

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 1 May 1518 and proved 22 January 1519, of John Danyell, esquire, of Felsted, Essex, servant of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford.

On 28 October 1506 the 13th Earl appointed the testator constable of Castle Hedingham. He was granted an annuity of £10 in the Earl's will, and was named as an executor. See Ross, James, *John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford 1442-1513*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), pp. 200, 231; and the will of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford, TNA PROB 11/17/379.

In the will below, the testator requests that a priest sing ten years for his soul and the souls of his family and that 'the said priest shall specially pray for the soul of the full noble and valiant knight, my late singular good Lord and master, John de Vere, late Earl of Oxenford'.

Ross states that the testator's son was in the service of the 13th Earl's widow, Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Beaumont De Vere, Countess of Oxford. See Ross, *supra*, p. 231:

His son John was a receiver of the earl's widow at the time of her death in 1537, receiving a bequest worth £40.

The 13th Earl's widow did have a servant, John Danyell, who was her receiver, as well as a witness to her will, TNA PROB 11/17/144:

Item, I give and bequeath to John Danyell, my receiver, a standing cup of silver and gilt with a cover, newly made, weighing 37 ounces di{midium}, di{midium} quarter, to be of the value of £10 sterling.

However in his will below the testator makes no mention of a son, and leaves the profits from his lands in trust to 'my cousin, John Danyell of Messing, my nephews, Doctor Knightley and William Knightley, his brother'.

It thus seems likely that the Countess of Oxford's receiver was the testator's cousin, John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556) of Messing (see below).

John Danyell was also named as an executor in the will of the Countess' brother-in-law, Sir John Seyntclere, TNA PROB 11/31/383, and it seems likely that he, too, was the testator's cousin, John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556) of Messing.

For the will of John Danyell of Messing, see ERO D/ABW 12/80.

The testator's nephews, 'Doctor Knightley and William Knightley, his brother', appear to have been the sons of Sir Thomas Knightley of Bent, Staffordshire. See:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/168672667/thomas-knightley>

The testator's nephew, William Knightley (d. 27 January 1548?), married firstly Margaret Pawe, and secondly Agnes Hare. His daughter, Winifred Knightley, was the mother of Sir Edward Coke. See Boyer, Allen, D., *Sir Edward Coke and the Elizabethan Age*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 2 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=lkEv6eccC44C&pg=PA2>

Winifred Knightley Coke, the Chief Justice's mother, came from a family at least as old and likely more prominent. Her grandfather, Andrew Pawe, had practiced law in Norwich for thirty-odd years, beginning under Edward IV and continuing into the reign of Henry VIII. William Knightley had practiced law in Norwich for forty-five years, from around 1495 to around 1540. (He seems to have lived most of a decade beyond this; the Chief Justice's longevity may have been inherited from this side of the family.). William belonged to the Knightley family who were prominent in Northamptonshire; he may have settled in Norwich upon marrying Margaret Pawe. The Pawe family's status was reason enough. Old Andrew had been town clerk for Norwich and clerk of the peace for Norfolk, and he had married his daughters well. Winifred's sister Audrey married Sir Thomas Gawdy – lawyer and landholder, right-hand man to the Duke of Norfolk, father of two judges, connections which would be invaluable to Coke.

Other lasting connections were forged at this juncture. William Knightley's second wife Agnes was the sister of Lord Keeper Sir Nicholas Hare. . . . Winifred's other sister, Lettice, had a granddaughter who married Sir Ranulph Crewe. . . .

For the will of William Knightley, see NRO Will register 55 (Wymer).

For the tomb of the testator's nephew, Dr Matthew Knightley (d. 9 June 1561), in the Church of All Saints, Cossington, Leicestershire, see:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1228032>

See also 'Cossington Genealogical Records' at:

<https://forebears.io/england/leicestershire/cossington>

. . . and in the north wall, within a recessed feathered arch, with triangular crocketed head, is a panelled altar tomb with quartered shield of arms to Matthew Knightley D.D. a former rector, ob. 9 June, 1561.

See also:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/153756045/matthew-knightley>

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For pedigrees of the Danyell family, see Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Suffolk*, (Exeter: William Pollard, 1882), pp. 24-5, 132 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationsofsuf00harvuoft/page/24>

See also the pedigrees at:

<http://prattens.co.uk/FAMILIES/DANIEL/trees.html>

See also ‘A Genealogical Note-Book of the Venerable Arthur Bell, OSF, Martyr, 1638’:

<http://prattens.co.uk/FAMILIES/DANIEL/bell.html>

See also ‘Daniel family of Acton’ at:

<http://www.prattens.co.uk/families/DANIEL/notes.html>

The testator’s immediate family background, including the names of his parents, is unknown.

According to the *ODNB*, the testator was a cousin of John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556), esquire, of Herberts in Messing, Essex, son of Edmund Danyell (d.1498?), esquire, of Stoke by Nayland, Suffolk, and Grace Baynard, daughter and heir of Richard Baynard (d.1473) of Messing. For Edmund Danyell, see his will, dated 20 September 1497 and proved 19 December 1498, TNA PROB 11/11/526. For Grace (nee Baynard) Danyell, see her will, dated 6 December 1508 and proved 16 March 1509, TNA PROB 11/16/317. In the will she mentions her sons, Edmund Danyell, deceased, John Danyell, Thomas Danyell, George Danyell, Edward Danyell, and her daughters Jane Danyell (who married Sir John Jermyn of Metfield, Suffolk), Katherine Danyell (who died without issue), and Elizabeth Danyell (abbess of Malling Kent). According to the Danyell pedigree, *supra*, p. 24, she had another daughter, Margaret Danyell, who married a husband surnamed Greene of Witham, Essex.

The testator’s cousin, John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556), married Elizabeth Denny (d.1516 or 1517), the daughter of Sir Edmund Denny (d.1520), Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and the sister of Mary (nee Denny) Gates (d.1583?), whose husband, Sir John Gates (1504–1553), was named as an executor in the 1552 will of the 16th Earl of Oxford. See the will of Sir Edmund Denny, TNA PROB 11/19/409.

Another of the testator’s cousins was Thomas Danyell (b. after 1488, d.1566), a younger brother of John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556). See the *ODNB* entry:

Danyell, Thomas (b. after 1488, d. 1566), administrator, probably was born in Suffolk shortly after 1488, the third of five sons of Edmund Danyell, esquire, of Stoke by Nayland, Suffolk (d. 1497×1504), and his wife, Grace (d. 1509), daughter and heir of Sir

Richard Baynard of Messing, Essex. In the will of his mother, dated 6 December 1508, Danyell and his younger brothers were each assigned the annual sum of £5 until they attained the age of twenty on condition that they continue their 'learning'. No information on Danyell's education survives, and his early life is obscure before he entered the service of Thomas Howard (1443–1524), earl of Surrey, duke of Norfolk, and lord treasurer of England. Danyell's paternal grandparents were Sir Thomas Danyell of Rathwire, Ireland, constable of Dublin Castle, and Margaret, sister to John Howard, first duke of Norfolk (d. 1485). In 1494 his father was named executor for the duke's widow.

As clients of the Howards, the Danyell family rose within East Anglia and at court. On 16 July 1517 Thomas Danyell was admitted for life by Norfolk to the recently vacated position of writer of the tallies in the receipt of the exchequer. There he joined his cousin Henry Everard, esquire, of Deverston, Suffolk, secretary to the lord treasurer in 1514 and subsequently a teller of the exchequer (1514–40), and other members of the Howard entourage. Danyell's eldest surviving brother, John, esquire, of Messing, had already married a daughter of Edmund Denny (d. 1519/20), lord treasurer's remembrancer and baron of the exchequer. Another cousin, John Danyell, gentleman, of Felsted, Essex (d. 1518), was in the service of John de Vere, earl of Oxford. Thomas Danyell continued to be active in the private affairs of the Howard family until at least 1540.

It seems likely the testator was also related to Ralph Danyell of Swaffham, who married Margaret Blake, by whom he had two daughters:

-**Margaret Danyell**, who married Sir William More (1520-1600) of Loseley.

-**Elizabeth Danyell**, who married Anthony Bedingfield, uncle of Oxford's friend, Thomas Bedingfield, who dedicated his translation of *Cardanus' Comfort* to Oxford. See the will of Thomas Blake, TNA PROB 11/15/341.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married a wife named Margery, whose family background is unknown. For her will, dated 20 July 1521 and proved 24 April 1523, see TNA PROB 11/21/102.

By his wife, Margery, the testator had a daughter:

* **Mary Danyell**, who married John Newport (d.1524) of Pelham Furneux, by whom she had a daughter, Grace Newport (c.1515–c.1549), who married Sir Henry Parker (d.1552). See the *ODNB* entry for their son, Henry Parker (1531/2-1577), 11th Baron Morley:

Parker, Henry, eleventh Baron Morley (1531/2–1577), Roman Catholic exile, was the eldest son of Sir Henry Parker (d. 1552) and his first wife, Grace (c.1515–c.1549), daughter and heir of John Newport of Pelham Furneux. . . .

For the inquisitions post mortem taken after the death of John Newport, see TNA PROB C 142/42/96 (Hertford) and TNA C 142/42/125 (Essex).

RM: Test{amentu}m Ioh{an}nis Danyell

In the name of God, Amen. I, John Danyell of Felsted in the county of Essex, gentleman, being in good and whole mind, not vexed, troubled nor diseased with my bodily sickness, knowing and considering well the uncertainty and unstableness of this wretched life and that there is nothing so certain to every creature in this world living as is departure of the same, and nevertheless nothing so uncertain as the time and hour thereof, ordain and make this my present testament and last will the first day of May in the year of Our Lord God 1500 and 18 and in the 10th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8th in manner and form ensuing:

First I give and bequeath my soul to the infinite mercy of Almighty God, Maker and Redeemer thereof, to the most Blessed and Glorious Virgin, Our Lady Saint Mary, Saint John Evangelist, Saint John Baptist, Saint Austin [=Augustine], Saint Anthony, Saint George, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the chapel in the south side of the church of Felsted aforesaid before th' image of the Blessed Trinity there if I depart this uncertain life within 10 miles of the same, and if not, then to be buried where it please Almighty God and after the discretions of mine executors and as to them shall seem best;

Item, I will that all my debts sufficiently proved to be due by my writing or otherwise and by me owing to any person be truly and duly content and paid with [sic] my debts do appear and be contained in a schedule hereunto annexed and in my book of reckoning, as well such debts as I do owe to any person as such debts as to me owing;

And also I will that unto all persons duly and sufficiently proving that I have injured or wronged them against reason and good conscience be made restitution, wherein I trust that few or none have or shall have cause to complain;

Item, I give and bequeath to the Holy Sacrament of the high altar in the church of Felsted aforesaid in recompense of my tithes and offerings by me forgotten and omitted 26s 8d;

Item, I will that the most and best disposed priest be provide[d] by mine executors, and shall by the space of 10 years next ensuing my departure sing in the said chapel of the Trinity if my body be buried there, and if not then the five first years next after my decease to be accomplished by the said priest where it shall please Almighty God that my body shall be buried, and the other 5 years in like wise to be accomplished in the said chapel of the Trinity, and my very will is that the said priest shall specially pray for the soul of the full noble and valiant knight, my late singular good Lord and master, John de Vere, late Earl of Oxenford, for my soul, and for the souls of all them that I am bound to pray for, the souls of my father and mother, the souls of my wife's father and mother, for

my children's souls, and all Christian souls, and the said priest to have for every of the said 10 years 8 marks sterling money, and that the said priest for that time be charged with dirges, commendations and other prayer as shall be thought by mine executors most expedient for the weal of my soul and the souls before rehearsed, and that the more part of the said Masses by him during the said ten years to be said and sung shall be of the Holy Ghost and of the 5 Wounds of Christ;

Item, I will that forthwith and incontinent after my death my said executors shall cause 8 trentals to be said and done in the said church of Felsted or else whereas my body shall be buried by the most virtuous priests that they can provide or get to sing and pray for my soul and for the souls of them that I am bound to pray for;

Item, I will that my said executors shall within one year next after my departure distribute and give for the weal of my soul to 5 the poorest men in the said parish of Felsted having wives and children, in the worship of the 5 Wounds of Christ and to th' intent that they shall specially pray for my soul and for the souls of them that I am bound to pray for, to every of them 5s in ready money or else in garments and clothes after the discretions of my said executors after the rate of the said money;

And where I have and hold the manors of Felsted and Gr{a}unt Court{es} [=Grandcourts] by lease of my Lady th' Abbess and Convent of the Monastery of Syon for term of certain years, to have and enjoy the same to mine executors, administrators and assigns during the said years as by the same lease more at large doth appear, I will and ordain by this my last will and testament that my cousin, John Danyell of Messing, my nephews, Doctor Knightley and William Knightley, his brother, shall have and enjoy all my right, interest and estate in the same to th' intent that they shall suffer Margery, my loving wife, to take the profits thereof by all the years that she shall fortune to live after my decease, paying yearly to my said Lady [f. 102v] and to her successors such sums of money as I by my life paid for the same farm by the time that I occupied the same, and immediately after her decease I then will that the said John Danyell, Doctor Knightley and William Knightley shall suffer Mary, my daughter, to take the profits of the premises during her life, she paying to my said Lady and to her successors as my said wife is before limited to pay;

And if the said Margery, my wife, and Mary, my daughter, decease within and during the years of my said lease, I then will that the profits of the residue of the years so then not expired nor ronnen [=run] and the money thereof coming to be bestowed towards the finding of poor priests, and scholars to the universities, and other charitable deeds as far as it will stretch and extend after their discretions for the most weal of my soul;

Provided always that my said cousins, John Danyell, Doctor Knightley and William Knightley, shall make no grant of the said term ne of any part thereof to my said daughter, Mary, during the time of her coverture;

And over this I will that all my feoffees that now be and hereafter shall be of and in my tenement called Woodes and of and in all other lands and tenements which I have

purchased lying and being within the parish of Felsted aforesaid shall stand and be seised in the same to th' use and performance of this my testament and last will, and the revenues thereof coming shall be employed towards the finding and salary of the priest before rehearsed during the time of the said ten years, and after the said 10 years be expired, then I will that the said feoffees shall stand and be seised of and in the premises to th' use of my said wife during her life, and after her death to th' use of my said daughter, Mary, and of her heirs forever;

Item, I give and bequeath to the marriage of my cousin, Katherine Danyell, five marks, to be paid to her within one year next after my departure if she be in my service at the time of my said departure, or else not;

The residue of all my goods movable and unmovable I give and bequeath to my said wife to her own proper use, and if I had much more than I have now at my said departure I could and would be right well content that she should have the same forsomuch as she hath taken great pains and labours in and about the getting thereof, and trust verily for the great love that hath been continually between us that she therefore will have my soul the rather in her special remembrance as may stand in her power, not doubting but she will leave to our said daughter, Mary, when God shall call my said wife to his mercy, such of her substance as she may conveniently, if my said daughter be then if life;

And for the performance of this my testament and last will I ordain and make mine executors Margery, my said loving wife, my cousin, John Danyell of Messing, my nephews, Doctor Knightley and William Knightley his brother, and my said cousins to have for their pain and labour as my said wife shall seem best for th' execution of this my testament and last will;

In witness whereof I, the said John Danyell, to this my testament and last will have set my seal and sign manual the day and year abovesaid, and written the same by good deliberation with mine own hand the day and year abovesaid.

Probatum fuit testamentum supradicti defuncti huiusmodi &c Coram domino apud Lameth xxijdo Die mensis Ianuarij Anno Domini Millimo quingentesimo xvijdo Iuramentis Iohannis Danyell personaliter presentis et Margerie Relicte In persona Thome Argall procuratoris executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum Ac approbatum & insinatum &c Et Commissa fuit administrationum bonorum & debitorum dicti defuncti prefatis executoribus De bene & fideliter administratione Ac de pleno & fideliter Inuentario citra festum sancti Mathie proximum futurum exhibendo Necnon de plano & vero compoto reddendo Ad sancta dei evangelia Iurat Reseruat potestate similem commissionem faciendi alios executoribus &c cum venerint xiiijdo die Iunii Anno domini Millimo quingentesimo xxvdo comissa fuit consimilis administratione bonorum predicti defuncti Mr Mathei Knightly

cl{er}ico executori etiam etc in p{er}sona Ric{hard}i ffelde notarij pu{bli}ci
procu{rato}ris sui etc Ad sancta dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{o}

[=The testament of the abovesaid deceased, having etc., was proved before the Lord at Lambeth on the 22nd day of the month of January in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 18th by the oath of John Danyell, personally present, and Margery, relict, in the person of Thomas Argall, proctor, executors named in the same testament, and probated & entered etc., and administration was granted of all the goods & debts of the said deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well & faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full & faithful inventory before the feast of Saint Matthew next to come, and also to render a plain & true account, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to the other executors etc. when they shall have come. On the 14th day of June in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 25th a similar administration was granted of the goods of the foresaid deceased to M{aster} Matthew Knightley, clerk, also executor, in the person of Richard Field, notary public, his proctor in that respect etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels.]