

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 20 May 1544 and proved 10 March 1550, of Edmund Sheffield (1521-1549), 1st Baron Sheffield (1521-1549), who was a ward of John de Vere (1482-1540), 15th Earl of Oxford, and whose wife was Oxford's paternal aunt, Anne de Vere (d.1572), the sister of John de Vere (1516-1562), 16th Earl of Oxford.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was the grandson of Sir Robert Sheffield (d. 10 August 1518), Speaker of the House of Commons, for whose will, dated 8 August 1518 and proved 28 February 1519, see TNA PROB 11/19/217. See also the *ODNB* entry, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/sheffield-sir-robert-1462-1518>

The testator was the son of Sir Robert Sheffield (d. 15 November 1531) of Butterwick, Lincolnshire, and his second wife, Margaret Zouche, the daughter of John Zouche (d. 20 October 1501), esquire, of Benefield, Northamptonshire. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, pp. 197-8.

The following excerpts are taken from the *ODNB*:

Edmund Sheffield, first Baron Sheffield (1521–1549), nobleman, was born on 21 November 1521, the elder son of Sir Robert Sheffield (d. 1531), of West Butterwick, Lincolnshire, and his first wife, Jane Stanley, a second cousin of Henry VIII. His family had prospered in recent generations, mainly through legal practice, and Edmund, who had a younger brother, David, and a sister, Eleanor, was heir to a substantial estate in the north midlands and Lincolnshire. Following his father's death on 15 November 1531, on 28 April 1533 Edmund's wardship was granted to George Boleyn, Viscount Rochford. Rochford was executed on 17 May 1536, and on 2 January 1538 the wardship and marriage were granted to John de Vere, fifteenth earl of Oxford; the grant probably confirmed an existing situation, for by the end of that month Sheffield was married to Oxford's daughter Anne, and the earl was asking Thomas Cromwell to be good lord to his son-in-law.

Predeceased by his first wife, Sir Robert Sheffield had later married Margaret Zouche. Following Sir Robert's death his widow herself remarried, her second husband being John Cavendish.

Although the *ODNB* entry states that Margaret (nee Zouche) Sheffield Cavendish was the testator's stepmother, the testator refers to her in the will below as his mother, and in the Sheffield pedigree in the revised edition of *Plantagenet Ancestry* it is also stated that the testator was the son of Sir Robert Sheffield's second marriage to Margaret Zouche, the

daughter of John Zouche, esquire, of Benefield, Northamptonshire, and his wife, Eleanor St John (personal e-mail communication from Douglas Richardson, 4 March 2010). For additional information on Margaret Zouche compiled by Douglas Richardson, see:

<https://soc.genealogy.medieval.narkive.com/EkxjIZBQ/complete-peerage-correction-sir-edmund-sheffield-s-mother-margaret-zouche>

For the will of the testator's stepfather, Sir John Cavendish (d.1554?), see TNA PROB 11/37/180.

Sir Robert Sheffield's first wife, Joan (or Jane) Stanley, was the daughter of Sir George Stanley (c.1460 – 4 or 5 December 1503), son and heir apparent of Thomas Stanley (c.1435-1504), 1st Earl of Derby, and his first wife, Eleanor Neville, the daughter of Richard Neville (1400-1460), 5th Earl of Salisbury, the eldest son of Ralph Neville (c.1364–1425), 1st Earl of Westmorland, and his second wife, Joan Beaufort (d. 1440), daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, p. 267.

Richard Neville (1400-1460) was thus the nephew of Henry IV, and a close kinsman of all three Lancastrian kings. In 1422 he married Alice Montagu (c.1406–1462), sole daughter and heir of Thomas Montagu (1388-1428), Earl of Salisbury. Eleanor Neville's sister, Margaret Neville, was the first wife of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford. There was thus a relationship between the families of the testator and Anne de Vere (d.1572) prior to their marriage. For the will of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford, see TNA PROB 11/17/379.

Sir George Stanley (c.1460 – 4 or 5 December 1503) married Joan Strange (c.1459 – 20 March 1514), the daughter of John Strange, 8th Lord Strange of Knockin, and his wife, Jacquetta Woodville. Sir George Stanley and his father, Thomas Stanley (c.1433-1504), 1st Earl of Derby, played pivotal roles in the Battle of Bosworth, as depicted in Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Their unique roles at Bosworth resulted from the fact that after the death of his first wife, Eleanor Neville, Thomas Stanley (c.1433-1504), 1st Earl of Derby, married Margaret Beaufort, the mother of the eventual victor of Bosworth, Henry VII. From the *ODNB*:

Appointed steward of the king's household late in 1471, [Thomas Stanley, 1st Earl of Derby (c.1433–1504),] was thenceforward a regular member of the royal council. The death of his first wife some time before 1471 severed his connection with the Nevilles and made possible, some time early in 1472, a marriage even more distinguished and politically significant. Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond, his new wife, was the mother of Henry Tudor and potentially heir-general of the house of Lancaster. . . .

Richard cannot wholly have trusted Stanley. When in the summer of 1485 the latter took leave to return to Lathom the king asked that his son, George Stanley, Lord Strange, take his place at court. The Stanleys had been in communication with Henry Tudor and the Lancastrian exiles for some time. Henry Tudor's strategy of landing in Wales and

crossing to Shrewsbury depended on the support of Sir William Stanley, the chamberlain of Chester and north Wales, and presumably on that of Stanley himself. Once informed of the invasion, the king ordered the two brothers to raise the men of the region in readiness to take the field against the pretender. On hearing that Henry Tudor was marching unopposed through Wales, Richard ordered Lord Stanley to join him at once. According to the continuator of the Crowland chronicle, Stanley excused himself on the grounds of illness. By this stage the king had firm evidence of Stanley complicity. After an abortive bid to escape from the court, Lord Strange confessed that he, his uncle Sir William Stanley, and his cousin Sir John Savage (d. 1492) were in league with Henry Tudor. The king proclaimed the two knights traitors, and let it be known that Strange was hostage for his father's loyalty in the coming conflict.

From Shakespeare's *Richard III* (V.v 342-6):

[Enter a messenger]

K. Richard. What says Lord Stanley? Will he bring his power?

Messenger. My Lord, he doth deny to come.

K. Richard. Off with his son George's head!

*Norfolk. My lord, the enemy is past the marsh,
After the battle let George Stanley die.*

Sir George Stanley died after a banquet in London in December 1503, predeceasing his father. It is said that he was poisoned.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Anne de Vere (d.1572), the daughter of John de Vere (1482-1540), 15th Earl of Oxford, by whom he had a son and two daughters:

* **John Sheffield** (c.1538–1568), 2nd Baron Sheffield, who married Douglas Howard (1542/3–1608), the daughter of William (d.1510-1573), 1st Baron Howard of Effingham. Shortly after the 2nd Baron Sheffield's death on 10 December 1568, his widow began a liaison with Leicester, and later claimed they had secretly married. Although the evidence for the marriage is inconclusive, she did bear Leicester a son, Sir Robert Dudley (1574-1649). The anonymous author of *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584) charged Leicester with the murder of Oxford's first cousin, the 2nd Baron Sheffield:

Long after this, [Leicester] fell in love with the Lady Sheffield, whom I signified before, & then also had he the same fortune to have her husband die quickly with an extreme rheum in his head (as it was given out), but as other say of an artificial catarrh that stopped his breath.

* **Frances Sheffield**, who married William Metham, esquire.

* **Eleanor Sheffield**, who married Denzel Holles (c.1538-1590), by whom she was the mother of John Holles (d.1637), 1st Earl of Clare. See the *ODNB* entry for John Holles, 1st Earl of Clare.

* **Elizabeth Sheffield**, born after the testator made his will.

The testator was slain at Norwich on 31 July 1549 while attempting to suppress Kett's Rebellion. After his death, Anne de Vere married John Brock, esquire, of Colchester, the son and heir of John Brock of Little Leighs, Essex, and Agnes Wiseman. Anne de Vere was buried at Stepney, Middlesex 14 February 1571/2. In 1581 John Brock married Mary Pascall. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. III, pp. 198-9.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

Thomas (1506-1558), 1st Baron Darcy of Chiche, named as a trustee and executor in the will below, was the testator's brother-in-law, the husband of Anne de Vere's sister, Elizabeth de Vere (d.1565).

The Lady Anne Grey mentioned in the will was Anne (nee Barlee), the second wife of the testator's paternal grandfather, Sir Robert Sheffield (d. 10 August 1518), who left her an annuity of 100 marks out of lands in Coningsby and West Butterwick in his will. See TNA PROB 11/19/217. After Sir Robert Sheffield's death, Anne married Sir John Grey of Blisworth, Northamptonshire, son of Thomas Grey (c.1455–1501), 1st Marquess of Dorset. See Challen, W.H., 'Lady Anne Grey', *Notes and Queries*, 1963, Vol. 10, pp. 5-9. For the will of Lady Anne Grey, see TNA PROB 11/40/229. See also:

http://www.tudorwomen.com/?page_id=646

ANNE BARLEE (d.1558)

The details in this entry are taken primarily from W. H. Challen's "Lady Anne Grey" in the January 1963 Notes and Queries, in which he sorts out the marriages of Anne Jerningham and Anne Barlee, both of whom were entitled to use the name Lady Anne Grey. Anne Barlee (Barley, Barlow, Barlie, Barleigh) was the daughter of William Barlee of Albury, Herfordshire (c.1451-1521) and Elizabeth Darcy. She was married three times and in each case was her husband's second wife. Her first husband was Sir Robert Sheffield of Butterwick, Lincolnshire (d.1519). Her second was Sir John Grey, son of the first Marquis of Dorset, and she is the "Lady Grey, Lord John's Wife" who attended the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520. His date of death is unknown, but since he is mentioned in his mother's will in 1528, he was apparently still alive then. The will of the second Marquis of Dorset in 1530, clearly identifies Anne as "my sister Lady Anne Grey, wife to my brother John Lord Grey and now wife to Richard Clemente," but Collins' Peerage listed her as the daughter of the first Marquis of Dorset and this mistake has been repeated ever since. Her third husband was Sir Richard Clement of Ightham Mote, Kent (d.1538). His will was proved December 2, 1538. His widow's will is dated October 1,

1557 and was proved May 7, 1558. She asked to be buried at Albury with a tomb of marble or white alabaster.

LM: Edmundus Sheffelde

In the name of God, Amen. The 20th day of May in the year of Our Lord God 1544 and of the reign of our most Sovereign Lord Henry the 8th by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland King, Defensor of the Faith, and in earth under God Supreme Head of the Church of England and Ireland the 36th, I, Edmund Sheffield of West Butterwick in the county of Lincoln, esquire, of whole mind and good memory, maketh this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First, I bequeath my soul to Almighty Jesus, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried within the holy ground where it shall please God to provide for it;

Also I bequeath for my mortuary that that the law of the church will;

And further will and declare this my last will and testament as concerning my manors, lands, tenements and other hereditaments in form following, that is to say, that David Sheffield, my brother, shall have my manor of Woodbury now in my possession, and also the reversion of all such lands and tenements as Lady Margaret Cavendish, my mother, hath assigned to her in dower in Woodbury aforesaid when at the pleasure of God it shall chance her to decease, to have and to hold the said manor in possession & reversion as is aforesaid to the said David Sheffield for term of his life;

And further for the payment of my debts unto the King's Majesty that I do owe unto his Grace's Highness, I declare my last will and testament as hereafter ensueth, that is to say, I will and declare this to be my last will and testament, that Thomas Darcy, knight, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche, esquire, and John Sutton, esquire, their executor[s] and assign[s], shall immediately from the time of my death receive and take all the rents, issues and profits of all and singular my manors of Hilderstone in the county of Stafford, Humby, Bratoft, Borowe, Winthorpe, Ingoldmells, Wrangle, Sibsey, Halton, Skegness, Sutton, Irby, with all and singular their members and appurtenances in the county of Lincoln, Walpole with the appurtenances in the county of Norfolk, Measham and Welysley [=Willesley?] with their appurtenances in the county of Derby, unto such time as they have received of the clear yearly profits thereof the sum of seven hundred and six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence to and for the payments of such debts as I do now owe unto our said Sovereign Lord the King's Majesty, as appeareth by my several obligations thereof made;

Also I will that immediately after my said debts paid, the aforesaid Thomas Darcy, knight, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche, esquire, and John Sutton, esquire, shall take and receive the issues, revenues and profits of the same manors, lands and tenements and other hereditaments last above-rehearsed unto such time as they have received and

taken the sum of one thousand seven hundred and three pounds eighteen shillings and two pence to th' intents and uses following, that is to say, for the marriage of my two daughters, Eleanor and Frances, two thousand marks, and the residue of the said sum of £1703 18s 2d that the foresaid Thomas Darcy, knight, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche, esquire and John Sutton, esquire, their executors or assigns, shall receive and employ the same unto the use of such child or children as Lady Anne, my wife, now is or shall be conceived with by me, the said Edmund, and if so chance and fortune that my said wife, Lady Anne, be not with child as is aforesaid, then I will that the foresaid Thomas Darcy, Lady Anne, George Zouche and John Sutton shall employ and bestow the said residue of th' aforesaid sum of £1703 18s 2d to th' use & preferment of the said David Sheffield, my brother, and if it fortune the said David to decease before he hath received the said residue of the sum beforesaid, that then I will the same residue so unpaid to be employed and bestowed to the enstoring of the pastures and furnitures of my head houses of Butterwick and Coningsby for th' use of John Sheffield, my son and heir apparent, and of my heirs, and if it fortune my said daughters, Eleanor and Frances, to die, as God defend, afore the said sum of 2000 marks be paid as is aforesaid, that then the said sum of money remaining unpaid to go and be delivered to the heirs of me, the said Edmund;

And further I will and declare this for my last will and testament for the payment of the residue of my debts that the foresaid Thomas Darcy, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche and John Sutton shall have and take the revenues, issues and profits of all my manors, lands and tenements with their members and appurtenances in Crakemarsch, Marchington, Creighton, Strongshelf, Uttoxeter, Clayton, Griffyth, Hanchurch, Hanford, Keele, Whitmore, Delves, Rugges and Chesterton in the county of Stafford unto such time as they have contented and paid unto my creditors the sum of six hundred forty and four pounds and six shillings, and after the same sum paid, I will that John Cavendish, knight, Lady Margaret, his wife, and the abovesaid John Sutton, their executors and assigns, shall have, take and receive of the issues, revenues and profits of all my said manors, lands and tenements last above-named, the sum of two hundred and fourteen pounds fifteen shillings and four pence for & towards the marriage of Eleanor Sheffield, my sister, and the said sum of £214 15s 4d to be delivered as it shall grow yearly to my said sister immediately after my said debts paid, and in case that any parcel or part of the foresaid sum of £644 6s do remain in th' hands of th' aforesaid Thomas Darcy, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche and John Sutton after all my debts well and truly paid, then I will that the said part and parcel be delivered unto the said Eleanor, my sister, towards her preferment and marriage, so that it amounteth not above the sum of one hundred marks, and if there remain more than one hundred marks, then I will that David Sheffield, my brother, shall have the same;

And further I will that if the foresaid Eleanor, my sister, do die, as God defend, afore she be married, or marry without the assent of John Cavendish, knight, Lady Margaret, his wife, George Zouche and John Sutton abovesaid, her friends, that then the said sums of money shall be delivered by the said John Cavendish, Lady Margaret, his wife, and John Sutton and other above-named unto the said David Sheffield, my brother;

And further I will and declare this for my last will and testament that the said Thomas Darcy, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche and John Sutton, for their labours and charges in well and truly executing of this my last will according to the true intent and purport of my mind herein declared, shall have the sum of one hundred seven pounds seven shillings and eight pence, to be received by them of th' issues and profits of the manors of Crakemarsh and other lands and tenements last above-named;

Also I will that after all th' aforesaid sums of money be well and truly contented and paid after my true intent and mind afore declared, that Anne Sheffield, my cousin, shall have towards her marriage out of the said manors of Crakemarsh and other last above-named, the sum of one hundred marks;

And also I will that after the said hundred marks paid, Anne Buckwood shall have out of the said manors of Crakemarsh and other last above-named the sum of 40 marks;

Also I will that after the said 40 marks paid, that Anne Sheffield and Margaret Sheffield, my aunts, shall have out of the said manors of Crakemarsh and other last above-specified the sum of two hundred marks;

And after the said two hundred marks paid, I will that (blank), my aunt, wife of Thomas Monson, shall have of th' issues and profits of the same lands the sum of one hundred marks to th' use and preferment of her and her children;

And after the said one hundred marks paid, I will that Agnes Zouche and Cecily Zouche, my aunts, shall have of th' issues and profits of the said manors last above-named the sum of one 100 marks;

Also I will that after the said 100 marks paid, the Lady Margaret Cavendish, my mother, shall have of th' issues and profits of the said manors last above-named the sum of £176 18s 4d;

Also I will and declare this my last will and testament, that immediately after all sums of money had, received and taken of th' aforesaid manors of Crakemarsh and other next above-mentioned and fully contented and paid in manner and form aforesaid, that the afore-named Thomas Darcy, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche and John Sutton shall take and receive the revenues, issues & profits of the said manors of Crakemarsh and other next above-mentioned unto such time as they shall have received the sum of £214 15s 4d to th' use of the abovesaid John Cavendish, knight, and Lady Margaret, his wife, my mother, to th' intent they shall be better unto my friends;

And further I will that Lady Anne, my wife, after the decease of Lady Anne Grey, immediately shall have one annuity or yearly rent of one hundred marks going out of my manors of Butterwick and Coningsby for term of her life in like sort and form as the Lady Grey now hath and enjoyeth for term of her life the same;

And further I give and bequeath by this my last will and testament to John Sheffield, my sons and heir apparent, all my dominions, lordships, manors, lands and tenements with their appurtenances in this my last will mentioned, and also all and singular my other dominions, manors, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and services and other hereditaments with their appurtenances within the realm of England, to have and to hold all the said dominions, manors and other the premises with their appurtenances to the said John Sheffield, my son, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue male the remainder thereof to the heirs males of the said Edmund Sheffield lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue male the remainder thereof to David Sheffield, my brother, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue male the remainder thereof to the right heirs of me, the said Edmund Sheffield, forever;

Also I will and declare for my last will and testament that all such legacies, bequests to all uses and intents had and specified in certain schedule or schedules hereunto annexed, signed and sealed with mine own hand and seal, shall be and take effect for the further declaration of my last will and testament as though they were herein particularly specified or mentioned;

The residue of all my goods moveable not bequeathed I give and bequeath to Lady Anne, my wife;

And further for the true executing and fulfilling of this my last will and testament I ordain, constitute and make the above-named Thomas Darcy, John Cavendish, knights, Lady Anne, my wife, George Zouche, John Sutton and Anthony Neville, esquires, Christopher Egmonton and Robert Brokelsbye, gent{lemen}, my full executors, these being witnesses: Robert Ivers, Alexander Banester, William Anderson, John Blake, John Cruso(?), priest, and Robert Wresyll & other. Edmund Sheffield.

Also I will that the within-named John Cavendish and Christopher Egmonton shall take and receive all the issues, revenues and profits to the value of £8 yearly of all my lands and tenements called Wadnynges lands within the Isle of Axholme to th' use and purpose hereafter following, that is to say, to th' use of Custance [=Constance] Lokwood, sometime wife of John Sheffield, Jane Sheffield and Anne Sheffield, daughters to the same John Sheffield, to and for the term of their lives, equally to be divided amongst them, provided alway that the said Custance shall have but her third part of the said sum for term of her life;

Also I will that Thomas Newlande shall have my farm in Beltofte for term of his life, now being in the tenure of John Newlande, his father, immediately after the death of the said John.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i testamentu{m} Coram D{omi}no Cant{uariensis} Archiep{iscop}o ap{u}d London Decimo die Marcij Anno D{omi}ni Millesimo

quingentesimo quadragesimo Nono Iuramento D{omi}ne Anne Relicte et executric{is} in eodem testamento nominate Ac approbatum et Insinuatu{m} Et com{m}issa fuit Administrac{i}o om{niu}m et sing{u}lor{um} bonor{um} &c dict{i} defunct{i} prefat{e} executrici de bene &c Ac de pleno Inventario &c exhibend{o} ad s{an}c{t}a dei evangelia in debita Iuris forma Iurat{e} Res{er}vat{a} p{otes}tate similem com{m}issionem faciend{o} alijs execut{oribus} in h{uius}mo{d}i test{ament}o no{m}i{n}at{is} eos cu{m} venerint In forma Iuris Admissur{is}

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the tenth day of March in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred forty-ninth 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 etc. of the said deceased to the forenamed executrix, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to well etc., and to exhibit a full inventory etc., with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to the other executors named in the same testament when they shall have come in form of law to be admitted.]