

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will dated 21 August 1500, with an annexed schedule dated 24 December 1502, of Sir George Vere, a younger brother of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, and a grandson of Richard de Vere (1385?-1416/7), 11<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford and his wife, Alice Sergeaux (d.1452), from whom Edward de Vere (1550-1604), 17<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, was also lineally descended. The will was proved on 3 April 1503.

Sir George Vere married Margaret Stafford, the daughter of Sir William Stafford of Bishops Frome, Herefordshire, and Elizabeth, the daughter of Hugh Wrottesley. After the death of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, without issue, Sir George Vere's only son and heir inherited the earldom as John de Vere (1499-1527), 14<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. Sir George Vere also had four daughters: Elizabeth, who married the soldier and administrator, Sir Anthony Wingfield (b. before 1488, d.1552) of Letheringham; Dorothy (d.1527), who married John Neville (1493-1543), 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron Latimer; Ursula (d.1558), who married firstly, George Windsor (d. before 1520), and secondly, Sir Edmund Knightley (d.1542); and Margaret, about whom nothing further is known. For the will of Sir George Vere's daughter, Ursula (d.1558), see TNA PROB 11/42A, ff. 7-9. For the will of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, see TNA PROB 11/17, ff. 82-90. For the will of George Vere's son-in-law, Sir Anthony Wingfield (b. before 1488, d.1552) of Letheringham, see TNA PROB 11/36, f. 57.

In the name of God, Amen. I, George Vere, knight, being of sound mind and good memory, on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundredth do make my testament containing my last will in this manner, viz.;

First, I commend my soul to Almighty God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints, and my body to be buried in the conventual church of the priory of Earl's Colne before the altar there called Earl Richard's altar;

Item, I will to have one trental to be celebrated in the foresaid church for 30 continuous days immediately after the burial of my body, with exequies and Masses solemnly celebrated by the prior and convent of the same priory;

Item, I will to have 12 poor men at the said exequies and Masses praying in honour of the 12 apostles;

Item, I will that the same 12 poor men withdraw(?) before the sacrament of the altar, and one of them say the Lord's Prayer in honour of the Holy Trinity and the Hail Mary in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles' Creed in honour of the 12 apostles, and one of the same poor men, departing, say in English words three times, Lord have mercy on the soul of George Vere and on the souls of all the faithful departed;

Item, I will that my executors, immediately after those 30 days, provide a suitable secular priest to celebrate the trental of Saint Gregory for a whole entire year on condition that the same priest begin the exequies each day about the second hour after nones with lauds & commendations, as appears in the rubric of the same trental;

Item, I will, as is said, the priest should dispose himself to celebrate Mass every day about the ninth hour before midday;

Item, I will that the same priest [=fast?] completely every Friday for an entire year without fish or milk;

Item, I will to have every day for that entire year one poor man at the exequies and Mass, and he to say one psalterum of Blessed Mary [=rosary of 150 Ave Marias] at the exequies and another at Mass daily for that year, and I will that a poor woman perform [+the same] instead of a poor man every Saturday in the foresaid year for reverence of the most glorious Virgin Mary;

Item, I will that my executors deliver and pay to the aforesaid prior for his interest in the exequies and Masses 13s 4d, and pay to the foresaid prior £6 of lawful money of England to be distributed to his brethren for the same offices;

Item, I will that my executors pay to the forenamed prior £3 15s to be distributed among the afore-named poor men for the aforesaid 30 days, and also I will that my executors pay to the foresaid priest celebrant(/) for the trental of Saint Gregory £13 6s 8d for his office that year;

Item, I bequeath to the same priest one gown of the value of 20s;

Item, I will that my executors deliver and pay to the afore-named priest £3 15s to be distributed every day for a year to the poor men interested in the foresaid exequies and Masses for their office 2d and an offering of bread;

Item, I will that every Saturday in the abovesaid 30 days there be 12 poor women performing in place of the 12 poor men, praying and saying as above;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of the church of Castle Hedingham 10s for tithes and oblations not(?) paid;

Item, I bequeath to the nunnery of Hedingham aforesaid for the maintenance of the same house 100 mature sheep, on condition that they in no way be sold, but kept for the maintenance and profit of the same nunnery;

Item, I bequeath to the brothers of the order of Saint Francis at Colchester 13s 4d for exequies and Requiem Masses to be had;

Item, I bequeath to the brothers of the order of Carmelites at Maldon 13s 4d for exequies and Mass of Requiem to be had;

Item, I bequeath to the brothers of the order of Dominicans at Chelmsford for the same office to be had, 13s 4d;

Item, in similar manner I bequeath to the Augustinian brothers at Clare 13s 4d;

Item, I bequeath to my executors £40 to be distributed about my funerals on the day of my burial;

Item, I bequeath to Margaret, my wife, £40, and all my silver vessel called 'le plate', with all utensils of my household;

Item, I bequeath to my daughter, Elizabeth, one chain of gold weighing 26 pounds when the same Elizabeth shall have accomplished the full age of 14 years, and if she shall have died before the said age then I will that the foresaid chain be sold, and the price coming thereof be disposed by my executors;

Item, I bequeath to my daughter, Margaret, one chain of gold weighing 26 lbs. when the same Margaret shall have come to the full age of 14 years, and if she shall have died before the said age, I will that the foresaid chain be sold, & the price coming thereof be disposed by my executors;

Item, I bequeath to my daughter, Dorothy, other chain of gold weighing 26 lbs. when she shall have accomplished the foresaid age, but otherwise to be disposed as above;

Item, I will that a missal of paper and a chalice of silver be bought by my executors, and that my priest aforesaid, so long as he shall celebrate for the salvation of my soul, shall have the use of the said book and chalice, and afterwards I will that the foresaid book and chalice remain at the altar where Lord Robert de Vere, formerly Earl of Oxford, is buried;

Item, I will that all my tenements with their appurtenances as lie in Colchester be sold by my executors, and that the money arising be disposed in the execution and performance of my testament and last will by my foresaid executors;

Item, I will that one vestment of black with seemly appurtenances for the celebrant priest be bought by my executors, and that the said priest, so long as he shall celebrate for the salvation of my soul, shall have the use of the same, and afterwards they to remain at the foresaid altar with the book and chalice where the foresaid Robert is buried;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of the priory of Colne £7 in old groats to make a chalice;

Item, I will that my wife deliver, for the gilding of the same chalice, £3;

Item, I bequeath to convent of the Dominican brothers of Cambridge 40s for exequies and Mass to be celebrated by them;

Item, I bequeath to the abbess and convent of Saint Osyth £5 that they celebrate exequies and Mass for my soul;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of the foresaid priory one corporal and one case for the same, with one part to made with my arms, the other part of purple velvet;

Item I will that all my money unbequeathed be distributed between my wife and my children according to the discretion of the prepotent Lord John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, my most well beloved brother, whom I ordain, make and constitute supervisor of my present testament and last will;

The residue indeed of all my goods unbequeathed, I give and bequeath to Margaret, my wife, Richard FitzLewis, knight, Lord John Eyer, prior of the priory of Earls Colne, and William Cooke, Doctor of the Decrees(?), whom I ordain, make and constitute my true executors, they to dispose for the salvation of my soul as to them it shall seem best to do;

These witnesses: Master John Osplett and Master Thomas Goodknap, Masters of Arts, and William Okeley, with others;

Given on the day and year above-written.

This schedule made on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred second, and annexed to this testament and my last will is attested by me, George Vere, knight, to have given and bequeathed certain legacies above and beyond those which in my said testament are specified, videlicet:

Firstly, I leave to John Vere, my son and heir, one seal of the best gold called 'le signet';

Item, I leave to my same son one ring of similar gold with one 'le ruby' in the same;

Item, I leave to Richard FitzLewis, knight, my cousin, one long gown of black velvet furred with 'le foins';

Item, I leave to every of my servants, videlicet, Mary Lee, Edith Berners, James Popley, Yoni Aleyn, John Codwell and John Jegon, one of my gowns according to the discretion of Margaret, my wife;

In witness of which thing I have ordered my seal to be affixed to these presents on the day and year aforesaid.

The above-written testament, together with the schedule annexed to the same, was proved before the worshipful Master Roger Church, Doctor of the Decrees(?), Commissary of the Prerogative Church of Christ of Canterbury, at the archiepiscopal seat there vacant, on the third day of the month of April in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred third by the oath of Margaret, relict, and Lord John Eyer, Prior of Colne, executors appointed in the same testament, and probated and registered, and administration was grant of all the goods and debts of the said deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully and with unanimous consent and assent administer [+the same], and to exhibit a full and true inventory before the feast of Easter next to come, and also to render a plain and true account, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to the other executors also appointed in the same testament when they shall have come etc.]

RM: Testamentum Georgii Veer militis

1 In dei nomine amen Ego Georgius Veer miles Compos mentis et bone memorie

2 existens xxjo die mensis Augusti Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo Condo testamentum meum vltimam voluntatem meam

3 continens in hunc modum viz In primis commendo animam meam deo omnipotenti beate Marie virgini et omnibus sanctis

4 Corpus que meum sepeliendum in ecclesia Conuentuali prioratus de Colne Comitibus ante altarium ibidem vocatum Erle Richardes

5 aulter Item volo habere vnum tricennale celebrandum in ecclesia predicta per xxx dies continuos Immediate post sepulturam

6 corporis mei cum exequijs et missis solemniter celebratis per priore et Conuentum eiusdem prioratus Item volo habere xijcim

7 pauperes ad dictas exequias et missas orantes in honore xij apostolorum Item volo quod ipsi xij pauperes in recessu pergant

8 coram sacramento altaris et dicat quilibet eorum orationem dominicam in honore sancte Trinitatis ac salutacionem angelicam in

9 honore beatissime Virginis marie et simbalum apostolorum in honore xij apostolorum Ac dicat quilibet ipsorum pauperum recedendo

10 in Anglicis verbis trina vice Deus misereatur anime Georgij Veer et animabus omnium fidelium defunctorum Item volo quod

11 executores mei incontinenter post istos xxx dies prouiderint de idoneo presbitero seculari ad celebrandum trigintale sancti Gregorij

12 per totum Annum integrum Ita quod ipse presbiter incipiat omni die exequias circa horam secundam post nonam cum laudibus & commendationibus

13 prout patet in Rubrica eiusdem trigintalis Item volo vt dicitur presbiterus disponat se celebrare missam omni die circa horam

14 nouenam ante meridiem Item volo quod idem presbiterus ienuitt(?) perfecte omnibus diebus veneris per Annum integrum sine piscibus et

15 lacticinijs Item volo habere omni die per istum Annum integrum vnum pauperem ad exequias et missam et dicat vnum psalterum

16 beate Marie ad exequias et aliud ad missam cotidie pro ipsum Annum Et volo quod paupercula mulier fungat vice pauperis

17 viri omni die Sabbato in predicto Anno ob reuerenciam gloriosissime Virginis Marie Item volo quod executores mei deliberent

18 et soluent antedicto Priori pro sui interesse exequijs et missis xiijs iiijd et soluent predicto priori vj libras legalis

19 monete Anglie distribatur confratribus suis pro eisdem officijs Item volo quod executores mei soluent prefato priori iijli xvs

20 distribatur inter prenomatos pauperes per antedictos xxx dies Etiam volo quod executores mei soluant predicto presbitero celebratori

21 trigintale sancti Gregorij xiiijli vjs viijd pro officio suo illo Anno Item lego eidem presbitero vnam togam valoris xxs

22 Item Volo quod executores mei deliberent ac soluant prenomato presbitero iijli xvs distribatur omni die per Annum pauperibus(?)

23 interessentibus(?) predictis exequijs et missis pro officio suo ijd et oblationem panis Item volo quod omni die Sabbati in supradictis xxx diebus

24 sint xij paupercule mulieres fungentes vice xij virorum orantes et dicentes vtsuper Item lego summo altari ecclesie de

25 hethingham ad castrum xs pro decimis et oblacionibus nonoe(?) compensatis(?) Item lego domui monialium de hethingham predicto ad

26 sustentacionem eiusdem domus C oues matures Ita quod nullo modo vendantur sed conseruentur ad sustentacionem et proficuum

27 ipsius domus monialium Item lego fratribus ordinis sancti ffrancisci apud Colcestriam xiijs iiijd pro exequijs et missis de

28 Requiem habendum Item lego fratribus ordinis Carmelitorum apud Maldon xiijs iiijd pro exequijs et missa de Requiem habendum

29 Item lego fratribus ordinis predicatorum apud Chelmesford pro eodem officio habendum xiijs iiijd Item simili modo lego fratribus

30 Augustiniensis apud Clare xiijs iiijd Item lego executoribus meis xlii distributur circa funeralia mea in die sepulture mee

31 Item lego Margarete vxori mee xlii ac omnia vasa mea argentea vocata le plate cum omnibus vtensilibus domus mee Item

32 lego filie mee Elizabethe vnam catenam de auro ponderantem xxvj libras cum ipsa Elisabetha peruenerit ad etate xiiijcem

33 Annorum completorum Et si migrauerit ab hac luce ante dictam etatem tunc volo quod predicta Cathena vendatur et precium inde proueniens

34 per executores meos disponatur Item lego filie mee Margarete vnam catenam de auro ponderantem xxvjli cum ipsa Margareta venerit

35 ad etatem xiiijno(?) annorum completorum Et si ab hac luce migrauerit ante dictam etatem volo quod predicta cathena vendatur & dispo

36 natur per executores meos precium inde proueniens Item lego filie mee Dorothee aliam catenam de auro ponderantem xxvjli cum ad

37 predictam etatem peruenerit sinantem disponatur vtsupra Item volo quod vnum Missale de paupiro et vnum calicem de argento

38 ementur per executores meos et quod presbiter meus predictus quamdiu celebrabit pro salute anime mee habebit vsum dicti libri

39 et calicis Et postea volo quod predicti liber et calix remaneant ad altarem vbi dominus Robertus de Veer quondam Comes

40 Oxonie est sepultus Item volo quod omnia tenamenta mea cum suis pertinentijs prout iacent in Colcestria per executores meos vendantur Et quod

41 pecunie prouenientes disponatur in execucione et performance mei testamenti et

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vltime voluntatis mee per executores meos predictos Item

42 volo quod vnum vestimentum de nigro cum pertinentijs decentis presbitero celebranti per executores meos ematur et quod dictus presbiterus

43 quamdiu celebrabit pro salute anime mee habeat vsum eorundem et postea remaneant ad predictam altarem cum libro et calice vbi predictus Robertus est sepultus Item lego summo altari prioratus de Colne vijli in antiquis grossis ad fabricandum calicem

44 Item volo quod vxor mea deliberet pro deauracione eiusdem calicis iijli Item lego Conuentum fratrum predicatorum Cantabrigiensis

45 xls pro exequijs et missa per eos celebrandum Item lego Abbatissam et Conuentum sancti Osithe vli vt exequias et missam

46 celebrent pro anima mea Item lego summo altari predicti prioratus vnum corporale et vnam tecam pro eodem cum vna

47 pars erit fabricatur armis meis altera pars de velueto purpureo Item volo quod omnes pecunie mee non legate

48 distribuantur inter vxorem meam et pueros meos secundum discretionem prepotentis viri domini Iohannes de

49 Veer Comitum Oxonie predilectissimi fratris mei quem ordino facio et constituo superuisorem mei testamenti

50 et vltime voluntatis presencium Residuum vero omni bonorum meorum non legatorum do et lego Margarete vxori mee

51 Ricardo ffitzlews militi Dompno Iohanni Eyer priori prioratus de Colne comitis et Willelmo Cooke de

52 cretorum doctori quos ordino facio et constituo meos veros executores vt illi disponant pro salute anime mee

53 prout eis melius videbitur expedire Hijs testibus magistro Iohanne Osplett et magistro Thoma Goodknapp

54 in artibus magistras ac Willelmo Okley cum alijs Datum die et Anno suprascriptis

1 Hec scedula facta xxiiij die mensis Decembris Anno domini Millesimo Quingentesimo secundo et

2 annexa hunc testamento et vltime voluntati mee testatur me Georgium Veer militem dedisse ac

3 legasse certa legata preter et vltra ipsa que in dicto testamento meo sunt specificata videlicet In primis

4 lego Iohanni Veer filio meo et heredi vnum sigillum de auro optimum vocatum le signett Item lego eidem filio

5 meo vnum annullum de simili auro cum vno le Ruby in eodem Item lego Ricardo ffitzlewes militi consanguineo

6 meo vnum togam talarem de velueto nigro penulatam cum le foynes Item lego cuilibet famulorum meorum

7 videlicet Marie Lee Edithe Barners Iacobo Popley Yoni Aleyn Iohanni Codwell et Iohannj

8 Jegon vnam de togis meis secundum dicretione Margarete vxoris mee In Cuius Rei testimonium sigillum

10 meum presentibus apponi mandauit Die et Anno predictis

1 Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum vna cum scedula eidem annexa coram venerabili

2 viro Magistro Rogero Church decretorum doctore prerogatiue ecclesie Xpi Cantuariensis sede Archiepiscopali ibidem vacante

3 commissario tercio die mensis Aprilis Anno Dominj Millesimo quingentesimo tercio Iuramento Margarete Relicte

4 et Dompni Iohannis Eyer prioris de Colne executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum Ac approbatum et insinuatum Et

5 commissa fuit administracio omnium bonorum et debitorum dicti defuncti prefatis executoribus De bene et fideliter ac

6 sub vnanimi consensu et assensu administrando Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario citra festum Pasche proximum futurum

7 exhibendo Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddendo Ad sancta dei euangelia iuratorum Reseruata potestate similem

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8 commissionem faciendi alijs executoribus in huiusmodi testamento nominatis etiam cum venerint etc.