

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 28 April 1521 and proved 2 October 1522, of Sir John Peche, whose wife, Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Peche (d.1544), was a first cousin of Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Beaumont de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, second wife of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford.

The testator and his wife had no children, and the male line of the testator's family died out with him. In the will below, the testator leaves his property to his nephew, Sir Percival Harte, son of the testator's sister, Elizabeth (nee Peche) Harte (d.1543), and her first husband, John Harte.

Another of the first cousins of the testator's wife, Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Peche (d.1544), was Margaret (nee Scrope) de la Pole (d.1515), widow of Edmund de la Pole (1472?-1513), 8th Earl of Suffolk, a claimant to the throne who was executed in 1513. Margaret (nee Scrope) de la Pole (d.1515) lived with the testator and his wife during the last years of her life (see Harris, Barbara J., *English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 173, available online). In the will below, the testator includes her among those whose souls are to be prayed for in his chapel at Lullingstone:

Also I will that my chapel at Lullingstone aforesaid shall be made up and finished of my costs as I have showed unto my friends, and that I have a priest there substantially founded, and to sing and pray perpetually for the souls of my good father and mother, Sir William Peche, knight, there being buried, and Dame Jane, his wife, my soul, my wife's soul, Dame Margaret Suffolk's soul, our friends' [+and] benefactors' souls, and all Christian souls.

The relations of the testator's wife, Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Peche (d.1544), are known to have been owners of books and manuscripts:

*The Foyle manuscript is an excellent example of the kind of 'reading circle' mentioned above; as Meale points out, it 'is richly suggestive of the kind of relationships, often encompassing a shared piety which joined women together . . . ' (Meale, *oft sibus* 35). The manuscript evidently remained at Barking until the dissolution; an inscription records that the book was given by Margaret Scrope, who was a nun at Barking prior to the dissolution, to Mistress Agnes Goldwell, a gentlewoman in the household of her sister, Elizabeth Scrope Peche. This inscription connects the manuscript with the book-owning female Scropes. The need for a detailed study of the reading habits of the female Scropes has been pointed out before. However a brief summary is not amiss. The children and grandchildren of Henry, Fourth Baron Scrope of Bolton and his wife, Elizabeth Scrope (a distant cousin) were avid readers and patrons of vernacular literature, especially the women. The Scrope women, in particular, provide evidence of the extent to which manuscripts passed between lay and religious women readers, suggesting that the needs and tastes of devout laywomen were not so very different from their religious sisters.*

See Wada, Yoko, ed., *A Companion to Ancrone Wisse* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), pp. 166-8, available online.

For the will of Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Beaumont de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, first cousin of the testator's wife, see TNA PROB 11/27, ff. 84-6. For the will of Mary (nee Scrope) Jerningham Kingston (d.1548), first cousin of the testator's wife, see TNA PROB 11/32, ff. 168-9. For the will of Margaret (nee Scrope) de la Pole (d.1515), first cousin of the testator's wife, see TNA PROB 11/18, ff. 44-5. For the will of the testator's wife, Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Peche (d.1544), see TNA PROB 11/30, ff. 92-3. For the will of the testator's heir, Sir Percival Harte, dated 15 February 1578, see TNA PROB 11/62, ff. 153-6.

One of the testators executors was Henry (1456/7-1523), 1st Baron Marney, whose daughter, Grace Marney (d. in or after 1553), married Sir Edmund Bedingfield (1479/80-1553), whose grandson, Thomas Bedingfield (d.1613), dedicated his translation of *Cardanus' Comfort* to Oxford (see STC 4607 on this website). For the will of Thomas Bedingfield (d.1613), see TNA PROB 11/122, f. 21. For the will of Sir Edmund Bedingfield (1479/80-1553), see TNA PROB 11/36, ff. 142-3.

The Roger Harlakenden named in the testator's will is unidentified. However it seems likely that he was related to the Roger Harlakenden whom Oxford sued for fraud in the sale of Colne Priory in 1594 (see ERO T/B 177/4, ERO D/DU256/1, and TNA C 24/239).

LM: Testamentum Iohannis Peche militis

In the name of God, Amen. In the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord God 1521 the 28 day of April in the 13 year of the reign of King Henry the 8th, I, John Peche of Lullingstone in the county of Kent, knight, being of good memory and perfect mind, thanked by God, I make, ordain and declare my present testament and last will in manner and form following:

First I bequeath my soul to the mercy of Almighty God, my Maker and Saviour, and to his Blessed Mother, Saint Mary, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried whereas it shall please Almighty God of his grace to dispose for it;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of Lullingstone 10s;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of Eynsford 20s;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of Shoreham 13s 4d;

Item, I bequeath to Mistress Margery Otwell one of the Queen's Chamberers with her Grace, £10;

Item, I bequeath to John Hall, merchant of the Staple, and Katherine, his wife, or to the lenger liver of them £20 in plate, of the which £20 worth of plate I will that after the decease of them two that George, their son, the which is my godson, shall have £10 worth of the same plate;

Item, I bequeath to my sister, to the relieving of her and her children, £20;

Item, I bequeath to John Browne, merchant of the Staple, £20;

Item, I bequeath to Laurence Bonvice £20;

Item, I bequeath to Anthony Baveryn £30;

Item, I will that mine executors shall do or cause to be done in deeds of charity for Master Saxbeis soul to the value of £20;

Item, I bequeath to Percival Harte the chief of all my wearing gear and raiment, and all my harness, except I will that every of my servants that be dwelling with me at the time of my decease shall have one harness;

Also I bequeath to Roger Harlakenden £10;

Item, I bequeath to William Hodsale of Chepsted [=Chipstead?] 20s;

Item, to the heirs of Edmund Page £10;

Item, I bequeath to Goldesborow the poulter of London 40s;

Item, I will that every of my servants dwelling with me at the time of my decease shall have his whole wages for the year next after my decease to pray for my soul, which I esteem will draw to the sum of £60 or thereabouts;

All the residue of my goods after my debts paid and my legacies fulfilled I give freely and wholly to my wife, she to dispose them at her pleasure and the weal of my soul, whom I make and ordain to be my executrix of this my present testament and last will, and Sir Henry Marney and John Whiztwode, my steward, to be executors with my said wife, and I bequeath to the said Sir Henry Marney for his labour, pain and diligence in that behalf as much plate as shall amount to the sum of £10, and to the said John Whiztwode as much plate as shall amount the [sic] the sum of £5;

Also I ordain and depute my Lord of Canterbury and my Lord of Rochester to be supervisors of this my present testament, and I bequeath unto my said Lord of Canterbury a gilt cup with a cover and a scripture in the foot, & the cup of assay to the same;

Also I bequeath to my Lord of Rochester another cup of the same fashion and making except it lacketh the scripture, and the cup of assay lacketh also;

Also I will that my chapel at Lullingstone aforesaid shall be made up and finished of my costs as I have showed unto my friends, and that I have a priest there substantially founded, and to sing and pray perpetually for the souls of my good father and mother, Sir William Peche, knight, there being buried, and Dame Jane, his wife, my soul, my wife's soul, Dame Margaret Suffolk's soul, our friends' [+and] benefactors' souls, and all Christian souls, the which foundation of the said priest I will shall be made by mine executors and by th' advice of their counsel, and the priest to have 10 marks a year out of my manor of Eynsford, and 20s a year out of the same manor yearly to be devised to them that shall control the said priest, and to see the chapel kept in good reparations, and the same priest to be named and put in by my wife during her life, and after her decease to be named and elect by the Bishop of Rochester always for the time being, and to sing in the said chapel forever, as is abovesaid.

This is the last will of me, the said Sir John Peche, knight, as touching all my lands, manors and tenements, rents and services with their appurtenances set and being within the said county of Kent or elsewhere whereof that I or any other man is seised or possessed to my use:

First I will that my wife shall have all my whole manors, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and services and all and singular their appurtenances freely to her own proper use during her natural life, keeping sufficient reparations, except I will that John Whizthed shall have all my lands at Grenestede and at Pinden during his natural life, keeping thereof sufficient reparations and paying thereof to the chief lords of the fee the rents of assize that ought of right and custom to be paid out of the said lands and tenements;

Also I will that Thomas Gleve shall have yearly 40s paid unto him during his natural life out of my farm that Alen dwelleth in above the hill, and that to be made sure to him by mine executors and feoffees to be yearly paid out of the said farm unto the said Thomas during his natural life in manner and form abovesaid;

Also I will that after the decease of my wife that all my whole manors, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and services with all and singular their appurtenances except before excepted to the foresaid John Whizthed and Thomas Gleve if they then overlive my said wife, shall remain to the above-named Percival Harte and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten;

Also I will that after the decease of the above-named John Whizthed and Thomas Gleve that all my foresaid lands and tenements as well at Grenstret and Pynden as all the other whole manors, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and services with all and singular their appurtenances shall wholly remain unto the said Percival Harte and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of heirs of the said Percival lawfully begotten,

then I will that all my said manors, lands and tenements with the premises and all and singular their appurtenance shall remain to the next heirs of my body for ever;

And I will and charge all my feoffees that be enfeoffed in any of all my said manors, lands and tenements with th' appurtenances or any parcel of them, that they do make feoffments and estates according to this my present testament and last will as they shall answer before God at the Day of Judgment when they thereunto shall be reasonably required;

And over that I will that if it so fortune that my sister, the which is the natural mother of the above-named Percival, do fortune to live at such time that it shall fortune my said wife to decease and that my said lands shall remain unto the said Percival, then I will that the said Percival shall pay yearly out of my said lands unto his said mother 20 marks by year during her natural life, and that to be made sure to her by my said feoffees during her life as is before said;

Item, I will that notwithstanding that is above-written, that my wife have all my household stuff and plate not bequeathed during her life, and if she need, as I trust to God shall not, to help her, that she sell part of my plate, or to give amongst her kin the value of £20 or more after her conscience and necessity, but all the residue I trust to her verily to leave Percival Harte, and if he die afore her, then she to dispose the best she can for the weal of both our souls, our fathers' and mothers' souls and all our friends' souls;

Furthermore I charge my wife and my executors that by the advice and judgment of my Lord of Canterbury they do make satisfaction to every person that righteously can complain, and that for the clearness of my conscience and discharge of my soul;

Furthermore I give to Mistress Walsingham, Mistress Hall and Mistress Walter, to each of them a gilt cruse of the value of £4 apiece;

Also, where before I have bequeathed to Percival Harte many bequests, part immediately after my decease, part after the decease of my wife, I will nevertheless that if the said Percival by himself or by his mother my sister, or by any other for them, do trouble my wife for any lands that I have granted and given unto her for term of her life, that then he shall enjoy none of my lands purchased or any other movables before-rehearsed, but that my wife shall dispose both lands and movables after her death as she shall think it best for the weal of her soul and mine, and if case he do content him and make no trouble against my wife by him nor by none other for him, but that my wife restfully enjoy all that I have granted her, then I will that he in like wise enjoy all his bequests above-rehearsed;

In witness whereof to this my present testament and last will to the same annexed I have put to my seal the day and year above-written in the presence of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, (blank) Maleverey, Commissary to the said Bishop, Sir John Dene, chaplain, Robert Rippon, and Thomas Gleve.

This is the will of me, Sir John Peche, knight, being in Ireland at the city of Dublin the 26th day of May in the 13 year of the reign of my Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8th:

Item, I will that my wife have my chains that I have here, which are worth upon £220 good to make therewith my chapel as is devised in my will that I made at my coming into Ireland, and all the money with all other things that I have given her, as apparel, horses, harness and plate, that she have it to perform my will;

In witness whereof I have written this bill with mine own hand and put to my seal the year and day above-written.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum coram domino aput knowell secundo die mensis Octobris Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo vicesimo secundo ac Approbatum et insinuatum Et comissa fuit administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum et debitorum dicti defuncti Domine Elisabethe Relicte et Iohanni Whightwode executoribus in huiusmodi testamento nominatis De bene et fideliter administrando eadem Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario exhibendo necnon de plano et vero computo calculo siue ratiocinio in ea parte reddendo ad sancta dei Euangelia Iuratis Potestate reseruata similem commissionem faciendi alteri executori cum venerit eam in debita iuris forma admissuro

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord [+Archbishop] at Knole(?) on the second day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred twenty-second, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods and debts of the said deceased to Lady Elizabeth, relict, and John Whitewood, executors named in the same testament, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory, and also to render a plain and true account, calculation or reckoning in that regard, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to the other executor when he shall have come to be admitted the same in due form of law.]