

SUMMARY: The document below is the last will and testament, dated 7 September 1619, of Oxford's sister-in-law, Lady Katherine Stanhope, to which she added a codicil on 7 April 1620. The will was probated 9 June 1621. Lady Katherine's husband, Sir John Stanhope, had died in 1611. At the time of the making of her will she had five sons (Sir John Stanhope of Elvaston (d.1638), married to Olave Beresford; William Stanhope; Thomas Stanhope; Francis Stanhope; and John Posthumous Stanhope) and five daughters (Cordelia, married to Sir Roger Aston of Cranford; Anne, married to Thomas Cockayne; Katherine Stanhope; Dorothy Stanhope; and Jane Stanhope). Also mentioned in the will is her stepson, Philip (1584-1656), Lord Stanhope, married to Katherine (d.1636), the daughter of Francis, Lord Hastings. Among many other bequests to relatives, Lady Katherine leaves a diamond ring to her nephew, Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, and a cloth of silver kirtle to her daughter Jane which had earlier been left to her in the will of her sister, Elizabeth (Trentham) de Vere, Countess of Oxford (see TNA PROB 11/121, ff. 74-5). She also bequeaths to a cousin, Michael Purfey, a book called *Scanderbeg* which may have a connection with the lost Elizabethan play *The History of George Scanderbeg*, known to have been performed by Oxford's playing company (see Gurr, Andrew, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies*, pp. 309-10). Lady Stanhope's first name is spelled 'Catherine' throughout the will and codicil, but she appears to have signed the will as 'Katherine', and the latter spelling has been used throughout this transcript for consistency with other wills mentioning her.

RM: Testamentum Domine Katherine Stanhope

In the name of God, Amen. The seventh day of September in the year of Our Lord God one thousand six hundred and nineteen, I, Lady Katherine Stanhope of Elvaston in the county of Derby, widow, late wife of Sir John Stanhope, late of Elvaston aforesaid, knight, deceased, being weak in body but, I praise Almighty God for it, of good and perfect memory, do ordain and make this my testament containing my last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First, I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, assuredly believing to be saved by the precious death and bloodshedding of Jesus Christ, my only Saviour and Redeemer, and my body to the earth from whence it came, and to be buried near unto my late good husband in the vault which I made in the chancel at Elvaston;

And as touching such worldly goods and possessions as God of his great goodness hath bestowed upon me, first I give and bequeath unto Sir John Stanhope, knight, my eldest son, one basin and ewer of silver, all my swans upon the rivers or elsewhere, and all my bedsteads, tables, cupboards, forms and benches in my house at Elvaston, all which said legacy my will is shall remain as heirlooms to the same house, and to his daughter Olive Stanhope forty shillings to buy her a pendent to hang in her ear;

Item, I give and bequeath unto John Posthumous Stanhope, my youngest son, all that my close or pasture or meadow-ground with th' appurtenances commonly called Humberholme or Humberholmes, to have and to hold to him or the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then to Francis Stanhope, my son, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then to Thomas Stanhope, my son, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then to William Stanhope, my son, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then to my said son, Sir John Stanhope, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue then to the right heirs of the said John Posthumous Stanhope forever;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son, William Stanhope, one hundred pounds of lawful money of England;

And to my son, the said John Posthumous Stanhope, six hundred pounds of the like lawful money of England to be put forth by my executors for his better preferment and maintenance within one year next after my death, and to be paid unto him within one month next after he shall accomplish the full age of twenty and one years, upon condition that he shall, upon the payment or tender thereof by my said executors or any of them, not only release, acquit, exonerate and discharge my executors hereafter named of and from all legacies, sum and sums of money, claims and demands whatsoever due or owing unto him, the said John Posthumous Stanhope, or that he may claim either of them or me by any ways or means whatsoever, either as executors of this my last will and testament or by reason of my being executor of the last will and testament of my said late dear husband, or otherwise, but also that he, the said John Posthumous Stanhope, shall release, acquit, exonerate and discharge Katherine Stanhope, Dorothy Stanhope and Jane Stanhope, his sisters, and Sir Thomas Delves, knight, and Walter Minors, esquire, and every of them, of and from all and all manner of actions, suits, accounts, debts, duties and demands whatsoever which he, the said John Posthumous Stanhope, may, might or ought to have, claim, challenge or demand of them or any of them, either by their or any of their being lessees of the right honourable Philip, Lord Stanhope, of the manor of Bingham and parsonage of Ratcliffe, or by being tenants or occupiers of the demesnes of Bingham and farms in Stoke, or of the demesnes of Weston & Aston;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son, Francis Stanhope, the sum of three hundred pounds of lawful money of England, to be put forth for his better preferment and maintenance within one year after my death, and to be paid unto him within one month next after he shall accomplish the full age of twenty and one years, upon the like condition that I give the former legacy unto his brother, John Posthumous Stanhope;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son, Thomas Stanhope, the sum of three hundred pounds of the like lawful English money, to be put forth and paid [-&] upon the like condition as aforesaid;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Jane Stanhope, the lease of Weston and Aston demesnes and all my interest and title therein until she have forth of the issues and

profits thereof, and of the third part wherein she herself is interested, raised, received and had the sum of one thousand pounds of lawful money of England, and when she, the said Jane, hath received forth of the same the sum of one thousand pounds, then I will, bequeath, give and devise the said lease of Weston and Aston demesnes and all the estate and term then to come and unexpired unto Francis Stanhope and John Posthumous Stanhope, my said sons, to be equally divided betwixt them;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my said daughter, Jane Stanhope, six hundred pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid unto her within six months after she shall accomplish the full age of twenty and one years, upon condition that she shall, upon the payment or tender thereof by my executors or any of them, not only release, acquit, exonerate and discharge them and every of them of and from all legacies, sum and sums of money, [LM: claims & demands] whatsoever due or owing unto her, the said Jane, or that she may claim either of them or me by any ways or means whatsoever, either as executors of this my last will or testament or by reason of my being executor of the last will and testament of my said dear husband or otherwise, but also that she, the said Jane, shall grant and release unto her two sisters, Katherine and Dorothy Stanhope, all the interest, title, claim, demand and estate which she, the said Jane, hath or shall, may, might or ought to have challenge, claim or demand of, in or to the demesnes of Bingham and farms in Stoke in the county of Nottingham or any of them, or any other leases, lands, tenements or hereditaments which were Thomas Wright's, esquire, in Bingham and Stoke aforesaid or either of them, and Happesford and Withybrook or either of them in the county of Warwick;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter, the Lady Cordell Aston, a gold ring of twenty shillings' price to wear for my sake;

And to my daughter, Anne Cockayne, my twenty-four pearls in my best bracelet, my tawny velvet gown and waistcoat, my crimson and white tuftaffeta petticoat and my caroché with it[s] furniture, and to Aston Cockayne, her eldest son, five pounds, and to her other six children, every one of them ten pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Katherine Stanhope, my agate chain strung with pearls and amintas, and my pearl bracelet strung with cornetions;

And to my daughter, Dorothy Stanhope, my diamond ring;

And to my daughter, Jane Stanhope, my border, my saddle and furniture, and all my apparel not by this my will disposed of;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my honourable good lord, the Earl of Oxenford, a diamond ring of twenty pounds' value, humbly entreating his Lordship to wear it for my sake;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my honourable good son, the Lord Stanhope of Shelford, a gold ring of twenty shillings' price;

And to my good uncle, Ralph Sneyd, esquire, one other gold ring of twenty shillings' price;

And to my good brothers, Francis Trentham and William Cooper, esquires, either of them a gold ring of twenty shillings' price, and also to my brother Trentham an armour which he hath of mine;

And to my cousins, Sir Richard Brooke and Sir Thomas Delves, knights, the Lady Burdett, Walter Minors, esquire, and Michael Purefey, gentleman, every one of them a gold ring of twenty shillings' price;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my good cousins and friends, Sir Richard Harpur, knight, and his good lady, Sir Thomas Trentham, knight, the Lady Rochelen, the Lady Scrymshaw, Ralph Sneyd, esquire, Edward Beresford, esquire, Thomas Cooper, esquire, John Bullocke, esquire, and his good wife, Mistress Lee, Mistress Oldfield, Mrs Elizabeth Cotton, Mrs Margaret Cotton, Mr Doctor Hunton, Mr Baptist Trott, Mr George Lacock, every one of them a gold ring of ten shillings' price to wear for my sake;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my good sister, Mistress Katherine Trentham, my new black stitched grogram gown and kirtle, and a ring of gold of twenty shillings' price;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my five nieces, my brother Cooper's daughters, every one of them five pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my good friend, Mr Timothy Levinge, five pounds, and to him and his wife, either of them a gold ring of ten shillings' price, and to his brother, Thomas Levinge, twenty pounds and a ten shillings' ring of gold, and a musket which I lent him, and to his good wife my wrought grogram gown and bodice and kirtle with aglets, and a ring of ten shillings' price, and to their daughter Katherine, my god-daughter, twenty pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my woman, Mrs Ellis, five pounds, and to my servant, William Osborne, five pounds, and to my old servant, Mrs Barbara Foster, five pounds, and to her husband twenty shillings, and to my godson, their son, twenty shillings;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my servant, Elizabeth Wilcox, twenty pounds, and to my servant Richard Gerard, forty shillings;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my servants Alice Gascoigne, Christian Bagaley, Anne Alred, Thomas Calver, John Bacon, Thomas Smedley, Richard Cooke and Richard Gardener, every one of them twenty shillings, and to my servant John Webster ten shillings, and to my good neighbours Mrs Richardson, Mrs Hall and Mrs Bentley, every one of them ten shillings, and to my tenant Richard Piggin 20s;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my said good cousin Mr Michael Purefey a book which I lent him called *Scanderbeg*;

And I do most earnestly entreat my said son, Sir John Stanhope, that he will have an especial care that this my last will and testament be in [-in] every respect duly performed, and all my debts and legacies well and truly satisfied and paid, and that if there be any want in my estate to perform this my last will and testament, or that Mr Thomas Wright fortune to depart this life before my daughter, Jane Stanhope, be fully satisfied and paid the sum of one thousand pounds forth of the issues and profits of the demesnes of Weston and Aston, then I do require and charge my said son, Sir John Stanhope, as well in part of performance of his father's letters written unto him, and in respect of the great charge I have been at in building for him, as also as he will show himself to have loved me, that he will supply the same wants forth of his own estate, as well to satisfy all my debts and legacies whatsoever as also to make up my daughter Jane the full sum of one thousand pounds over and above the sum of six hundred pounds hereby bequeathed unto her, if the said Thomas Wright shall fortune to die before the said sum of one thousand pounds be fully raised forth of the demesnes of Aston and Weston;

And I do earnestly desire and will that if my goods and personal estate will pay all my debts and legacies without the sale of my two jewels, that then the same two jewels might be and remain to my said two daughters, Dorothy and Jane, to whom in that case I give and bequeath the same, viz., the feather jewel to Dorothy;

And I do hereby revoke all former wills by me made, and I do ordain and make my two loving sons, Sir John Stanhope, knight, and William Stanhope, my good cousin, Sir Thomas Delves, knight, and the said Thomas Levinge executors of this my last will and testament, trusting they will, according to the special [-to the special] trust I repose in them, see the same will performed in all things, and all my debts and legacies well and truly paid and discharged;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor of the parish of Elvaston ten pounds;

And my will is that no legacy hereby given to my daughter Jane shall be delivered unto her until she have performed the condition mentioned in this will, but only that she shall have fitting maintenance forth of the use of the six hundred pounds hereby bequeathed, and the issues and profits of Weston and Aston demesnes as they shall be raised my will is shall be received by my said executors, and put forth to use for her, and not paid unto her until that time;

Provided always nevertheless, and my will, intent and true meaning is that if my said son, Sir John Stanhope, do well and truly pay or cause to be paid to my said other executors or the survivors or survivor of them within two years next after my decease the whole and entire sum of three hundred and fifty pounds of lawful money of England to and for the use of my said son, John Posthumous Stanhope, that then my gift and bequest unto him, the said John Posthumous Stanhope, and all other my said sons in remainder in tail of that the said close or pasture or meadow-ground with th' appurtenances called Homberholme or Homberholmes shall cease, determine and be utterly void, and then and

in that case I give and bequeath the said ground called Homberholme to my said son, Sir John Stanhope, and his heirs forever;

And my will is that the said sum of three hundred and fifty pounds and also the sum of six hundred pounds which I formerly give and bequeath unto my said son, John Posthumous Stanhope, shall be put forth by my executors to the best profit, and that the said John Posthumous Stanhope shall have fitting maintenance forth of the same, and whensoever the said sums of three hundred and fifty pounds and six hundred pounds with the increase (his maintenance deducted) shall amount to twelve hundred pounds, then my will is that the same twelve hundred pounds shall be bestowed by my said executors or the survivors of them upon land to be conveyed to the said John Posthumous Stanhope and the heirs males of his body with such remainders over as I have formerly given and bequeathed Humberholme unto him, so as the said John Posthumous Stanhope perform the conditions formerly appointed him by this my will;

And whereas I give and bequeath unto my two sons, Thomas and Francis Stanhope, either of them three hundred pounds to be put forth for their benefit and to be paid them at their several ages of twenty and one years, now my will is that the same moneys shall be bestowed upon lands for my said sons to be conveyed unto them and their heirs, either of them their proportionable part, so as they and either of them perform the conditions on their parts that they and my said son, John Posthumous Stanhope, are formerly by this my will appointed to perform;

Item, I give and bequeath to my servant, William Breereley, ten shillings, and to my good friends, Mr Mason and his wife, either of them a ring of gold of ten shillings' price;

In witness whereof I have published this as my last will and testament in the presence of Michael Purefey, Timothy Levinge, Thomas Levinge, William Osborne, Nathaniel Hassard.

Katherine Stanhope

[CODICIL]

And whereas I have by my last will bequeathed and given unto my daughter Jane all my apparel not bequeathed, I now hereby revoke, frustrate and make void the said legacy, and do hereby give and bequeath unto my said daughter Jane my tawny taffeta gown and waistcoat and kirtle, my cloth of silver kirtle that was my Lady of Oxford's, my jewel with one opal and the two rings tied to it, my two Holland bone-laced aprons, my loom-work apron, my two silk calico-lawn aprons with two pieces of new Holland, my gold bodice wrought with coloured silk and gold and a coif and head-cloth of the same, my best beaver hat with two bands and two feathers to it, my tawny fan, my rose-coloured petticoat with two whole breadths of stuff which John Bacon hath, all the short velvet cloaks that were father's, the one half of all my childbed linens and of the black wrought

pillow-beres and cut-work cushion-cloth, a pair of pillow-beres wrought with coloured silk, my rose-coloured and white gown of wrought velvet, my little cabinet, my cloth of silver and russet stuff which John Bacon hath, and my two new black wrought waistcoats;

And I do hereby commend and commit my said daughter Jane and all the several legacies bequeathed unto her either by my last will or this codicil to the care and government of my daughter Cockayne, who I doubt not but will have an especial care, respect and regard unto her and the using of the several legacies for her best profit, use and behoof, and I do charge my said daughter Jane that she shall be ruled, advised and directed by her said sister;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my dear and well beloved son, Sir John Stanhope, knight, my seal of gold, entreating him to wear it for my sake;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my honourable good lady, the Countess of Huntingdon, a diamond ring of five pounds' value, and unto my honourable good friend, the Lady Kitson, one other diamond ring of three pounds' value;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Cockayne a coif and cross-cloth wrought with black silk and gold with bone-lace to edge it which she gave me to my New-year's gift, with one other coif and head-cloth wrought satin stitch with coloured silk which my daughter Aston gave me, my best cut-work apron, my scarlet petticoat, my best black fan and feather, and my two cabinets for strong waters;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Katherine my white wrought silver velvet kirtle with the black silk and silver lace which John Bacon hath, my fair cabinet that my daughter Aston gave me, and my pot of gold that was her father's with his arms upon it, to keep for her father's sake and mine;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Dorothy my little clock, my velvet saddle-covering, my Holland apron with network needlework straps, my loom-work apron seamed with bone-lace, my gold coif and cross-cloth wrought with coloured silk that my cousin Barbara gave me, and my waistcoat wrought with coloured silk and mistletoe, my new cobweb lawn ruff, the other half of all my childbed linens and of my black work pillow-beres and cut-work cushion-cloth, and my cabinet covered with black velure;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Aston my jewel which my Lady Bartlett [=Berkeley], my good deceased aunt, gave me, and I do revoke the legacy given her by my will;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son, Francis, a twenty-two shillings' piece his father gave me for him to keep for his father' sake and mine, and my will is that he shall have the jewel my Lord of Dorset gave him;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son, John Posthumous Stanhope, my little(?) ring that his father wore at his death, and an eleven shillings piece to put into something to wear for his father's sake and mine;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my good sister Trentham my black gold camlet bodice and kirtle;

And to my worthy friends Sir John Higham, Sir William Harvey, the Lady Jermyn, the Lady Crofts, the Lady Cope, the Lady Smith, the Lady Poley, the Lady Harvey, the Lady Sare, Mrs Colt, Mrs Lamb, Mr Despedyne and his wife, and my cousin Zouch and his wife, every one of them a gold ring of ten shillings' price, which my hope is they will be pleased to accept of as a token of my love;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my servant, Alice Gascoigne, twenty shillings over and above the legacy given her by my will, and I do revoke the legacy given by my will unto my late servant, Thomas Calver, and I do give and bequeath unto my servant Richard Gerard three pounds over and above the legacy of forty shillings given them by my will;

Item, I give to the poor of Bury five marks;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sons, William and Thomas Stanhope, either of them five pounds to bestow of something to keep for my sake;

And whereas I have bequeathed unto my daughter Jane my lease of Weston and Aston and all my interest therein until she have, out of the issues and profits thereof and of the third part wherein she herself is interested, raised, received and had the sum of one thousand pounds, and then to my sons, Francis and John Posthumous Stanhope, for the rest of the term, now my will, intent and true meaning is, and I do hereby give full power and authority to the executors of my last will and testament to sell, assign and convey the said lease of Weston and Aston demesnes and all the interest and title therein to any person or persons that they shall think fit, & to pay unto my said daughter Jane the sum of one thousand pounds, so as she convey her interest in the third part to them or when [sic?] they shall appoint, and the surplusage whatsoever shall remain, my will is my said two sons, Francis and John Posthumous Stanhope, shall have;

This codicil was published by the Lady Katherine Stanhope and appointed by her to be annexed unto her will this seventh day of April 1620 in the presence of Dorothy Stanhope, Jane Stanhope, Thomas Levinge, Katherine Stanhope.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum vna cum Codicillo annexo apud London coram magistro Edmundo Pope legum doctore Surrogato venerabilis viri Domini Iohannis Bennett militis legum etiam doctoris Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis magistri Custodis sive Commissarij legitime Constituti Nono die mensis Iunij Anno Domini Millesimo sexcentesimo vicesimo primo Iuramento Willelmi Stanhope filij naturalis et legitimi dicte

defuncte et vnius executorum in eodem testamento nominati Cui Commissa fuit administratio bonorum iurium et creditorum dicte defuncte De bene et fideliter administrando &c Ad sancta Dei Evangelia Iurati Reservata potestate similem Commissionem faciendo Iohanni Stanhope militi Thome Delves militi et Thome Leving executoribus in huiusmodi testamento nominatibus eandem cum venerint petituri in debita Iuris forma admissuri examinatus

[=The above-written testament was proved, together with the codicil annexed, at London before Master Edmund Pope, Doctor of the Laws, surrogate of the worshipful Sir John Bennett, knight, also Doctor of the Laws, Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury lawfully constituted, on the ninth day of the month of June in the year of the Lord the thousand six hundred twenty-first by the oath of William Stanhope, natural and legitimate son of the said deceased, and one of the executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer etc., with power reserved for a similar commission to be made to John Stanhope, knight, Thomas Delves, knight, and Thomas Levinge, executors named in the same testament, when they shall have come to petition in due form of law to be admitted to the same. Examined.]