

SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the will, dated 21 July 1588 and proved 20 August 1588, of John Audley, whose nephew married Katherine Windsor, the daughter of Oxford's half sister, Katherine de Vere (1538-1600).

FAMILY BACKGROUND

For the testator's family background, see the pedigree in *The History of Audley End*, (London: Samuel Bentley, 1836), p. 24 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/historyofaudleye00bray#page/24>

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

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/audley-john-i-1588>

Almost all the information found about this John Audley, who was under 18 when his uncle, Lord Audley, died in 1544, is in his will, drawn up on the day of his death, 21 July 1588, and proved a month later by the executrix, his sister-in-law Katherine, widow of his brother Thomas.

The testator was the third and youngest son of Thomas Audley (d.1577/8) of Berechurch, Essex, a brother of Sir Thomas Audley (1487/8-1544), Lord Chancellor of England. For the will of the Lord Chancellor in which he mentions his three nephews, Thomas Audley, senior, Thomas Audley, junior, and the testator, John Audley, see TNA PROB 11/31/64:

And I will that my said brother during his life natural shall employ and bestow of the issues, revenues and profits of the premises to him afore limited [=manor of Berechurch] during his life to and for the finding of my said nephew, Thomas Audley, his son and heir, yearly ten pounds, and to and for the finding of my nephew, Thomas Audley, his second son, yearly eight pounds, and to and for the finding of my nephew, John Audley, his youngest son, yearly £8, to th' intent they be honestly brought up in learning or service as their aptness and capacity will serve them.

The testator's eldest brother, Thomas Audley (d.1572), senior, of Berechurch, Essex, married Katherine Southwell, the daughter of Sir Richard Southwell (1502/3-1564), for whose will see TNA PROB 11/47/231. In the will below the testator appoints his sister-in-law, Katherine, as his executrix. Katherine (nee Southwell) Audley was the aunt of the Jesuit Robert Southwell (1561-1595).

According to the pedigree of Audley of Berechurch, Thomas Audley (d.1572) and Katherine Southwell had three sons and two daughters. See *The History of Audley End*, (London: Samuel Bentley, 1836), p. 24 at:

<https://archive.org/stream/historyofaudley00bray#page/24>

In 1597 Robert Audley (d.1624), the eldest son of Thomas Audley (d.1572) and Katherine Southwell, married Katherine Windsor, the daughter of Edward Windsor (1532?-1575), 3rd Baron Windsor, and his wife, Katherine de Vere (1538 - 17 January 1600), Oxford's half sister. For the will, dated 20 December 1572 and proved 25 June 1575, of Edward Windsor, 3rd Baron Windsor, see TNA PROB 11/57/332. For the will of Katherine de Vere, see TNA PROB 11/95/237.

In the will below the testator leaves a bequest to his 'cousin, Robert Audley', who appears to have been the Robert Audley who later married the daughter of Oxford's half sister, Katherine de Vere:

Item, I give to my cousin, Robert Audley, all my nets and other engines to take partridges and hawks.

The testator's other brother, Thomas Audley, junior, of Gosbecks near Colchester, Essex, married a wife named Beatrix, and died in 1584, leaving the children mentioned in the will below.

For Oliver Pigge, see the History of Parliament entry for the testator, *supra*:

. . . bequests to Margery Pigge and 'Oliver Pigge the elder' (presumably either the puritan preacher of that name, or a relative) suggest that Audley may have had puritan views, likely to gain him the favour of the Earl of Bedford. Richard Pigge, brother of Oliver, had served Lord Audley, and the preacher owed several of his livings, including the vicarage of Aberton, Essex, to John Audley's brother Thomas.

LM: T{estamentum} Ioh{ann}is Awdeley

In the name of God, Amen. The one and twentieth day of July a thousand five hundred eighty-eight in the thirtieth 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, John Audley of Berechurch in the county of Essex, gentleman, being sick in body but of good and perfect remembrance, thanks be to Almighty God, do make and declare this my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say:

First and principally I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, my Maker and Redeemer, and my body to the earth from whence it came;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin [=nephew], Thomas Audley of Berechurch, all those my lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever called Butlers with th' appurtenances lying and being in Peldon and Aberton or elsewhere in the county of

Essex, to have and to hold to him and his heirs forever upon this condition following, that is to say:

That he, the said Thomas, or his assigns shall pay or cause to be paid unto the children of my brother, Thomas Audley, late of Gosbecks, deceased, that is to say, to Richard Audley, George Audley, Francis Audley, John Audley, Elizabeth Blennerhassett, now the wife of Richard Blennerhassett, and to Mary Cooke, now the wife of Robert Cooke, and to each of them forty pounds apiece of good and lawful English money to be taken out of the profits of the land before given, and the first forty pounds to be paid to the youngest child, and so orderly from [f. 410r] the youngest to the eldest one after another until every of the said children have received their said portions of forty pounds before given unto them;

And that my said cousin, Thomas Audley, or his heirs shall make unto my farmer, Reinolde Wakering, or his assigns one sufficient lease, demise or grant of all my said lands called Butlers together with the stock and store now occupied with the same, to have and to hold to him and his assigns from the feast of the Annunciation of Our Blessed Lady last past unto th' end and term of fifteen years from thence next following fully to be complete and ended, yielding and paying therefore yearly during the said term to my said cousin, Thomas Audley, or his assigns the sum of thirty pounds of lawful English money at two terms or feasts in the year, that is to say, at the feasts of St Michael th' Archangel and th' Annunciation of Our Lady by even portions, and in th' end of his said term shall leave and yield up the same premises with the stock aforesaid, that is to say, twenty milch beasts and threescore mother ewes, unto my said cousin, Thomas Audley, or his assigns in as good case as he shall now receive them;

Item, I give and bequeath to my said cousin, Thomas Audley of Berechurch, my bay ambling nag;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin, Francis Audley, and to my cousin, John Audley, two of the sons of my brother, Thomas Audley, late of Gosbecks aforesaid, deceased, all that my farm called Trompingtons and Fithelers with th' appurtenances situate, lying and being in Much Tey or elsewhere in the said county of Essex, to have and to hold to them and their heirs forever, part and part like, desiring them to be content with this my bequest without any trouble or vexation one with another;

Item, I give and bequeath to the poor men's box of the parish of Berechurch ten pounds of lawful English money, and five pounds more I will shall be distributed amongst poor people at my burial by the discretion of my executrix;

Item, I give and bequeath to every one of my sister Audley's children of Berechurch one piece of gold of ten shillings or a mark;

And to Mrs Marie Southwell I give two pieces of gold called ducats;

Item, I give and bequeath to Margery Pigge forty shillings;

Item, I give and bequeath to Mrs Elizabeth Gynes(?) one piece of gold of ten shillings;

Item, I give and bequeath to every one of my sister Audley's servants in household with her at Berechurch six shillings and eight pence;

Item, I give and bequeath to Olive Pigge th' elder twenty shillings;

And to Robert Cooke of Colchester ten shillings;

Item, I give to my cousin, Mary Cooke, my joined cupboard and all my pewter;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin, Elizabeth Blennerhassett, my featherbed I do now lie on with all that belongs to it together with two pair of sheets, four pillow-beres and four kerchers;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin [=nephew], Richard Audley, my best buff hose and a canvas doublet;

And all the rest of my apparel I give to my cousin, Francis Audley, and to my cousin, John Audley, saving I will that Margery Pigg shall have two shirts;

Item, I give to my cousin, Richard Blennerhassett, my two longbows and my arrows;

Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin, Robert Cooke, and his wife my two coffers;

Item, I give to my cousin [=nephew], Robert Audley, all my nets and other engines to take partridges and hawks;

Item, I give and bequeath to the children of my cousin, Richard Blennerhassett, the ten pounds that is owing me, that is to say, by Richard Underwood six pounds, by Mother Lambert forty shillings, and by my cousin, Richard Blennerhassett, other forty shillings;

And I do ordain and appoint my very good sister [=sister-in-law], Mrs Katherine Audley, to be my executrix to see this my last will and testament performed according to my true meaning;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister [=sister-in-law], Beatrix Audley, all the debt of money she oweth me, and I do give her ten pounds more beside;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister, Katherine Audley, my gold ring;

Item, I give to my godchildren, that is to say, my cousin, John Nutbrowne, Stansted's son, and Clerke's son, to every of them ten shillings;

Item, I give to my cousin, Thomas Audley of Gosbecks, five pounds;

In witness whereof I, the said John Audley, have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year above-written in the presence of those persons whose names are underwritten. By me, John Audley. Sealed and delivered in the presence of Anne(?) Ashe, Jane Gilberde, Ambrose Gilbarde.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i testamentum apud London coram m{agist}ro Henrico Jones Legum doctore surrogato venerabilis viri m{agist}ri Will{el}mi Drury Legu{m} etia{m} d{o}c{t}oris Curie Prerogatiue Cant{uariensis} m{agist}ri Custodis siue Com{m}issarij &c vicesimo die mens{is} Augusti Anno domini mill{es}imo quingentesimo octogesimo octauo Iuramento Ioh{ann}is Kyne notarij publici procuratoris Katherine Awdeley executric{is} in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento nominat{e} Cui comissa fuit administratio bonorum iurium et creditorum eiusdem def{uncti} de bene et fidel{ite}r administrand{o} &c Ad sancta dei Evangelia iurat{e}

[=The same testament was proved at London before Master Henry Jones, Doctor of the Laws, Surrogate of the worshipful Master William Drury, also Doctor of the Laws, Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury etc., on the twentieth day of the month of August in the year of the Lord the thousand five hundred eighty-eighth by the oath of John Kyne, notary public, proctor of Katherine Audley, executrix named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of the goods, rights and credits of the same deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer, etc.]