SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 18 April 1558 and proved 4 July 1558, of Isabel (nee Graunt) Spencer, whose son-in-law, Sir Richard Knightley (d. 30 March 1538) was the brother of Sir Edmund Knightley (by 1491 – 12 September 1542), husband of Ursula de Vere (d.1558), sister and co-heir of John de Vere (1499-1526), 14th Earl of Oxford. For her will, see TNA PROB 11/42A/10.

According to the inscription on the monument of the testatrix and her husband, Sir John Spencer (d. 14 April 1522) in Brington church (see full inscription below), the testatrix was:

. . . one of the daughters and coheirs of Walter Graunt of Snitterfield in the county of Warwick, esquire. Her mother was the daughter and heir of Humphrey Ruddinge of the Wich in the county of Worcester, esquire.

According to the OED, Wich was an early name for Droitwich:

The original meaning may have been the group of buildings connected with a salt-pit. The chief names of salt-making towns in which the word occurs are Droitwich (formerly Wich) in Worcestershire, Middlewich, Nantwich, and Northwich in Cheshire.

According to Grazebrook, the testatrix’ mother’s Christian name was Elizabeth, and in addition to the testatrix, she and Walter Graunt had another daughter, Margaret Graunt, who married Humphrey Jennets of Feckenham, Worcestershire. See Grazebrook, H. Sydney, The Heraldry of Worcestershire, (London: John Russell Smith, 1873), Vol. II, pp. 474-6 at:

https://archive.org/stream/heraldryworcest01grazgoog#page/n116/mode/2up

From the pedigree entered at the Visitation of 1569, it appears that John, son of Edmund Ruding, of Martin Hussingtree, was father, by Alice Lyde, his wife, of two sons, Richard, of Martin Hussingtree, and Edmund of the Wallhouse; and that the latter had by Joan his wife, the daughter of William Colles, two daughters, his co-heiresses, Alice and Anne, the former of whom was married to Thomas Grant. But it likewise appears from other sources (Baker’s Northamptonshire, I, 109, &c) that a Humphrey or Hugh Ruding, of Wich, had two daughters and co-heiresses: Margaret, wife of John Martin, and Elizabeth, married to Walter Graunt, of Snitterfield, co. Warwick; Margery Graunt, the second daughter and co-heiress of the latter, is stated to have married Humphrey Jennets, of Feckenham.

For the will of John Spencer (d. 4 January 1497) of Hodnell, who was the uncle of the testatrix’ husband, see TNA PROB 11/11/147.

Thomas Spencer (d.1532) of Hodnell, son of John Spencer (d. 4 January 1497), refers to Humphrey Jennetts as his uncle, which appears to confirm that Thomas Spencer’s mother, Joan or Jane Graunt, Humphrey Jennetts’ wife, Margery Graunt, and the testatrix, Isabel Graunt, were sisters, the three daughters of Walter Graunt of Snitterfield, Warwickshire, by Elizabeth Rudinge.

The testatrix married Sir John Spencer (d. 14 April 1522) of Wormleighton, Warwickshire, and Althorp, Northamptonshire. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/20/348.

According to the monument in Brington church, the testatrix had two sons and three daughters by Sir John Spencer. See The English Baronetage, (London: Thomas Wotton, 1741), Vol. I, p. 204 at:

http://books.google.ca/books?id=R2QUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA204&lpg=PA204&dq=%22Sir+John+Spencer%22+%22Anthony+Cope%22&source=bl&ots=Bx82coLOtz&sig=LsAe65lcP00TIG9lcorjwlu8IU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=7J6oU8aBBsKJogThzodABg&ved=0CDcQ6AEwBw#v=onepage&q=%22Sir%20John%20Spencer%22%20Anthony%20Cope%22&f=false

_Here lieth the bodies of Sir John Spencer, knight, and Dame Isabel, his wife, one of the daughters and coheirs of Walter Graunt of Snitterfield in the county of Warwick, esquire. Her mother was the daughter and heir of Humphrey Rudinge of the Wich in the county of Worcester, esquire. Which John and Isabel had issue Sir William Spencer, knight; Anthony Spencer, who died without issue; Jane, wife to Richard Knightley, esquire, son and heir of Sir Richard Knightley of Fawsley in the county of Northampton, knight; Isabel, married to Sir Nicholas Strelley of Strelley in the county of Nottingham, knight; Dorothy, married to Sir Richard Catesby of Legers-Ashby in the county of Northampton, knight. Which Sir John Spencer departed this life the 14th of April Anno Domini 1522._

The pedigree of Spencer in Fetherston, _supra_, pp. 284-5, lists two children of Sir John Spencer and the testatrix not named on the monument in Brington church: a son, Thomas Spencer, who died without issue, and a daughter, Elizabeth Spencer, who married John Greville, son of Sir Edward Greville of Milcote, Warwickshire. It seems these were actually the children of the testator’s uncle, John Spencer (d. 4 January 1497) of Hodnell, Warwickshire, _supra_, who had a daughter, Elizabeth, who married Sir John Greville, and a son, Thomas, who died without issue in 1532. See the will of John Spencer (d. 4 January 1497) of Hodnell, _supra_; the will of Sir John Greville (d. 25 November 1547), TNA PROB 11/32/252; Richardson, Douglas, _Magna Carta Ancestry_, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, p. 268; and the History of Parliament entry for Sir John Greville at:
Moreover according to two contemporary sources Anthony Spencer, was not, as alleged on the monument, the son of the testatrix, but was illegitimate. See Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitation of Northamptonshire Made in 1564 and 1618-19*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1887), p. 47:

https://archive.org/stream/visitationsnort00vincgoog#page/n60/mode/2up.

See also Fetherston, *supra*, p. 284, where he is listed as Anthonius Nothus.

The testatrix was predeceased by her only son, Sir William Spencer (d. 22 June 1532). For his will, see TNA PROB 11/24/12. He left a son and heir, Sir John Spencer (d.1586), named in the will below as one of the testatrix’ executors.

As noted above, the testator’s daughter, Isabel Spencer, married Sir Nicholas Strelley (d. 25 August 1560), for whom see Kerry, Charles, ‘Notes to the Pedigree of the Strelleys of Hazlebach’ in *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, (London: Bemrose and Sons, January 1892), Vol. XIV, p. 95 at:

http://books.google.ca/books?id=9Lw1AAAMAAJ&pg=RA1-PA95&lpg=RA1-PA95&dq=%22Sir+Nicholas+Strelley%22&source=bl&ots=CI8kRxFd7k&sig=0lqGNpQgAU6W15f2SFiEVM2Nhl&hl=en&sa=X&ei=YpeoU4nWFpXtoATZzhYGQA&ved=0CBsQ6AEwADgK#v=onepage&q=%22Sir%20Nicholas%20Strelley%22&f=false.

*Sir Nicholas Strelley, only son of Sir Nicholas and Catherine, daughter of Lord Delaware. He married, first, Sarah, daughter of Simon Digby, Lieutenant of the Tower; second, Ellen, daughter of Sir Thomas Gresley; and, third, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Spencer, Kt., by whom he had four sons and four daughters.*

Sir Nicholas Strelley (d. 25 August 1560) appears to have been related to Margaret Strelley, who married Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), who in 1599 leased the ground on which the Globe playhouse was built to William Shakespeare of Stratford and other members of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. See TNA C 54/1947, mm. 5-6, and the will of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), TNA PROB 11/98/348. See also:


See also “Ancestors of Edward Michael Swift” online, where a pdf file can be accessed which contains a detailed pedigree of the Strelley family.

The testatrix directs that the residue of her estate be divided into three parts, whereof one part is to be employed for the preferment in marriage of the children of Sir Nicholas Strelley (d. 25 August 1560):
The residue of all my goods, cattle(?), plate, jewels and ready money not bequeathed, my
debts paid and will performed, as shall appear by inventory thereof made, I will shall be
divided into three parts, whereof I give one of the said three parts unto Sir Nicholas
Strelley, knight, to th’ use of his children towards their preferment in marriage.

An indenture dated 8 July 1558 also mentions this bequest:

http://www.british-history.ac.uk/ancient-deeds/vol6/pp510-523

C. 7722. Indenture, dated 8 July, 4 Philip & 6 Mary, between Sir Nicholas Strelley of
Strelley, co. Notts, knight, of the one part, and Sir Edward Grevill of Myllecote, co.
Warwick, knight, and Edward Graunte of Snytterfyllde, co. Warwick, gentleman, two of
the executors of Dame Isabel Spencer of Wromeleighton, of the other part, reciting
various legacies to Sir Nicholas, to Dame Elizabeth his wife, daughter of the said Dame
Isabel, and to Isabel Strelley, Dame Jane, late the wife of Sir Hugh Willoughby, and
Henry Strelley, his children; and declaring that he is to receive 200l from the executors
at the sealing of the indentures, and 66l. 13s. 4d. from Sir John Spencer of Allthroppe,
knight, part of a debt due to the said Dame Isabel, together with 20l. from the executors,
in full payment of all his claims on the estate. English. Signed: Edward Grevell, Edward
Graunte. Two seals.

For Sir Hugh Willoughby (d.1554?), see the ODNB entry.

As noted above, the testatrix’ daughter, Dorothy Spencer, married Sir Richard Catesby
d. 8 March 1553) of Ashby St. Ledgers, the grandson of Sir William Catesby (d.1485),
councillor to Richard III, and the son of George Catesby, esquire, by Elizabeth Empson,
the daughter of Sir Richard Empson (d.1450-1510). After the death of George Catesby,
Elizabeth Empson married, in August 1509, Sir Thomas Lucy (d.1525), by whom she
was the grandmother of Sir Thomas Lucy (d.1600) of Charlecote, from whose park
William Shakespeare of Stratford is alleged to have poached deer. See the ODNB articles
on Sir William Catesby and Sir Richard Empson; Richardson, Douglas, Magna Carta
Ancestry, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. IV, p. 278; the will of Sir Richard Catesby, proved 26
October 1553, TNA PROB 11/36/261, and Metcalfe, supra, pp. 10, 47:

https://archive.org/stream/visitationsnort00vincgoog#page/n24/mode/2up.

See also Burke, John and John Bernard Burke, A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary
of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain & Ireland, (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), Vol. I,
p. 772 at:

http://books.google.ca/books?id=C8fTAAAMAAJ&pg=PA772&lpg=PA772&dq=%22Sir+Thomas+Lucy%22+%221525%22&source=bl&ots=W9G_oJoUv9&sig=pJT6yOdX_JNIKfTcuEzIa1bk&hl=en&sa=X&ei=waTFU--GN8G9jAKEtoHABA&ved=0CDMQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=%22Sir%20Thomas%20Lucy%22%201525%22&f=false.

Modern spelling transcript copyright ©2014 Nina Green All Rights Reserved
http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/
As noted above, the testatrix’ daughter, Jane Spencer, married Richard Knightley, (d. 30 March 1538), esquire, the son and heir of Sir Richard Knightley (d. 8 December 1534) of Fawsley, Northamptonshire. For the will of Sir Richard Knightley (d. 8 December 1534), see TNA PROB 11/25/292. For Richard Knightley (d. 30 March 1538), see his will, TNA PROB 11/28/156; and the History of Parliament entry at:


See also the pedigree of Knightley in Metcalfe, supra, p. 32 at:

https://archive.org/stream/visitationsnort00vincgoog#page/n44/mode/2up.

By Richard Knightley, the testatrix’ daughter, Jane Spencer, had a daughter, Joan or Jane Knightley, who married firstly, by settlement dated 20 May 1524 and before 1533, George Lumley (executed at Tyburn 2 June 1537), by whom she was the mother of John Lumley (c.1533–1609), 1st Baron Lumley, and two daughters, Jane Lumley and Barbara Lumley, and secondly John Knottesforth. See the ODNB articles on George Lumley and John Lumley, 1st Baron Lumley. For a letter from Oxford concerning John, 1st Baron Lumley, see BL Lansdowne 38/62, ff. 158-9. It seems likely that the ‘Lord Lomney’ to whom the testatrix leaves a bequest was her grandson, John Lumley (c.1533–1609), 1st Baron Lumley.

The ‘Friar Peyto’ to whom the testatrix leaves a bequest was Cardinal William Peto [Peyto] (c.1485–1558), a younger son of Edward Peyto of Chesterton, Warwickshire, and Goditha Throckmorton (d.1531). See the ODNB article.

The testatrix appoints Sir Edward Greville as one of her executors, and leaves the following bequest to him and to his son, the testatrix’ godson:

Also I give and bequeath unto my cousin, Sir Edward Greville, knight, my best basin and ewer of silver parcel gilt, one bowl of silver and one gilt bowl, and after his death to remain to his son and heir, my godson.

The testatrix’ executor was Sir Edward Greville (d. 24 December 1559) of Milcote, Warwickshire, son of Sir John Greville (d. 25 November 1547) and Elizabeth Spencer, daughter of John Spencer (d. 4 January 1547) of Hodnell, Warwickshire, supra. Sir Edward Greville was knighted 2 October 1553. See Shaw, William A., The Knights of England, (London: Sherratt and Hughes, 1906), Vol. II, p. 68 at:

https://archive.org/stream/knightsofengland02shawuoft#page/n77/mode/2up

He married Margaret Willington, the daughter of William Willington of Barcheston, Warwickshire, by whom he had three sons: his eldest son and heir, Lodowick Greville (pressed to death 14 November 1589), who married Thomasine Petre, the daughter of Sir
William Petre (1505/6-1572) of Ingatestone by his second wife, Anne Tyrrell, the daughter of John Tyrrell of Heron; two younger sons, John Greville and William Greville; and two daughter, Anne Greville, who married Edward Mitton, and Elizabeth Greville, who married Thomas Mitton. It was presumably Lodowick Greville who was the testatrix’ godson.

See also the description of Sir Edward Greville’s brass in the church at Weston on Avon in *Warwick Castle and its Earls*, (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1903), Vol. II, pp. 608-10 at:

https://archive.org/stream/warwickcastleits02warw#page/608/mode/2up.

RM: T{estamentum} D{omi}ne Isabelle Spencer vidue

[f. 251r] In the name of God, Amen. The 18th day of April in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred fifty and eight, I, Dame Isabel Spencer of Wormleighton in the county of Warwick, widow, being whole of body and perfect remembrance, thanks be to God, considering th’ end of this transitory world to be at hand upon this my old age, do make and declare this my testament containing therein my last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I commend my soul to the mercy of Almighty God, and my body to be buried within the parish church of Snitterfield in the said county of Warwick near unto the sepulture of my mother;

And I give and bequeath for the charges of my burial and funerals and for blacks and doles unto the poor people with all other charges in any manner of wise appertaining to my funeral, burial, month’s mind and year’s mind 300 marks;

Also I give and bequeath unto the churchwardens of Snitterfield aforesaid to th’ use of the church and parish of Snitterfield and for the more reverend celebration of divine service within the said church one chalice to be delivered at the day of my burial;

Also I give and bequeath towards the reparation of the parish church of Wormleighoton three pounds;

Also I give and bequeath unto Mother Joan of Wormleighton 20s;

Also to Mother Amyable of the same 20s;

Also to Mother Shakerley of Claydon 20s;

Also I give and bequeath to Margaret Buckston of Wormleighton 20s;
Also I bequeath unto the Lord Lomney [=Lumley?] my ring of gold set with a black sapphire;

And do give and bequeath unto Friar Peyto, Warden of the Friars Observants of Greenwich, to th’ use of the said house and his brethren friars there to be prayed for £3 6s 8d;

Also I give and bequeath unto Sir Nicholas Strelley, knight, my son-in-law, £40 in ready money;

Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Dame Elizabeth Strelley, one ring of gold set with a turquoise, the which she hath now in her custody;

Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Dame Elizabeth Strelley, £40 in ready money, a basin and an ewer of silver parcel gilt, a gilt bowl and a white bowl of silver, all which plate are now in the custody of my said son-in-law, Sir Nicholas Strelley, her husband;

Also I give and bequeath unto Henry Strelley, the youngest son of the said Sir Nicholas Strelley, knight, £13 6s 8d;

Also I give and bequeath to Isabel Strelley, daughter unto the said Sir Nicholas Strelley, £20 to be paid of such debts as Sir John Spencer, knight, oweth me for my cattle;

Also I bequeath to Dame Jane Willoughby, daughter of the said Sir Nicholas Strelley, £6 13s 4d;

Also I bequeath to my cousin, Elizabeth Salmon, £6 13s 4d and a gilt goblet;

Also I give and bequeath unto my cousin, Sir Edward Greville, knight, my best basin and ewer of silver parcel gilt, one bowl of silver and one gilt bowl, and after his death to remain to his son and heir, my godson;

Also I give to my cousin, Mary Oldenall, a black gown and a kirtle of black satin, a featherbed, a bolster and a pillow;

Also I clearly release and forgive John Davies, my cousin, all that he oweth me, and I do give unto him the bill of debt of Francis Graunt;

And further I give and bequeath unto my said cousin, John Davies, £6 13s 4d in ready money;

Also I give and bequeath unto my cousin, John Jennett, £20 in ready money and the featherbed that he lieth on with the bolster, pillow and blankets and covering of the same bed, and also one pair of three bread [=breadths?] sheets, one pair of middle sheets, one tablecloth and half a garnish of pewter vessel;
Also I give and bequeath unto the said John Jennett one gilt goblet without a cover;

Also give and bequeath unto Thomas Catesby £6 13s 4d;

Also I give and bequeath unto the said Thomas one featherbed, one bolster, a pair of pillows, a coverlet, a pair of sheets of two breadths;

Also I give unto Richard Catesby five marks, [f. 251v] whereof he hath 40s paid unto him, one pair of flaxen sheets, one tablecloth and a towel;

And I release and forgive to Ralph Standish all that he oweth me;

And I will and bequeath unto my godson, Thomas Graunt, a featherbed, a bolster, a pillow and a pair of blankets and one coverlet;

Also I clearly forgive Humphrey Morewood and Simon Seaton all such debts as they own unto me;

And also I give and bequeath unto the said Simon Seton a featherbed and all things thereunto belonging;

Also I give and bequeath unto Humphrey Morewood 20s;

Also I give and bequeath unto Thomas Chasunt, gentleman, my attorney at the law, 40s in ready money;

Also I give and bequeath unto Joyce Lambourn and Margery Write, my two maids, to either of them 66s 8d, and to either of them a black gown;

Also I will and bequeath unto my cousin, Isabel Davies, the income of my tenement in Napton for 40 years;

Also I give unto Mary Daves, daughter unto my said cousin, Isabel Davies, one featherbed, a bolster, a pair of blankets, a pillow, a covering and a pair of sheets;

And to my cousin, Isabel Davies, one black damask kirtle, one copplett(?), and a velvet bonnet;

And further I give unto my said cousin, Isabel Davies, £20 in ready money to her own use;

Also I give and bequeath unto John Cheshire one mattress, one bolster, with all the furniture of the said bed which he did use to lie upon;

Also I give and bequeath unto Isabel Owen a frontlet of crimson velvet;
Also I will and bequeath unto my cousin, Edward Graunt of Snitterfield, my worst basin and ewer of silver, one standing cup with a cover whole gilt;

Also I give and bequeath unto my said cousin, Edward Graunt, the little gilt bedstead in the chapel chamber, the bed that I do lie upon, one bolster, one pair of pillows, one pair of fustian blankets and a counterpoint, [all which he will be], all which plate and stuff I will, if God shall call for my said cousin, living his wife, that she shall have the custody and keeping of the said plate and stuff during her widowhood, & if she shall fortune to marry, then I give and bequeath the said plate and stuff to Thomas Graunt, the eldest son of my said cousin;

Also I give and bequeath unto my said cousin Graunt’s children towards their finding and bringing up in learning 40 marks;

I will and bequeath unto Simon Rawleigh, esquire, 66s 8d;

And I give and bequeath to Mistress Raulegh, now his wife, 66s 8d;

Also I give unto Mistress Palmer, sister unto the said Master Raulegh, 20s;

I give and bequeath unto John Nevill of Stratford upon Avon, glover, a black gown at the time of my death;

Provided always that all the legacies heretofore in this my present testament and last will bequeathed and given to any of my servants shall in no wise take effect or be construed or taken as any part or parcel of this my testament and last will unless the said servants to whom any such bequests is made be in my service at the time of my death;

And furthermore my mind and will is that if all or any of the said legacies and bequests of bedding or other implements which I have here in this my present testament and last will given and bequeathed to any person or persons cannot be delivered and performed by my executors by reason of certain conveyances comprised in a pair of indentures heretofore made between me and Sir John Spencer, knight, then my will is that every such person and persons to whom any such bedding or other implements is before bequeathed shall have paid unto him or them the value and price of the said bedding or other implements so bequeathed according as the said stuff shall be praised unto the said Sir John Spencer, knight, and not otherwise;

The residue of all my goods, cattle(?), plate, jewels and ready money not bequeathed, my debts paid and will performed, as shall appear by inventory thereof made, I will shall be divided into three parts, whereof I give one of the said three parts unto Sir Nicholas Strelley, knight, to th’ use of his children towards their preferment in marriage;

The second part to be bestowed upon the marriages of the poorest of my kinsfolks;
And the third part unto and toward the relieving of the poor people as by the discretion of Sir Edward Greyhill [sic for ‘Greville’?], knight, Sir Richard [f. 252r] Burg{es} [=Bridges?], knight, and my cousin, Edward Graunt of Snitterfield, gentleman, whom I make and ordain my whole and full executors, shall be thought meet and convenient;

And I give and bequeath unto every of them for their pains taken therein, to every of them 40 marks over and besides their charges and expenses in th’ execution of this my last will and testament;

And I do ordain and make supervisors of this my last will and testament Sir Nicholas Strelley, knight, and Sir John Spencer, knight, and I do give unto either of them for their pains taken £6 13s 4d over and besides their legacies before bequeathed;

In witness whereof I, the same Dame Isabel Spencer, unto this my last will and testament have set to my hand and seal and caused it to be published in the presence of all these persons hereafter written.

It was sealed and delivered unto the said executors the 22\textsuperscript{nd} day of the said April and the years above-written.

In the presence of these whose names hereafter follow: Sir Richard Verney, knight, John Davis, John Nevill, Ralph Standish, William Greestowe(?), William Buston, clerk unto the [word omitted?] of Snitterfield, John Jennett.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum cora{m} D{omi}no apud London quarto die mens{is} Iulij Anno Domini Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo octauo Iurament{o} Petri Johnson l{ite}rati procuratoris Executorum in h{uius}mo{d}i i testamento n{o} {m} i{nn}ator{um} Ac approbatum et insinuatu{m} Comissaque{e} fuit admi{n}istrac{i}o om{ni}u{m} et singulor{um} bonor{um} juri{um} et creditorum d{i}c{tu}n defunctu{m} &c prefat{is} executorib{us} in d{i}c{t}o testamento &c De bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c Necon de plano et vero compoto reddend{o} &c Iurat{o}

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at London on the fourth day of the month of July in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-eighth by the oath of Peter Johnson, learned, proctor of the executors 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 etc. to the forenamed executors [named] in the said testament etc., sworn to well etc., and [to exhibit] a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account etc.]