

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 19 October 1605, of George Clifford (1558-1605), 3rd Earl of Cumberland, the son of Henry Clifford (1517-1570), 2nd Earl of Cumberland, by his second wife, Anne (c.1538-1581), the daughter of William, 3rd Baron Dacre of Gilsland. In 1577, George Clifford married Margaret Russell (1560-1616), the daughter of his guardian, Francis Russell, 2nd Earl of Bedford. There were no surviving male issue of the marriage, and at his death, George Clifford left his lands and titles to his brother, Francis Clifford (1559-1641), who succeeded as 4th Earl of Cumberland. In June 1589 Francis had married Grissell (1559-1613), the elder daughter of Thomas Hughes of Uxbridge, Middlesex, and widow of Edward Neville, Lord Bergavenny (d.1589). Grissell Hughes was a second cousin of Oxford's father, both being descendants of Sir John Don (c.1430-1503) (see *Edward De Vere Newsletter* #47 on this website). Robert Greene dedicated two books to George Clifford, *Pandosto* (1588) and *Greene's Mourning Garment* (1590). In the former dedication he includes 'the virtuous Countess, your wife', to whom he had already dedicated *Penelope's Web* (1587) jointly with her elder sister, Anne (1549-1604), the wife of Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth. Greene's dedication of his *Mourning Garment* to George Clifford is interesting for its disavowal of the suggestion that Clifford was being offered a model for his own repentance. In 1584, Robert Greene had dedicated *The Mirror of Modesty* to George Clifford's stepsister, Margaret Stanley (1540-1596), Countess of Derby, eldest daughter of Henry Clifford (1517-1570), 2nd Earl of Cumberland, and his first wife, Eleanor (1519-1547), the daughter of King Henry VIII's sister, Mary Tudor (1496-1553), and her husband, Charles Brandon (d.1545), Duke of Suffolk. After Mary Tudor's death, Charles Brandon (d.1545), Duke of Suffolk, married his ward, Katherine Willoughby (1519-1580). By her second marriage to Richard Bertie (1517-1572), Katherine Willoughby (1519-1580), Duchess of Suffolk, was the mother of Peregrine Bertie (1555-1601), Lord Willoughby d'Eresby, who married Oxford's sister, Mary De Vere (d.1624). Through his stepsister, Margaret Stanley, George Clifford was thus related to Oxford through both his brother Francis Clifford's marriage to Grissell Hughes (1559-1613), and his stepsister Margaret Stanley's descent from Charles Brandon (d.1545), Duke of Suffolk.

RM: Testamentum prenobilis viri Georgij Comitum Cumbrie

In the name of God, Amen. I, George, Earl of Cumberland, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, being now somewhat visited with sickness but of good and perfect memory, thanks be given to Almighty God, do make this my last will and testament the nineteenth day of October in the years of the reign of our most gracious Sovereign Lord King James of England, France and Ireland, the third and of Scotland the 39th, and in the year of our Lord God one thousand six hundred and five, in manner and form following:

First of all I commend and commit my soul into the hands of my only Redeemer and sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ, by whose only merits and mercy I trust to be made partaker of everlasting joy in heaven, desiring him to pardon and forgive my manifold offences, and

to give me strength against all temptations and grace that I may willingly leave the world and make a godly end;

And first, I do hereby revoke and make frustrate and void all former wills by me made;

And forsomuch as my debts are grown far greater than heretofore they were by reason of my many occasions of charge and great expense of late and within a few years past whereby I have just cause to alter many things and dispose otherwise of them than I have formerly purposed, I have therefore assigned and set over all my leases, as well the licence for transportation of cloths undressed which I had from his Majesty, as also all the estate and term of years which I have of or in any rectories, tithes, ironworks, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever in the counties of York and Westmorland, and also have made a lease for the term of one hundred years of the parks of Holden and Carleton within the county of York, and of all the lands, tenements and hereditaments which I have in the county of Cumberland either by grant from the King's Majesty or otherwise, and also a deed of gift of all my goods, chattels, household stuff, hangings, bedding, jewels, plate, utensils and all other my goods and chattels of what nature, kind or quality soever unto the right honourable Robert, Earl of Salisbury, Edward, Lord Wotton, Sir Frances Clifford, knight, and John Taylor upon trust and confidence and to the only end therewith and thereby to pay my debts, which above all other things I desire may be performed as most acceptable in the sight of God, agreeable with my honour, and most comfortable and best satisfying my own conscience, and also for the payment of such portion as I shall by this my will limit and appoint for the advancement of my only and well-beloved daughter, the Lady Anne Clifford, as by the said lease bearing date the sixteenth day of this instant October may appear;

And touching my said daughter, I do hereby declare that all former portions appointed or limited to my said daughter by any former assurance shall cease and be void, and I do hereby appoint, give and bequeath to my said well-beloved daughter, the Lady Anne Clifford, for her full portion and in full recompense and satisfaction of her child's portion and such right, title and estate as she might have or pretend to have to any my castles, manors, lands, tenements or hereditaments, leases, household stuff, plate, jewels, goods and chattels whatsoever in any other sort than I have formerly or hereby assured or appointed the same, the full sum of fifteen thousand pounds, to be paid to her in manner and form following, that is to say, the sum of three thousand pounds at th' end of two years next after my death, and other three thousand pounds at the end of one whole year then next following, and the sum of four thousand pounds at the end of one whole year then next following, and the other five thousand pounds at two several payments after she shall accomplish the full age of one and twenty years, that is to say, the one half within six months after she shall accomplish her full age, and the other half at the end of one whole year next after the said six months;

And I do appoint that she shall have two hundred pounds yearly for two years next after my death for and towards her maintenance, wherewith I desire she would be contented in respect that the urgent necessity of speedy payment and order taking with my creditors doth enforce me to defer the payment of her portion so long;

And I do hereby request my said most beloved daughter, as my trust is in her and as she regardeth my fatherly care and love to her, and by the duty that she oweth to me, her father, that she hold herself well satisfied and contented with this portion, and that she do not molest nor trouble my loving brother, Sir Francis Clifford, knight, nor the heirs males of his body, but permit and suffer him and the heirs males of his body peaceably and quietly to have and hold all my manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments according as I have appointed them by former conveyances or by this last will;

And I do appoint that she shall deliver to my said loving brother, Sir Francis Clifford, a bond whereby some assurances have been made to her for the suffering her portion to be raised out of the demesnes of Bolton which were sithence that time, upon my going to sea and other occasions, mortgaged;

And I do hereby appoint the said Lady Anne, my daughter, that she shall make such security after she shall accomplish her full age to my said brother or the heirs males of his body whereby he and they may enjoy all my castles, manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments in the counties of York, Westmorland and Cumberland without let, trouble or interruption of her or any other by her means as shall be reasonably devised or advised by my said brother or the heirs males of his body, and if she shall refuse to perform that assurance, then I will and declare that the said five thousand pounds appointed to be to her paid when she shall accomplish the age of one and twenty years shall cease and not be paid until she shall have made such security according to the true intent and purpose of this my last will, having ever had a principal care to leave a firm and settled peace between my said daughter and my brother, and to prevent all cause of difference and dissension which may easily be raised and grow without just occasion if either of them shall give ear to any of factious disposition or restless humours;

And where I have by my deed bearing date the eighteenth day of this instant October for the advancement of my house and for the love I bear my well-beloved brother, Sir Francis Clifford, covenanted to stand seised of all such manors, lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services and hereditaments whereof I have any estate of inheritance in fee simple to the use of myself and the heirs males of my body, and for default of such issue to the use of the said Sir Francis Clifford, my brother, and the heirs males of his body, and for default of such issue to the heirs of my body, and for default of such issue to the use of the right heirs of my said brother, with power of revocation, as by the said conveyance may appear, I do hereby ratify and confirm the same, and do for further assurance thereof hereby give, devise and bequeath all my castles, manors, lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services, the sheriffwick of Westmorland and all other hereditaments whatsoever of what kind or nature soever to my said loving brother, Sir Francis Clifford, and to the heirs males of his body, the remainder thereof to my well-beloved daughter, the Lady Anne Clifford, and the heirs of her body, the remainder to the right heirs of my said brother;

And where I have mortgaged the site and demesnes of Bolton in the county of York and divers manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments which are to be redeemed or reassured,

being forfeited, I do appoint and declare that my said brother and the heirs males of his body shall have power, if they shall be able and think fit, to redeem them and to have the benefit that may be got thereby;

And where I have formerly assured divers of my manors, lands and tenements in the county of York to my well-approved friend, Sir William Ingleby, and to William Ferrand, my late servant, and to their heirs for the saving them harmless of such of my debts for which they stood bound, and towards the payment of other of my debts which I did then owe, it is now my will, and I do hereby appoint, that such of my said manors, lands and tenements as the said Sir William Ingleby now standeth seised of shall be subject and liable to the payment of all my debts which I now owe and to the raising of my daughter's portion, and if my executors shall in their wisdoms think it fitter for the speedier payment of my debts or of my daughter's portion to raise money out of any other of my lands which are left or conveyed to my said brother, and to reserve in stead thereof some part of those other things which I have otherwise appointed for those purposes, it is my will and I do hereby desire that my said brother do raise moneys out of his estate and lands which I have left him in such sort as he knoweth I had purposed to have done and as shall be thought fittest by the rest of my executors;

And if anything shall remain after my debts and my daughter's portion paid and my will performed, then I will that whatsoever shall so remain shall be assured to my said brother, to whom I have left all to the end he may pay all, and I give to my wife all such household stuff now in her custody and which were used in my house at Clerkenwell when I kept house there;

And if my brother die without issue male, so that my lands descend or come to my said daughter, then I will that my executors or the survivors of them shall pay forth of such things as I have granted to them the sum of four thousand pounds to my well-beloved nieces, Margaret Clifford and Frances Clifford, my brother's two daughters, the one half to be paid to them at the end of one whole year next after my lands shall remain or come to my said daughter, and the other half at the end of one other year then next after;

And I do constitute and appoint the said right honourable Robert, Earl of Salisbury, Edward, Lord Wotton, my well-beloved brother, Sir Francis Clifford, knight, and my servant, John Taylor, whom I have for many years past employed in all my businesses and bred him up in my service and have ever found him faithful and honest, assuring myself he will so continue to my house, my sole executors of this my last will and testament;

And I do heartily desire my said right honourable and most assured friends the Earl of Salisbury and the Lord Wotton to present this my last request to my most gracious sovereign, that it will please his Majesty to grant unto my said brother those lands in Cumberland for which I have been a long suitor unto his Majesty, wherein I had no doubt but to have prevailed according to his Majesty's princely word and promise if it had pleased God to have spared me life, and if it shall please his Majesty to grant it, I appoint

it to go towards the payment of my debts in such sort as I have appointed my other lands in Cumberland;

And I do give and bequeath to the said right honourable Earl of Salisbury my pointed diamond ring which I used to wear and which my servant, John Taylor, can deliver, and also I will that a basin and ewer of one hundred pounds' value be provided for him, desiring him to accept them as tokens of my love;

And I give and bequeath to my said honourable friend, the Lord Wotton, my baybald [=bay ball?] jennet now at Grafton;

And I give to my loving brother, the Lord Wharton, my white gelding at Skipton called White Smithfield which I used for my own saddle;

And I give to my most approved and well-esteemed friend, Sir William Ingleby, my gelding called Gray Lambert;

And I give to my faithful and assured friend, Richard Hutton, sergent at law, one hundred angels, whom I desire to continue his best and most faithful counsel and advice to my brother and my daughter for the good of my house and performance of this my last will as I have ever found him to do to myself;

And I give to my said trusty servant, John Taylor, the lease of the new park for one and twenty years, paying twenty nobles yearly rent;

And for such of my servants as I have not preferred, I leave them to the consideration of my said well-beloved brother, as I have done many other things, desiring him that he will have care to prefer them and to do for them as he in his judgment shall think I would have done if I had lived, and as he shall find them to deserve;

And I do request all such of my friends whom out of my love I had cause to have remembered with some legacies not to take it unkindly that they are omitted, for it proceeded neither out of want of goodwill to them nor forgetfulness in myself, but only out of the due consideration of the greatness of my debts which I would most gladly have paid;

And I appoint my body to be buried where it shall be thought fit by my executors, desiring them that it may be done with as little charge as is possible in regard I would have nothing done that might give any hindrance to the payment of my debts;

And I give to the poor of Skipton twenty pounds, and to the poor of the parish where I shall die ten pounds;

And I give God most hearty thanks that hath given me time and space of repentance, and also hath lent me time to settle my estate in such sort as at this present I thought convenient and so as therein I take much comfort;

And so committing my body and soul to God's mercy, I have in witness and testimony of this my last will subscribed my name and set to my seal the day and year above-written in the presence of those whose names are subscribed, my said will containing nine several sheets of paper. Cumberland.

Richard Hutton, 1605. George Turner. Michael Erneley. William Priest. Richard Johnes [=Jones?]. John Etton. William Thompson. Henry Cookson.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum apud London coram venerabili viro Domino Iohanne Bennett milite et legum doctore Curie Prerogatiue Cantuariensis magistro Custode sive Commissario legitime constituto septimo die mensis Iulij Anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo sexto Iuramento prenobilis viri domini ffrancisci Clifford Comitis Cumbrie vnus Executorum in huiusmodi Testamento nominatorum Cui commissa fuit Administracio bonorum iurium et creditorum dicti defuncti de bene et fideliter administrando eadem Ad sancta dei Evangelia iurati Reservata potestate similem comissionem faciendi honorandis viris Domino Roberto Comiti Saresburie Edwardo domino Wootton et Iohanni Taylor executoribus etiam in huiusmodi Testamento nominatis cum venerint eam petituri in debita Iuris forma admissuri postea prefati Dominus Comes Saresburie et Dominus Wootton oneri execucionis dicti Testamenti expresse renuntiarunt vt ex actis liquet. Examinatus per me Robertum Erswell(?)

[=The testament above-written was proved at London before the worshipful Sir John Bennett, knight and Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the seventh day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred sixth by the oath of the right honourable Francis Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, one of the executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and creditors of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, with power reserved for a similar commission to be made to the honourable Sir Robert, Earl of Salisbury, Edward, Lord Wotton, and John Taylor, executors also named in the same testament, when they shall have come to petition in due form of law to be admitted, and afterward the forenamed Lord, the Earl of Salisbury and the Lord Wotton expressly renounced the burden of the execution of the said testament, as by the acts appears. Examined by me, Robert Erswell(?).]

LM: Tertia [] Pasche 1620 Iohannis Taylor vnus executoribus &c renunciavit(?) oneri execucionis huiusmodi testamenti vt in actis

[=On the third [] of Easter 1620 John Taylor, one of the executors etc., renounced(?) the burden of the execution of the same testament, as in the acts.]