

SUMMARY: In this final version of his will, dated 1 March 1597 [=1598], Lord Burghley makes generous bequests to his three granddaughters Elizabeth, Bridget and Susan, Oxford's children by his first wife Anne Cecil. Lord Burghley's bequests include marriage portions for Bridget and Susan, who were still unmarried at the time. The will also refers to lands which had been purchased by Lord Burghley to provide maintenance for Oxford's three daughters after Lord Burghley's death (see also SP 12/266/99, f. 137, CP 25/2/135/1725/34ELIZIEASTER, and C 66/1392, mbs. 30-31). Lord Burghley's will was probated on 13 November 1598.

LM: Testamentum Domini Willelimi [sic] Cecill domini de Burleighe

The testament of me, William Cecil, Knight of the Order of the Garter, Lord Burghley etc., begun in Anno Millesimo Quingentesimo Septuagesimo Nono, & revisited many times after, and now perfected for this time the 25th of Iulij 1583. And newly revisited 26 Iulij 1586. And now reviewed 28 October 1588, the thirtieth year of Queen Elizabeth. And now reformed 20 ffebruarij 1589, 32 Elizabeth. And now reviewed the first of November 1591 and the 32nd year of Queen Elizabeth. And now reviewed the 20th of November 1593, the 36 year of the said Queen's reign. And now reviewed and altered mense Augusti 1595, Anno Regine 37. And now reviewed Primo Martij Millesimo Quingentesimo Nonagesimo Septimo Anno Quadragesimo Regine Elizabethhe.

Considering I have been by the goodness of Almighty God created and made a reasonable creature of body and soul, and thereby ordained to serve him as my creator and maker, and born also of Christian parents and christened in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost in the month of September the year of Our Lord one thousand five hundred twenty in the church of Bourne in the county of Lincoln, and consequently by order of my good parents brought up and instructed in my young years after that I did come to the years of discretion to have knowledge of the gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ (the knowledge whereof begun about that time to be more clearly revealed here in England than it had been many years before), being thereby taught that there was no other means of salvation of my soul but by the passion, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, the son of God, in whom, as I ought, so I do put my whole confidence and trust, and do desire the assistance of his holy spirit to have grace during this frail life to continue in that mind and to have a desire to obey his will and commandments in living religiously and virtuously as farforth as the infirmity of my flesh will suffer;

Whereunto adding the consideration of the certainty of the worldly death of my body, which is inevitable though I am uncertain of the manner, hour and place, and yet being by increase of years and of other infirmities of my body (grown for a great part by continual public services) thereby necessarily induced to look shortly by order of nature for my worldly end;

And knowing also that whatsoever worldly and earthly gifts it hath pleased Almighty God to have given (or rather lent) unto me, I must by death leave them all to the world, and whatsoever godly and spiritual graces hath been by God's favour bestowed upon me I hope certainly by his goodness and merits (though my body shall be committed to earth) to enjoy the fruits thereof in heaven by the mere goodness of Almighty God after this mortal life if I shall use and dispose them in this life to God's glory, acknowledging them to have proceeded only of his mere goodness, and that more plentifully bestowed upon me than upon many others;

Upon all these and many other like considerations, being at this time occupied with the cogitation of my mortality, and yet of whole mind and memory, for the which I humbly thank Almighty God, I do determine, and many times heretofore I have done, to declare my last will and testament in writing concerning the disposition of my lands and goods which are worldly, what my mind is therein, and to whom I will and desire that the same may remain after my decease in such sort as by the laws of the realm I may do and as I hope shall not offend God, the giver of them all to me, considering as it is in the psalm, *Coelum c[o]jeli Domino, Terram dedit filijs hominum*, and therefore this present first of March one thousand five hundred ninety-seven [=1 March 1598], and in the year of Queen Elizabeth, my dear Sovereign Lady, the fortieth, I do revoke all my former wills in writing, which have been many, and have been altered as occasions have moved me from the year one thousand five hundred seventy-nine, or from any time before, and do mean that none shall from this day forward be of any force but this now written, and that which shall from time to time hereafter be added hereunto;

In the name therefore of Almighty God, I, William Cecil, Knight of the Order of the Garter, Baron of Burghley and Treasurer of England, do most humbly commend my soul, both now presently (and so I pray God that I may do the same when God shall separate it from my body) into the hands and protection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the only mediator betwixt God and man, to be presented and placed in heaven by the same Christ, my only Saviour and Redeemer, there to have the fruition of the joy therefore prepared until the last day that my body shall be raised from the earth to be joined with my soul, and from thenceforth to enjoy such immortal blessedness as no earthly being or heart can express or contain;

And my body I leave to the world to be buried in comely sort in respect of the firm hope I have of the resurrection thereof at the last day. And for that I trust God hath of his mercy permitted it to be here in earth a living temple for the service of him, I do ask mercy of God for that I have not had due regard in the keeping of it as a clean vessel for the Holy Ghost, which mercy I firmly hope God will for his Son's sake, Jesus Christ, grant to me as he hath promised. And for the burial of my body, because before the time of the writing hereof I have already caused a place in St. Martin's church in Stamford Baron in the county of Northampton, wherein my house of Burghley is situated, to be made fit for a burial-place for the bodies of my grandfather, father and mother, and myself and others that may succeed me, I do desire my executors, or such as I shall in this my will name to take the charge of my burial, to cause my body to be buried there; otherwise I will it to be buried by their discretion, with the licence of the dean and chapter, in the

Collegiate Church of Westminster near where the bodies of my wife and my daughter of Oxford are buried. And I will, if my body shall be carried to be buried at Stamford Baron, that it be carried without any pomp to my house of Burghley in some couch covered with black, accompanied only with twelve persons and no more, whereof four to be gentlemen and the rest yeomen and grooms for avoiding of an unnecessary charge in a long carriage of a dead carcass, and that there be given forty shillings to every parish church for the poor where my corpse shall remain every night until it shall be brought to my house of Burghley, from whence it shall be decently carried to Saint Martin's church in Stamford. And yet in hope of assured resurrection, I will that such as I shall hereafter name shall bury it with convenient comeliness according to the degree of a Baron and a Lord of Parliament, and that the costs all manner of ways exceed not one thousand pounds, whereof one hundred pounds to be disposed at the time of the funeral to charitable uses, which thousand pounds shall be delivered by Thomas Bellot to such persons as my sons shall name and authorize, therewith to defray the charges. I desire to be buried by the direction of my two sons;

Item, for discharging of my debts that may be demanded of my executors, I do will and devise that [sic] to my executors my manor of Newton Kyme in the county of York, to be sold by them if otherwise the value of my goods will not suffice to the payment of my debts. And if the money thereof growing shall not satisfy the same, then to supply the want thereof, I will my said executors shall have and take the yearly profits of all my manors, lands, tenements & hereditaments in the parts of Lindsey and Holland in the county of Lincoln not being otherwise granted away from my heirs, to have and retain the same until by the yearly profits thereof my said debts shall be fully therewith satisfied, saving I will not that my executors shall by virtue of this devise make sale of any my great woods being above one and twenty years' growth within the said parts of Lindsey or Holland, for that I will the same great woods shall remain to my heirs. And yet I will that my said executors shall not by authority hereof receive from time to time any more than they shall by good proof show that the same is by them paid for any my debts;

Now for the disposition of all my leases, I do will and give unto my son Sir Robert Cecil all and every my leases and estate for years which I have, hold or ought to enjoy in the counties of Hertford, and Enfield in the county of Middlesex, or either of them, for and during all the years or interests therein mentioned or comprised if he do so long live, and also all the use of all other leases which any person or persons hath in trust or by mine appointment or nomination in the said counties of Hertford, or Enfield in Middlesex. And if there shall be any number of years remaining unexpired at the death of my said son, then I will the same shall remain to such persons as shall be owner by way of inheritance of my house of Theobalds in the county of Hertford during the terms in the said several leases thereof comprised;

And for my leases in the counties of Northampton, Lincoln and Rutland which shall remain in my possession (except such as shall be hereafter otherwise devised), I will the same shall remain to my son Thomas Cecil or to such of my heirs as shall be seised of any estate of inheritance or freehold of my house of Burghley in the county of Northampton during all the term of years therein comprised;

And I give to my sister Olive White all the interest that I have in lease and term of years of and in all that farm, lands, tenements and hereditaments in Woodhead and in the manor of Casterton and in the pastures of Pickworth in the county of Rutland for and during all the years yet to come in the same if she so long do live, and after her death I will that such of her children shall have the same as she shall nominate and appoint by her last will or otherwise;

And for my moveable goods, I will that all my plate usually used in the court, and all other my goods and chamber stuff usually there occupied at the court shall remain and be to my said son Sir Robert Cecil, to whom I give the same, and appoint him to be my executor for that legacy;

And so I give to my said son Sir Robert Cecil and to the Lady Bridget & Lady Susan Vere, the daughters of my deceased daughter the Lady Anne, Countess of Oxford, all my goods, money, plate and stuff that are or shall be remaining at my death within my bedchamber at Westminster and in my two closets and any chambers thereto adjoining and extending to the lodging of the said Robert Cecil at my dwelling-house called Cecil or Burghley House in Westminster, all which stuff, plate and money I will shall be divided by my servant Thomas Bellot and the Dean of Westminster equally into three parts betwixt my said son Robert Cecil and the said two Ladies, and that the same be delivered for the said two young Ladies by the order of my daughter, Countess of Derby, the Lady Denny, & my sister White, and my steward Thomas Bellot, or by any two of them, saving I will that the value of one thousand pounds shall be delivered to the Countess of Derby, and one other thousand pounds of the said plate and money shall be severed and delivered to my sons Sir Thomas and Sir Robert Cecil for the charges of my burial. But yet I do except out of this grant all the gold plate which shall be found in my said studies, which hereafter here in this will I will limit and dispose. And I will that no part of the said plate and money shall be moved, seized or valued but by my servant Thomas Bellot, to whom I commit the trust to deliver the same as here is limited. And touching my plate in my plate-house or in any other part of my said house called Burghley House saving my said bedchamber and the two closets thereto adjoining, I will the moiety of the same plate shall remain to my son Sir Thomas as a legacy to him with my house, with condition there shall be first taken out of all the whole quantity of my said plate-house the parcels hereafter named, and then my son Thomas Cecil to have the moiety of all the rest of that moiety, all which parcels my meaning is to be delivered to the same persons before my body shall be buried:

To my sister-in-law the Lady Russell in gilt plate the value of five hundred ounces;

To my sister Anne White, three hundred ounces;

To my sister Elizabeth Alington, two hundred ounces;

To my sister Margaret Smith, two hundred ounces;

To my nephew Robert Wingfield, three hundred ounces;

To my daughter-in-law the Lady Cecil, Sir Thomas Cecil's wife, three hundred ounces;

To William Cecil, eldest son of my son Sir Thomas Cecil, and to his wife, three hundred ounces;

To the Lord Ross, two hundred ounces;

To Lucy, the Lady St. John, two hundred ounces;

To William Paulet, the Lady St. John's son, two hundred ounces;

To Thomas Paulet, his brother, one hundred ounces;

To the Lady Denny, two hundred ounces;

To the youngest daughter of my son Sir Thomas Cecil, one hundred and fifty ounces;

To my sister-in-law the Lady Bacon, one hundred ounces;

To the Lady Reade, one hundred ounces;

To the Lady Hatton, two hundred ounces;

To my daughter Mistress Alington, one hundred ounces;

To William Cecil, son to Sir Robert Cecil, three hundred ounces;

To his sister Frances Cecil, two hundred ounces;

To every of the younger sons of my son Thomas Cecil, fifty ounces;

To my nephew Cecil Cave that serveth me, one hundred ounces;

To my niece Elizabeth Wolley, sixty ounces;

To Elizabeth Cecil, my god-daughter, daughter of William Cecil, one hundred ounces;

Item, I will that after the said several portions of plate before devised being chosen out and severed, all the rest of my plate at Westminster not before given or limited, and such as is before limited to persons that shall happen to die before me, shall be duly gathered, weighed and valued by order of my said servant Thomas Bellot with the assistance and in the presence of the Wardens of the Goldsmiths in London, and shall be divided into two equal parts, whereof I do give one half part as above is mentioned to my son Sir Thomas Cecil, my heir apparent. And further I will, and my meaning is, that the other moiety not

given to my son Thomas Cecil nor charged with the particular legacies above mentioned shall be divided into four equal parts, whereof I give to my son Sir Robert Cecil one fourth part, and to the Lady Elizabeth Vere, now Countess of Derby, one other fourth part, and to the Lady Bridget Vere one other fourth part, and to the Lady Susan Vere one other fourth part. And if any of the said three Ladies shall die before me, then I will that the survivors of them shall have the portions equally divided amongst them. And because there shall be no contention for the choice of any portion of my plate, saving for such as shall be known usually to be occupied in my chambers at the court or in my bedchambers and two studies above recited which before I had devised to my son Sir Robert Cecil and the two young Ladies, I will that either of my said two sons shall name two honest goldsmiths with the consent of the said Thomas Bellot to weigh & divide the same indifferently according to my true meaning herein expressed. And if they two and Thomas Bellot shall not agree, then the same to be done by the Master & Wardens of the Company of Goldsmiths in London or two of them to be required thereto by my steward Thomas Bellot being best acquainted therewith, they taking for their pains some piece of plate of the quantity of forty ounces;

Item, I give to my said son Sir Thomas Cecil all my household stuff and furniture of household in my said house called Burghley House in Westminster, excepting all such as is aforementioned and bequeathed, or that hereafter shall be given to any other;

Item, whereas I have divers chains with Georges of the Order hanging at them, and two great collars of the Order of the Garter, and sundry other small Georges, and also sundry garters both garnished with jewels and without, I do give to my said son Thomas Cecil my best greatest collar with the George thereto pendent, and the second great collar to my son Robert Cecil, and any other chain with a George and any one of my best garters, only to remain with him as a memory to him and his sons' sons of the honour I had to be one of the noble Order of the Garter. And my son Thomas to have all the rest belonging to the Order for a like memory with his sons' sons, and not for any ostentation;

Item, I give unto the Lady Bridget Vere and the Lady Susan Vere all manner of plate, stuff and furniture of household in the chambers, schoolhouses and nurseries where they do usually lodge or lie, both in my house at Westminster and at Theobalds, with all such plate as pots, bowls, plates, salt, linen, spoons and bedding and other utensils commonly occupied for their lodgings, dinners and suppers in the places commonly used by them privately for their dinners, suppers or diet in my absence, to be enjoyed by them for their use wheresoever they shall remain, the same to be chosen out for them by my sister White and Thomas Bellot;

Item, I will and give to my said son Sir Robert Cecil all my household stuff and furniture of household usually occupied at and about my house at Theobalds with the plate reserved only there for my private use at my access thither, saving such stuff as the young Ladies have had and used to have in their lodgings, and likewise excepting all linen chested by my wife to serve at any time of the Queen's access to my house, and also except all other plate there kept in store to serve for access of strangers to my house, of which legacy I appoint my said son my executor, all which plate besides the linen so

ched I do give to my two daughters the Lady Bridget and Lady Susan Vere, and for the linen so chested, I will that the same shall remain to my son Sir Robert Cecil, to be by him left to his daughter Frances Cecil;

Item, I do give to the two Ladies Bridget and Susan all manner of household stuff as shall be in my lodge at Cheshunt Park, and if the same shall not be furnished with household stuff at my death, then I give to them all such household stuff or the like as was occupied by them at Pimms, or as much to be taken out of my stuff at Theobalds, and for increase thereof to furnish the said lodge for them, I have caused my steward Thomas Bellot to make an inventory of all stuff necessary to be used for them in the lodge, which I do give to them, to be by him chosen out of my stuff before bequeathed to my son Sir Robert Cecil;

Item, I do also give to the two young Ladies, Lady Bridget and Lady Susan, the choice by them to be made with the advice of the Lady of Derby, their sister, or my sister White, their aunt, of any two beds or stuff for the same bedding with pallet thereto belonging, cupboard, carpet, stools and chairs that shall be in any chamber within my houses at Theobalds, saving and excepting such two chambers as my son Sir Robert Cecil shall require to be excepted, so as either of the said two Ladies may have a bed & bedstead fully furnished with a pallet and pillows and sheets thereto belonging, besides their own private beddings used by them in any of my houses;

Item, I give all my books in my upper library over my great chamber in my said house in Westminster to my son Sir Thomas Cecil, and namely all evidences and rolls belonging to my pedigrees, giving my son Robert Cecil the use of them for two or three months to take copies thereof for his information of the same. And as for all such books and writings saving evidences for lands as are or shall be at the time of my death in any of my bedchambers, pallet chambers, or chambers used for suitors to resort unto me or in my study over the porch, I give unto my said son Sir Robert Cecil with all my writings concerning the Queen's causes, either for her revenue or affairs of council or state, to be advisedly perused by him;

Furthermore, where there was an estate made in King Henry the Eighth's time by my good father Richard Cecil, esquire, to me and my second wife Mildred and to the heirs of our two bodies, of the manor and castle of Essendine in the county of Rutland, the remainder of the fee simple to me and my heirs, of which estate my son Sir Robert Cecil, being begotten by me on the body of my said second wife is heir apparent in tail special, which estate my desire hath always been to be preserved in him because it may remain as a place for him and the heirs of his body, or the heirs of the body of his sister the Countess of Oxford, to resort unto where my eldest son's livelihood doth lie, to confirm familiarity & acquaintance in blood betwixt them, I do by this my will not only ratify and affirm the said estate of the said castle and manor to my said son Robert and the heirs of his body, but do also by these presents give and devise the same to him and the heirs of his body, the remainder to the heirs of the body of my daughter the Lady Anne, Countess of Oxford, so as if any imperfection be in the grant of my said father or in any other conveyance to be made or suffered, my mind is that nothing shall impeach the said estate

so intended by my father. And furthermore, where there is joining and belonging to the said manor a large wood commonly called Essendine park which is esteemed to be situated for the greater part in the county of Lincoln, so as the same wood cannot pass as parcel of the manor of Essendine, being in the county of Rutland, without further express words declaring the same wood to be in the county of Lincoln, for good assurance to have the said wood or park to pass to my said son Sir Robert Cecil in like condition as the said manor of Essendine is, I do by this my will give and devise the said wood commonly called Essendine park with the soil and all manner grounds, lands and enclosures belonging to the same wood being in the county of Lincoln or Rutland to the said Robert Cecil and the heirs of his body, the remainder to the children of the said Countess of Oxford and the heirs of their bodies, and the remainder in fee simple to my right heirs;

Item, where I have at sundry times made conveyance of my lands in sundry counties of England limiting sundry estates to begin after my life, whereof many have been for my eldest son and heir apparent Sir Thomas Cecil and the heirs of his body or his heirs general, and some have been made for my son Sir Robert Cecil and the heirs of his body, many of which conveyances and their estates have been revoked and others newly made, my mind and will is, and so I do by this expressly declare that all such conveyances shall be taken for good by which I have limited any of my lands in the counties of Hertford and Essex and in the parishes of Enfield and Edmonton, and Tottenham in the county of Middlesex, for my son Sir Robert Cecil and the heirs of his body, with such remainders as are specified in certain indentures dated the sixteenth of June in the nine and twentieth year of the Queen's reign [=16 June 1587] and enrolled in the Chancery the first of November, and so I do by these presents give to him and the heirs of his body in tail all my said lands in the said counties and parishes next before mentioned;

And my meaning is that all other my lands in any other place in England (saving my lands in the counties of Hertford, or in Enfield and Edmonton & the manor of Essendine with the wood called Essendine park in the counties of Lincoln and Rutland afore limited to my son Sir Robert Cecil, and such other lands as I have purchased for the three young Ladies, daughters of the Countess of Oxford), shall remain and descend to my son Sir Thomas Cecil and the heirs of his body or his heirs general;

Wishing to both my said sons the grace and favour of God to live brotherly together without contention for any my goods and lands, but to be content with such limitations for my lands as in this clause presently I have declared my will, and with such bequests for my goods to every of them as I have also expressed in this my present will;

Item, I do give, devise and bequeath unto my said son Sir Robert Cecil during his life all and singular the deeds, evidences, court rolls, letters patents, escripts and muniments whatsoever touching and concerning only all and every my manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments in the counties of Middlesex and Hertford or in any of them (except all deeds, evidences and writings touching or concerning my capital or mansion house called Burghley House near the Savoy in Westminster and the tenements thereto adjoining both on the west and on the east side of my said house, and other my tenements, houses and hereditaments in the parishes of Saint Clement's, St. Martin's & Saint Margaret's and

Kentish Town in the county of Middlesex, and of all my tenements and houses situate in Paul Churchyard in London);

And after the decease of the said Sir Robert Cecil, then I do give, devise and bequeath the same deeds, evidences, court rolls, letters patents, escripts and muniments (except before excepted) unto such person and persons successively one after another to whom the inheritance of the said manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments shall belong or appertain by virtue of any assurance or conveyance thereof by me heretofore had, made or suffered, or to be had, made or suffered;

And further I do by these presents constitute and make my said son Robert Cecil my sole executor only for all such bonds, obligations, recognizances and statutes as do concern any the manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments in the counties of Middlesex, Hertford and the city of London, or any of them, limited to remain and come to him (except before excepted);

Item, I will that my executors shall within one month after my decease give to the collectors for the poor in the parishes of Saint Clement's, the Savoy, Saint Martin's in Westminster, and in the parishes of Cheshunt and Saint Martin's in Stamford, for every parish ten pounds;

And to the prison of the Gatehouse ten pounds, to be disposed by the Dean of Westminster and the keeper of the Gatehouse;

And to the prisoners in Newgate & Ludgate twenty marks betwixt them, to be disposed by the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London, or by any one of them;

Item, I do give to the two Ladies, Bridget and Susan, the choice of any of my coaches and of any two of my coach-horses with all furniture thereto belonging, and the choice of any four horses or geldings either in my stable or in any park or pasture;

And I do give to my son Sir Thomas Cecil the choice of any two of my stone horses, and my son Sir Robert Cecil the choice of any other two stoned horses next, and all the rest I will to be equally divided betwixt them, saving I do give to Thomas Bellot any two of my horses or geldings with his furniture, to be chosen next after the choice made for two for every of the Ladies Bridget and Susan;

Item, where my two servants, Henry Maynard and Walter Cope, & Mr Robert Carr are my tenants of several houses in Westminster whereupon they have bestowed much cost, I do will and grant to every of them an estate in the said houses for their several lives and for three years after their deaths, paying the present accustomed rents to my son Sir Thomas Cecil and his heirs;

And so I do will that all my servants that serve me in my houses at Westminster & Theobalds or at the court, and do receive yearly wages, shall have yearly paid to them their ordinary wages for the space of two whole years after my death at such times as

usually they were accustomed to receive the same, and if any of them shall upon request of any my sons or of the two young Ladies continue in service with any of them, I will that they shall have their usual wages yearly the space of four years if they shall so long continue in their service;

Item, I will that such as do serve me in my said houses and have received no wages and do lodge in my house shall have in reward for their services the whole furniture of their bedding wherein they did lie in any of my said houses, and the sum of forty shillings in gold, and every of them that have served as a gentleman to have also a piece of plate of the value betwixt three and four pounds;

Item, I will to every one of my servants attending on me in my bedchamber, besides their wages above limited, their said wages yearly for four years, and a piece of plate of the value of thirty ounces;

And I will to Humphrey Plessington twenty pounds;

To John Clapham, twenty pound;

To Thomas Lawrence, ten pounds;

To Sedam, five pounds;

Item, I will that my son Thomas Cecil shall not take full possession of my house here in Westminster during the space of six weeks after my decease, during which time I will that Thomas Bellot as my executor shall keep my household there with meat, drink and lodging for the Ladies as hath been used in my absence, within which time there may be order taken where the two Ladies shall remain, who shall have a revenue, part in Essex and part in Lincoln and Leicestershire, to maintain for their apparel and diet, and the two Pawlets to be delivered to their grandfather, Sir Thomas Cecil;

Item, I give to my sister Anne White, widow, twenty pounds by the year during her natural life, to be paid out of the rent of the farm of Nutting Barns in the county of Middlesex;

Item, I give unto my servant and steward of household Thomas Bellot twenty pounds by the year during his natural life, to be taken out of the rent of the said farm of Nutting Barns;

Item, I give unto my servant John Clapham the sum of six pounds, thirteen shillings, four pence by year during his natural life, to be paid him out of the yearly rent of the said farm of Nutting Barns, the said three several sums last recited to be paid unto the persons aforementioned half yearly by equal portions;

Item, where Thomas Bellot hath in his charge in my plate-house certain portions of money and some bonds for money to be paid to me, I do commit so much trust to him as

I will require him to make Doctor Goodman, Dean of Westminster, privy thereto, and I do make them two executors of this my will, and to dispose the same money to the advancement of the Lady Bridget and Lady Susan for their marriages, with these conditions, that which of them shall be married with an earl or the heir apparent of an earl shall have four thousand pounds, part of the money left with the said Thomas Bellot, and if they shall marry with a baron or the heir apparent of a baron, then but three thousand pounds, and if under that degree, then but two thousand pounds;

But my meaning is the said Thomas Bellot shall out of the said money now in his custody take allowance for all the charges laid out by him for my household charges and for my legacies to my servants, and the remainder being divided into two parts, I will that the one-half [+be given] to the Lady Elizabeth, Countess of Derby, and her two sisters, and the other moiety to be given to such godly uses as my executor shall think good;

I will that all my gold plate be duly weighed by order of Thomas Bellot and the Dean of Westminster, and that my two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir Robert Cecil, shall have the one-half thereof, and the other half to be given to my three daughters, the Countess of Derby, the Lady Bridget and Lady Susan, so as there be given to my sister White one piece of thirty or forty ounces;

Item, where I have committed special trust to Thomas Bellot and the Dean of Westminster, appointing them to be the executors of this my will, I do for their pains give to Thomas Bellot the yearly profit of my farm or manor of Nutting Barns, to hold the same during his life, paying out of the same such annuities as I shall by a codicil limit to my old servants;

And I give to the Dean of Westminster the yearly profits of all my lands belonging to the Neate near Westminster now occupied by him;

I will that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Keeper and Justice Owen shall be the overseers of this my will to assist my executors, and that every of them shall have a piece of gold plate to the weight of thirty ounces;

These papers I do affirm to contain my last will.

Signed: W. Burghley, William W[], Henry Maynard, George Coppin, John Clapham

Probatum fuit Testamentum suprascriptum apud Londonia coram venerabili viro Magistro Iohanne Gibson Legum Doctore Curie Prerogatiue Cantuariensis Magistro Custode siue Commissario legitime constituto Decimo tertio die mensis Novembris Anno domini Millesimo Quingentesimo Nonagesimo Octauo Iuramento venerabilis viri Magistri Gabrielis Goodman Decani Ecclesie Collegiate Westmonasterij et Thome Bellotte executorum in huiusmodi Testamento nominatorum Quibus Commissa fuit administratio omnium et singulorum bonoruu Iurium et creditorum dicti defuncti et huiusmodi testamentum quoad predictos executores qualicumque concernentem de bene et fideliter administrando eadem &c Ad sancta dei evangelia iurate examinatus

[=The above-written will was proved at London before the worshipful Master John Gibson, Doctor of the Laws, Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury lawfully constituted on the thirteenth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord one thousand five hundred ninety-eight by the oath of the worshipful Master Gabriel Goodman, Dean of the Collegiate Church of Westminster, and Thomas Bellot, executors nominated in such testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, property and credits of the said deceased and such testament, as far as whatsoever concerns(?) the foresaid executors, sworn on the sacred gospels to well and faithfully administer the same etc. Examined.