

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 23 March 1670 and proved 15 February 1672, of Lady Mary Vere (1581-1671), widow of Oxford's first cousin, Horace Vere (1565-1635), Baron Vere of Tilbury, the youngest of the four sons of Geoffrey Vere (d. 1572?) of Crepping Hall, Wakes Colne, Essex, and his wife, Elizabeth Hardeyn (d.1615), daughter of Richard Hardekyn of Colchester.

The testatrix was the youngest daughter of Sir John Tracy (d.1591) of Toddington, Gloucestershire, and his wife, Anne Throckmorton.

The testatrix' sister, Dorothy Tracy (d.1612), married Edward Conway (d.1631), 1st Viscount Conway, by whom she was the mother of Brilliana Conway (bap. 1598, d.1643), who married, in July 1623, as his third wife, of Sir Robert Harley (bap. 1579, d.1656) of Brampton Bryan, Herefordshire, by whom she was the grandmother of Robert Harley (1661-1724), 1st Earl of Oxford and Mortimer (1661-1724). The testatrix is said to have brokered the marriage. See the *ODNB* entry for Brilliana Conway Harley. This family connection may explain the choice of the earldom of Oxford when Sir Robert Harley was raised to the peerage.

At nineteen, the testatrix married firstly William Hoby (d. 1602?) of Hailes, Gloucestershire, by whom she had two sons, Philip Hoby (d.1617) and William Hoby (d.1623).

In November 1607 the testatrix married Sir Horace Vere, by whom she had five daughters:

* Elizabeth Vere (d.1683), who married, in 1626, John Holles, from 1637 2nd Earl of Clare.

* Mary Vere (c.1611-1669), who married firstly Sir Roger Townshend, and secondly Mildmay Fane, from 1638 2nd Earl of Westmorland.

* Catharine Vere (b.1612/13), who married firstly, in 1634, Oliver St John (1612/1613 - November 1641 or 1642) of Lydiard Tregoze, son of Sir John St. John (1585-1648), and secondly, in 1641, John Poulett, from 1649 Lord Paulet. See Burke, John, *A General and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage of the British Empire*, (London: Henry Colburn, 1832), Vol. I, p. 126 at:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=Cq8KAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA126&lpg=PA126&dq=%22Oliver+St+John%22+%22Lydiard+Tregoze%22&source=bl&ots=fjC_qFVbAF&sig=kvtMo_eolH1MK0suRLQsU2Leo5M&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDsQ6AEwBWoVChMli5zTweL5yAIVT02ICh3NhQsY#v=onepage&q=%22Oliver%20St%20John%22%20%22Lydiard%20Tregoze%22&f=false.

* Anne Vere (1617–1665), who married, in 1637, Thomas Fairfax (from 1648 Lord Fairfax).

* Dorothy Vere, who married John Wolstenholme.

In the will below the testatrix bequeaths paintings at Kirby Hall to her grandson, Horatio Townshend:

Item, I give unto my loving grandchild, Horatio, Lord Townshend, the picture of my late dear husband, Horace, Lord Vere, deceased, in my great parlour, and the pictures of all my Lord Vere's officers and captains in the said room or elsewhere in my house called Kirby Hall, to be delivered to his Lordship or whom he shall appoint immediately after my decease.

For the paintings, see Eales, Jacqueline, 'Anne and Thomas Fairfax, and the Vere Connection', in Hopper, Andrew and Philip Major, eds., *England's Fortress: New Perspectives on Thomas, 3rd Lord Fairfax*, (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014), pp. 156-7 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=AjXjBAAAQBAJ&pg=PA156&lpg=PA156&dq=%22Mary+Vere+1581-1671%22&source=bl&ots=Ca3K3oyImi&sig=w5H-I00uD4VbLMAUUU86kzLAsIU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CBwQ6AEwAGoVChMI1PHMm5L8yAIVRH2ICh1btAyU#v=onepage&q=%22Mary%20Vere%201581-1671%22&f=false>

As well as Kirby Hall, the testatrix also owned property in Hackney and at Bartholomew Close in London.

For a portrait of the testatrix by William Larkin, thought to have been painted about 1615, see:

<http://www.weissgallery.com/paintings/mary-lady-vere-1581-%E2%80%931671>.

The testatrix died 25 December 1671 at the age of 90, and was buried 10 January 1672.

For the will of the testatrix' maternal grandfather, Sir Thomas Throckmorton (d.1568), see TNA PROB 11/50/110. For the will of the testatrix' maternal grandmother, Margaret Throckmorton (d.1578), see TNA PROB 11/60/596. The testatrix was the niece of Sir Thomas Throckmorton (1539-1607), and a first cousin of his son, Sir William Throckmorton (1579-1628), who married Cecily Baynham, the daughter of Thomas Baynham (d.1611) and his wife, Mary Winter, the daughter of Sir William Winter (c.1525-1589). See the article on the Throckmorton family in the *ODNB*.

RM: Lady Mary Vere

In the name of God, Amen. I, Mary, Lady Vere, widow and relict of the right honourable Horace, Lord Vere, Baron of Tilbury, deceased, being now (blessed be God) in good health and of good and disposing memory and understanding, do make this my last will and testament, revoking hereby all former wills by me made;

First, I commend my soul unto the hands of Almighty God, my most gracious Father, hoping to be saved by the only merits of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who died for sinners, and my body I commit to the earth to be decently buried at the discretion of my executors hereinafter named;

And concerning the disposition of my estate, I will as followeth:

Whereas (by virtue of an indenture made or mentioned to be made the six and twentieth day of December in the year of Our Lord God according to the computation of the Church of England one thousand six hundred and nine and forty between me, the said Mary, Lady Vere, on the one part, and the right honourable Sir Robert Tracy, knight, Lord Viscount Tracy (since deceased), on the other part, there is due to me, the said Mary, Lady Vere, the sum of one thousand pounds to be paid to my executors or administrators or to such person or persons as I, the said Mary, Lady Vere, should appoint within three months (accounting eight and twenty days to every month) next after my decease, I do give, limit and appoint the said sum of one thousand pounds as hereinafter followeth:

Item, I will that all my debts and funeral charges be first satisfied and paid;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my good daughter, Mrs Dorothy Wolstonholme, the sum of fifty pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid to her or to her assigns within twelve month next after my decease;

Item, I give & bequeath the sum of fifty pounds of like money to my loving grandchild, the Lady Clinton, to be by her disposed of according as I have given her direction in my lifetime, to be paid her within twelve months after my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my grandchild, Mrs Katherine Paulet, the sum of one hundred pounds of like money, to be paid to her or her assigns within twelve months after my decease;

Item, I give unto my loving grandchild, Horatio, Lord Townshend, the picture of my late dear husband, Horace, Lord Vere, deceased, in my great parlour, and the pictures of all my Lord Vere's officers and captains in the said room or elsewhere in my house called Kirby Hall, to be delivered to his Lordship or whom he shall appoint immediately after my decease;

Item, I give unto Mr Thomas Watson of the city of London, clerk, the sum of thirty pounds of like money, to be paid him or his assigns within twelve months after my decease;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Timothy Felton of Conington(?), gentleman, the sum of thirty pounds of like money, to be paid to him or his assigns within twelve months next after my decease;

Item, I give unto Mr Samuel Borset, clerk, my household chaplain, the sum of fifty pounds of like money, to be paid to him or his assigns within six months next after my decease;

Item, I give unto Mrs Hannah Mosse the sum of forty pounds of like money, to be paid to her or her assigns within six months next after my decease;

Item, my mind and will is that all my servants living with me at the time of my death, and my household chaplain, shall have liberty to continue and stay in my house called Kirby Hall for the space of one month next after my death (with the leave of my grandson, the Lord Paulet), and there to have their diet and lodging for so long time at the charge of my executors;

Item, my mind and will is that all the wages due to my servants at the time of my death be forthwith paid them by my executors, and I do also give and bequeath unto every one of my servants one full half year's wages over and above (except those to whom I have given legacies in this my will), to be paid them by my executors within six months after my death;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my grandson, Sir James Langham of the city of London, knight, the sum of forty pounds of like money, to be paid him within twelve months after my decease;

Item, the rest and residue of the said sum of one thousand pound (when all my debts, legacies and funeral charges is satisfied and paid), and all other my goods, chattels, household stuff and personal estate (except what is hereinbefore given), I give unto my good daughter Elizabeth, Countess of Clare, whom, and my good daughter Mrs Dorothy Wolstonholme, and the said Sir James Langham, I do make executors of this my last will & testament;

In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal the three and twentieth day of March one thousand six hundred sixty-nine. Mary Vere.

Signed, sealed, read, published and declared as my last will and testament in the presence of us, Timothy Felton, William Gray, Philip Hayward.

It is my meaning and will concerning my pictures given after my death to my loving grandson, Horatio, Lord Townshend, that if he have no son at his death, then all those pictures shall be restored to my daughter, the Countess of Clare, whom I have made one of my executors of my will, or if she be not then living, unto her heirs, that they may be preserved to the posterity of my dear husband, Horatio, Lord Vere. In witness whereof I have hereto put my hand and seal the three and twentieth day of March one thousand six hundred sixty-nine. Mary Vere.

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud aedes Exonienses scituat{ae} en le Strand in Comitatu Middlesex vnacum Codicillo eidem annexo coram venerabili viro Richardo Lloyd Legum doctore Surrogato venerabilis et egregij viri domini Leolini Jenkins militis legum etiam doctoris Curie prerogatiue Cantuariensis magistri custodis siue Commissarij legitime constituti decimo Quinto Die Mensis Februarij Anno Domini (stylo Anglice) millesimo sexcentesimo septuagesimo primo juramentio [sic?] honorandae Feminae Elizabethae Comitissae Dotissae de Clare et domini Iacobj Langham militis duorum e Executoribus in hujusmodj Testamento dictae Defunctae nominat{orum} Quibus commissa fuit Administratio omnium et singulorum Bonorum juriu{m} et Creditorum dictae Defunctae de bene et fideliter administrando eadem Ad sancta Dej Evangelia jurat{orum} Reservata potestate similem Com{m}issione{m} faciendi Dorotheae Wolstenholme alteri e Executoribus in eodem Testamento nominat{ae} cum venerit eandem petitur{us}(?)

[=The above-written will was proved at Essex House(?) situate in the Strand in the county of Middlesex, together with the codicil annexed to the same, before the worshipful Richard Lloyd, Doctor of the Laws, surrogate of the worshipful and distinguished Sir Leoline Jenkins, knight, also Doctor of the Laws, lawfully constituted Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the fifteenth day of the month of February in the year of the Lord (English style) a thousand six hundred seventy-one, by the oath of the honourable Elizabeth, Countess Dowager of Clare, and Sir James Langham, knight, two of the executors named in the same will of the said deceased, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to Dorothy Wolstenholme, another of the executors named in the same will, when she shall have come to petition the same.]