

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the undated last will and testament, proved 2 November 1579, of William Devereux (b. c. 1525, d. 28 September 1579) of Merevale, Warwickshire, who appointed as one of the overseers of his will Thomas Trentham (d.1587), father of Oxford's second wife, Elizabeth Trentham (d.1612). The connection between the Devereux and Trentham families appears to have come about when an earlier Thomas Trentham (d.1518/19) married Elizabeth Corbet, whose mother was the testator's great-aunt, Elizabeth Devereux (d.1516), the daughter of Walter Devereux (c.1432-1485), 1st Baron Ferrers of Chartley. For the will of Thomas Trentham (d.1518/19), see TNA PROB 11/72, ff. 285-6.

For the History of Parliament biographies of the testator, Sir William Devereux, and his brother, Sir Richard Devereux (c.1513-1547), see:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/devereux-sir-william-1525-79>

and:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/devereux-richard-1513-47>.

The testator was the son of Walter Devereux (c.1489-1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, and his first wife, Mary Grey (d. 22 February 1539); the grandson of John Devereux (c.1463/4-1501), 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Ferrers of Chartley and his wife, Cecily Bouchier (d.1493); and the great-grandson of Walter Devereux (c.1432-1485), 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Ferrers of Chartley, and his wife, Anne Ferrers (1438-1469), daughter and heir of Sir William Ferrers of Chartley, Staffordshire. From the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

*Devereux, Walter, first Viscount Hereford (c.1489–1558), administrator and nobleman, was the son and heir of John Devereux, second Baron Ferrers of Chartley (c.1463/4–1501), and his wife, Cecily (d. 1493), heir of the houses of Bouchier and de Bohun and niece of Edward IV. Succeeding his father as third Lord Ferrers in 1501, Walter had, while still under age, married Lady Mary, daughter of Thomas Grey, first marquess of Dorset and great-grandfather of Lady Jane Grey. Having been a ward in the royal household, he was summoned to Henry VIII's first parliament in January 1510 and soon afterwards became steward of several royal manors and joint constable of Warwick Castle. . . .*

It is stated in the History of Parliament biographies that the testator's brother, Sir Richard Devereux (c.1513-1547) was the first son of Walter Devereux (c.1489–1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, and that the testator was the second son. However the entry for Walter Devereux (c.1489-1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* states, with reference to his heir, that:

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*That heir, again named Walter and again a minor, was the viscount's grandson by his second son, the eldest of his three sons by his first marriage, to Mary Grey, having also predeceased him.*

The heir of Walter Devereux (c.1489-1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, was his grandson, Walter Devereux (1539-1576), 1st Earl of Essex. From the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

*Devereux, Walter, first earl of Essex (1539–1576), nobleman and adventurer, was born on 16 September 1539 at Chartley, Staffordshire, the eldest son of Sir Richard Devereux and his wife, Dorothy, daughter of George Hastings, first earl of Huntingdon.*

It thus appears that the eldest son of Walter Devereux (c.1489-1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, was Henry Devereux, who predeceased his father without leaving male issue. The second son, Sir Richard Devereux (c.1513-1547), also predeceased his father, but left a son, Walter Devereux (1539-1576), 1st Earl of Essex.

The testator, Sir William Devereux, was thus the third son of Walter Devereux (c.1489-1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, and as indicated in the will below, he left no male issue, his heirs being his two daughters, Barbara (nee Devereux) Cave Hastings and Margaret (nee Devereux) Littleton.

As noted in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, after his first wife's death, Walter Devereux (c.1489-1558), 1st Viscount Hereford, married, as his second wife, Margaret (d. 1599), the daughter of John Garneys of Kenton in Suffolk, with whom he had a daughter, Katherine, and a fourth son, Edward, father of the fifth Viscount Hereford, who married Catherine Arden, the eldest daughter of Edward Arden of Park Hall. From the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

*Arden, Edward (1533–1583), convicted conspirator, was the son of a Warwickshire gentleman, William Arden, second cousin to Mary Arden, the mother of Shakespeare. William having died in 1545, Edward succeeded his grandfather Thomas as master of Park Hall, Warwickshire, in 1563. He married Mary (d. 1603), daughter of Sir Robert Throckmorton, and they had at least three children, Robert and two daughters. . . .*

In the will below, the testator leaves a bequest to his great-nephew, Robert Devereux (1565-1601), 2nd Earl of Essex. From the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

*Devereux, Robert, second earl of Essex (1565–1601), soldier and politician, was born on 10 November 1565. He was the elder son and heir of Walter Devereux, first earl of Essex (1539–1576). Through his mother, Lettice (1543–1634), he was a member of Elizabeth I's extended Boleyn–Carey cousinage. . . .*

The testator married Jane Scudamore, the daughter of John Scudamore (c.1486-1571) of Holm Lacy, for whom see his will, TNA PROB 11/53, ff. 314-15, the entry for the

Scudamore family in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, and the History of Parliament biography at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/scudamore-%28skydmore%29-john-1503-71>.

The testator's daughter, Barbara Devereux, married firstly, Edward Cave, the eldest son and heir of Bryan Cave (d.1592) and his first wife, Margaret Throckmorton, the daughter of Sir George Throckmorton (c.1489-1552), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/36, ff. 160-2. After the death of Edward Cave, Barbara (nee Devereux) Cave married secondly, Sir Edward Hastings (d.1603?), fourth son of Francis Hastings (1513/14-1560), 2nd Earl of Huntingdon, for whom see the History of Parliament biography at:

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/hastings-sir-edward-1603>.

See also the will of Bryan Cave, TNA PROB 11/80, ff. 310-11, and Waters, Robert Edmond Chester, *Genealogical Memoirs of the Extinct Family of Chester of Chicheley*, Vol. I, (London: Robson and Sons, 1878), pp. 80-1.

The testator's other daughter, Margaret Devereux (d.1603), married Sir Edward Littleton (d.1555-1610), who participated in the Essex Rebellion in 1601.

LM: T{estamentum} Will{el}mi Deveroux milit{is}

In the name of the eternal living God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, in whose name I was baptized, in whom only I hope and believe to be saved, Amen. I, William Devereux of Merevale in the county of Warwick, knight, being whole and perfect of mind and memory, thanks be to God, but sick in body, do make this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First I bequeath my soul into thy hands, O God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. As touching my body, that I bequeath unto the earth from whence it came. I knowledge and confess with all my heart that I am a sinner, yea, such a sinner as hath need of the grace, mercy and favour of God. I believe that the Lord will have mercy upon me, for he hath first made me, and if it shall please him, he may save me. This I believe, whether I live or die, I am the Lord's. My hope is I shall find both grace and mercy for my sins of God the Father, even for Jesus Christ's sake, in whom I believe he is my Redeemer. He liveth ever and ever, Amen;

Secondly, concerning my worldly substance, I do dispose and give the same in manner and form following, that is to wit:

I, William Devereux, will, bequeath and assign to Jane, my well-beloved wife, all the manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments comprised or mentioned in an Act of Parliament begun and holden at Westminster the fourth day of November in the first year of the reign of the late King Edward the Sixth, and by divers prorogations continued unto [+the] three and twentieth day of January in the fifth year of the reign of the said late King, in the fourth and last session of the Parliament, to have, hold, perceive and enjoy to my said wife during her natural life, with all lands, meadows, pastures, woods, waters, coal-mines, mills and all and singular commodities and profits whatsoever belonging or appertaining to the same, and all my lands in Atherstone, Whittington, Baxterley, Bentley, Hertishull [=Hartshill?] and Mancetter or elsewhere belonging to my said manor of Merevale aforesaid, with all my goods, chattels, plate, jewels, implements of household, as well within the county of Warwick as also within the county of Leicester or elsewhere, whatsoever or wheresoever they be;

And as for my farm or grounds called the Newhouse and Pinwall, with the rents of the moor barn, I have already assured to Dame Jane, my said wife, and do by this my present last will and testament give, assign and bequeath the same to the said Dame Jane, my wife, as aforesaid, all which said gifts, grants and bequests aforesaid shall be upon condition and in consideration of the especial good hope and trust that she do and will perform this my said last will and testament which and wherewith I give her charge as she will answer at the dreadful day of judgment to see it fulfilled to the uttermost of her power in every point and condition according to the truth and true meaning of the same;

Also I give and bequeath to my two daughters, to every of them ten kine and ten young beasts apiece, to be delivered immediately after my decease, and all my plate after the decease of the said Dame Jane, my wife, equally to be divided between my said two daughters and their husbands, which said plate doth remain and shall remain in the hands and custody of my said wife during her life as aforesaid, so that there be a just inventory thereof taken and indented between my executors, and she bounden to deliver the same according to this my last will and testament;

And further I will that my son Hastings and my daughter, Dame Barbara, his wife, shall have, take and enjoy to their use all the furniture and bedding contained in my chamber called the lord's chamber, with two pair of sheets and two pillows, and I will and bequeath in like manner unto my son Littleton and my daughter Margaret, his wife, all the furniture and bedding in my chamber in the upper new building with two pair of sheets and two pillows, that they and every of them at all times when they shall repair to Merevale to see the welfare of their mother, they [f. 334r] may know their place and lodging;

And also I do give and bequeath to my god-daughter, Marie Littleton, forty pounds, to be paid unto her at the day of her marriage by my executors;

And I will and bequeath to my good Lord and dearly-beloved nephew, the Earl of Essex, my little standing gilt cup with a cover which I use to drink in myself for a poor token of remembrance;

Also I will that Dame Jane, my wife, during her natural life, nor any other person in her behalf during her said life, do alter or change my old officers in Atherstone, neither my old tenants within my site or manor of Merevale, neither put forth any of them from their livings, holds and tenements which they now enjoy or their officers [sic?], paying their accustomed rents, especially by name Richard Broughton, John Hill, John Hickson, Richard Bache and Jeffrey Dawkins, but that they and every of them may enjoy the same quietly during the natural life of the said Dame Jane, my wife, whom I leave in trust to be their defence and the defence of all my old officers, tenants and good servants;

And I will that Dame Jane, my wife, shall permit and suffer all my good friends, neighbours and servants whatsoever to whom I have granted any pastures, woods, meadows or other grounds, either within my said manor of Merevale or within my farm or grange of Newhouse or Pinwall in the said county of Leicester, quietly to occupy and enjoy the same according to their several estates by me granted unto them, whose rents and money I have received for the same aforehand;

Also I will that my said wife shall provide and see that all my tenants of Atherstone and others to whom I have granted leases for one and twenty years of my earable land, meadow and pasture, they may have and enjoy the same according to their several grants whereunto my said wife hath been made privy and I have received the fines for the same;

Also I give and bequeath to all my loving servants that be retainers, to every of them an angel for a small remembrance of my goodwill towards them;

And to every of my household servants, as well at Merevale as at the Newhouse, both menservants and women servants, every of them half a year's wages;

And to William Brookes, my godson, a heifer of two year old, and twenty shillings in money to be employed to his use and behoof by the advice of my said wife if the said William Brookes will do her service as one in her kitchen for reasonable wages, and after three years past, I will that the said Brookes shall have the cony-skins to his further maintenance;

And to every of my godsons twelve pence;

And I will that my said wife shall content and pay yearly to George Fisher, my old servant, six and twenty shillings and eight pence, to be paid quarterly during her natural life if he so long live;

Further my will is that my house lately purchased at Atherstone of one Repington, and now in the tenure of Edmund Shepty(?), shall freely after my decease be and remain to the use of the free school there forever, so that there be paid forth of the said house to the churchwardens of Atherstone for the time being thirteen shillings and four pence yearly to be distributed and given to the use of the poor people there forever in manner and form following, that is to wit:

Every Sunday yearly, as far as it will extend, two of the said poor in course to be appointed by the said churchwardens and the bailie shall come to their parish church, and after the Gospel read shall come unto the curate there at the choir door, and meekly kneeling on their knees shall say the Lord's Prayer and the twelve articles of their Christian belief in English, to the intent they and every of them may be expert and ready in the same to the good example of others, and that done, the said churchwardens to deliver them four pence to be divided between them;

Moreover my will is that the said Dame Jane, my wife, upon consideration aforesaid, shall yield, content and pay all my debts in such reasonable time as she conveniently may to whom any such debt is due, and especially such debts as by a schedule is set down and unto this my last will and testament annexed, and receive and take all debts due to me towards the same also in a schedule in like manner annexed;

Provided always and my meaning is that if the said Dame Jane, my wife, do happen hereafter to marry again, that then and from thenceforth she shall pay or cause to be paid out of my said manor of Merevale forty pounds yearly to my two daughters, that is, to my daughter, Margaret, twenty pounds, and to my daughter, Dame Barbara, twenty pounds, towards the maintenance only of their apparel during the life of the said (blank);

And if she do marry again, I will that then she shall further enter into bonds before her marriage to perform and keep all my legacies and bequests contained in this my last will and testament to my overseers according to the [sic?] discretions in that behalf;

And I give and bequeath unto the said Dame Jane, my wife, all my goods and chattels in manner and form foresaid, my debts paid, my legacies and bequests performed, and my funerals discharged;

[f. 334v] And I do further ordain and make my said well-beloved Dame Jane Devereux and Mr Thomas Trentham, esquire, my good and lawful executors for the performance of this my last will and testament, and to the said Thomas Trentham for his pains and travail to be taken therein I do give unto him twenty pounds, to be paid within one year and a day after my decease, and a buck and a doe yearly forth of my park at Merevale during my said wife's life to be taken;

Also I give and bequeath to (blank) William of Vauxator twenty pounds;

And I make and ordain my overseers of this my last will and testament (blank), Richard Devereux, and my well-beloved friends, Sir Thomas Cockin [=Cokayne], knight, Richard (blank) Atherstone, and for their pains therein to be taken I do give to every of them forty shillings;

Witnesseth these being present, Anthony Grene, Richard Broughton, Thomas Hilton and Ralph Marten, Robert Holte, Roger Walton, with others.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentum Apud London Coram mag{ist}ro Will{el}mo Drury legum Doctore Curie Prerogatiue Cantuarien{sis} Com{m}issario Secundo Die mensis Novembris Anno d{omi}ni Mill{es}imo Quingentesimo Septuagesimo nono Iuramento Edwardi Barker notarij publici procurat{oris} D{omi}ne Jane Deveroux Relicte et executricis in h{uius}mo{d}i Testamento no{m}i{n}at{e} Cui com{m}issa fuit Admi{ni}strac{i}o &c De bene &c Iurat{i} Res{er}vat{a} p{otes}tate &c Thome Trentam execut{ori} cum venerit &c admissur{o}

[=The same testament was proved at London before Master William Drury, Doctor of the Laws, Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the second day of the month of November in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred seventy-ninth by the oath of Edward Barker, notary public, proctor of Dame Jane Devereux, relict and executrix named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted etc., sworn to well etc., with power reserved etc. for Thomas Trentham, executor, when he shall have come etc. to be admitted.]