

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 10 November 1576 and proved 13 December 1576 of Sir Edward Saunders (1506–1576), Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

The testator was the eldest surviving son of Thomas Saunders (d. 1528) of Sibbertoft, Northamptonshire, by Margaret Cave, the daughter of Richard Cave (d.1538) of Stanford, Northamptonshire and his first wife, Elizabeth Mervin (d. 9 August 1493). After the death of Thomas Saunders in 1528, Margaret (nee Cave) Saunders married Robert Chauntrell, esquire, of Foxton, Northamptonshire. See the summary of the will of her father, Richard Cave (d.1538), in which she is referred to as ‘my daughter Chauntrell’, in Waters, Robert Edmond Chester, *Genealogical Memoirs of the Extinct Family of Chester of Chicheley*, Vol. I, (London: Robson and Sons, 1878), pp. 75-80. She is mentioned in the will below in connection with an earlier lease in which she had been named as ‘Margery Chauntrell, widow’.

In the will below, the testator leaves a bequest to his first cousin, Francis Saunders (d.1585), the son of William Saunders (d.1542) of Welford. William Saunders (d.1542) of Welford and the testator’s father, Thomas Saunders (d.1528) of Sibbertoft, were brothers, the third and fourth sons of Edward Saunders of Harrington and his wife, Joan, the daughter of Richard and Felice Makerneys of Wolfhampcote. See the pedigree of Saunders of Little Bowden in Metcalfe, Walter C., ed., *The Visitations of Northamptonshire*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1887), p. 44 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/visitationsofnor00harvrich#page/44/mode/2up>.

See also the pedigree in Winchester, Barbara, *Tudor Family Portrait*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955), p. 17.

See also Agutter, Doreen, ‘Edward Saunders of Harrington and Rothwell, Northamptonshire’, *Monumental Brass Society*, Bulletin 115, (September 2010), pp. 288-9, at:

<http://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/Bulletin.html>.

By his second wife, Dorothy (nee Yonge) Haddon Saunders Dayrell (d.1572), William Saunders (d.1542) was the father of George Saunders, murdered on 25 March 1573 by Oxford’s former servant, George Browne. The murder was the subject of a pamphlet by Oxford’s uncle, Arthur Golding (1535/6-1606), *Brief Discourse of the Late Murther of Master George Saunders*, and an anonymous play, *A Warning for Fair Women*, performed by the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. The testator was thus a first cousin of the murdered George Saunders.

For the testator’s family background, see also the will of the testator’s uncle, Lawrence Saunders (d.1544), TNA PROB 11/30/232; the will of the testator’s uncle, Thomas Saunders (d.1528), TNA PROB 11/22/481; the will of the testator’s uncle, William

Saunders of Welford, TNA PROB 11/28/488; the will of the testator's aunt, Dorothy (nee Yonge) Haddon Saunders Dayrell (d. 18 January 1574), TNA PROB 11/56/39; the will of the testator's first cousin, Francis Saunders, TNA PROB 11/68/442; the will of the testator's brother, Robert Saunders, TNA PROB 11/43/474; the will of the testator's brother, Ambrose Saunders (d.1586), TNA PROB 11/69/469; the will of the testator's brother, Blase Saunders, TNA PROB 11/63/486; and the *ODNB* article on the testator's brother, the Protestant martyr, Lawrence Saunders (d.1555).

For the testator's biography, see the entry in the *ODNB* and:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/saunders-edward-1506-76>.

The testator married firstly, Margaret Englefield (d.1563), the daughter of Sir Thomas Englefield (1488-1537) of Englefield, Berkshire (for whose will see TNA PROB 11/27/152), and Elizabeth Throckmorton (d. 1543) of Coughton, Warwickshire, the daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton (d.1518) and Katherine Marowe. Margaret Englefield (d.1563) was the sister of the courtier and Roman Catholic exile, Sir Francis Englefield (1522–1596), and at the time she married the testator was the widow of George Carew (d.1538). Both George Carew (d.1538) and Oxford were descended from Joan Courtney, heiress of her mother, Philippe l'Arcedekne, a descendant of Geoffrey Plantagenet. Joan Courtney (died c. 1465) married firstly, Sir Nicholas Carew (died c. 1448), and secondly Sir Robert Vere (died c. 1461). See Richardson, Douglas, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, 2nd ed., 2011, Vol. I, pp. 476-7, 584-5; Vol. II, pp. 194-6; *The Visitation of the County of Cornwall*, p. 31; and the pedigree of Carew of Crowcombe, which states that George Carew (d.1538), esquire, of Stoodleigh and Camerton, Somerset, was the son of John Carew, esquire, and his wife, Margaret, the daughter of William Kelly, esquire, and the great-grandson of Joan Courtenay (died c. 1465).

By his first wife, Margaret (nee Englefield) Carew Saunders, the testator had one daughter, Mary Saunders, who married Thomas Morgan.

The testator married secondly, Agnes (nee Hussey) More Curzon (d.1588), the daughter of John Hussey and Agnes Spence. She had been twice married, firstly to Roger More, and secondly to Thomas Curzon, whose mother was Isabel Saunders, sister to the testator's father, Thomas Saunders (d.1528) of Sibbertoft. See Pennant, Thomas, *The Journey from Chester to London*, (London: Wilkie and Robinson, 1811), p. 558, and:

<http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=ancestorsearch&id=I30060>.

For the will of Agnes (nee Hussey) More Curzon Saunders (d.1588), see TNA PROB 11/73/69. For the will of her first husband, Roger More (d.1551), Serjeant of the Acatry, see TNA PROB 11/35/90.

Sir Christopher Hatton (c.1540-1591), appointed by the testator as overseer of the will, was the son of the testator's first cousin, Alice Saunders, daughter of Laurence Saunders, second son of Edward Saunders of Harrington and his wife, Joan, the daughter of Richard and Felice Makerneys of Wolfhampcote (see above).

For the will of the testator's brother, Blase Saunders, mentioned in the will below, see TNA PROB 11/63/486.

LM: T{estamentum} Edwardi Saunders Mi{li}t{is} principalis baronis sc{accar}ij

[f. 298v] In the name of God Amen. The tenth day of November in the year of Our Lord God one thousand five hundred threescore and sixteen and in the eighteenth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith etc., I, Sir Edward Saunders, knight, Chief Baron of the Queen's Majesty's Court of her Exchequer, being at this present sick in body and yet in good and perfect mind and memory, thanks be given to Almighty God, calling to remembrance that to all men in this transitory world is nothing more certain and sure than death, and yet nevertheless nothing more uncertain than the hour thereof, do ordain and make my last will and testament in manner and form following, wherein first I bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, not doubting but that as he of his great goodness hath created it and with his precious blood hath redeemed it, so of his infinite mercy he will save it amongst his saints in his glorious kingdom;

And I will my body to be buried in the parish church of Weston under Wetherley in the county of Warwick;

And whereas before this time by my deed of gift bearing date the last day of October last past before the making hereof, upon confidence and trust which I had and have in the right honourable and my very good and trusty friend, Sir Walter Mildmay, knight, Chancellor of the Exchequer and one of the Queen's Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, Edmund Plowden, esquire, my cousin William Saunders of Hetherington [=Harrington], esquire, and in my trusty and well-beloved servants Humphrey Dyke and Lawrence Eyton, I did fully give and grant unto them, the said Sir Walter Mildmay, Edmund Plowden, William Saunders, Humphrey Dyke and Lawrence Eyton, all my goods and chattels real and personal, movable and unmovable, whatsoever and wheresoever they then were, to and for the uses in the same deed contained and to and for such other uses as in this my last will and testament should be limited, appointed and declared, now I will and ordain by this my present testament that the said grantees and th' executors of this my last will and testament shall with my said goods and chattels in the said deed mentioned, and with the rights and debts which may come unto them by this my present testament, not only well and truly perform and fulfil all and singular the uses and intents in my said deed of gift expressed, but also all and singular the uses, intents and things hereafter in this my present will limited and appointed, that is to say:

First I will that of my said goods and chattels, rights and debts there shall be bestowed in and about my funerals such sum of money as [-to] my said grantees and executors shall think good;

Also I will that my said grantees and executors shall consider and go through with some lawful devise and order for th' assurance of my well-beloved wife, [f. 299r] Dame Agnes Saunders, for the true performance of all those charges, covenants and yearly payments expressed and contained in the indentures of the marriage between her and me in as short time as they can after my decease if she shall chance to overlive me, and that all and every thing unto her to be delivered, paid, done and performed be well and truly done and executed according to the tenor, effect & true meaning of my agreements by writing for her or to her use made;

Also I will and desire my said grantees and executors to procure and cause some devise to be made that my said wife may peaceably occupy and enjoy the pastures of Foxton in the county of Northampton that now be in mine own occupation during her life, with allowance of tynsell [=tinsel?] with meet wood for the making and repairing of hedges and gates being necessary to be maintained for the fencing and keeping in safety those enclosures out of the woods of the same manor of Foxton, she paying for the same yearly unto mine heir and heirs for the time being one red rose at the feast of St John the Baptist if it be lawfully asked;

Also my will and meaning is that my cousin, Francis Saunders of Welford, shall have one basin and an ewer of silver and gilt having thereon the Saunders arms alone, my circuit gown of London russet faced with marten, my greatest bible being at Sherbourne, my Abridgement of Fitzherbert, being also there, and one hundred pounds of lawful English money, desiring him to be good unto my son-in-law, Thomas Morgan, and to my daughter, his wife, with favour, friendship, succour and help as he may show unto them, and in like manner unto my brother, Ambrose, and other my kinsfolks and friends;

Also I will that my said son-in-law, Thomas Morgan, shall have my best gown, being of double taffeta;

Also I will that my brother, Ambrose Saunders, shall have the term and interest which I have in Northorpe tithes upon condition that he and his assigns shall pay yearly unto my said son, Thomas Morgan, and to my said daughter and to their executors for and during the life of Mr Windell for and towards the finding of the said Mr Windell five pounds of lawful English money at the feasts of St John Baptist and the Nativity of Our Lord God by even portions;

Item, I will and devise unto my said son and to my said daughter all my estate and interest in the parsonage and tithes of Theddingworth within the county of Leicester upon condition also that they shall employ and bestow yearly upon the finding of the said Mr Windell £5(?) over and besides the five pounds before appointed for his finding to be paid by the said Ambrose Saunders, and my intent and meaning is that during the life of the said Mr Windell my said son and daughter and their executors shall pay the rent

therefore due to the lord or lords thereof, and that after the decease of the said Mr Windell my said brother, Ambrose, shall pay yearly unto my said son and daughter and their executors towards the payment of the rent due to the lord or lords thereof, being fourteen pounds, the yearly sum of four pounds at such feasts and times as the same is or shall be due, and the ten pounds residue I will to be paid by my said son and daughter during the continuance of the said lease, and my intent is further that if my said son shall go about to do or suffer any act or thing whereby my said daughter may not enjoy the said parsonage and tithes after the decease of my said son, her husband, if she should fortune to survive him, discharged of all encumbrances done by him, then his estate shall cease, and that he shall receive no profit thereof during his life;

Also I will that the said Lawrence Eyton shall have an hundred pounds of lawful English money to be employed to the profit of Edward Eyton, my godson;

Also I will that Barnarde [=Bernard?] Saunders, my godson, shall have twenty pounds of like money;

Also that Blase Katesby [=Catesby?] and William Turnor, either of them shall have twenty pounds of like money;

And I will and give unto Haselwod [=Haslewood?] five pounds;

Also I will that my servant, Robert Jenson, shall have Smythe's farm in Sibbertoft with St John's lands and all the lands therewith occupied heretofore except a small piece of ground lying on the backside of Curzon's farm now in th' occupation of my said brother, Ambrose, to have, hold, occupy and enjoy for the term of thirty years next after my decease, yielding therefore yearly twenty shillings of rent at Michaelmas to my right heir, and I give also unto the said Robert Jenson fifty pounds of lawful money towards the stocking and storing of the said farm;

Also I will that all persons unto whom I have made any leases of any farms, lands or tenements shall have and enjoy the same farms, lands and tenements for such terms of years as are contained in their leases and upon the same rents & covenants they have taken them, the lease made unto my brother, Ambrose Saunders, of the house and lands which Jenson shall have in Sibbertoft and one other lease of the site of the manor [f. 299v] of Foxton and of divers lands there now in the tenure of Philip Havarde, gentleman, or of Margery Chauntrell, widow, heretofore made unto the said Philip for certain years to begin immediately after the decease of the said Margery Chauntrell, widow, only excepted;

Also I will and devise unto my wife two salts with a cover of silver and gilt, one cup of silver and gilt with a cover, a tankard of silver and gilt with a cover, one little cup of silver with two elephants' heads thereto annexed, and one little flagon of silver which I have appointed and set forth for her, and all her apparel, chains, bracelets, rings and other attire and ornaments which she hath worn at any time heretofore, and six geldings or horses;

Item, I will and give unto my brother, Blase Saunders, and to my sister-in-law, his wife, one annuity or yearly rent of twenty pounds of lawful English money, to be paid unto them for and during their natural lives and the longer liver of them by my said grantees and executors out of all such my farms, lands and tenements as I shall be possessed of at the time of my decease, payable at the feasts of th' Annunciation of Our Lady and Michaelmas by even portions;

And I will and give unto my brother, Ambrose Saunders, one other annuity of ten pounds, to be paid by my said grantees and executors unto him for term of his life out of my said farms at the said feasts;

Item, I give unto every one of my sisters, viz., my sister Villiers, my sister Johnson, and my sister Eyton, a piece of plate of five pounds in value or five pounds in money;

Item, I give and devise unto my very good and trusty friend, Mr Robert Atkinson, ten pounds of lawful English money;

Item, my will is that Mr John Smyth, clerk, shall have one annual rent of four pounds, to be paid him quarterly by mine executors out of my said farms for term of seven years next after my decease if he so long shall live, to his own use;

And I will that my said grantees and executors shall deliver unto the said Mr John Smyth twenty pounds to be employed and bestowed to such uses and in such sort as I have appointed him;

Item, I give unto my servant, Robert (blank), the cook, ten pounds;

Item, I give unto every one of my servants that take wages to whom I have not already given any legacy by this my will one half year's wages over and besides their wages due unto them;

Item, I give and bequeath unto the two Chief Justices and to the two Barons of th' Exchequer, to every one of them a ring of the value of forty shillings;

Also I will that my houses and households as well in London as in Weston shall be continued and kept at my charge and at the charge of the said grantees and executors for and during one month next after my decease;

Also I will and devise that the same & like allowance as I have been accustomed to allow and bestow upon certain poor folks within the city of Coventry shall be allowed and continued by my said grantees and executors for the space of seven years next after my decease;

All which devises, charges and payments before remembered being discharged, performed and paid, I will and determine that all the residue of my said goods and

chattels real and personal, movable and unmovable, shall wholly be conveyed and delivered unto my son-in-law, Thomas Morgan, and Mary, his wife, my said daughter, if she shall be then living, to have, hold, occupy and enjoy as their own proper goods and to their own uses;

And if my said daughter, Mary Morgan, at that time when the said delivery of all the said goods and chattels should be made should be departed out of this life, then all the said goods and chattels shall be conveyed and delivered unto such children of the said Mary as the said Mary shall leave in life according to the discretion of the said grantees and executors or of such of them as then shall be living;

And if my said daughter, Mary, shall leave no children in life, then I will the said goods and chattels shall be conveyed and delivered unto such person as then shall be my next heir, whosoever it shall chance to be;

And if my said son-in-law, Thomas Morgan, will not be contented to join in devise with the said grantees and [-and] executors or the more part of them or with the survivor or survivors of them, and do and execute all that shall appertain unto him to do for the good executing and performing of my true intents and meanings heretofore expressed in this my present last will and testament, and that Dame Agnes Saunders, my wife, be then also living, then I will that the moiety of the said goods and chattels shall be conveyed and delivered unto the said Dame Agnes to use as her own proper goods, and thother moiety to be bestowed amongst my kinsfolks by the discretion of my said grantees and executors, provided always that if my said son-in-law, Thomas Morgan, or any other that is to take any benefit by this my present last will and testament any manner of way shall work or do any manner of thing tending to th' abridging, breaking or making void my foresaid gift or this my testament or any of the particular gifts or devises contained in them, that then all devises, gifts and bequests made or set forth to that person shall be utterly void and of none effect, and that my said grantees [f. 300r] and executors shall and may dispose those goods and chattels in such order as they or the more part of them shall think best to stand with the true intent and meaning in this my present will limited and intended, so that it be to my kinsmen and kinswomen and such other persons to whom I have by this my testament appointed anything which shall not do or suffer any thing tending to th' abrogating, breaking or making void of my said gift and last will, anything contained in the said gift or testament notwithstanding;

And finally I, the said Sir Edward Saunders, do ordain and make the said Sir Walter Mildmay, knight, Edmund Plowden, William Saunders, Humphrey Dike and Lawrence Eyton my executors of this my last will and testament, to every of whom I will and give a piece of plate of the value of five pounds or five pounds in ready money, and I also give unto the said Humphrey Dike ten pounds more over and besides the said piece of plate;

And I humbly desire my worshipful friend, Christopher Hatton, esquire, Captain of the Queen's Majesty's Guard, to be overseer of the same my testament, to whom I give for a token of remembrance my best gelding.

Probatum fuit huiusmodi Testamentum apud London Coram magistro Willielmo Drury Legum Doctore Curie Prerogative Cantuariensis Commissario Decimo tertio die mensis Decembris Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentesimo Septuagesimo sexto Iuramento Laurentij Eyton vnius Executorum Cui Commissa fuit administratio &c De bene &c Ad sancta Dei Evangelia Iuratus Reseruat apertate similem Commissionem faciendos reliquis Executoribus cum venerint &c admissuris

[=The same testament was proved at London before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the thirteenth day of the month of December in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-sixth by the oath of Lawrence Eyton, one of the executors, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn on the Holy Gospels to well etc., with power reserved for a similar grant to be made to the remaining executors when they shall have come etc. to be admitted.]