

Sir Francis Knollys's Latin dictionary: new evidence for Katherine Carey*

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Abstract

A Latin dictionary once owned by Sir Francis Knollys has come to light containing his records of his marriage to Katherine Carey, daughter of Mary Boleyn, and the births of their fourteen children. These previously unpublished details (here transcribed) strengthen the argument that Katherine was an illegitimate child of Henry VIII, born during his affair with Anne Boleyn's sister. Sir Francis's handwritten notes also reveal his wife's remarkably successful series of pregnancies; and the birth date of his daughter Lettice – branded a 'she-wolf' by Elizabeth I – who turns out to be younger than is usually claimed when she married Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester

The private family records kept by Elizabeth I's vice-chamberlain, Sir Francis Knollys, have come to light revealing some interesting details about his wife, Lady Katherine (the daughter of Anne Boleyn's sister Mary), and their many children. Written inside his Latin dictionary, and previously unpublished, his notes provide additional evidence on the question of whether Katherine was an illegitimate child of Henry VIII.

The dictionary, produced in Venice in 1551 and still in contemporary calf binding, is the first volume – A to E – of a *Dictionarium Seu Thesaurus Latinae Linguae* compiled by Marius Nizolium. Inside its front cover is a handwritten record: 'in order the names, with the times of the birth, of the children of Francis Knollys and Katherine his wife'. It was acquired by the present owner's family in 1971 from Maggs Brothers booksellers but details of its previous whereabouts have not been retained. Comparing Sir Francis's notes with later publications, however, it seems that the details he wrote down were not transmitted to other family records and the dictionary itself may have passed out of family ownership before the Knollys pedigree was drawn up for the earl of Banbury in 1809.

* The dictionary is privately owned and the author is indebted to the owner for making it available and for permission to print a transcript of Sir Francis's notes (see Appendix). The author also gratefully acknowledges the kind assistance of the Knollys family, who informed her of the dictionary's existence and other private information; and the help of Dr. Simon Adams, who encouraged and assisted her research. Any errors are, of course, her own.

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Sir Francis's notes were also apparently unknown to the Devereux family, into which his most famous daughter, Lettice, married in 1561. The dictionary makes it clear that Lettice was his third child and second daughter, born '1543 . . . Tuesday week after All Hallows'. Yet, when she died at Christmas 1636, leaving her estate to her grandson, the third earl of Essex, Lettice's age was incorrectly recorded on her tomb as ninety-six. The Devereux family history, compiled in 1853, therefore assumed she was born about 1540/1. Subsequent uncertainty about her birth and references to her as the Knollys's eldest child, suggest that Sir Francis's records have never been published or made widely known.¹

In total the handwritten notes show four lines of text followed by a list of names and birth dates for fourteen children – eight sons and six daughters – born between April 1541 and May 1562. The consistency of writing suggests that the first three lines of text, the first eleven numbered birth entries, ending with Anne's in July 1555, and the number '12' were recorded at the same time, probably when a twelfth child was expected. At a later date, the same writer appears to have entered simultaneously the details of a twelfth and thirteenth birth, in 1558 and 1559, and inserted the fourth line of text above the first birth entry, to explain the year dating used. The final entry, Dudley's birth in 1562, may or may not have been recorded in the same hand.

As the first entries were written after July 1555 and probably before March 1558, a period when Sir Francis (a leading Protestant) is known to have spent time abroad, it is tempting to speculate that he acquired the dictionary on the Continent and there felt the need to record his large, and still growing, family. Sir Francis's manner of dating may also reflect Continental influence. From the interpolated fourth line of text – 'the year of our Lord is counted to begin at Christmas' – he evidently felt it necessary to explain that he was not following the customary English practice of dating each year from 25 March. This is confirmed by examining the dates themselves. For example, the birth of his second son William is noted as 'Friday before Lady Day in Lent' 1545, which in contemporary English usage meant March 1546. Yet, that cannot be the case, since the birth of the next child, Edward, is given as October 1546.² Similarly, Thomas's birth in 1558, 'the Wednesday before Candlemas', cannot mean 1559 since Katherine was born on 21 October 1559. Sir Francis's method is more akin to the growing Continental practice of dating each year from January, but he is singular in using Christmas rather than January. The

¹ *The Pedigree of the Family of Knollys* (1809), compiled for the earl of Banbury's suit to the house of lords; Hon. Walter Devereux, *Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex* (2 vols., 1853). Only an unpublished work, F. J. Malpas, 'Sir Francis Knollys and family' (Local Studies Collection, Berkshire County Library, 1993), uses details from the dictionary.

² There is evidently a mistake in Sir Francis's note of Edward's birth, since St. Luke's Day, 1546, fell on Monday, 18 October, hence the eve was a Sunday, not a Tuesday.

detailed timing in entries thirteen and fourteen suggests that the author (whether Sir Francis or not) was present in the house during the births.

Sir Francis's choice of a secular work to contain his notes is also unusual, particularly in a wealthy household where a bible or Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was more commonly chosen (poorer households being forced to use whatever was to hand). But it is notable that a similarly secular choice involves Lady Katherine's brother, Henry, first Lord Hunsdon, whose family notes were found in a Froissart's *Chronicles*.³

Lady Katherine produced a surprising number of offspring who survived to maturity. Of the fourteen children listed, only the last, Dudley, is known to have died in infancy, and for all except two of the others, Mary and Maud, there is recorded evidence of adult life. One might have expected a greater degree of infant mortality, and still births or 'cot deaths' may account for the discrepancy between Sir Francis's records and Lady Katherine's memorial plaque in Westminster abbey. The plaque credits her with sixteen children, eight male and eight female, and, as the plaque was certainly in place before 1600 and possibly before Sir Francis's death (1596), it is likely to be correct.⁴

Yet, the dictionary names only six daughters – Mary, Lettice, Maud, Elizabeth, Anne and Katherine. Possibly two died at or soon after birth, perhaps before being christened. Alternatively, two could have been born after the last entry in 1562, although this is unlikely. Knollys family papers do not refer to any daughters other than those listed in the dictionary. They also refute the existence of a daughter named Cecilia, who is included in some histories of the period as a member of Elizabeth I's household. Family records suggest that this is a confusion with Elizabeth Knollys which arises from an incorrect inscription on a seventeenth-century portrait, thereafter repeated in biographical dictionaries.

A further discrepancy is thrown up by the figures on the spectacular Knollys monument in St. Nicholas church, Rotherfield Greys, near the family's manor home, Greys Court (now owned by the National Trust), outside Henley-on-Thames. Erected in 1605 by their second son and heir, William, the monument shows recumbent effigies of Sir Francis and Lady Katherine flanked by fourteen kneeling adult 'weepers'. Arranged in twin lines of seven females and seven bearded males, they are remarkable for their individualized faces. On a canopy overhead are two further kneeling figures in ermine robes and coronets, presumed to be William and his second wife, added after he was created earl of Banbury in 1626. Since William is unlikely to have omitted himself from the original monument, he can be assumed also to be represented among the seven male 'weepers'. Compared with the Westminster sixteen, the Rotherfield Greys memorial appears to lack one son and one daughter; while compared with the dictionary fourteen, it has one son too few and one daughter too many.

³ F. H. Mares, *The Memoirs of Robert Carey* (Oxford, 1972), app. 2.

⁴ The tablet, in St. Edmund's chapel, is inscribed: 'Illa tibi liveros sex et bis quinque marito protulit. Aequalis faemina. Masque fuit.' It is referred to in William Camden's *Reges, Reginae, Nobilis et alii, in Ecclesia Collegiata B. Petri Westmonasterii sepulti* (1600), G1 verso.

The eighth son implied by the Westminster abbey plaque, and named in the dictionary, can probably be accounted for by the swaddled infant lying on the monument beside Lady Katherine. There is a contemporary record that Sir Francis's 'childe called Dudley Warwick' was 'killed' in June 1562,⁵ and from the dictionary we now know that Dudley was born that same year on 'the 9 day of May'. Dictionary, abbey plaque and monument are thus consistent about the sons, and with Sir Francis's comment in 1568, 'I have six sons living, besides my eldest'.⁶ And if, as is likely, the monument shows them in order, they represent: Henry (who predeceased Sir Francis), William, Edward, Robert, Richard, Francis and Thomas.

The position with regard to the daughters is more difficult. William, as the commissioner of the 1605 monument, may also have included an effigy of his first wife, Dorothy Brydges, who was alive until the end of October that year – for reasons of symmetry if no other. Assuming infant mortality does account for two of the eight daughters implied by the abbey plaque, Dorothy and the six daughters named in the dictionary would then account for the seven female 'weepers' at Rotherfield Greys. Their line almost certainly begins with Lettice, another figure in ermine and coronet. Twice a countess by her marriages to Walter Devereux, first earl of Essex (1561) and Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester (1578), Lettice naturally took precedence over her sisters (and William's first wife) and her position on the monument may have prompted the idea, often rehearsed, that she was the eldest.

The frequency and success of Lady Katherine's pregnancies was remarkable. In the first fifteen years of her marriage, which Sir Francis notes occurred on 26 April 1540, she produced eleven children.⁷ All but one of those pregnancies occurred at intervals of about ten months or less. Thus, the gap in recorded births between Anne's in July 1555 and Thomas's on 'Wednesday before Candlemas' 1558 (swiftly followed by yet another) may indicate that Lady Katherine and her husband were living apart for a time. They are both known to have lived abroad during Mary I's reign and it has sometimes been assumed that the family went overseas as 'Marian exiles' almost as soon as Mary came to the throne. A farewell letter from Princess Elizabeth to Lady Katherine on her departure, signed 'cor rotto (broken heart)', has been dated to 1553,⁸ but the dating is uncertain and the earliest independent evidence for Lady Katherine being abroad is in

⁵ 'A "journal" of matters of state . . .', ed. S. Adams, I. W. Archer and G. W. Bernard, in *Religion, Politics, and Society in 16th-Century England*, ed. I. W. Archer and others (Camden 5th ser., xxii, 2003), pp. 35–136, at p. 103.

⁶ Sir Francis to William Cecil, 12 Sept. 1568 (*Calendar of State Papers, Scottish, 1563–9*, ii, 505, item 811).

⁷ Their marriage was already assumed to date from spring/summer 1540, because of legislation of July 1540 which assured them a joint right to inherit the manor of Rotherfield Greys after Sir Francis's mother's death (*Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, XV, no. 498, iii, c. 67 (p. 218)).

⁸ The letter, British Library, Lansdowne MS. 94, item 10, fo. 21, is dated 1553 in M. A. E. Wood, *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain* (3 vols., 1846), iii, 279, and in C. H. Garrett, *The Marian Exiles* (Cambridge, 1938), p. 210, but not in *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth, 1533–1603*, ed. G. B. Harrison (1935), p. 19.

June 1557.⁹ The gap in Lady Katherine's pregnancies may support the alternative view that a family exodus was not necessary before the discovery of the Dudley plot against Mary in 1555/6; and that Sir Francis made various trips without Lady Katherine before she joined him to live on the Continent in 1556, or early 1557, both returning on Elizabeth's accession.

The most intriguing information, however, that may be deduced from the dictionary relates to Lady Katherine's age. Sir Francis's record that their son Dudley was born on 9 May 1562 confirms that she was pregnant that year and provides the first contemporary evidence to support the identification of a portrait known as 'Probably Catherine, Lady Knollys'. Attributed to Steven van der Meulen, it shows the sitter heavily pregnant and its inscription gives the date 1562 and the sitter's age as thirty-eight, or in her thirty-eighth year.¹⁰ Among art historians the picture is recognized as an early and important pregnancy portrait and, although the identification is traditional, as Croft and Hearn point out, there is no reason to doubt it. There is also, they state, 'a plausible resemblance between the sitter and the effigy of Lady Knollys' in Rotherfield Greys church.¹¹ And if the evidence of 'resemblance' is considered too subjective, it may be noted that portrait sitter and effigy appear to wear the same jewelled breast pendant, described by Scarisbrick as 'Pearls and point-cut diamonds arranged in a circle round a central stone'.¹²

The picture was among a group of Knollys family portraits sold at Sothebys in 1974 and is assumed to be painting number four in the Fern Hill list of portraits produced by General Sir William Knollys in the late nineteenth century.¹³ But it has not previously been considered by historians debating the birth dates of Lady Katherine and her brother, Henry, and its evidence is of no little significance.

Like the portrait's identification, there is no particular reason to doubt the accuracy of the inscription (and no art experts appear to have done

⁹ Garrett, p. 212.

¹⁰ Steven van der Meulen, 'Probably Catherine, Lady Knollys', inscribed 'Aetatis suae 38 Ao Dom 1562'; oil on panel. The portrait is part of the Mellon Collection held by the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Conn., U.S.A., and the author is much obliged to Karen Denavit, librarian at the Center, for kindly supplying information about it.

¹¹ P. Croft and K. Hearn, "'Only Matrimony maketh children to be certain': two Elizabethan pregnancy portraits: Lady Cecil and Lady Knollys', *British Art Jour.*, iii (Autumn 2002), 18–24, at pp. 19, 24 n. 4.

¹² D. Scarisbrick, 'Jewellery in Tudor and Jacobean portraits at New Haven', *Apollo* (Nov. 1987), 323–8.

¹³ Sir William's list is reproduced in Revd. F. G. Lee, *The History, Descriptions and Antiquities of the Prebendal Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Thame* (1883), p. 598, n. 6. It is noted that some pictures were 'hanging high' and Sir William 'could not discover' their details, which might explain why he recorded the inscription as '1567, aged 36'. The picture was sold at Sotheby's on 30 Jan. 1974 (lot 153) and subsequently acquired for the Mellon Collection from Sabin Galleries (London), who supplied the following provenance: 'The portrait of Catherine Lady Knollys descended through her great granddaughter Loetitia Durham to Martyn, also a great granddaughter (a granddaughter of Lettice Knollys and therefore cousin once removed of Martyn) and then through four generations of the Martyn family.'

so). But its date and meaning are open to interpretation. If '1562' is old-style dating, the picture could have been painted in the first three months of 1563. The chance, however, that Lady Katherine gave birth to Dudley on 9 May 1562 (as the dictionary states) and was again in the final stages of pregnancy by 25 March 1563, is remote. She was, after all, nearing forty years of age and had been child-bearing for twenty-two of them. It seems reasonable, then, to assume that the portrait was painted a month or two before the birth of Dudley. Whether she was already aged thirty-eight, or was in her thirty-eighth year, is also open to question: if the former then she was born in the twelve months before March/April 1524; if the latter, the latest date for her birth is March/April 1525. In either case, her conception falls within the period when her mother, Mary Boleyn, is believed by many historians to have been Henry VIII's mistress.

It is not possible to date with certainty Mary Boleyn's affair with the king.¹⁴ But it is now generally considered likely that the liaison occurred after Mary's marriage to William Carey, in February 1520, and was in progress at least between 1522 and December 1524.¹⁵ However, although her children took the name of her husband, William Carey, and their paternity has long been the subject of speculation,¹⁶ current opinions differ as to whether they were born during or after the affair. In 1997, Hoskins put forward arguments for various illegitimate offspring of Henry

¹⁴ It is not within the scope of this article to re-address arguments on the date of the affair (often combined with analysis of Mary's age), which can be found chiefly in: J. Gairdner, 'Mary and Anne Boleyn', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, viii (1893), 53–60 and 'The age of Anne Boleyn', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, x (1895), 104; P. Friedmann, *Anne Boleyn: a Chapter of English History, 1527–36* (2 vols., 1884); H. Paget, 'The youth of Anne Boleyn', *Bull. Inst. Hist. Research*, liv (1981), 162–70; E. W. Ives, *Anne Boleyn* (1986), rev. as *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn: 'the most happy'* (Oxford, 2004); R. M. Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1989); A. Hoskins, 'Mary Boleyn's Carey children and offspring of Henry VIII', *Genealogists' Magazine*, xxv (1997), 345–52; D. Starkey, *Six Wives: the Queens of Henry VIII* (2003).

¹⁵ For the marriage date, see *L. & P.*, III, ii, p. 1539; and Starkey, p. 274. It is not necessary to assume that Mary's marriage was a device to allow the king *droit de seigneur*, since there is no evidence that he was aware of her before 1520, but it is possible. Ives considers it is 'more likely' that the affair took place in the early 1520s, that it was alive in 1523, and that it was finished 'by or before' 1526 (Ives, *Life and Death*, pp. 16, 65, 81); Starkey (p. 277) suggests that it ended around Christmas 1524. Other historians conclude that the affair post-dated 1520 (C. Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993), p. 89; A. Weir, *Henry VIII: King and Court* (2001), pp. 221–5; and B. A. Murphy, *Bastard Prince: Henry VIII's Lost Son* (Stroud, 2001), p. x). Various grants of land and offices between 1522 and 1525 to Mary's husband are taken to be rewards for compliance in the affair (Ives, *Life and Death*, p. 16; Warnicke, p. 46; Friedmann, i, 43; *L. & P.*, IV, i, no. 196 (15), (18)).

¹⁶ The first recorded rumour is in the trial of John Hale, 1535, who claimed that 'young Master Carey' had been identified to him as a son of the king (*L. & P.*, VIII, no. 567). No contemporary recorded gossip is known regarding Katherine, although that is not necessarily indicative since she was of no significance to the succession. The 'Hale rumour' itself, however, may lend weight to the case for her royal paternity. If it was, as Ives suggests, a story put about by supporters of Katherine of Aragon, it was only worth spreading if something about it was credible; and it would be believable if it were known or thought that the sister of 'young Master Carey' was a royal bastard (Ives, *Life and Death*, p. 369, n. 75).

VIII and concluded that both the Carey children were royal bastards.¹⁷ But Ives's 2004 study of Anne Boleyn has repeated his opinion that Henry's affair with Mary was childless: 'Mary Boleyn became pregnant as soon as she left Henry for her husband'; 'her two children came in quick succession'; 'her first child Henry Carey was born in March 1526'.¹⁸

Whatever the case for Henry Carey's royal paternity, the claim that Katherine was his younger sister looks increasingly unlikely. To be Mary's second child, Katherine could only have been born in or after February 1527, and she would have been at most thirteen years and two months when she married.¹⁹ The arrival of her first child some twelve months later ('Tuesday before Easter day' 1541) proves that Katherine was a co-habiting wife, not a betrothed juvenile; and at thirteen that would have been highly unusual. Youthful motherhood is neither unknown nor impossible. But, as Ives points out in dating Mary Boleyn's birth, she 'was no landed heiress', so marriage at such a young age 'would have been exceptional'.²⁰ And even for landed heiresses marriage at thirteen did not usually involve co-habitation.²¹

Assigning Lady Katherine a birth date early in the range March 1523 to April 1525 is also more consistent with her appointment, in November 1539, to the coveted position of maid of honour 'for the coming of Anne of Cleves'.²² Unlike children placed in aristocratic households to learn social skills, maids to an adult queen were usually girls aged sixteen or more, who served and entertained their mistress. Katherine, as Mary Boleyn's second child, would not yet have reached thirteen when Henry VIII's fourth wife made her inauspicious entry to London. At least two of the other five maids, Katherine Howard and Anne Bassett, were aged about eighteen, and Bassett had been rejected as too young to be a queen's maid at fifteen and forced to wait a year.²³

The balance of probability points, then, to Lady Katherine being Mary Boleyn's elder child, born at the latest in April 1525; and if it is correct that Mary was then the king's mistress, it is reasonable to assume that Henry VIII would have preferred not to share her favours, even with her

¹⁷ Hoskins (see above, n. 14).

¹⁸ Ives, *Life and Death*, pp. 16ff., 190. Henry Carey's birth is fixed by the post-mortems for Mary Boleyn and William Carey (see *The Herald and Genealogist*, iv (1866), 33–48 and 129).

¹⁹ The date often given, 1529/30 (e.g., in the entry for Sir Francis Knollys in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*), is impossible as Will Carey died in June 1528 (see *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, ed. H. Ellis (3 vols., 1824), i. 295).

²⁰ Ives, *Life and Death*, p. 369, n. 69.

²¹ Katherine Seymour (née Grey) is a case in point: her first marriage, aged about 13, was not consummated and was subsequently annulled (*O.D.N.B.*). Henry VIII's elder brother, Arthur, was deemed not to have consummated his marriage aged 15.

²² *L. & P.*, XIV. ii, p. 203, item 572.

²³ *The Lisle Letters*, ed. M. St. Clare Byrne (6 vols., Chicago, Ill., 1981), iv. 863, 895. It is worth noting that Lettice Knollys was 15 before she became a maid to Elizabeth, and her daughter Penelope had turned 18. Katherine Seymour, too, was more than 15 when appointed a maid of honour to the queen.

husband. If Lady Katherine *was* the king's child, he never acknowledged her. He had nothing to gain by recognizing the Carey children. He already had an illegitimate son – ennobled as duke of Richmond and Somerset in 1525 – and the consanguinity laws meant that his affair with Mary seriously complicated his marriage and divorce proceedings. Unsurprisingly, Elizabeth never recognized Katherine as her half-sister, and it was certainly not a relationship that Katherine or Sir Francis ever openly claimed. At court Katherine was acknowledged as the queen's favourite among her first cousins, and leading lady of the bed-chamber; and Elizabeth's lack of other female relatives to whom she felt close may be adequate to explain this favoured position.²⁴ As soon as Elizabeth succeeded to the throne, Lady Katherine, Sir Francis and their daughter Lettice were appointed to her household, and for the first ten years of the reign Lady Katherine combined the most senior post among the ladies-in-waiting with motherhood to more than a dozen children.²⁵ When she died, still with the queen at Hampton Court, on 15 January 1569 (while Sir Francis was guarding Mary Queen of Scots at Bolton castle), Elizabeth was inconsolable and ordered a lavish funeral in Westminster abbey at her own expense, £640 *2s 11d*. It was an unusually generous gesture and considerably more than she spent on the burials of her other cousins, who were unquestionably royal.²⁶

A broadside epitaph by Thomas Newton soon appeared pointing out that Lady Katherine was 'In favour with our noble queen, above the common sort', and for weeks the queen's grief was apparent to everyone.²⁷ A year later, still thinking of Lady Katherine, Elizabeth wrote a recommendation for her eldest son, 'whom you know what reason we have to regard, in respect of his kindred to us by his late mother'.²⁸ Whatever that 'kindred' was, Lady Katherine was clearly a woman worthy of high regard and her life merits individual attention. But if Sir Francis's Latin dictionary lends compelling evidence that she was Elizabeth's half-sister, there is still greater reason to record her life; not least because Lady Katherine was the grandmother of Robert Devereux, earl of Essex – Elizabeth's last favourite.

²⁴ In 1558 Elizabeth had two remaining first cousins descended from Henry VIII's sisters: Margaret, countess of Lennox and Frances, duchess of Suffolk. But both had forfeited her confidence long ago. Margaret was a favourite of Queen Mary and Frances had supported efforts to place her daughter, Lady Jane Grey, on the throne and subvert the succession in 1553.

²⁵ C. Merton, 'The women who served Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth: ladies, gentlewomen and maids of the privy chamber' (unpublished University of Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, 1992), app. 1; Brit. Libr., Lansdowne MS. 3/88, fos. 191–2 and item 89, fo. 193; *Acts of the Privy Council 1558–70*, new ser., vi, p. 43.

²⁶ Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Salisbury MSS.*, i, 415 (item 1314).

²⁷ Huntington Library 18322, Thomas Newton, 'An epitaph upon the worthy and honorable lady, the Lady Knowles' (1569); *A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed 1475–1640* (2nd edn., 1976–86), no. 18512; S. Haynes, *A Collection of State Papers . . . left by William Cecil 1542–70* (1740), pp. 509–10.

²⁸ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth Addenda, 1566–79*, xvii. 198.

Appendix

Transcript of the handwritten notes on the inside front cover of Sir Francis Knollys's Latin dictionary²⁹

Here folowethe in order the names, wt the tymes of the byrthe of the chyl dren of Francys Knollys & Katern his wyffe that were maryed ye xxvi daye of Aprylle anno. 1540. & the year of or Lorde is cownted to begyne at krystmas.

1. Harry Knollys was borne, anno domini, ~~155~~ 1541. the tewsdaye befor ayster daye.
2. Mary Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1542. the wensdaye present before all halou daye.
3. Lettyce Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1543. ye tewsdaye present afr all halou daye.
4. Wyllyam Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1545. ye frydaye before owre Ladye daye in Lentt.
5. Edward Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1546. upon tewsdaye beyng saynt Lukes even.
6. Mawde Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1548. on the fryday ^{afr} ~~before~~ ower Lady daye in Lentt.
7. Elisabeth Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1549. upon trynpte even.
8. Robart Knollys was borne, anno domini, ~~154~~ 1550. the sunday sennett [sennight] ~~befe~~ afr all halou daye.
9. Rychard Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1552. the saterday before the Assention daye.
10. Francys Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1553. on munday the 14 daye of August.
11. Anne Knollys was borne, anno domini, 1555. ye 19th daye of Julye.
12. Thomas Knollys was borne ye wensday before candlemas daye anno 1558.
13. Katern Knollys was borne uppon satrday ye 21 daye of October anno 1559. between 12 and 1 of ye kloke at afrnone.
14. Dudley Knolles was borne uppon saterdaye the 9th daye of maye, halffe a quarter of an howre before 2 of the kloke at afrnoone ao. 1562.

²⁹ The author is indebted to Dr. Frances Harris of the British Library Manuscripts Department for assistance in preparing this transcript, and for her advice that, compared with a holograph letter of Sir Francis, dated 1575 (Brit. Libr., Additional MS. 32091 fo. 34), in all probability the handwriting is the same. Following the fourth entry, William, there is a much later pencilled interpolation which reads 'Earl of Banbury 1626'. Punctuation has been regularized, eliminating many full points. For the sake of clarity initial capitals have been used for children's names. Caret marks indicate interlinear insertions. Line breaks are preserved as in the original.