

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 13 May 1557 and proved 14 September 1557, of Sir John Clere (c.1511-1557) of Ormesby, the son of Sir Robert Clere (d.1529) of Ormesby and his second wife, Alice Boleyn, the aunt of Henry VIII's Queen, Anne Boleyn. The testator was thus a first cousin of Queen Anne Boleyn. For the will of the testator's mother, Alice Boleyn Clere, dated 28 October 1538 and proved 23 January 1539, see TNA PROB 11/27, ff. 190-1.

The testator married, before 19 August 1529, Anne Tyrrell, the daughter of Sir Thomas Tyrrell (1472?-1551) of Gipping, by whom he had three sons, Robert, Thomas and Edward, and two daughters, Margaret, who married Walter Haddon (1514/15-1571), and Elizabeth, who married firstly, Walter Herendene and secondly, Francis Trevor. For the will of the testator's father-in-law, Sir Thomas Tyrrell, which contains complaints about the testator, see TNA PROB 11/34, ff. 172-4.

The testator's two eldest sons predeceased him, and he was succeeded by his third son, Sir Edward Clere (b. 15 June 1536, d. 8 June 1606). Sir Edward Clere purchased Oxford's manor of Weybourne in Norfolk. For the licence dated 20 April 1580 authorizing Oxford to alienate his manor of Weybourne to Sir Edward Clere, see TNA C 66/1197, mm. 15-16.

For the will of the testator's younger brother, Thomas Clere, esquire, dated 6 June 1544 and proved 21 April 1545, see TNA PROB 11/30, ff. 192-3. Thomas Clere died on 14 April 1545 at the siege of Montreuil while attempting to save the life of Oxford's uncle, Henry Howard (1516/17-1547), Earl of Surrey. He was buried in the parish church of St Mary, Lambeth, where there is a monumental brass to his memory which formerly exhibited a tablet with an epitaph by the Earl of Surrey.

In the inquisition post mortem of Oxford's father, the 16th Earl, the testator is mentioned as having surrendered rents to the 16th Earl, in return for which his son, Edward Clere, was granted an annuity of £20 (see TNA C 142/136/12):

And the foresaid jurors say that the foresaid late Earl, by a certain deed of his sealed by his seal at arms and subscribed by his own hand dated the eighteenth day of November in the first year [=18 November 1547] of the reign of the late King Edward the Sixth, in consideration that John Clere, knight, had surrendered two several rents containing together thirty pounds which the same John Clere had of the gift of a certain Peter Watts by two several charters of the late Earl issuing of his manor of Thorncombe in the county of Devon during the natural life of the same Peter Watts, granted to Edward Clere, esquire, son of the said John Clere, one yearly rent of twenty pounds of lawful money of England issuing of his foresaid manor of Thorncombe & of all other his lands & hereditaments in Thorncombe aforesaid, to have the foresaid yearly rent to the forenamed Edward Clere & his assigns during the natural life of the said Edward, to be paid yearly at the feasts of the Annunciation of Blessed Mary the Virgin & Saint Michael the Archangel by equal portions, with a clause of distraint for non-payment of the said yearly rent, as by the foresaid deed to the foresaid jurors upon the taking of this present inquisition in manifest evidences more fully appears.

The testator's purchase of the manor of Blickling from his uncle, Sir James Boleyn (c.1480-1561), Chancellor of the Household of Queen Anne Boleyn, is mentioned in Sir James Boleyn's will (see TNA PROB 11/44, ff. 277-9).

The testator was drowned in a naval engagement off the coast of Scotland on 21 August 1557.

For the foregoing see Richardson, *Plantagenet Ancestry* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2004), pp. 35-6; Bindoff, S.T., *The House of Commons 1509-1558*, Vol. I, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982), pp. 456-7, 650-2); and the entry for Walter Haddon in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online.

RM: Testamentum Iohannis Clere militis

In the name of God, Amen. I, John Clere, knight, being of good and perfect mind and remembrance, thanks be to God, do make and ordain this my last will and testament concerning the disposition of my lands and goods the 13th day of May in the 3rd and 4th years of our Sovereign Lord and Lady, King Philip and Queen Mary, King and Queen of England, France, Spain, Jerusalem and Ireland etc.;

First I give and bequeath to mine executors my manors of Ormesby, Winterton, Somerton, Burrowaux [=Burgh?], Freethorpe, More(?) Hall, Limpenhoe, Southwood, Tacolneston, (blank) Enstayns(?) and Gonwilles [=Gonvilles?] in (blank) in the county of Norfolk with the appurtenances, and all other my lands, tenements and hereditaments within the county of Norfolk, to have and to hold the same manors to my said executors for and during the space and term of five years after my decease to the intent and that they shall take the issues, profits and emoluments thereof during the said term of five years next after my decease to the intent and with part of the issues and profits thereof content, satisfy and pay to my son, Walter Haddon, fifty marks this four year for the full satisfaction of five hundred marks;

And whereas my manor of Freethorpe and Limpenhoe is appointed and assured to the honourable Charles, Duke of Suffolk, and others to the intent that Elizabeth, my daughter, shall have ten pounds of the profits thereof until such time as she shall be married, and then after her marriage she to have the profits of the said manors of Freethorpe and Limpenhoe until such time as she have levied five hundred marks of the profits thereof towards her marriage, as doth plainly appear by indentures made between the said Duke and others on the one party, and me, the said Sir John Clere, on the second part, wherefore considering that my said daughter Elizabeth shall be a long time before that she shall receive the said five hundred marks of the profits of the same lands, I will that my executors pay to my son-in-law, Walter Herendene, a hundred marks a year till such time as he shall have received up(?) five hundred marks for my said daughter's marriage as I am

bound to him and his assigns for my said daughter's marriage in recompense of the said manors of Freethorpe and Limpenhoe;

Furthermore I will mine executors sell my manor of East Todnam to pay withal my debts;

Also I will that mine heir shall have delivered to him at the age of 21 years my chain that the Emperor's Majesty gave me when I was Vice-Admiral when he went out of Flanders into Spain, and all my plate, jewels and apparel, armour, hangings, beds, bedsteads, carpets and all other mine utensils and stuff of household wheresoever they be, as well napery as sheets;

And also I will that all such stock of cattle, grain, household stuff and goods as be in the occupying of Leonard Pawner(?), the farmer of Ormesby of the demesnes there, shall be occupied with the said (blank) to the (blank) of this my last will and testament;

Also I give unto mine heir all such leases as I have when he or she shall come to the age of 21 years;

Also I give to John Butler term of his life four nobles a year;

Also to Edmund Jones term of his life forty shillings a year;

Also to Richard Browene(?) [=Browne?] term of his life four nobles a year;

To William Esto(?) term of his life four nobles a year;

Also to Richard Bakner(?) forty shillings a year during his life;

Also I give to Robert Goodwyn his bailiwick(?) of Ormesby term of his life, and four marks a year for (blank) for(?) of it;

Also I give to John Covell, John Browne, Francis Alleyne, Leonard Canlar, Thomas Mandes and John Lone(?) forty shillings apiece;

And all my servants a quarter's wages and a black coat;

Also I make and ordain my executors my brother-in-law, Mr Richard Fulmerston, my son-in-law, Walter Haddon, my son-in-law, Walter Herendene, and Sir Robert Paynter, parson of Tacolneston, and I give to every one of them for their labours ten pounds;

In witness whereof I writ this will with my own hands and subscribed my name and set to my seal. By me, John Clere.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi Testamentum coram Magistro Willelmo Cooke Legum doctore Prerogatiue Cantuariensis Custode siue Commissario apud London decimo quarto die mensis Septembris Anno domini millesimo quingentesimo quinquagesimo septimo Iuramento Edmundi Brudenell procuratoris Walteri Herenden executoris Cui &c Reservata potestate &c alijs executoribus &c cum venerint &c admissuris vicesimo nono die Mensis octobris Anno domini 1560 Emanauit commissio Edwardo Clere filio dicti defuncti ad administrandum bona dicti defuncti per Walterum Herenden executorem iam Defunctum non administrata Eo quod reliqui executores oneri execucionis dicti testamenti ex certis causis &c Renunciauerunt(?) &c prout in actis super commissione administracionis(?) ab intestato &c apparet folio: 20

[=The same testament was proved before Master William Cooke, Doctor of the Laws, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative [+Court] of Canterbury, at London on the 14th day of the month of September in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-seventh by the oath of Edmund(?) Brudenell, proctor of Walter Herendene, executor, to whom etc., with power reserved etc. to the other executors etc. when they shall have come etc. to be admitted. On the twenty-ninth day of the month of October in the year of the Lord 1560 a grant issued to Edward Clere, son of the said deceased, to administer the goods of the said deceased by Walter Herendene, executor, now deceased, not administered because the remaining executors renounced etc. the burden of the execution of the said testament for certain causes etc., as appears in the acts above of the grant of administration by way of an intestacy etc. [in?] folio 20.]