

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 23 March 1545 and proved 29 March 1545, of Margaret Neville, the only daughter of John Neville (b. 1493, d. 2 March 1543), 3rd Baron Latimer, and his first wife, Dorothy de Vere (d. 7 February 1527), sister and co-heir of John de Vere (1499-1526), 14th Earl of Oxford. After the death of the testatrix' mother, Dorothy de Vere, John Neville (b. 1493, d. 2 March 1543), 3rd Baron Latimer, married secondly, Elizabeth Musgrave, the daughter of Sir Edward Musgrave of Hartley, Westmorland, and thirdly, Katherine Parr (1512–1548), the daughter of Sir Thomas Parr of Kendal, Westmorland, who after Lord Latimer's death became the sixth wife of King Henry VIII.

In his will, John Neville (b. 1493, d. 2 March 1543), 3rd Baron Latimer, provided income for the upbringing of the testatrix, and entrusted her care to his third wife, Katherine Parr (1512–1548):

Also I will that all the residue of the said manor, lands and tenements with th' appurtenances in Nun Monkton and Hammerton aforesaid, over and besides the said hundred marks a year to be received, had and taken by the said Lady Katherine, my wife, yearly during the space and term of the said five years for the finding and bringing up of my said daughter Margaret, and if it fortune her not to be married within the said five years, then I will after the said five hundred marks so received as is aforesaid, and the said five years determined, that from thenceforth the said Lady Katherine, my wife, shall yearly receive and have in, of and upon the rents, revenues and profits of my said manor, lands and tenements at Nun Monkton and Hammerton the sum of thirty pounds for the finding and keeping of my said daughter during all such time and space till she shall be preferred in marriage.

In the will below the testatrix expresses appreciation for Katherine Parr's 'tender love and bountiful kindness' to her, and apart from bequests to Elizabeth Fitzgerald and to servants, makes her stepmother, Queen Katherine Parr, her sole beneficiary.

The testatrix' only brother, John Neville (d.1577), 4th Baron Latimer, died without surviving male heirs. His lands were eventually divided among his four daughters and co-heirs, Katherine Neville (1545/6-1596), Dorothy Neville (1548-1609), Lucy Neville (c.1549-1608), and Elizabeth Neville (1545x50-1630), who married, respectively, Henry Percy (c.1532-1585), 8th Earl of Northumberland; Thomas Cecil (1542-1632/3), 1st Earl of Exeter; Sir William Cornwallis (c.1551-1611) of Brome; and Sir John Danvers (1540-1594) of Dauntsey. The eldest son and heir of Sir John Danvers (1540-1594) of Dauntsey and Elizabeth Neville (1545x50-1630), Sir Charles Danvers (c.1568-1601), was attainted and executed in 1601 for his part in the Essex rebellion, as a result of which the lands which he inherited from both his father and his mother escheated to the Crown. Several of Oxford's extant letters describe his involvement on the Queen's behalf in the Danvers escheat case, and the lands which had descended to Sir Charles Danvers from the Lords Latimer are specifically referred to in a letter written by Oxford to his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Cecil, in January 1602 (see CP 181/99).

For the will of the testatrix' father, John Neville (b. 1493, d. 2 March 1543), 3rd Baron Latimer, see TNA PROB 11/29, ff. 134-6.

LM: Margarete Nevill

I, Margaret Neville, being of perfect mind and memory, do make this my testament and last will the 23rd day of March in the 45th(?) year of Our Lord after this manner and form following:

First I bequeath, yield up and commit into the hands of my most merciful Father my soul, yet [sic?] all my whole substance, as well spiritual as corporal, most steadfastly trusting unto his mercy that he, through the merits of my Saviour and only Mediator, Jesus Christ, will now perform his promise unto me that death may have no power over me, but that through his grace I may boldly say, O Death, where is thy victory? O Hell, where is thy sting?;

Being above all other things most certain that all that trust in him shall not be confounded, I know that thou wilt receive me under the wings of thy mercy, not for my worthiness but for the worthiness of Christ, my Saviour, inasmuch as thou hast promised to glorify all his members for whom he prayed here that they might be glorified, and though I be most vile yet is [sic] he rich, though I most sinful yet is he holy;

Finally, I find in myself nothing but damnation, but in him I find dwelling all the treasures of thy mercy, goodness, graces and virtues; I therefore through him whom thou, O Father, with all his riches and treasures hast given unto me, do approach unto the throne of thy mercy, beseeching thee to pardon me of all my offences by which I have in any time of all my life offended thee, and that thou wilt blot them out of thy memory, and never impute them unto me, for then who shall lay anything farther to my charge whom thou hast remitted, yea, whom thou hast received for a member of thy mystical body?;

And now insomuch as I have of my merciful Father received divers and sundry talents which it hath pleased him to commit unto my hands, that I may not be counted like unto the unprofitable servant which had the talents of his lord in the earth I shall most humbly beseech my dear Sovereign Mistress, the Queen's Highness, to take all and singular my said talents into her hands to be disposed to the glory of God as her Highness shall think most best;

And forsomuch I am never able to render to her Grace sufficient thanks for the godly education and tender love and bountiful goodness which I have evermore found in her Highness, and knowing farthermore that her Grace is of such perfect godliness and wisdom that she can much better dispose them to the honour of and discharge of my duty than I can myself devise, I shall most humbly desire her Grace to take the ordering of the same;

First of all, therefore, for the entire friendship and great gentleness that I have evermore found in Mistress Elizabeth Garrett, and to be to her as a token and perpetual memory that she shall come, when it shall please God, to the same estate that I am at now, I give and bequeath unto the same Mistress Elizabeth Fitzgarrett [=Fitzgerald] twenty pound money;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Dorothy Fountayns, my maid, £4 yearly during the life of the said Dorothy;

Item, I bequeath unto Margaret Paye 40s yearly during the life of the said Margaret;

Item, I bequeath unto Nicholas Pygott forty shillings yearly during the life of the said Nicholas;

Item, I bequeath to William Savage forty shillings yearly during the life of the said William;

All the rest of my goods and chattels as well movable and unmovable which I have in my hands as [sic?] any man to my use hath or ought to have at this time present or hereafter, and as well the thousand marks which my father gave unto me to my marriage, as all that right, interest and title which I have in [+and] to the manor of Innunennton(?) lying and being within the county of York, I fully give, grant and bequeath unto my dear Sovereign Mistress the Lady Katherine Parr, Queen of England, France and Ireland, whom I make my only and sole executrix;

In witness whereof I have to this my present testament and last will set to my name and seal the day and year above-written. Margaret Neville.

Witness to this present will: W. Essex, Nicholas Throckmorton, Francis Goldsmith, and sealed with all their seals.

Probatum fuit suprascriptum testamentum vicesimo nono die mensis marcij Anno domini Millesimo quingentesimo quadragésimo sexto Iuramento Iohannis Cockes armigeri procuratoris serenissime domine Regine executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominate ac approbatum et insinuatum et commissa fuit administracio omnium et singulorum bonorum iurium et creditorum dictum defunctum et eius testamentum qualitercunque concernentium dicte executrice de bene et fideliter administrando eadem ac de pleno et fidei Inventario &c exhibendo &c necnon de plano et vero compoto reddendo ad sancta dei Euangelia Iurati

[=The above-written testament was proved on the twenty-ninth day of the month of March in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred forty-sixth by the oath of John Cockes, esquire, proctor of the Most Serene Lady the Queen, executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular

the goods, rights and credits whatsoever concerning the said deceased and her testament to the said executrix, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit etc. a full and faithful inventory etc., and also to render a plain and true account.]