

SUMMARY: In his will dated 8 April 1605, Thomas Trentham of Rocester in Staffordshire leaves the residue of his goods to his mother, Jane (Sneyd) Trentham, after the satisfaction of numerous bequests to family members including his brother Francis Trentham, his two surviving sisters, Katherine Stanhope and Elizabeth de Vere, Countess of Oxford, his two surviving brothers-in-law, Sir John Stanhope and William Cooper of Thurgarton, his nephews and nieces, including his 12-year old nephew Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, his Sneyd and Mynors cousins, as well as family servants and tenants. There is also a bequest to an otherwise unidentified 'Sir Robert'. He appoints his mother and brother as executors, and a close friend, Lawrence Wright, as overseer. The will was probated on 14 May 1605. Thomas Trentham's will also includes mention of an unnamed former servant of his who is now employed in the service of Henry de Vere, Earl of Oxford, as a keeper, presumably in Waltham Forest. The rights of the Earls of Oxford in Waltham Forest had been restored to Henry de Vere's father, Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, on the accession of King James.

LM: Testamentum Thome Trentham

In the most blessed and reverend name of God, Amen. I, Thomas Trentham of Rocester, being sick in body but of sound and perfect mind and remembrance (all honour, praise and glory be given to God therefore), do ordain and make this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First, I give and bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, my Maker, trusting through the merits of his dear son Jesus Christ and his precious bloodshedding to have free remission and forgiveness of all my sins, and my body to be buried in the parish church of Rocester or elsewhere it shall please God to appoint it;

Item, I give unto my mother, my principal and best friend from whom I acknowledge all that I have, one hundred pounds which remains in her own hands;

Item, I give unto my dear and well-beloved sister, the Countess of Oxenford, one hundred pounds which remains in th' hands of Master Walter Fowler of St. Thomas, to be paid to the said Countess of Oxenford within two months after it shall be due by my bond, and his bond freely to be delivered him, provided always that if the hundred pounds be not paid within two months after it shall be lawfully demanded, then the bond to stand in full force, effect and virtue to the use of the said Countess;

Item, I give unto my Lord of Oxenford my little stoned horse, for whose prosperity I have and ever shall pray so long as I have breath, and withal desire his entertainment of his keeper, my late servant, to hold no longer than he shall be well-deserving of;

Item, I give unto my well-beloved sister, the Lady Katherine Stanhope, one hundred pounds which is in the hands of her husband, Sir John Stanhope, and his bond freely to be

restored him upon the payment of one hundred pounds within two months after my decease;

Item, I give unto my well-beloved brother, Mr Francis Trentham, esquire, my grey gelding;

Item, I give unto my well-beloved brother-in-law, Mr William Cooper of Thurgarton, esquire, a needlework purse and twenty pounds in gold;

RM: Item, I give unto my loving cousin, Mr Walter Mynors, a case of French pistols;

Item, I give unto my well-beloved cousin, Mr William Sneyd, as a token of my love, my damask rapier and dagger with a girdle and hangers to the same;

Item, I give unto my living cousin, Mrs Marie Mynors, whom I have ever been beholding unto, forty shillings to be bestowed in what she best fancies as a remembrance of my love unto her;

Item, I give unto my cousin, Mr Ralph Sneyd, my old gilt rapier which I much esteemed for the goodness;

Item, I give unto my cousin, Mr Thomas Sneyd, my russet Spanish rapier;

Item, I give unto my loving nephew, Mr John Stanhope, my trunk, with all that remains within it, which stands at my Lady of Oxenford's house at Hackney within the wardrobe;

Item, I give unto my two nieces, Mrs Cordell Stanhope and Mrs Anne Stanhope, in token of my love to them, to each of them five pounds to buy what the[y] like best of;

Item, I give to my loving nephew, Mr Thomas Cooper, in token of my goodwill, a trunk of clothes and all that remains in that trunk, which stands at Rocester, if he please to accept of them;

Item, I give unto my loving niece, Mrs Anne Cooper, three pounds six shillings eight pence;

Item, I give unto Mr Thomas Trentham, my nephew and godson, five pounds to buy him a nag;

LM: Item, I give unto my other godson & nephew, Mr William Stanhope, other £5 to buy him a nag;

Item, I give unto two old servants of my father's, Robert Draycott and William Cooke, which have been ever well-deserving of me, to either of them forty shillings;

Item, I give unto Henry Holmes, a servant of my brother's who hath likewise deserved well of me, twenty shillings;

Item, I give unto another servant of my brother's, Godfrey Pearsall, who hath likewise deserved well of me, twenty shillings;

Item, I give unto Alice Pearsall two shillings sixpence;

Item, I give unto my mother's maid, Elizabeth Fone, who hath taken pains about me, twenty shillings;

Item, I give unto my nurse twenty shillings;

Item, I give unto Sir Robert, who hath been a long well-wisher unto this house and me, twenty shillings;

Item, I give unto Roger Godhelpe twelve pence;

Item, I give unto Godfrey Smith two shillings sixpence;

Item, I give unto Thomas Marven two shillings sixpence;

Item, I give unto John Cross, my brother's milner, two shillings;

Item, I give unto John Sherritt twelve pence;

Item, I give unto John Badley 12d;

Item, I give unto Thomas Braddock twelve pence;

Item, I give unto Edward Pedley five shillings;

Item, I give unto Joan Burton two shillings sixpence;

Item, I give unto Bridget two shillings sixpence;

Item, my will is that my man shall have paid him his year's wages, which is forty shillings, and six shillings eight pence over, and also I give unto him three old suits of apparel, my black frizado hose and a doublet, a hose and jerkin laced, a canvas doublet striped with green and a pair of black silkish(?) hose to the same, and an old beaver hat;

Item, I give unto my tenant Barlow my bay trotting mare;

Item, I give unto Nicholas Blore, Robert Braddock, George Hall, widow Johnson, Anne Milward, John Alsop, goodwife Woodward, Ralph Lorrymeate, Robert Evans and widow Booth, to each of them twelve pence;

Item, I give unto Francis Adams twenty shillings;

Item, I give unto George Henshaw, whom I have found at all times ready to do me any service he could, my bay ambling mare and my riding cloak;

As I have ever found Sir John Stanhope my favourable and loving brother, so now in the like testimony of my ever-assured affection unto him I do give unto him five pounds, trusting he will more measure the assured goodwill of the giver than the means of the gift;

Item, my legacies being performed and my debts paid, all the rest of my goods I give unto my loving mother;

Item, I do ordain and make my dear and well-beloved mother, Mistress Jane Trentham, and my loving brother, Mr Francis Trentham, esquire, the full and lawful executors of this my last will and testament, and that my said will may be executed according to my intent and good meaning, I do appoint my especial good friend, Mr Lawrence Wright, to be the overseer of this my will, unto whom I do give forty shillings;

In witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name the eighth day of April in the third year of the most gracious and happy reign on our Sovereign Lord James by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland King and of Scotland the 37th, one thousand six hundred and five.

Thomas Trentham.

Witnesses hereof: George Henshaw, Henry Holmes

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum apud London coram magistro Willelmo Birde legum doctore Surrogato venerabilis viri domini Iohannis Gibson militis legum etiam doctoris curie Prerogative Cantuariensis magistri Custodis sive Commissarij legitime constituti decimo quarto die mensis Maij Anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo quinto Iuramento ffrancisci Trentham fratris naturalis et legitimi dicti defuncti et vnus executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominati Cui commissa fuit Administracio bonorum iurium et creditorum eiusdem defuncti de bene et fideliter administrando eadem Ad sancta dei Evangelia iurato Reservata potestate similem commissionem faciendi Iana Trentham matri naturali et legitime predicti defuncti altere Executorum in huismodi testamento nominate cum venerit eam petiturus in debita Iuris forma admissur. examinatus

[=The above-written will was proved at London before Master William Bird, Doctor of the Laws, surrogate of the worshipful Sir John Gibson, knight, also Doctor of the Laws, Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury lawfully constituted, on the fourteenth day of the month of May in the year of the Lord one thousand six hundred five by the oath of Francis Trentham, natural and legitimate brother

of the said deceased and one of the executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, property and credits of the same deceased, sworn on the sacred gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, [+with] power reserved for a similar commission to be made to Jane Trentham, natural and legitimate mother of the foresaid deceased, another of the executors named in the same will, when she shall have come to petition in due form of law to be admitted. Examined.]