

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 27 April 1556 and proved 9 November 1559, of Sir William Fitzwilliam (c.1506 – 3 October 1559), whose son-in-law, Sir Thomas Browne (d. 9 February 1597), signed Lady Russell's 1596 petition against James Burbage's Blackfriars theatre.

The testator's wife was the niece of Mildred Sackville (d. before 1529?), who married, as his second wife, Lady Russell's grandfather, Sir William Fitzwilliam (d. 9 August 1534). See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 236, Vol. II, pp. 109-10.

For Lady Russell and the testator's son-in-law, Sir Thomas Browne, see Laoutaris, Chris, *Shakespeare and the Countess*, (London: Fig Tree, 2014), pp. 121, 123, 130, 176-7, 277-8, 324:

See Laoutaris, Chris, *Shakespeare and the Countess*, (London: Fig Tree, 2014), pp. 121, 123, 130, 176-7, 277-8, 324:

The Blackfriars tutelary lord William More had been seeking a patent to establish his own legal court and appoint Justices of the Peace to enforce law in the district. [Lady Russell's] brother-in-law Sir Nicholas Bacon was drawn into the scheme and was sent a list of gentlemen who could be appointed as 'commissioners for the peace within the precinct'. A further list included . . . one Thomas Browne. . . . Sir Thomas Browne, who was not merely [Lady Russell's] neighbour in the Blackfriars but her kinsman, related to both the Cooke and Fitzwilliam families. He must have been the very same who would feature as a signatory on her petition. This is made all the more likely by the fact that he was a resident of St Anne's, where [Lady Russell] worshipped in the church just south of her own house. This was the same parish that many of her other co-signatories called home. A few years later Sir Thomas would be involved with Elizabeth's close friend and kinsman Sir Henry Neville in the equipping of the 'trained shot' in Berkshire, the troops pressed into the service of the Crown during the attack of the Spanish Armada in 1588. . . . As well as his property in the Blackfriars, Browne also owned an estate in Surrey, Betchworth Castle, making him a neighbour of William More twice over.

Thomas Browne gave further ratification to the 1580 list of commissioners by appending his name for a second time to the base of the document, where it appears alongside those of William More and Lord Cobham. . . .

When [Sir Thomas Browne] put his name to [Lady Russell's] petition he had less than a year to live. When he died, in 1597, his Blackfriars property passed to his second wife, Helen Harding. The 1599 Subsidy Rolls confirm that the man who was present in the Blackfriars in 1596 and signed [Lady Russell's] petition must be this same Thomas Browne, for his name is replaced on the list of tax assessments by that of "Lady Browne". The intriguing document suggests some telling neighbourly associations, for next to her own name, and placing them as the Brownes' immediate neighbours in the parish of St Anne's, are those of 'Doctor Paddy' and 'Cuthbert Burbage'. . . .

The land on which the Globe would be built was leased from Nicholas Brend, who would later pass it on to [Lady Russell's] kinsman Sir Matthew Browne, son of the Sir Thomas Browne whose signing of [Lady Russell's] petition had helped bring them to this shift.

The testator's grandson, Sir Matthew Browne (died c.1603), was one of the trustees of Nicholas Brend (d. 12 October 1601), who leased the ground on which the Globe theatre was built by lease dated 21 February 1599 to Richard Burbage, Cuthbert Burbage, William Kempe, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, John Heminges and William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon (see TNA REQ 4/1/2). See the will, dated 2 August 1603 and proved 19 April 1608, TNA PROB 11/111/273, of Sir Matthew Browne (died c.1603).

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The testator was a descendant of Sir Jenico d'Artois (c.1350 – November 1426), for whom see the Wikipedia entry at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenico_d%27Artois

Sir Jenico d'Artois, Dartas, Dartass or Dartasso (c.1350 – November 1426) was a Gascony-born soldier and statesman, much of whose career was spent in Ireland. He enjoyed the trust and confidence of three successive English monarchs. . . .

By his first marriage, Sir Jenico d'Artois had a son, Sir Jenico d'Artois the younger, who married Jane Serjeant, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Robert Serjeant of Castleknock, by whom he had an only daughter and heiress, Margaret d'Artois, who married firstly Sir John Dowdall of Newtown, county Kildare; secondly Thomas Barnewall; and thirdly Roland FitzEustace (d.1496), 1st Baron Portlester.

For Sir John Dowdall, see:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/soc.genealogy.medieval/GBB52ZizNi0>

Testator's father

The testator was the second son of Thomas Fitzwilliam (c.1465-1517), of Baggotrath Castle, Dublin. See:

<http://humphrysfamilytree.com/Fitzwilliam/irish.thomas.html>

See also 'Baggotrath' in Ball, Francis Elrington, *A History of the County of Dublin*, Part Second, (Dublin: Alen, Thom & Co. Limited, 1903), pp. 42-8, available as a pdf file online at:

<http://humphrysfamilytree.com/sources.local.html#ball>

Testator's mother

The testator's mother was Eleanor Dowdall. According to *The Irish Compendium*, she was the daughter of John Dowdall, esquire, third son to Sir John Dowdall of Newtown, and Margaret d'Artois, daughter of Sir Jenico d'Artois the younger and Jane Serjeant. See *The Irish Compendium*, 5th ed., (London: J. Knapton, 1756), p. 297 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=HIJcAAAACAAJ&pg=PA297>

As noted above, Eleanor Dowdall was the step-daughter of Roland FitzEustace (d.1496), 1st Baron Portlester, father-in-law of Gerald Fitzgerald (c.1456-1513, 8th Earl of Kildare. See the *ODNB* entry for Roland FitzEustace:

Roland married . . . third, Margaret Dartas (or Marguerite d'Artois), widow of John Dowdall and of Thomas Barnewall. In 1455 he built St Mary's Chapel in St Audoen's parish church, Dublin, and later erected there 'a goodly monument' with recumbent effigies of himself and his wife Margaret, remains of which survive.

See also the Wikipedia entry for the testator at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Fitzwilliam_\(died_1559\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Fitzwilliam_(died_1559))

See also the *ODNB* entry for the testator:

Sir William Fitzwilliam (c. 1506–1559) was the second son of Thomas Fitzwilliam of Baggotrath, co. Dublin, and his wife, Eleanor, daughter of John Dowdall and his wife, Margaret. He never served in Henry's privy chamber but throughout the 1540s was being groomed to serve Edward. Fitzwilliam's father was at one time sheriff of Dublin, and his family had a long history of serving in the Irish administration. He was possibly admitted to Gray's Inn in 1531. Fitzwilliam first came to prominence by his service to his namesake Sir William Fitzwilliam, later earl of Southampton. There is no evidence as to how he entered service with Sir William though it is possible that they were kinsmen. By 1536 Sir William Fitzwilliam was referring to him as his 'trusty servant', and he was his principal servant by 1539 (LP Henry VIII, 11.128). He may have sat as MP for Guildford in 1539 and certainly did so in 1542, through the patronage of his master. He was MP again three times between 1547 and 1559. By 1539 he had married Jane (d. after 1559), daughter and coheir of John Roberts of Cranbrook in Kent. They had four daughters.

Southampton died in 1543, and the following year Fitzwilliam was appointed to be a gentleman in Prince Edward's privy chamber. By November 1545 he was the chief gentleman, and when Edward succeeded to the throne in 1547, Fitzwilliam followed him into his privy chamber as a gentleman, where he continued to serve for the rest of the

reign. He was knighted between September 1551 and May 1552. He died on 3 October 1559 and was buried in St George's Chapel, Windsor.

See also the History of Parliament entry for the testator at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/fitzwilliam-sir-william-i-1559>

See also Nichols, John Gough, ed., *The Topographer and Genealogist*, Vol. III, (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Sons, 1858), p. 406 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=Nh0IAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA406>

See also Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 414 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=kjme027UeagC&pg=PA414>

Testator's siblings

The testator had two brothers and two sisters:

(1) Richard Fitzwilliam (c.1495-1528), Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Henry VIII. He married Katherine Bathe, the daughter of Robert Bathe, esquire, of Kepocke [=Cappoge Castle?], county Dublin, by whom he had three sons and a daughter: Sir Thomas Fitzwilliam (c.1519 - 9 November 1592), who married Genet Finglas, the daughter of Patrick Finglas (d.1537) of Westpalstown, county Dublin, Chief Baron of the Exchequer; Michael Fitzwilliam, who married Mary Preston, the daughter of Jenico Preston, 3rd Viscount Gormanston; John Fitzwilliam; and Katherine Fitzwilliam, (d.1574) who married John Cashell. See *The Irish Compendium*, *supra*, pp. 297-8, and Ball, *supra*, pp. 45-6, and:

<http://humphrysfamilytree.com/Fitzwilliam/irish.sir.thomas.html>

(2) Nicholas Fitzwilliam, a priest, treasurer of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

(3) Alison Fitzwilliam, who married firstly, in 1524, Christopher Usher (c.1465-30 January 1526), esquire, mayor of Dublin in 1518 and 1524; secondly Sir(?) James Fitz-Simons, gentleman, of Dublin; and thirdly John Sedgrave, alderman. See *The Irish Compendium*, *supra*, p. 297. In the will below the testator refers to her as 'Dame Alsone, Lady Fitz Symonds', and mentions his nephew, Thomas Fitz Symonds, 'now at Oxford'. See Foster, Joseph, *Alumni Oxonienses*, Vol. II, (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1891), p. 504 at:

<https://archive.org/details/alumnioxoniensi00oxfogoog/page/n80>

(4) Margaret Fitzwilliam, who married William Walsh, esquire, of Carrigmaine, county Dublin. See *The Irish Compendium, supra*, p. 297. He may have been related to Walter Walsh (d.1538), son of John Walsh and Elizabeth Blount, who, like the testator, was a Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber.

For the testator's siblings, see also Lodge, John, *The Peerage of Ireland*, Vol. III, (Dublin: J. Leathley, 1756), p. 4 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=SGw9AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA4>

MARRIAGE AND ISSUE

The testator married, by 1539, Jane Roberts (d.1575?), the daughter and co-heiress of John Roberts by Mary Sackville, the daughter of Richard Sackville (d. 28 July 1524) of Withyham, Sussex, and Isabel Digges, the daughter of John Digges of Barham, Kent. For Richard Sackville and Isabel Digges and their children, see his will, TNA PROB 11/21/446, and the inquisition post mortem taken after his death in Attree, F.W.T., *Notes of Post Mortem Inquisitions Taken in Sussex*, Sussex Record Society, Vol. XIV, (London: Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, 1912), p. 196 at:

<https://archive.org/details/notesofpostmorte00greauoft/page/196>

See also Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, p. 656; and Brydges, Egerton, *Collins's Peerage of England*, Vol. II, (London: F.C. and J. Rivington, 1812), pp. 103-4 at:

http://archive.org/stream/collinsspeerage_02coll#page/102/mode/2up

The testator's father-in-law, John Roberts, was the son of Walter Roberts (d.1522) of Glassenbury, Kent. See the will of Walter Roberts, TNA PROB 11/20/22, and:

Edward Hasted, 'Parishes: Cranbrooke', in *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 7* (Canterbury, 1798), pp. 90-113. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-kent/vol7/pp90-113> [accessed 23 October 2018].

[Walter Roberts] died in the year 1522, aged more than eighty years, and was buried under the old tomb on the north side of the south chancel. . . .

The testator's mother-in-law, Mary Sackville, was the sister of Mildred Sackville, who, as noted above, married, as his second wife, Sir William Fitzwilliam (d. 9 August 1534), grandfather of Lady Burghley, Lady Bacon, and Lady Russell. See *Plantagenet Ancestry, supra*.

The testator's mother-in-law, Mary Sackville, was also the sister of John Sackville (by 1484-1557), who married firstly Margaret Boleyn (died c.1533), sister of Thomas Boleyn

(c.1477 – 12 March 1539), 1st Earl of Wiltshire. For John Sackville, see his will, dated 1 July 1556, TNA PROB 11/42B/539, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/sackville-john-i-1484-1557>

b. by 17 Mar. 1484, 1st s. of Richard Sackville of Withyham by Isabel, da. of John Digges of Barham Kent, bro. of Richard Sackville I. m. (1) by 1507, Margaret, da. of Sir William Boleyn of Blickling, Norf., 3s. Christopher, John II and Richard Sackville II 3da.; (2) by 1534, Anne, da. of Humphrey Torrell of Willingale Doe; Essex, s.p. suc. fa. 28 July 1524.1

The testator's wife, Jane Roberts, was a first cousin of John Sackville's eldest son, Sir Richard Sackville (by 1507 – 21 April 1566), for whom see the *ODNB* entry, and the History of Parliament entry at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/sackville-sir-richard-1507-66>

For the will of the testator's wife, Jane Roberts, see TNA PROB 11/57/533.

By Jane Roberts, the testator had four daughters:

* **Mabel Fitzwilliam** (d.1564?), who married Sir Thomas Browne (d. 9 February 1597), only son of Henry Browne (d.1545?), esquire, by his first wife, Katherine Shelley, the daughter of Sir William Shelley (d. 4 January 1549) of Michelgrove (in Clapham), Sussex, and Alice Belknap, the daughter of Henry Belknap (d. 3 July 1488), esquire. For the will of Henry Browne, see TNA PROB 11/32/421. For the will of Henry Belknap, proved 2 December 1488, see TNA PROB 11/8/280. Alice Belknap's sister, Elizabeth Belknap, married Sir Philip Cooke (c.1454 - 7 December 1503) of Gidea Hall (in Havering), Essex, by whom she was the grandmother of Sir Anthony Cooke (d. 11 June 1576), and the great-grandmother of Sir Anthony Cooke's five daughters, including Lady Burghley, Lady Bacon and Lady Russell. See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, pp. 232-7. For the inquisition post mortem taken in 1574/5 concerning the heir of Mabel Fitzwilliam, see TNA C 142/170/5.

By Sir Thomas Browne, Mabel Fitzwilliam was the mother of a son and two daughters:

(1) Sir Matthew Browne (died c.1603), the trustee of Nicholas Brend, owner of the land on which the Globe Theatre was built. See *Plantagenet Ancestry*, *supra*, Vol. I, p. 414.

For the will of Nicholas Brend, in which he names Sir Mathew Browne as one of his overseers, see TNA PROB 11/98/348.

(2) Jane Browne, who married Sir Oliph Leigh (d.1612). See the History of Parliament entry for their son, Sir Francis Leigh (1590-1644) at:

<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1604-1629/member/leigh-sir-francis-ii-1590-1644>

bap. 6 Sept. 1590, o.s. of Sir Oliph Leigh of Addington and Jane, da. of Sir Thomas Browne† of Betchworth Castle, Surr. educ. Trin., Oxf. 1607; I. Temple 1610. m. (1) 5 June 1610, Elizabeth (d. 1 Dec. 1615), da. and h. of William Mynterne of Thorpe, Surr., 3s. (2 d.v.p.) 1da.; (2) by 1619, Christian (d. c.1660), da. of Sir John Thynne of Longleat, Wilts., 6s. (2 d.v.p.) 2da. (1 d.v.p.). suc. fa. 1612; 1 kntd. Jan. 1613. 2 d. 13 Dec. 1644.3*

(3) Elizabeth Browne, who married, in 1584, as his second wife, Robert Honeywood (1545-1627) of Marks Hall, who married firstly, in 1569, Dorothy Croke, the daughter of John Croke and Dorothy Theobald. Robert Honeywood was the son of Robert Honeywood (1525-1576) of Charing, Kent, and Mary Waters (d. 11 May 1620), the daughter and coheir of Robert Waters of Lenham, Kent. See the pedigree of Honeywood of Evington, Kent, in *The English Baronetage*, Vol. III, Part I, (London: Thomas Wotton, 1741), p. 106 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=2GQUAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA106>

It should be noted that on 23 May 1584, Oxford acknowledged a bond of £3000 to ‘Honeywood’, likely Robert Honeywood (1545-1627). See TNA PRO 30/34/14.

After the death of the testator’s daughter, Mabel Fitzwilliam, Sir Thomas Browne married secondly, by 1 August 1575, Helen Harding (1537-1601), the daughter and heiress of William Harding (d. September 1549), and widow of the Gentleman Pensioner Richard Knyvet (d. 1 November 1559), cousin of the half blood of Sir Henry Knyvet (d.1546?), Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, grandfather of Oxford’s mistress, Anne Vavasour, and father of Sir Thomas Knyvet (1546 – 27 July 1622), who fought with Oxford over the ‘quarrel of Anne Vavasour’, an altercation in which Oxford was hurt and his man ‘Gerret’ slain, according to an entry in the diary of Richard Madox for 1-3 March 1582 (see BL MS Cotton, Appendix 47, f. 7v). See the will of Sir Henry Knyvet, TNA PROB 11/32/4.

By Helen Harding, Sir Thomas Browne had one son:

(1) Richard Browne, to whom his mother left her property in the Blackfriars. See her will, TNA PROB 11/98/226:

And whereas heretofore I have heretofore purchased th’ inheritance of the house, gardens, wharf and buildings in the Blackfriars, London, now in my own use and possession Now I do hereby declare my full mind and intent to be that the whole fee simple of the said house, gardens, buildings and profits thereunto belonging shall be . . . immediately after my decease conveyed and assured to and for the use of my son, Richard Browne, or his heirs, if he be then living at the time of my decease.

* **Katherine Fitzwilliam** (1542-1583), who married, as his first wife, Christopher Preston (1536/7–1600), 4th Viscount Gormanston, by whom she had a daughter, Jane Preston. After the death of Katherine Fitzwilliam (1542-1583), Christopher Preston married a second wife, also named Katherine Fitzwilliam (d.1602?). See the *ODNB* entry for Thomas Preston, 1st Viscount Tara:

Preston, Thomas, first Viscount Tara (b. in or after 1585, d. 1655), soldier, was the second son of Christopher Preston, fourth Viscount Gormanstown (1536/7–1600), and his second wife, Catherine Fitzwilliam (d. 1602?), daughter of Sir Thomas Fitzwilliam of Baggotsrath, co. Dublin.

See also *Sharp's Peerage of the British Empire*, Vol. I, (London: John Sharpe, n.d.), p. 2 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=j8Mda-vvDxEC&pg=RA50-PA2>

See also Cracroft's Peerage at:

<http://www.cracroftspeerage.co.uk/online/content/gormanston1478.htm>

* **Elizabeth Fitzwilliam** the elder.

* **Elizabeth Fitzwilliam** the younger.

One of the testator's daughters named Elizabeth (b.1544?) married Francis Jermy (d.1611?) of Brightwell, the son of Sir John Jermy and Margaret Teye, eldest daughter and coheir of Sir Thomas Teye, by whom, according to the will below, she had a daughter, Jane Jermy. See the pedigree of Jermy in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Suffolk*, (Exeter: William Pollard, 1882), p. 196 at:

<https://archive.org/details/visitationsofsuf00harvuoft/page/196>

See also the Jermy pedigree in Rye, Walter, ed., *The Visitacion of Norfolk*, (London: Harleian Society, 1891), Vol. XXXII, p. 173 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=HS8EAAAIAAJ&pg=PA173>

See also Blomefield, Francis, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, Vol. V, (London: William Miller, 1806), p. 387 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=3kouAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA387>

The other daughter of the testator named Elizabeth married Innocent Rede, esquire, by whom she had a daughter, Anne Rede. According to a Chancery suit dated 26 November 1586, TNA C 78/120/19, Innocent Rede was the son of Sir Richard Rede (d. September

1560?) of Redbourn, Hertfordshire. See the will of Sir Richard Rede, dated 27 March 1559, but not proved until 11 July 1576, TNA PROB 11/58/251, and Ball, F. Elrington, *The Judges in Ireland, 1221-1921*, Vol. I, (London: John Murray, 1926), p. 204 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=rqeSXWqKAD8C&pg=PA204>

For the testator's daughters, see also 'The Manor of Beadlow' at:

<http://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/CommunityArchives/Beadlow/TheManorOfBeadlow.aspx>

In 1553 King Edward VI (1547-1553) gave Beadlow Manor to Sir William Fitzwilliam and his wife Joan. He died in 1558 and she died shortly afterwards [sic], leaving the manor to be divided between their four daughters Mabel, wife of Thomas Browne, Katherine, wife of Christopher, Viscount Gormanston, Elizabeth, wife of Francis Jermye and another Elizabeth, wife of Innocent Rede. Mabel died in 1564 and was succeeded by her son Matthew who sold his share to Richard Charnock in 1585. This gave him the whole of the manor as he had already acquired the quarter shares of the other three Fitzwilliam girls.

OTHER PERSONS NAMED IN THE WILL

For Sir Henry Neville, see the *ODNB* entry:

Sir Henry Neville (c. 1520–1593) was the second son of Sir Edward Neville (d. 1538), alleged conspirator, of Addington Park in Kent, and his wife, Eleanor, daughter of Andrew Windsor, first Baron Windsor, and his wife, Elizabeth. He came from noble stock, and it can be said that his appointment to the privy chamber was not because of this, but rather despite it. His father was the brother of George Neville, third Baron Bergavenny, and had been at one time a favourite of the king. However, he was executed on 9 January 1539 as a consequence of the Courtenay conspiracy. His children, though, did not suffer. Henry Neville, the younger son, was the king's godson and an annuity of £20 was granted to him in October 1539, only nine months after his father's execution. It is possible that he had been destined for a diplomatic career, for in March 1542 he was with the French ambassador. However, by 1546 he was a groom of the privy chamber—a considerable prize for the son of an alleged traitor.

In the will below the testator refers to John Teye as his brother-in-law. The relationship is unclear. As noted above, the testator's daughter, Elizabeth Fitzwilliam, married Francis Jermy (d.1611?), the son of Sir John Jermy and Margaret Teye, eldest daughter and coheir of Sir Thomas Teye. Two of Margaret Teye's younger sisters married brothers of John Neville, 3rd Baron Latimer, for whose will see TNA PROB 11/29/303. The 3rd Baron Latimer's brother, Sir Thomas Neville of Piggotts Hall in Ardleigh, Essex, married Mary Teye, while another brother, Marmaduke Neville of Marks Tey, married Elizabeth Teye.

TESTATOR'S LANDS

For the manors of Highclere and Burghclere, which were granted to the testator by Edward VI on 22 September 1551, see Meeson, R. and W.N. Welsby, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer*, Vol. XIII, (Philadelphia: T. & J.W. Johnson, Law Booksellers, 1846), p. 492 at:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=esQaAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA492>

See also:

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Highclere-Castle>

See also:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000109>

For the testator's manor of Northill, Bedfordshire, see TNA C 147/343, TNA C 8/2/23, and:

'Parishes: Northill', in *A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 3*, ed. William Page (London, 1912), pp. 242-251. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/beds/vol3/pp242-251> [accessed 26 October 2018].

At the Dissolution Northill College Manor passed to the Crown, and in 1549 it was granted to Sir William Fitz William, who died in 1559, being succeeded by his widow, the Lady Joan. (fn. 31) After her death in 1575 the manor, which was held of the queen in chief for one-hundredth part of a knight's fee, was divided between Sir Thomas Browne, who had married Mabel, (fn. 32) one of the daughters and co-heirs of Sir William Fitz William, and his other surviving daughters, Katherine wife of Christopher Viscount Gormanston, Elizabeth wife of Innocent Rede and Elizabeth wife of Francis Jermy. (fn. 33) Sir Thomas Browne acquired two of the last three moieties in 1577 and 1580 respectively, and Katherine died without issue, (fn. 34) so that eventually the whole of the manor reverted to Richard Browne son of Sir Thomas, who was in possession in 1597. (fn. 35) In 1610 he sold the manor to Edward Osborne of the Inner Temple. . . .

RM: T{estamentum}Will{el}mi ffitzwilliam

In dei nomine Amen. I, William Fitzwilliam, knight, dwelling in the Great Park of Windsor, being in good health of body, whole of mine and memory, thanks be unto God, do ordain and make this my last will and testament in form following:

First I give and beseech Almighty God to receive my soul to be numbered amongst his saints in joy everlasting, and require my friends to lay my body in the earth at their discretion;

Item, I bequeath unto Thomas Fitzwilliam, my nephew, my best gown, and do clearly forgive him all such debts as he oweth me;

Also I will he shall have my best coat;

Item, I will that my nephew, Michael [f. 422v] Fitzwilliam, shall have my second best gown and second best coat;

Also I do forgive him all such debts as he oweth me;

Item, I will that my nephew, John Fitzwilliam, shall have six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence in current money of England;

Item, I will that my loving sister, Margaret Walsh, shall have the little bell of silver which Mr Page gave me;

Also I will that my loving sister, Dame Alson [=Alison?], Lady Fitz Symonds, shall have a ring with a small turquoise which I do use to wear;

Item, I will that Thomas Fitz Symonds, my nephew, now at Oxford, shall have the advowson of the parsonage of Trim in Ireland if he shall attain to learning and be meet for the same;

And if not, then my nephews, Thomas and Michael Fitzwilliam, to appoint the same unto some other of our kin that shall be meet therefore;

Item, I will that every one of my servants which shall be in my service at the time of my departure out of this life shall have one whole year's wages;

Also I will that my servant, Christopher Cotton other [=alias?] Rasare(?) shall have during his natural life out of my lordship of Norrell [=Northill?] yearly four pounds in case he will justly and honestly serve my wife, with honest finding and livery as appertaineth etc.;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my loving wife, Jane, my house in Cannon Row during all her natural life without anything paying therefore;

And after her decease out of this life, then I will that my daughter, Mabel, shall have my said house unto her and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten;

And for lack of such issue then I will that my daughter, Elizabeth th' elder, shall have the same to her and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten;

And for lack of such heirs then to my daughter, Katherine, and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten;

And for lack of such heirs, then I will that my daughter, Elizabeth the younger, shall have the same to her and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten;

And for lack of such heirs, then to the right heirs of me, the said William Fitzwilliam, forever;

Item, I will that my said wife shall have my manors of Highclere and Burghclere with all other my lands and tenements in Hampshire during her natural life without anything paying [-there] therefore;

And after her decease all the same to remain unto my said three daughters, Elizabeth, Katherine and Elizabeth the younger, to be divided accordingly [sic?] to the laws of this realm, to have and to hold the same unto them and every of them and to the heirs of every their bodies lawfully begotten;

And for lack of such heirs to the right heirs of me, the said [+Sir William?] Fitzwilliam, forever;

Item, I do charge my said loving wife as far as God giveth me power that she shall see the honest and good bringing up of my said children in all honesty and virtue, and find them all honest necessities for their bodies and sustenance, so that they reverently and obediently will be advised and ordered by her until such time as it shall please God they may be able to help themselves, and at their convenient years she to help them to honest marriages to her power if they shall be so minded etc.;

For the true executing of this my last will and testament I do ordain and make my said loving wife my whole and sole executrix, and do give and will unto her, she performing this my last will and testament and paying all my debts, all my goods and chattels, as well movable as unmovable, to be ordered and [-and] distributed at her will and pleasure;

And I most heartily desire my loving friends, Sir Henry Neville, knight, and my brother-in-law, John Taye [=Teye], and John Danyell to be aiding and assisting unto my said wife in executing of this my will, and for their pains so taking I will that every one of them shall have a horse or gelding at my wife's appointing;

Also I most heartily require them to be good and friendly unto my poor wife and children in all their reasonable and good causes for God's sake etc.;

In witness that this is my very true and last will written with mine own hand and signed on both sides I have set my seal the twenty and seven day of April in the second and third years of the reign of our Sovereign Lord and Lady, King Philip and Queen Mary, by the grace of God King and Queen of England, France and Ireland etc. and the year of Our

Lord a thousand five hundred fifty and six. By me, William Fitzwilliam. Witness of this to be his last will, John Tey, John Danyell.

Probat{um} fuit suprascriptum testamentum cora{m} Custode Curie prerogatiue cantuariensis nono die mensis nouembris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo quingentesimo quinquagesimo nono Iurament{o} Petri Johnson L{ite}rati procuratoris D{omi}ne Iane Relic{t}e et executricis in huiusmodi testamento nominatate Ac approbatum et insinuatum Commissaque fuit administratio omnium et singulorum bonorum Iurium &c prefate executrici de bene &c Ac de pleno et fidei Inventario Necnon de vero et plano compot{o} Reddend{o} &c Iurat{e}

[=The above-written testament was proved before the Keeper of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on the ninth day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred fifty-ninth by the oath of Peter Johnson, learned, proctor of Dame Jane, relict and executrix named in the same testament, and probated and entered, and administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights etc. to the forenamed executrix, sworn to well etc., and [+to exhibit?] a full and faithful inventory, and also to render a true and plain account etc.]