

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 26 December 1564 and proved 23 October 1566, of Sir Valentine Knightley, at the home of whose son, Sir Richard Knightley (1533-1615), Martin Marprelate's *Epitome* was printed on a secret press in November 1588.

### ***FAMILY BACKGROUND***

For the testator's family background, see Barron, Oswald, 'The Knightleys of Fawsley', *The Ancestor*, No. II, July 1902, pp. 1-13 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/ancestorquarterl02londuoft#page/n9/mode/2up>

See also the pedigree in Fetherston, John, ed., *The Visitation of the County of Warwick in the Year 1619*, (London: Harleian Society, 1877), Vol. XII, p. 399 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationcount01britgoog#page/n430/mode/2up>

See also the pedigree in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Northamptonshire Made in 1564 and 1618-19*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1887), p. 32 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationsnort00vincgoog#page/n46/mode/2up>

### ***Testator's parents***

The testator was the son of Sir Richard Knightley (d. 8 December 1534) of Fawsley, Northamptonshire, and Jane Skennard, the daughter and heir of Henry Skennard or Skynnerton of Alderton, Northamptonshire.

### ***Testator's siblings***

For the testator's three brothers, Richard Knightley (d. 30 March 1538), Sir Edmund Knightley (by 1491 – 12 September 1542), and John Knightley, and his sister, Susan Knightley, see the will of the testator's father, TNA PROB 11/25/292, and the will of the testator's eldest brother, Richard Knightley (d. 30 March 1538), dated 29 March 1537 and proved 14 July 1540, TNA PROB 11/28/156.

### ***MARRIAGE AND ISSUE***

The testator married Anne Ferrers, the daughter of Sir Edward Ferrers (d. 29 August 1535), son and heir of Sir Henry Ferrers of East Peckham, Kent, by Constance Brome (d. 30 September 1551), one of the two daughters of Nicholas Brome (d. 10 October 1516)

of Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire, by his first wife, Elizabeth Arundel, widow of William Whittington (d.1470) of Pauntley, Gloucestershire, and daughter of Sir Renfrey Arundel (d.1434) of Lanherne by Joan Coleshull (d. 20 December 1497), daughter and heiress of Sir John Coleshull (1391-1418). Constance Brome's sister, Isabel Brome, married Sir Thomas Marrowe (d.1505), sergeant at law; for his will, dated 31 March 1505 and proved 10 April 1505, see TNA PROB 11/14/514. See also Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 333 and 381; the *ODNB* article on Henry Ferrers (1550–1633); and Dugdale, William, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Vol. II, (London: John Osborn and Thomas Longman, 1730), p. 973 at:

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=PhBaAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA83>

See also the will, dated 10 July 1535 and proved 18 November 1535, of the testator's father-in-law, Sir Edward Ferrers (d. 29 August 1535), TNA PROB 11/25/416, and the will, dated 26 August 1551 and proved 17 October 1551, of the testator's mother-in-law, Constance (nee Brome) Ferrers (d. 30 September 1551), TNA PROB 11/34/401. According to Dugdale, *supra*, Sir Edward Ferrers and Constance Brome had three sons and six daughters. See also:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/soc.genealogy.medieval/2PDSNAhRPZQ>.

By Anne Ferrers the testator is said to have had five sons and four daughters. See 'The Knightleys of Fawsley', *supra*, pp. 10-11, and the pedigree in Metcalfe, *supra*. Four sons, Richard, Edmund, Thomas and Edward, and a daughter, Anne, are mentioned in the will below:

\* **Sir Richard Knightley** (1533–1615), eldest son, who married firstly, in 1556, Mary Fermor (d.1573), the daughter of Sir Richard Fermor, by whom he had three sons and three daughters, and secondly Elizabeth Seymour (d.1603), the daughter of Edward Seymour (c.1500-1552), Duke of Somerset, by his second wife, Anne Stanhope (c.1510–1587), a descendant of Edward III, by whom he had seven sons and three daughters. See the *ODNB* article on Sir Richard Knightley (1533-1615), and Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2011, Vol. III, pp. 110-111. It was at Sir Richard Knightley's home at Fawsley that Martin Marprelate's *Epitome* was printed on a secret press in November 1588. See Serjeantson, R.M., *A History of the Church of All Saints, Northampton*, (Northampton: William Mark, 1901), p. 120 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/historyofchurcho00serjuoft#page/120/mode/2up>.

\* **Edmund Knightley** (d.1575), second son, of Grandborough, Warwickshire.

\* **Thomas Knightley**, third son, of Brghall or Brough Hall, Staffordshire.

\* **Edward Knightley**, fourth son, of Offchurch, Warwickshire.

\* **Anne Knightley** (buried 12 July 1617), who married Francis Cokayne (d. 25 December 1594), son and heir to Sir Thomas Cokayne of Ashborne, Derbyshire, by whom she had no issue. See Cokayne, Andreas Edward, *Cokayne of Ashbourne Hall, Co. Derby and Pooley Hall, Co. Warwick*, (Congleton, 1869), p. 30 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/cockaynememorand01coka#page/30/mode/2up>

According to the pedigree in Metcalfe, *supra*, the testator is also said to have had a daughter:

\* **Constance Knightley**, who married Henry Acton, son and heir to Sir Robert Acton of Ribbesford, Worcestershire. She is not mentioned in the will below.

### ***OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL***

For the testator's executor, Francis Saunders (d. 20 June 1585), see his will, dated 26 October 1584 and proved 3 July 1585, TNA PROB 11/68/442.

LM: T{estamentum} Valentini Knightley mi{li}{t}{i}s

In the name of God, Amen. The 26<sup>th</sup> day of December in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of our most dread Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith, etc., and in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred threescore and four, I, Sir Valentine Knightley of Fawsley in the county of Northampton, knight, being whole in body and of good and perfect remembrance, thanks be to Almighty God, yet nevertheless considering the unsteadfastness of my life and that the time of death to all men is uncertain, therefore for the perfect declaration of my last will and testament I do by this present writing bipartite make, ordain and declare the same in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I do bequeath my soul unto Almighty God and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the parish church of Fawsley aforesaid or elsewhere at the discretion of my executors;

And I will that mine executors named in these presents within convenient time after my decease by their discretion shall distribute and give or cause to be distributed and given to such my poor neighbours as be dwelling in the towns near Fawsley aforesaid, and bestow or cause to be bestowed in and about my funerals and the necessaries requisite thereunto, the sum of an hundred pounds of lawful English money;

Also I will that mine executors hereafter named within convenient time after my decease shall well and truly pay or cause to be paid to all such persons as I shall be duly indebted

to at the time of my decease all such sum and sums of money as I shall then duly owe them;

And as concerning the disposition and devise of certain of my manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments, my full will, mind and intent as concerning the same is in manner and form following, that is to say:

Where I am seised in fee of and in the manor of Offchurch, otherwise called Offchurch Bury and Grandborough with their appurtenances in the county of Warwick, and [f. 445r] of and in the manor of Brough Hall, Cowley and Cotton with their appurtenances in the county of Stafford, and of & in the manor of Ulbarough with the appurtenances in the county of Worcester, and of and in divers other messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments with their appurtenances in Offchurch Bury and in the town and fields of Offchurch, Grandborough, Woolscott and Walcote in the said county of Warwick, and in Brough Hall, Cowley and Cotton in the said county of Stafford, and in Ulborough in the said county of Worcester, and also of and in one close or pasture with the appurtenances in Aseley in the said county of Warwick now in the tenure of one (blank) Adams being of the yearly rent of three pounds ten shillings and eight pence, and of and in one tenement or farm with the appurtenances in Much Everdon in the said county of Northampton being now in the tenure of William Burie and being of the yearly rent of fifty-three shillings and four pence, and of one other tenement with certain lands, meadow and pasture thereto belonging in Everdon aforesaid now in the tenure of one Robert Allen being of the yearly rent of 20s, and of and in one cottage with the appurtenances in Everdon aforesaid now in the tenure of Nicholas Buller being of the yearly rent of six shillings and eight pence, I will and bequeath to my said executors herein named all and singular the said manors, lands, tenements and other the premises with their appurtenances, to have and to hold all and singular the said manors, lands, tenements and othe[r] the premises with their appurtenances before expressed to the same mine executors in manner, form, sort and effect and to and for the only meaning and intents hereafter mentioned in this my present will and testament, that is to say:

I will and devise that my said executors and the lenger liver of them shall have the occupation and possession and perceive, levy and take the yearly rents, issues, revenues and profits of the said manor of Grandborough with the appurtenances in the said county of Warwick and of all the said messuages, lands, tenements and other the premises with their appurtenances in Grandborough, Woolscott and Walcote aforesaid in the said county of Warwick towards the performing and fulfilling of this my last will and testament and bringing up of my younger sons and advancement, preferment and marriage of my daughter, Anne, until Edmund Knightley, my second son, shall come to or accomplish the age of twenty and two years;

And immediately after the said Edmund, my son, shall accomplish the said age of twenty and two years, I will that the said Edmund Knightley, my son, shall have and enjoy all the said manor of Grandborough with the appurtenances in the said county of Warwick and all and singular the said messuages, lands, tenements and other the premises with their appurtenances in Grandborough, Woolscott and Walcote aforesaid in the said county of

Warwick to him and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue male of his body lawfully begotten the remainder thereof to the heirs males of the body of me, the said Sir Valentine, lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue male to remain to my right heirs forever;

Also I will and devise that my said executors and the lenger liver of them shall have likewise the occupation and possession and perceive and levy and take the yearly rents, issues, revenues and profits of the said manors of Brough Hall, Cowley and Cotton in the said county of Stafford and Ulbarough alias Walborough in the said county of Worcester, and of all the said lands, tenements and other the premises with all and singular their appurtenances in Brough Hall, Cowley, Cotton, Ulbarough alias Wolbarough, Anseley and Everdon aforesaid in the said counties of Warwick, Stafford, Worcester and Northampton aforesaid towards the performance and fulfilling of this my said last will and testament and bringing up of my younger sons other than my said son, Edmund, and advancement, marriage and preferment of my said daughter, Anne, until Thomas Knightley, my third son, shall come to or accomplish th' age of twenty and two years, and immediately after the said Thomas, my son, shall accomplish the age of twenty and two years, then I will that the said Thomas Knightley, my son, shall have and enjoy all the said manors of Brough Hall, Cowley, Cotton, Ulbarough alias Wolbarough and all the said lands, tenements and other the premises with all and singular their appurtenances in Brough Hall, Cowley, Cotton, Ulbarough alias Wolbarough, Anseley and Everdon aforesaid in the said county of Warwick, Stafford, Worcester and Northampton to him and to the heirs males of the body of the said Thomas Knightley lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue male the remainder thereof to the heirs males of the body of me, the said Sir Valentine, lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue to remain to my right heirs forever;

Moreover I will and devise that my said executors and the lenger liver of them shall have likewise the occupation and possession and perceive, levy and take the yearly rents, issues, revenues and profits of the said manor of Offchurch alias Offchurch Bury with the appurtenances and of all and singular the said messuages, lands, tenements and other the premises with their appurtenances in Offchurch Bury and in Offchurch aforesaid within the said county of Warwick towards the performance and fulfilling of this my last will and testament and bringing up of [f. 445v] my son, Edward, and advancement, marriage and preferment of my said daughter, Anne, until the said Edward Knightley, my youngest son, shall come to and accomplish the age of twenty and two years, and immediately after the said Edward, my son, shall accomplish the said age of twenty and two years then I will that the said Edward Knightley, my son, shall have and enjoy the said manor of Offchurch otherwise called Offchurch Bury and other the premises in Offchurch Bury and in Offchurch aforesaid with all and singular their appurtenances to him 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 body of me, the said Sir Valentine, lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue the remainder thereof to my right heirs forever;

And if it shall happen any of my said younger sons to die before he shall accomplish the said age of twenty and two years having no issue male of his body lawfully begotten,

then I will that my said executors and the lenger liver of them shall have the possession and occupation of all that part and portion of my said manors, lands, tenements and other the premises with their appurtenances as is by this my present last will and testament bequeathed, limited and appointed to such of my said younger sons when he should have accomplished the age of twenty and two years if he had so long lived that shall so fortune to die as is aforesaid, and they to receive the yearly rents, issues, revenues and profits thereof towards the performance of this my last will and testament and preferment, marriage and advancement of my said daughter, Anne, until this my last will and testament be [+or?] conveniently may be in every point performed and fulfilled, and immediately after such time as this my said last will and testament be or conveniently may be performed and fulfilled, I will that all the said part or portion limited and assigned to such of my said younger sons that so shall die as is aforesaid shall remain to the heirs males of the body of me, the said Sir Valentine Knightley, lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue to remain to my right heirs forever;

And so likewise I will and devise so often as any of my said younger sons shall fortune to die before the said age of twenty and two years without issue male of his body lawfully begotten, I will and devise that my said executors and the lenger liver of them shall have the possession and occupation and receive, levy and take the issues, revenues and profits of my manor of Moreton Pinkney with the appurtenances in the said county of Northampton, and of all my lands, tenements and hereditaments with their appurtenances in Moreton Pinkney in the said county of Northampton towards the performance of this my last will and testament and preferment, marriage and advancement of my said daughter until this my will and testament be or conveniently may be fully performed and fulfilled, and immediately after such time as this my last will and testament shall or conveniently may be performed and fulfilled, I will the said manor of Moreton Pinkney with the appurtenances and other the premises in Moreton Pinkney aforesaid shall remain to the heirs males of the body of me, the said Sir Valentine Knightley, lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue to remain to the right heirs of me, the said Sir Valentine Knightley, forever, according to the ancient inheritance of Sir Richard Knightley, my late father, deceased, whose soul God pardon;

Provided alway and I will that my said executors and the survivors or survivor of them or such of my said executors as shall intromit and meddle with the execution of this my last will and testament shall yearly make a just and true account unto my well-beloved friends the supervisors or overseers of this my last will and testament named in these presents or to the more part of them and to the survivors or survivor of them once in the year at such day and place as the said supervisors or the more part of them shall appoint during the time that they or any of them shall have the possession and occupation of the said manors, lands, tenements and other the premises or any part or parcel of them in manner and form aforesaid of and for the yearly rents, revenues, issues, profits and gains coming and growing of, in and by reason of the same manors and other the premises appointed to the performance of this my said last will and testament;

The residue of my manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments not before appointed to the performance of this my last will and testament except the manor of Marston alias

Priors Marston and the manor of Hardwick alias Priors Hardwick with their appurtenances in the said county of Warwick, and also excepted all other my said messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments in Marston alias Priors Marston and in Hardwick alias Priors Hardwick in the said county of Warwick with all and singular [f. 146r] their appurtenances, I leave them to descend, come and be unto my son and heir according to the course of the common law of this realm in such manner and form and of such estate as the same manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments now stand and be, to the intent the Queen's Majesty, my most dread Sovereign Lady, her heirs or successors, kings of this realm, may have her or their wardship or primer seisin of the same premises as the case shall require;

Nevertheless I will, declare, devise and dispose by these presents that the said manor of Marston alias Priors Marston and the said manor of Hardwick alias Priors Hardwick with their appurtenances in the said county of Warwick and also all other my said messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments in Marston alias Priors Marston and in Hardwick alias Priors Hardwick aforesaid in the said county of Warwick with all and singular their appurtenances immediately from and after the decease of me, the said Sir Valentine, shall come and be to Richard Knightley esquire, mine eldest son and to the heirs males of the body of the same Richard lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue the remainder thereof after the decease of the same Richard unto the heirs males of the body of me, the said Sir Valentine, lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue the remainder thereof unto the right heirs of me, the said Sir Valentine, forever;

I give and bequeath to my said daughter, Anne Knightley, towards the preferment of her marriage five hundred marks of current money of England to be delivered her at the day of her marriage if she be ordered in her marriage by the advice of my executors or of my son and heir, Richard Knightley, or else she to have but two hundred marks;

Provided alway and my full intent and meaning is and I will and devise that all patents and leases for term of life or years to any of my servants or to any other by me heretofore made or hereafter to be made shall be good and effectual during the time and terms comprised in the same, and if any of my sons to whom I have given, bequeathed or assigned any manors, lands, tenements or hereditaments by this my last will and testament do molest or interrupt any person or persons to whom I have given, granted or demised any such patents or leases of having or enjoying the same contrary to the tenor and purport of their writings, then I will that such of my said sons so molesting or interrupting shall take no benefit by this my said last will and testament;

Item, I will and devise that at the costs and charges of mine executors my family and household be kept at Fawsley wholly together by the space of one whole year next ensuing after my decease in such sort and order as the same hath been most commonly kept by me by the space of twelve years last past;

Also I give and bequeath to every of my servants now in wages with me one whole year's wages over and besides such wages as shall be due to them or any of them at the time of my decease;

Executors of this my last will and testament I name, constitute, ordain and make my son, Richard Knightley, Thomas Spenser, Francis Saunders and Thomas Nicolles, esquires, trusting that they will employ their best endeavours that this my last will and testament be fully performed and executed according to the intent and true meaning thereof;

Supervisors and overseers of the execution thereof I desire to be my good and well-beloved friends Sir John Spencer and Sir Robert Lane, knights, and Edward Gryffyn, esquire, desiring them and every of them in what they may to further th' execution of this my last will and testament;

And in consideration of their pains and travail therein to be taken, I give and bequeath to every of the said supervisors or overseers six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence of lawful English money, and in like consideration I give and bequeath to every of my said executors other than my said son, Richard, five pounds apiece of lawful English money;

And for that my especial trust and confidence is fully grounded on my said son, Richard, that he will have a special and a reverend care and regard to the fulfilling and performance of this my last will and testament [f. 446v] as duty in many respects bindeth him, therefore the charges of my funerals being discharged, my debts which I duly owe being paid, and my legacies herein contained being fulfilled, performed and executed, the residue of all my goods and chattels movable and unmovable as well real as personal I give and bequeath wholly to my said son, Richard, to the proper use and behoof of him, his executors and administrators;

Item, I will that my said son, Richard Knightley, shall virtuously bring up in the fear of God and learning Valentine Knightley, his son and heir, in any of the universities or elsewhere;

In witness whereof I, the said Sir Valentine Knightley, have to either part of this present writing bipartite set my hand and seal the day and year above-written. Valentine Knightley.

Subscribed and sealed by the said Sir Valentine Knightley in the presence of me, Richard Walloppe, and of me, William Spencer, and of me, Richard Colles, and of me, Richard Butler, and of us, Thomas Bricket(?), Thomas Chapleyne and ven(?) Presute(?), and of me, James Chamberleyne, and of me, Ralph Blunte.

Probatum erat Suprascriptum testamentum coram Mag<sup>ist</sup>ro Walthero Haddon Legum Doctore Curie n<sup>ost</sup>re prerogatiue Cant<sup>uariensis</sup> Comissar<sup>io</sup> apud London xxii<sup>jo</sup> Die mensis Octobris Anno D<sup>omi</sup>ni mill<sup>es</sup>imo quingentesimo sexagesimo sexto Iuramento Radulphi Browne notarij publici procuratoris D<sup>omi</sup>ni Rich<sup>ard</sup>i Knightley militis Executoris in h<sup>uius</sup>mo<sup>d</sup>i testamento no<sup>m</sup>i<sup>n</sup>at<sup>i</sup> Cui comissa erat L<sup>itte</sup>ra administrac<sup>i</sup>o<sup>n</sup>is omniu<sup>m</sup> bonor<sup>um</sup> Iuriu<sup>m</sup> et creditor<sup>um</sup>

D*ic*t*i* Defunct*i* &c Ac De pleno Inventario &c Exhibend*o* necnon De pleno ac vero Comp*ot*o reddend*o* Res*er*uat*a* p*otes*tate similem Comissionem faciend*o* Thome Spenser ffrancisco Saunders et Thome Nicolles Armigeri executorib*us* etiam in eod*e*m test*ament*o no*m*i*n*at*is* Et eos cum venerint in Debit*a* Iuris forma admissur*is*

[=The above-written testament was proved before Master Walter Haddon, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of our Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the month of October in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred sixty-sixth by the oath of Ralph Browne, notary public, proctor of Sir Richard Knightley, knight, executor named in the same testament, to whom letters of administration were granted of all the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased etc., [+sworn to administer] and also to exhibit a full inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account, with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to Thomas Spencer, Francis Saunders and Thomas Nicolles, esquires, executors also named in the same testament, and they(?) when they shall have come in due form of law to be admitted.]