SUMMARY: The document below is the Prerogative Court of Canterbury copy of the last will and testament, dated 4 December 1587 and proved 12 February 1591, of Sir Roger Townshend (c.1544-1590), a servant of the Howards.

On 6 May 1584 Oxford sold Townshend the manors of Wivenhoe, Battleswick and Great Bentley (see TNA CP 25/2/132/1693/26ELIZIEASTER, Item 51). For Townshend's account of a fray on 18 June 1582 between the men of Thomas Knyvet, uncle of Oxford's mistress, Anne Vavasour, and men purporting to serve Oxford, see TNA SP 154/13, ff. 23-4.

On 6 November 1590 Townshend is listed as one of the plaintiffs who filed a bill in Chancery in connection with problems arising from two statutes entered into by Oxford on 6 July 1571 to the two guarantors of his debt to the Court of Wards (see TNA C 2/Eliz/T6/48). It would appear that Townshend's interest in this litigation was being pursued by his executors since, according to the *ODNB*, Townshend had died on 30 June 1590 at Stoke Newington, three months before the bill was filed.

The testator's first wife was Ursula (d. before 1564), the daughter of Sir Christopher Heydon, by whom he had no issue. After her death, the testator married Jane Stanhope (c.1547–1618), the daughter of the courtier Sir Michael Stanhope (b. before 1508, d.1552) and his wife Anne (c.1515-1588), the daughter of Nicholas Rawson of Aveley, Essex.

The testator was thus related by marriage to Oxford, since Oxford's brother-in-law by his second marriage to Elizabeth Trentham (d.1613), Sir John Stanhope (d.1611), was the nephew of Townshend's second wife, Jane Stanhope (c.1547-1618). For the will of Oxford's brother-in-law, Sir John Stanhope (d.1611), see TNA PROB 11/117, f. 356. For the will of Oxford's sister-in-law, Katherine (nee Trentham) Stanhope, see TNA PROB 11/137, ff. 434-6.

In 1598 the testator's widow, Jane, married Henry, Lord Berkeley (1534-1613), whose first wife had been Oxford's first cousin, Katherine Howard (d.1596), sister of Thomas Howard (1537-1572), 4th Duke of Norfolk, whose life Oxford had tried to save. See G.E.C., *The Complete Peerage*, Vol. II, (London: St Catherine Press, 1912), p. 138.

The testator's will is also of interest for its mention of his second son, Robert Townshend, who was later the patron of Ben Jonson (1572-1637). According to the *ODNB*:

*During the early years of the new century Jonson lodged with various friends and patrons. 'Ben. Johnson the poet nowe lives upon one Townesend' observed John Manningham the diarist in February 1603—referring to Sir Robert Townshend, at some stage the patron also of John Fletcher—'and scornes the world' (Diary of John Manningham, 187).*

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The connections between Oxford and the testator suggest that Oxford would have known Jonson.

The testator was appointed an overseer of the will of Henry Prannell (d. 22 October 1589). See TNA PROB 11/74/370.

LM: T{estamentum} Rogeri Townesend

In the name of God, Amen. This is the last will and testament of me, Roger Townshend, late of East Raynham in the county of Norfolk, esquire, by me made and declared the fourth day of December in the thirtieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth wherein I, the said Roger, first and principally recommending my soul to Almighty God, my Creator, Saviour and Redeemer, do will, devise and bequeath in manner and form following, that is to say:

First, whereas I did of late purchase of Edmund Bell, esquire, the manor of Wellingham with the appurtenances and all lands, tenements and hereditaments accepted, reputed or taken as part, parcel or member of the said manor or with the said manor usually occupied, demised or letten in the county of Norfolk, and yet nevertheless did cause the said Edmund Bell and Henry Osborne and Christopher Osborne, gentlemen, to convey and assure the said manor with th' appurtenances to my brother-in-law, Mr Edward Stanhope, Doctor of Law, and to his heirs to the use of him and his heirs upon confidence and trust notwithstanding to the benefit and behoof of me and my heirs forever, my will and mind is that my executors of this my last will and testament from and after my decease shall perceive, take and enjoy the rents, issues and profits of the said manor with th' appurtenances for and until such time as they, the same my executors, shall or may with the money coming and growing of the same rents, issues and profits and of the revenues and profits of other my lands, tenements and fold-courses hereafter in this my will mentioned, and with such of my goods, chattels and leases as are herein also specified, well and truly satisfy and pay all and singular the debts which I owe to any person and all other the legacies by me herein bequeathed to any person, and if my said executors or the survivors or the survivor of them shall think it necessary to make sale of the said manor of Wellingham with th' appurtenances and all lands, tenements and hereditaments accepted, reputed and taken as part, parcel or member of the said manor or usually occupied, demised or letten with the said manor or any part thereof, that then I will and devise that my executors or the survivors of them shall make sale of the same or of any part thereof at and by their discretion or at and by the discretion of the survivor of them, and I heartily pray and desire my said brother-in-law and good friend that he will execute and perform all such acts and devises in law as shall be in that behalf from time to time required by my said executors or the survivor of them, and after my debts and legacies paid, if my said executors or the survivors of them or survivor of them shall not make sale as is aforesaid, then I will and devise my said manor of Wellingham and other the premises thereunto belonging as is aforesaid, or so much thereof as shall not be sold as is aforesaid, to my son John and his heirs forever;

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And where also my cousin, Robert Whitney, gentleman, and Robert Herward(?) do stand seised in their demesne as of fee of and in the one moiety of the manor of Chastleton alias Castleton in the county of Oxford to the use of them and their heirs, and yet notwithstanding upon confidence and trust to the benefit and behoof of me and my heirs forever, my will and mind also is that the executors of this my will or the survivors or the survivor of them shall sell the said moiety of the moiety of the said manor of Chastleton with th' appurtenances for such price as they can reasonably obtain for the same, and my will is that the money thereof coming shall likewise be employed and bestowed by my said executors for and towards the payment of my debts and performance of this my will, and I do likewise earnestly require my said cousin, Robert Whitney, and the said Robert Harwell to convey and assure the said moiety of the said moiety of the said manor with th' appurtenances unto such person and persons and their heirs as the same my executors shall sell the same unto;

Also, my will and mind is that my executors of this my will shall have all my estate, lease, interest and term of years yet to come of and in all that farm and capital messuage commonly called Ludgraves in Hadley in the county of Middlesex, and in all the lands, tenements and hereditaments thereunto belonging or reputed as parcel of the same, for and towards the payment of my said debts and performance of this my last will;

And my mind and will is that the same my executors shall likewise have all my leases, estates and term for years yet to come of and in the manors of Hytcham, Byecham, Newton and Sydistane [=Syderstone?] alias Systane with all and singular their appurtenances in the said county of Norfolk likewise for and towards the payment of my said debts and performance of this my will;

Also I give and bequeath to Jane, my wife, all my estate, lease, interest and term of years of and in all that capital messuage in Newington in the county of Middlesex and of and in all the lands, pastures and grounds thereunto belonging which I had of the demise and grant of Thomas Sutton, esquire;

Also, I give and bequeath to the said Jane, my wife, all my sheeps stock and flocks of sheep wheresoever going, being, pastured or kept upon any of the fold-courses, lands or grounds whatsoever in East Raynham, West Raynham, Hillington, South Raynham, Shereford, East Rudham, West Rudham, Coxford or elsewhere upon any lands or grounds late belonging to the late-dissolved priory of Coxford in the said county of Norfolk heretofore by me assured or conveyed to or to the use of the said Jane, my wife, for her jointure, to have and enjoy the same as her own proper goods forever;

And my will and meaning likewise is that the said Jane, my wife, shall have all my plate, jewels, apparel, linen and household stuff and utensils of household whatsoever and wheresoever within this realm of England to her own only use;

Also my will and meaning is that the said executors of this my will shall have all my stock and flock of sheep going, being and pastured in and upon the marsh in Alborowe in

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the said county of Suffolk, and that interest, estate and term of years which I have or of right ought to have in the moiety or one half of the said marsh which my said cousin, Robert Whitney, hath upon confidence and trust to my use, together also with all those my sheep and the moiety or one half of the sheep going, being, kept or pastured in or upon certain sheep's pastures, fold-courses, lands and grounds in Westwick and other towns there nigh adjoining in the said county of Suffolk in the occupation of my said cousin, Robert Whitney, which he hath of the demise of the right honourable Philip, Earl of Arundel, for and towards the payment of my debts and performance of this my last will;

And my will likewise is that my said executors shall have, take and enjoy all the benefit and profit which shall come, grow or be renewed of, upon or by means of all those my sheep stocks and flocks of sheep within the county of Norfolk except such as be before to my said wife bequeathed until the said John Townshend, my son, shall accomplish his age of two and twenty years, for and towards the payment of my said debts and performance of this my will, and then my will and mind is that the said John, my son, shall have all the said sheep stocks and flock of sheep within the said county of Norfolk, except before excepted, upon condition that he, the said John, my son, shall permit and suffer as well my said wife as my son, Robert, to enjoy all such manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments as I have conveyed or assured or by or in any writing under my hand and seal mentioned or intended to be conveyed and assured unto them or either of [+them] according [+to] my true intent and meaning therein expressed, and also shall upon request made assure, convey, confirm and ratify all and singular the same manors, lands, tenements and hereditaments to either of them according to my true intent and meaning in the same expressed;

And my will and mind also is that my said executors shall have, take, perceive and enjoy for and towards the payment of my debts and performance of this my will all the rents, revenues, issues and profits which shall come, grow or be renewed of, in or upon all my manors, messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments in the county of Norfolk heretofore not conveyed or assured to or to the use of the said Jane, my wife, for her jointure or which my said wife by my true intent and meaning in consideration of other manors, lands and tenements to be assured is not to enjoy until my said son, John Townshend, shall accomplish his age of two and twenty years;

Item, I give and bequeath unto the said Jane, my wife, all that rectory and parsonage of South Raynham in the county of Norfolk with all and singular the appurtenances, to have and to hold the same unto the said Jane, my wife, and her assigns for and during the term of her natural life, and after her decease I will that the same shall remain unto the said John, my son, and to his heirs forever;

Item, I give and bequeath unto my niece, Anne Godsalve, £200 of lawful money of England, to be paid her at the years of one and twenty;

Item, I give and bequeath to my sister Godsalve, the wife of Thomas Godsalve, esquire, forty pounds of lawful money of England;

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Item, I give and bequeath to my brother, John Stanhope, esquire, one piece of plate of the value of ten pounds;

Item, I give and bequeath to my brother, Doctor Stanhope, one piece of plate of the value of ten pound;

Item, my will and desire is my men that have served me be considered according to their service, wherein I desire my wife's discretion to be used therein because their service is best known unto her, and I desire my executors to perform it accordingly, whom I ordain and make my loving cousin, Francis Wyndham, one of her Majesty's Justices of the Common Pleas at Westminster, and my loving brother-in-law and loving cousins, Michael Stanhope, esquire, and Edward Coke and Miles Corbet, esquires;

Item, I give and bequeath to either of my executors twenty pounds of good and lawful money of England;

Item, I desire my executors to do what in them lieth to demise unto my loving friend, Mr John Huggen, all the grounds which is now in his occupation or his assigns belonging to my manor of Skarminge for term of his life, paying therefore the same rent which he always paid me;

And in witness that this is my last will, I, the said Roger Townshend, have set my hand and seal to every leaf thereof the day and year above-written. By me, Roger Townshend. Witnesses: William Dix, Thomas Smith, Thomas Mynors, Richard Dyes, John Owles.

Probatum fuit h{uius}mo{d}i Testamentum Apud London Coram venerabili viro mag{ist}ro Will{el}mo Lewen Legum Doctore ad exercendum officium mag{ist}ri Custod{is} siue Com{m}issarij Curie Prerogatiue Cant{uariensis} L{egi}time Deputat{i} Duodecimo Die mens{is} ffebruarij Anno domini iuxta Computac{i}o{n}em Eccl{es}ie Anglicane Mill{es}imo Quingen{tesi}mo nonagesimo Iuramento Galfridi Clerke no{ta}rij pub{li}ci Procur{ato}ris Michaelis Stanhopp et milonis Corbet executor{um} in h{uius}mo{d}i testamento nominatorum Quibus Com{m}issa fuit administrac{i}o om{n}i{u}m et sing{u}lor{um} Bonorum iurium et creditorum Dict{i} Def{uncti} De bene et fidel{ite}r Administrand{o} eadem Ad sancta Dei Evangelia Iurat{orum} Reservata p{otes}tate similem Com{m}issionem faciend{i} ffrancisco Windham et Edwardo Coke Ar{migero} Executoribus etiam in h{uius}mo{d}i tes{tamen}to nominat{is} cum venerint &c eandem petitur{is}

[=The same testament was proved at London before the worshipful Master William Lewin, Doctor of the Laws, lawfully deputed to exercise the office of Master, Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on the twelfth day of the month of February in the year of the Lord according to the reckoning of the English church the thousand five hundred ninetieth by the oath of Geoffrey Clerke, notary public, proctor of

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Michael Stanhope and Miles Corbet, executors named in the same testament, to whom administration was granted of all and singular the goods, rights and creditors of the said deceased, sworn on the Holy Gospels to well and faithfully administer the same, with power reserved for a similar commission to be made to Francis Wyndham and Edward Coke, esquire, executors also named in the same testament, when they shall have come etc. to petition the same.]

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