

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 7 August 1546 and proved 30 March 1547, of Sir Henry Knyvet, soldier and Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and father of the Sir Thomas Knyvet (1546-1622) who fought with Oxford over the ‘quarrel of Anne Vavasour’, an altercation in which Oxford was hurt and his man ‘Gerret’ slain, according to an entry in the diary of Richard Madox for 1-3 March 1582 (see BL MS Cotton, Appendix 47, f. 7v). The testator’s daughter, Margaret Knyvet, and her husband Henry Vavasour of Copmanthorpe, Yorkshire, were Anne Vavasour’s parents, and the testator was thus Anne Vavasour’s grandfather, while the Sir Thomas Knyvet (1546-1622) who fought with Oxford was Anne Vavasour’s maternal uncle. The testator’s wife and executrix, Anne, was the daughter of Sir Christopher Pickering of Killington, Westmorland, and widow of Sir Francis Weston (executed in 1536). After the testator’s death, she married John Vaughan (d.1577). The testator’s father, Sir Thomas Knyvet of Buckenham, Norfolk (c.1485-1512), had been Master of the Horse to King Henry VIII; his wife was Muriel Howard, daughter of Thomas Howard, 2nd Duke of Norfolk (1443-1524). The testator’s son and heir, Henry Knyvet (1537?-1598), of Charlton, Wiltshire, is described in *The Dictionary of National Biography* as ‘a soldier and distinctly belligerent country gentleman’. The testator was on an embassy to France when he fell sick at Melun as indicated in this footnote in Lefevre-Pontalis, Germain, *Correspondance politique de Odet de Selve, Ambassadeur de France en Angleterre, 1546-1549* (Paris: Ancienne Librairie Germer Bailliere, 1888) at p. 5:

Sir Henry Knyvet, ambassadeur extraordinaire d’Angleterre en France et charge de représenter Henry VIII au combat singulier dont il est parle ci-dessous. (Sa letter de creance, en date du 11 juillet, State Papers, t. XI, p. 239, n. 2). It parait etre tombe malade a Melun pendant sa mission . (Id., pp. 253, 263).

It seems likely that the testator, Sir Henry Knyvet, died at Melun.

RM: Testamentum Henrici Knyvet militis

In the name of God, Amen. I, Henry Knyvet, knight, one of the Gentlemen of the King’s Privy Chamber, being whole of mind, thanks be to God, and sick in body, do ordain and make my testament and last will in manner and form following:

First, I commit my soul unto the everliving God, my body to be buried at such place as shall be thought most expedient by mine executors;

First, concerning my lands, what estate, title or interest I, the foresaid Sir Henry, have in possession, remainder or reversion I give unto my loving wife, Dame Anne Knyvet, for term of her life, and immediately after her decease to remain to my son and heir, Henry Knyvet;

As concerning my goods, I commit th' order and disposition of them unto the said Lady Anne, my wife, whom I desire, for the tender love that hath been between her and me, to see my debts contented and paid to the uttermost that my goods will extend;

And the residue of my goods I bequeath unto the said Lady Anne, whom I constitute and ordain my sole executrix;

Thus making an end of my testament and last will, I give my hearty commendations unto my good Lord Admiral and my most loving friend, Master Denny, whom I most heartily desire to be good unto to my said Lady, my wife, and my children, with all my servants and household, desiring them for the special love, trust and confidence that I ever have had in them to be their aiders in all their business and affairs, and of this my last will and testament to be overseers;

In witness that this is my very true and last will I have subscribed this with mine own hand and set to my seal in the presence of these men whose names be underwritten at Melun in France the seventh day of August in the 38th year of our most dread Sovereign Lord, Henry the Eight, 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.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum Coram domino Cantuariensis Archiepiscopo apud London xxxo die mensis marcij Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo xlvijo Iuramento domine Anne Relicte et executricis In huiusmodi testamento nominate Ac approbatum et insinuatam Commissaque fuit administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum iurium et creditorum dictum defunctum et eius testamentum qualitercunque concernentium prefatorum de bene et fideliter administrando eadem Ac de pleno Inventario exhibendo Ad sancta dei Euangelia Iurate

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the 30th day of the month of March in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 46th by the oath of Lady Anne, relict and executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits concerning the said deceased and his testament whatsoever aforementioned(?), sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full inventory.]