

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will dated 19 January 1569 and proved 7 February 1569, of William Aylofffe of Runwell in Essex, who, as indicated in his will, held the lease of Oxford's manor of Wennington, which had descended to Oxford through Elizabeth Trussell.

By 1475 William Trussell (d. 1481) held the manor. He was followed by his son Edward (d. 1499) and his grandson John Trussell (d. 1499). Elizabeth, sister and heir of John Trussell, married John de Vere (d. 1540), earl of Oxford. The manor descended in the de Vere family until 1579 when Edward de Vere (d. 1604), earl of Oxford, sold it to William Aylofffe (d. 1585) of Bretons, in Hornchurch. The Aylofffes held it at least until 1664.

See 'Wennington', *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 7* (1978), pp. 180-190. The lease had been granted to William Aylofffe (d.1569) by the 16th Earl and his brother, Robert Vere (d.1598), to whom the 16th Earl had granted a life estate in the manors of Wennington and Kennington on 5 March 1544. The testator's son and heir, William Aylofffe (c.1535-1584), Justice of the Queen's Bench, purchased Robert Vere's life estate and Oxford's reversionary interest in the manors of Kennington and Wennington in 1579. The purchase resulted in Chancery suits brought by Robert Vere and his second wife, Joan (nee Hubberd), against Justice Aylofffe's son and heir, William Aylofffe (d.1627), and Oxford's former receiver-general and one of the Six Clerks of Chancery, Edward Hubberd (d.1602), the brother of Joan Hubberd. See TNA WARD 8/13, TNA C 54/626, TNA C 3/251/104, TNA PROB 11/91, f. 279 and ERO D/DL/T1/680. The testator's son and heir, Justice William Aylofffe (c.1535-1584), is also mentioned in two other documents directly concerning Oxford (see CP 159/110-11 and CP 9/91).

The testator had married, as his second wife, Margaret (nee Forster) Sulyard (d.1587), sister of George Forster (d.1556?) mentioned in the will, and widow of Eustace Sulyard (d.1547). Since a clause in the will mentions that the testator stands bound to George Forster (d.1556?) for Margaret's jointure, the testator's marriage to Margaret (nee Forster) Sulyard (d.1587) must have taken place before George Forster's death in 1556 or 1557. For the will of Margaret (nee Forster) Sulyard Aylofffe, see TNA PROB 11/72, ff. 163-6. For the will of Eustace Sulyard (d.1547), see TNA PROB 11/31, ff. 271-4.

The testator was thus related by marriage to Oxford's maternal uncle, Henry Golding (d.1576), whose wife, Alice (nee Covell) Forster Golding, had been the wife of George Forster (d.1556) prior to her marriage to Henry Golding (d.1576). For the will of Alice (nee Covell) Forster Golding (d. 1587), see TNA PROB 11/70, ff. 154-7. For the will of Oxford's paternal uncle, Henry Golding (d.1576), see TNA PROB 11/59, ff. 57-8.

In the name of God, Amen. I, William Aylofffe of Runwell in the county of Essex, esquire, being of good and perfect remembrance, thanks be unto Almighty God, do make this my last will and testament in manner and form following, revoking and renouncing hereby all other former wills whatsoever, that is to weet:

First, I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, through whose mercy, merits and passion I trust to be saved, beseeching him most heartily to be merciful unto me, and then my body to be buried in the church of Runwell if I fortune there to decease;

And now concerning the disposition of all my goods and chattels whereof I am at this present time possessed, and debts as well owing to me as by me to others, first my will is that Margaret, my well-beloved wife, shall have all my household stuff, plate, jewels, corn in the barn and in the house or fields, stock of cattle, as well kine, oxen, bullocks, sheep, hogs and all other my goods whatsoever which now be and remain in my houses at Flemings or Peireyes or in any of the grounds to them or any of them belonging, and also the household stuff at Braxted Lodge which was hers before, to her own only use and behoof except certain plate which was brought from Britzens [=Bretons], that is to weete, two bowls, a gilt salt, whereof my will is that she shall have the occupying during her life, and after her decease my will is that William Aylofffe, my eldest son, have it, except also four oxen now going at Flemings, that is to say, two red oxen and two dun oxen, which my will is that my said son, William, shall have towards the performance of this my present testament, and also except all my horses, geldings, mares and colts other than those which I shall hereafter by this my last will appoint and bequeath unto my said wife;

And therefore I will and bequeath unto my said well-beloved wife the white nag which I commonly ride on, and the gray double gelding which my wife useth to ride on, the sorrel nag called Owseleye, the black nag called Wrichte, the great bay trotting gelding at Braxted, the little bay mare and the great bay trotting mare, the two cart mares, the great white curtal, the black ambling mare and the white stoned colt at Braxted;

And further I give and bequeath unto my said wife towards the keeping of her house four fat bullocks which be in Braxted park, and all my sheep there;

And further my will is that my said wife, for the consideration aforesaid, shall give unto all my children one year's board next and immediately after my decease in such sort as they have had it in my life in her house at Flemings if she so long do live;

The residue of all my goods and chattels, as leases for term of years yet to come, household stuff, plate, stock of cattle, debts due unto me, and all other my goods before nor hereafter in this my present will not bequeathed to any other whatsoever, I give and bequeath unto William Aylofffe, mine eldest son, whom I ordain and appoint mine only executor, to the intent he shall therewith and with the profits of my said lands and of my said leases pay, satisfy and discharge yearly one hundred pounds of good and lawful money of England toward the payment of my funerals, debts and legacies until this my said will be fully performed and executed;

And therefore my will is that my said wife shall shortly after my death deliver or cause to be delivered unto my said son all such indentures of lease, bargains or assignments of them or any of them as now remain and be in my house at Flemings, and also all

obligations or other writings which either by reason of his said executorship or else by reason of any lands and tenements which shall descend and come unto him after my decease shall belong unto him, and then my will is that, my funerals and debts being paid, my said executor shall pay to my daughter, Elizabeth Aylofffe, two hundred marks, and to my daughter, Mary Aylofffe, one hundred pounds, and to every of the residue of my children forty pounds of good and lawful money of England, that is to weet, to my two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth at the several days of their first several marriages their entire sums of money to either of them appointed and bequeathed if it will so soon be levied, and to my sons, that is to weet, Thomas Aylofffe, Giles Aylofffe and Ralph Aylofffe, their sums of money as soon as it will arise and grow of the said hundred pounds a year;

And whereas there is due unto two of Master Sulyard's daughters yet left unmarried four hundred marks by their father's legacy to be paid unto them at the days of their several marriage, I will also that my said executors [sic] do pay the said four hundred marks unto them at the days aforesaid if it will be so soon levied of the said hundred pounds a year;

And now as concerning the order and disposition of my lands and tenements, my will is that whereas I am and stand bound unto George Foster [=Forster], esquire, and others amongst other things that if it fortune my said wife to overlive me I shall leave unto her my lease of Wennington Hall for so many years as she shall fortune to live after my decease, which bond being taken to the use and behoof of my said wife she hath promised and is contented there shall none advantage be taken thereof against her or mine executor, and therefore my will is that my said wife shall have in lieu and recompense thereof my farm or tenement called Peires(?) for term of her natural life, trusting that she will procure and get my said heir and executor a discharge of the said bond, and after her decease my will is that the said farm or tenement shall remain unto my said son, William, and his heirs forever;

And further my will is that every one of my three sons, that is to weet, Thomas Aylofffe, Giles Aylofffe and Ralph Aylofffe, shall have immediately after my decease one annuity or yearly rent of ten pounds by the year apiece for term of their natural lives, to be paid them and either of them at my mansion house called Brittens [=Bretons] yearly at the feasts of Saint Michael the Archangel and the Annunciation of Our Lady by even portions, and if it chance the said annuities or rents of ten pounds by the year apiece to be behind and unpaid in part or in all by the space of one month over or after any of the said feasts in which they ought to be paid, then it shall be lawful for him or them to whom the said annuity or rent is due or owing to enter into any of my manors, lands and tenements now descended or bequeathed to my said son, William, and there to distrain, and the distresses there taken to drive away, impound and detain until such time as he or they be of the said annuity or yearly rent with th' arrearages thereof, if any be, be fully satisfied, contented and paid;

Furthermore, my will is that my said executor shall within one month after my decease pay unto all my servants their wages then due unto them;

Also I will and bequeath unto every one of my said sons one gelding, that is to weet, to Thomas Aylofffe, my son, the bay ambling gelding called Bay Jackson, to Giles Aylofffe the young roaned ambling nag new broken, and to Ralph Aylofffe, my son, [+the] sorrel gelding with the cut(?) of his ledge [=leg?];

Also I will and bequeath unto Robert Bundocke, Marten Engledewe and John Jackson and to every of them 20s, and to James, my lackey, 40s, and to Peter, my cook, 10s, to be paid to every of them within one month after my decease;

Also my will is that my cousin Darcy of Tolleshunt shall have Gray Jackson, and my son-in-law, Edward Sulyard, shall have my bay stoned horse, desiring them both to be good to my children;

Item, I will and bequeath unto Raven(?), my servant, 20s;

Also I will and bequeath to every of my wife's daughters yet living a ring of the value of 40s;

And of this my last will I make and appoint my well-beloved wife and my cousin Darcy of Tolleshunt overseers, desiring to see it performed as it ought to be;

In witness whereof I have set my hand to this my present will the nineteenth of January in the tenth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, anno 1568. William Aylofffe.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum coram magistro Waltero Haddon legum doctore curie prerogatiue cantuariensis comissario apud London Septimo die ffebruarij Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentesimo Sexagesimo octavo Iuramento Willelmi Aylofff executoris in testamento huiusmodi nominati Cui comissa fuit administracio omnium & singulorum bonorum &c De bene &c Ad sancta Dei Evangelia Iurato

[=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 seventh day of February in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred sixty-eighth by the oath of William Aylofffe, executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all & singular the goods etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc.]