

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 18 and 20 April 1550 and proved 27 October 1551, of Sir Edmund Knyvet (c.1508 - 1 May 1551), great uncle of Oxford's mistress, Anne Vavasour, and uncle of Sir Thomas Knyvet (1546 – 27 July 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).

In 1541 the testator was sentenced to lose his right hand for striking Thomas Clere, the son of Sir Robert Clere and Alice Boleyn (c.1487 - 1 November 1538), at court. From the *ODNB*:

Late in April 1541 Knyvet again showed his hotheadedness, when he was charged with striking Thomas Clere, a servant of Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, within the king's tennis court. A recent statute had stated that anyone guilty of such violence at court should have his right hand struck off, and arrangements were made to inflict the penalty—the statute specified in detail how this should be done, the king's master cook wielding the knife and the sergeant of the poultry providing a cock to test its sharpness. Possibly because Knyvet begged to have his left hand amputated instead, so that his right might still do the king good service, he received a pardon before the blow could be struck.

See the will, TNA PROB 11/27/398, of Alice Boleyn Clere (c.1487 - 1 November 1538), whose grandson, Sir Edward Clere (15 June 1536 – 8 June 1606), purchased Oxford's manor of Weybourne.

For the testator's inquisition post mortem, see C 142/91/66.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Testator's great-grandparents

The testator was the great-grandson of Sir William Knyvet (c.1440-1515) of Buckenham, Norfolk, Councillor to Henry Stafford, 2nd Duke of Buckingham, and to Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham, and his first wife, Alice Grey (d. 4 April 1474), the daughter of John Grey, esquire, of Kempston, Bedfordshire. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 186-8 at:

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

For the will of the testator's great-grandfather, Sir William Knyvet, see TNA PROB 11/18/352.

The testator was a cousin of the half blood of Richard Knyvet (d. 1 November 1559), first husband of Helen Harding Knyvet Bowne, whose second husband, Sir Thomas Browne (d. 9 February 1597), signed Lady Russell's petition against James Burbage's Blackfriars theatre. As noted above, the testator was the great-grandson of Sir William Knyvet (c.1440-1515) by his first wife, Alice Grey, while Richard Knyvet (d. 1 November 1559) was the great-grandson of Sir William Knyvet (c.1440-1515) by his second wife, Joan Stafford (living 1484), divorced wife of William Beaumont (d. 19 December 1507), 2nd Viscount Beaumont, and daughter of Humphrey Stafford, 1st Duke of Buckingham.. See the will of Helen Harding Knyvet Browne, TNA PROB 11/98/226; and *Plantagenet Ancestry, supra*, Vol. II, pp. 186-8.

Testator's grandparents

The testator was the grandson of Sir Edmund Knyvet (drowned at sea in 1503/4) and Eleanor Tyrrell, the daughter of William Tyrrell of Gipping, Suffolk, beheaded on Tower Hill 23 February 1462, and Margaret Darcy, the daughter of Robert Darcy (d. 3 September 1448). For William Tyrrell (beheaded 23 February 1462), see the will, dated 16 March 1471, of Sir William Tyrrell of Beeches; and Ross, James, *John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford (1442-1513)*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), pp. 39, 42. For the six sons and three daughters of Sir Edmund Knyvet and Eleanor Tyrrell, see *Plantagenet Ancestry, supra*, Vol. II, pp. 189-90.

Testator's father

The testator was a younger son of Sir Thomas Knyvet (c.1485–1512), a favourite of Henry VIII. When war broke out with France in 1512 the testator's father was given command of the *Regent*, and was killed on 10 August 1512 when the *Regent* engaged the largest ship in the French fleet, the *Cordelière*. The testator's mother, Muriel Howard died in childbirth a few months later, between 13 and 21 December 1512. The testator and his brothers and sisters are said to have been brought up by their grandmother, Eleanor Tyrrell (see above). However after the death in 1515 of the testator's great-grandfather, Sir William Knyvet, the testator became the ward firstly of his father's friend, Charles Brandon (c.1484-1545), 1st Duke of Suffolk, and secondly of Sir Thomas Wyndham (d.1522), nephew of Elizabeth de Vere (d.1537), Countess of Oxford, second wife of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford. See the will of Sir Thomas Wyndham, TNA PROB 11/21/53, and the *ODNB* entry for the testator:

Edmund's wardship was then purchased by his father's friend Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, who had also been the guardian of Knyvet's half-sister Elizabeth Grey. It appears that Suffolk subsequently sold Knyvet's wardship to Sir Thomas Wyndham, who at his death instructed his executors to sell it on to Anthony Wingfield for £400 or, failing that, to the highest bidder.

For the brief will, dated 5 August 1512, of the testator's father, see TNA PROB 11/17/337.

Testator's mother

The testator's mother was Muriel Howard (1485 – 14 December 1512), daughter of Thomas Howard (1443-1524), 2nd Duke of Norfolk, by his first wife, Elizabeth Tilney (d.1497). See Emerson at:

http://www.tudorwomen.com/?page_id=685

Muriel Howard (1485-December 14, 1512) was the daughter of Thomas Howard, 2nd duke of Norfolk (1443-May 21, 1524) and Elizabeth Tylney (d. April 4, 1497). She was at Sheriff Hutton Castle in 1495 when John Skelton composed his poem "The Garland of Laurell" (published 1523). She married John Grey, viscount Lisle (April 1480-September 9, 1505) in June 1504 and had one daughter, Elizabeth (1505-1519). Muriel married Sir Thomas Knyvett of Buckenden or Budkenham, Norfolk (d. August 10, 1512) and was the mother of Edmund (1507/8-1550/1), Ferdinando (b.1509), Henry (d. March 30, 1547), Anthony, Catherine, and Anne. Her will was written October 13, 1512 and proved January 12, 1512/13. She bequeathed "all my three sons and two daughters to the King's Highness, together with my wedding ring to him, desiring him to be a good Lord to them."

For the will of Muriel Howard Knyvet, see Nicolas, Nicholas Harris, *Testamenta Vetusta*, Vol. II, (London: Nichols and Son, 1826), p. 516 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ivsUAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA515>

As noted above, by the testator's mother's first marriage the testator had a half sister:

-Elizabeth Grey (1505-1519), who was betrothed as a child to Charles Brandon (c.1484-1545), 1st Duke of Suffolk. From the *ODNB* entry:

[Brandon's] status rose in leaps and bounds: knighted on 30 March 1512, elected a knight of the Garter on 23 April 1513, created Viscount Lisle on 15 May 1513. Promotion into the peerage was made possible by his betrothal to Knyvet's eight-year-old stepdaughter, Elizabeth Grey, heir to the barons Lisle, whose wardship he had purchased from the crown. The title was also intended to facilitate his exercise of increasingly responsible military commands.

In the naval campaign of 1512 Brandon and Henry Guildford had captained one of Henry's largest ships, the Sovereign, but watched helplessly as another, the Regent, burnt with Knyvet aboard.

Brandon did not marry the testator's half sister, Elizabeth Grey. In February 1515, he secretly married Henry VIII's sister, Mary Tudor (1496-1533), widow of Louis XII of France. From the *ODNB*:

In summer 1514 Wolsey brokered peace between Henry and Louis XII of France, a peace sealed by Louis's marriage to Henry's sister Mary (1496–1533). In the autumn Suffolk led a jousting embassy to the wedding celebrations. Louis's death in January brought him to France again, charged with escorting Mary home. At Paris, in mid-February, without Henry's permission, they wed.

Shortly after Brandon's marriage to Mary Tudor, Elizabeth Grey married, as his first wife, Henry Courtenay (1498/9-1538), Marquess of Exeter, eldest surviving son of William Courtenay (c.1475–1511), 1st Earl of Devon, and Katherine Plantagenet (1479-1527), sixth daughter of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville. See the *ODNB* entry for Henry Courtenay. See also Gray, Todd, ed., *Tudor and Stuart Devon*, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1992), p. 24 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=X8JPu4ltlJ4C&pg=PA24>

In July 1515 he [=Henry Courtenay, Earl of Devon] and his mother received the wardship and marriage of Lady Elizabeth Lisle, daughter and heiress of John Grey, Viscount Lisle, for the sum of £4000 . . . Henry and Elizabeth were consequently married, but sometime before June 1519 she died, and on 25 October of the same year he married his second wife, Gertrude Blount, the daughter of William Blount, Lord Mountjoy.

After the death of Mary Tudor, Charles Brandon married Katherine Willoughby (1519–1580), whose son by her second marriage, Peregrine Bertie, married Oxford's sister, Mary de Vere.

For Elizabeth Grey, see also:

http://www.tudorwomen.com/?page_id=677

Elizabeth Grey (1505-1519) was the daughter of John Grey, viscount Lisle (April 1480-September 9, 1505) and Muriel Howard (1485-December 14, 1512). After the death of her stepfather, Sir Thomas Knyvett, in August 1512, she became the ward of Charles Brandon. In 1513, she was betrothed to Brandon and he was created Viscount Lisle. When he married Mary Tudor, widowed Queen of France and sister of Henry VIII, he surrendered the title. Elizabeth's wardship passed to Katherine Plantagenet, countess of Devon, who married Elizabeth to her son, Henry Courtenay (1496-1538). Elizabeth died before the marriage could be consummated.

Testator's siblings

The testator's mother had three sons and two daughters living when she made her will on 13 October 1512. According to Emerson, *supra*, she had a fourth son, Ferdinando Knyvet (b.1509), who appears to have predeceased her. The testator thus had four siblings living at the time of his mother's death:

-Sir Henry Knyvet (d. 7 August 1546?), Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, who married Anne Pickering. See the will of Sir Henry Knyvet, TNA PROB 11/32/4; the will of his widow, Anne (nee Pickering) Weston Knyvet Vaughan (1514 – 25 April 1582), TNA PROB 11/64/217; and the History of Parliament entry for his eldest son and heir, Sir Henry Knyvet (1537? – 14 June 1598) at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/knyvet-henry-1537-98>

By Anne Pickering Sir Henry Knyvet was the father of Sir Thomas Knyvet (1546 – 27 July 1622), who fought with Oxford over the 'quarrel of Anne Vavasour'. See his will, TNA PROB 11/140/169, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/knyvett-sir-thomas-1545-1622>

-Sir Anthony Knyvet, who served as Lieutenant of the Tower of London in the 1540s, and was executed in 1554 for his involvement in Wyatt's rebellion.

-Catherine Knyvet, who married firstly Sir William Fermor (d.1558), son of Sir Henry Fermor of East Barsham, Norfolk, and secondly Nicholas Mynne, esquire. See Clark, Nicola, *Gender, Family, & Politics: The Howard Women, 1485-1558*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 7 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=7hhnDwAAQBAJ&pg=PA7>

See also *History and Antiquities of the County of Norfolk*, Vol. V, (Norwich: J. Crouse, 1781), pp. 8, 86, 90, 130 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=Q5lCAAAAYAAJ&pg=RA1-PA4>

After this it was possessed by sir Robert Knollys, and was settled on his hospital, or college, at Pomfret. . . .

After the dissolution of the aforesaid hospital, it was granted May 17, in the 3d of Edward VI. to sir William Fermor and sir Richard Fulmerstone, and sir William died seised of it in 1558; on whose death Catherine, his lady, possessed it, and brought it by marriage to Nicholas Mynne, esq.

See also Allen, James M., 'Sir James Tyrrell', Genealogical Research Report GR-111201, November 12, 2001, available as a pdf file online at:

www.terrellsociety.com/genealogy/documents/L246_JMAllen_S.pdf

Catherine Knyvet's second husband was perhaps Oxford's servant, Nicholas Mynne.

-**Anne Knyvet** (c.1506-c.1533), who married Thomas Thursby of Ashwicken, Norfolk.
See:

http://www.tudorwomen.com/?page_id=691

Anne Knyvett (c.1506-c.1533) was the daughter of Sir Thomas Knyvett of Buckenham Castle, Norfolk (d. August 10, 1512) and Muriel Howard (1485-December 14, 1512). Her mother wrote her will on October 13, 1512 (proved January 12, 1513), leaving her children to the care of King Henry. In 1519-20, Anne Knyvett was given six yards of yellow bridge (Bruges?) satin for a kirtle, 2¼ ells of black worsted for a kirtle, lined with two ells of black kersey, and ten ells of linen, as well as ribbons, shoes, hose, and other items. In the covenant for a marriage settlement dated May 31, 1527, Anne was described as "one of the queen's gentlewomen and one of the daughters of Sir Thomas Knyvett deceased." She was to marry Thomas Thuresby or Thoresby of Asshewykyne.

For Thomas Thursby, see also:

<https://ancientmonuments.uk/114694-site-of-all-saints-church-leziate>

For Thomas Thursby, see also:

<https://www.literarynorfolk.co.uk/Norfolk%20Deserted%20Villages/Causes%20of%20Desertion.html>

See also Parkin, Charles, *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, Vol. III, (London: William Miller, 1808), p. 338 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=4ksuAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA338>

. . . and the said Thomas Thorisby died seized of the manor of Ashwyken, with its appertenances, in the 36th of Henry VIII [=1544/5]. The Thorisbys seem to have lived here at this time. Edmund Thoresby, Esq. son of Thomas, by his last will, dated December 20, 1547, desires to be buried in the church of Ashwyken, appoints Ursula his wife executrix, and mentions his brother, Francis Thoresby, Esq. proved January 9 following. In the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, Thomas Thoresby, Esq. had livery of the manors of Ashwiken, Bawsey, Glosthorp, &c. being son and heir of Edmund.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Anne Shelton, the daughter of Sir John Shelton (1476/7–1539) of Carrow, Norfolk, and Anne Boleyn (c. 1483–1555). See the *ODNB* entry for Sir John Shelton.

For Anne Shelton, see also:

http://www.tudorwomen.com/?page_id=707

Anne Shelton (d. September 17, 1563) was the daughter of Sir John Shelton of Shelton and Carrow, Norfolk (c.1472-December 21, 1539) and Anne Boleyn (c.1475-December 1556), the sister of Queen Anne Boleyn's father. Anne married Sir Edmund Knyvett of Buckenham Castle, Norfolk (d. May 1, 1551) by 1527. As he was not knighted until 1538/9, she may have been the Mistress Anne Knyvett in the household of Princess Mary in Wales in 1525-7. In 1538, her aunt, Alice Boleyn Clere, left her "a tablet of gold with the picture of the Salutation of Our Lady in it with 8 rubies and 24 pearls in the same." Their children still living when Anne died in 1563 were Thomas (d. September 22, 1569), Edmund, Henry, and Anthony. Her second husband was Christopher Coote of Blonorton, by whom may have had another son, Richard (d.1563+).

The testator's wife was the niece of Alice Boleyn Clere (see her will, *supra*).

Although no other record of the marriage has been found, TNA C 78/20/11 suggests that before she married the testator, Anne Shelton was the widow of John Flowerdew, esquire ('Plaintiffs: Christopher Coote, esq and his wife, Dame Anne Knyvet widow of Sir Edmund Knyvet and John Flowerdewe, esq.').

After the testator's death, Anne Shelton married Christopher Coote (d. 17 September 1563). For a decree dated 6 May 1561 concerning the wardship of Richard Catlyn in a lawsuit brought against Francis Southwell and his wife, Barbara Spencer, by Christopher Coote (d. 17 September 1563) and the testator's widow, Anne Shelton, see TNA C 78/20/11.

For Christopher Coote, see also:

Francis Blomefield, 'Hundred of Giltcross: Norton', in *An Essay Towards A Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: Volume 1* (London, 1805), pp. 242-249. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/topographical-hist-norfolk/vol1/pp242-249> [accessed 2 October 2018]

Semere Hall Manor . . . about 1510 [was] said to be in the heirs of John Boteram, of whom, in all probability, it was purchased by Christopher Coote, Esq. (fn. 8) who had it settled on him and his trustees by fine, in 1521; he died Sept. 17, 1563, (fn. 9) seized of Seymor's manor here, Rich. Coote, his son and heir, being 34 years old, who had immediate livery; he was afterwards knighted, and lived to the age of 124 years; Sir Charles Coote, Knt. and Bart. who translated himself and family into Ireland, where he was Lieutenant in King Charles the First's time, and was killed in 1642

According to Emerson, *supra*, the testator had four sons:

* **Sir Thomas Knyvet** (c. 1547 - 22 September 1569), eldest son and heir, aged 22 at his father's death. He married, by settlement dated 4 March 1565, Katherine Stanley, the daughter of Edward Stanley, 3rd Earl of Derby, by whom he had two sons. See the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/knyvet-sir-thomas-1528-69>

* **Edmund Knyvet.**

* **Henry Knyvet.**

* **Anthony Knyvet.**

LM: Ed{mundi}i Knyvett milit{is}

In the name of God, Amen. I, Sir Edmund Knyvet, knight, the 18 day of April in the fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Edward the Sixth make my testament concerning my goods and chattels in the form following:

First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, and my body to be buried where it shall please Anne, my wife, whom I make my sole executrice and to whom I bequeath all my goods and chattels as well real as personal;

In witness whereof I have subscribed this [sic?] presents with mine own hand and to the same set my seal the day and year aforesaid. Edmund Knyvet, knight. Thomas Knyvet, John Flowerdew. Witness, Denys Coppes.

This twenty day of April I will that John Flowerdew be also my executor with my wife;

Also I will that my executors shall distribute amongst my servants fifty pounds;

And that Grabryell [=Gabrielle?] Shelton have during her life meat, drink and lodging or six pounds by year to be paid out of Gloners, Fokes and out of Sturston and other such tenements as I have purchased.

LM: Administrator computavit

Vicesimo septimo die mens{is} Octobris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo primo Emanauit com{m}issio Thome Knyvett filio naturali et l{egi}timo d{ic}t{i} defunct{i} ad admi{ni}strand{um} bona eiusdem ad viam intestat{i} deceden{ti} pro eo q{uod} Executores xxxmo Augusti Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo primo in p{er}sona Iohannis Clerke no{ta}rij pu{bli}ci procurator{is} eorum renuntiarunt on{er}e execuc{i}o{n}is testament{i} De bene et fidel{ite}r admi{ni}strand{o} eadem Ac de pleno Inuentario &c exhibend{o} Necnon de plano compoto reddend{o} ad Sancta dei Eu{a}ngelia in debita Iuris forma Iurat{o}

[=On the twenty-seventh day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-first a grant issued to Thomas Knyvet, natural and legitimate son of the said deceased, to administer the goods of the same by way of an intestacy for that the executors on the 30th August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-first renounced the burden of the execution of the testament, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to exhibit a full inventory etc. and also to render a plain account.]