

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 22 January 1529 and proved 10 February 1535, of Sir Richard Knightley (d. 8 December 1534) of Fawsley, Northamptonshire.

The testator married Joan or Jane Skennard, the daughter and heir of Henry Skennard or Skynnerton of Alderton, Northamptonshire.

In the will below the testator names his wife, Jane, and four sons, Richard, Edmund, Valentine and John.

For the testator's eldest son, Richard Knightley (d. 30 March 1538), who married Jane Spencer, see his will dated 29 March 1537 and proved 14 July 1540, TNA PROB 11/28/156.

The testator's son, Sir Edmund Knightley (by 1491 – 12 September 1542), married Ursula de Vere (d.1558), daughter of Sir George Vere (d.1503) and his wife, Margaret Stafford, and sister and co-heir of John de Vere (1499-1526), 14th Earl of Oxford. Ursula de Vere's first husband was George Windsor, eldest son and heir apparent of Andrew Windsor (1467 - 30 March 1543), 1st Lord Windsor. George Windsor predeceased his father, dying before 1520. Edmund Knightley had no surviving issue, and his heirs were the daughters of his elder brother, Richard Knightley (d. 30 March 1538). For the will of Ursula (nee de Vere) Windsor Knightley, dated 20 January 1558 and proved 29 November 1558, see TNA PROB 11/42A/10. For the will of her father-in-law by her first marriage, Andrew Windsor, 1st Lord Windsor, dated 16 March 1543 and proved 31 July 1543, see TNA PROB 11/29/416.

By his marriage to Ursula de Vere, Sir Edmund Knightley was the brother-in-law of Sir Anthony Wingfield (b. before 1488, d. 1552) of Letheringham, who married Elizabeth Vere (d.1557), eldest daughter of Sir George Vere (d.1502/3) and sister of John de Vere (1499-1527), 14th Earl of Oxford. For the will of Sir Anthony Wingfield, dated 13 August 1552 and proved 26 April 1553, see TNA PROB 11/36/112.

For Sir Edmund Knightley, see also the History of Parliament entry at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/knightley-edmund-1491-1542>.

For the testator's son, Sir Valentine Knightley, see his will, dated 26 December 1564 and proved 23 October 1566, TNA PROB 11/48/595.

The testator's son, John Knightley, was rector of Byfield and Dean of the Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick. See 'The Knightleys of Fawsley', *The Ancestor*, No. II, July 1902, pp. 1-13 at p. 10:

<https://archive.org/stream/ancestorquarterl02londonoft#page/10/mode/2up>.

Although she is not mentioned in the will below, the testator also had a daughter, Susan Knightley, who married Sir William Spencer (d.1532). See:

<http://www.kateemersonhistoricals.com/TudorWomenK.htm>

SUSAN KNIGHTLEY (d.1549+)

Susan Knightley was the daughter of Sir Richard Knightley of Fawsley, Northamptonshire (c.1500-December 8, 1534) and Jane Skennard (d.1550). She married Sir William Spencer of Althorp, Northamptonshire and Wormleighton, Warwickshire (d. June 22, 1532) and was the mother of Sir John (1524-1586), Isabel (d.1538), Jane (d.1593), Dorothy (d.1575), Anne, and Mary. Her brothers Richard and Edmund quarreled with her husband and, after an alleged assault on them by Sir William in 1529, as they were leaving the Horse's Head in Cheapside, the case went to the Star Chamber. After Spencer died, however, they supported their sister's effort to withhold her son's wardship from the crown and defraud the trustees of the estate of certain movables. Susan claimed that her husband had been deeply in debt at his death, although the estate was valued at £454 a year when her son reached his majority, and that she and her children were destitute. Edmund Knightley was charged with fraud and was briefly imprisoned in the Fleet in September 1532. It was December 1539, however, before the wardship was granted to Sir Giles Alington.

For the will of Sir William Spencer, dated 17 June 1532 and proved 8 July 1532, see TNA PROB 11/24/12.

RM: Tes{tamen}t{u}m Ricardi Knyghtley Milit{is}

[f. 163r] In the name of God, Amen. I, Richard Knightley, knight, being in good health and perfect mind, not grieved, vexed, troubled nor diseased with any bodily sickness, knowing and considering well the uncertainty and unstableness of this wretched life and that there is nothing so uncertain [sic?] as to any creature in the world living as is the departure from the same, and doubtless nothing so uncertain as the time and hour thereof, ordain and make this present will and testament the 22nd day of January in the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred twenty and eight and in the 19th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8th, in manner and form following, videlicet:

First I give and bequeath my soul to the infinite mercy of Almighty God, Maker and Redeemer thereof, to the most blessed and glorious Virgin, Our Lady Saint Mary, Saint John, Saint John the Evangelist, and all the holy company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the chancel of Fawsley before the image of Our Blessed Lady according to my degree and as it shall be thought convenient by the discretion of mine executors;

And I renounce and revoke by this my present testament and last will all other former wills, testaments and legacies by me made before the date foresaid;

Furtherly, that all my debts sufficiently proved to be due by any writing or otherwise and by me owing to any person be truly and duly content and paid;

And in like wise I will that unto all persons duly and sufficiently proving that I have injured them, wronged or taken any goods of them against right and good conscience be made recompense and restitution as far as my goods may extend or else as mine executors may entreat them for the discharge of my conscience;

Item, I will and require mine executors that they as hastily as they can after my departure shall cause as many Masses of Requiem to be said and sung for my soul and all Christian souls after the order of Saint Gregory's trentals in the parish church of Fawsley as shall be thought requisite by the discretion of mine executors, every priest taking for his labour 8d and every clerk 2d;

Item, I will that mine executors cause a trental of Masses to be said and sung for my soul and all Christian souls at my month's mind in Fawsley aforesaid, and another at my year's mind by the most virtuous priests that they can provide, as well men of religion as other, and for every of the said trentals I bequeath 20s;

Item, as to all other ceremonies of my funerals, burial, month's mind and year's mind to distribute in doles and other deeds of charity I remit to the order and discretion of mine executors;

Item, to every of the four orders of friars in Northampton 20s, for the which I will that every of the said 4 orders cause to be said and sung with convenient speed for my soul one trental after the rate(?) of Saint Gregory's trentals;

Item, I will that mine executors as soon as they may after my departure do find a secular priest to sing and pray for my soul, the souls of my father, my mother, my wife's soul after her departure, my children, my brethren, my sisters, my ancestors, my godfathers, my godmother's soul in the parish church of Fawsley for term of twenty years next after my departure;

Item, I will that the said priest have yearly for his wages and salary ten marks, and that the said priest shall during the said time teach children their plainsong after the number and rate as mine executors shall think meet & convenient without anything taking of the said children or of their friends for their teaching;

Item, to the high altar of Litchborough, Stowe, Weedon, Norton, Alcetre(?), Braunston, Byfield, Woodford, Catesby, Hellidon, Charwelton, Preston, Farthingstone and Plumpton and to every of them to th' intent God's service may be the better maintained there one vestment price of 20s, or else 20s to every one of the said churches to buy them with;

Item, my household be kept for one year next after my departure in like manner and form as I should have done myself if I had lived, and that my servants have like wages for that year as they had before the year past;

Item, if any of my servants will depart within the said year, then I will that he have a quarter wages over and besides his wages to him due;

Item, I will that the profits of all my lands and tenements go to the performance of this my last will and testament;

Item, after my will performed, I will that Jane, my well-beloved wife, have all my lands and tenements, rents, reversions, services and hereditaments in Fawsley, Charwelton and Snotescombe in the county of Northampton for term of her life as long as she shall live sole and not marry in recompense of all such title of dower and jointure as to her doth or might appertain or belong of my other lands and tenements within the realm of England, and that all and singular person or persons that now stand and be seised of the said manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments in Fawsley, Snotescombe and Charwelton aforesaid shall from henceforth stand and be seised thereof to the use and performance of this my last will & testament, and after to the use of my said wife as long as she shall live sole and not marry as is abovesaid;

And after her decease and my will performed, I will that all and singular the said manors, lands, tenements & hereditaments in Fawsley, Charwelton and Snotescombe aforesaid shall immediately after my decease, my will performed, and after the death of my said wife, remain to my said son, Richard, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And after the decease of my said son, Richard, and th' heirs males of his body, the remainder of all and singular the said manors, lands and tenements to my son, Edmund, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And after the decease of my son Richard and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and after the decease of my son, Edmund, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, I will that all and singular the said manors, lands and tenements shall remain to my son, Valentine, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten according to certain covenants, grants and agreements made between the right honourable Earl of Oxford and Sir Andrew Windsor, knight, of the one party, and me, the said Sir Richard, Dame Jane, my wife, and my said son, Richard, of the other party, all which covenants, grants and agreements contained in the said indentures I do ratify and confirm by this my last will and testaments [sic?], and that every article, grant and agreement contained in the said indentures be taken as part of my said last will and testament;

Item, [f. 163v] I will that if my wife do not occupy the said manors, lands or tenements in her own hand, but be minded to set or let the same, then I will that my son, Richard, have the preferment of the said lease or farm thereof, paying as another person will pay or giving as much as the said manors, lands and tenements be worth, provided alway that

my said wife be not compelled to make any such lease, but only at her pleasure, so that the meaning of this article is only that my son, Richard, shall have the preferment of the occupation, farm or lease before any other person;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son, Valentine, lands and tenements to the yearly value of forty pounds of my purchased lands which I purchased sith the marriage of my son, Edmund, that is to say, all my lands and tenements in Greneborowe, Wolscote, Walcote and Willoughby in the county of Warwick which by estimation be of the yearly value of £24; my lands and tenements in Watford in the county of Northampton now in the tenure of one John Francis by the year 17s 4d; my lands and tenements in Morcote now in the tenure of Nicolas Wylles to the yearly value of 11s; my lands and tenements in Norton, that is to say, the lands and tenements that one Sympson(?) Burden occupieth there to the yearly value of 9s 6d; my lands and tenements purchased of Clerk to the yearly value of £3 6s 8d; my lands and tenements purchased of one Thomas Knight by the year 10s; item, my lands and tenements in the occupation of John Coke called York's house by the year 13s 4d; item, the Crosse house by the year 10s; William Stone's house by year 2s; item, William Reynolde, 14d; my lands and tenements in Drayton now in the tenure of More the butcher to the yearly value of 27s; my lands and tenements in Daventry lately purchased of one Folk Barker called Barker's lands to the yearly value of £3; my lands and tenements in Helmeden(?) now in the tenure of one Brokes to the yearly value of 24s; item, Davyes' land in Stareton 20d; item, Nicoll Russhealles' house, Startton, Dotsford and Badby to the value of 28s 6d; summa of all the said lands and tenements by year £40 and odd money;

To have and to hold all the said lands, tenements and hereditaments to my said son, Valentine, and to th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue I will that all the said lands, tenements and hereditaments remain to my son, Richard, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue I will that all the said lands and tenements remain to my son, Edmund, and to th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the remainder thereof to me and to my right heirs;

Provided alway that it shall be leeful to my son, Valentine, and to his heirs males to make his wife or wives a jointure of all and singular the said lands, tenements and hereditaments to have to her for term of her life, and so in like manner it shall be leeful to every of my sons, Richard and Edmund, and to their heirs males of their bodies to make their said wife or wives a jointure of the said lands and tenements to have to her during her life if in case the said lands and tenements should come to their hands for lack of such issue male, as God defend;

Also I will that mine issue male in whom mine heritance shall rest shall pay or cause to be paid to every one of the daughters of my sons, Richard and Edmund and Valentine, of their bodies lawfully begotten which at that time shall be unpreferred or married, to every one of them a hundred marks of lawful money of England;

Item, I will that all and singular my feoffees and recoverers of all and singular the residue of my said lands and tenements immediately after my decease shall stand and be seised thereof to the use of my son, Richard, and th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue all the said residue shall come to my son, Edmund, and to th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for lack of such issue the remainder thereof to my son, Valentine, and to th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, the remainder over to th' heirs males of the body of me, the said Sir Richard;

Item, I will that if my said lands and tenements now appointed or willed to my said wife and to my said son, Richard, come to my said son, Valentine, or to his issue male by reason of the said remainder as otherwise by descent, then I will that my son, John, yearly during his life have a[n] annuity or pension of forty pounds to be paid out of the said lands and tenements and of the issues and profits of the same;

Item, I will and charge my said wife and every one of my sons that they within 6 months next after my decease by their deeds indented sufficient in the law do release and confirm with warrant the state and possession of the said Sir Andrew and other co-recoverers or co-feoffees of and in all such manors, lands, tenements, rents, reversions and services as they have recovered against me and my wife or be enfeoffed of by me or by any other person by mine assent, to have to them and to their heirs to the uses and intents specified in the said indentures and to the use of this my present last will and testament;

Also I will that my said wife and all and every one of my sons at all times after my departure shall further do for the further surety of the said Sir Andrew and the other recoverers or co-feoffees and their heirs of and in all and singular such manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments which I or they or any other person to my use is seised of within [+the?] realm of England as shall be at all times devised by the said Sir Andrew, the other recoverers or feoffees or any of them, their heirs, or his or their learned counsel;

And in case my said sons or any of them do not perform this my last will and testament on his or their part to be performed, fulfilled and kept as above specified, then I will that he or they so refusing or breaking my said will nor yet their children take none advantage of this my last will and testament;

Item, I will that all my goods and chattels shall go to the performance of this my last will and testament, provided alway that my stock of sheep be not sold for the same, but that they be occupied with my lands as I do now occupy them, the revenues whereof with th' issues and profits of my land I will shall go to the performance of this my last will and testament as is abovesaid;

And after my will performed, my wife to take the occupation thereof during her life to her own advantage;

And after her decease my said stock or the increase of them to remain to my said son, Richard, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten;

And for lack of such issue to remain to the heirs males [f. 164r] of my body lawfully begotten in like manner and form and with like advantage as mine executors doth receive them after my decease;

Item, where I have purchased certain lands and tenements in Everton and Snotescombe in the county of Northampton, which lands and tenements had been right meet and convenient for my son, Edmund, because they were my purchased lands, but only because the said lands and tenements lie and be so near my manor of Fawsley and lie very commodiously and profitable for my son, Richard, and his heirs males, wherefore it was thought right convenient to settle my said son, Edmund, further off, whereupon my said son, Edmund, and Ursula, his wife, be made sure of the manors of Stoke Bruerne, Alderton and Schitlanger within the county of Northampton, parcel of my wife's inheritance, to have and to hold to them and to th' heirs males of the body of my said son, Edmund, lawfully begotten, my will and mind is that if the said manor of Stoke Bruerne, Alderton and Shitlanger or any part or parcel of them be lawfully taken from the possession of my said son and Ursula, his wife, or from the possession of his heirs males of his body lawfully begotten or from the possession of such persons as be or shall be seised thereof to his or their use by action, entry lawful or otherwise, then I will that my son, Edmund, and Ursula and his heirs males have as much of my lands and tenements in Snotescombe and Everton as shall amount to the clear yearly value of the said lands and tenements so recovered, evicted or taken from his or their possession, them to enjoy to him and to th' heirs males of his body lawfully begotten in recompense of the said lands and tenements so recovered, evicted or taken away, anything contained in my said will to the contrary notwithstanding;

Item, I give and bequeath to my son John, convenient apparel once over(?) as shall be thought convenient by my said wife, to th' intent he shall have me in his daily and continual prayer and remembrance, or else ten pounds to buy it with by the oversight of mine executors;

Item, of this my present last will and testament I ordain and make my well-beloved wife, Jane, my sole executrice, and after her decease I ordain and make my son, Richard, sole executor of this my last will and testament. Per me, Ric{hardu}m Knightley. Test{e} Ricardo Humfrey, Will{el}mo Chapleyn, cl{er}ico, Antonio Vernon, Roberto Richards et multis alijs.

Probatum fuit test{amentu}m prescripti defuncti Coram D{omi}no apud Lamethith xo die mens{is} ffebr{uarij} Anno D{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingen{tesimo} xxxiiiio Iurament{o} Antonij Vernon & Rob{er}ti Richard{es} test{amentu}m [sic?] executor{um} ac D{omi}ne Jane Relicte & executricis in h{uius}mo{di} test{ament}o no{m}i{n}at{e} Ac approbatum &c Et com{m}issa fuit admi{nistrac{i}o o{mn}i{u}m & sing{u}lor{um} bonoru{m} Iuriu{m} & creditor{um} d{ic}t{i} defunct{i} prefat{e} executrici De b{e}n{e} & fidel{ite}r admi{nistrand{o} Ac de pleno & fideli In{uenta}rio s{e}c{un}do die post festum Inuenc{ionis} s{an}c{t}e Crucis prox{imum}

futur{um} exhibend{o} Necnon de plano & vero compoto reddend{o} Ad s{an}c{t}a dei
Eu{a}n gelia In p{er}sona mag{ist}ri Thome Stacy procur{atoris} sui Iurat{e}

[=The testament of the fore-written deceased was proved before the Lord at Lambeth on the 10th day of the month of February in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 34th by the oath of Anthony Vernon & Robert Richards, witnesses to the testament(?), and Dame Jane, relict & executrix named in the same testament, and probated etc., and administration was granted of all & singular the goods, rights & credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executrix, sworn on the Holy Gospels in the person of Master Thomas Stacy, her proctor, to well & faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full & faithful inventory on the second day after the feast of Invention of the Holy Cross next to come, and also to render a plain and true account.]