

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 24 June 1502 and proved 1 December 1502, of Robert Russell (d. 28 June 1502) of Strensham. The testator was the great-grandfather of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon. For the will of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), see TNA PROB 11/165/424.

TESTATOR AND SIR THOMAS COKESEY

The testator was one of the heirs of his kinsman, Sir Thomas Cokesey alias Greville (d. 6 March 1498), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/11/353. An inquisition post mortem taken after the testator's death in which he is described as 'cousin and heir of Thomas Cokesey, knight', states that the testator assigned the manor of Eaton Dovedale to Sir Thomas Cokesey's widow, Elizabeth, and her then husband, Sir Edward Stanley, in recompense of her dower. See:

Maskelyne and H. C. Maxwell Lyte, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry VII, Entries 651-700', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Series 2, Volume 2, Henry VII* (London, 1915), pp. 411-458. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/series2-vol2/pp411-458> [accessed 1 January 2018].

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the Russell pedigree, see Phillimore, W.P.W., ed., *The Visitation of the County of Worcester Made in the Year 1569*, (London: Harleian Society, 1888), Vol. XXVII, pp. 117-19 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationcount02mundgoog#page/n131/mode/2up>

See also the Russell pedigree in *The Heraldic Journal*, Vol. III, (Boston: Wiggin & Lunt, 1867), p. 103 at:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=ku_A9O5M5M4C&pg=RA1-PA103

For the testator's family background, see also:

'Parishes: Strensham', in *A History of the County of Worcester: Volume 4*, ed. William Page and J W Willis-Bund (London, 1924), pp. 202-208. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/worcs/vol4/pp202-208> [accessed 24 November 2017].

Robert Russell of Strensham received exemption for life on 9 October 1353 from being put on assizes, juries, &c., against his will. (fn. 45) He married Catherine daughter of John Vampage, (fn. 46) and must have been living as late as 1361, when he presented to

the church. (fn. 47) He was succeeded before 1376 by his son Sir John Russell, Master of the Horse to Richard II. (fn. 48) In 1388 [Sir John Russell] received licence to crenellate his mansion-house at Strensham . . . in 1398 . . . he was described as 'long keeper of the king's great horses.' In 1399 he settled the manor and advowson on his wife Elizabeth. (fn. 54) His son William ratified the estate of Elizabeth, his father's wife, in the manor in 1400–1, (fn. 55) and in 1405 Sir John died at Letheringham in Suffolk, according to the inscription on his tomb at Strensham, on which are recorded also the names of his three wives, Elizabeth, Margaret and Agnes. Elizabeth survived him and as Lady de Clinton held the manor until her death in 1423. (fn. 56) William Russell followed, and was succeeded by his son Robert, who was holding the manor in 1428 (fn. 57) and 1431, (fn. 58) and married Elizabeth daughter of Sir John Throckmorton. (fn. 59) She was holding the manor with her husband in 1433–4, when it was conveyed by them to John Throckmorton and others for purposes of settlement. (fn. 60) The manor, described as having been forfeited by John Russell in 1461, (fn. 61) was granted to the king's kinsman Richard Nevill, Earl of Warwick, in 1462. (fn. 62) On 7 June 1471 Elizabeth Russell of Strensham, widow, received a general pardon for all offences committed before 5 June last, (fn. 63) and the manor must have been restored to her She settled the manor by her will on her son Robert, and enfeoffed Robert Throckmorton and others for execution of this settlement and for providing portions for the sons and daughters of Robert Russell. (fn. 65) Robert, who married Joan daughter of Sir Kinard de la Bcere, succeeded to the manor, and was followed at his death in 1493 by his son Robert, who married Elizabeth daughter of Thomas Baynham (fn. 66) and died in 1502. (fn. 67) Robert's son John, who then inherited the manor, married Edith Unton. (fn. 68) In 1523 he and his son Thomas were appointed surveyors of the lands of the bishopric of Worcester. (fn. 69) He died in 1556, (fn. 70) and was succeeded by his son Sir Thomas Russell (knighted in 1549), (fn. 71) who in 1557 made a settlement on his wife Frances daughter of Sir Roger Cholmeley, and in 1572 settled Strensham on his son John at the marriage of the latter with Elizabeth daughter of Ralph Sheldon of Beoley. He died at Worcester on 9 April 1574 (fn. 72) and was succeeded by his son John, afterwards Sir John, who suffered attainder, his lands being granted in 1588 to Walter Coppinger and others. (fn. 73) Sir John's lands were, however, restored before he died in 1593. (fn. 74) His son Thomas, who succeeded him . . . was knighted in 1603, (fn. 75)

See also:

The church contains an unusual number of interesting monuments, mostly to members of the Russell family. The earliest are two brasses on the chancel floor, one of about 1390 to Robert son of Thomas Russell of Strensham, showing an armed figure in camail with his feet on a lion; the marginal inscription had shields at the angles, all now gone. The second brass is to Sir John Russell, who died in 1405, and his three wives, Elizabeth, Margaret and Agnes. It represents a knight in armour under a crocketed ogee canopy with side pinnacles; the marginal inscription has the evangelistic symbols at the angles, one being missing. A third brass to Robert Russell and Elizabeth (Baynham) his wife, 1502, is now placed in a modern slab against the north wall. It has an armed figure with one of the wife. Against the same wall at the east end is a panelled altar tomb, with a marble slab, to Sir John Russell, 1556, and Edith (Unton) his wife, 1562; the sides have

diamond panels, formerly with brass shields, all now lost. At the head is an upright panel crested with Tudor flower and having small kneeling brass figures of Sir John and his wife, both in heraldic dress, with a son behind and three shields above. The first bears the arms of Russell quartered with de la Planche, Hodington, Golafre, Cassy, Cooksey, Thorgrim and Cromlyn, the second bears Unton quartered with Fettiplace, the third shield bears the first two impaled.

For the testator's descent from the Cokese, Cassy and Hodington families, see the will, dated 1497 and proved 26 March 1498, of Sir Thomas Cokese alias Greville (d. 6 March 1498), TNA PROB 11/11/353.

Testator's great-great-grandparents

The Russell pedigrees are essentially in agreement that the testator's great-great-grandfather, Robert Russell, married Katherine Vampage, and was succeeded before 1376 by his son, Sir John Russell (d. 31 January 1405), Master of Horse to Richard II. See the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/russell-sir-john-1405>

s. and h. of Robert Russell^f of Strensham ?by Katherine, da. of John Vampage of Pershore, Worcs. m. (1) bef. Mich. 1382, Agnes, 3s. inc. William, 3 da.; (2) aft. 1389, Margaret (d.1397), da. of Sir Hugh Hastings of Elsing, Norf., wid. of Sir John Wingfield^f of Letheringham Suff.; (3) between 24 Dec. 1398 and 15 Jan. 1399, Elizabeth (1 Jan. 1348-Sept. 1423), posthumous da. and event. sole h. of William de la Plaunk of Haversham, Bucks. by Elizabeth, yr. da. of Sir Roger Hillary, c.j.c.p., of Bescot, Staffs., wid. of Sir John Birmingham, Robert, Lord Grey of Rotherfield and John, Lord Clinton. 1 Kntd. by Oct. 1378.*

The testator's great-great-grandfather, Sir John Russell (d. 31 January 1405), married three wives.

First marriage

Sir John Russell married firstly a wife named Agnes, whose surname is unknown, although most pedigrees state that she was Agnes de la Plaunches. By his first wife, Agnes, he had a son and a daughter:

-William Russell (d.1418/19?), the testator's great-grandfather. See below.

-Elizabeth Russell, who married Sir Robert Wingfield (d. 3 May 1409), second son but eventual heir of Sir John Wingfield (d.1389) of Letheringham, Suffolk, by whom she was the mother of Sir Robert Wingfield (1403-1454), and the grandmother of Sir John Wingfield (1428 – 10 May 1481). Sir John Wingfield (1428 – 10 May 1481) married

Elizabeth Fitz Lewis, whose grandson, Sir Anthony Wingfield (d. 15 August 1552), married Elizabeth Vere (d.1557), sister of John de Vere (1499-1527), 14th Earl of Oxford. See the will of Elizabeth Fitz Lewis, Norfolk Record Office CAGE 135; Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, pp. 502-5; and:

<http://www.letheringhamlodge.com/wingfield-of-wingfield-and-letheringham/>

Second marriage

Sir John Russell married secondly Margaret Hastings, widow of Sir John Wingfield (d.1389), and daughter of Sir Hugh Hastings of Elsing Norfolk. Her will (243 Harsyk), dated August 1387, was proved in 1396 in the Consistory Court of Norwich.

By Margaret Hastings Sir John Russell had a son and a daughter:

-John Russell.

-Margaret Russell (living 14 January 1453), who married Sir Ralph Rochford. (died c. 1 November 1449).

According to the *ODNB*, John Russell, Speaker of the House of Commons, was perhaps an illegitimate son of Sir John Russell (d.1405). From the *ODNB*:

Russell, John (d. 1437), administrator and speaker of the House of Commons, was a kinsman, perhaps even an illegitimate son, of Sir John Russell (d. 1405) of Strensham, Worcestershire, master of the horse and councillor to Richard II, in whose property in Buckinghamshire he had an interest in remainder.

It also seems possible that John Russell (d.1437) was the son of Sir John Russell (d. 31 January 1405) by his second wife, Margaret Hastings Wingfield.

Third marriage

Sir John Russell married thirdly Elizabeth de la Plaunche (d. 17 September 1423), daughter and eventual sole heiress of William de la Plaunche, and widow successively of Sir John de Bermingham, Robert de Grey (d. 12 or 14 January 1388), 4th Baron Grey of Rotherfield, and John de Clinton (d. 6 September 1398), 3rd Baron Clinton, by whom he had no issue.

See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 503.

Testator's great-grandparents

The testator was the great-grandson of William Russell (d.1418/19), esquire, and Agnes Hodington, daughter and coheir of Thomas Hodington by Jane Thurgrim. Sources disagree as to the name of Jane Thurgrim's father. For a discussion, see the will of Sir Thomas Cokesey, *supra*.

By Jane Thurgrim, Thomas Hodington was the father of two daughters, Agnes Hodington, who c.1406 married William Russell (d.1418/19?), and Joan Hodington, who married Roger Winter of Droitwich. For the marriage of William Russell and Agnes Hodington, see CR 1998/Box 50, Warwickshire County Record Office.

See also the History of Parliament entry for Thomas Hodington at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/hodyngton-thomas>

In the following year [1406] Hodyngton married his elder daughter, Agnes, to Sir John's eldest son and heir, William Russell.

See also the History of Parliament entry for William Russell at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/russell-william-141819>

Testator's grandparents

The testator was the grandson of Robert Russell (d.1461?) by Elizabeth Throckmorton (c.1427-1483x4), the daughter of Sir John Throckmorton (d. 12 April 1445), Under-Treasurer of England, by Eleanor de Spine, daughter and coheir of Guy de Spine (or de Spineto) of Coughton, Warwickshire. See the *ODNB* entry for Sir John Throckmorton, his will, TNA PROB 11/3/531, and the Throckmorton pedigree in Lipscomb, George, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham*, Vol. IV, (London: J. & W Robins, 1847), p. 399 at:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=_t89AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA399

Testator's parents

The testator was the son of Robert Russell (c.1440-1493), and Joan Delabere, daughter of Sir Kynard Delabere (d. by 1453) and sister of Sir Richard de la Bere (c.1448 – 15 July 1514). See 'Parishes: Strensham', in *A History of the County of Worcester: Volume 4*, ed. William Page and J W Willis-Bund (London, 1924), pp. 202-208. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/worces/vol4/pp202-208> [accessed 24 November 2017].

See also the inquisitions post mortem taken after the death of Robert Russell (c.1440-1493), TNA C 142/9/17 and C 142/9/68.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

The testator married Elizabeth Baynham, the daughter of Thomas Baynham of Clearwell, Gloucestershire, and sister of Sir Alexander Baynham (d. 25 September 1524) of Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire.

For the Baynham family, see the will of the testator's brother-in-law, Sir Alexander Baynham (d. 25 September 1524) of Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire, TNA PROB 11/21/469 and TNA PROB 11/22/256. See also the Baynham pedigree in Maclean, John, ed., 'The History of the Manors of Dene Magna and Abenhall' in *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society for 1881-82*, Vol. VI, (Bristol, C.T. Jefferies), pp. 123-209 at pp. 184-5:

<http://archive.org/stream/transactionsbris06bris#page/184/mode/2up>

See also the Baynham pedigree in Maclean, John and W.C. Heane, eds., *The Visitation of the County of Gloucester Taken in the Year 1623*, (London: Harleian Society, 1885), Vol. XXI, p. 14 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofcoun00inchit#page/14/mode/2up>

By Elizabeth Baynham the testator was the father of Sir John Russell (1493/4 – 15 August 1556), as well as three younger sons mentioned in the will below, and an unborn child. In the inquisition in Maskelyne, *supra*, the testator's son and heir, John Russell, is stated to have been eight years of age and more at his father's death.

The testator's eldest son and heir, Sir John Russell (1493/4 – 15 August 1556), married, by settlement dated 11 January 1519, Edith Unton, the daughter of Sir Thomas Unton of Wadley, Berkshire. See the will of Sir John Russell, TNA PROB 11/38/167, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/russell-john-i-149394-1556>

After the testator's death, Elizabeth Baynham married secondly, as his second wife, Sir Robert Throckmorton (c.1451-1518). For the will of Sir Robert Throckmorton, see TNA PROB 11/20/25.

The testator was the grandfather of Sir Thomas Russell (d. 9 April 1574) of Strensham, for whom see his will, TNA PROB 11/57/83, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/russell-sir-thomas-1520-74>

Sir Thomas Russell (d. 9 April 1574) married, as his second wife, Margaret Lygon (d.1617), by whom he was the father of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon. See also Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 23, and the will of Margaret (nee Lygon) Russell Berkeley (d.1617), TNA PROB 11/129/781.

In the name of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen. The Friday in the feast of the Nativity of Saint John Baptist in the year of Our Lord God 1500 and 2 and in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord the King Henry the 7th the 17th, I, Robert Russell, squire, of whole mind and good remembrance, howbeit that now I am sick in my body and suffer at some [-at] times sore pangs, make this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First I bequeath my soul to [+the?] great mercy of Our Lord God, Our Most Blessed Lady, Saint Mary, and all [+the?] holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the chancel of the parish church of Saint John Baptist of Strensham, of which church I am patron, besides the bodies of my father and mother, whom I beseech Our Lord soon(?) assoil;

Also I will that there be kept a convenient interment for me in exequies and obsequies for the relief of my soul and to [+the] relief of my friends that would be thereat, and specially of priests, clerks and poor people that will be there to pray for my soul;

And that done, I will that above & afore all things that my debts, whatsoever they be, either of [+my?] father's part, either of mine own part, be paid and truly content as soon as may be after my decease;

And also that there be made a convenient & a due recompense and satisfaction to all and every person that I have done any wrong or injury unto by the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I bequeath to the church work of Our Blessed Lady of Worcester 3s 4d;

To the church of Strensham, as well for my burying of my body within the said church as otherwise to the behoof thereof 40d;

And to the church of Puplyngton [=Peopleton?] where also I am patron 20d;

And to the church work of the monastery of Pershore 20d;

Also I bequeath to the reparation of the bridges called the Borne bridge 3s 4d and Defford bridge 3s 4d, and to the reparation of the causeway and to the ways of Strensham where most need is 3s 4d, it to be disposed and be set by the discretion of my executors and some of the sad men of Strensham and of Defford;

Also I will that my wearing gear as gowns, doublets, hoses, jackets and such other be departed amongst my servants that have waited upon me, that is to say to every of them after their degrees and by the discretion of mine executors;

The residue for-forth [=far-forth?] of all my goods and chattels I give and bequeath to my best-beloved Elizabeth, my wife, and my dear brother [=brother-in-law], Sir Alexander Baynham, knight, whom I ordain and make mine executors, requiring them and heartily praying them to do for the weal of my soul as they shall think best and as they will answer afore God;

Given in my manor of Strensham the day and year abovesaid.

This is the last will and intent of me, Robert Russell, squire, touching the ordering, disposition and demeanour of all such manors, lands, tenements, meadows, leasows, pastures, woods, mills, waters, fishings, rents, reversions, services with all their appurtenances of which or any part of them my full discreet grandam, Elizabeth Russell, widow, with the agreement of my father made certain feoffments by their deeds in writing, as by the same deeds more plainly do appear, for the performance of the wills of my said grandam or of my said father while the[y] were alive, which feoffments, their wills performed, be and must be to perform my will while I am alive and to the feoffees of the same now be my feoffees with whom I am content, therefore I make and declare this my will of and upon the said feoffment by this my writing made in the same feast of the Nativity of Saint John Baptist anno supradicto in manner and form ensuing:

First I will that my cousin, Sir Robert Throckmorton, Sir Richard Knightley, Simon Mylbourne, Thomas Lygon, William Tracy, squires, and their co-feoffees or these or any other now my feoffees be, stand and continue feoffees like as they were made and ordained by my said grandam or by my said father or otherwise, & over that I will that my said feoffees be loving and assisting to mine executors so that the same mine executors and 2 of my said feoffees such as my said executors shall think most ready and expedient to assi[s]t them, levy, receive and perceive yearly all the issue, rents, revenues and profits coming, growing or [f. 173v] rising of any of the said lands, manors, tenements and other of the premises or any of them after my decease till such time that my father's debts & mine be content and all paid, and till such time [+my?] 3 younger sons and the child now being in my wife's belly, whereof I be [sic for 'beseech?'] Jesus send her good deliverance, shall be of convenient age to help themselves, so that with the said issues, rents, revenues and profits of the said manors, lands and tenements and other [+the?] premises my said children have their convenient fi[n]ding and exhibition till they be ready to go to school, and then to be found at school, every of them after their age and degrees, each of them so to be found till he come to the age of 18 years, and over that I

will that every of my said sons and children so found to school till they be of 18 years of age have, at such time as they shall be of that age of 18 years 200 marks to and for their farther promotion, and so each of them to have for their p[r]omotion and findings the sum of 200 marks of lawful money of England;

And if it shall fortune any of them [-of them] to decease within the age of 18 years full, then his finding to cease, but I will that the sum of money assigned and appointed to and or for the promotion of them at the decease of any of them be converted and employed(?) to [+the?] remnant of them overliving to their larger promotion that God will shall overlive, and this to be done after the true intent of the premises without deceit or malengine of any person or part as they shall answer afore God;

And when that my will shall be fully executed, then I will that my said feoffees be and stand feoffees of the premises to the use and behoof of mine next heir or heirs;

In witness whereof to this my present will I have put to my seal and sign manual the day and year abovesaid. This to be overseen by th' advice of your discreet counsel & friends.

Probatum fuit suprascriptu{m} testamentu{m} coram d{omi}no Apud lamehith primo die mensis decembris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Quingentesimo ijo Iurament{o} Alexandri Baynh{a}m milit{is} parsonalit{er} present{is} et Elisabeth{e} Relect{e} in parsona dict{i} Alexandri procurat{oris} ac approbatu{m} et insinuat{um} &c Et commissa fuit admi{n}istracio o{mn}i{u}m bonoru{m} dict{i} defunct{i} dict{i}(?)

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at Lambeth on the first day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-second by the oath of Alexander Baynham, knight, personally present, and Elizabeth, relict, in the person of the said Alexander, proctor, and probated and entered etc., and administration was granted of all the goods of the said deceased said [sic?].]