Edward Clere, was granted an annuity of £20 (see TNA C 142/136/12):

And the foresaid jurors say that the foresaid late Earl, by a certain deed of his sealed by his seal at arms and subscribed by his own hand dated the eighteenth day of November in the first year [=18 November 1547] of the reign of the late King Edward the Sixth, in consideration that John Clere, knight, had surrendered two several rents containing together thirty pounds which the same John Clere had of the gift of a certain Peter Watts by two several charters of the late Earl issuing of his manor of Thorncombe in the county of Devon during the natural life of the same Peter Watts, granted to Edward Clere, esquire, son of the said John Clere, one yearly rent of twenty pounds of lawful money of England issuing of his foresaid manor of Thorncombe & of all other his lands & hereditaments in Thorncombe aforesaid, to have the foresaid yearly rent to the forenamed Edward Clere & his assigns during the natural life of the said Edward, to be paid yearly at the feasts of the Annunciation of Blessed Mary the Virgin & Saint Michael the Archangel by equal portions, with a clause of distraint for non-payment of the said yearly rent, as by the foresaid deed to the foresaid jurors upon the taking of this present inquisition in manifest evidences more fully appears.

In July 1557 the testator was given command of a fleet against Scotland, and was drowned in a naval engagement in the Orkneys on 21 August 1557.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was the son of Sir Robert Clere (c.1452 - 10 August 1529) of Ormesby, for whose will see TNA PROB 11/24/84.

For the Clere pedigree, see Howard, Joseph Jackson, ed., *The Visitation of Suffolke, Vol. II*, (Lowestoft: Samuel Tymms, 1871), p. 258 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=LCgAAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA258>

For the Clere family, see also the pedigree in Burke, John and John Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England*, (London: Scott, Webster and Geary, 1838), p. 118 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=K1kBAAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA118>

By his father's first marriage to Anne Hopton (d. 23 January 1506), the daughter of Sir William Hopton (d. 7 February 1485) and Margaret Wentworth (d. 20 April 1478), the testator had one brother and four sisters of the half blood:

-**William Clere**, who is said to have died without issue.

-**Elizabeth Clere**, who married Sir Robert Peyton (d. 18 March 1518) of Isleham, Cambridgeshire, a descendant of Robert de Vere, 3rd Earl of Oxford. For his will, proved 20 April 1518, see TNA PROB 11/19/81. For her will, dated 21 November 1545 and proved 6 April 1546, see TNA PROB 11/31/102. Elizabeth Clere was the grandmother of Roger Wigston (c.1537 - 1608), at whose home, Wolston Priory, the last two Marprelate tracts, the *Theses Martinianae* and the *Just Censure and Reproof of Martin Junior*, were printed on a secret press in July 1589.

For Elizabeth Clere, see also Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 354, and Waters, Robert Edmond Chester, *Genealogical Memoirs of the Extinct Family of Chester of Chicheley*, Vol. I, (London: Robson and Sons, 1878), pp. 206-7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/genealogicalmem01wategoog#page/n244/mode/2up>

-**Audrey Clere**, who married William Jenney, esquire.

-**Anne Clere**, a nun at Denny.

-**Dorothy Clere**, who married Robert Cotton.

The testator was the eldest son of his father's second marriage to Alice Boleyn (d. 1 November 1538), the daughter of Sir William Boleyn (c.1451-1505?) and Margaret Butler (d. before 20 March 1540), the youngest daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Butler (d. 3 August 1515), 7th Earl of Ormond, by his first wife, Anne Hankford. Alice Boleyn Clere was the aunt of Queen Anne Boleyn, and the testator was thus the Queen's first cousin. For the will of Alice Boleyn Clere, see TNA PROB 11/27/398.

By his father's second marriage, the testator had two brothers of the whole blood:

-**Richard Clere**.

-**Thomas Clere** (d. 14 April 1545), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/30/376. He was slain at the siege of Montreuil while attempting to save the life of Oxford's uncle, Henry Howard (1516/17-1547), Earl of Surrey. He was buried in the parish church of St Mary, Lambeth, where there is a monumental brass in his memory which formerly exhibited a tablet with an epitaph by the Earl of Surrey. The testator was also one of Surrey's companions, and 'was one of a group around Surrey arrested during the second session of the Parliament of 1542 for eating flesh in Lent'.

See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, pp. 6-7 and Vol. II, pp. 401-2.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married, before 19 August 1529, Anne Tyrrell (buried 14 May 1576?), the daughter of Sir Thomas Tyrrell (1472?-1551) of Gipping, Suffolk, Master of the Horse, by his first wife, Margaret Willoughby, daughter of Christopher Willoughby, de jure 10th Lord Willoughby de Eresby. For the will of the testator's father-in-law, Sir Thomas Tyrrell, which contains complaints about the testator, see TNA PROB 11/34/309.

By Anne Tyrrell the testator had three sons and two daughters:

* **Robert Clere**, who predeceased the testator.

* **Thomas Clere**, who predeceased the testator.

* **Sir Edward Clere** (15 June 1536 – 3 or 8 June 1606), for whom see his will, TNA PROB 11/108/169, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/clere-edward-1536-1606>

Sir Edward Clere married firstly Frances Fulmerston (buried 20 March 1580), the daughter of Sir Richard Fulmerston (d. 3 February 1567), whom the testator appoints as one of his executors, referring to him as his 'brother-in-law'. For Sir Richard Fulmerston, see the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/fulmerston-richard-1516-67>

By Frances Fulmerston, Sir Edward Clere had three sons, Sir Edward Clere, Sir Francis Clere and Charles Clere, and three daughters, Anne Clere, Temperance Clere and Elizabeth Clere.

Sir Edward Clere married secondly Agnes Crane, widow successively of John Smith, gentleman, of Halesworth, Suffolk, Francis Clopton, esquire, of Long Melford, Suffolk, and Sir Christopher Heydon (d. 10 December 1579) of Baconsthorpe, Suffolk. She was the daughter of Robert Crane, esquire, of Chilton, Suffolk, and Bridget Jermyn, daughter of Sir Thomas Jermyn. By Agnes Crane, Sir Edward Clere had one son, Robert Clere.

See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 96 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=kjme027UeagC&pg=PA96>

* **Margaret Clere**, who married Walter Haddon (1514/15–1571). For the testator's executor and son-in-law, Walter Haddon, see the *ODNB*:

Haddon's first wife was Margaret, daughter of Sir John Clere (c. 1511–1557) of Ormesby, Norfolk, who was a first cousin of Anne Boleyn; the couple had two boys and two girls. His son Clere, who drowned in the River Cam shortly after his father's death, mentioned them in a poem he wrote in memory of his father, though it appears that the other three predeceased him as they are not mentioned in his will. On 17 December 1567 Haddon married Anne, daughter of Sir Henry Sutton, who survived him and married Henry Brooke, brother of Lord Cobham, whom she also survived. Haddon died aged fifty-six in London on 21 January 1571.

* **Elizabeth Clere**, who married firstly, Walter Herendene and secondly, Francis Trevor.

TESTATOR'S MANORS

For the testator's manor of East Tuddenham, see Taylor, E.S., 'Armorial Bearings of Clere Family', *Notes & Queries*, (London: George Bell, 1855), Vol. XII, p. 84 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=uIrWLegNZxUC&pg=PA84>

The testator's purchase of the manor of Blickling from his uncle, Sir James Boleyn (c.1480-1561), Chancellor of the Household of Queen Anne Boleyn, is mentioned in Sir James Boleyn's will (see TNA PROB 11/44/387).

For the testator see also Bindoff, S.T., *The House of Commons 1509-1558*, Vol. I, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982), pp. 456-7, 650-2, and the History of Parliament entry for the testator at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/clere-sir-john-1511-57>

RM: T{estamentum} Ioh{ann}is Clere milit{is}

In the name of God, Amen. I, John Clere, knight, being of good and perfect mind and remembrance, thanks be to God, do make and ordain this my last will and testament concerning the disposition of my lands and goods the 13th day of May in the 3rd and 4th years of our Sovereign Lord and Lady, King Philip and Queen Mary, King and Queen of England, France, Spain, Jerusalem and Ireland etc.;

First I give and bequeath to mine executors my manors of Ormesby, Winterton, Somerton, Burrowaux [=Burgh?], Freethorpe, More(?) Hall, Limpenhoe, Southwood,

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

Tacolneston, (blank) Enstayns(?) and Gonwill {es} [=Gonvilles?] in (blank) in the county of Norfolk with the appurtenances, and all other my lands, tenements and hereditaments within the county of Norfolk, to have and to hold the same manors to my said executors for and during the space and term of five years after my decease to the intent and that they shall take the issues, profits and emoluments thereof during the said term of five years next after my decease to the intent and with part of the issues and profits thereof content, satisfy and pay to my son, Walter Haddon, fifty marks this four year for the full satisfaction of five hundred marks;

And whereas my manor of Freethorpe and Limpenhoe is appointed and assured to the honourable Charles, Duke of Suffolk, and others to the intent that Elizabeth, my daughter, shall have ten pounds of the profits thereof until such time as she shall be married, and then after her marriage she to have the profits of the said manors of Freethorpe and Limpenhoe until such time as she have levied five hundred marks of the profits thereof towards her marriage, as doth plainly appear by indentures made between the said Duke and others on the one party, and me, the said Sir John Clere, on the second part, wherefore considering that my said daughter Elizabeth shall be a long time before that she shall receive the said five hundred marks of the profits of the same lands, I will that my executors pay to my son-in-law, Walter Herendene, a hundred marks a year till such time as he shall have received up(?) five hundred marks for my said daughter's marriage as I am bound to him and his assigns for my said daughter's marriage in recompense of the said manors of Freethorpe and Limpenhoe;

Furthermore I will mine executors sell my manor of East Todnam [=Tuddenham?] to pay withal my debts;

Also I will that mine heir shall have delivered to him at the age of 21 years my chain that the Emperor's Majesty gave me when I was Vice-Admiral when he went out of Flanders into Spain, and all my plate, jewels and apparel, armour, hangings, beds, bedsteads, carpets and all other mine utensils and stuff of household wheresoever they be, as well napery as sheets;

And also I will that all such stock of cattle, grain, household stuff and goods as be in the occupying of Leonard Pawner(?), the farmer of Ormesby of the demesnes there, shall be occupied with the said (blank) to the (blank) of this my last will and testament;

Also I give unto mine heir all such leases as I have when he or she shall come to the age of 21 years;

Also I give to John Butler term of his life four nobles a year;

Also to Edmund Jones term of his life forty shillings a year;

Also to Richard Browene [=Browne?] term of his life four nobles a year;

To William Esto term of his life four nobles a year;

Also to Richard Bakner forty shillings a year during his life;

Also I give to Robert Goodwyn his bailiwick(?) of Ormesby term of his life, and four marks a year for (blank) for(?) of it;

Also I give to John Covell, John Browne, Francis Alleyne, Leonard Canlar, Thomas Mandes(?) and John Lone(?) forty shillings apiece;

And all my servants a quarter's wages and a black coat;

Also I make and ordain my executors my brother-in-law Mr Richard Fulmerston, my son-in-law Walter Haddon, my son-in-law Walter Herendene, and Sir Robert Paynter, parson of Tacolneston, and I give to every one of them for their labours ten pounds;

In witness whereof I writ this will with my own hands and subscribed my name and set to my seal. By me, John Clere.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentu{m} coram Mag{ist}ro Will{el}mo Cooke Legum doctore Prerogative Cant{uariensis} Custode siue Com{m}issario apud London decimo quarto die mens{is} Septembris Anno d{omi}ni mill{es}imo quingen{tesim}o quinquagesimo septimo Iurament{o} Ed{mund}i Brudenell procur{ator}is Walteri Herenden ex{ecutoris} Cui &c Res{er}vata p{otes}tate &c alijs ex{ecutoribus} &c cu{m} venerint &c admissur{is} vicesimo nono die Mens{is} octobris A{n}no d{omi}ni 1560 Ema{nauit} com{m}issio Edwardo Clere filio d{ic}t{i} def{uncti} ad admi{n}strand{um} bona d{ic}t{i} def{uncti} per Walteru{m} Herenden ex{ecutorem} ia{m} Def{unctum} no{n} admi{n}strata Eo q{uod} reliqui executores oneri execuc{i}o{n}is d{ic}t{i} test{amenti} ex cert{is} caus{is} &c Renu{n}ciauerunt(?) &c prout in act{is} super com{m}issione admi{n}strac{ionis}(?) ab intestat{o} &c apparet folio: 20

[=The same testament was proved before Master William Cooke, Doctor of the Laws, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative [+Court] of Canterbury, at London on the 14th day of the month of September in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-seventh by the oath of Edmund(?) Brudenell, proctor of Walter Herendene, executor, to whom etc., with power reserved etc. to the other executors etc. when they shall have come etc. to be admitted. On the twenty-ninth day of the month of October in the year of the Lord 1560 a grant issued to Edward Clere, son of the said deceased, to administer the goods of the said deceased by Walter Herendene, executor, now deceased, not administered because the remaining executors renounced etc. the burden of the execution of the said testament for certain causes etc., as appears in the acts above of the grant of administration by way of an intestacy etc. [in?] folio 20.]