

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 18 January 1580, of Oxford's paternal uncle, Aubrey de Vere. The testator was the second son of John de Vere (1482-1540), 15th Earl of Oxford, and Elizabeth Trussell (b. 1496, d. in or before 1527). For the wills of the testator's eldest brother, John de Vere (1516-1562), 16th Earl of Oxford, see BL Stowe Charter 633/4 and TNA PROB 11/46, ff. 174v-6. For the will of the testator's brother, Robert de Vere (d.1598), see TNA PROB 11/91, f. 279. For the nuncupative will of the testator's youngest brother, Geoffrey de Vere (d.1572), see ERO D/DABW 38/187.

The testator married Margaret Spring, the daughter of John Spring of Lavenham, brother of the wealthy clothier, Thomas Spring (d.1523) of Lavenham. For the will of Thomas Spring (d.1523), see TNA PROB 11/21, ff. 83-4. It would appear from the will below that the testator's wife, Margaret (nee Spring) predeceased him.

According to the will of the testator's eldest brother, John de Vere (1516-1562), 16th Earl of Oxford, the testator had two sons and three daughters:

Item, I give and bequeath to the 2 sons of my brother, Aubrey Vere, that is to say, Hugh and John, to either of them twenty pounds, to be paid unto them by mine executors when they come to their several ages of 21 years, and I give and bequeath to Anne Vere, eldest daughter of my said brother, Aubrey, one hundred marks [=£66 13s 4d], and to either of his other daughters, Bridget and Jane, forty pounds to be paid to them at the several days of their marriages.

Through the marriage of the testator's elder son, Hugh Vere, to Eleanor Walsh, the testator and his wife were the grandparents of Robert de Vere (d.1632), 19th Earl of Oxford. See Anderson, Verily, *The De Veres of Castle Hedingham*, (Lavenham, Suffolk: Terence Dalton, 1993), p. 141.

Nothing further is known of the testator's second son, John.

The testator's eldest daughter, Anne (d.1617) married three times. Her first husband was Christopher Shernborne (d.1575) of Shernborne, Norfolk, by whom she had a son, Francis Shernborne. For the will of Christopher Shernborne (d.1575), see TNA PROB 11/57, f. 271. Her second husband was John Stubbe (d.1590), author of *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf* which criticized Queen Elizabeth's proposed marriage to the Duke of Alencon. For the publication of this tract, Stubbe lost his right hand on 3 November 1579, and was imprisoned until 1581. For the will of John Stubbe (d.1590), see TNA PROB 11/75, ff. 313-4. Her third husband was Anthony Stapley of Framfield, Sussex. For the will of Anne (nee Vere) Shernborne Stubbe Stapley (d.1617), see TNA PROB 11/129, f. 567.

The married name of the testator's daughter, Bridget, appears to have been Cracherode. In her will, Anne (nee Vere) Shernborne Stubbe Stapley (d.1617) leaves two furred gowns to 'my sister Cracherode', and bequests to her Cracherode nephews.

The testator's daughter, Jane, married Henry Hunt of Gosfield, Essex. Their eldest son, John Hunt, was considered by Oxford's second wife, Elizabeth Trentham, to be a bad influence on Oxford's son, Henry de Vere (1593–1625), 18th Earl of Oxford (see TNA SP 14/65, ff. 76-9).

The Latin probatum clause which follows the will below has not been transcribed.

LM: Alberij Veere

In the name of God, Amen. The 18th day of January Anno domini 1579 and in the 22nd year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France & Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc., I Alberie(?) Vere of Hedingham at Castle in the county of Essex, [] of London, esquire, being of good and perfect remembrance, thanks unto Almighty God, do ordain and make this my present testament concerning my last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First I bequeath my soul to the mercy of Almighty God, my body to be buried in the parish church of Hedingham at Castle aforesaid at the discretion of mine executor[s] hereunder named, whom I do ordain and make my well-beloved friends, Thomas Atkins(?), gentleman(?) and William Adams of Hedingham at Castle aforesaid to be executors of this my said testament;

And I do give and bequeath unto my said executors all my goods, debts, household stuff whatsoever to the intent that they shall therewithal pay and discharge all such debts as of right [I am indebted?] and do owe unto any person or persons, and after that my debts being paid and my funeral charges done, together with all such charges & expenses as there shall be charged as my executors, what(?) then shall remain I will [] shall be distributed to John, my son, & Bridget, my daughter, equally betwixt them, provided and it is my [] will & true meaning that mine executors shall in no wise be charged any further in paying of my debts than my goods which shall come to their hands shall extend unto;

In witness whereof I have unto this my present testament set my hand & seal in presence of Gyles Whitinge, George Warde, Robert Osborne & William Vigorus.