

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 23 April 1509, of Sir Robert Corbet, the son of Richard Corbet and Elizabeth Devereux, the daughter of Walter Devereux (1432-1485), 1st Lord Ferrers of Chartley, killed at the Battle of Bosworth. Elizabeth Devereux's nephew, Walter Devereux, 1st Viscount Hereford, was the great-grandfather of Queen's Elizabeth's favourite, Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex (1566-1601). The first of the trustees mentioned in the will, Sir Henry Vernon of Haddon (d.1511) was the father of Sir Robert Corbet's wife, Elizabeth; another trustee was Sir Henry Vernon's son and heir, Richard Vernon of Haddon (d.1517). Two other trustees were Sir Robert Corbet's brothers-in-law Thomas Lacon of Willey (the husband of his sister Mary Corbet) and Thomas Cornwall of Burford (1468-1538) (the husband of his sister Anne Corbet). George Onslowe was likely also a relative since Sir Robert Corbet's sister Katherine was the wife of Thomas Onslow of Rodington. Another of Sir Robert Corbet's sisters, Elizabeth, married Thomas Trentham of Shrewsbury; they were the great-grandparents of Oxford's second wife, Elizabeth Trentham. In this connection it is of interest that Sir Robert Corbet's sister, Mary, and her husband Thomas Lacon were the great-grandparents of Elizabeth Vernon, the wife of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. Their daughter, Mary Lacon, married George Vernon, the father of John Vernon (d.1592) of Hodnet, who in 1564 married Elizabeth Devereux (daughter of Sir Richard Devereux, and sister of Walter Devereux (d.1576), 2nd Viscount Hereford and 1st Earl of Essex); their daughter, Elizabeth Vernon, married Southampton. At the time of the making of the will, Sir Robert Corbet's three daughters Anne, Dorothy and Jane, were unmarried. Anne later married Thomas Newport of High Ercall; she and her husband were the parents of Sir Richard Newport (d.1570), the owner of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* in the British Library containing annotations thought to have been made by Shakespeare. The George Bromley appointed as one of Sir Robert Corbet's executors was likely the George Bromley of Hodnet who married Jane Lacon, the daughter of Mary Corbet and Thomas Lacon. George Bromley was also a first cousin of Margaret Bromley, who married Sir Richard Newport (d.1570), the owner of the annotated copy of Hall's *Chronicle*. George Bromley and Jane Lacon were the parents of Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas Bromley, who was a trustee of Oxford's indenture entered into on 30 January 1575 prior to his departure for his continental tour (see ERO D/DRg2/25). Unfortunately the surname of one of Sir Robert Corbet's executors is missing from the PCC copy of the will; it may have been Thomas Lacon. For the will of Sir Robert Corbet's son and heir, Roger Corbet, see PROB 11/27, f. 194.

LM: Testamentum domini Roberti Corbet Militis

In the name of God, Amen. Whereas I, Sir Robert Corbet, knight, have made a feoffment by deed unto Sir Henry Vernon, knight, Thomas Englefield, knight, Thomas Cornwall, knight, Thomas Lacon, esquire, Roger Corbet, my son and heir apparent, esquire, Richard Vernon, esquire, Roger Thornes, esquire and George Onslowe of all and singular my

lordships, manors, meses, lands and tenements, rents, reversions and fines and all other hereditaments with th' appurtenances in Hopton, Fitz, Eaton Constantine, Lawley, Waters Upton, Dallington, Linslade, Southcote(?), Howbridge Hill and Wigginton within the county of Salop, Northampton, Buckingham, Essex and Hertford, to have and to hold to them, their heirs and assigns, to the use of me, the foresaid Sir Robert, and of mine heirs, to fulfil my last will made or hereafter to be made, know ye, me, the said Sir Robert, whole of remembrance and perfect mind, thanked be God, make, ordain and declare my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First, I bequeath my soul to God Almighty and to his Blessed Mother, Saint Mary, and to all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the church of Saint Bartholomew at Moreton Corbet, if it please God I decease there, and if it happen me by the pleasure of God to decease in any other place, then I commit my body to be buried in such a holy place as mine executors think most meetliest and convenient;

Also I will that my said executors prepare and ordain for meat, drink, light and all other things necessary and belonging for me at the time of my burying as they think convenient and according after their discretion;

Item, I will that my said executors see my dirges and Masses be songen and said with secular priests, clerks and religious men at the same time as they shall think most expedient and profitable for my soul health;

Item, I will that my said executors cause my trentals and 30 Masses, every of them, to be songen and said with secular priests, clerks and religious men at the day of my said burying if they so may have priests to do it, and if they may not, then to see it be done as shortly after as they conveniently can have time;

Item, I will have that my said executors, in as short time as they can conveniently after my burying, prepare and ordain the Great Trental of Saint Gregory to be sung, said and done in due form and order as it ought to be for my soul and all Christian [+souls];

Item, I will that every secular priest, clerk and religious man be rewarded for their divine service saying and doing at the time of my said burying after the laudable custom thereto belonging and the discretion of my executors;

Item, I will that my said executors provide and hire two honest and conveniable priests, such as shall be of good name and fame, to song and say dirge Masses and other devout prayers by the space of 2 whole years next following the day of my said burying, to pray for my soul and all Christian souls in manner and form following, that is to say, every Monday during the said 2 years, every of them to say Masses of the Trinity, Dirge and Commendations; every Tuesday, Mass of the Holy Ghost and Our Lady[’s] Psalter; every Wednesday, Mass of Requiem, Dirge and Commendations; every Thursday, Mass of the 5 Wounds, 7 Psalms and Litany; every Friday, Mass of John(?), Dirge and

Commendations; every Saturday, Mass of Our Lady and Our Lady[']s] Psalter; and every of the said priests to have 8 marks for their hire or more after as they be hired;

Item, I bequeath to Roger, my son and heir, my best salt with the covering, my best piece of silver with the covering, my best goblet and half my spoons, and all the residue of my said plate I bequeath to Elizabeth, my wife, during her life, and after her decease to remain to Roger, my said son;

Item, I bequeath half my stuff of household and half my cattle to Roger, my said son, and the other half to Elizabeth, my wife;

Item, I will that my wearing gear and all other things not bequeathed stand at my pleasure till my departing to give, do with and bequeath where I or my executors shall think most best and convenient;

Item, I will that my said feoffees or the overlivers of them and their heirs shall stand and be seised of and in the said lordships, manors, meses, lands, tenements and all other hereditaments above-rehearsed to th' intent they shall suffer mine executors to take, receive and levy th' issues and profits of all the said lordships, manors, meses, lands and tenements and all other hereditaments with th' appurtenances and every parcel of them to pay my debts and all other things pertaining to my interment and soul health in manner and form abovesaid, and after that done, I will that my said executors with the yearly profits and issues aforesaid content, pay and bestow to and for the marriage of every of my daughters, that is to say, Anne, Dorothy and Jane, the sum of 100 marks and their arrayment, which sums, after my debts paid, shall be received to the use and form following, that is to say, that every of my said daughters shall have yearly a portion of the said issues and profits of the said lordships, manors, meses, lands and tenements with their appurtenances till her said sum and bequest be fully content and paid;

Also I will that my said daughters and every of them have sufficient finding of meat, drink and cloth convenient and meetly for them, over and beside their portion of 100 marks apiece and their arrayment abovesaid for their marriage, till they be married, and at such time as any of them shall be married, she that so shall be married shall have her portion if it be levied, or as much as is levied, and her arrayment, and no further finding, and that sum of her portion that is not paid at the time of her marriage to be paid in manner and form abovesaid;

Item, I will that my executors content and pay to and for the marriage of Margaret, my sister, the sum of 40 marks and her arrayment of the yearly issues and profits abovesaid, and her finding of meat, drink and arrayment till she be married upon the same issues and profits beside her said bequest;

Item, I will that my said feoffees or the overlivers of them, after my debts paid and my will and testament in everything accomplished and fulfilled, make an estate of all the said lordships, manors, meses, lands and tenements and all other hereditaments with th'

appurtenances abovesaid unto Roger Corbet, my son and heir, and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue, the remainder to my right heirs;

Item, I make and ordain Thomas Cornwall, knight, Thomas [], esquire, Elizabeth, my wife, George Bromley and George Onslowe my executors, and Henry Vernon, knight, and Richard Vernon, his son and heir, overseers;

In witness whereof to this my present will and testament I have put to my seal and sign manual the 23rd day of April in the year of our Lord God 1509, and of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 7th after the conquest of England the 24th.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum coram domino Apud Lambith xvj die Mensis Nouembris Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo terciodecimo habentis dum vixit et mortis suo tempore bona siue debita in diuersis Diocesis sive(?) provincijs Cantuariensis Iuramento Domine Elizabete Relicte et Executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominate in persona Willelmi Cromwell procuratoris sui in hac parte sufficienter et legitime constituti Ac approbatum et insinuatum Et commissa fuit Administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum et debitorum dicti defuncti prefate Executrici de bene et fideliter Administrando eadem Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c citra festum Natalis domini proximum futurum &c Necnon de plano et vero compoto &c Reddendo Ad sancta dei Euangelia Iurate Alijs Executoribus onus execucionis testamenti eiusdem expresse refutarunt

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord [+Archbishop?] at Lambeth on the 16th day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred thirteenth, having while he lived and at the time of his death goods or debts in divers dioceses or provinces of Canterbury, by the oath of Lady Elizabeth, relict and executrix appointed in the same testament, in the person of William Cromwell, her proctor sufficiently and lawfully constituted in that respect, and probated and registered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods and debts of the said deceased to the forenamed executrix, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and a full and true inventory etc. before the feast of the Birth of the Lord next to come etc., and also to render a plain and true account etc., the other executors having expressly refused the burden of the execution of the same testament.]