

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 21 January 1539 and proved 12 January 1540, of Edward Dormer, citizen and haberdasher of London.

The testator was a younger son of Geoffrey Dormer (d. 9 March 1503) of West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, and Thame, Oxfordshire, Merchant of the Staple of Calais, by his second wife, Alice Collingridge. The testator is said to have had seven brothers, including Geoffrey, Sir Michael Dormer (d. 20 September 1545), Lord Mayor of London in 1541, and Peter, and five sisters, including Alice, who married Thomas Crocker or Croker of Faringdon, Berkshire; Margaret, who married Richard Cowley; and Elizabeth, who married a husband surnamed Towley. See Richardson, Douglas, *Magna Carta Ancestry*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Vol. II, (Salt Lake City, 2011), pp. 421-3. However in the will below the testator mentions only two brothers, Michael and Peter, and one sister, Elizabeth, the wife of Richard Cowley.

For the will of the testator's brother, Sir Michael Dormer, see TNA PROB 11/30, ff. 291-4. For the will of Sir Michael Dormer's widow, Katherine Dallam Collier Pakington Dormer, see TNA PROB 11/46.

By his wife, Katherine Sampson (d.1578), the testator had an only daughter, Elizabeth.

After the testator's death Katherine married, as his second wife, Sir John Gresham (d. 23 October 1556), Lord Mayor of London, while her daughter, Elizabeth Dormer, married Gresham's second son, John Gresham (born 13 March 1529). After the death of her first husband, John Gresham, Elizabeth Dormer married William Plumbe of Northend near Fulham, whose will was proved 1 March 1594. See the History of Parliament biography of John Gresham, and Burgon, John William, *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham*, Vol. I, (London: Robert Jennings, 1839), pp. 456-8, both available online. For the will of William Plumbe, see TNA PROB 11/83, ff. 180-1.

For the will of the testator's executor, Guy Crafford (d.1553), esquire, see TNA PROB 11/36, f. 35. Crafford's wife was Joan Bodley, the daughter of James Bodley (d.1514), mercer, of Saffron Walden, Essex, and Joan Strachey, daughter of Thomas Strachey of Saffron Walden. See Barron, Caroline M. and Anne F. Sutton, eds., *Medieval London Widows*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), p. 211. For the will of Joan Crafford, see TNA PROB 11/67, ff. 244-5.

LM: T{estamentum} Edwardi Dormer

In the name of God, Amen. The 21 day of January the year of Our Lord God 1538 and in the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Henry the 8<sup>th</sup>, I Edward Dormer, citizen and haberdasher of London, being of good and perfect memory, laud and praise be

unto Almighty God, make and ordain this my present testament containing herein my last will in manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul unto Almighty God, my Maker, Saviour and Redeemer, and my body to be buried in Christian burial where it shall be thought convenient by mine executrix;

Item, I will that all such debts & duties as I owe of right or of conscience to any person or persons be well & truly contented and paid by mine executors hereafter named;

And after my debts paid and my funeral expenses performed, I will that all my goods, chattels & debts shall be divided into three egall parts, whereof I will that Katherine, my wife, shall have one egall part to her own use in name of her purpart & reasonable part to her of all my said goods, chattels and debts after the laudable custom of the City of London belonging;

And the second egall part of all my said goods, chattels and debts I bequeath unto Elizabeth, my daughter, to her to be delivered when she shall accomplish and come to her lawful age of 16 years or else be married, and if it fortune the said Elizabeth, my daughter, to decease before she accomplish her said age and before that time be not married, then I bequeath the said part and portion of my said daughter of all my said goods, chattels and debts unto the said Katherine, my wife, she then being naturally living, and if the said Katherine, my wife, shall be then deceased, then I will that all the said part and portion of my said daughter of all my said goods, chattels and debts shall wholly be employed and bestowed in amending and repairing of noyous highways nigh about the City of London by the discretion of the Lord Mayor & his brethren th' Aldermen of the City of London for the time being;

And the third egall part of all my said goods, chattels and debts I reserve unto myself and to mine executrix, therewith to perform my legacies and bequests hereafter following, that is to wit:

First I bequeath to the high altar of the parish church of All Hallows Bread Street of London, whereas I am a parishioner, for tithes forgotten or negligently withholden, if any such shall be, 3s 4d;

And I bequeath unto Sir Robert Dormer, knight, and my Lady his wife, to either of them a black gown of the price of 13s 4d the yard;

Item, I bequeath unto my brother, Michael Dormer, Alderman of London, a black gown of the price aforesaid;

Item, I bequeath to Guy Crafford, gentleman, and his wife, either of them a black gown of the price aforesaid;

Item, I bequeath to every of Peter Dormer, my brother, and his wife; Joan Bromwell, widow; my cousin John Goodwin of Winchendon; my cousin and his wife Edward Burlacy [=Borlase], mercer, and his wife; John Gower(?), my cousin, and his wife; Richard Beade, salter, and his wife; George Hynde, plumber, and his wife; Thomas Atkinson, cutler, and his wife; Nicholas Barker, John Popham and William Bower, one black gown;

Item, I bequeath to Anne Crafford, daughter unto Richard Crafford, gentleman, deceased, £13 6s 8d, to her to be delivered when she shall accomplish and come to the age of 21 years or else be married;

Item, I give and bequeath to either of my cousins, Geoffrey Dormer and Walter Dormer, sons of Michael Dormer, my brother, a ring of gold of the value of 40s or else 40s in money to make a ring withal, by them and either of them to be had of my gift for a remembrance of me;

Item, I bequeath to every of the children of Elizabeth, my [f. 3r] sister, wife of Richard Cowley, which shall be living the day of my decease, 20s;

Item, I bequeath to the said Elizabeth, my sister, £3 6s 8d;

Item, I bequeath to Katherine Hill, widow, late wife of Henry Hill, haberdasher, that was my master, a black gown;

Item, I bequeath to the parish church of Thame in Oxfordshire 2 torches, to the parish church of Crendon 2 torches, to the parish church of Kingsey 2 torches, to the parish church of All Hallows in Bread Street aforesaid 2 torches, to the parish church of Saint Mary Magdalen in Milk Street one torch, to the parish church of West Wycombe a torch, and to the parish church of Fulham 2 torches;

Item, I give and bequeath to every of the prison-houses hereafter rehearsed, that is to say, to Newgate, Ludgate, the 2 Counters in London, the Marshalsea and the King's Bench 10s to and amongst the prisoners within every of the said prison-houses to be given and distributed;

Item, I give and bequeath towards th' amending of noyous highways whereas my executrix under-named shall think most need, £5;

Item I bequeath to the marriage of 20 poor maidens in the parish of Thame, Crendon and Towers and in such other places as my said executrix shall think best, £6 13s 4d, that is to say, every of the said 20 maidens 6s 8d;

Item, I bequeath to 7 poor men, householders within the ward wherein I now dwell, 7 black gowns, that is to say, to every of them a gown, and to every of the wives of the said 7 poor men 12d;

Item, I bequeath to 15 blind men 15s, and to 15 bedrid bodies other 15s, that is to say, to every of the said 30 persons 12d;

The residue of all my goods, chattels and debts, after my debts paid, my funeral expenses done, and this my present testament in all things fulfilled, I freely give and bequeath unto the foresaid Katherine, my wife, which said Katherine, my wife, of this my present testament and last will I make and ordain my sole executrix;

And of th' execution of the same I make and ordain Michael Dormer, Alderman, my brother, and Guy Crafford, gentleman, overseer, and I bequeath to either of the same Michael Dormer & Guy Crafford for his labour in that behalf 5 marks sterling;

And I utterly revoke and annul all and every other former testaments, wills, legacies, bequests, executors and overseers by me in any wise before the day of the date hereof made, named, willed & bequeathed, and I will that this my present testament together with all the legacies, bequests, executrix and overseers by me herein made, named, willed and bequeathed shall stand and abide for my very testament and none other nor otherwise;

In witness whereof to this my present testament and last will I, the said Edward Dormer, have set my seal, given the day and year above-written, these witnesses of this testament and last will: Guy Crafford, Thomas Atkinson, George Hynde, John Popham, Henry Bright and other.

Probatum fuit(?) testamentum sup{ra}dicti defuncti h{ab}entis &c Coram D{omi}no apud London duodecimo die mens{is} Ianuarij Anno D{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo Tricesimo nono Iurame{n}to Petri Lyllye procurator{is} &c Ac approbatum & Insinuatum Commissaque fuit administrac{i}o o{m}n{i}u{m} bonor{um} et debitor{um} dicti defuncti Katarine Relicte et executrici in p{er}sona dict{i} procuratoris De Bene & fideli{te}r administrando eadem Ac de pleno et fideli inventario o{m}n{i}u{m} et sing{u}lorum bonor{um} et debitorum h{uius}mo{d}i conficiendo Necnon De plano et vero compoto reddendo &c Ad sancta Dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{i}

[=The testament of the abovesaid deceased having etc. was proved before the Lord at London on the twelfth day of the month of January in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred thirty-ninth by the oath of Peter Lyly, proctor etc., and probated & entered, and administration was granted of all the goods and debts of the said deceased to Katherine, relict and executrix, in the person of the said proctor, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well & faithfully administer the same, and to prepare a full and faithful inventory of all and singular the goods and debts of the same, and also to render a plain and true account etc.]

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xvijmo Iulij A{nn}o 1578 ema{nau}i{t} com{m}issio Elizabethe Gressham al{ia}s Dormer filie na{tura}li et l{egi}time d{ic}t{i} def{uncti} ad admi{ni}strando bona etc p{er} katherinam Dorm{er} Rel{i}c{t}am iam def{unctam} non ad{ministrat}a iuxta tenorem test{ament}i h{uius}mo{di} annex{i} etc in p{er}sona Georgij Harryson no{tar}ij pu{bli}ci p{ro}cu{rator}is etc Iurati

[=On the 17<sup>th</sup> of July in the year 1578 a grant was issued to Elizabeth Gresham alias Dormer, natural and legitimate daughter of the said deceased, to administer the goods etc. by Katherine Dormer, relict, now deceased, not administered, according to the tenor of the same testament annexed(?) etc., in the person of George Harrison, notary public, proctor etc., sworn.]