

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 10 October 1547 and proved 24 May 1549, of Robert Spring (1502 – 3 or 20 April 1549?) of Lavenham whose father, Thomas Spring (d.1523), and John de Vere (1442-1513), 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Oxford, were major benefactors of the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Lavenham. See:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/church\\_gallery\\_03.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/church_gallery_03.shtml)

### ***FAMILY BACKGROUND***

The testator was the second son of the wealthy clothier, Thomas Spring (d.1523), by his first wife, Anne King of Boxford, Suffolk.

For the testator's family background, see the will, dated 13 June 1523 and proved 3 July 1523, of his father, Thomas Spring, TNA PROB 11/21/179.

### ***MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN***

The testator married Agnes/Anne Eden (d.1557). According to the Spring pedigree, she was the daughter of Thomas Eden, esquire, of London. See Corder, Joan, ed., *The Visitation of Suffolk, 1561*, Part I, (London: Harleian Society, 1981), pp. 32-3, and Howard, Joseph Jackson, ed., *The Visitation of Suffolke*, Vol. I, (Lowestoft: Samuel Tymms, 1866), pp. 190-1 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ExI2AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA190>

See also Copinger, W.A., *The Manors of Suffolk: The Hundreds of Babergh and Blackbourn*, (London: T. Unwin Fisher, 1905), p. 198 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/manorsofsuffolkn01copiuoft#page/198/mode/2up>

*Rowheads alias Roushedges Manor*

*It is found that trustees were seised of this tenement to the use of Thomas Spryng who died the 28 September 1486, and that Thomas Spryng aged 30 years was his son and heir. In subsequent times however it is frequently referred to as a manor. Thomas Spring called the "Rich Clothier of Lavenham" was the Spring who built two chapels in Lavenham Church and a good part of the steeple. He died in 1523, when the manor passed to his son and heir Sir John Spring. Three years before his death he disposed of the manor to his brother Robert Spring who married Ann daughter of Thomas Eden of London and died seised the 20<sup>th</sup> April 1549, when it passed to his son and heir Thomas Spring then 30 years of age. Thomas Spring married 1<sup>st</sup> Julian d. and h. of John Fayrye who died Sheriff of London, and 2ndly a daughter of Appleton of Waldingfield, and*

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according to the Davy MSS. held this manor being succeeded by his son and heir Robert Spring. It seems pretty clear however that the manor did not pass to this last Robert Spring, for before the year 1575 it had vested in Stephen Spring 6<sup>th</sup> son of Robert Spring and came to him either on the death of his father Robert in 1549 or of his brother Thomas, for in this year 1575 Stephen disposed of the manor to Sir William Cordell. No doubt the sale was made as Stephen Spring had an only daughter as heir Elizabeth married to George Kempe of Swasye in Cambridgshire.

However, as Corder notes, the pedigree of Eden of Sudbury states that it was Henry Eden who had a daughter, Anne Eden, who married Robert Spring, second son of Thomas Spring of Lavenham, and it thus appears that the testator's wife, Anne Eden, may have been the daughter of Henry Eden of Sudbury, and the sister of Thomas Eden of Sudbury, for whose will, dated 1 October 1565 and proved 2 December 1568, see TNA PROB 11/50/383. See also Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Suffolk*, (Exeter: William Pollard, 1882), pp. 27, 135 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=EycAAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA135>

In the will below the testator mentions his wife Agnes [=Anne], and seven sons and three daughters:

\* **Thomas Spring**, eldest son and heir. For his will, see TNA PROB 11/39/50.

\* **Nicholas Spring**, who married Elizabeth Risby, the daughter of the Lavenham clothier, William Risby and his wife, Margaret Maye, for whose will, dated 14 November 1551 and proved 27 September 1552, see TNA PROB 11/ 35/308. See also the Risby pedigree and the will of William Risby in *Evidences of the Winthrops of Groton, co. Suffolk, England*, (Privately printed, 1894-1896), pp. 66, 68-9 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=7dYKAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA68>

\* **Henry Spring**, parson of Icklingham.

\* **Jerome Spring**, who married Elizabeth Grey, daughter of Fulke Grey of Norfolk, and widow of a husband surnamed Downes. According to Corder, *supra*, p. 33, she left a will, dated 18 April 1597/8 and proved 2 May 1605, TNA PROB 11/105/324. See also the Grey pedigree in Rye, Walter, ed., *The Visitation of Norffolk*, (London: Harleian Society, 1891), Vol. XXXII, p. 138 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitacionievisi32ryew#page/138/mode/2up>

It appears Jerome Spring also had a connection to a daughter of Sir Philip Paris, who in his will mentions his 'daughter Bulleyne', and a promise he had made to her and Jerome Spring:

*Item, I will that my promise be also kept with my daughter Bulleyne of 100 marks, I say one hundred marks, which I promised to give her to her marriage and in recompense of all old reckonings between her and me in case my said daughter Bulleyne be not otherwise recompensed by me in my lifetime according to my promise made by me to her and to Jerome Spring.*

See the will of Sir Philip Paris, proved 20 January 1559, TNA PROB 11/42A/230.

\* **Robert Spring**, who married Dionyse Leveson, daughter of Thomas Leveson (1532-1576), esquire, of Halling, Kent. Thomas Leveson was the father of William Leveson (d.1621), who acted as trustee to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, including William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon, in the allocation of shares in the ground lease of the Globe Theatre in 1599, and Robert Spring was thus William Leveson's brother-in-law. For the will of Thomas Leveson, see TNA PROB 11/58/397. For the will of William Leveson (d.1621), Shakespeare's trustee, see TNA PROB 11/137/600.

\* **John Spring**, about whom nothing further is known.

\* **Stephen Spring**, about whom nothing further is known.

**Dorothy Spring** (buried 2 December 1564). According to Corder, *supra*, p. 34, she married William Humberstone of Dunwich, Norfolk. However according to the Humberstone pedigree, William Humberstone married *Margery* Spring, the daughter of Robert Spring of Pakenham, Suffolk. See Rye, *supra*, pp. 166-7 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitacionievisi32ryew#page/166/mode/2up>

\* **Grisell Spring**, about whom nothing further is known.

\* **Frances Spring**, who married Robert Ashfield of Stowlangtoft. See Corder, *supra*, p. 34.

According to Corder, *supra*, p. 34, the testator had three other daughters not mentioned in the testator's will below:

\* **Elizabeth Spring**, who married firstly John Jenney (d. 14 May 1575) of Great Cressingham, Norfolk and secondly Edward Flood. See Corder, *supra*, p. 34, and the Jenney pedigree in Rye, *supra*, p. 171 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitacionievisi32ryew#page/170/mode/2up>

\* **Mary Spring**, who married Charles Clere of Stokesby and Acle, Norfolk. See Corder, *supra*, p. 34.

\* **Bridget Spring**, who married Thomas Thwaites, of Hardingham, Norfolk. See Corder, *supra*, p. 34, and the Thwaites pedigree in Rye, *supra*, p. 284 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitacionievisi32ryew#page/284/mode/2up>

*Quare* whether Elizabeth, Mary and Bridget were the daughters of the testator's widow, Anne Eden, by her second husband, Sir Philip Paris.

The Spring pedigree in *The Visitation of Suffolke* conflicts in several respect with the will below. It states that the testator had two wives, Anne Eden, the daughter of Thomas Eden of London, and Emme Paris of Linton, Cambridgeshire, and assigns to Anne Eden the seven sons named in the testator's will (see above), and to Emme Paris six daughters (Elizabeth, Dorothy, Bridget, Grizell, Frances and Mary). See Howard, Joseph Jackson, ed., *The Visitation of Suffolke*, Vol. I, (Lowestoft: Samuel Tymms, 1866), p. 168 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=ExI2AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA168>

For Captain Thomas Spring of Castlemaine, said in several sources to have been the testator's eldest son and heir (but *quare* whether that is correct), see:

<http://reganettinger.blogspot.ca/2015/08/captain-thomas-spring-of-castlemaine.html>

After the testator's death, his widow, Anne Eden Spring, is said to have married, as his second wife, Sir Philip Paris. See the will of Sir Philip Paris, *supra*, and 'Sir Philip Paris of Linton (1492-1558)', Linton and District Historical Society at:

<http://archive.is/tPtd>

### ***OTHER PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE WILL***

As overseer, the testator appoints Sir William Cordell (d.1581), Master of the Rolls. For Sir William Cordell, one of the trustees appointed by Oxford in his indenture of 30 January 1575 prior to his departure on his continental tour, see ERO D/DRg2/25, the *ODNB* entry, and will of Sir William Cordell, TNA PROB 11/63/590).

For the testator's executor, Sir Andrew Judd (c.1492 – 4 September 1558), Lord Mayor of London, see the *ODNB* entry:

*Judde, Sir Andrew (c.1492–1558), merchant, was the third son of John Judde (d. 1493), gentleman, of Tonbridge, Kent, and his wife, Margaret, daughter of Valentine Chiche and great-niece of Archbishop Henry Chichele. . . . Judde married three times: first, in 1523, Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Mirfyn, himself a skinner and lord mayor of London in 1518; second, by 1542, Agnes, about whom nothing is known; and third, in 1552, Mary, daughter of Thomas Mathews of Colchester and wealthy widow of another skinner, Thomas Langton. Three children survived from the first marriage, John, Richard, and Alice, who married Thomas Smythe (1522–1591) the customs official, and one daughter from the third, Martha, who married Robert Golding in Essex.*

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*Judde profited initially from exports of English wool through Calais, and he remained heavily involved there: he was mayor of the staple in 1552, 1555 (when he entertained King Philip of Spain in the city), and 1558. But he also had interests in the cloth trade; he dealt in lead, alum, and bullion; he lent money, arranged loans for the crown, and bought and sold former monastic land; he was a promoter of early voyages to Russia and west Africa, and a founder member of the Russia Company.*

The testator's connection to Sir Andrew Judd is unknown. However it likely came about as a result of Judd's interest in the cloth trade.

LM: T{estamentum} Roberti Spring armiger{i}

In the name of God, Amen. I, Robert Spring of Lavenham in the county of Suffolk, esquire, the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month of October in the first year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King Edward the Sixth by the grace of God King of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and of the Church of England and also of Ireland Supreme Head, make and ordain this my present testament and last will touching th' order and disposition of all my goods in manner and form following, revoking and annulling all other wills and testaments heretofore thereof had, made, written and spoken, and this to be my last testament:

First I give and bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, my Creator and Redeemer, and to all the blessed company of heaven, my body to be buried within the parish church of Lavenham in such place there as shall be thought meet and convenient by my executors, or in the parish church where it shall please God to call me unto his mercy out of this transitory life;

First, I give unto the high altar of the same church where it shall chance me to be buried for my tithes and offerings be [=by] me forgotten or negligently withholden, in discharging of my soul, 10s;

Item, I will that my executors shall distribute amongst priests, clerks and poor people within the town where I shall so decease the day of my burials, my seventh day & month day the sum of threescore pounds of lawful money;

Item, I will that my executors & th' executors of my executors shall yearly during the space of 20 years next after my decease about such time of the year as it shall please God to call me unto his mercy distribute, dispose and give amongst the poor people of the same town where it shall chance me to be buried the sum of five pounds of lawful money;

Item, I will and bequeath unto Agnes, my wife, four hundred pounds of lawful money of England to be paid unto her by my said executors within one whole year next after my decease without any further delay;

Item, I will and give unto the said Agnes, my wife, all my household stuff and implements of household only except plate, wool, oil, oode [=woad?], cloth and all other implements and things belonging and appertaining to the mystery of cloth-making, to have and to hold the said premises, except before excepted, unto the said Agnes, my wife, and to her assigns forever;

Provided always that whereas the said Agnes, my wife, is by th' order of the common law entitled to be endowed of the third part of all such manors, lands, tenements and other hereditaments that I was or am seised of an estate of inheritance during the coverture between us, in recompense of which dowry I have by my last will concerning the disposition of all my lands, tenements and other hereditaments devised, appointed and assigned divers lands and tenements unto the said Agnes, my wife, during her natural life, as by the same more at large doth appear, nevertheless if the said Agnes, my wife, will not be contented with such lands and tenements as I have devised unto her by my said will, but demand her dowry of the third part of all such lands and tenements that I was seised of estate of inheritance during the marriage between us against my son and [f. 238r] heir or against any other of my children or their heirs to whom I have willed or devised any of my said lands by my said will, or if the said Agnes, my wife, will not release unto my said son, Thomas, and to every other of my sons within [+one?] half year next after my decease all such right and title of dowry as she by the due order and course of the common laws of this realm is entitled unto of any such manors, lands, tenements and other hereditaments as I have devised and assigned unto my said children, then I will that the said Agnes, my wife, shall have no part of the said sum of four hundred pounds nor any part or portion of my household stuff, but that the said legacies and bequests and all other legacies made and devised unto the said Agnes by this my last testament shall be clearly frustrate and void, and that the said sum of £400 and all other legacies above remembered unto her bequeathed shall be equally divided by my executors amongst all my sons as they shall accomplish and come unto th' age of 21 years, anything herein contrary notwithstanding;

Item, I will and give unto Thomas Spring, my son and heir, a hundred pounds of lawful money of England to be paid unto him by mine executors within one whole year next after my decease;

And if the said Thomas do refuse(?) to accomplish my last will touching the assurance of such manors, lands and tenements as I have there devised unto divers of my sons according to the purport and effect of my said will, then I will that the said Thomas shall have no part of the said sum of £100, but that the said legacy unto him shall be utterly void and that the said sum of a £100 shall be equally divided amongst my sons, Jerome, Robert and John, by my executors as they shall come unto th' age of 21 years;

Item, I give and bequeath unto Nicholas Spring, my son, a hundred pounds of lawful money likewise to be paid unto him by my said executors within one whole year next after my decease;

And whereas I have by several grants sufficient in the law the next presentments of the advowsons and churches of Lavenham aforesaid and Much Waldingfield in the county of Suffolk, I will that my son, Henry, now parson of Icklingham in the county aforesaid, shall be presented unto the said churches and to every of them at such time as they or any of them shall become void by death, resignation or otherwise;

And if it fortune my said son, Henry, to decease before he be presented unto the said churches or to any of them, then I will & give the presentments and next avoidance of the said churches or of that the which the said Henry was not presented unto before his death unto the said Thomas Spring, my son, and to his assigns;

Item, I will and bequeath unto my said son, Henry, four score pounds of lawful money to be paid unto him by my executors within one whole year next after my decease;

I will and give unto my said son, Jerome, two hundred marks of lawful money of England to be paid unto my said son, Jerome, by my executors when he shall come unto th' age of 21 years;

Item, I will and give unto my said son, Robert Spring, two hundred marks of lawful money of England to be paid unto him likewise by my executors when he shall come unto the age of 21 years;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my said son, John Spring, two hundred marks of lawful money to be paid unto my said son, John, by my executors when he shall come unto th' age of 21 years;

Item, I will and give unto Stephen Spring, my son, two hundred marks of lawful money of England to be likewise paid unto him by my executors or th' executors of my executors when he shall come unto th' age of 21 years;

And if it fortune any of my said sons, Jerome, Robert, John and Stephen, for to decease before they come unto th' age of 21 years, then I will that the part or parts of all such legacies as I have before assigned unto them of him or them so deceased shall be equally divided by my executors among such of my said sons, Jerome, Robert, John and Stephen, as shall be living at their said age of 21 years;

And if it fortune all my said sons, Jerome, Robert, John and Stephen, to decease before the said age of 21 years (as God defend), then I will that all such sums of money as I have before devised and given unto them shall be distributed by my executors amongst all my daughters then living by equal portions at the days of their marriages or when they shall come unto th' age of 24 years;

Item, I will and give unto Dorothy, my daughter, £164 13s 4d of lawful money of England to be paid unto her by my executors the day of her marriage or when she come unto th' age of 24 years;

Item, I will and bequeath unto Grysyll Spring, my daughter, £164 13s 4d of lawful money of England to be paid unto her by my executors or th' executors of my executors at the day of her marriage or when she shall come unto the age of 24 years;

Item, I will & give unto Frances Spring, my daughter, £164 13s 4d of lawful money of England to be paid unto her by my said executors at the day of her marriage or when she shall come unto the age of 24 years;

And if it fortune any of my said daughters to decease before the said [f. 238v] age of 24 years or lawful marriage, then I will that all such legacies and sums of money that I have by this my last testament given and willed unto them so dead shall be equally by my executors or by th' executors of my executors distributed and divided amongst such of them as shall survive at the said age of 24 years or lawful marriage;

And if it fortune all my said daughters to decease before the said age of 24 years or lawful marriage, then I will that all the said legacies and sums of money be [=by] me given and willed unto them and every of them as is aforesaid shall be equally divided and distributed by my executors and by th' executors of my executors amongst my said sons, Jerome, Robert, John and Stephen, or amongst such of them as shall be then living at such age and in like manner and form as I have appointed and assigned all such legacies that I have given and willed unto them & every of them as is aforesaid;

The residue of all my goods moveable and unmovable whatsoever they be, after my debts first and principally paid, my funeral expenses done, I leave and commit them wholly unto my executors to the performance of this my present testament;

And the surplusage thereof after this my present testament performed and executed, I will and charge that my said executors or th' executors of my executors shall dispose and distribute the same in deeds of charity amongst the poor inhabitants of the town of Lavenham for the weal of my soul and all Christian souls;

And of this my present testament I make, ordain and constitute to be my true and faithful executors Andrew Judd, alderman of London, and John Harwell, my servant;

And I give unto them and every of them for their labour and business herein to be had and sustained ten pounds of lawful money, charging them and every of them as they will answer to God at the dreadful Day of Judgment and as my special trust is in them that they will see this my present testament and my last will also concerning my lands truly and faithfully executed and performed;

And overseer or supervisor of this my last testament I do make, ordain and constitute my faithful friend, William Cordell, gentleman, desiring him to endeavour himself as much



as he can to see this my present testament and last will also performed, and I give unto him for his labour and pains therein to be sustained ten pounds;

And in witness that this is my present testament and last will touching the order & disposition of my goods, I, the said Robert Spring, have subscribed my name unto this my testament and put to my seal, these being further witnesses. Per me, Robert Spring.

[NOTE: Will of lands not yet transcribed]

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i testamentu{m} coram d{omi}no Cant{uariensis} Archie{pisco}po apud London xxiii<sup>o</sup> die Maij Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo qui{n}gesimo xlixo Iuramento Executoru{m} in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento no{m}i{n}atoru{m} Ac approbatu{m} et insinuat{u} Com{m}issaq{ue} fuit admi{n}istrac{i}o o{mn}i{u}m bonor{um} &c Dict{is} ex{ecutori}b{us} De bene et fideli{te}r admi{n}istrand{o} eadem Ac de pleno et fideli Inuentario &c exhibend{o} Ad s{an}c{t}a dei Eu{a}ngelia Iurat{is}

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at London on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred 49<sup>th</sup> by the oath of the executors named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all the goods etc. to the said executors, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, and to exhibit a full and faithful inventory etc.]