

[ENGLAND]

Lady Bergavenny's Will, 1434

[1]

THE
BARONAGE
 OF
 ENGLAND
 OR
An Historical Account
 OF THE
 LIVES and moſt Memorable ACTIONS
 OF
Our English Nobility

In the *SAXONS* time, to the *NORMAN* Conqueſt;
 And from thence, of thoſe who had their riſe before the end of
 King *HENRY* the Third's Reign.

DEDUCED

From *Publick Records*, *Antient Hiſtorians*, and other *Authorities*,

BY

WILLIAM DUGDALE

NORROY King of Arms

*Nam genus & proavos, & quæ non fecimus ipſi,**Vix ea noſtra voco.* [2] *Ovid.*

TOME the Firſt.

LONDON:

Printed by *Tho. Newcomb*, for *Abel Roper*, *John Martin*, and *Henry Herringman*,
 at the Sun in *Fleetſtreet*, the Bell in *S. Pauls Churchyard*, and at the
 Anchor in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange. 1675.

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[. . .]

[p 240]

But before I proceed with my diſcourſe of this *Richard* [3]; I ſhall take leave to tranſcribe part of the Teſta-
 ment [4] of *Joane* his Mother (who was Daughter to
Richard Earl of **Arundell**, and one [5] of the Siſters and
 Coheirs to *Thomas* Earl of **Arundell**, as alſo Widow of

Humphrey de Bohun Earl of **Hereford**, **Effex**, and
Northampton;) in regard that by it the greatneſs and
 ſtate, wherein the Nobility of **England** in thoſe dayes
 lived, may in ſome ſort be diſcerned.

I N the name of the bleſſed Trynyte Fader and
 Sone and Holy Goſt the *x*th day of Janyver
 the yere of oure Lord *a m l cccc xxx iiij* I *Johanne*
Beauchamp lady of *Bergevenny* as a meke
 doughter of holi chirche full in the cryſten fayth
 and belyve hool in mynde and body bleſſed be
 God conſideryng þat þe freel condicion of this
 wrecched and unſtable lyef ys ful of perels and
 the yende and conclufion therof ys not elles but
 deth fro the whiche no perſone of none aſtate
 ſhall eſcape and therfor purpoſyng with the leve
 of God to diſpoſe ſuche goodes as of hys grace
 he hath lent me in ſuche uſe as myght be moſt to
 his pleaſauns and profit to my ſoule and alle
 theres þat I am bounden to I have ordeyned and
 make my teſtament and laſt wylle in this forme.

Firſt I bequethe my ſoule to the mercy of my
 bleſſed ſavyour and maker Jeſu Cryſt thorough
 the beſechyng of his bleſſed moder *Mary* and
 alle holy company in hevene and my ſymple and
 wrecched body to be bured in the queer of þe
Frere Prechours of *Hereford* in a newe tumbre
 by my worthy lord and ſumtyme huſbond *Sir*
Wylliam Beauchamp on whoos ſoule God have
 mercy.

But I wol þat my body be kept unburyed in þe
 place where it happeneth me to dye unto the
 tyme my *Maigne* [6] be clethed in blak, my hers
 my chare and other covenable purviaunce made
 and þanne to be caried unto þe place of my
 buryeng before reherſed with alle þe worſhip þat
 ought to be don unto a woman of myne eſtate,
 whiche God knowyth wele procedeth not of no
 pompe or veynglory þat I am ſette ynne for my
 body but for a memorial and remembraunce of
 my ſoule to my kyn frends ſervantes and alle
 other.

And I wol þat every pariſh chirche þat my ſaied
 body reſteth ynne a nyght after hit paſſeth from
 þe place of my dyeing be offred *ij* clothes of

[1] [Dugdale's edition of Lady Bergavenny's will has been corrected here from the will's text in *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury 1414-1443* by E. F. Jacob and H. C. Johnson, Oxford UP, 1937-1947, vol 2 pp 534-539. The original version in the Register must have been one long block of text; Dugdale's version divided it arbitrarily into unnumbered paragraphs. The version presented here shows each sentence or clause as a distinct paragraph numbered in the margin. The character þ is called "thorn"; it was the equivalent of "th", and was later often mistaken for "y". The long-s character ſ is copied from Dugdale.]

[2] [Latin, "Birth and ancestry, and that which we have not ourselves achieved, we can scarcely call our own."]

[3] [*Richard Beauchamp*, Lord *Bergavenny*.]

[4] Chichley. f 455. a. [*i.e.* Archbishop Chichele's register, *op. cit.*]

[5] Eſc. 4 H. 5 n. 54. Rot. Fin. 30 H. 6. m. 4.

[6] [her retinue or household; see *OED* s v *meinie*.]

golde and if it rest in any colledge or conventual chirche *iiij* clothes of golde.

[4] Also I devyfe þat in every cathedral chirche or conventual where my body restes a nyght toward the place where my body shal be buryed þat the dean, abbot or priour have *vj* s. and *viiij* d. [7] and every chanon monke vicar prest or clerke þat ys at þe *Dirige* at þe masse in þe mornyng shal have *xij* d. [8]

[5] Also I ordeyne þat anon aftur my buryeng ther be don for my soule *vml.* masses in alle þe haþt þat þey may goodly.

[6] And I bequethe unto þe housfe of þe saide freres atte *Hereford* in general *iiijcc* marke [9] for to fynde *ij* prestes perpetual to syngge for my lord my husbond my lord my fader my lady my moder and me and Sir *Hugh Burnell* knyght and alle my good doers and alle cristen soules the oon prest to syngge þe first masse in the mornyng in the same housfe and þe other the laft mafse þat ys doon in the day in the same housfe so þat it be seen that þere be sure ordenaunce made therefore to be kept perpetually as lawe wolle.

[7] And I bequethe eche frere of þe same housfe in special þe day of my buryeng to pray for my soule *iiij* s. and *iiij* d. [10]

[8] And I wolle that þe forsaide freres have a hool sute of blak þat ys fey a chesepyl [11], *ij* tunycles, *iiij* coopes with my best paire of candelstikkis of sylver unglyte and a paire of gylte candestikkis of sylver wrethon and my best sute of vestiments of cloth of golde with pecokkes with autere clopes and aubes and alle þat longeth therto for a memorial perpetual to use hem every yere at the annyversary of my lord my husband and of me.

[9] And for the coftes of myne enterment uppon my deth and buryeng I ordeyne and devyfe a *m* marke. [12]

And I devyfe a *c* marke [13] to be dalt penyemele [10] or more after the discrecion of myne executours among poer menne and women þat come to myne enterment the day of my buryeng.

And I ordeyne and devyfe to have five Prestis [11] to s̄ng for me 20 Winters, for to have *v* prestes to syngge for me *xx* wynter for my lord my fader, my lady my moder, my lord my husband, my sone *Richard* Erle of *Worcestre*, Sir *Hugh Burnell* knyght and alle my good doers and cristen soules and þat of þe most honest perfonis and good conversacion þat mowe be founden, of whiche *v* prestes I ordeyne and devyfe *ij* to syngge in the parish of *Rocheford* and other *iiij* in *Kyrkeby Belers* in the counte *Leycestr*' duryng the terme aforesaide.

Moreover I devyfe *ijcc* marke [14] to be depart-ed among my poer tenautes in *Englond* in fuche place as moft nede ys after þe discrecion of myne executours.

Also I devyfe a *c* li. [15] to be disposed in clothyng, beddyng, hors, oxen and other bestiall and necessaries withynne halve a yere after my deth and to be yeven and dalt among bedred men and other poer peple dwellyng in the lordshippes þat I have.

And also I devyfe that *Bartholomew Brokesby* and *Wauter Kebyll* be every yere atte *Hereford* the day of myne annyversary feyng þat my *obite* with þe remanaunt of my *obsequiez* be don in du wyfe to the most profitz of my soule spending about þe execucion thereof at every tyme *x* li. [16] after here discrecion.

Moreover I devyfe to the mariage of poer may-dons dwellyng withynne my lordshippes a *c* li. [15] and to the makyng and emendyng of feble brugges [17] and foule wayes [18] a *c* li. [15] and to the fyndyng and delyveraunce of poer prifoners that have ben wel condicioned *xl* li. [19]

Also I bequethe to Sir *James* son and eyre of þe erle of *Ormounde* *vc* li. [20] to be dyspent by

[7] [In 1434 the English pound represented 6.94 troy ounces of silver. The modern (2022) Canadian price of silver is \$28.33 per troy ounce. So that pound equates to Can\$197 in silver, and a gift of 6 s 8 d (one-third of a pound) would be like Can\$66. A more elaborate comparison based on prevailing income levels (GDP *per capita*) in England in 1434 (£2) and in Canada in 2022 (about Can\$70,000) suggests this gift would be more like Can\$12,000 today.]

[8] [12 pence = 1 shilling = 1/20 of a pound, equating to Can\$10 in silver today; but based on relative income levels more like Can\$1,800.]

[9] [A mark was 2/3 of a pound. 300 marks was thus £200: Can\$39,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$7M.]

[10] [3 s. 4 d. (one-sixth of a pound): Can\$33 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$5,800.]

[11] [*Sic.* Perhaps a monk's scapular or shoulder-cloak.]

[12] [1,000 marks (= £666.67): Can\$130,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$23M.]

[13] [100 marks (= £66.67): Can\$13,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$2.3M.]

[14] [200 marks (= £133.33): Can\$26,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$4.6M.]

[15] [£100: Can\$20,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$3.5M.]

[16] [£10: Can\$2,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$350,000.]

[17] [feeble bridges]

[18] [bad roads]

[19] [£40: Can\$8,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$1.4M.]

[20] [£500: Can\$100,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$17.5M.]

- myne executours aboute þe defence of þe landes that I yeve and affigne hym by the wylle of my landes in caas they be chalenged or impugned wrongfully withynne his age or elles to have the same money or elles as much therof as shal be unspende atte his fulle age to þe same entent and a payre of bafyns of sylver gylt and covered with my armes.
- [17] And I devyse and bequethe to the same Sir *James* a bedde of golde of swannes with tapettez of grene tapefery with branches and floures of divers colours and *ij* paire shetes of Raynes, a paire of fustiaunce, *vj* paire of other shetes, *vj* paire of blankettes, *vj* materas, *vj* pelowes and with quysfhones and bancours þat longen to þe bedde aforefaide with alle my stuffe at *Bergavenny*, a pane of menyvere with alle my armure in *Englond* and *Wales*,
- [18] whiche goodes I wolle þat it shal abide in þe keypyng of *Robert Darcy*, *Bartholomu Brokesby* and *Wauter Kebyl* tyll þe faide Sir *James* be *xx* yere of age and thenne to be delyvered hym and elles not.
- [19] And in caas that the faied Sir *James* dye withynne the faide age withouten izsue of his body lafully begoten thenne I wylle and devyse alle the forfaide goodes to be delyvered unto *John* of *Ormond* his Brother in the same wyse þat Sir *James* shulde have hit.
- [20] And if *John* dye or he come at the same age I woll þat *Thomas Ormond* his brother have hit in the same wyse þat *John* shulde have it.
- [21] And if *Thomas* dye or he come at þat age þanne I wolle þat alle þees goodes ben folde and don for my soule and heres and alle my good doers.
- [22] And I bequethe unto þe same *John* of *Ormounde* a bedde of cloth of gold with lebardes with those quysfhones and tapettes of the best rede worsted þat longen to the same bedde and bancours and formers that longe to the same bedde, also *iiij* paire of shetes, *iiij* paire blankettes, *iiij* pelowes and *iiij* materas.
- [23] And I bequethe unto *Thomas* of *Ormound* his brother a bedde of velwet whyte and blak paled with quyhfhones and tapetes and formers þat longe to þe same bedde, *iiij* peyre schetes, *iiij* peyre blankettes, *iiij* pelowes, *iiij* materas.
- [24] And I bequethe unto *Elizabeth* his sister a bedde of blewe bawdekyn with quysfhones tapetes of blewe worstede and formers þat longe to þe same bedde, *iiij* paire shetes, *iiij* paire blankettes, *iiij* pelowes, *iiij* materras.
- And I bequethe my son Sir *James* of *Ormound* *iiij* of the best hors in my chare and *John* his brother the next best and *Thomas* his brother the next best after hym and *John Gray* the *vj*. [25]
- And I bequethe to *John* of *Ormound* and *Thomas* his brother in defence of here lyvelode þat I have bequest hym ayther of hem *DCC* marc. [21] [26]
- Also I bequethe unto *Bartholomu Brokesby* my Hallyng of blak, rede and grene with morys lettres with quysfhones bancours and costers. [27]
- And I bequethe unto the same *Bartholomu* my bedde of sylke blak and rede embrawd with wodebynde floures of sylver and alle þe costers and apparel þat longeth therto. [28]
- And I woll þat þe faide *Bartholomu* have *xij* paire of shetes of þe best cloth þat I have save Raynes, *vj* paire of blankettes and a pane of menyver, a bolle of sylver called *plaiçe bolle* and my best cuppe of gold covered and my rounde bafyn of sylver pounced with morys lettres with the ewer that longeth to þe same bafyn. [29]
- And I bequethe to þe same *Bartholomu* a dosen veßell of sylver geryshed and *ij* bafyns and *ij* ewers of sylver and my best gowne furred with marters. [30]
- And I devyse to *Robert Darcy* *iiijcc* mark [22] [31] and my image of oure Lady þat the erle of *Marche* gaf me and a cuppe of gold covered.
- Also I devise to *Wauter Kebyll* a *c* mark [13] [32] and *iiij* of my best lowe hors.
- And I woll þat þe faide *Wauter* have my blak bedde of sylke with alle þe apparell of a chambre of þe best blak tapetez that I have and *vj* paire of shetes and *vj* paire of blankettes, *iiij* matras and my rounde bafyn of sylver with bolles and a ewer þat longeth therto and my littell saler and *vj* spones of sylver þat ben in my maner atte *Smyterfeld* and my best stayned halle with a potel pot and *iiij* pece of sylver and grete maßer covered that was Sir *Adam Perfales* and my secunde gowne of marters. [33]
- And I bequethe the remanaunt of my gownes furred with marters to my sone Sir *James* of *Ormound* and to his *ij* bretheren after the discrecion of myne executours and alle my other weryng clothes of wolle be departed among my women after the discrecion of myne executours. [34]

[21] [500 marks (= £333.33): Can\$66,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$11.7M.]

[22] [400 marks (= £266.67): Can\$52,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$9.3M.]

- [35] And I bequethe to *Ifabell Muton* a *c* mark [13] for hir mariage.
- [36] And I bequethe unto *Florys Lee* a *c* mark [13] and *ij* horf to his mariage, and I bequethe to *Richard Burley* a *c* mark [13] fo bothe they be ruled by me and myne executours and dwelle with me whilef I lyve.
- [37] And I bequethe to *Reynold Motton* a *c* marc. [13]
- [38] And I bequethe to *Thomas Besford* a *c* marc. [13]
- [39] And I bequethe to *John Daunsey* *xx li.* [23]
- [40] And I bequethe to *Henry Leycestre* *xx li.* [23]
- [41] And I bequethe to *Henry Fylongley* a *c* marc. [13]
- [42] And I bequethe to *Alyfon Darcy* a *c* marc [13]
- [43] And I bequethe to *Henry Brokesby* a *c* marc [13] under the condicion þat he be governed by me and by the worthiest of his kyn.
- [44] And I bequethe to *John Maffy* a *c* marc [13]
- [45] And I bequethe to *Philip Cuburley* *xx li.*, [23] and to *William Loudham* a *c* marc. [13]
- [46] And I bequethe to *Elizabeth* daughter of the erle of *Ormund* a *c* marc [13] and to *Thomas Blankamy* *xx li.*, [23] and to *John Yerdley* *x* marc, [24] and to *John Bultus* *x li.*, [16] and to *lytell Lewes* *x* marc, [24] and to *John Hulle* a *c* f., [25] and to *Thomas Burton* *x li.*, [16] and to *Thomas Webley* *c* f., [25] and to *John Foteman* *xl* f., [26] and to *John Gardyner* of *Bergevenny* *iiij* marc. [27]
- [47] And also I woll þat alle þe remanaunt of my servautes be rewarded after the discrecion of myne executours.
- [48] Also I devyfe to my prestes and clerkes of my chapell yf they go with my body and do my *obsequiez* dayly tulle I be bured on my coftes and to ben ruled after myne executours a *c* marc. [13]
- [49] Also I wolle þat my wardes with here maryage and alle þe lyvelode that I have by hem be under the governaunce of *Robert Darcy*, *Bartholomu*

Brokesby and *Wauter Kebyll* þey for to sylle hit and dispoſe hit to the most advauntage of my soule and to perfourme hit and put in execucion my wylle and my devyſe aforeſaide.

I ordeyne and make myne executours master [50] *John Bathe* chanon of *Welles* takyng for his labour *xl li.* [19] if he take miniftracion, *Robert Darcy*, *Bartholomu Brokesby*, *Wauter Kebyll*, *Sir Wyllyam Creke* takyng for his labour if he take miniftracion *xl li.* [19] and *John Bultus*.

And I wolle þat *Wauter Kebyll* ne *John Bultus* [51] adminiftrere ne do nothyng þat toucheth my teſtament in any wyſe withoute the advyſe or commaundement of the remanaunt of myne ſaide executours.

And the reſidue of my goodes I wolle and [52] ordeyne hym to be diſpoſed by myne executours to bere yerly charges of my *obites*, and in almes dedes doyng in the mene tyme whiles they wolle laſt, requiryng and prayng alle theeſ perſones executours aforenemed and aſ fer as I dar or may chargyng hem that as my ſengler truſt is on hem afore other the reſuſe not but to take uppon hem the adminiftracion of this teſtament with the condicions afore reherſed and put hit in execucion as they wolde I ſholde do for hem in lyke caas and as they wyll aunſwere before the moſt high and myghtfull Juge atte the dredfull day of Dome where bothe they and I ſhal appere.

In witteneſſe þat this ys my laſt wylle I have ſette hereto my ſeall. Iwryten the day and yere aforeſaide. [10 Jan. 143[4].]

Probatum fuit testamentum prescriptum coram domino in manerio suo de Lamehith' xix die mensis Novembris anno Domini millesimo cccc^{mo} xxxv^{to} et per ipsum approbatum, insinuatum ac legitime pronunciatum pro eodem etc.

Commissaque fuit administratio omnium bonorum prefatam defunctam et testamentum suum huiusmodi concernencium magistero Iohanni Bathe canonico Wellensi, Roberto Darcy, Bartholomeo Brokesby, Waltero Kebyll et Iohanni Bultus executoribus in dicto testamento nominatis de fideli inventario etc. conficiendo et domino citra festum Pasche proximo futurum exhibendo etc..

[The fore-written will was proved before the lord (Archbishop) in his manor of Lambeth on the 19th day of November in the year of the Lord 1435 and by him approved, notified and pronounced legitimate for that purpose etc.

And the administration of all the goods of the aforesaid deceased and her will was committed to master John Bathe, canon of Welles, Robert Darcy, Bartholomew Brokesby, Walter Kebyll and John Bultus, the executors named in the said will; also making and presenting a faithful inventory, etc. to the lord (Archbishop) on or before the next feast of Easter

[23] [£20: Can\$4,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$700,000.]

[24] [10 marks (= £6.67): Can\$1,300 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$230,000.]

[25] [100 shillings (= £5): Can\$1,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$175,000.]

[26] [40 shillings (= £2): Can\$400 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$70,000.]

[27] [4 marks (= £2.67): Can\$500 in silver today; but based on relative incomes more like Can\$93,000.]

*reservata potestata commit-
tendi administracionem
bonorum huiusmodi domino
Willelmo Creke capellano
executori etc. cum eam in for-
ma iuris venerit admissuris.*
[19 Nov. 1435.]

reserving power for the
same lord (Archbishop) to
admit Willem Creke, chap-
lain, executor, etc. in trust
for the administration of
such goods when he comes
as required by law.]

[*Note:* The figures indicate that her relatives, churchmen, retainers and charitable purposes received legacies that made them well-to-do and some of them very rich indeed. In particular, she gave amounts resembling Can\$4.6M to support poor tenants (para [12]); Can\$3.5M to support invalid men (para [13]); another Can\$3.5M to support marriages for poor maidens; the same again to repair bridges and roads; and Can\$1.4M for poor prisoners (para [15])—as well as even greater amounts for her sons, favoured servants, her own burial—and for platoons of churchmen to pray or sing for her soul.]