

[http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/collectionsindepth/family/middleton/biographies/biographyofsirfranciswilloughby,1stbaronet\(1668-1688\).aspx](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/collectionsindepth/family/middleton/biographies/biographyofsirfranciswilloughby,1stbaronet(1668-1688).aspx)

Biography of Sir Francis Willoughby, 1st Baronet (1668-1688)

The eldest son of [Francis Willoughby](#) the naturalist and his wife Emma, Francis was brought up on the family estate at Middleton in Warwickshire. He was only four years old when his father died. His mother married Sir Josiah Child in 1676 and the family moved to Wanstead in Essex. Francis was created a Baronet on 7 April 1677. At the age of 12 he ran away from home to live with his aunt, Lettice Wendy, where he was tutored at home before going on to St Catharine's College, Cambridge in 1682. In 1685, having arranged for his brother Thomas to be brought away from his stepfather's house to Cambridge, Sir Francis took Sir Josiah to court, accusing him of squandering his inheritance. By the following year, Sir Francis had gained control of his own estate and decided to move into Wollaton Hall, which had lain empty since a fire in 1642 and the death of Sir Percival Willoughby in 1643. He intended to go on a Grand Tour in 1688, but fell ill in London and died in July 1688, aged only 20. He was succeeded by his brother, [Thomas Willoughby](#) .

Family

Sir Francis died unmarried in 1688.

Archive Collections

- Title deeds, settlements, estate and legal papers relating to Sir Francis's ownership of the Willoughby estates are part of the [Middleton Collection](#) held in Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University of Nottingham.

Published Sources

Correspondence and details relating to Sir Francis Willoughby are contained within Cassandra Willoughby's two-volume history of the Willoughby family, part of the [Middleton Collection](#) held at Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University of Nottingham (reference Mi LM 26-27), and published as:

- Chandos, Cassandra, Duchess of, *History of the Willoughby Family* . Published in Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Report to the Commissioners on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton Preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire* (1911) [King's Meadow Campus East Midlands Collection Em. D2 HIS]
- Chandos, Cassandra, Duchess of (ed. Wood, A.C.), *The Continuation of the History of the Willoughby Family* (The University of Nottingham, 1958) [King's Meadow Campus East Midlands Collection Not 4H.V38 WIL]