

SUMMARY: The document below is the will, dated 4 July 1632 and proved 13 May 1633, of Oxford's sister-in-law, Katherine Trentham.

The testatrix was the daughter of Sir Ralph Sheldon of Beoley and his wife Anne Throckmorton. For Anne Throckmorton, see:

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenT.htm>

*Anne Throckmorton (1540-1603) was the daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton (1510-February 12, 1581) of Weston Underwood, Buckinghamshire, and Muriel Berkeley (d.1542). She was raised by her stepmother, Elizabeth Hussey, who bore Anne's father several children, including another daughter named Anne (d.1605+). The Anne Throckmorton of this entry married Ralph Sheldon of Beoley, Worcestershire (1537-1613), her third cousin. Their children were William, Elizabeth, Philippa, Anne, Edward (1561-1643), Mary, Muriel, Jane, Margaret, Catherine, and Frances. The family remained Catholic in Elizabeth Tudor's England and built the Sheldon chapel in St. Leonard's church at Beoley for private worship.*

The testatrix had other Catholic connections through three of her mother's stepsisters, Mary, Muriel and Anne, the daughters of Sir Robert Throckmorton (c.1510-1581) and his second wife, Elizabeth (nee Hussey) Hungerford Throckmorton (d. 23 January 1554):

--Mary Throckmorton (d.1603) married Edward Arden (1533-1583) of Park Hall, executed for treason in 1583. Edward Arden (1533-1583) of Park Hall was the son of William Arden (d.1545), a second cousin of Mary Arden, the mother of William Shakespeare of Stratford on Avon;

--Muriel (d.1615) Throckmorton married the recusant Sir Thomas Tresham (1543-1605) of Rushton Hall, who in his youth had been a ward of Sir Robert Throckmorton;

--Anne Throckmorton, married Sir William Catesby (1547-1598); their son, Robert Catesby (b. in or after 1572, d. 1605), was involved in the Gunpowder plot in 1605.

The testatrix' sister, Elizabeth Sheldon, married Sir John Russell (1552-1593), the stepbrother of Thomas Russell (1570-1634), overseer of the will of William Shakespeare of Stratford. For the tempestuous marriage of Sir John Russell and the testatrix' sister, Elizabeth Sheldon, see Hotson, Leslie, *I, William Shakespeare, Do Appoint Thomas Russell, Esquire* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), pp. 29 ff. For the will of Sir John Russell, see TNA PROB 11/92, ff. 52-5.

About 1591 the testatrix married Francis Trentham (d.1626), brother of Oxford's second wife, Elizabeth (nee Trentham) de Vere (d.1612), Countess of Oxford.

In her will, Elizabeth Trentham de Vere (d.1612), Countess of Oxford, left the following bequests to the testatrix and to two of the testatrix' daughters:

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<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/>

*Item, I give unto my sister Trentham my borders of rubies and diamonds, my white satin gown, my plain black satin gown, my petticoat of cloth of gold, and my kirtle of white satin with gold lace;*

*Item, I give unto Vere Trentham, my god-daughter, my jewel enamelled with red, and diamonds in it;*

*Also, I give and bequeath unto Marie Trentham (whom I intend, if God give me life, to educate and train up) five hundred pounds towards her preferment in marriage, the same to be paid after my debts and all my other legacies be satisfied and paid, and the charges of my funeral and tomb be discharged.*

LM: T{estamentum} Catherine Trentham

In the name of God, Amen. I, Katherine Trentham, widow, late wife of Francis Trentham of Rocester in the county of Stafford, esquire, deceased, being at this time in perfect health and memory (thanks be to God for it), yet considering the uncertainty thereof and of this life in this transitory world, do therefore hereby make and ordain this my testament, declaring my will in manner & form following, viz.:

First I commend my soul to Almighty God that gave it, hoping by the only merits of Jesus Christ to have free remission of my sins and finally everlasting life;

And for my body, I wish it may be buried in Christian manner at the discretion of my executors hereafter named;

And for my worldly goods whereof God hath made me owner, I do hereby dispose them as followeth:

First I give and bequeath to the poor of the parish of Rocester the sum of five pounds current money, to be paid by my executor within six months next after my decease, and distributed by & with the privity and consent of the churchwardens and overseers of the poor for the said parish for the time being;

Item, I give and bequeath unto every one of my children, sons and daughters, the sum of forty shillings apiece, to be paid unto them by my executor within twelve months next after my decease;

Item, all the residue of my goods, chattels, plate, jewels, ready money, household stuff, implements of husbandry and household, and chattels whatsoever I give and bequeath unto my worthy good friend, Richard Congreve of Stretton in the county of Stafford aforesaid, esquire, whom I ordain and make sole executor of this testament, my funeral charges being first paid, my debts discharged, and my legacies performed;

In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal the fourth day of July in the eighth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles by the grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc. Anno Domini one thousand six hundred thirty-two.

Katherine Trentham

Witnesses to the same: Thomas Mabbs, Thomas Congreve, the mark of Elizabeth Fawne, Francis Mabbs, John Ireland his mark.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud London coram venerabili viro domino Henrico Marten Milite legum doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuar{ensis} Magistro Custode sive Commissario l{egi}time constituto decimo tertio die mens{is} Maij Anno domini Millesimo sexcentesimo tricesimo tertio Iuramento Richardi Congeave Armigeri Executoris in huiusmodi Testamento nominat{i} Cui Commissa fuit Administratio omnium et singulorum bonorum iurium et Creditorum dicti defuncti De bene et fideliter Administrando eadem Ad sancta Dei Evangelia Coram Sampson Newton Cl{er}ico Vigore Commissionis in ea parte al{ia}s Emanat{e} Iurat{i} ex{aminatus}

[=The above-written testament was proved at London before the worshipful Sir Henry Marten, knight, Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Count of Canterbury, on the thirteenth day of the month of May in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred thirty-third by the oath of Richard Congreve, esquire, executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, before Sampson Newton, clerk, by virtue of a grant in that part elsewhere issued. Examined]