

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 27 November 1538 and proved 1 February 1539, of Roger Corbet (1501/2 – 20 December 1538), ward of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford, and uncle of Sir Richard Newport (d. 12 September 1570), the owner of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* containing annotations thought to have been made by Shakespeare. The volume was Loan 61 in the British Library until 2007, was subsequently on loan to Lancaster University Library until 2010, and is now in the hands of a trustee, Lady Hesketh. According to the Wikipedia entry for Sir Richard Newport, the annotated Hall's *Chronicle* is now at Eton College, Windsor. See:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Newport_\(died_1570\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Newport_(died_1570))

Newport's copy of his chronicle, containing annotations sometimes attributed to William Shakespeare, is now in the Library at Eton College, Windsor.

For the annotated Hall's *Chronicle*, see also the will of Sir Richard Newport (d. 12 September 1570), TNA PROB 11/53/456; Keen, Alan and Roger Lubbock, *The Annotator*, (London: Putnam, 1954); and the Annotator page on this website:

<http://www.oxford-shakespeare.com/annotator.html>

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the testator's family background, see the pedigree of Corbet in Burke, John, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. III, (London: Henry Colburn, 1836), pp. 189-90 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/genealogicalhera03burk#page/188/mode/2up>

See also the pedigree of Corbet in Grazebrook, George, and John Paul Rylands, eds., *The Visitation of Shropshire Taken in the Year 1623, Part I*, (London: Harleian Society, 1889), Vol. XXVIII, pp. 136-8 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationshrop02britgoog#page/n190/mode/2up>

For the Corbet family, see also Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. II, pp. 463-6, 490.

Testator's parents

The testator was the eldest son and heir of Sir Robert Corbet (c.1477 - 11 April 1513) and Elizabeth Vernon (d. 29 March 1563), the daughter of Sir Henry Vernon (b. circa 1441, d. 13 April 1515) of Haddon and his wife, Anne Talbot (d. 17 May 1494), the daughter of

Sir John Talbot (1413-1460), 2nd Earl of Shrewsbury. For the will of the testator's father, Sir Robert Corbet, see TNA PROB 11/17/471.

Testator's wardship

The testator was about twelve years of age at his father's death on 11 April 1513, and in 1514 his wardship was purchased for 1000 marks by Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. See Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk c.1484-1545*, London: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 21 and the History of Parliament entry for the testator at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/corbet-roger-15012-38>

See also Corbet, Augusta Elizabeth, *The Family of Corbet*, (London: St. Catherine's Press, n.d.), Vol. II, p. 264 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/familyofcorbetit02corb#page/n153/mode/2up>

The testator later became the ward of John de Vere (1442-1513), 13th Earl of Oxford (see TNA C 1/1485/58). After the 13th Earl's death, his widow and the Earl's other executors sold the testator's wardship and marriage, as well as custody of his lands during his minority, for 950 marks to Andrew Windsor (b.1467, d. 30 March 1543), 1st Baron Windsor, who married the testator to his daughter, Anne Windsor (d.1550/1).

The testator sued his livery on 22 October 1522.

Testator's siblings

For the testator's brothers, Richard and Reginald, and four sisters, Jane, Joanna or Anna, Mary and Dorothy, see the will of the testator's father, *supra*. In the will below the testator bequeaths 100 marks towards the marriage of his sister, Mary Corbet.

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married Anne Windsor, the daughter of Andrew Windsor (1467-1543), 1st Baron Windsor, and his wife, Elizabeth Blount, granddaughter of Walter Blount (d.1474), 1st Baron Mountjoy, and daughter of William Blount, slain at the battle of Barnet on 14 April 1471, and his wife, Margaret Echingham (d.1481). For the will of the testator's wife, Anne (nee Windsor) Corbet, see TNA PROB 11/34/443. For the will of her father, Andrew Windsor, 1st Baron Windsor, see TNA PROB 11/29/416.

In his will the testator urges his executrix and supervisors to redeem his eldest son and heir, Sir Andrew Corbet (d. 16 August 1578), from wardship. The will of the testator's

widow, Anne (nee Windsor) Corbet (d.1550/1) indicates that this did not come to pass. For the testator's grandson, the diplomat Robert Corbet (d.1583), son of the testator's eldest son and heir, Sir Andrew Corbet, see the will of the testator's son, Walter Corbet (d.1583), TNA PROB 11/66/4. Robert Corbet (d.1583) was almost certainly the 'Mr Corbek' mentioned by Oxford in his letter to Lord Burghley written from Paris on 17 or 18 March 1575.

In the will below, the testator provides annuities for the maintenance of his younger sons ('Walter, Robert and their brethren'). In the PCC copy below, this clause is mistranscribed as 'Walter Robert brethren').

In the will below, the testator mentions his two unmarried daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth. For further details of the testator's children and their marriages, see the will of the testator's widow, Anne (nee Windsor) Corbet, *supra*.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

As supervisors, the testator appoints his mother, Elizabeth Vernon (d. 29 March 1563), his uncle, John Vernon (d.1545), esquire, and his brother-in-law, Thomas Newport (d.1548x51). As noted above, the testator's brother-in-law, Thomas Newport, was the father of Sir Richard Newport (d.1570/1), owner of a copy of Hall's *Chronicle* containing annotations thought to have been made by Shakespeare. For the wills of the testator's brother-in-law, Thomas Newport, and nephew, Sir Richard Newport, see TNA PROB 11/34/176 and TNA PROB 11/53/456.

The testator leaves the household goods at his manor of Linslade in Buckinghamshire to his wife, Anne, and it appears from her own will that she resided there until her death. The testator also mentions his chamber in the Strand in London, and in the will of his brother, Reginald Corbet, he is referred to as 'my old master, my brother, Roger Corbet', which suggests that the testator may at one time have been a London merchant.

For the foregoing, see references cited in the will of the testator's wife, Anne (nee Windsor) Corbet.

RM: Tes{amen}t{u}m Rogeri Corbett

In dei nomine, Amen. The 27th day of November in the year of our Lord God a thousand five hundred 38, I, Roger Corbet, sick of body and whole in mind, make my will and testament in manner and form following:

First, I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, and my body to be buried in the next parish church where God shall do his will by me, except it be within ten miles of the parish church where my dwelling is, then I will my body there to be buried without any

solemnity at my burial to be had otherwise than 6 Masses to be said at the time of my burial, and 24 Masses to be said for my soul and all Christian souls in divers and sundry places by the discretion of my executors, whom I make sole Anne, my wife, and my supervisor I require meekly to be my Lady, my mother, my uncle John Vernon, esquire, Thomas Newport, my brother-in-law, esquire, and as for any other ceremony to be done or celebrate at my burial, I remit that to the discretion of mine executrix to do as God shall put in her mind;

Item, I bequeath to my sister, Mary, one hundred marks towards her marriage;

Item, I bequeath to 13 poor men 13 black gowns;

Item, to 13 poor women, 13 smocks, to be assigned and appointed by the discretion of my supervisors and executrix;

Item, I bequeath thirty rings of gold to the value of five shillings a ring, which rings shall be marked with a R and a C, and they to be divided to special and trusty friends for a remembrance by the discretion of my executrix and supervisors;

Item, I will that the household stuff and plate left unto me by the will of my father do remain and continue in the castle of Moreton Corbet to the use and behoof of him or her whom God will shall inherit the possessions and lands of their foresaid fathers;

Item, I require and humbly beseech my supervisors and my executrix, tenderly lamenting the captive bondage of wardship, to consult together, pondering the readiest ways how to redeem my heir out of the thraldom and bondage of wardship, for whose marriage I was offered one thousand marks;

Item, if my supervisors and executrix, if they redeem the wardship of my son and heir, then I will that out of the money that they may have for his marriage, and out of the revenues and profits of his lands, be taken forth three hundred marks to the marriage of my daughter, Margaret, and three hundred marks to the marriage of my daughter, Elizabeth, which I will to remain in the custody of my executrix, so that she be widow, otherwise if she be married, I will that the money for the marriages remain in the custody of the supervisors;

Item, I will my servants, every man and woman, have his twelve months' wages clearly, or else my gelding and horses to be distributed amongst them after the discretion of my executrix;

Also I will to Walter, Robert [+and their?] brethren, every one apiece, when they come to full age, £6 13s 4d for term of their lives, to be taken out of the revenues and profits of my lands, and till they be of full age to have a competent and a sufficient finding to their learning and living, and when God so provides for any of them that he or they may spend by his provision or other of his friends to the yearly value of twenty pounds, or else if God do his will by any of them, I will that the foresaid £6 13s 4d be equally divided

between his two brethren, and so from brother to brother, as God shall dispose their lives, and after their deceases or having the yearly value before named, then I will that the whole sum revert again to the use and behoof of my son & heir;

Item, I will to my brethren my apparel and raiment;

Item, I will to Anne, my wife, mine executrix, all my goods moveable unbequeathed that longeth to my house in Linslade for term of her life, and so after her decease to remain and descend to my heir;

Item, I bequeath to the vicar of Moreton, and to the parish clerk, and to the poor people of the said parish 6s 8d, and likewise to the parish of Shawbury and to the parish of Stanton, to be distributed and paid by my Lady, my mother;

Item, I will that my evidences which be at Linslade and at my chamber in Strand shall be brought to the castle of Moreton Corbet;

Item, I will my flagon-chain, after the decease of my wife, to be distributed and divided equally betwixt my three younger sons, and if God do his will upon any of them, I will the same to be distributed betwixt the other two;

Item, I will that my own chain be equally divided amongst my supervisors for their pains to be taken in the setting forth and furtherance of this may last will and testament;

In witness whereof I have put thereto my seal the day & year abovesaid.

Probatum fuit tes{tamen}t{u}m suprascripti defuncti h{ab}entis &c Primo Die mensis ffebruarij Anno D{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo xxxvij apud London auc{torita}te D{omi}ni n{ost}ri Regis &c Iurament{o} Anne Relicte & executricis in h{uius}mo{d}i tes{tamen}to no{m}i{n}at{e} In p{er}sona mag{ist}ri Io{h}annis Talkary notarij pu{bli}ci procur{atoris} sui &c Com{m}issa q{ue} fuit admi{ni}stracio o{mn}i{u}m et sing{u}lorum bonor{um} Iuriu{m} et creditorum d{i}c{t}i defuncti prefat{e} executrici In p{er}sona d{i}c{t}i procur{atoris} De bene & fidel{ite}r admi{ni}strand{o} Ac de pleno & fideli In{uenta}rio secundo Die post D{o}m{ini}cam vocat{am} n{o}mi{n}a{m} D{omi}ni prox{imam} futur{am} exhibend{o} Necnon de plano et vero compoto reddend{o} Ad sancta Dei Eu{a}ngelia in debita iuris forma Iurat{e}

[=The testament of the above-written deceased, having etc., was proved on the first day of the month of February in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 38th at London by the authority of our Lord the King etc. by the oath of Anne, relict & executrix appointed in the same testament in the person of Master John Talkary, notary public, her proctor etc., and administration was granted to the forenamed executrix of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased in the person of the said

proctor, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to well & faithfully administer, and to exhibit a full & true inventory on the second day after the Sunday called Holy Name(?) next to come, and also to render a plain and true account.]