

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 19 April 1544 and proved 18 February 1546, of Thomas Audley (1487/8–1544), Lord Chancellor, owner of the Great Garden property at Aldgate later purchased by Oxford. By his will below the testator granted the Great Garden property to the Master and Fellows of Magdalene College, Cambridge, who later sold it, contrary to their statutes. Oxford purchased the Great Garden property for £2500 from the merchant Benedict Spinola on 15 June 1580, and still held it at his death on 24 June 1604. See Magdalene College documents on this website, and TNA REQ 2/178/60; STC 1057; TNA C 54/1393, mm. 22-3; TNA C 142/305/103; TNA WARD 7/41; TNA SP 15/39, f. 141; BL MS Harleian 6806/78; *English Reports*, Vol. 77, pp. 1235-1252; and *English Reports*, Vol. 21, pp. 485-9.

The entry for the testator in the *ODNB* provides details of his family background and marriages, and his acquisition of the property disposed of in his will:

Audley, Thomas, Baron Audley of Walden (1487/8–1544), lord chancellor, was born at Hay House, Earls Colne, Essex, the son of Geoffrey Audley, administrator, of Berechurch, Essex.

About 1519 he married Christina (d. 1538), daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston of Kedington, Suffolk, and his wife, Elizabeth. They had no children.

Lady Audley died on 23 January 1538. Three months later, on 22 April 1538, Audley married Lady Elizabeth (d. 1557), daughter of Thomas Grey, second marquess of Dorset (1477–1530), and his second wife, Margaret.

Audley and his second wife had two daughters, Mary (d. c.1546), who remained unmarried, and Margaret (1540–1564), who married first Henry Dudley (1531?–1557), then Thomas Howard, fourth duke of Norfolk, and died on 10 January 1564.

The dissolution of the monasteries was of great personal benefit to Audley. Thomas Fuller, in his Church History, said that Audley received the grant of Christ Church in London, the first priory to be suppressed, 'to clear his voice, to make him speak shrill and loud for his master' (Fuller, 358–9).

From the dissolved houses Audley, a man of modest origins, built up a substantial estate. On 26 May 1536 he was granted St Botolph's in Colchester, and two days later he received the priory of Prittlewell, also in Essex. In April 1542 he was given the priory of Colchester and the abbey of Tilty in Essex. Fears of dissolution also helped expand his holdings: the manor at Berechurch was allegedly given to him in 1531 by Sir William Weston, prior of the hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England, for help in preventing the dissolution of the order. Such may also have been the case with the exchanges made by Weston in 1538 of the manors of Rye in Essex and Gosbeck in Suffolk to Audley in return for a rectory and advowson in Warwickshire. It certainly was the case in an exchange by John, abbot of St Osyth, in 1538 of the manors of Abberton and Abbots, as

well as other properties in Essex and Suffolk, for lands belonging to Audley. Additionally, Audley purchased manors and lands from the nunnery of Holywell, Hertfordshire, in 1537, and received a grant of lands in Hertfordshire in December 1538, to be held from the king, from the abbey of St Mary by the Tower. The most valued of his acquisitions was Walden Abbey, the source of his title, which was granted to him in March 1538, and renamed Audley End in 1616 by his grandson Thomas Howard, first earl of Suffolk, in honour of his eminent forebear.

Audley retained Henry's favour throughout his life, a rare accomplishment for royal servants of the second Tudor king. On 21 April 1544 Audley gave up the great seal, professing himself uncertain of his ability to perform his duties 'through infirmity of body', an unsurprising decision, considering he had been absent from most of the parliamentary meetings of 1543 and 1544 owing to illness (LP Henry VIII, 19/1, no. 459). He died peacefully, aged fifty-six, at his home at Christ Church, Aldgate, London, on 30 April 1544, and was buried at Saffron Walden, Essex.

Although the *ODNB* does not note the fact, the testator's family had long-standing connections to the Earls of Oxford:

Audley was born in Earl's Colne, where his grandfather was the earl of Oxford's bailiff until around 1466. Audley's father, Geoffrey, was bailiff of Earl's Colne in 1496 and 1497 and owned tenements there; Geoffrey died in 1504, leaving his inheritance to his two sons, both named Thomas. Possibly the thirteenth earl of Oxford helped gain admittance for the younger Thomas to the Inner Temple, but Oxford's death in 1513 and the subsequent minority eliminated the patronage of the de Veres at the beginning of Thomas's career as a lawyer.

See Higgs, Laquita M., *Godliness and Governance in Tudor Colchester* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), pp. 52-3. It thus appears that the testator's grandfather served as bailiff to both John de Vere (1408–1462), 12th Earl of Oxford, and his son, John de Vere (1442–1513), 13th Earl of Oxford, and that the testator's father served as bailiff to the latter.

Moreover Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Beaumont de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, second wife of the 13th Earl, was related to the Audley family. Her sister, Katherine Scrope, married Richard Audley, and the Countess left bequests to members of the Audley family in her will (see TNA PROB 11/27, ff. 84-6). It thus seems possible that the testator was a descendant of the branch of the Audley family into which the Countess' sister, Katherine, married.

The testator's connections with the Christmas family are also of interest because the Earls of Oxford had connections to the Christmas family. The testator leaves these bequests to his 'cousin', John Christmas (d. by 1554), and to his cousin's children, including George Christmas (d.1566), who was also the testator's servant:

And where my cousin, John Christmas of Colchester, oweth me one hundred pounds of money lent, I give and bequeath thereof to my servant and cousin, George Christmas, his son, £20 thereof, and to Katherine Fleetwood, his sister, ten pounds, and to every of the children of my cousin, John Christmas, £3 6s 8d.

Item, I give to George Christmas one of my geldings in my stable.

Earlier, Elizabeth (nee Scrope) Beaumont de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, had left bequests in her will to two female members of the Christmas family:

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

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

It seems possible that the Katherine Christmas who was one of the Countess' maidens in 1537 is the Katherine Fleetwood mentioned in the testator's will in 1544 as the sister of George Christmas (d.1566).

It also seems likely that Muriel Christmas, to whom the Countess left a 'ring with a diamond like a spear-point', is the Muriel Christmas who had served in the Privy Chamber of Henry VIII's first wife, Catherine of Aragon (see McIntosh, J.L., *From Heads of Household to Heads of State*, (Columbia University Press, 2008), available online, citing MacCulloch, Diarmaid, ed., *The Vita Mariae Angliae Reginae of Robert Wingfield of Brantham*, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1984), p. 270:

When [the future Queen Mary I] arrived at Colchester a day of so after July 19 [1553], she stayed in the house of her mother's former privy chamber lady, Muriel Christmas, whom Wingfield praised as "scarcely without equal in birth and modest conditions".

One of the most trusted servants of Oxford's father, the 16th Earl, was Robert Christmas, the son of the wealthy Colchester alderman, John Christmas (see Higgs, pp. 50, 375). Robert Christmas was named by the 16th Earl as one of the six executors of his will, but was ultimately the only executor to whom administration was granted (see TNA PROB 11/46, ff. 174v-6). Robert Christmas was in Leicester's service during most of the years during which he was sole administrator of the 16th Earl's will.

The testator's mansion at Saffron Walden, Audley End, is known to students of Elizabethan literature as the scene of Gabriel Harvey's 'hobby-horse revelling' during the Queen's progress in the summer of 1578, satirically described by Thomas Nashe in *Have With You To Saffron Walden*:

I have a tale at my tongue's end, if I can happen upon it, of his hobby-horse revelling & domineering at Audley End when the Queen was there, to which place Gabriel (to do his country more worship & glory) came ruffling it out, hufty-tufty, in his suit of velvet. . . .

It was also at Audley End that Leicester presented Gabriel Harvey's *Gratulationes Valdinenses* to the Queen in manuscript on 30 July 1578. The *Gratulationes Valdinenses* contains a Latin encomium in which Harvey belittles Oxford while purporting to praise him, likely for the purpose of currying favour with Leicester (see STC 12901 on this website).

RM: Testamentum domini Thome Awdeley militis

In the name of God, Amen. The 19th day of April in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred forty and four, and in the 35th year of the reign of our most dread Sovereign Lord Henry the Eighth by the grace of God King of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and in earth of the Church of England and also of Ireland the Supreme Head, I, Thomas Audley, Knight of th' Order of the Garter, Lord Audley of Walden, and Chancellor of England, knowing that I am naturally born and ordained to die and pass from this unstable world and transitory life, minding to put an order as well of my lands, tenements and hereditaments as of my goods and chattels to th' intent there should be no strife for the same after my decease, do therefore first of all, after thanks given unto Almighty God for his great benefits, desire and pray my wife and children and all other of my kin to be contented and satisfied with this my will and testament without trouble, business or vexation of any of them against other for any my lands or goods, for I have no goods nor old inheritance but that I may freely and liberally give and dispose at mine own will and pleasure, and to avoid all occasions I revoke and renounce all wills and testaments heretofore by me made by word, writing or otherwise, and make and ordain this to be my very true last will and testament concerning as well my lands, tenements and hereditaments as my goods and chattels in manner and form following:

First I commend my soul to Almighty God and to his Son, Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, most humbly beseeching the most Holy and Blessed Trinity to have mercy on my soul and pardon and forgive my sins so that after this mutable life I may arise with the elect and have the eternal life and fruition of the Godhead according to my true faith in that behalf;

Item, I will that my body shall be buried in the parish church in which parish it shall happen me to decease, and with as little pomp as conveniently may be, remitting the charges of my funerals to the discretion of mine executors;

Nevertheless, I will that afterwards in as secret wise as may be my body be conveyed and buried in the tomb at my new chapel at Walden made for that purpose;

Item, I give and bequeath to our most dread Sovereign Lord the King, of whom I have received all my reputations and benefits, a hundred pounds to be delivered to his Majesty upon New Year's Day next after my decease for a New Year's gift, or else before by the discretion of mine executors, most humbly beseeching his Majesty to accept and take the

same for a poor remembrance of me, his true, faithful and most bounden servant and subject;

Item, I bequeath to the Lady Elizabeth, my wife, as much and such parcels of my plate & ornaments of my chapel of silver and gilt such as she will choose thereof as shall amount to the clear value of two hundred pounds after 4s le ounce the gilt plate, 3s 8d parcel gilt, and the white plate after 3s 4d le ounce;

And also I give and bequeath to my wife all her own jewels, chains and apparel whatsoever they be, and all her own plate that hath been given to her without diminution of any part thereof, and two hundred marks in ready money to begin her house withal;

And over that, I bequeath to my said wife the half part of all my copes, vestments and altar-cloths that I have for my chapel, and also all my whole beds, bedsteads and all that belongeth to them, and all such hangings of arras, verdour, say, testers, curtains, cushions, counterpoints, quilts, blankets, featherbeds, pillows, bolsters, coverlets and all my sheets, pillow-beres, tablecloths, towels, napkins and all other my linen napery, and all my pots, pans, spits and all other my stuff of household by what name soever it be called, and all my corn, wood and hay ready made which I shall have at the time of my decease at my houses of Walden and Terling of any of them, to retain, keep and have the same to her own use, saving always such part and portion of the premises as shall be necessary to be spent at my funerals, provided also that my said wife shall not claim or have any other or more plate than I have before appointed and given to her;

Item, I give and bequeath to my daughter, Margaret, so much of my plate as shall amount to the value of £40 after the prices above-rehearsed, to be delivered to her at her age of 15 years if she so long live, and to my daughter, Mary, so much of my plate as shall amount to £20, to be delivered to her at her age of 15 years if she so long live;

And I give and bequeath to my brother, Thomas Audley, so much of my said plate as shall be of the clear value of twenty pounds, and to every of my three nephews, his sons, so much of my plate as shall be worth ten pounds after the rates of the prices aforesaid, to be delivered to every of them at their ages of 18 years;

And if my said daughter, Margaret, happen to decease before her said age of 15 years, then I will and bequeath that portion of plate to her afore limited to be delivered to her sister, Mary, at her age of 15 years, if she so long live;

And if my said daughter, Mary, die before her said age of 15 years, then I will the portion of plate to her before limited shall be delivered to my said daughter, Margaret, at her said age of 15 years;

And if both my said daughters shall happen to die before their said ages, then I will that all the said plate limited to them to be divided amongst my three nephews at their said ages of 18 years, and if any of them die before the said age of 18 years, then I will that all such his part and portion of my plate to him given and bequeathed by this my will shall

be disposed to his two brethren him overliving and coming to their said age of 18 years, and if two of my said nephews happen to decease before the said age, then I will that all their parts and portions of my said plate to them given and limited by this my will as is aforesaid shall be disposed and delivered to the overliver of them coming to his age of 18 years, and if all my said nephews shall happen to decease before their said ages of 18 years, then I will that all the parts and portions of plate to them given by this my will as is as aforesaid shall be disposed and delivered to my next heirs;

Item, I give to every of my Lord Marquess' younger brethren twenty pounds apiece to buy either of them a great horse;

Item, I will and bequeath that every of my yeomen and groom-servants being my daily waiting household servants and in wages at the time of my decease shall have their wages for one half year;

Item, I bequeath to James of my chamber 40s, and to Edmund of my chamber 40s;

Item, to Philpott of my chamber, 40s;

Item, I bequeath to Anthony of my chamber 40s;

Item, I bequeath to every of my wife's gentlewomen being my household servants at the time of my decease 40s sterling;

Item I give and bequeath to my servant, Richard Pigge, £20, and to his sister, Jane Clare(?), fifty pounds, and to his sister, Mary(?) Copynger, fifty pounds, and to his brother, Oliver Pigge, £5, and to my cousin, William Audley, £10, and to John Wheler, servant to Mr Christmas of Colchester, £3 6s 8d;

And where my cousin, John Christmas of Colchester, oweth me one hundred pounds of money lent, I give and bequeath thereof to my servant and cousin, George Christmas, his son, £20 thereof, and to Katherine Fleetwood, his sister, ten pounds, and to every of the children of my cousin, John Christmas, £3 6s 8d; also I give thereof to Arthur Clarcke £3 6s 8d, and to himself, ten pounds, and the residue thereof I will he shall pay and content to mine executors for the payment of my debts and other legacies;

Item, I bequeath to the son and heir apparent of Sir Henry Parker, knight, ten pounds, and to the Lady Dame Julyan Waldegrave, the wife of William Waldegrave, knight, ten pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to Jasper Owen ten pounds, and to the Lady Burgh, ten pounds;

Item, I give to Margaret Smythe, my servant, ten pounds, to be paid at her marriage or at her age of 15 years if she so long live;

Item, I give to George Christmas one of my geldings in my stable;

Item, I will that mine executors make two rings of gold, flat hoops, every of them of the value of five marks, and I will that my Lady Frances have one of them and my Lady Anne, my wife's sister, another;

Also I will that mine executors shall make five rings of gold, every ring thereof(?) of the value of twenty shillings, whereof I will that my Lady Guildford have one, and my Lady Raynsforth one(?), Mistress Christmas one, and Mistress Golderone and Mistress Lucas one;

Also I will that Sir John Raynsforth, knight, shall have all such sums of money as be comprised in certain obligations which I have of Edward Strangman and Thomas Strangman, executors of the testament of John Strangman, one of the executors of old Sir John Raynsforth, knight, and the same obligation to be delivered to him, for the said debt grew by the goods of the said old Sir John Raynsforth, father to the said Sir John, remaining in th' hands of the said John Strangman, who meddled and ministered all the goods and chattels of the said old Sir John Raynsforth, and little or nothing came to my hands, and where the said Sir John gave to the church of Bradfield a cross of silver and gilt of the value of five pounds, I bequeath to the said church for recompense thereof six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence;

Item, I will that my house with my household shall be kept with meat and drink in convenient and measurable order by the space of six weeks next after my decease by the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I give and bequeath to my said brother, Thomas Audley, the two sparvers that were Sir David Owen's, knight, and all the beds, hangings and stuff of household that I have or shall have at my house of Berechurch at the time of my decease, and there by him(?) to be used and kept during his life, and after his decease the said stuff to remain to his next heirs;

The residue of all my plate, goods and chattels not before bequeathed I will to mine executors, whom I make and ordain the said Lady Elizabeth, my wife, Sir Edward North and Sir Thomas Pope, knights, Edmund Martyn and Thomas Barbour, my servants, and I give to either of the said Sir Edward and Sir Thomas Pope £20, and to either of my other executors and servants ten pounds for their labours for th' execution of my will;

And I desire and pray my good Lord, the Lord Marquess Dorset, and my loving friend, Sir William Herbert, knight, to be my supervisors and to help my wife and executors in their lawful suits, and I bequeath to my said Lord Marquess twenty pounds and to the said Sir William Herbert ten pounds, praying them to accept this as a remembrance of a poor man.

Vltima voluntas eiusdem D{omi}ni Thome Awdeley

And as to the disposition of all my manors, lands, tenements and other hereditaments, I make and declare my will thereof in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I will that my next heirs shall have and enjoy all those my manors of Cornebery and Gybrack with their members and appurtenances in the county of Hertford, and the patronages of the parsonage of Dixwell and of the vicarage of Leyston and Alswycke in the said county, and all those my manors of Braughing, Friars, Mylcheley, the parsonage of Braughing, and all those my manors of Westmyll(?) and Little Hormead, and all other my lands and tenements, advowsons and other hereditaments whatsoever in the said county of Hertford;

And all those my manors of Oesenage, Cresseners, Talmages, Heringeswell and Abbottes with their members and appurtenances in the county of Suffolk, and all other my lands, tenements, rents, reversions and hereditaments in the said county of Suffolk;

And all that my chief mansion and dwelling-house called Christchurch in London, with all the houses, buildings and gardens thereto belonging, and all other my meses, houses, cottages, tenements, shops, cellars, gardens, lands, rents, services and hereditaments in the parishes of Saint Katherine Christchurch within Aldgate of London and also in the parish of Saint Botolph's without Aldgate of London, except the parsonage of Saint Katherine Christchurch aforesaid with all the tithes and profits thereto belonging, and also except one mese with the garden and appurtenances in the said parish of Saint Botolph's wherein my cousin, William Audley, dwelleth, and also except my great garden in the said parish of Saint Botolph's in the tenure of one Casey for the yearly rent of £9 by the year;

And also I will that my said heirs immediately after my decease shall have all that site and circuit of the late monastery of Tiltey with the manor, grange and parsonage of Tiltey with all and singular their appurtenances;

To have and to hold all my said manors, meses, lands, tenements, advowsons and all other the premises, except thereof before excepted, to my said right heirs by descent of estate of inheritance in fee simple immediately from and after my decease according to the course of the common laws of the realm and as though I had made no mention thereof in this my will, whereof the King's Majesty shall and may have and take wardship or primer seisin as the cause shall require by the laws and statute in that case provided, all which manors, meses, lands, tenements, hereditaments and other the premises, except thereof before excepted, been above the clear yearly value of the third part of all my manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments, wherefore I most humbly beseech the King's Majesty to accept the same according to the statute, and suffer the residue of my lands and possessions to go for my wife's jointure and according to this my last will thereof made without interruption thereof;

And also I will that the said Lady Elizabeth, my wife shall have and enjoy all that my chief and capital mansion house in Walden with the park thereunto adjoining and all the

houses, buildings, barns, stables, gardens, orchards, meadows, lands and pastures within the limits and precincts thereof, and all those my manors of Brooke Walden, Chipping Walden, Great Walden, Little Walden, Great Chesterford, Pounces, Matyns, Saint Aylots, Butlers, Westleys, Manhall, Bollesgrove and Bengenhoo otherwise called Bourghchers Hall, Debden and Berden, with all and singular their members and appurtenances in the county of Essex, and all that my manor of Abbots in Thunderley in the said county of Essex;

And all that my manor and other lands and tenements in Reche and other towns in the Fen with their appurtenances in the county of Cambridge;

And all that my parsonage of Walden and Great Chesterford with the advowson and patronage of the vicarages of the churches of Walden and Great Chesterford, and all those my rents, farms and services with their appurtenances called the Common Pittance and Cosses Fee or any of them, and all other my rents and farms in the collection of Nicholas Whytney, my bailiff, belonging to the late monastery of Walden, and all that portion of tithes in Little Chesterford in the county of Essex letten yearly for 20s, and all other my manors, meses, lands, tenements, advowsons, parks, mills, woods, waters, reversions, rents, services, tithes, portions, fold-courses, pensions and all other my hereditaments whatsoever they be set, lying or being in Brooke Walden, Chipping Walden, Great Walden, Little Walden, Little Chesterford, Great Chesterford, Pounces, Matyns, Saint Aylots, Butlers, Debden, Berden, Abbott{es} in Thunderley, Manhall, Bollesgrove, Bengenhoo, Burchers Hall, Henham, Ashdon, Hadstock, Linton, Studmere, Newport Pittance, Cosses fee and Littlebury in the said county of Essex;

And all that my yearly rent of 40s which I have out of the manor of Hawkeston in the said county of Cambridge which was parcel of the possession of the late priory of Saint Botolph's in Colchester, and all those(?) my lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever which I have in the said county of Cambridge;

And all those my advowsons and patronages of the parsonages of Aynho and Kingham in the county of Oxford, with that yearly pension of 20s going out of the said parsonage of Kingham, and that yearly pension of 4s going out of the said parsonage of Aynho;

And all that my manor of Minchens in Arkesden, and the parsonages of Arkesden, Chishall and Elsenham with the patronages of the vicarages of Chishall and Arkesden and Elsenham with all and singular their appurtenances;

To have and to hold the said capital mansion, manors, meses, parsonages, lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services, advowsons, patronages and all and singular the premises last above-specified and assigned to my wife with the appurtenances, rights, profits and commodities whatsoever they be to my said wife and her assigns during her life for part of satisfaction of her jointure and dower;

And I will that my said wife and her assigns during her life shall yearly pay out of the premises to the King, our Sovereign Lord, and to his heirs and successors, £37 5s 10d

which is due to be paid yearly for the tenth of th' old possessions of the late monastery of Walden, and shall discharge and acquit during her life every other person of the said tenth, and also shall pay all other tenths going out of any the premises to her afore limited for term of her life, and also shall pay all other fees that hath be[en] granted by me or by me or my said wife or by the late Abbot and Convent of the said monastery of Walden, or that hereafter shall be granted by me and my said wife out of the premises or out of any part or parcel thereof, and suffer all such leases and patents as I and she have made or hereafter shall make to any person or persons of any parcel of the premises or of any offices or fees of or out of the same or any part thereof to stand and continue and abide good and available to the grantees and lessees and their assigns without impeachment or interruption;

And I will that after the decease of my said wife all my said chief mansion house, manors, meses, parsonages, parks, lands, tenements and all and singular other the premises with their appurtenances before assigned to my wife for term of her life shall be, come and remain to my right heirs and their heirs and assigns forever;

And I will that my said right heirs and their heirs and assigns shall bear and pay out of the said mansion, manors, lands, tenements and other the premises to them afore assigned after the decease of my wife, as well to the King, our Sovereign Lord, and to his heirs and successors the said yearly several tenths, and thereof discharge all other persons, as also bear, pay and suffer all other patents, offices, fees and leases as is aforesaid without interruption of them or any of them;

Also I will that my said wife shall have all that my manors of Terling and Leighs with the parsonage of Terling with their appurtenances which were of late of the possessions of the Bishopric of Norwich, and all my manor of Much Leighs with the members and appurtenances in the county of Essex, and all those my lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services, advowsons, pensions, portions and all other hereditaments which I have in Terling, Much Leighs, Hatfield Peverel, Faulkbourne, Boreham, Fairstead, Notley, Rayne, Braintree, Hatfield Broad Oak, Cressing and Witham in the said county of Essex, to have and to hold the said manors of Terling and Leighs with the appurtenances together with the parsonage of Terling and all other the said lands in Terling, Much Leighs, Hatfield Peverel, Faulkbourne, Boreham, Fairstead, Notley, Rayne, Braintree, Hatfield Broad Oak, Cressing and Witham and all other my lands and tenements, rents, services, advowsons and other hereditaments in Terling, Much Leighs, Hatfield Peverel, Boreham, Fairstead, Notley, Rayne, Braintree, Hatfield Broad Oak, Cressing and Witham for term of her life, and after her decease to my right heirs forever;

And also I will that my said wife shall have all that my manor of Woodham Ferrers with the appurtenances in the county of Essex, and all that my mansion and house called th' Old Ford with the gardens, meadows and lands thereunto belonging as I purchased it of Thomas Shaa, and all that my marsh or pasture called Leemouth, late parcel of the possessions of the late monastery of Stratford, and all other my lands and tenements in Woodham Ferrers, Stratford, Hackney, East Ham and West Ham, to have and to hold the said manor of Woodham Ferrers, and all that my mansion and house of Old Ford

aforesaid with the appurtenances, and the said pasture called Lemowthe, and other the premises last before remembered to her for term of her life in full satisfaction of her dower and jointure;

An I will that immediately after her decease the said manor of Woodham Ferrers, and the said mansion and house of Old Ford, and the said marsh called Lemouthe, and other the premises in Stratford, East Ham, West Ham and Hackney aforesaid shall wholly and entirely be and remain unto my nephew, Thomas Audley, eldest son of my brother, Thomas Audley, and to his heirs and assigns forever;

Item, I will and bequeath that my said brother, Thomas Audley, immediately after my decease shall have and enjoy all that my manor or mese called Berechurch with the park thereunto adjoining, and the advowson of the church of Berechurch in the county of Essex, and all those my lands, tenements, rents, services, reversions, woods, advowsons, patronages and hereditaments with their appurtenances whatsoever they be in Berechurch, West Donyland, East Donyland and Fingringhoe in the said county, and all those my lands, tenements and meadow called Colles land and Colles meadow in Abberton in the said county of Essex, and all that my water-mill with the meadow and other appurtenances therewith(?) used to be letten lying in Layer de la Haye and West Donyland aforesaid, and all that my manor or mese called Gosebak{es}, and all that yearly rent of 20s going out of the manor of Herstedes, all which rent was parcel of the possessions of the late priory of Saint Botolph's, and all the lands, meadows, pastures and woods thereunto belonging with their appurtenances in Stanway and West Donyland, and all that site, circuit and precinct of the late hospital or priory of the Crossed Friars in the suburbs of the town of Colchester with all that messuage called the Bell and all other the houses, buildings and gardens, pightles and closes thereunto adjoining and belonging, and all that my wood with the appurtenances called Crokelforde wood, parcel of the possessions of the said late priory of Saint Botolph's in Colchester, and all that my messuage, lands and tenements called Butlers in Abberton and Peldon with their appurtenances, and all that mese, lands, tenements, rents, meadows, pastures, woods and hereditaments called Trumpingtons lying in Much Tey in the said county of Essex;

To have and to hold the said manor or mese called Berechurch with the park thereunto adjoining, and the said manors or meses, lands and tenements called Gosebeck{es}, and the said yearly rent of 20s going out of the manor of Hersted Hall, and the said site, circuit and precinct of the late hospital or priory of the Crossed Friars with all the said messuage called the Bell and all other the premises thereunto lying and belonging, and the said wood called Crokelforde wood, and all and singular other the premises last aforementioned in Berechurch, West Donyland, East Donyland, Fingringhoe, Layer de la Haye, Abberton, Peldon, Stanway, Colchester and Much Tey to my said brother and his assigns during his natural life;

And I will that my said brother during his life natural shall employ and bestow of the issues, revenues and profits of the premises to him afore limited during his life to and for the finding of my said nephew, Thomas Audley, his and son heir, yearly ten pounds, and to and for the finding of my nephew Thomas Audley, his second son, yearly eight

pounds, and to and for the finding of my nephew, John Audley, his youngest son, yearly £8, to th' intent they be honestly brought up in learning or service as their aptness and capacity will serve them;

And I will that immediately after the decease of my said brother my said manor or mese called Berechurch with the park and the advowson of Berechurch aforesaid, and all that my mill called Layer mill with the meadow and other the appurtenances thereunto belonging, and all other my said lands, tenements, rents, reversions, woods and hereditaments in Berechurch, West Donyland, East Donyland and Fingringhoe aforesaid, and all those lands, tenements and meadows with th' appurtenances called Colles land and Colles meadow in Abberton aforesaid, and all that yearly rent of 20s going out of the said manor of Hersted Hall shall be, come and remain to my said nephew, Thomas Audley, son and heir apparent to my said brother, and to the heirs and assigns of my said nephew forever;

And I will that immediately after the decease of my said brother all that the said site, circuit and precinct of the said late hospital or priory of the Cross Friars with all that the said mese called the Bell and all other the houses, buildings, gardens, pightles and closes thereunto adjoining and belonging, and all that my said manor or mese called Gosebeck{es} with all the lands, meadows, pastures and woods thereunto belonging and all and singular their appurtenances, and all that my said wood called Crokelforde wood with the appurtenances shall be and remain to my nephew, Thomas Audley, second son of my said brother, and to the heirs and assigns of the same my nephew, the second son, forever;

And I will also that immediately after the decease of my said brother all that my said mese, lands, tenements, rents, reversions and woods called Butlers in Abberton and Peldon aforesaid, and all that my mese, lands, tenements, rents, reversions, meadows, pastures and woods called Trumpingtons in Much Tey aforesaid with their appurtenances shall be, come and remain to my nephew, John Audley, youngest son of my said brother and to the heirs and assigns of the same John forever;

Item, I will that all that my manor of Blind Knights with the appurtenances in the county of Essex, and all that my manor or mese with all the lands, tenements and hereditaments with their appurtenances called the Rye in Layer de la Haye, and all those my meses, lands, tenements, meadows, pastures, rents, reversions and services with their appurtenances called Wardes, Giles, Harveys, Hethowse, Hott{es}, Sayvyors, Symmes, Bealdes, Graftons, Undrewooddes, Glevers and Olevers with their appurtenances in Layer de la Haye aforesaid in the said county of Essex, and all that my parsonage of Layer de la Haye aforesaid with the patronage of the vicarage of the same, and all other my lands and tenements in Layer de la Haye aforesaid except only my mill called Layer mill with the meadow and appurtenances thereunto belonging, and all that my manors of Abberton and Badcokk{es} with the appurtenances in the county of Essex, and all that my manor of Much Tey with the appurtenances with the advowson of the parsonage of Much Tey in the county of Essex, and all that my manor or mese called North lands in East Mersea in the county of Essex in the tenure of William Hoye, farmer thereof, and all

that my hundred called Lexden Hundred in the said county of Essex with the sheriffs' turns there and all other profits and commodities to the same belonging, and all that my manor of Drayton Bassett with the appurtenances in the county of Stafford in as large and ample manner as Mistress Robinson holdeth the same in farm, and all that my manor and parsonage of Chawreth with the appurtenances in the county of Essex shall be and remain after my decease to mine executors and to their executors and assigns for term of 12 years next and immediately following after my decease to th' intent to pay my debts and legacies and also to take thereof as much reasonable costs and charges as they shall expend about th' execution of my will, and also yearly during the said term of 12 years to pay to the King, our Sovereign Lord, of the issues and profits of my said manors, lands and tenements in Layer de la Haye £13 8s 4d for the whole tenth of th' whole possession of the late priory of Saint Botolph's in Colchester, and also to pay yearly to Arthur Clarcke during the said term of 12 years such yearly fee as I have given him by patent, and the residue thereof, if any shall happen, I will shall be divided in two parts, whereof one part to be disposed in deeds of charity by the discretions of mine executors, wherein I will they shall somewhat consider Magdalene College in Cambridge, and also cause every Sunday in the Lent one sermon to be preached in the town of Colchester in such churches where I am patron during the same term of 12 years, and th' other moiety thereof I will shall be divided amongst my brother's children aforesaid at their age of 20 years if they so long live, or else amongst such of them as shall live to that age;

And immediately after the said 12 years, I will that the said manors and all other the premises last afore limited to mine executors, except thereof the said manor of Drayton Bassett with the appurtenances, shall be and remain to the heirs males of my body lawfully begotten and to the heirs males of their bodies lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue to remain to my nephew, Thomas Audley, eldest son of my brother, Thomas Audley, and to his heirs and assigns forever, provided alway and my very will is that my said heirs males and their heirs males, and for lack of such heirs males my said nephew, Thomas Audley, and his heirs shall yearly pay forever out of the said manors, lands and tenements in Layer de la Haye aforesaid to the King, our Sovereign Lord, the said yearly tenth of £13 8s 4d, and thereof discharge any other person forever;

Also I will that if I shall happen to have heir male of my body lawfully begotten which shall happen to live 12 years after my decease, then I will that my daughter, Margaret, after the said term of 12 years limited to mine executors, shall have to the advancement of her marriage and to her and her heirs the moiety of [-of] my said manor of Drayton Bassett, and my daughter, Mary, th' other moiety to her and to her heirs, and if I shall not have such heir male of my body lawfully begotten which shall happen to live the said space of 12 years, then I will the said manor of Drayton Bassett with the appurtenances shall immediately after the said 12 years thereof limited to my said executors to be and remain to my said nephew, Thomas Audley, eldest son to my said brother, Thomas Audley, and to his heirs forever;

Also I give and bequeath to the Master and Fellows of Magdalene College in Cambridge all that my parsonage of Saint Katherine Christchurch within Aldgate in London with all titles and profits thereto belonging, they farming the cure thereof, except thereof all

manner of tithes to be paid for my great mansion house that I dwell in in the said parish, and the tithes of the house in the tenure of the Lord Clinton, and the house late in the tenure of the Lady Burgh, and of all other houses in the churchyard next adjoining to my said chief mansion house, whereof I will no tithe shall be paid;

Also I give to the said M{aste}r and Fellows all that my great garden in the said parish of Saint Botolph's in the tenure of one Cacy [=Casey?] for the yearly rent of £9 by the year, to have and to hold the said parsonage and the said garden, except thereof before excepted, unto the said M{aste}r and Fellows and to their successors forever for the finding of such number of the Fellows of the said House as shall be limited by the discretion of mine executors and according to such ordinance as they shall devise for the same;

Also I will that my said executors shall devise and make all such statutes & ordinances concerning the said Master and Fellows and the same House as by their discretions shall be thought reasonable and convenient for the wealth and commodity of the said House;

Item, I give to the said Master and Fellows a chalice, a pair of censers of silver and a ship to the same, a cross of silver and gilt that I had of the church of All Saints in Colchester, two vestments and three copes of my chapel stuff;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin, William Audley, all that messuage and the house with the garden and appurtenances wherein he now dwelleth, set and being in the parish of Saint Botolph's without Aldgate of London, to have and to hold the same to the said William and to his heirs and assigns forever;

Item, I bequeath to my said brother, Thomas Audley, and to his heirs and assigns forever all those my lands and rents in Frating in the county of Essex with the advowson of the church of Frating and one yearly pension of 6s 8d going out of the parsonage of the same, and also the advowson of the Church of Saint Michael at Mile End besides Colchester and one yearly pension of 6s 8d going out of the parsonage of the same, and all that my portion of tithes in Boxsted in the county of Essex late parcel of the possessions of the priory of Saint Botolph's in Colchester, and all that my yearly pension of 6s 8d going out of the parsonage of Aldham in the county of Essex, and all that my yearly pension and rent of 6s going out of Whitechapel in the said county of Essex, and all other mine advowsons of churches, lands, tenements, rents and other hereditaments in Colchester not before given to any person by this my last will, except thereof one yearly pension of 10s going out of the parsonage of Saint James in Colchester, which pension of 10s I give to the parson of Saint James and to his successors forever, and also except all that my tithe corn which belonged to the late priory of Saint Botolph's in Colchester, all which tithe corn I give to the parson of All Saints in Colchester and to his successors forever, and also except such yearly pension which I ought to have out of the parsonage of Saint Martin's in Colchester, which yearly pension I give to the parson of the same and to his successors forever, and also except that my yearly pension of 26s 8d going out of the vicarage of Saint Peter's in Colchester, all which yearly pension I give to the vicar of the same and to his successors forever to th' intent that he and his successors shall cause one

sermon to be yearly preached upon Good Friday in the Church of Saint Peter's forever, provided alway and my very will is that all such fees as been afore specified, and all other fees and offices which I have granted or in my life shall grant to any person or persons by my letters patents under my seal shall be continued and paid according to the tenor and effect of my grants thereof, anything in this testament and last will to the contrary thereof notwithstanding;

Provided also that if my said daughters, Margaret and Mary, shall happen not to be mine heirs, that then any of them not being mine heir shall yearly have and receive during the said term of 12 years of the issues and profits of my said manor of Drayton Basset twenty marks for their finding, anything afore in this my last will and testament to the contrary notwithstanding.

Thomas Audley, Chancellor. Henry Dorset, Thomas Pope, Robert Huyck, Thomas Barbour, John Christmas, George Christmas, Ralph Copinger, John Fowler, Edmund Martyn, Thomas Powle, Edmund Dey.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum Decimo octavo die mensis february Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo quadragesimo quinto Iuramento xpofo[n] [sic] Robynson notarij pu[bli]ci procuratoris d[omi]nor[um] Edwardi North et Thome pope militu[m] et Edmundi Martyn et Thome Barbour executor[um] quibus com[miss]a fuit admi[n]istracio Ac approbatum et insinatum Et com[miss]a fuit administracio om[n]i[um] bonor[um] etc prefatis executoribus De ben[e] et fideliter administrand[o] eadem Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario om[n]i[um] bonor[um] exhibend[o] Necnon de plano et vero comp[ot]o inde reddend[o] Ad sancta dei Eu[an]gelia in parsona [sic?] dicti procuratoris Iurat[i] Res[er]uata p[otes]tate similem com[mission]em faciend[i] D[omi]ne Elizabet[he] Awdeley executrici etiam in h[uius]mo[d]i testamento no[m]i[n]at[e] eam cum venerit in debita iuris forma admissur[e]

[=The above-written testament was proved on the eighteenth day of the month of February in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred forty-fifth by the oath of Christopher Robynson, notary public, proctor of Sir Edward North and Sir Thomas Pope, knights, and Edmund Martyn and Thomas Barbour, the executors to whom administration was granted, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all the goods etc. to the forenamed executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels in the person of the said proctor to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory of all the goods, and also to render a plain and true account thereof, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to the Lady Elizabeth Audley, executrix also named in the same testament, when she shall have come in due form of law to be admitted the same.]