

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 4 August 1540 and proved 14 August 1540, of George Verney, gentleman, whose nephew, Sir Richard Verney (c.1516 – 26 July 1567), was accused in *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1584) of responsibility for the murder of Leicester's first wife, Amy Robsart (1532-1560):

But Sir Richard Verney, who by commandment remained with her that day alone, with one man only, and had sent away perforce all her servants from her to a market two miles off, he (I say) with his man can tell how she died, which man, being taken afterward for a felony in the marches of Wales, & offering to publish the manner of the said murder, was made away privily in the prison. And Sir Richard himself, dying about the same time in London, cried piteously & blasphemed God, & said to a gentleman of worship of mine acquaintance not long before his death that all the devils in hell did tear him in pieces. The wife also of Bald Butler, kinsman to my Lord, gave out the whole fact a little before her death. But to return unto my purpose, this was my Lord's good fortune to have his wife die at that time when it was like to turn most to his profit.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was a younger son of Richard Verney (d. 28 September 1527), esquire, by Anne Danvers, daughter of Sir William Danvers (1428-1504), Justice of the Common Pleas. See the will of the testator's father, TNA PROB 11/22/259.

For the Verney pedigree, see Dugdale, William, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, (London: Thomas Warren, 1656) p. 435 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/antiquitiesofwar00dugd#page/434/mode/2up>

See also Collins, Arthur, *The Peerage of England*, Vol. VI, (London: W. Strahan, 1779), pp. 398-401 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=zfk-AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA398>

For the family of the testator's mother, see Macnamara, F.N., *Memorials of the Danvers Family*, (London: Hardy & Page, 1895), pp. 154-5, 175, 181 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/memorialsodanve00macn#page/n207/mode/2up>

Dugdale's depiction of the monumental brass to the testator's father and mother at Compton Verney indicates that the testator had eight brothers and five sisters. However only two of the testator's brothers, and one of his sisters, have been identified:

-Sir Thomas Verney (d.1557), who married Alice Tame (d.1549), sister and coheir of Sir Edmund Tame (d. October 1544) of Fairford. See the inquisition post mortem taken

after the death of Thomas Verney, TNA C 142/115/71; and Holt, Henry F., 'The Tames of Fairford', *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, (London, 1871), pp. 110-148 at p. 146:

https://books.google.ca/books?id=_RUrAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA146

By Alice Tame, Sir Thomas Verney was the father of:

--**Sir Richard Verney** (c.1516 – 26 July 1567), who, as noted above, was accused in *Leicester's Commonwealth* of responsibility for the murder of Leicester's first wife, Amy Robsart. In the will below he is bequeathed a sword, a dagger, a ring and a velvet cap:

Item, I bequeath to my nephew, Richard Verney, my sword and the girdle, my Scottish dagger, my ring, and a cap of velvet set with little brooches.

Sir Richard Verney married Frances Raleigh, the daughter of George Raleigh, esquire, of Farnborough, Warwickshire, by Jane Coningsby, the daughter of Sir Humphrey Coningsby (d. 2 June 1535). See TNA C 1/1358/18-20, a Chancery suit brought against Sir Thomas Verney and Sir Richard Verney, his son; and TNA C 1/1389/40, a Chancery suit brought by Sir Richard Verney, son of Sir Thomas Verney and Alice, his wife, against his brother-in-law, Vincent Goddard.

-**John Verney**. In the will below the testator bequeaths him a damask gown and a velvet coat:

Item, I bequeath to my brother, John Verney, a gown of damask furred with martens, a coat of velvet, the sleeves laid on with laces.

-**Anne Verney** (c.1523), who married Edward Odingsells of Long Itchington, and predeceased the testator. See Dugdale, *supra*, p. 437, and Collins, *supra*, p. 399.

MARRIAGE

It is unclear whether the testator married. He leaves a bequest in the will below to his 'brother' [=brother-in-law] Cheney in Buckinghamshire, who may have been his wife's brother, or the husband of one of the testator's sisters.

OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL

The testator states in the will that he is in the service of Edward Seymour (c.1550-1552), then Earl of Hertford, and leaves bequests to both the Earl and his wife.

Nothing appears to be known of the testator's principal legatee, John Brasier. Among other bequests, the testator leaves him his 'leasows called Odelles field', which were bequeathed to him in the will of his father, Richard Verney (d. 28 September 1527).

RM: T{estamentum} Georgij Verney

In de nomine Amen. In the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred and forty, the 4th day of August, I, George Verney, gentleman, being of perfect mind and memory, make my testament and last will in manner following:

In primis I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, and to dwell amongst the blessed company of heaven, and my body to be buried in the church or churchyard of Saint Leonard's in Eastcheap in London, or else in what parish soever it shall please God me to depart this world;

Item, I do make only my executor John Braser, my servant;

Item, I do give unto the said John my farm at Lighthorne even in as ample manner as I have it of the King by his letters patents to him and his wife and children with all manner goods and chattels in and upon all the said farm pertaining to myself at this present day;

Item, I will that the said John Brasier shall pay unto Thomas Eaton, servant unto th' Earl of Hertford, twenty pounds so that the said Thomas do discharge me and my executor for himself, his brothers and sisters, and for all manner debts which I owe to him or any of them before this present day;

Item, I bequeath to the said John all my chattels in my leasows called Odelles field;

Item, I will that his son, Henry, shall marry with Agnes Grene which is at my brother [=brother-in-law] Cheney's in Buckinghamshire;

Item, I bequeath to my brother Cheney my gown of black taffeta guarded with velvet, and one jacket of velvet laid upon with black lace, a doublet of changeable taffeta, a pair of hose lined with the same, a cap of velvet with a brooch on it;

Item, I bequeath to my brother, John Verney, a gown of damask furred with martens, a coat of velvet, the sleeves laid on with laces;

Item, I bequeath to my nephew, Richard Verney, my sword and the girdle, my Scottish dagger, my ring, and a cap of velvet set with little brooches;

Item, I bequeath that the said John Brayser shall receive all my debts owing to me at this present day, that is to say, of Mr Hassett forty shillings, of John Venors twenty shillings and a salt parcel gilt, with all other that is owing me of anybody;

Item, I bequeath to John Brasier's wife my black hat, my scarlet cloak;

Item, I will that Thomas Eaton shall have my gown that I wear now in my sickness with the jacket thereto pertaining, a featherbed, a bolster, two coverings, my old gelding with the mail [=bag] and mail pinion with a saddle and a bridle, and I will that the said John give him meat for the said gelding both winter and summer;

Item, I bequeath to my Lord, th' Earl of Hertford, my master, my chain, to desire him to be so good Lord to my executor, John Brasier, as to take for him the farm that he dwelleth in of the King's grace to the use of the said John;

Item, I bequeath to my Lady my ambling gelding and the piece of gold that hangeth at the chain, that she would be a mean to my Lord for the said John concerning the said farm, trusting that the same will be ready at all times to do his Lordship true and good service;

Item, I bequeath to Andrew Loro a pair of white hose lined with red;

Item, I bequeath to Thomas Drawise, my servant, a new coat of blue, a pair of boots and spurs, a doublet of unwatered camlet, a doublet of tawny camlet, my black cap with the feather, and 26s 8d in money;

Item, I bequeath to Edward Thorpe my say gown;

Item, I give to John Barwycke my tawny satin doublet;

Item, I give to Christopher Gome(?) my tawny say doublet, a jerkin of black satin with sleeves, my lyem [sic for 'linen?'] and my color [=collar?], and my best shirt;

Item, I bequeath all my goods in every place unbequeathed to the said John Brasier, my executor, to pay my debts and my legacies and to see this my last will performed to the uttermost of his power as he shall answer afore God, being witness Sir John Turner, clerk, his ghostly Father, parson of Saint Leonard's in Eastcheap, John Armstrong, Thomas Gale, Edward Thorpe, Thomas Travise, with other.

Probatum fuit suprascriptu{m} testamentu{m} coram d{omi}no apud London xiiiio die mens{is} Augusti anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingen{tesi}mo quadragesimo Iuramento Iohannis Brasier executoris in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento no{m}i{n}at{i} Ac approbatu{m} et insinuatu{m} Et com{m}issa fuit administrac{i}o o{mn}i{u}m et singuloru{m} bonoru{m} iuriu{m} et creditoru{m} dicti defuncti prefato Executori de bene &c Ac insuper de pleno et fideli Inventario conficiend{o} et citra festu{m} a{n}i{m}ar{um} prox{imum} sequent{ium} exhibend{o} Necnon de plano et vero computo calculo siue ratiocinnio inde reddend{o} ad sancta dei Eu{a}ngelia in debita iuris forma Iurat{i}

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Lord at London on the 14th day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fortieth by the oath of John Brasier, executor named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of the said deceased to the forenamed executor, sworn on the Holy Gospels in due form of law to well etc., and moreover to prepare a full and faithful inventory and to exhibit [+it?] before the feast of All Saints next to come, and also to render a true account, calculation or reckoning thereof.]