

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 26 December 1557 and proved 29 April 1558 of Sir William Drury (c.1500-1558), eldest son and heir of Sir Robert Drury (b. before 1456, d. 1535) and his first wife, Anne Calthorpe. The testator's father, Sir Robert Drury (b. before 1456, d. 1535), lawyer and speaker of the House of Commons, was chief steward and executor to John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford. The names of both the testator and his father appear in the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (Huntington Library EL 26 C 09) which was at one time owned by the Earls of Oxford. It is said that the testator's father received the manuscript as a legacy from the 13th Earl. For a description of the Ellesmere manuscript and the names of members of the Drury family found in it, see Digital Scriptorium, available online at <http://www.scriptorium.columbia.edu/>.

The testator married, as his second wife, Elizabeth Sothill (d.1575), one of the twin daughters and heiresses of Henry Sothill, esquire, of Stoke Faston, Leicestershire, attorney-general to King Henry VII, and himself a descendant of King John by a mistress.

The couple had two sons, Robert (d.1557) and Henry (d.1587), and six daughters: Anne (d.1561), who married Sir Christopher Heydon (d.1579) of Baconsthorpe; Mary (d.1594), who married firstly, Sir Richard Corbet of Assington, Suffolk, and secondly, on 24 June 1565, Sir John Tyrrell of Gipping, Suffolk; Frances, who married James Hobart; Bridget, who married Henry Yelverton (d.1601) of Rougham, Norfolk; Dorothy (d.1602), who married Robert Rokewood; and Elizabeth, who married Sir Robert Drury of Rougham.

The testator's eldest son and heir, Robert Drury, died in December 1557, predeceasing his father by only a few weeks. His wife, Audrey Rich, was one of the nine daughters of Richard Rich, 1st Baron Rich (1496/7-1567), a member of the council of Oxford's grandfather, John de Vere (1482-1540), 15th Earl of Oxford, and later Lord Chancellor of England. The testator appoints Lord Rich as supervisor in his will below. By his wife, Audrey Rich, Robert Drury (d.1557) is said to have had the following children: his son and heir, Sir William Drury (1550-1590), who succeeded at Hawstead; a second son, Thomas; two other sons, Henry and Robert, who died without issue; and eight daughters, 1. Ann, wife of John Thornton of Soham, Cambridge; 2. Mary, wife of Robert Russell of West Rudham, Norfolk; 3. Elizabeth married first Thomas de Grey of Merton, Norfolk, and secondly, Nicholas Mynne of Walsingham, Norfolk; 4. Susan, wife of Robert Baspole; 5. Winifred, wife of Edmund Marchant of Colchester, Essex; 6. Bridget, wife of Richard Zouch of Pitton, Wiltshire; 7. Dorothy, wife of Edward Barnes of Soham, Cambridge. However the will of their grandmother, Elizabeth (nee Sothill) Drury (d.1575), makes no mention of either Anne or Elizabeth, and mentions another daughter, Audrey.

The testator died on 11 January 1558 and was buried in Hawstead church. The epitaph on his monument is given in Bald, R.C., *Donne and the Drurys* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), p. 10:

*Here lieth clothed now in earth Sir William Drury, knight,
Such one as whilst he lived here was loved of every wight,
Such temperance he did retain, such prudent courtesy,
Such noble mind with justice joined such liberality
As fame itself shall sound for me the glory of his name
Much better than this metal mute can aye pronounce the same.
The leventh of frosty Janyver, the year of Christ, I find,
A thousand five hundred fifty-seven his vital thread untwined,
Who yet doth live and shall do still in hearts of them that knew him;
God grant the slips of such a stock in virtue to ensue him.*

The testator's grandson and heir, Sir William Drury (1550-1590), was only just seven when he inherited the family estates. Sir William Drury (1550-1590), was Oxford's associate at court circa 1578-81 (see BL Lansdowne 99, ff. 259a-64b; BL Cotton Titus C.6, ff. 5-6; STC 19974.6, and Segar, William, *The Book of Honor and Armes* (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975), p. 95). Sir William Drury (1550-1590) married Elizabeth Stafford (d.1600), daughter of Queen Elizabeth's mistress of the robes, Dorothy Stafford (1526-1604). Elizabeth Stafford (d.1600) was herself one of the ladies of the bedchamber from 28 November 1568 until her death, and is referred to in a letter written to Oxford by his estranged wife, Anne Cecil on 12 December 1581: 'For my Lady Drury, I deal as little with her as any can, and care no more for her than you will have me, but I have been driven sometimes for avoiding of malice and envy to do that both with her and others which I would not with my will do' (see BL Lansdowne 104/64, ff. 166-7).

For information in the foregoing paragraphs, see entries for the Drury family, Dorothy Stafford, and Lord Rich in the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography*; Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2004), p. 276; Cullum, John, *The History and Antiquities of Hawsted* (London: J. Nichols, 1784), pp. 69, 115, available online; and <http://www.genealogysource.com/druryhistpt5.htm>. For the will of the testator's second wife, Elizabeth Soteshill (d.1575), see TNA PROB 11/57, ff. 324-5. For the will of Henry Drury (d.1587), esquire, second son of the testator and Elizabeth Soteshill (d.1575), see TNA PROB 11/70, f. 28. For the will of the testator's grandson and heir, Sir William Drury (1550-1590), see TNA PROB 11/86, ff. 10-12.

LM: Testamentum Willelmi Drury militis

In the name of God, Amen. I, Sir William Drury, knight, the 26th day of December in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred fifty and seven make and ordain this my present testament and last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I give and bequeath my soul to Almighty God, Our Lady Saint Mary, and to all th' holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried within the church of Hawstead by my first wife after and according to my degree by the discretion of mine executors;

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And by this my present testament and last will I revoke and annul all other wills and testaments by me before this time made, and I will that no person nor persons shall take any advantage, profit or commodity by reason of any such testament or will by me at any time before this time made;

And to fulfil this my present testament and last will and everything that is or shall be therein contained, I make and ordain mine executor Elizabeth, my wife, and I ordain and specially desire Sir Richard Rich, knight, Lord Rich, to be a supervisor to call upon mine executor for the true performance and execution of this my present testament and last will, and to aid and help her in such things as shall be requisite and necessary for the same, and I give unto him for his pains and friendship therein a gilt cup with a blue flower in the top;

And I will that my said wife, all my children, and Bridget Jervis have every of them a black gown, and every of my household servants black coats;

And I will and require my said executor to pay my debts as soon as they conveniently may;

Item, I give and bequeath to Elizabeth, my wife, forty pounds worth of my plate after the rate of 6s the ounce all gilt and 5s silver and parcel gilt, if it may be conveniently borne and my debts being discharged and truly paid;

And I give and bequeath also to my said wife all the residue of my plate, to be disposed to my children and my son Robert's children, so that my debts may be well and truly paid of the residue of my goods and chattels, and this my present testament and last will also performed with the same residue of my goods and with the issues and profits, rents and farms of such manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments as hereafter be willed, devised or assigned to my said executors for the term of certain years, and such part of the same plate as William Drury, my son Robert's eldest son, shall have to be delivered him at his full age;

Also I give to my said wife thirty pair of good sheets, six featherbeds and 6 mattresses with bolsters for them, of which featherbeds two of them be in mine own chamber;

And I give unto the same Elizabeth, my wife, the sparvers and hangings of the same two beds usually occupied and hanging over and about the same two beds, and also the hangings about mine own chamber, and the hangings in the maidens' chamber where Elizabeth Holt did lie;

Also I give unto my said wife six pillows of down, one trussing coffer, and the coffer of walnut-tree, and one great ship-coffer, and 6 carpet cushions, the best she will choose, and one cushion of silk wrought with the needle, three cushions of satin paned, one carpet for a cupboard of those which were of her own making, and also I will that she shall have all her chains and jewels with all her apparel belonging unto her;

And also I will that my said wife have the second vestment with the alb and that belongeth to it for a priest to sing in, and I will that my said wife shall have the reasonable wearing and occupying of all other my beds, sparvers, hangings for beds, curtains, plate, coffers, chests, sheets, tablecloths and napery and hangings for chambers and all other hangings whatsoever they be or shall happen to be at the time of my decease until such time as my heir shall accomplish his full age of 21 years, and then to be left for the furniture of my house at Hawstead, except such as shall hereafter in this my present testament be otherwise devised, so as my debts be paid and discharged and other legacies in this my present testament fulfilled;

Also I will that the said heir at his full age have my best vestiment with the alb and all that belongeth to it, and the best altar-cloth, and all the residue of the vestiments and altar-cloths with the stuff in the chapel except such as I have before bequeathed to my said wife;

And also I give unto my said heir at his full age all th' evidences of mine inheritance which shall remain, descend and come to him, with the boxes wherein the same evidences or any parcel of them be;

And I give and be[queath] to my said wife two brass pots, two spits, a kettle, and 2 posnets, and I bequeath to my said heir at his full age all the residue of my brass pots, with the residue of my spits, with racks of iron to turn spits in [-with racks of iron to turn spits in], two kettles and a pan, with a garnish of my best vessel, and I will that my said wife shall have one other garnish of my best vessel next that, provided alway and I will that all such stuff of household, plate, goods and chattels as I have afore given to my said heir to be delivered unto him at his said full age;

And I will, give, and bequeath and assign to my said wife the manors of Hawstead Hall and Talmage, otherwise called Buckenhams, with their appurtenances, and all other my lands, tenements and hereditaments in Hawstead, Nowton and Sidolfmere [=Sicklesmere?] which late were my father's, Sir Robert Drury, knight, or any other to his use, to have and to hold the same manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments to my said wife and her assignees for term of ten years next and immediately following after my decease towards the payment of my debts and fulfilling this my present testament and last will, and for more surety that my said debts and legacies should be well and truly paid and fulfilled with th' issues, rents, farms and profits coming of the said manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments by the space of ten years, I caused long before this time estates to be executed of all such the said manors, lands and tenements as were of my late father, Sir Robert Drury, knight, to th' use of me for term of my life and ten years next after my decease without impeachment of waste, as by certain deeds indented sealed and signed by me more plainly it appeareth;

I will nevertheless that my daughter, Dame Mary Corbet, shall have in farm the site of the manor of Hawstead Hall with all such pasture ground and meadow grounds as Roger

Hawstead lately had and occupied with the same, paying yearly to my said wife during the said ten years £4;

And I will and give to Dorothy Drury, my daughter, for th' advancement of her marriage two hundred pounds to be paid at her age of 20 years;

And where by my deed sealed with my seal of arms and signed with my hand I have given and granted to my son, Henry Drury, and to his heirs one annuity or yearly rent of 20 marks yearly going out of my manor of Whepstead mentioned in the same grant, I will that the same be truly paid according to my said grant;

And also I give to my said wife all my other goods and chattels, whatsoever they be, not in this present testament and last will otherwise given, bequeathed or assigned, to th' intent to perform the same and towards the payment of my said debts;

And I do give unto Bridget Jervis, my said wife's gentlewoman, £6 13s 4d sterling toward th' advancement of her marriage;

And I give unto my son, Henry Drury, one good featherbed, a bolster, a pillow of down, a coverlet, a pair of blankets and a pair of sheets;

Also I give, devise and assign unto the said Henry Drury, my son, and to th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, the reversion after the decease of Elizabeth, my wife, of the manor of Bradfield with th' appurtenances, and of other lands, tenements and hereditaments which I lately purchased of the Lord Willoughby of Parham;

And I will also that my said son, Henry, shall have yearly during the life of my said wife towards his exhibition and living ten marks, parcel of the yearly rent of nineteen pounds and odd money going out of the manor of Lawshall, which rent the Queen's Majesty did by her letters patents among other things give to me and my heirs;

Item, I give and bequeath and assign to my said wife to the performance of this my present testament and last will the residue of the yearly rent of £19 and certain odd money going out of the manor of Lawshall which our Sovereign Lady Queen Mary lately gave unto me and mine heirs amongst other things, to have and to hold the same residue to my said wife for [-for] term of 13 years next after my decease, the remainder thereof after the same 13 years to the said Elizabeth, my wife, for term of her life, and after her decease and the same 13 years ended, to remain to th' heirs males of my body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the remainder thereof to my right heirs forever;

Also I give to my said wife all my lands, rents, reversions and services called Ingehams with the grange called Hemote and the lands and tenements thereunto belonging for the term of 13 years next after my decease towards the payment of my debts and the fulfilling of this my testament and last will;

And I give and bequeath to every of my household servants ten shillings, and I will that every of my said servants shall be well and truly paid and satisfied of and for all such sums of money as been due unto them for their wages and also for their liveries within month [sic] next after my decease;

And I will also that my house be kept at my costs and charges by the space of one month next after my decease, and that my said servants and other of my household shall at their free will and pleasure have and take their meat, drink and lodging during that month;

And where I have obtained and bought of the King and Queen's Majesties the wardship and marriage of Robert Drury, cousin and heir of John Drury, late of Rougham in the county of Suffolk, esquire, deceased, to th' intent that marriage should be had betwixt him and Elizabeth, my daughter, my mind, will, purpose and intent is that the same marriage should take effect; nevertheless, if any disagreement shall happen to be, either of the party of the said Robert Drury or on the party of the said Elizabeth, I will then that the said Elizabeth, my daughter, shall have the whole profit and commodity that shall or may arise and grow by reason of the wardship and marriage of the same Robert or of any other his heir which I ought to have by my said bargain with the King and Queen's Majesties, the same Robert deceasing within age and unmarried to my said daughter, and if it happen the said Robert Drury and his brother to decease before marriage or disagreement so as she be not advanced by this gift, then I will that my said daughter, Elizabeth, shall have two hundred marks for th' advancement of her marriage;

And I pray, will and desire my said wife, according to such motion as I have made unto her, to assure unto Henry Drury, Thomas Drury and Robert Drury, sons of my said (blank) Robert Drury, deceased, the manor of Hawcombye [=Haconby?] with th' appurtenances in the county of Lincoln, to have and to hold to them in reversion after her decease as to th' heirs males severally of their bodies lawfully begotten towards th' advancement and preferment of their living, and also her to see the bringing up of my said son Robert's children, as my special and only trust is in her, to whom I have committed all these things before remembered for those considerations and other before specified;

Item, I give unto Master Payne £6 13s 4d; to Mr Butler, £4; to William Wrenne, 40s; to Anne Goldingham, £4; to Alexander Mariott, 40s; and to Walter Lorde, other 40s;

In witness of all these premises these persons under-named have set to their hands, and the said Sir William have set to his seal of arms the day and year first above-written. William Drury. Henry Yelverton, Henry Payne, William Wrenne, Alexander Marriott.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum coram domino apud London xxix die mensis Aprilis Anno Domini Millesimo quingentesimo quinquagesimo Octauo Iuramento Edmundi Brudnell Literati Procuratoris Domine Domine [sic?] Elizabethhe Relicte dicti defuncti ac executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominate Ac approbatum et insinuatam &c Commissaque fuit administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum &c dicte Domine

Elizabethhe executrici antedictae De bene &c Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddendo &c iurati

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord [+Archbishop] at London on the 29th day of the month of April in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-eighth by the oath of Edmund Brudnell, learned proctor of the said Lady Elizabeth, relict of the said deceased, and probated and entered etc., and administration was granted of all and singular the goods etc. to the said Lady Elizabeth, executrix aforesaid etc., sworn to well etc., and [+to prepare] a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account.]