

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 6 April 1562 and proved 10 February 1569, of Sir John Yorke, Master of the Mint, with whose family Oxford was associated.

The testator was the third son of John Yorke and his wife, Katherine Patterdale, and great-grandson of Sir Richard Yorke (1430–1498), Mayor of York. For the Yorke pedigree, see Harwood, H.W. Forsyth, ed., *The Genealogist*, New Series, Vol. XX (London: George Bell, 1904), p. 24; Norcliffe, Charles Best, ed., *The Visitation of Yorkshire in the Years 1563 and 1564 made by William Flower*, Vol. XCI, (London: Harleian Society, 1881), p. 357; and Howard, Joseph Jackson, and George John Armytage, eds., *The Visitation of London in the Year 1568 Taken by Robert Cooke* (London: Harleian Society, 1869), p. 81, all available online.

The testator married Anne (nee Smyth) Paget Yorke (d.1575), the daughter of Robert Smyth of London, and widow of Robert Paget of London, by whom she had a son, William Paget, and a daughter, Grace Paget.

The testator's step-daughter, Grace Paget, married, firstly, Robert Bull (d.1551), secondly, Robert Robotham (d.1571), and thirdly, Godfrey Fanshawe (d. 12 February 1588), a younger brother of the Queen's Remembrancer of the Exchequer, Thomas Fanshawe (c.1533–1601). For the licence dated 30 November 1550 for the marriage of Robert Bull of St Clement Danes, London, gentleman, and Grace Paget of St. Stephen's Walbrook, London, see Armytage, George J., ed., *Allegations for Marriage Licences Issued by the Bishop of London 1520-1610* (London: Harleian Society, 1887), p. 13. For the will of Robert Bull (d.1551), dated 11 July 1551, which mentions Lady Yorke, see TNA PROB 11/34, ff. 135-6. For the will of Robert Robotham (d.1571), see TNA PROB 11/53, ff. 342-4. See also the entry for Robert Robotham in Bindoff, S.T., *The House of Commons 1509-1558* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982), pp. 202-3, and the pedigree of Robotham of St. Alban's in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Hertfordshire made by Robert Cooke, Esq., Clarencieux, in 1572, and Sir Richard St. George, Kt., Clarencieux, in 1634* (London: Harleian Society, 1886), p. 87, available online. For the will of Godfrey Fanshawe (d.1588), dated 26 October 1584, see TNA PROB 11/85, ff. 174-5. A copy of the latter will is available online in Howard, Joseph Jackson, ed., *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, (London: Hamilton Adams, 1876), pp. 288-9.

The testator's will contains a bequest to 'my brother Robotham':

And I give to my brother Robotham a gilded cup with a cover.

Mary Robotham, the youngest daughter of Robert Robotham (d.1571) and Grace Paget, married Shakespeare's trustee, William Leveson (d.1621). For the will of Shakespeare's trustee, William Leveson (d.1621), mentioning his wife, Mary, see TNA PROB 11/137, ff. 447-8.

For the will of the testator's wife, Anne (nee Smyth) Paget Yorke (d.1575), see TNA PROB 11/57, f. 386.

As mentioned in the will below, the testator's eldest son and heir, Peter Yorke (1525-1589), married Elizabeth Ingleby, the daughter of Sir William Ingleby of Ripley (1518-1578) and his wife, Anne Mallory.

For the will of the testator's son, Edmund Yorke, see TNA PROB 11/89, f. 161.

For the testator's son, Rowland Yorke (d.1588), see the entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online.

For the family of the Sir William Hilton (d.1600), who married the testator's daughter, Anne, see Burke, John, ed., *The Patrician* (London: E. Churton, 1847), p.559, available online.

The register books of the parish of St Stephens, Walbrook record the burial of the testator on 27 January 1569, his widow, Anne, on 21 August 1575, and his son and heir, Peter Yorke, gentleman, on 17 April 1589. See White, J.G., *History of the Ward of Walbrook*, (London, 1904), pp. 351-2.

Several documents attest to Oxford's close relationship to the Yorke family. In 1574, Oxford stayed at Lady Yorke's house in Walbrook before his brief trip to the continent without the Queen's leave, as noted by his uncle, George Golding (see ERO D/Drg/2/24):

Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxenford, went from the Lady Yorke's house in Walbrook in London where he then lay for a time, and at Aldgate, where he took horse, scilicet, the first day of July 1574, being Thursday, between two and three o'clock in the morning, and so to Wivenhoe in Essex, and the next night he took ship & coasted over into Flanders, arriving at Calais.

Lady Yorke had died while Oxford was away from England on his continental tour of 1575/6. However Oxford again stayed at Yorke House on his return, according to notes made by Lord Burghley (see CP 160/99):

I sent letters to him to entreat him to take my house for his lodging, whereof I had no answer, and yet I wrote twice by 2 several messengers, but my son sent me word that he found him disposed to keep himself secretly 2 or 3 days in his own lodging, and yet that Edward Yorke told him secretly that his Lordship would come first to my house, but he would nobody knew thereof, whereupon I was very glad, but his wife gladder, and the contrary I knew until he was landed, and then my son told me how he did suddenly leave the barge and took a wherry and only with Rowland Yorke landed about Yorke House.

Within 2 hours I heard by them that had been with him how many had been with him without any his misliking, and also that it was heard that he meant to sup out of his lodging at Edward Yorke's, and that there was a coach preparing for my Lady, his sister,

to come to him, which being heard by my daughter, she very importunately required me she might go to him, and yet I required her to stay until I might send to my Lord Howard, from whom I would know whether he knew that my Lord, her husband, would go to the court, for if he would, she should not go until he had been there. My Lord Howard sent me word that he as yet could not tell, but when he should know he would send me word, whereof I had none.

Oxford appears to have been a particular friend of the testator's son, Edward Yorke, as indicated in the foregoing notes, and in the 'Articles whereof Oxford would have accused Leicester' in TNA SP 12/151/50, f. 110:

First, that Ned Yorke had told him in what sort Killingworth was fortified, with brass pieces, munition, powder etc., proportionably as strong as the Tower, against a day under colour of making the Queen sport with fireworks, shooting, etc.

The testator's sister, Margaret Yorke, married Bernard Frobisher and by him was the mother of the explorer, Martin Frobisher (1535?-1594). Oxford's friendship with the Yorke family was perhaps part of the reason for his financially disastrous investment in Frobisher's voyages. See Oxford's letter dated 21 May 1578 in which he terms Frobisher 'my friend', TNA SP 12/149/42(15), f. 108v:

To my very loving friends William Pelham & Thomas Randolph, esquires, Mr Young, Mr Lok, Mr Hogan, Mr Field, & others the Commissioners for the voyage to Meta Incognita

After my very hearty commendations. Understanding of the wise proceeding & orderly dealing for the continuing of the voyage for the discovery of Cathay by the north-west which this bearer, my friend Mr Frobisher, hath already very honourably attempted, and is now eftsoons to be employed for the better achieving thereof;

And the rather induced, as well for the great liking her Majesty hath to have the same passage discovered, as also for the special good favour I bear to Mr Frobisher, to offer unto you to be an adventurer therein for the sum of one thousand pounds or more, if you like to admit thereof;

Which sum or sums, upon your certificate of admittance, I will enter into bond shall be paid for that use unto you upon Michaelmas day next coming;

Requesting your answers therein, I bid you heartily farewell from the court the 21 of May, 1578. Your loving friend, Edward Oxenford.

LM: York

In the name of God, Amen. I, Sir John Yorke of the city of York, knight, calling to mind the uncertain time that all living creatures have in this world, and that th' end of our days are not known unto us, have thought now good during the time of my health to establish and dispose my worldly possessions and goods by my last will and testament to th' intent that hereafter or whensoever it shall please Almighty God to call me to his mercy that I shall not be troubled with any worldly cares or troubles, but wholly to addict my whole heart and mind upon heavenly and godly cares, prayers(?) and desires for the health of my soul; these causes now considered, I ordain and make this my last will and testament the sixth day of April in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred threescore and two and in the fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., in manner and form following:

First I give and bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty God, the Creator of all the world, and in Jesu Christ, his only son, our Saviour, through whose death and passion I undoubtedly believe to have full release of [sic?] remission of all my sins, and to be partaker of the heavenly joys promised to all Christian and faithful creatures, and do fully acknowledge all the works that ever I have done or could do to be as of themselves(?) of none effect or worthy to attain any favour at God's hands;

Secondly, I will that my body shall be buried within the church of St John's at Ouse Bridge and if it please God that I die within the city of York, or otherwise as it shall please my executors, and I will that my funerals shall be made and be bestowed upon at my burial as shall be thought decent by mine executors and supervisors of this my last will;

And I will, give and bequeath unto William Yorke, my son, my whole manor of Pedderthorpe in the county of York, and all other my lands, rents, tenements, reversions and services with all and singular the appurtenances in Pedderthorpe aforesaid, to have and to hold the same premises with all and singular their appurtenances to the said William Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will the same manor and other the premises shall wholly remain to my son, Peter, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the same manor and other the premises shall wholly remain to my son, Edmund Yorke, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the same manor and other the premises shall wholly remain to my son, Rowland Yorke, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the same manor and other the premises shall wholly remain unto my son, Edward Yorke, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said manor and other the premises shall wholly remain to my son, Henry Yorke, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the same manor and other the premises shall wholly remain and come to my right heirs forever;

Also I give, will and bequeath to my said son, Edmund Yorke, the manor of Sledmere with th' appurtenances in the county of York and all other my lands, tenements, rents,

reversions and services with their appurtenances in Sledmere aforesaid, to have and to hold the said manor and other the premises in Sledmere with all and singular their appurtenances to the said Edmund and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said manor of Sledmere and other the premises in Sledmere shall wholly remain unto the said Peter Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said manor of Sledmere and other the premises in Sledmere in the county of York shall remain to the said William Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said manor of Sledmere and other the premises in Sledmere shall wholly remain unto the said Rowland Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said manor of Sledmere and other the premises in Sledmere shall wholly remain to the said Edward Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said manor of Sledmere and other the premises in Sledmere shall wholly remain to the said Henry Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will the said manor of Sledmere and other the premises in Sledmere shall wholly remain and come to the right heirs of me, the said Sir John Yorke, forever;

Also I give, will and bequeath unto the said Rowland Yorke and Edward Yorke the manor of Rudston in the county of York and all other my lands, tenements, rents, reversions, services and hereditaments in Rudston aforesaid, to have and to hold the said manor of Rudston and other the premises in Rudston to the said Edward Yorke and Rowland Yorke and their heirs males of their several bodies lawfully begotten, and if it happen the said Rowland Yorke to die without heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that that moiety and half of that the said Rowland should have by force of this my bequest shall remain to the said Peter Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and if it happen the said Edward Yorke to die without issue male of his body lawfully begotten, then I will that the said moiety or half of the said manor of Rudston that the said Edward shall have by this my bequest shall wholly remain to the said Peter Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that as much of the said manor and other the premises in Rudston as shall for want of issue male of either of the bodies of the said Rowland and Edward come and remain to the said Peter or the heirs males of his body shall remain to the said William Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of issue the remainder thereof to the said Edmund Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue the remainder thereof to the said Henry and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the remainder thereof to the right heirs of me, the said Sir John Yorke, forever;

And also I give and bequeath unto the said Henry Yorke all my messuages, lands, tenements, rents, reversions and services with their appurtenances in Heselthorpe, Shereburne and Leigh in the said county of York, and one mansion house set, standing and being in Soper Lane in London, and all cellars, shops, courts & void rooms to the said mansion house belonging, to have and to hold the said messuages, lands, tenements and hereditments with their appurtenances in Heselthorpe, Shereburne and Leithe in the said

county of York and the said mansion house and other the premises in Soper Lane in London to the said Henry Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue male, then I will that the same lands, messuages, tenements and reversions to the said Henry last before bequeathed shall wholly remain to the said Peter Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue then I will that the said last-recited premises with th' appurtenances which were lastly bequeathed to the said Henry Yorke shall remain to the said William Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then I will that the said last-recited bequest to the said Henry Yorke shall wholly remain to the said Edmund Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then I will that the said last-recited premises bequeathed to the said Henry shall wholly remain to the said Rowland Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then I will that the said last-recited remises shall remain to the said Edward Yorke and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for and in default of such issue the same to remain and come to the right heirs of me, the said Sir John Yorke, forever;

Also I give and bequeath unto my son, Peter Yorke, my great pounced basin and ewer of silver double gilded, and my great cross of gold set with diamonds, and my chain of gold, and my ring or signet, to be delivered him after the death of my wife, or before if my wife shall think good, so that the said Peter Yorke will be bound to my wife by his deed obligatory in the sum of five hundred marks that he shall not alien, sell, give, bequeath or otherwise leave or put away the same or any of them but only to his son and heir or to such other of his brethren or their heirs as shall be his heirs males if he shall chance to die without heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, for my full, whole and perfect will and mind is that the said basin and ewer, cross of gold, chain and ring, and every parcel of them, shall abide, remain and continue with them that shall chance to be the heir male of my body or any of their heirs males successively, without alienation, alteration, exchange, devise or other means to hinder the same;

And I give and bequeath unto my son, Edmund Yorke, my best agate set in gold and my second gilt basin and ewer after such manner and form and upon such condition as the last-recited bequest is bequeathed to my son, Peter;

Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Jane Yorke, the sum of a thousand marks in money to be taken of my goods, and my second cross of diamonds, to and for the preferment of her marriage in full recompense, satisfaction and payment of her child's portion of all my goods and chattels;

Also I give and bequeath to my son-in-law, William Hilton, a button of gold with a pointed diamond set in it to make him a ring upon, and I bequeath unto my daughter Hilton an agate set in gold with four diamonds on the sides of it;

And all the residue of my goods and chattels movable and unmovable, plate and jewels, my debts and legacies paid and performed, I give wholly unto my wife to dispose at her pleasure amongst my children, and I make her the sole executrix of this my last will and

testament, and I make my son, Peter Yorke, and my son-in-law, William Hilton, the supervisors of this my last will and testament, and I give and bequeath unto either of them for their pains therein to be taken the sum of ten pounds;

In witness hereof I have to this my will subscribed my name and set my seal in the presence of these persons whose names are under-written. Witnesses of this will: William Watson, Robert Pacoke [=Peacock?], William Hilton, Peter Yorke, Thomas Layton, George Lyghtfoote.

Further I will and bequeath by this my last will and [+testament] to my son, Peter Yorke my manors, lands and tenements in Netherdale, Awswicke, Appletreewick and Kynsaye in the county of York, and my capital messuages in York and London, to such uses and intents as are mentioned and declared in certain covenants comprised in a pair of indentures which are made betwixt me and Sir William Ingleby for and concerning the marriage of my said son to his now wife, to the uses whereof I have knowledged a fine before the judge;

Also I will and bequeath to my son, Edmund, all my whole sums of money and stock which I have lying in the voyage of Muscovia, which is as I remember about the sum of two hundred 22 pounds of thereabouts, togethers with the increase of the same stock;

And I give to my brother Robotham a gilded cup with a cover;

And I give and bequeath unto my said son, Edmund, all my lands and tenements in Morton and Busshop hill, and all other my lands and tenements that I lately had of Richard Yorke, to have and to hold to the said Edmund and th' heirs males of his body with like remainders over as are above-written in these indentures of other lands before to him bequeathed;

The witnesses of these last-recited bequests: William, Burnand(?), Thomas Layton, Robert Maskewe(?), Richard Payes, and other of the house.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum coram magistro Waltero Haddon legum doctore curie prerogative cantuariensis commissario apud london decimo die ffebruarij Anno domini millesimo quingentesimo sexagesimo octavo Iuramento Edwardi Brgges notarij publici procuratoris Elizabethe [sic] relicte et executricis in testamento huiusmodi nominate Cui comissa fuit administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum &c De bene &c Ad sancta dei Evangelia Iurati

[=The above-written testament was proved before Master Walter Haddon, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the tenth day of February in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred sixty-eighth by the oath of Edward Briggess(?), notary public, proctor of Elizabeth [sic], relict and executrix named in

the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods etc.,
sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc.]