

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 13 June 1523 and proved 3 July 1523, of the wealthy clothier, Thomas Spring of Lavenham. The testator and John de Vere (1442-1513), 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, were major benefactors of the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Lavenham (see [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/church\\_gallery\\_03.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/church_gallery_03.shtml)).

Margaret Spring, the daughter of the testator's brother, John Spring, married Oxford's uncle, Aubrey de Vere, second son of John de Vere (1482–1540), 15<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. The testator's niece, Margaret Spring, was thus the grandmother of Robert de Vere (d.1632), 19<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford. See Anderson, Verily, *The De Veres of Castle Hedingham*, (Lavenham, Suffolk: Terence Dalton, 1993), p. 141.

The testator is said to have married, firstly, Anne King of Boxford, and secondly, Alice (d.1538), the daughter of Thomas Appleton of Waldingfield. For the will of the testator's second wife, Alice (d.1538), see TNA PROB 11/27, ff. 166-7.

The testator was succeeded by his son, Sir John Spring, who married Dorothy Waldegrave, the daughter of Sir William Waldegrave (d.1527). For the will, dated 8 June 1544, of Sir John Spring, see TNA PROB 11/32, ff. 235-6. For the will, dated 15 April 1564, of his widow, Dorothy (nee Waldegrave) Spring, see TNA PROB 11/47, f. 228. For the will of Sir William Waldegrave (d.1527), see TNA PROB 11/22, ff. 227-8.

One of the testator's daughters married Sir Thomas Jermyn (d.1552) of Rushbrook. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/35, ff. 258-261.

The testator's daughter, Rose Spring, married Thomas Guybon of Lynn, Norfolk.

The testator's youngest daughter, Bridget Spring, married firstly, William Ernley of Cookham, Sussex, and secondly, Sir Henry Hussey of Slynfold, Sussex. For her will, see TNA PROB 11/40, ff. 138-9.

LM: Testamentum Thome Sprynge

In dei nomine amen. The 13<sup>th</sup> day of June in the year of Our Lord God 1523 and in the 15 year of the reign of King Henry the 8<sup>th</sup>, I, Thomas Spring of Lavenham in the county of Suffolk and in the diocese of Norwich, cloth-maker, being of whole mind and memory and perfect remembrance and verily knowing that there is nothing more sure or more certain to any creature in this wretched world than death, which every creature living inevitably must suffer, and nothing more unsure and uncertain than the dreadful hour thereof, fully disposing and purposing myself by the mercy, grace and help of the most merciful Lord Christ Jesus to be at all and every time and hour ready, do make my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First I annual and revoke all other wills and testaments ever afore this day made and declared, and will that every of them shall be of no strength nor effect;

Item, I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, to his Blessed Mother Mary, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the Church of Lavenham before the altar of Satin Katherine where I will be made a tomb with a parclose thereabout by the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I bequeath to the high altar of Lavenham for my tithes and offerings negligently forgotten and not paid 100s;

Item, I will that satisfaction and restitution be made to every person complaining and duly proving any injury, wrong, extortion, oppression, deceit or any misbehaving or demeaning against reason and conscience by me to them done in any wise;

Item, I will that immediately after my decease in as hasty time as it may be conveniently done, there shall be a thousand Masses sung for the wealth of my soul;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of the houses of friars of Clare, Sudbury, Babwell, two houses of friars in Thetford and the nuns of Thetford to pray for my soul and all my benefactors' souls and to every of them 40s;

Item, I will that there be disposed the 30<sup>th</sup> day after my decease and departing out of this world one hundred pounds in all such towns and parishes as I have any lands and tenements, that is to say, to have a Mass with dirge in every church, and the money to be disposed to the priests, clerks and poor folks to pray for my soul and all my benefactors' souls;

Item, I give and bequeath to the finishing of the steeple of Lavenham two hundred pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to the reparation of highways to be disposed where mine executors shall think most necessary about the town of Lavenham 100 marks;

Item, I bequeath and give to Alice, my wife, all her apparel with jewels, and one thousand marks in money and pennyworths over and beside six hundred marks that she brought to me at the time of her marriage, which 600 marks I will that be paid her over and beside the said thousand marks;

Item, I will that all my plate, ornaments and implements of household as bedding, napery, hangings, brass, pewter and all other hustlements of house be divided between my wife and John Spring, my son, by mine executors;

Item, I give and bequeath to Alice, my wife, 2 of my best horses and 3 kine such as she will choose;

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Item, I will that the wood in my yards and my corn and malt upon the sollars be equally divided between my wife and John, my son, except such as shall be spent by mine executors about my interment and other things touching the ministration of my goods;

Item, I give and bequeath towards the marriage of Bridget Spring, my youngest daughter, five hundred marks to be delivered to her at the age of 16 years, and if it happen the said Bridget to die afore she come to the age of 16 years, then I will the said five hundred marks be divided equally between my children's children then living;

Item, I give and bequeath to John Spring, mine eldest son, two hundred pounds;

Item, I give to Frances, his daughter, one hundred marks;

Item, I give and bequeath to Robert Spring, my son, two hundred pounds;

Item, I give to every of the children of Thomas Jermyn now living £20, and if any of them die before the age of 16 years, then I will the part or parts of them so departed or deceased be evenly divided amongst the other then living;

Item, I give and bequeath to every child of my daughter, Rose Guybon, now living £20, and if any of them die before the age of 16 years, then I will that the part or parts of them so departed or deceased be evenly divided amongst the other then living;

Item, I will that mine executors do pay unto my wife's daughter, Alice May, when she shall be of the age of 16 years, £26 13s 4d which I recovered for her of Maye's executors;

Item, I will that if Robert Newman and William Goding of Bocking do not pay the said Alice Maye £40 at the age of 16 years, that then mine executors shall sue a certain obligation in which they be bound to me;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of my godchildren 3s 4d;

Item, I will there be distributed among my household servants so much money as shall be thought necessary by the discretion of mine executors;

The residue of all my goods and chattels not given nor bequeathed I give it to the disposition of mine executors whom I ordain and make Sir William Waldegrave, knight, and Thomas Jermyn, my son-in-law, desiring and requiring them in the way of charity to order and dispose the same in charitable deeds as they shall think most expedient to the pleasure of God and for the wealth of my soul;

Item, my mind and will is that if my wife or any of my children do interrupt, let or trouble any article comprised in this my last will and testament so that this my last will cannot take effect according to the true intent thereof, then I will that all legacies and bequests to them before given that so do interrupt be void and of none effect, and that such person or persons so interrupted or troubled shall have and enjoy the same legacy

and bequest which was bequeathed to him or them that shall make such trouble, vexation and business;

And further I require and charge John Spring, mine eldest son, upon my blessing that he hinder not, disturb nor let this my testament and last will in no point, but that he endeavour himself as much as in him is to perform and accomplish the same according to the truth;

Item, I give to the bailiff of Lavenham, William Betryn, one hundred pounds, whereof I will that John, his son, have £20;

Item, I give and bequeath to Peter Gawge, mine apprentice, 10 half bales of wood [sic?];

In witness of the truth I have sealed and delivered this as my last will and testament in the presence of William Betryn, bailie of Lavenham, Henry Symond, William Wooder and Peter Turns.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascripti defuncti Coram prefatis Commissarijs in ecclesia Cathedrali diui pauli London tercio die mensis Iulij Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo xxiiio Iuramentis executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum In persona Thome Argall procuratoris Ac approbatum & insinuatum Et commissa fuit administracio auctoritate prefatorum Reuerendissimorum patrium omnium & singulorum bonorum Iurium & creditorum dicti defuncti prefatis executoribus In persona dicti procuratoris de bene & fideliter administrando Ac de pleno & fideli Inuentario citra festum sancti Edwardi Regis proximum futurum exhibendo Necnon de plano & vero compoto reddendo Ad sancta dei Euangelia in debita iuris forma Iuratis

[=The testament of the above-written deceased was proved before the forenamed Commissioners in the Cathedral Church of [+Saint?] Paul on the third day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 23<sup>rd</sup> by the oaths of the executors named in the same testament in the person of Thomas Argall, proctor, and probated & entered, and administration was granted by the authority of the Most Reverend Fathers of all & singular the goods, rights & credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law in the person of the said proctor to well & faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full & faithful inventory before the feast of Saint Edward, King, next to come, and also to render a plain and true account.]