

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 9 August 1575 and proved 2 December 1575 of Lady Anne Yorke, at whose house in Walbrook Oxford stayed before departing without the Queen's licence for the continent in 1574.

Anne (nee Smyth) Paget Yorke was the daughter of Robert Smyth of London, and wife, firstly, of Robert Paget of London, and secondly, of Sir John Yorke (d. 1569). For the will of Sir John Yorke (d. 1569), see TNA PROB 11/51, ff. 29-30. 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.

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

For the testatrix' 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 testatrix' daughter, Anne, see Burke, John, ed., *The Patrician* (London: E. Churton, 1847), p.559, available online.

The testatrix' eldest son, Peter Yorke (1525-1589), married Elizabeth Ingleby, the daughter of Sir William Ingleby of Ripley (1518-1578) and his wife, Anne Mallory. The testatrix' daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, is the recipient of this bequest:

*Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Elizabeth Yorke, my damask gown.*

The following bequests are to the testatrix' son and daughter by her first marriage to Robert Paget:

*Also I give and bequeath unto William Paget twenty marks in money.*

*Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter Fanshawe my great ring with a red stone.*

The testatrix's 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.

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.

The register books of the parish of St Stephens, Walbrook record the burial of the testatrix' husband, Sir John Yorke, on 27 January 1569, of the testatrix on 21 August 1575, and of her son, 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 was at the testatrix' 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.*

The testatrix 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 testatrix' 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.*

Margaret Yorke, the sister of Sir John Yorke (d.1569) and sister-in-law of the testatrix, 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.*

RM: Testamentum Domine Anne Yorke

In the name of God, Amen. I, Dame Anne Yorke of the city of London, widow, sick in body but strong in faith and perfect of remembrance, I thank my Lord God through Jesus Christ, my Saviour, by whose death and passion I trust only to be saved, and renounce

and forsake all other men's, and being in this perfect mind I make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I bequeath and yield my soul unto the hands of Almighty God by Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, and my body to be buried in the parish church of St Stephen's in Walbrook in London;

And for my transitory goods, I leave them to the world;

Item, my funerals performed and my debts paid in London or elsewhere I do owe, which I charge my son, William Yorke, to see them well and truly answered and paid so far as in him lies for his father and me, I give and bequeath these legacies following:

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son, Peter Yorke, my great table diamond;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Hilton my velvet gown and my cloak;

Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Elizabeth Yorke, my damask gown;

Also I give and bequeath unto my daughter Fanshawe my great ring with a red stone;

Also I give and bequeath unto my son, William Yorke, my turquoise, and my seal ring;

Also I give and bequeath unto my son, Rowland Yorke, now being beyond the seas, two hundred pounds in money and my diamond with many cuts, and if it fortune my said son not to enjoy the said sum of two hundred pounds, then I will that Edward Yorke shall have forty pounds thereof, and touching the residue thereof, I give and bequeath to my son Peter's children threescore pounds thereof, equally amongst them to be divided, and the rest and residue thereof I give and bequeath to my executor hereunder named;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Edward Yorke, twenty pounds in money;

Also I give and bequeath unto William Paget twenty marks in money;

Also I give and bequeath unto my maid, Ellen, twenty pounds in money, to be paid unto her at her day of marriage;

Also I give and bequeath to my cousin Bacon his wife a black gown;

Also I give and bequeath to twelve poor women twelve black gowns;

Item, to George Bonde and Roger Warfield, to either of them a black gown;

To Ralph, my servant, forty shillings, and to Mychell Sekea twenty shillings;

And whereas I have bargained for the sale of my house in Pankeike [=Pancake?] Lane in London, I give and bequeath unto my executor all my right, title and interest in the said house, to have and to hold to him and his heirs forever for to confirm the sale thereof accordingly, and the money which shall proceed and come thereof to be for the behoof and performance of this my last will and testament;

And of this my present last will and testament I do make and ordain my said son, William Yorke, my full and sole executor, and overseers hereof I make the foresaid George Bonde and Roger Warfield;

The residue of all and singular my goods and chattels as well within the city of London as elsewhere (my debts, funerals and legacies performed and this my present last will and testament fulfilled and accomplished), I do wholly give and bequeath to my said executor;

In witness whereof to this my present testament and last will I, the said Dame Anne Yorke, have set my hand and seal, given the ninth day of August 1575 and in the seventeenth 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. Sigillatum subscriptum et deliberatum in presentia. By me, George Bonde. By me, Roger Warfield, ac me Richardi Coulson servientem Willelmum Brooke notarij.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi Testamentum coram magistro Willelmo Drewrye legum doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis Commissario apud London Secundo die mensis Decembris Anno Domini Millesimo quingentesimo Septuagesimo quinto Iuramento Willelmi Yorke filij et executoris in huiusmodi Testamento nominati Cui Comissa fuit Administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum Iurium &c De bene et fideliter administrando eadem Ac de pleno et fideli Inventario &c exhibendo Necnon de plano et vero Compoto Calculo siue racionio inde reddendo Ad Sancta Dei Evangelia Iurati

[=The same testament was proved before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London on the second day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-fifth by the oath of William Yorke, son and executor named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account, calculation or reckoning thereof.]