

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 30 May 1537 and proved 6 November 1537, of Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Beaumont de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, second wife of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testatrix was born Elizabeth Scrope, one of the daughters and co-heirs of Richard Scrope (d.1485) by Eleanor Washbourne (d.1505/6), the daughter of Norman Washbourne (1433-1482) and Elizabeth Kniveton, daughter of Henry Kniveton of Bradley, Derbyshire. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 548.

The testatrix' father, Richard Scrope (d.1485), was the second son of Henry Scrope (1418 – 14 January 1459), 4th Baron Scrope of Bolton, by his wife, Elizabeth Scrope (d. 10 May 1504), the daughter of John Scrope (c.1388 - 15 November 1455), 4th Baron Scrope of Masham, Lord Treasurer of England, and Elizabeth Chaworth (d.1466?). Through his grandparents, Richard Scrope (31 May 1394 - 29 August 1420), 3rd Baron Scrope of Bolton, and Margaret Neville (d.1463/4), daughter of Ralph Neville, 1st Earl of Westmorland, by Margaret Stafford (d. 9 June 1396), Richard Scrope was a descendant of Geoffrey Plantagenet (1113–1151), King Henry II (1133–1189) and King Edward I (1239–1307) of England. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, p. 612, Vol. III, pp. 187-90, 290, 412, 670-3; Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. IV, pp. 199-200; the entries for Scrope of Bolton and Scrope of Masham in *The Complete Peerage*, Vol. XI, pp. 543-4, 548; and the *ODNB* entries for Henry Scrope (c.1376-1415), 3rd Baron Scrope of Masham, and John Scrope (1437/8-1498), 5th Baron Scrope of Bolton.

See also the Scrope pedigree in Norcliffe, Charles Best, ed., *The Visitation of Yorkshire in the Years 1563 and 1564*, (London: Harleian Society, 1881), Vol. XVI, 280-1 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofyork00flow#page/280/mode/2up>

For the will of the testatrix' father, Richard Scrope (d.1485), see the copy on this website and in Raine, James, ed., *Testamenta Eboracensia*, Vol. III (London: Surtees Society, 1865), pp. 297-9 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/testamentaebora05claygoog#page/n307/mode/2up>

For the will of the testatrix' mother, Eleanor (nee Washbourne) Scrope Wyndham (d.1505/6), see TNA PROB 11/15/3.

By Richard Scrope, Eleanor Washbourne (d.1505/6) had a son, Stephen, and a daughter, Dorothy (d.1491), who died young, and seven daughters who survived to adulthood:

-Elizabeth Scrope, the testatrix.

-Eleanor Scrope, who married her stepbrother, Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1522) of Felbrigg. See his will, TNA PROB 11/21/53. For their children, and his second marriage to Elizabeth Wentworth (living 1542) see below. See also the Wentworth pedigree in Rutton, William Loftie, *Three Branches of the Family of Wentworth*, (London: 1891), pp. 138-9 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=YhY5AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA138>

-Margaret Scrope (d.1515), who married Edmund de la Pole (1472?-1513), 8th Earl of Suffolk, a claimant to the throne who was executed in 1513. For her will, see TNA PROB 11/18/128. Edmund de la Pole's paternal grandparents were William de la Pole (1396-1450), 1st Duke of Suffolk (executed 1450), and Alice Chaucer (c.1404-1475), only child of Thomas Chaucer (c.1367-1434), son of the poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, author of *The Canterbury Tales*. At one time the Earls of Oxford owned the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, which contains a 'balade' on the House of Vere by one Rotheley in a hand dating from 1450-1480. The de Vere ownership of the Ellesmere manuscript may have resulted from the fact that the 13th Earl's wife, Elizabeth (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, was the sister-in-law of Edmund de la Pole (1472?-1513), grandson of Alice Chaucer.

-Mary Scrope (d. 25 August 1548) married firstly, Sir Edward Jerningham (d. 6 January 1515) of Somerleyton and, secondly, Sir William Kingston (d. 14 September 1540), Constable of the Tower of London. For her will, see TNA PROB 11/32/320.

-Katherine Scrope, who married Richard Audley of Swaffham, Norfolk, eldest son and heir of Sir John Audley (died 18 April 1530) of Swaffham Market, Norfolk, and his first wife, Muriel Brewes, daughter of Sir Thomas Brewes (d. 17 June 1482) of Little Wenham, Suffolk, by his second wife, Elizabeth Debenham (d.1503). The will of Sir John Audley, dated 12 January 1527 and proved 6 June 1532, indicates that his son, Richard, had predeceased him, leaving a son, John Audley. In 1531 Roger Townshend (d.1551), who had married Amy Brewse, the granddaughter of Sir Thomas Brewes (d. 17 June 1482) by his first wife, Margaret Calthorpe, sold the wardship of John Audley to Elizabeth de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, for £300, while keeping the wardship of Edmund Audley, John's younger brother, for himself (see Moreton, *supra*, pp. 6, 96, 125). By the time Elizabeth (nee Chedworth?) Blake Audley (d.1542), widow of Thomas Blake, esquire, and the second wife of Sir John Audley (d. 18 April 1530) made her will on 30 April 1541, Richard Audley's son, John Audley, appears to have died. For the will of Thomas Blake, see TNA PROB 11/15/341. For the will of Sir John Audley (d. 18 April 1530), see TNA PROB 11/24/210. For the will of Elizabeth Blake Audley (d.1542), see TNA PROB 11/29/21.

-Jane [Joan] Scrope, who married Thomas Brewes [Brewse] (d.1514), of Little Wenham, Suffolk, son of Robert Brewes of Little Wenham (d. 7 December 1513) and

Katherine Wingfield (d.1525), the daughter of Sir John Wingfield (d. 10 May 1481) of Letheringham and his wife Elizabeth FitzLewis (b. about 1426, d.1500?), and grandson of Sir Thomas Brewes (d. 17 June 1482) of Little Wenham, Suffolk, and his second wife, Elizabeth Debenham (d.1503). Through his maternal grandparents, Sir John Wingfield (d. 10 May 1481) of Letheringham and his wife Elizabeth FitzLewis (b. about 1426, d.1500?), Thomas Brewes (d.1514) was a descendant of King Edward I and Eleanor of Castile (see Richardson, *supra*, pp. 373-4). Jane Scrope and Thomas Brewes (d.1514) had three children: Ursula, a nun at Denny, buried at Little Wenham 9 December 1598; Sir John Brewes of Little Wenham, born 13 December 1512, died 13 February 1585, aged 73; and Giles Brewes of Denton, Norfolk (d.1558/9). For the foregoing, see the Brewes pedigree in Crisp, Frederick Arthur, *Fragmenta Genealogica*, Vol. VIII (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1996), pp. 57-60, available online; the discussion of the Brewes family in Moreton, *supra*, pp. 95-100; the will of Elizabeth (nee Debenham) Brewes (d.1503), TNA PROB 11/13/418; and the will of Thomas Brewes (d.1514), TNA PROB 11/18/97. Since Robert Brewes and Muriel Brewes were brother and sister, their children, Thomas Brewes (d.1514) and Richard Audley, were first cousins. Jane Scrope and her sister Katherine Scrope therefore married husbands who were first cousins.

-Anne Scrope, a nun at Barking.

For the Scrope pedigree in Norcliffe, Charles Best, ed., *The Visitation of Yorkshire in the Years 1563 and 1564*, (London: Harleian Society, 1881), Vol. XVI, 280-1 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofyork00flow#page/280/mode/2up>

After the death of the testatrix' father, the testatrix' mother, Eleanor Washbourne Scrope (d.1505/6), married Sir John Wyndham (beheaded 6 May 1502) of Crownthorpe, Norfolk, whose first wife, whom he married in 1467, was Margaret Howard (born c.1451), daughter of John Howard (d. 22 August 1485), 1st Duke of Norfolk. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 272-3. See also Sharpe, Thomasin Elizabeth, comp., *A Royal Descent with Other Pedigrees and Memorials*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1875), p. 6 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=dqVbarc4qt8C&pg=PA6>

By his first wife, Margaret Howard, Sir John Wyndham had three sons and three daughters:

-Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1522) who married firstly the testatrix' sister, Eleanor Scrope (see above), by whom he had two sons and three daughters:

(1) Sir Edward Wyndham (d.1569), who married Susan Townshend, the daughter of Roger Townshend (d.1551) and Amy Brewes. See Moreton, C.E., *The Townshends and Their World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 39.

(2) Sir John Wyndham. In the will below the testatrix leaves a bequest to ‘my nephew, John Wyndham’.

(3) Margaret Wyndham, who married Sir Andrew Luttrell.

(4) Mary Wyndham (d. 1 January 1597), who married Erasmus Paston (buried 6 November 1540), esquire. See Richardson, *supra*, Vol. III, p. 549.

(5) Elizabeth Wyndham.

After the death of the testatrix’ sister, Eleanor Scrope, Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1522) married secondly, before 1509-10, Elizabeth Wentworth (living 1542), widow of Roger Darcy (d. 30 September 1508), esquire. See the will of Sir Henry Wentworth (c.1448 - August 1499) of Nettlestead, TNA PROB 11/12/265.

By Elizabeth Wentworth Darcy (living 1542), Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1522) had one son, Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1554), for whom see the *ODNB* entry. After the death of Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1522), Elizabeth Wentworth Darcy Wyndham (living 1542) married thirdly John Bouchier (20 July 1470 – 2 June 1541), 1st Earl of Bath. See Richardson, *supra*, Vol. III, pp. 548-9.

-Edward Wyndham.

-George Wyndham, Archdeacon of Norfolk.

-Anne Wyndham, who married Thomas Radcliffe, esquire.

-Elizabeth Wyndham (d.1537) who married firstly Sir Francis Calthorpe (d.1544). For Sir Francis Calthorpe’s second wife, Elizabeth Berney (d.1582), daughter of Ralph Berney, esquire, see Blomefield, Francis, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, Vol. IV, (London: William Miller, 1806), p. 31 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=3tovAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA31>

-Dorothy Wyndham.

By Sir John Wyndham (d.1502), the testatrix’ mother had one daughter:

-Frances Wyndham (d.1546?), who married Sir John Seyntclere. See his will, TNA PROB 11/31/383, and Richardson, *supra*, Vol. III, p. 548. The testator leaves bequests to her half sister, Frances, and her husband, Sir John Seyntclere, and to two of their children, Giles Seyntclere and Elizabeth Seyntclere, in the will below

MARRIAGES

The testatrix married firstly, as his second wife, William Beaumont (1436 – December 1507), 2nd Viscount Beaumont, who had been divorced from his first wife, Joan Stafford, (d. before 1485) daughter of Humphrey Stafford (15 August 1402 – 10 July 1460), 1st Duke of Buckingham, and Anne Neville (1414–1480), daughter of Ralph Neville (c.1364-1425), 1st Earl of Westmorland. See Ross, James, *John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford (1442-1513), 'The Foremost Man of the Kingdom'*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), p. 97; the will of Sir William, Knyvet, TNA PROB 11/18/352; and Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 186-8, and Vol. III, pp. 253-6 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=kjme027UeagC&pg=RA1-PA188>

The testatrix married secondly, in 1508, as his second wife, John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford, but had no issue by either marriage. For the will of the 13th Earl, see TNA PROB 11/17/379.

TESTATRIX' EXECUTORS

Sir William Kingston

For Sir William Kingston (c.1476-1540) see the *ODNB* entry, his will, TNA PROB 11/28/542, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/kingston-sir-william-1476-1540>

Sir Philip Paris

In the will below, the testatrix leaves a bequest to Sir Philip Paris (d.1558), and appoints him as one of her executors. In his own will, proved 20 January 1559, TNA PROB 11/42A/230, Sir Philip Paris leaves a bequest for prayers for the testatrix' soul:

And the same priest at the time of his service doing in the said church continually and from time to time to pray for the souls of Stephen, late Bishop of Winchester, Lady Elizabeth, late Countess of Oxford, John Lorde, priests, and for the souls of his father and mother, and for the souls of Sir Philip Paris and of Margaret and Dame Agnes, his late wives, his father and mother their souls, and for all the souls which the said sir Philip is bound to pray for, and for all Christian souls.

For Sir Philip Paris, see also the will, dated 30 April 1541 and proved 14 January 1542, of Elizabeth (nee Chedworth) Blake Audley, TNA PROB 11/29/21; and 'Sir Philip Paris of Linton (1492-1558)', Linton and District Historical Society at:

<http://archive.is/tPtd>

John Ryther, esquire

Another of the Countess' executors, and the comptroller of her household, John Ryther (c.1514-1552), was later comptroller of the household of Oxford's father, the 16th Earl. See Higgs, Laquita M., *Godliness and Governance in Tudor Colchester* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp. 49-50:

More obviously a protégé of [the 16th Earl of] Oxford than were either [John] Lucas or [Anthony] Stapleton was John Ryther, who served with Lucas in Edward VI's first Parliament in 1547. There is no indication that Oxford dictated the selection of Lucas and Ryther, but it is quite possible that Oxford, as an active supporter of the Protestant Reformation, wanted the right people elected and used his influence to get them elected. Ryther's father had been a servant to the thirteenth earl, and Ryther began his service to the de Veres as comptroller of the household of Elizabeth, dowager countess, and after her death, comptroller of the sixteenth earl's household. Probably the Oxford connections helped bring Ryther to the office of cofferer of the household of Prince Edward and then of the royal household, but even earlier Ryther would have come to the attention of Colchester when he was appointed by Thomas Cromwell to report on the alleged embezzlement by one of the abbot's servants of the jewelry of Colchester abbey. Ryther served only in the 1547 Parliament for Colchester, as he died before another Parliament was elected.

According to the History of Parliament entry, John Ryther was likely the son of Nicholas Ryther of Castle Hedingham:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/ryther-%28ryder%29-john-1514-52>

For Nicholas Ryther, brother of Sir Ralph Ryther (d. 2 April 1520), see Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 111, and the pedigree of Ryther of Scarcroft, in Dugdale, William, *The Visitation of the County of York*, (London: Surtees Society, 1859?), p. 235 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ykNjAAAACAAJ&pg=PA235>

For the will of John Ryther, see TNA PROB 11/35/362.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

The testatrix leaves numerous bequests to her surviving sisters of the whole blood, who can be identified from the description of her family given above. She also leaves bequests to John de Vere (1482-1540), 15th Earl of Oxford, and his sons and daughters, three of whom were her godchildren -- John de Vere (1516-1562), the future 16th Earl of

Oxford (referred to in the will as 'Lord Bulbeck'), Aubrey Vere, and Elizabeth Vere (d.1564/5), Lady Darcy, second wife of Thomas (1506-1558), 1st Lord Darcy of Chiche. There is also a bequest to Lord Bulbeck's first wife, Dorothy (nee Neville). It seems likely that the 'Richard Hardekyn, yeoman usher of my chamber' to whom the Countess leaves a bequest for his service to her, was the father of Elizabeth Hardekyn, who married the 16th Earl of Oxford's brother, Geoffrey Vere. Elizabeth Hardekyn and Geoffrey Vere were the parents of Sir Francis Vere and Sir Horatio Vere.

Frances Baynham

The testatrix leaves a bequest to Frances Baynham, then one of her maidens:

Item, I give and bequeath to Frances Baynham, one of my maidens, five pounds in ready money.

Frances Baynham (d.1583) was the granddaughter of Sir William Kingston (d. 14 September 1540), second husband of the testatrix' sister, Mary Scrope, and married the testatrix' grandson, Sir Henry Jerningham (d. 6 September 1572), Mary Scrope's eldest son and heir by her first marriage to Sir Edward Jerningham (d.1515). For the will of Frances Baynham Jerningham, see TNA PROB 11/66/340.

Anthony Stapleton

The testatrix also leaves a bequest towards the legal education of Anthony Stapleton (c.1514-1574):

Item, I give and bequeath to Anthony Stapleton, towards his learning at the common law, ten pounds in money.

Stapleton was later a member of the council of John de Vere (1516-1562) 16th Earl of Oxford, and was granted an annuity by the Earl on 3 June 1544 (see TNA C 142/13612). Stapleton was witness to the will dated 1 February 1549 extorted from the 16th Earl by the Protector Somerset (see TNA C 66/848).

For Anthony Stapleton, see also the will of his father-in-law, Sir Michael Dormer (d.1545), Lord Mayor of London, TNA PROB 11/30/546.

Both the History of Parliament and Norcliffe appear to be in error with respect to the identity of Anthony Stapleton's parents. See:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/stapleton-anthony-1514-74>

See also Norcliffe, Charles Best, ed., *The Visitation of Yorkshire in the Years 1563 and 1564*, (London: Harleian Society, 1881), Vol. XVI, pp. 295-6 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationofyork00flow#page/296/mode/2up>

It appears that Foster, Dugdale and Harwood are correct in stating that Anthony Stapleton was the second son of Sir Brian Stapleton (d. 2 April 1550) by his second wife, Johanna or Joan Basset (d.1552/3), the daughter of Thomas Basset of North Luffenham, Rutlandshire. See the pedigree of Stapleton of Carlton in Foster, Joseph, *Pedigrees of the County Families of Yorkshire*, (London: W. Wilfred Head, 1874), Vol. II at:

<http://archive.org/stream/pedigreesofcount02fost#page/n187/mode/2up>

See also Clay, J.W., ed., *Dugdale's Visitation of Yorkshire, With Additions*, (Exeter: William Pollard & Co., 1899), p. 167 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/dugdalesvisitati01dugd#page/166/mode/2up>

See also Harwood, H.W. Forsyth, ed., *The Genealogist, New Series*, (London: George Bell & Sons, no date), Vol. XVI, pp. 241-2 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/genealogist1619selb#page/n499/mode/2up>

See also the Stapleton papers at Hull University:

<http://archiveshub.ac.uk/data/gb50-uddca;ddca%282%29;ddca%283%29;ddca%284%29;ddca%285%29>

The testatrix' legatee, Anthony Stapleton, was thus the son of one of the coheirs of the testatrix' first husband, William Beaumont (1438 – 9 December 1507), Viscount Beaumont. According to George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage*, (London: The St Catherine Press, 1912), Vol. II, pp. 62-5, the coheirs of the testatrix' first husband, Viscount Beaumont, were his great nephews, viz., (1) Sir Brian Stapleton (d. 2 April 1550), son and heir by Joan Lovell (d. before 4 January 1485), wife of Sir Brian Stapleton (d. 16 December 1496) and eldest daughter of John Lovell, Lord Lovell, by Joan Beaumont (d. 5 August 1466), sister of William Beaumont (1438 – 9 December 1507), Viscount Beaumont, and (2) Sir John Norreys (d.1564), son and heir of Frideswide Lovell, second and youngest daughter of the said Lord Lovell by the said Joan Beaumont (d. 5 August 1466). Sir John Norreys died without legitimate issue in 1564, and was succeeded by his brother and heir, Henry Norreys, who was attainted and executed in 1536. The latter's son and heir, another Henry Norris (d.1600), was restored in blood in 1572 as Lord Norris of Rycote, and was grandfather of Oxford's son-in-law, Francis Norris, Earl of Berkshire, husband of Oxford's daughter, Bridget Vere.

John Danyell

John Danyell was the testatrix' receiver, and a witness to her will. According to Ross, he was the son of the 13th Earl's executor, John Danyell (d.1519) of Felsted, Essex. See Ross, James, *John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford 1442-1513*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), pp. 200, 231. However it should be noted that in his will, TNA PROB 11/19/189, John Danyell (d.1519) of Felsted makes no mention of a son.

The testatrix' receiver thus appears to have been John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556) of Messing, Essex, a cousin of John Danyell (d.1519) of Felsted. John Danyell (d. 5 September 1556) of Messing was also likely the John Danyell named as an executor in the will of the Countess' brother-in-law, Sir John Seyntclere, TNA PROB 11/31/383.

Robert Rochester

For Sir Robert Rochester (c.1500-1557), see the *ODNB* entry:

Rochester, Sir Robert (c.1500–1557), administrator, was the son of John Rochester (d. 1508), of Terling, and his wife, Griselda Writtle. He was born into a minor Essex gentry family, which had court connections established by his grandfather, also Robert Rochester, a yeoman of the pantry to Henry VIII. John Rochester died young, and his son may have been brought up in the household of the earls of Oxford. Robert Rochester had become receiver of John de Vere, sixteenth earl of Oxford, by 1542, and from him he received the bailiffship of Lavenham, Suffolk.

John Fabyan

John Fabyan was the testatrix' marshal of the hall:

Item, I give and bequeath to John Fabyan, marshal of my hall, for his good faithful service, twenty nobles in money.

Another member of the Fabyan family had also been in the testatrix' service. See the will, TNA PROB 11/25/127, of Robert Fabyan (d.1534), who describes himself as 'Robert Fabyan, otherwise called Clerke, steward of household with the right honourable Lady Elizabeth Countess of Oxford th' elder, and prebendary of Stobreclare [sic for 'Stoke Clare']?. The will was witnessed by Thomas Westly, priest, and Edward Cole, 'servants to the said honourable Lady'.

There is a connection between the Waldegrave and Fabyan families and the Earls of Oxford in that Sir William Waldegrave was an executor of the 13th Earl's will. See the will, dated 26 January 1525 and 6 July 1525 and proved 6 March 1528, TNA PROB 11/22/294.

And whereas I was one of the executors to the noble Earl of Oxenford, I make declaration that none of his goods, jewels nor money do rest in my hands other than I have paid for.

Sir William Waldegrave's sister, Anne Waldegrave, married John Fabyan, nephew of the chronicler, Robert Fabyan (d.1513). The 'John Fabyan, esquire' who witnessed Sir William Waldegrave's will may have been Anne Waldegrave's husband, and may also have been the testatrix' marshal of the hall.

See also the nuncupative will, dated 20 July 1540 and proved 9 May 1542, of Anne Waldegrave's son, Thomas Fabyan, parson of Polstead, Suffolk, to whom Sir William Waldegrave left a bequest in his will:

Item, to my nephew, Parson Fabyan, a book in Latin called Liber Sentenciarum.

It is of interest that Henry Scrope (b. c. 1373, beheaded 5 August 1415), 3rd Baron Scrope of Masham, elder brother of the testatrix's grandfather, John Scrope (b. c. 1388, d. 15 November 1455), 4th Baron Scrope of Masham, is the Lord Scrope who is implicated in the Cambridge conspiracy in the anonymous play *Sir John Oldcastle*, and is the Lord Scrope of Masham who is executed for his alleged part in that conspiracy in Act II, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

It is also of interest that the testatrix' relations 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 Ancrene Wisse* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), pp. 166-8, available online.

Robert Goldingham

For the testatrix' gentleman-usher, Robert Golding, see his will, TNA PROB 11/31/505. See also the will of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford, *supra*, and the will of Margaret Ryther, TNA PROB 11/29/155.

RM: Tes{tamen}t{um} D{omine} Elizabeth{e} Comitisse Oxon{ie}

[f. 84r] In dei no{m}i{n}e Amen. I, Elizabeth, Countess of Oxenford, being in my pure widowhood and in my perfect mind and memory, knowing and considering the mutable and uncertain state of this present life, desiring to be in readiness whensoever it shall please our most merciful Saviour to call me from the same, do ordain and make this my present testament and last will the 30th day of May in the year of our Lord God 1537 and in the 29th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8th in manner and form following, that is to say:

First, I give and bequeath my soul unto the infinite mercy of Almighty God, Maker and Redeemer of the same, to the most blessed and glorious Virgin, Our Lady Saint Mary, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the parish church of Wivenhoe by the corps and body of my dear Lord and sometime husband William, late Viscount Beaumont, whose soul Jesus pardon, utterly renouncing all manner of pomp and vain expenses in and about the same, and I renounce and revoke by this my testament and last will all other former testaments, wills, bequests and legacies by me made afore the date above-written;

I will that all my debts sufficiently proved to be due by any writing or otherwise by me owing to any person be wholly and truly contented and paid, and in like manner I will that unto all persons duly and sufficiently proving that I have injured or wronged them, or taken any goods of them against reason and good conscience, be made full recompense and restitution, and forasmuch as I have had experience that to general doles as well the rich as the poor and needy persons do resort, I will therefore that no such common doles be made for me if mine executors by any good means may by their wisdom otherwise use it, and that I will to every parish near adjoining to the place of my burial be delivered by mine executors to the curate or curates, the churchwardens, & certain other honest men of every of the said parishes, such sums of money as shall be thought by mine executors convenient towards the relief of the poor and impotent persons of every of the said parishes, [RM: And in the church of every of the said parishes] I desire to have upon the thirty day next after my departure from this present life or thereabouts Dirge and Mass of Requiem to be said or sung, for the which to be done I will the curate, clerk or clerks of every of the said parishes to have competent reward by the discretion of mine executors, at which Mass and Dirge I will and desire that all and every poor people within their own parish to be present there to pray for my soul, my father, my mother, my husband's souls, and all Christian souls except he or they have a reasonable cause to be absent;

Also I will in like manner certain sums of money to be distributed by the discretion of my executors to the curates, clerks and poor people of every parish and parishes, as well

where I am patroness as where I have lands and livelihood, for like intent and purpose as afore is mentioned;

Item, I will and require mine executors that they, as shortly after my decease as they may or convenient[ly] can provide, shall cause to be said or sung for my soul, for the souls of my father and mother, and my Lord my husband's soul, two hundred Masses, that is to say, fifty of the Trinity, fifty of the Holy Ghost, fifty of the Five Wounds, and fifty of Requies, and to reward the sayers of the said Masses for every Mass so often times said or sung, 12d in money;

Item, I give and bequeath to the picture of Our Blessed Lady of Walsingham, in th' honour of God and her, my marrying ring, or else the value of the same ring to be distribute amongst the poor people dwelling within the same town of Walsingham; this I defer unto the discretion of my executors;

Item, I give & bequeath to the parish church of Wivenhoe my best vestment and my best cope of crimson velvet, my best chalice, and my 2 altar-cloths of crimson velvet with a pane of blue velvet in the midst of the same, and a frontlet of the same suit;

Also I give and bequeath to the chantry there, for the altar of Saint John the Baptist within the same church, 2 altar-cloths of blue velvet with a pane of crimson velvet in the midst of them, and one frontlet of white cloth of baudekin and crimson paned;

Also, I give and bequeath to the abbess of Barking and to her sisters 4 marks in money, they to sing Dirge and Mass of Requies for my soul and the souls afore-named;

Also I give and bequeath to the high altar of the church of Syon besides London my best altar-cloth of white cloth of baudekin, and to the brethren and sisters there being four marks in money for like intent afore rehearsed; to the brethren of the Charterhouse of Sheen for like [f. 84v] intent, 40s in money; to the brethren of the Charterhouse in London for like intent, other 40s in money; to the Nunnery Minors in London for like intent, other 40s in money; to the abbess and nuns of Denny for like intent, four marks in money;

I give and bequeath to Dame Ursula Brewes, my niece, to pray for my soul, 40s in money; to the Friars Preachers in Cambridge for Dirge and Mass to be sung there for the souls afore-named, four nobles in money; to the Grey Friars in Colchester for like intent, 20s in money; to the Crossed Friars in Colchester for like intent, 10s in money; to the Friars Augustines of Clare for like intent, 20s in money; to the Friars Preachers in Sudbury for like intent, other 20s in money; to the Friars Preachers in London for Dirge and Mass for my soul and my father there buried, 40s in money; and to the Friars Augustines in Norwich for Dirge and Mass for my soul & mother there buried, 40s in money;

Also I give and bequeath to 3 scholars of Cambridge to pray for my soul and the souls afore-named, to every of them four marks in money for one time;

Also I give and bequeath to the chantry of Donington in Suffolk one of my copes of blue cloth of baudekin;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor prisoners in Colchester Castle, in Newgate within London, in the Marshalsea and in the King's Bench in Southwark, in Melton jail in Suffolk, in the Castle of Cambridge, in Hertford jail, and in the shire jails of Lincoln and Leicester, to either of the said jails in ready money 6s 8d, to be distribute amongst the poor prisoners there;

Item, I give and bequeath to the right honourable and my singular good Lord, John de Vere, now Earl of Oxenford, 7 tapets of counterfeit arras of the story of Solomon lately by me bought of the Bishop of Ely[']s executors; item, a round sparver of yellow and russet satin [LM: paned, embroidered with roses & letters of gold, & curtains of yellow & russet sarsenet] to the same; item, a tester of tinsel satin and black velvet paned for a trussing bed, embroidered with clouds and drops of gold, and four curtains of purple sarsenet to the same, and a trussing bedstead belonging to the same tester lately by me bought of the Lady Curson; item, 2 of my best featherbeds with 2 bolsters, 2 long pillows, 2 pair of fustians, 2 pair of sheets of 3 breadths, 2 long pillow-beres fine; item, 2 counterpoints, one of them of counterfeit arras with the picture of Saint George, lately bought of the said Lady Curson, and the other of (blank); item, I give and bequeath unto my said Lord my long cushion and 2 short cushions, the one side of them of needlework with silk, and the other side of incarnation satin embroidered with the Garter and letters of cloth of gold; item, my pax of silver and gilt, and a little box of silver to put in the Sacrament of the Altar; item, my great shaving-basin of silver weighing 80 ounces, and for a special remembrance, my little cross of gold having closed in the same a piece of the Holy Cross, which I daily wear about my neck;

Item, I give and bequeath to my Lord Bulbeck, my godson, my ring of gold with a rose of diamonds, & to the Lady Dorothy, his wife, a tablet of gold fastened like a steeple, set with divers small pearls and three blue stones with a pearl in the midst of them;

Item, I give and bequeath to his brother, Aubrey, my godson, my ring of gold with a sapphire of divers squares;

Item, I give and bequeath to the Lady Surrey, his sister, a book of gold having divers leaves of gold with the Salutation of Our Lady at the beginning;

Item, to my god-daughter, Elizabeth Darcy, his sister, my ring largest with a sharp diamond;

Item, to the Lady Anne Vere, his sister, a book of gold of the value of 100s with the picture of the Crucifix and the Salutation of Our Lady, to be newly made;

Item, I give and bequeath to my god-daughter, Elizabeth Howard, a tablet of gold with th' Assumption of Our Lady and Saint Francis;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister Vere my image of Our Lady of Pity, to hang at her beads to pray for my soul;

Item, to my niece Wingfield, her daughter, my ring with the Five Joys of Our Lady with a table diamond;

Item, I give and bequeath to my brother, Sir William Kingston, knight, my Jesus of diamonds set in gold with 3 great pearls hanging at the same, also my 2 flagons of silver having my Lord of Oxenford's arms in them;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister, Dame Mary, his wife, a basin and an ewer of silver chased gilt of the newest making afore the chance of fire, weighing 92 ounces; my goblet of gold graven with crankettes and mullets, weighing 13 ounces 1 quarter; and also my book of gold set with pearl;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister, Jane Brewes, a basin and an ewer chased gilt of the oldest sort, weighing five score and 6 ounces, having my Lord of Oxenford[^s] arms in the bottom of the basin; item, a great goblet with the cover of silver, parcel-gilt, weighing 31 ounces, graven with crankettes and mullets, which she lately gave me after the chance of fire; item, my cross of gold ragged which was my father's, accustomedly worn about my neck; item, [f. 85r] a trussing bed of black velvet and scarlet cloth engrained paned, embroidered with letters of cloth of gold and black velvet, a counterpoint of the same, one featherbed with a bolster, 2 pillows, 2 pair of sheets of 2 breadths di {midium}, and one pair of fustians;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister, Dame Mary Kingston, and to my sister, Jane Brewes, all my samplers, evenly to be divided between them, and I will my said sister Kingston to have the choice;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my brother [=brother-in-law], Sir John Seyntclere, knight, a basin and an ewer of silver chased gilt, the fellow of the same that I have bequeathed unto my sister Brewes, weighing five score and 6 ounces;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my sister [=half-sister], Dame Frances, his wife, a cup of silver and gilt of the value of £4 sterling, or else £4 in ready money; item, my trussing bed of black velvet and black satin paned, with curtains of tawny sarsenet to the same; item, a counterpoint of blue cloth of baudekin, one featherbed with bolster, one long pillow, one pair of fustians, and 2 pair of sheets of 2 breadths and a half;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Dame Alice Cotton, widow, my beads of black jet large gauded with crosses of gold;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Philip Paris, esquire, my basin and an ewer of silver parcel-gilt, weighing 78 ounces, and if the said basin be not of the whole value of £20

sterling, that then I will he shall have so much money as the said basin and ewer lacketh of the value of £20;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my nephew, Henry Jerningham, my great balas standing in gold with a white rose and a red enameled, and 3 pearls hanging at the same; also, I give and bequeath him ten pounds sterling;

Item, I give and bequeath my nephew, John Brewes, my cross of gold with the Five Wounds and a flower-de-luce of diamonds;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my nephew, John Seyntclere, one of my great goblets of silver all gilt with a cover to the same, having a grayle of flower-de-luce about the same goblet;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my nephew, Edmund Jerningham, a goblet of silver and gilt with a cover, weighing 15 ounces di{midium}, the goblet pounced like pens, having my Lord Beaumont's arms and mine in the top of the cover, and also I give him fifty pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to my niece Luttrell my tablet of gold pictured with the Crucifix, Our Lady, and Saint John;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my niece Audley a standing cup of silver and gilt with a cover, newly made, weighing 30 ounces di{midium}, di{midium} quarter;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, John Wyndham, a round hoop of gold with a small pointed diamond;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, Giles Brewes, a standing cup of silver and gilt with a cover, newly made, weighing 24 ounces di{midium}, di{midium} quarter;

Item, I give & bequeath to John Beaumont, esquire, my goblets of silver and gilt with a cover, weighing together 45 ounces 3 quarters di{midium}, and also five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, Giles Seyntclere, my godson, a cross of gold with the Crucifix and the letters of I.N.R.I;

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;

Item, I give and bequeath to my niece, Elizabeth Seyntclere, one of my beer-pots of silver and gilt; item, a gown of black satin, a kirtle of black velvet, and also towards the advancement of her marriage I give her threescore pounds in ready money which her father, Sir John Seyntclere, knight, is indebted unto me, as appeareth by divers bills of his

handwriting remaining in my hands and custody, and over and besides that I give and bequeath her forty pounds in money to be delivered by mine executors;

Item, I give & bequeath to my cousin, Dame Margaret Scrope, five pounds in money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Muriel Christmas my ring with a diamond like a spear-point;

Item, I give and bequeath to Jane Crane my ring with a turquoise;

Item, I give and bequeath to Ely Fyncham my ring with an emerald;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Elizabeth Rve my pomander of gold like a pear, used to be worn at my girdle;

Item, I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Miche a pair of Eyeleres(?) beads gauded with 10 beads of gold;

Item, I give and bequeath to my nephew, [f. 85v] Edmund Audley, a cup of silver and gilt with the cover, of the value of five pounds in money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Anthony Stapleton, towards his learning at the common law, ten pounds in money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Margaret Ryther th' elder, for the true and faithful service that she of long continuance hath done to me, one hundred marks in ready money, 2 salts of silver and gilt with a cover and a Garter in the midst of them, weighing 26 ounces; item, 2 of my best featherbeds not before bequeathed; item, 4 pair of my best sheets, 2 bolsters, 2 pillows, one long, and 2 mattresses, 2 counterpoints, the one having the pictures of Saint John the Baptist, Saint Peter and Saint Giles of counterfeit arras, used to be laid upon my bed, the other like unto the same of counterfeit arras; item, 2 pair of fustians; item, all my tappets of tapestry of damask-work, the ground green, with the Garter and my Lord's arms in them, used to be hanged in my chamber; item, 2 brass pots of 3 gallons, 2 small pans of brass, and one garnish of counterfeit vessel largest of pewter;

Item, I give and bequeath to John Ryther, my controller of household, 2 pots of silver parcel-gilt which I lately bought of Master Lucas, weighing 64 ounces one quarter, and also 2 bowls of silver parcel-gilt of the value of £11 6s 8d, and for lack of the same bowls, he to have of my gift £11 6s 8d in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Margaret, his wife, my trussing bed of blue velvet and crimson, my counterpoint of yellow Turkey satin and curtain of yellow sarsenet to the same; item, 2 featherbeds, 2 bolsters, 2 pillows, 2 pillow-beres, 2 pair of sheets and one pair of fustians;

Item, I give to my god-daughter, Elizabeth Ryther, five pounds in ready money, and to John Ryther, her brother, other five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Robert Goldingham, my gentleman-usher, for his continuant good service, ten pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to John Fabyan, marshal of my hall, for his good faithful service, twenty nobles in money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Doctor Cranker, my almoner, my 2 salts of silver and gilt with one cover, having a scripture about them, weighing 45 ounces one quarter;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mr Robert Skinner, my chaplain, five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Master Ralph Bane, my chaplain, other five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Bowes, one of my maidens, for her long service, twenty pounds in money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Willoughby, for her good service, twenty marks in ready money;

Item, to Margaret Frognall for like cause, 20 marks in ready money;

Item, to Jane Roberts, for like cause, 20 marks in ready money;

Item, to Ele Fyncham, for like cause, 20 nobles in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Emlyn Badbye, my chamberer, for her good service, 20 marks in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my said 6 women all mine apparel except my jewels and gowns of velvet and satin, equally divided among them by the discretion of my executors;

Item, I give and bequeath to Frances Baynham, one of my maidens, five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Katherine Christmas, one of my maidens, a pair of beads of crystal gauded with beads of gold;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mary Hamersham, towards the advancement of her marriage, ten marks in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Christopher Goldingham my trussing bed of crewel needlework with roses and a counterpoint of silk dornick; item, one featherbed, one bolster, 2 pillows, one pair of sheets, and one pair of fustians;

Item, I give to Anne, his wife, one long cushion and 2 short cushions of crewel of damask-work with the needle, and my small pair of beads of jet gauded with beads of gold;

Item, I give and bequeath to John Goldingham, his son, five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Rokewood, one of my maidens, five pounds in ready money;

Item, I give to Robert Skerne, gentleman, for his old continuant service by him to me done and borne, ten pounds in ready money;

Item, I give to Robert Rochester, gentleman, for his good service unto me done, ten marks in ready money;

Item, I give and bequeath to Richard Hardekyn, yeoman usher of my chamber, for his old continuant service to me done, five pounds in ready money, one featherbed, one bolster, and one coverlet of white tapestry with the letters of E and O;

Item, I will that every chaplain and gentleman waiter being in my checker-roll not before remembered in this my will with any special bequest shall have one featherbed, one bolster, one pair of sheets and one coverlet shortly after my departure;

Item, I will that all such my [f. 86r] servants as shall be in my checker-roll at my departure shall incontinent after my said departure have their whole year's wages over and besides any legacies or bequests to any of them by this my present testament and last will given;

Item, I will that all other my servants as retained, not being in my checker-roll, shall have incontinent after my departure their yearly remembrance which they had in my lifetime for one time;

Item, I give and bequeath to old Trott and his wife, or the longest liver of them, 20s in ready money, and also one bed with th' appurtenances at the discretion of my executors;

Item, I will that all my featherbeds, sheets, fustians, counterpoints and all other stuff of household before in this my present testament and last will given and bequeathed and not declared or assigned by name nor by special token be delivered at the discretion of my executors;

Item, I will that all my plate, jewels, my stuff of household and all other my moveable goods not given nor bequeathed in this my last will and testament be sold by mine

executors to the best proof that may conveniently be for the performance of this my said last will and testament, and that fulfilled, I will the overplus be disposed and distribute as well amongst my most needy and poor servants as in other deeds of charity by the discretion of mine executors for the weal of my soul, my father and mother's souls, my Lords' and husbands' soul[s], and all Christian souls;

Item, I will that every of mine executors taking upon him the charges of execution of this my present testament and last will shall have ten pounds in ready money for his pains taking in and about the same;

Also I will that all and every of my said executors so taking the charge upon them shall have all such charges and costs as shall be sustained by any of them in any manner of wise in and about th' execution of this my present testament and last will;

Also I give and bequeath to Sir Thomas Cromwell, Lord Cromwell and Lord Privy Seal, for a poor remembrance, ten pounds in ready money, desiring and willing him to be supervisor of this my present testament and last will;

And for the performance of this my present testament and last will I ordain and make mine executors whose names are hereafter with mine own hand written;

In witness whereof I have set to my sign manual in the presence of them that hereafter unto this my will hath set to their hands bearing witness that this is my last will and testament: my brother Sir William Kingston, knight; Philip Paris, squire; my sister, Jane [sic] Kingston; Margaret Rider, and John Ryder. By me, Elizabeth Oxenford. By me, William Kingston, John Saintclere, Mary Kingston, Jane Brewes; per me, Ioh{ann}em Danyell; p{er} me, Ioh{ann}em Ryther; p{er} me, Robert Goldingh{a}m; p{er} me, Philippum Parys.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum Tes{tamen}t{u}m vjto Die mens{is} Novembris Anno D{omi}ni Mill{esi}mo quinge{n}tesimo tricesimo septimo Ap{u}d London coram D{omi}no auc{torita}te D{omi}ni n{ost}ri Reg{is} Henrici Octavi Anglie et ffrancie Reg{no}r{um} &c Iurame{n}to D{omi}ni Will{el}mi Kyngeston Milit{is} Philippi Parys et Ioh{ann}is Ryther executor{um} in h{uius}mo{d}i testa{men}to no{m}i{n}at{orum} Ac p{er} eund{em} approbat{um} et insinuat{um} Com{m}issaq{ue} fuit admi{n}istrac{i}o om{n}i{um} et singulor{um} bonor{um} Iur{ium} et creditor{um} d{i}c{t}e D{omi}ne Def{uncte} predict{is} Executor{ibus} de b{e}n{e} et fidel{ite}r admi{n}istrand{o} &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inue{n}tario s{e}c{un}do Andree p{ro}x{imo} futur{o} exhibend{o} Necno{n} de plano et vero Compoto reddend{o} &c Ad s{an}c{t}a dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{is} Res{erua}ta p{otes}tate Alijs Ex{ecutoribus} cu{m} ven{er}int &c

[=The above-written testament was proved on the 6th day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred thirty-seventh at London before the Lord

[+Archbishop?] by the authority of our Lord King Henry the Eighth, of the realms of England and France etc., by the oath of Sir William Kingston, knight, Philip Paris and John Ryther, executors appointed in the same testament, and by the same probated and registered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said Lady deceased to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., and to exhibit a full and true inventory on the second of Andrew(?) next to come, and also to render a plain and true account etc., with power reserved to the other executors when they shall have come etc.]