

The Last Will and Testament of Jean de Popincourt, 1403

To all who will read this document, I, Guillaume, seigneur of Tignonville, knight, chamberlain, and councilor to the king our Lord, guardian of the provostship of Paris, salute you. Let it be known, that, before Estienne Boileau and Nicaise le Munier, notary clerks of the king our lord, by him established at the Chatelet of Paris, and personally established as noblemen and sage, my lord Jehan de Poupaincourt, knight, seigneur of Lyencourt, first president for the King our lord in his Parliament of Paris, infirmed in body, although sound of mind, of good sense and understanding, as it appears by his words, thinking and wishing with all his heart and all of his power, to gain the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the redemption of his soul and for all of the goods and things that our dear Savior has given and lent him in this mortal world, ordered and disposed of by testamentary ordinances or last wishes, has made and ordered this present, in the name of our Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in the manner which follows.

Firstly, he, as a good Catholic and by his devotion, recognizes his dear creator Our Lord Jesus Christ and recommends his soul to him when it shall depart from his body, to the glorious Virgin Mary, his mother, to his lordship and Holy Father and Saint Paul, to his lordship the holy angel Michel and to all the righteous and celestial court of Paradise.

Item, he elects that the burial of his body be made in the church of his Lordship Saint Florent of Roye, at the center, before the main altar of the said church, and wishes and orders that his body be placed in a tomb chosen by his executors hereafter named and according to their wishes and ordinance.

Item, he wishes and orders that his debts and obligations to his said executors be paid and amended, and he also wishes and orders, that they receive the salary for all that will be owed to the servants, those at his manor in Paris as elsewhere, either laborers or others, that lady Perrenelle his wife, be made aware of, and be assured that all will be paid, and whatever she desires to say and order pertaining to the amounts owed them, so that the servants be paid in full.

Item, the said testator wishes and orders that when he dies, he be transported at the said place of Roye, and that while being taken there, he be also taken to Sercelles, in Liencourt in Beauvoisis, at Buvrines where he was born, and that in each of the said churches in each location, a mass and a vigil be celebrated; and leaves and donates to each parish priest of the said towns, XL *sols* Paris currency.¹

Item, once his interment is done, his service completed in the church of Saint Jehan en Greve, in Paris, where he is a parishioner, he orders that LX *livres* of Tours currency be made to the poor in the name of God, this to be carried out by his said executors.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the charities of the said church of Sain Jehan in Greve XL *sols* Paris currency, and to its priest XL *sols* Paris currency.

¹ French currency at this time consisted of a *livre* of 20 *sols* and *sol* (or *sous*) consisted of 12 *deniers*. A franc is worth one *livre tournois* (minted in Tours). The *écu* is probably the *écu à la couronne* which was minted starting in 1385 and was worth 22 *sols*, 6 *deniers*.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the church of Billettes of Paris, a bed covering made of vermillion sendal, worth XXIII *livres* Parisian currency.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Hotel Dieu of Paris X *livres* Parisian currency.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to each of the main Mendicant orders of Paris, XX *sols* Parisian currency and will hold vigil in the said church of Saint Jehan in Greve for his service.

Item, other than what has been stated above, he gives and bequeaths to the charitable works of the said church of Buvrines, XX *sols*, Parisian currency, as rent that the said testator takes on the inheritance of Jehan Bequet, and, with this, gives to the said charitable works all of his tillable lands that he owns within the said city of Buvrines, among which the said order can sustain from now on and for always the four Angelus bells which are at each corner of the central altar of the said church, and will highlight the said donation. And that, each year, on the anniversary date of the death of the testator, the church wardens of the said church shall sing a solemn obituary service for his soul.

Item, he gives and bequeaths for always to the said church of Saint Florent de Roye, his forest called la Rigale, among which, each year and for always, the canons and beneficiaries of the said church will hold a solemn vigil and on the following day a mass will be celebrated on the anniversary day that the testator has deceased, and will distribute to all attending the service, canons, chaplains, and vicars of the said church, VI *livres* Paris currency, from revenue obtained from the said wooded lot, and the surplus to be used in the lighting and vestments in the said church.

Item, the said testator wishes and orders that a chapel or chantry be founded in the said church of Saint Florent de Roye, in which a Requiem mass be sung and celebrated each day of the year and for always for his soul and for those of his friends and benefactors, and to ensure that this is done, he leaves a one-time sum of one thousand gold *écus*, and if the said sum is not sufficient, the said testator wants and orders that his property that he inherited and acquired at Pons Sainte Maixence and Pompoint and surrounding area be sold and disposed of for the foundation of and construction of the said chapel where a daily mass will be celebrated in perpetuity. And the said testator wishes that all of this be made according to the ordinance of his said executors.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the *cordeliers* [Franciscan friars] of Roye a one-time sum of XX *sols* Paris currency.

Item, to the Hotel Dieu of this city XL *sols* Paris currency, where a vigil and celebration of a mass will be performed.

Item, he wishes and orders that all the poor people who will come to the said place of Roye on the day of his funeral, be given and granted four *deniers* each, Paris currency.

Item, he wishes and orders that all of the priests of the said church of Saint Florent, that is, the one celebrating the mass, deacon, sub-deacon, and choir member be each given and granted VIII *sols* Paris currency, and to each of the other canons from the said church who will be present at the vigil and mass at his service, VI *sols* Paris currency, to each chaplain and to each vicar of the said church one *sols* Paris currency, to each of the altar boys of the said church XII *deniers* Paris currency, and to each of the

priests of the said city of Roye and surrounding countryside, who would want to celebrate a mass for his soul, III *sols* Paris currency.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Katherine, his sister, a one-time sum of X *livres* Tours currency.

Item, to Marie, his sister, X *livres* Tours currency.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Thibaut de Maiseray and to lady Blanch his wife, daughter of the said testator, all that they may owe him, and wants that the duties, obligations be given and donated to them truthfully and completely.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the said church of Saint Florent de Roye, all of the religious items that he has in the chapel in his manor in Paris, that is, vestments, altar cloth, chalice, *corporaux*,² cross, chandeliers, silver cruets, prayer book, breviary, to be donated and delivered following the demise of the said lady Perrenelle his wife, to whom he prays that it be made donation of, no one other than her, and that there be no impediments to this donation, and that this present donation and bequeath that she may admire and touch, she would like to consent to and find agreeable. And in the event that she doesn't, he orders that those of the said church of Roye, be content and grateful to receive half of it, the case being, which half will be donated to it following the demise of the said testator.

Item, he donates and bequeaths to Guillemine le Clerc, his nephew, student in Orleans, all of his books on canon law, along with a one-time sum of II hundred *écus*, not including however his legal cases and his *signé*³ which are found in his study; which legal cases and *signé* the said testator gives and bequeaths to Aubelet le Clerc, brother of the said Guillemine.

Item, he donates and bequeaths to the said Aubelet, his house, where presently resides master Pierre de Marrigny, advocate in Parliament, which was once owned by Colin de Condé, and for which he will have to go to school to study; and in case he doesn't, this donation and bequest shall be taken from him and given to the said Guillemine.

Item, he donates and bequeaths again to the said Aubelet, a one-time sum of one hundred *écus* for school expenses, which sum will be administered to him by master Pierre de Marigny, in accordance with the needs of the said Aubelet.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Gieffrin, his nephew, a one-time sum of one hundred *écus* as well as his Bible.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Golin le Breton, his nephew, a one-time sum of one hundred *écus* as well as his property inherited at Pompoint and Pons and surrounding area if they remain unsold for the cause above described.

Item, to Margot, his niece, daughter of the late Jehan le Clerc, V hundred gold *écus* for her marriage, to be administered by the said master Pierre de Marigny, when the need arises, along with the land that he owns at the said place of Roye.

² A *ciborium*, used to hold the consecrated eucharist.

³ Signed documents, probably relating to settled legal cases.

Item, to Jehannette, his niece, daughter of Mahieu Breton, V hundred *écus* for her marriage.

Item, to Jehanette de Haynaut, his niece⁴ II hundred *écus* to enter into a religious order, and in the event that his said nieces or any one of them came to decease before being married or entering the religious order, he orders and wants that the bequest become null and void, and likewise, of Colin le Breton, and also that, if any or all of them be married during the lifetime of the said testator, these present donations and bequests will become null and void in regards to those who were married or entered into religion.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Margot, his niece, daughter of the late Jehan Villain, LX *écus* to place her in whichever religious order.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the four daughters of the said master Pierre de Marigny, a onetime donation of II hundred *écus* in favor de their marriages, in the manner and according to the conditions as above described for these nieces.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Jehannin de Marigny, his niece, his *Catholicon*.⁵

Item, he gives and bequeaths to each of his servants, male and female, who will be there to serve him in his manor on the day of his demise, ten *francs*.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to lady Blanche, his daughter, wife of the said Thibaut de Maiseray, his piece of land at Lyencourt, in the manner that they will be found on the day of his decease, along with his lands in Sercelles, du Marchaiz, of Noisy, and his manor where he resides in Paris, on condition that the dower of the said lady Perrenelle, his wife, to retain a lifelong enjoyment . And, in the event that God would grant him a male heir, the said testator, now and in future, gives and donates to his future male heir the properties and said possessions which were left to the said lady Blanche, his daughter, during her lifetime, and in case where no one is living, after her death, the testator wants and orders that Jehan de Poupaincourt, dit Souyllart, his brother, become lord and proprietor of the said city and land of Lyencourt and its surroundings; and in the case where the said testator should leave his said properties in all of its entirety that he will possess on the day of his decease, and if it should come to pass that the said Souyllart decease without having a male heir, in which case the said testator gives and bequeaths the said land of Lyencourt to the said Guillemin, his nephew.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Jehan de Poupaincourt, son of the said Jehan de Poupaincourt, dit Souyllard, his godson, the land properties at Sercelles and Marchaiz, to have and enjoy following the demise of the said lady Blanche according to the conditions above described with reservations.

Item, the said testator leaves the said Souyllard all receipts and other items that may be demanded, because of having taken care of his needs.

⁴ Note found in printed versions of the will: Jeannette de Hainant, who was destined to a religious life by her uncle, fell into disorder after being seduced by a squire by the name of Clerbault, in the service of the bishop of Tournai, with the help of a matchmaker by the name of Marguerite de Bauhon, residing in the home of the first president, and which the Parliament condemned to be banished on the 21 June 1403 from the provostship of Paris.

⁵ A *Catholicon* is a Latin dictionary and grammar with some encyclopedia like entries.

Item, and in the case where the said lady Blanche, his daughter, would give birth to daughters, the said testator, in which case, gives and bequeaths from this day forward to the said daughters, his Paris home where resides the said testator, who was Jehan de Flory, the home and inheritance at Noisy and Marchaiz, notwithstanding the bequest of the said Marchaiz to the said Jehan de Poupaincourt, in regards to the said Marchaiz only.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to Jehannin, son of Clemence his niece and master Pierre de Marigny, his home, lands and appurtenances at Lusarches.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the said Climence [*sic*], his niece, his scarlet robe in its entirety, in the condition that it is found.

Item, to Ysabelet, wife of master Benoist Beth, his English green robe in its entirety.

Item, to Jehannette, daughter of the said Ysabelet, fifty *francs* for her marriage.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to the said Souillard, his brother, two of his horses, those of his choice, along with all of its armories.

Item, he wishes and orders that all the bequests described above, as to movable property, his funeral and burial, and all of the expenses needed to perform them, be taken firstly and before anything else, against his movable property; and in case where the said movable property be insufficient to pay for the expenses, that his lands at Pons and his residential manor in Paris, be sold and *adenerées*⁶, without providing any restitution to those to whom he has bequeathed according to this testament.

Item, he gives and bequeaths to each of his executors who would wish to mediate in its execution, a gilded silver goblet, weighing two *mars*⁷ approximately.

Item, to Jehannete la Monnete and the good ladies of the Chapelle the late Estienne Handry ten francs, that is to say, to the said Jehannette one franc, and to the other ladies of the said Chapelle VI *francs*.

For all of the said clauses and ordinances in this last will and testament, the contents within, and the circumstances and dependencies therein found, to complete and put into execution according to its content, the said testator has chosen and elected, named and ordered his executors and stewards the said lady Perrenelle, his wife, honorable and wise men master Pierre le Fevre, councillor to the King our lord, master Pierre le Cerf, general procurator to the King our lord, master Pierre de Marigny, Jehan de Poupaincourt dit Souyllart, named above, and Guillaume de Lachenau his clerk; which six executors, to the five, four, three or two of them, which two executors always be the said lady Perrenelle, his wife, or the said master Pierre de Marigny, the said testator has given and grants full power, authority and special pastoral rights to carry out his wishes; in the hands of which executors, the five, four, three or two as mentioned above, the said testator has relinquished all of his property, wishing that the said executors be fully in possession of in order to be able to carry out the wishes of the testator as described in this present will and testament and to present this document to the parliamentary court and to all

⁶ This word can mean “fed up,” but that is apparently not the meaning in this context.

⁷ I can find no unit of French measurement called a *mar*, I wonder if this is supposed to be a *marc*, unit of weight equaling 8 ounces.

other courts and jurisdictions, so that all previous last wills, codicils or ordinances that he may have made and ordered and dated prior to this document, be declared null and void; which testament, its content, circumstances, dependencies he wishes and orders that they be carried out in the best manor and form possible.

In witness thereof, we have fixed our seal of the provostship of Paris, in the year of our grace one thousand IIII hundred and three, Tuesday the fifteen day of May. N. Le Munier

*Collatio facta est.*⁸

Note: This will was translated by Paul-Antoine Lavoie for John P. DuLong, June 2020, based on the following copies of the will: Corpus, “Testaments enregistrés au Parlement de Paris sous le règne de Charles VI: Jean de Popincourt, premier président du Parlement de Paris,” http://corpus.enc.sorbonne.fr/testaments/testament_040 (accessed 26 June 2017); Alexandre Tuetey, *Testaments enregistrés au Parlement de Paris sous le règne de Charles VI* (Paris, 1880), 95-104; and *Mélanges historiques: Choix de documents* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1880), 3 :335-344.

⁸ This Latin phrase means a comparison was made with the original will to verify this copy.