

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 11 August 1558 and proved 18 August 1558, of Bridget (nee Rede) Willoughby. The testatrix was the daughter of Sir Robert Rede (d.1519), Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and one of the executors of the will of King Henry VII (see the will of Sir Robert Rede (d.1519), TNA PROB 11/19, ff. 97-100; the entry for Sir Robert Rede (d.1519) in the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography*; and <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=62855>).

The testatrix married Sir Thomas Willoughby (d.1545), Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, a younger brother of William (d.1526), Lord Willoughby, and was thus the aunt of Katherine (nee Willoughby) Brandon Bertie (1519–1580), Duchess of Suffolk, the daughter of William (d.1526), Lord Willoughby, and the mother of Peregrine Bertie (1555, d. 26 June 1601), Lord Willoughby de Eresby, husband of Oxford's sister, Mary de Vere (d.1624). For the will of William (d.1526), Lord Willoughby, see TNA PROB 11/23, ff. 227-9. For the will of Peregrine Bertie (1555, d. 26 June 1601), Lord Willoughby de Eresby, see TNA PROB 11/98, ff. 144-7. See also the entries in the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography* for Katherine (nee Willoughby) Brandon Bertie (1519–1580), Duchess of Suffolk, and Peregrine Bertie (1555, d. 26 June 1601), Lord Willoughby de Eresby.

By Sir Thomas Willoughby (d.1545), the testatrix had two sons, Robert Willoughby, who married Dorothy, the daughter of Edward Willoughby of Wollaton, Nottinghamshire, and Christopher Willoughby (d.1586?) of Penshurst, Kent, who married Margaret, the daughter of Richard Tottishurst, and two daughters, Mary, who married Humphrey Walrond, and Elizabeth, who married Thomas Tottishurst (d.1574) of Kent. See the pedigree of Willoughby in Marshall, George William, ed., *The Visitations of the County of Nottingham in the Years 1569 and 1614* (London: Harleian Society, 1871)p. 184, available online.

The testatrix' overseer and cousin, Thomas Wotton (b. in or before 1521, d. 1587), was the son of Sir Edward Wotton (1489?–1551) and his first wife, Dorothy (nee Rede) Wotton (d. September 1529), daughter of Sir Robert Rede (d.1519) and sister of the testatrix. See the entry in the online edition of *The Dictionary of National Biography* for Sir Edward Wotton (1489?–1551).

RM: Testamentum domine Brigitte Willoughbye

In the name of God, Amen. The 11th(?) day of August the year of Our Lord God a thousand five hundred fifty and eight, I, Bridget Willoughby of the parish of Chiddingstone in the county of Kent, widow, being of good and perfect remembrance, thanks be given unto Almighty God therefore, make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, my Maker, believing assuredly to be saved only by the merits of Christ's passion, who suffered death upon the Cross to redeem me and all the world from everlasting death and damnation, and my body to be buried in the church of Chiddingstone aforesaid in the chancel there where my late husband, Sir Thomas Willoughby, lieth buried, and as for anything to be done at the day of my burial, either at my house or at the church, I refer it to the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I will that there be given and distributed immediately after my burial to the poor folk of the parishes of Chiddingstone, Sundridge, Chevening, Leigh, Penshurst and Hever four pounds of money, and that to be distributed according to the discretion of mine executors;

Item, I give to Henry Willoughby my trotting colt being of th' age of four years and vantage;

Item, I give to my daughter Tottishurst a counterpoint of old arras or a quilt of red sarsenet, whether of them twain she will chose;

Item, I give to my said daughter 20 sheep;

Item, I give to Elizabeth Tottishurst, one of the children of my said daughter Tottishurst, a cow with the calf by her side;

Item, I give to Margaret Basset, my god-daughter and one of the daughters of William Bassett, my servant, a cow;

Item, I give to Christopher Jenney a certain yearly rent or annuity of forty shillings of lawful money of England going out of all my lands and tenements lying and being in the parishes of Chiddingstone, Leigh, Penshurst, Hever, Sundridge and Chevening in the county of Kent, to have, perceive and receive the said yearly rent of 40s to the said Christopher Jenney for the term of 7 years next and immediately following my decease, to be paid unto the same Christopher or to his assigns during the said term at the feasts of th' Annunciation of Our Lady and Saint Michael th' Archangel [-and th' Annunciation of Our Lady] by even portions, the first payment thereof to begin at either of the said feasts that shall follow next and immediately my decease;

Item, I give toward the marriage of Elizabeth Tottishurst, now the daughter of my son, Thomas Tottishurst, forty pounds of lawful money of England;

Item, I give towards the marriage of Anne Tottishurst, another of the daughters of the said Thomas, ten pounds of lawful money of England;

Also I give to Margaret Tottishurst, to Frances Tottishurst, to Dorothy Tottishurst and Martha Tottishurst, now the daughters of the said Thomas, to each of them ten pounds apiece of lawful money of England, which said sums of money I will shall be paid to them at the day of their marriage as before is rehearsed;

And if the said Thomas Tottishurst, now the husband of my daughter, Elizabeth, do labour to have the said sums of money so given to the marriages of his said daughters in occupying to his commodity and profit until the days of their marriages, then I will the said sums of money so given shall be delivered to him by mine executors, so that the same Thomas will be bound, and sufficient sureties with him, to my executors and to my cousin, Thomas Wotton, to pay or cause to be paid to his said daughters at the days of their marriages as before is rehearsed the said sums of money so to them given and bequeathed, and also to discharge and save harmless my executors and my said cousin, Thomas Wotton, their heirs, executors and assigns, for the payment of the said sums of money as before is rehearsed;

And if the said daughters of the same Thomas Tottishurst or either of them do not use themselves honest of body during the time they be unmarried, or else not ruled & ordered touching their marriages by their father and mother, my son, Christopher Willoughby, and my cousin, Thomas Wotton, then I will that she not so using herself shall lose the benefit of the bequest so to her given and bequeathed, and her part so not ordering herself shall be divided amongst the rest of her sisters;

Furthermore, if any of the said daughters fortune to depart this world before they be married, then I will that her portion being so dead shall be also divided to the other sisters being then alive;

I give to Mary Willoughby, now one of the daughters of my son, Christopher, ten pounds to her marriage;

Item, I give to Anthony Waldron, one of the sons of my daughter Waldron, to John Willoughby, now one of the sons of my son, Christopher, and to Ambrose Tottishurst, now one of the sons of my daughter, Elizabeth, to each of them five pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid yearly during the space of seven years next and immediately following my decease towards the finding of them to their learning;

Item, I give to Thomas Tottishurst, now the eldest son of my daughter, Elizabeth, an annual rent or annuity of forty shillings of lawful money of England during the space of seven years next & immediately following my decease, to be paid to him at four usual terms of the year by even portions, that is to say, at the feasts of St Michael th' Archangel, the Nativity of Our Lord God, the Annunciation of Our Lady, and the Nativity of St John Baptist;

Item, I give to either of my waiters twenty shillings, to either of my men labourers 13s 4d, to William Webbe(?), my bailie, 13s 4d, to Agnes Heyward 40s, to three other of my maidservants, to either of them 13s 4d apiece, which foresaid money I will to be paid to my said servants within a quarter of a year next after my decease besides their quarter wages, which I will shall be paid to them by mine executors immediately after my burial;

Item, I give to John Cooke 13s 4d;

Item, I give towards the mending of the highways forty pounds, whereof £30 to be paid according to the will of Sir Thomas Willoughby, my late husband, and the other ten pounds to be bestowed of my gift in the highways likewise within the space of seven years next after my decease;

Item, I give to Agnes Heyward, my maid, a cow, to be delivered to her within a sennight after my decease;

Item, I give to Bridget Aware, sometime my servant, a cow and 6s 8d in money;

Item, I give to Christopher Jenney a featherbed and all things thereto belonging;

Also I give to him the bay ambling nag which I had of Thomas Willoughby;

Item, I give to William Basset, my servant, my gray ambling gelding;

Item, I give to my daughter, Elizabeth Tottishurst, two kine and two steers of three years old;

Item, I give to her and to my daughter, Margery Willoughby, now wife to my son, Christopher, all my apparel, egally to be divided between them;

Item, I give to my daughter Tottishurst the bed that I lie on, being a bed of down, with the blankets, coverlet and curtains & tester of red and green sarsenet, and the other curtains and tester of the same colour I give to my said son, Christopher;

Item, I give to Elizabeth Tottishurst, now daughter to my said daughter Tottishurst, the featherbed in the red(?) chamber, with all things belonging thereto;

Item, I will that the bedstedell [=bedstead] and the bed, being of down, with two pillows thereto which be now in the best chamber, with the tester and curtains of silk, with the hangings of say now there being, to remain to the house and not to be removed;

Item, the bed in the great chamber, with the bedstead, sparver and curtains thereto belonging, with two pillows of down, I will shall remain to the house and not to be removed;

And the rest of my beds, bedstedells [=bedsteads], testers and curtains not given and bequeathed I will shall be divided between mine executors;

Also I will that all the cupboards, presses, tables, treskells [=trestles], forms, stools and chairs shall remain to the house and not to be removed, saving one of the best chairs, which I give to my son, Christopher Willoughby;

Item, I will that all the kitchen stuff and a garnish of the best pewter vessel, all the buttery stuff, all the brewing vessels, barrels, kyllerkynnes(?) [=kilderkins?] and hogsheads, and all the stuff belonging to the bakehouse shall remain to the house and not to be removed, saving a brass pot being in the fish-house which I give to my son, Christopher, and a great cauldron being at Taylaur's house of Bowebeche which I give also to my son, Christopher;

Item, I will that Thomas Willoughby shall have the keeping of Anthony Waldron until such time as his father send for him, and in the meantime I will that he go to his book;

Item, I give to my son, Christopher, eleven silver spoons that be daily occupied in the house, and the silver salt with the cover that is also daily occupied at my table;

And all the rest of my plate not given and bequeathed, I will that it be sold by mine executors and the money thereof to go to the performance of this my will;

Item, I will that all the pewter vessel not bequeathed shall be divided between my son, Christopher, and Thomas Willoughby;

Item, I give to Thomas Willoughby a dozen of trencher plates of pewter, and the rest I give to my son, Christopher, and my daughter Tottishurst, to be divided between them;

Item, I give to my cousin, Thomas Wotton, a covering to a bed of crimson velvet;

Item, I give and bequeath towards the repairing of the planks at Somerden mead five pounds;

Item, I give towards the buying of such necessaries as is lacking in the church of Chiddingstone forty shillings;

Item, whereas William Bassett, my servant, heretofore had the collection of certain rents and farm going out of the manor of Chiddingstone Cobham and other lands to the use of Anne Burgh by the order and commandment of Sir Thomas Willoughby, my late husband, for the which rents the said William fully accounted unto my said husband, Sir Thomas Willoughby, and yet that notwithstanding may fortune to be called to account or impeached and molested for the same, my will is that mine executors shall save harmless and discharge the said William Bassett of all such actions, suits and demands as are or may hereafter be moved against the said William Bassett, his heirs, executors or administrators for the said rents and farm or the collection of the same, as well by the heirs, executors or administrators of the said Lord Burgh as by Mr Richard Vaughan, the husband of the said Anne Burgh, or by the said Anne Burgh, or by any other person or persons whatsoever, and also I will that my said executors shall disburse and pay all such money as shall happen to be recovered of the said William for the same or by the means thereof by any manner of wise;

And the rest of all my goods and chattel[s] not before willed, I give unto my son, Christopher, and the said Thomas Willoughby;

Item, I give to my son, Christopher Willoughby, that my tenement called Watstock with all the lands thereunto belonging set, lying and being within the parishes of Chiddingstone and Penshurst, to have and to hold the said tenement and lands thereunto belonging to the said Christopher and his heirs in such and as ample estate as the same lands and tenements or any part thereof are given, disposed, devised or bequeathed unto the said Christopher by the last will and testament of Sir Thomas Willoughby, my late husband, deceased;

Item, the rest of all my lands, tenements and hereditaments lying and being in the parishes of Chiddingstone, Sundridge, Chevening, Hever, Penshurst and Leigh or elsewhere within the county of Kent I give and bequeath to the performance of this my last will and testament and of the legacies therein given and bequeathed in manner and form following, that is to say, I give and bequeath all the rents, issues & profits of all my said lands, tenements and hereditaments now in the tenure and occupation of others (the said tenement of Watstocke only excepted) wholly unto the payment of my said legacies and of all and singular of them until the said legacies all and singular be fully satisfied, contented and paid;

And also I give and bequeath out of my mansion house of Bere Place and out of the lands and tenements now being in mine occupation and unleased the yearly sum of forty pounds of lawful money of England in like wise to be paid for the performance of my said legacies and all and singular of them until my said legacies all and singular be fully satisfied, contented & paid, the said rents, profits and yearly rent to be levied by such as shall happen to have the execution and administration of this my last will and testament for the time being;

Item, as touching the disposition of the inheritance of all my said lands, tenements and hereditaments, the said tenement of Watstock excepted and my legacies performed, I give and bequeath my tenement called Moreden with all the lands, rents, services and other things thereunto belonging lying and being within the parishes of Chiddingstone, Leigh and Penshurst unto my said son, Christopher Willoughby, and unto the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the remainder thereof unto Thomas Willoughby and unto the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the same to remain unto the right heirs of me, the said Bridget, so that the said Christopher and his said heirs males, and for lack of such issue the said Thomas and his said heir males, and for default of such issue males, my said right heirs do quietly suffer and permit the profit of the said tenement with the lands and tenements thereunto belonging to go and to be levied by such as shall happen to have the administration of this my last will and testament for the time being to the performance of this my last will and testament and unto the payment therein contained until the time my said legacies be fully satisfied, contented and paid;

And the rest of my lands, tenements and hereditaments, as well those wherein I do now dwell called Bere Place as also all my other lands and tenements lying and being within the parishes of Chiddingstone, Sundridge, Chevening, Hever, Penshurst and Leigh or elsewhere within the county of Kent, my said legacies performed, I give unto Thomas Willoughby, son and heir of Robert Willoughby, deceased, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the same to remain unto my said son, Christopher, and unto the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten, and for default of such issue the same to remain unto the right heirs of me, the said Bridget, so that the said Thomas and his heirs males, and for default of such issue the said Christopher and his heirs males, and for default of such issue, my said right heirs do yearly pay unto the performance of this my last will and testament the said sum of £40 of lawful money of England out of my said dwelling-house called Bere Place and other the lands now in mine occupation, and do also quietly suffer and permit the said issues and profits of the said lands and tenements out of my occupation wholly to go and to be levied by such as shall happen to have the administration of this my last will and testament for the time being unto the performance of this my last will and testament and unto the payment of my legacies therein contained until my said legacies be fully satisfied, contented and paid;

Item, I do ordain and make my son, Christopher Willoughby, and the said Thomas Willoughby mine executors, and my cousin, Thomas Wotton, mine overseer of my last will and testament;

Item, in case that my said executors do not take upon them the execution and administration of this my said will and testament, or that my said executors do refuse, neglect or leave undone the performance of this my last will and testament or the payment of these my said legacies, or else if it happen by death of my said executors or by any other means that my said executors cannot perform this my last will, then my will is that my said overseer shall have the full authority to perform the same and to perceive and levy all such rents and profits appointed for the payment of my said legacies until my said legacies be wholly satisfied, contented and paid. Witnesses hereof: Christopher Jenney, William Bassett.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi Testamentum coram Domino apud London decimo octavo Die Mensis Augusti Anno Domini Millesimo quingentesimo quinquagesimo octavo Iuramento Willelmi Denman Procuratoris Thome Willoughby et Christoferi Willoughby Executorum in huiusmodi testamento nominatorum Quibus commissa est Administracio &c De bene &c Ad sancta Dei Euangelia Iurati

[=The same testament was proved before the Lord [+Archbishop] at London on the eighteenth day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-eighth by the oath of William Denman, proctor of Thomas Willoughby and Christopher Willoughby, executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc.]