

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 19 July 1610, of Oxford's brother-in-law, Sir John Stanhope. Although the testator mentions five sons, he had a sixth son born after his decease, John Posthumous Stanhope. For further information concerning the family see the will of his widow, Oxford's sister-in-law, Lady Katherine Stanhope (TNA PROB 11/137, ff. 434-6).

RM: Testamentum domini Iohannis Stanhope, militis

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the Creator of the whole world and of all therein contained, the only Saviour and Redeemer of me, Lord of all mankind and the true and lively comforter of all that believe in thy divine majesty, I, John Stanhope of Elvaston in the county of Derby, knight, being of perfect memory at my writing hereof, for which I yield most humble thanks to Almighty God, assuring myself of full remission of my infinite and horrible sins by the only death and most precious bloodshedding of my loving Saviour, Jesus Christ, knowing the frailty and uncertainty of man's life, following the example of the scripture do make and ordain this my last will and testament of my soul, body and worldly estate;

My soul, being heavenly, I commend and bequeath to God, my Creator, assuring myself in his great and wonderful day of salvation both in soul and body by the only mediation of Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer;

My body, as it is earthly, I do willingly yield it to the earth, and desire to be interred in the chancel of the parish church of Shelford by my late dear father, from whence with him I hope to arise into the everlasting and incomprehensible joys of heaven;

And for my worldly estate thereof I thus dispose of:

What land soever I am possessed of that is not settled on my two eldest sons I have already made conveyances whereby there is set down the small preferments I am able to yield to my three youngest sons;

More than that, which whilst I breathe I give and increase to my eldest and youngest together, my humble prayers to Almighty God to bless them and all my daughters with all his best heavenly and earthly blessings;

My debts, which are not small, I will that they be paid of the goods I die possessed of;

For the residue, if any do remain, I give to my dearest wife, Dame Katherine Stanhope, and to my daughters that are unmarried, to be divided amongst them;

And the lease of Weston demesnes given me by my late good uncle, Sir Edward Stanhope, knight, doctor, deceased, I give to my daughters unmarried, my loving wife, and my most

true friend, Mr Lawrence Wright, to dispose thereof for my said daughters' behoof, which if any my younger sons shall contrary that might take benefit thereby by my uncle's gift and will, then I give to my said unmarried daughters amongst them that portion of land I had conveyed to my son that shall thus contrary my will, to be sold to their benefit by my wife and friend, Mr Lawrence Wright, and do hereby revoke that deed of conveyance to any son contrarying my will, and do further hereby give and grant the said land to my wife and Mr Lawrence Wright to sell and dispose of to the behoof and behalf of my daughters that are unmarried, and because my sons are yet under-age, and cannot agree to my disposing of the legacy given them by my foresaid uncle, my will is and hereby I do give and grant to my wife and Mr Lawrence Wright and to their heirs forever all the lands conveyed to any or all of my three youngest sons, to dispose of as aforesaid whensoever any or all my three youngest sons shall contrary this my bequest of Weston demesnes;

And to my two daughters that are married, to wear for a remembrance of me and for their full child's parts, I give to each of them a twenty shillings' piece of gold to make a ring of, and to my two loving eldest sons I give a like twenty shillings' piece of gold for their child's parts, praying them in the fear of God to love one the other and never to have smites the one with the other, and to love and to be good to their sisters, as my several letters to them dated with this my will doth more fully set forth my requests;

To my honourable loving aunt, the Lady Bertley [=Berkeley], and to my two most dear uncles, the Lord Stanhope and Sir Michael Stanhope, though a small, yet a token of my true love, and as my present estate will admit, to each of them I give a twenty shillings' piece of gold to make a ring of to wear for my sake, who did ever truly love and honour them;

And to my most true friend, Mr Lawrence Wright, and to his son, Mr Thomas Wright, I give to each of them a like remembrance of a twenty shillings' piece of gold to put into a ring to wear for a remembrance of me;

My loving brother, Edward Stanhope, I commend hereby to my son, Sir Philip Stanhope, his nephew, and do pray my son hereby to give to my brother and his two sons some estate of living for their lives;

My ever most kind and loving friend, Mr Lawrence Wright, and my loving wife, Dame Katherine Stanhope, I make my full and only executors of this my last will;

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the nineteenth of July 1610.

John Stanhope.

The last will and testament of Sir John Stanhope, knight, which he acknowledged to be his will the 19th of this July 1610 afore us whose names are underwritten: William Osborne, Thomas Foster.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro Domino Iohanne Benet milite legum doctore Curie prerogatiue Cantuariensis Magistro Custode siue Comissario legitime constituto Quarto die mensis Maij Anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo vndecimo Iuramento domine Catherine Relicte dicti defuncti et Lawrencij wright Armigeri executorum in eodem testamento nominatorum Quibus Comissa fuit Administracio bonorum Iurium et Creditorum dicti defuncti de bene et fideliter Administrando &c ad sancta dei Evangelia vigore Commissionis in ea parte alias Emanate Iuratorum examinatus

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Sir John Bennett, knight, Doctor of the Laws, Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury lawfully constituted, on the fourth day of the month of May in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred eleventh by the oath of the Lady Catherine, relict of the said deceased, and Lawrence Wright, esquire, executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., by force of a commission in that respect issued at another time. Examined.]