

# THE WILL OF HUMPHREY DE BOHUN, EARL OF HEREFORD & ESSEX, 1319

translated by Michael Andrews-Reading<sup>1</sup>

*Foundations* (2014) 6: 11-12

© Copyright FMG and the author

Humphrey de Bohun, 8th Earl of Hereford and 9th Earl of Essex, married Elizabeth, daughter of King Edward I, in 1302. He was killed at the Battle of Boroughbridge on 16 March 1322.<sup>2</sup> A transcription of his will, in French, “*preserved in the archives of the Duchy of Lancaster*,”<sup>3</sup> was printed in the *Archaeological Journal* in 1845 with an article by Turner examining some of its contents and the accompanying estate inventory.<sup>4</sup> A subsequent English version was published in 1896 in an account of Bohun wills by Bigelow.<sup>5</sup> The present version is offered to facilitate access for modern scholars, and to complement the article on p.3 of this journal.

## Translation from the original French

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: I, **Humfrai de Bohun**,<sup>6</sup> **Earl of Hereford and of Essex**, of good memory and health, make this my will in the following manner: firstly, I devise my soul to our Lord Jesus Christ who suffered death upon the cross for me and for all sinners, and to the Blessed Virgin Mary his mother, and to all the saints of heaven, and my body to be buried in the church of our blessed lady at Walden, near to the body of **Elizabeth late my spouse**. *Item*, I devise that all my debts should be paid and acquitted in full, and I will that the outstanding provisions of my wife’s will shall be performed in their entirety. *Item*, I devise for the carriage of my body from the place where I die to the Abbey of Walden and for related undertakings and for my burial and for obsequies made at my interment and for all other things thereunto relating, one thousand marks, charging my executors that the bodies of my father, my mother and my wife should be likewise honestly hung with cloths as my body, and that between all our bodies there should be only one hearse and course of lighting. Furthermore, I devise to **my lord the King** a pot and a cup of gold, which my wife bequeathed to me. *Item*, to **Sir Bartholomew de Badlesmere**, the black charger that I brought from beyond the seas. And as my lord the King has of his mercy granted me by his letters patent the moiety of the issues of all my lands from the day that God shall have mercy upon me until the full age of my heir and all the sums that may be levied for the marriage of my said heir and all the sums that my said lord the King owes to me by account made in his wardrobe of my arrears with him and also of all the sums that **the Count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland** owes to me, I devise to **Humfrai, Edward, William and Eneas my sons**, to each of them, £2,000 to buy lands or marriages or to use in other ways as my executors

<sup>1</sup> Email: mjcar@btinternet.com

<sup>2</sup> CP 6: 470.

<sup>3</sup> It is now in the UK National Archives as part of the Duchy collections, catalogued as DL 27/14.

<sup>4</sup> T H Turner, “The Will of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, with Extracts from the Inventory of his Effects, 1319-1322”, London, *The Archaeological Journal* 2 (1845): 346-347.

<sup>5</sup> Melville M Bigelow, “The Bohun Wills,” *American Historical Review* 1(3) (1896): 414-435.

<sup>6</sup> I have left all personal names in their original spelling, and marked them in bold text.

shall think best for their profit, and if the sums aforesaid be more, we desire that they be shared between our four aforesaid sons. Furthermore, I devise to **Alianore my daughter** towards her wedding clothes, £200. *Item*, I devise to **Sir Hugh de Courtenay** one thousand marks which I give him for the marriage of **Margaret my daughter and his son and heir**. *Item*, I devise to the same Margaret towards her wedding clothes 200 marks. Furthermore, I devise to my eldest son all my armour, and an entire bed of green powdered with white swans, with all its appurtenances. *Item*, I devise to **Master John Walewayn** a cup stamped and embossed with fleurs de lis which belonged to Saint Edmond de Pounteny, and a small cup that **Giles de Herteberghe** gave to me at Bruges, and a gold ring with a ruby which my wife devised to me, which is all covered with bruises and is in a small casket in a great box at the end of the lower wardrobe. Furthermore, I devise to **Sir Robert de Haustede the father and to Dame Margerie his wife** for the guardianship of Eneas my son, £100, and to **Sir Robert de Walkefare**, £60, and to **Sir Walter de Shorne** to whom we have made no regard, £100. Furthermore, I devise to **Philippa Wake**, governess of Alianore my daughter, £20, and to **Maud de Baskerville my sister**, towards her marriage, £40. *Item*, I devise to **Katherine de Boklaunde**, governess of Margaret my daughter, £10, and to **Isabel the wife of Peter de Geudeford**, 100 shillings. Furthermore, I devise to the Chapter-General of the Friars Preacher for masses and other prayers sung and said for my soul, £20, and to the Chapter-General of the Friars Minor for the same purposes, £20. *Item*, to the Chapter of the Augustinian Friars for the same, 20 marks, and to the Chapter General of the Carmelite Friars for the same, 20 marks. Furthermore, I give to the Abbot and Convent of Walden for sung masses and other benefits made for my soul, £10, and to the Prior and Convent of Lanthony near Gloucester for the same undertaken, £10. *Item*, to the Prior and Convent of Farley for the same, £10, and to the Prior and Convent of Brecon for the same undertaking, £10, and to the Prior and Convent of Hurley for the same undertaking, £10, and to the Prior and Convent of Stoneley, 100 shillings, and to the Prior and Convent of Wirecestre for the same undertaking, £10. Furthermore, I devise to **Huard de Soyrou**, governor of Humfrai my son, £20, and to **Robert Swan** who is with John our son and his brothers, £20. *Item*, I devise to **Robert de Clifton**, £10, and to **Robert de la Lee**, £10. *Item*, to **Master William, my cook**, £10, and to **William my falconer**, £10, and to **Robert Brutyn**, £10. *Item*, to **Berthelet the falconer**, 100 shillings, and to **John de Gynes**, 100 shillings. Furthermore, I devise to **Richard Wrothe**, my constable at Brecon, £20, and to **Thomas Gobyoun**, my constable at Plashy, £20, and to **Henri Herbert**, £10. *Item*, I devise to **Walter le Seler**, 100 shillings, and to **Roger the cook**, 100 shillings, and to **Richard le Deen**, 100 shillings. *Item*, I devise to **John le Deen**, 50 shillings and to **Adam de Rothingge**, 100 shillings. *Item*, to **John the chandler**, 50 shillings and to **William 'le ferour'** [smith?], £10. *Item*, I devise to **Adam 'le ferour'**, 100 shillings, and to **William de Weston**, 100 shillings. *Item*, to **Miles**, 100 shillings, and to **Thomas le Pestour**, 100 shillings. Furthermore, I devise to **Thomas de la Despense**, my chamberlain, 10 marks, and to **Poun, my barber**, 10 marks. *Item*, to **William 'de la Gardrobe'**, 100 shillings, and to **Robert my palfrey-man**, 100 shillings. *Item*, I devise to **Gilbert le Poleter**, 100 shillings, and to each of my boys who shall have been in my service for more than a year when God shall have mercy upon me, 20 shillings. Furthermore, I devise that all of my best horses shall be assigned for my burial. And in order that all the foregoing be undertaken, I have ordained Master John Walewayn, **Sir Bartholomew de Enfield**, the Abbot of Walden, and **Sir John de Walden** my executors. Subscribed at Gosforth near to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the 11th day of August in the year of grace 1319.