

A medieval manuscript illustration depicting a woman in a blue dress and white headpiece standing at a wooden desk, pointing to an open book. Several men in medieval attire, including a blue robe and a red hood, are gathered around the desk, looking at the book. The background features a red and gold floral pattern.

THE

NATIONAL

ARCHIVES

Medieval Society

What roles did women play in Medieval times?

Key Stage 3 | Medieval 974-1485

Lesson Pack

Introduction

Medieval women's lives were as varied as they are today, but unlike today, most women (and men) lived in the countryside and worked the land on what were known as manors, estates on which tenants rented their properties from the lord and often performed services for him at harvest time. Women can also be found living and working in towns and cities, or in religious communities. There were extremely rich and powerful women, such as queens and noblewomen, but there were also countless ordinary women, whose names we do not always know, who emerge from the archives.

Use this lesson to find out about their lives in medieval England and Ireland from records held at The National Archives.

Suitable for:

Key Stage 3

Time period:

Medieval
974 - 1485

Connections to the Curriculum:

Medieval life
Significant Individuals

Contents

Introduction	Page 2.	Source 5: Indenture	Page 25.
Background	Page 3.	Source 6a: Parliament Roll	Page 27.
Teacher's Notes	Page 4.	Source 6b: Poem	Page 29.
List of Sources	Page 6.	Source 6c: Will	Page 31.
Tasks	Page 7.	Source 6d: Book	Page 33.
Source 1: Grant	Page 13.	Source 7a: Payments	Page 35.
Source 2a: Sale of Land	Page 15.	Source 7b: Will	Page 37.
Source 2b: Charter	Page 17.	Source 7c: Will	Page 39.
Source 3: Petition	Page 19.		
Source 4a: Investigation	Page 21.		
Source 4b: Petition	Page 23.		

Background

Women's lives in medieval times were most often shaped by the family they were born into and their economic, social and legal position. One of the most important differences between women's position today concerned the law. Medieval women were treated differently under the law to men depending on whether or not they were married. In medieval English law, an unmarried woman was under the authority of her father or brother, or another male relative, and they represented her in any court case, or business matter. A married woman and her husband were treated as one person legally, usually represented by the husband even when it related to his wife's interests or property. However, a widow whose husband had died could act on her own and manage her own business and lands. Many medieval widows were socially very powerful because of this.

Women appear in the records alongside male relatives, by themselves and with other women. The most obvious examples of groups of women living and working together are in convents as nuns. Some convents were particularly known for education and their libraries, but most were quite small. The head of a convent, the abbess, managed the community and its finances. We also find women running businesses in towns, often after the deaths of their male relatives. Sometimes women might receive formal training as apprentices, but often their education was informal. Instead, they were expected to fit in any paid work they did around family life, usually for less money than men, although there are times in the sources when men and women received the same rate of pay.

Powerful women, including members of the nobility and royal family, managed large and complex households. They might be responsible for feeding and supplying

hundreds of individuals at any one time. These households would include servants, both men and women, as well as young women who were there as ladies-in-waiting to be educated in the ways of a large, busy organisation.

Many girls would have experienced a period of being sent away for their education, whether they were noble girls sent to other noble families, or peasant girls sent to another farm to learn there as servants. In family workshops in towns and cities, the wife of the head craftsman would probably be involved in teaching apprentices as well as working alongside male family members when needed.

Our word 'spinster,' meaning an unmarried woman, comes from spinning wool. This was a job that was generally done by women during 'the Middle Ages'. Another largely female job was brewing ale, which most people drank rather than water because it was cleaner and safer. Ale might be made at home for a family or as a small business supplying neighbours. Women also appear in the archives as immigrants, moving to England either by themselves or with family members.

Teacher's Notes

The aim of this lesson is to show how the history of medieval women can be found in all types of document series held at The National Archives and elsewhere. The sources provide a variety of evidence for women's lives.

Starter activity

Teachers could use the Illustration image of Christine de Pizan as a starter activity.

Teachers could explain to the students how Christine de Pizan (1364-1430) was one of the earliest women to earn her living by writing after her husband died. Born in Italy, she lived at the French court after her father, Thomas de Pizan, an astrologer, became secretary to King Charles V of France. She was a Greek and Latin scholar and had access to important libraries and collections of books. Christine de Pizan wrote about the lack of education for women and their lack of rights and freedoms, as well as poetry, and religious and political commentary.

Her most well-known work is 'The book of the City of Ladies' (1405) which described the achievements of women, which imagined a city populated only by women. 'The Treasure of the City of the Ladies' followed making the point that if women had equal rights they can contribute to society. Christine de Pizan was arguably one of the earliest feminist writers.

- Can you describe the image?
- Why do you think it was created?
- What does it reveal about the class and social position of Christine de Pizan?
- How typical do you think her life was in comparison to the experience of other medieval women?
- Who do think was the audience for her writings?
- How would her work have benefited the lives of women in general?

For the lesson students explore how women appear in court cases, in petitions, and in wills. Court records record the details of disputes between individuals heard by judges [see source 4c.] Petitions were received by queens asking them to do things or to make things happen, [see Source 3 and 4b]. Women appear in wills, both their own wills and in those of men, [see sources 6c, 7b and 7c]. The fifteenth-century poem "What the Goodwife taught her daughter" was a popular poem showing how women were expected to behave- not necessarily how they did behave! [See Source 6a]. Other sources explore how girls appear in a statute from 1406 concerning a law about their education in 'Statutes of the Realm', [see source 6a]. It is important to note that of course the sources do infer details about wider medieval society, for example the church and we have provided questions to prompt this.

As part of the lesson students are asked to search other financial records that give us evidence for women's economic activity, for example by using taxation records digitised for the England's Immigrants database. <https://www.englishimmigrants.com/>

Teacher's Notes

All documents are provided with transcripts with difficult terms defined in square brackets. Some also have simplified transcripts for additional support. Students can work through the questions individually or in pairs and report back to the class. Alternatively, teachers may want to use this lesson in two parts owing to the large number of sources. Finally it is worth considering with students what other sources could help us understand the lives of medieval women.

Further Activities

- Use the sources to write the day in the life of a medieval woman of your choice
- Which source is most surprising/interesting?
- Curate your exhibition on the role of medieval women using the sources in this lesson and those found in our lesson on Medieval seals.

Connection to curriculum:

The development of Church, state and society in Medieval Britain 1066-1509: Society, economy and culture: for example, feudalism, religion in daily life (parishes, monasteries, abbeys), farming, trade and towns (especially the wool trade), art, architecture and literature

External links

- Find out more about Hildegard of Bingen and listen to one of her compositions here: <https://womennart.com/2018/03/07/who-was-hildegard-of-bingen/>
- Discussion of medieval women writers from the British Library: <https://www.bl.uk/medieval-literature/articles/womens-voices-in-the-medieval-period>
- Article from British Library with sources: <https://www.bl.uk/the-middle-ages/articles/women-in-medieval-society>
- A blog from the British Library the roles of Medieval and Renaissance women: <https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2022/02/medieval-and-renaissance-women.html>
- Video describing the lives of medieval women. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YJImBcg-So>

Sources

Illustration image: Wikimedia Commons: British Library. Harley 4431, f.259v.

From compendium of Christine de Pizan's works, 1413. Produced in her scriptorium in Paris.

Source 1: Document with seal concerning Joan Marshal, Catalogue ref: DL 25/1515

Source 2a: Deed of Pupelina Galle, her sons and her daughters. Late 12th century Catalogue ref: DL 25/2719

Source 2b: Charter from Pupelina Galle, her son and her husband to Alvingham Priory. Catalogue ref: Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc. 642 folio 86r.

Source 3: Petition sent to Philippa of Hainault by Jacques de Artevelde. 1343 Catalogue ref: SC 1/56/57

Source 4a: Commission investigating Agnes de Vescy, 1283 Catalogue ref: C 66 /102 m. 10

Source 4b: Petition from Maud de Lacy, Agnes' cousin, c. 1275 Catalogue ref: SC 8/124/6174.

Source 5: Indenture between Agnes Allosley, the prioress of Catesby Abbey and family of John Horewood of Staverton, 1457, Catalogue ref: E 326/8274.

Source 6a: Statutes of the Realm, 1406. The 'Statutes of the Realm' is a collection of the Acts of the Parliament of England from earliest times until 1707. Catalogue ref: C 65/68 m. 2.

Source 6b: Extract from a fourteenth-century poem, 'How the Good Wife taught her daughter' from 'Women in England c1275-1525 : Documentary sources, translated and edited by P. J. P. Goldberg (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 97-103.

Source 6c: A fourteenth-century will [printed in R.R. Sharpe, *Wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings, London I* (London, 1889), p. 445.] The original is in the London Metropolitan Archives Catalogue ref: CLA/023/DW/01/068

Source 6d: Christine de Pizan, *The boke of the cyte of ladyes*, trans. B. Anslay, edited H. Johnston (Tempe, Arizona; 2004) I.27.

Source 7a: This document concerned a payment from a brewer about using false measurements. 1278 Catalogue ref: E 101/230/28 m.2

Source 7b: Will printed in R.R. Sharpe, *Wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings, London II*. (London, 1890) p. 299. The original is at London Metropolitan Archives Catalogue ref: CLA/023/DW/01/120

Source 7c: Will from a woman in 1349 who has an apprentice. Printed in R.R. Sharpe, *Wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings* (London, 1899), p 106. The original is in the London Metropolitan Archives Catalogue ref: CLA/023/DW/01/076

Tasks

Task 1 - Women in the countryside

This deed or grant of land shows that it is genuine as Joan Marshal's own seal with an image of a dolphin is attached to the document. Joan had some claim to part of a field called 'the east field' in Langham, Essex probably as part of her dowry, usually a third of her husband's money and lands set aside for her to live on after his death, 10 April 1325. Catalogue ref: DL 25/1515.

- Why do you think Joan Marshal chose a dolphin for her seal?
- Why do you think Joan has 'given up my rights' and sold her land to John de Langwode?
- Why do you think John de Langwode wanted the land?
- What does this document tell you about how medieval villagers farmed their lands?
- Why do you think this document was created and had a seal attached to it?
- What do you think the document shows about Joan Marshal's position in society?

Task 2 - Women in the countryside

Source 2a:

This document from the late 1100s concerns the sale of some family land with a mill on it in Lincolnshire. Catalogue ref: DL 25/2719

- Look at the four surviving seals on this document. Can you find the women's names: Aliz (Alice), Pupilina and Gene (Genevieve)? [Clue: the names might be upside down]
- What kind of farming do you think this land is used for?
- Why do you think the women are included in this document and have attached their seals?
- Why do you think they are selling this land to their cousin? [We know Odo is Arnald Galle's nephew from a different document in the same collection].

Source 2b:

According to this Latin charter from the records of Alvingham Priory from the late twelfth century, Pupilina and her son from her first marriage, gave six acres of land nearby to an abbey in Lincolnshire. Catalogue ref: Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc. 642 folio 86r.

- How wealthy do you think this family was according Source 2a and Source 2b?
- What position do you think they held in society?
- Why were women involved in the sale of land in both of these documents?
- What do these documents reveal about
 - (a) Life of medieval women?
 - (b) Life in the countryside?

Tasks

Task 3 - Foreign women

This is a petition sent to Philippa of Hainault by Jacques de Artevelde, burgess [townsman] of Ghent. 16 January [1343] Catalogue ref: SC 1/56/57

Queen Philippa of Hainault was married to Edward III (born c. 1310, married 1328, died 1369). She came from Hainault, which is an area on the border between Belgium and France. She was considered a model queen, and the chronicler Jean Froissart said she was 'the most courteous, noble and liberal queen that ever reigned'.

- What does this source tell you about Philippa's role as queen?
- What is Jacques expecting her to do?
- Do you think Queen Philippa's role was different to that of today's monarch?

The England's immigrants database lists all the people who are known to have immigrated to England in the later middle ages. Try searching for the Netherlands and then choosing 'women'. It should give you the 58 women who were originally from Belgium. If you click 'summary' for any woman listed, it will tell you what more we know about them.

- What kind of information can we find about these women using this database?
- What information do we not learn about them?
- What more would you like to know?

Task 4 - Independent noblewomen

Source 4a

This document from September 1283 shows that Henry III appointed two men to look into what Agnes de Vescy had done in Yorkshire. Catalogue ref: C 66 /102 m. 10 from 1283

Agnes de Vescy (born de Ferrers) was a noblewoman in the thirteenth century. She was one of the many co-heiresses of the Marshal family in England and Ireland, through her mother, Sibyl Marshal. She married William de Vescy around 1244 and was widowed about ten years later. For the rest of her life, she did not remarry and died in 1290. As a widow and heiress, she controlled her own lands and money. There is a range of documents written about her, but we do not have any written by Agnes herself.

In the document, a prior means the person in charge of a priory where a group of monks lived and worked together. A canon means a member of the religious community who served a cathedral or other church.

- What was Agnes de Vescy's role in the events that led to Malton Abbey's complaint?
- Why do you think Agnes was involved in these events?
- Why was Agnes a woman of influence and power?

Tasks

Source 4b

This is a petition from Maud de Lacy's cousin, Agnes de Vescy dated between 1272 and 1283, Catalogue ref: SC 8/124/6174.

'Knight's service' was a fixed sum of money paid by each county in Ireland for the king's wars. It was divided up among the inhabitants and collected by the King's sheriffs [the main royal official in each county]. Aids and premises are also forms of taxation. Today a bailiff takes people's possessions away for debts, but a medieval bailiff collected rents for the lord or lady of the manor.

- What does this source tell us about the lives and responsibilities of Agnes and Maud?
- What might we find out if we had Agnes' answer to Maud's petition?
- Look at both sources 4a & 4b again. How would you describe Agnes de Vescy and her role in society?

Task 5 - Religious women

This is an indenture, a rental agreement between Agnes Allesley, the Prioress of Catesby Abbey and the family of John Horewood of Staverton, in Northamptonshire. March 1457, Catalogue ref: E 326/8274.

According to the document, the Prioress agreed to rent out a house and fields to John, his wife Alice and their son Thomas in Staverton for 15 shillings in rent to be paid twice a year. The prioress would have kept this copy, and the Horewoods would have kept a copy as well, each attaching their seal to the other's copy. You can see at the top the jagged edge where the two copies were cut apart. If needed, they could be checked by fitting the cut edges together.

- How much rent did the Horewoods have to pay Catesby Abbey to rent the messuage or dwelling house and three parts of pasture?
- Who rented the house and land before the Horewood family?
- How could there have been a disagreement between Prioress Agnes and the Horewoods?
- How do you think Prioress Agnes might have dealt with any future disagreement?
- What does this source tell us about Catesby Abbey's relationship with people living near it?

Task 6 - Women and education

- Does the law concerning education of girls and boys in Source 6a surprise you? Give your reasons.
- Can you explain why the education of girls and boys would be different at that time?
- What does the poem in source 6b infer about the education that girls received?
- What does source 6c suggest about education for girls?
- What does source 6d say about what kinds of education were available for girls?
- Looking at all the sources together, what do you think girls' educations were like at this time?
- How different is education for girls and boys today?

Tasks

Source 6a

This is an extract from the Parliament Roll of 1406. It was published in 'The Statutes of the Realm: a collection of the Acts of the Parliament of England from earliest times until 1707'. Catalogue ref: C 65/68 m. 2.

Source 6b

This is an extract from a fifteenth-century poem, 'How the Good Wife taught her daughter' from 'Women's Lives in Medieval Europe, a sourcebook', by Emilie Amt, pp. 97-103, Published by Routledge (2009). One of the manuscripts is London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 853.

Source 6c

This source is an example of a fourteenth-century will [printed in R.R. Sharpe, Wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings, London I (London, 1889), p. 445.] The original is in the London Metropolitan Archives Catalogue ref: CLA/023/DW/01/068

Source 6d

Christine de Pizan was the most famous female author of the middle ages. She was Italian and wrote in France in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries about politics, women's lives and history. One of the manuscripts of her work is in the British Library, which has a picture of Christine working in her study. This text is from an early translation into English of Christine's most famous work, The Book of the City of Ladies (Tempe, Arizona; 2004) l.27.

Task 7 - Women in urban areas

Source 7a

This document contains a payment which concerned a payment from a brewer about using false measurements. Hilary term 1278. Catalogue ref: E 101/230/28 m. 2 face [front of the document]

- Why do you think she might use the wrong size measurement when selling ale?
- How do you think she was caught?

Source 7b

This is a will from an apothecary in the City of London. An apothecary prepared and sold medicines and drugs. He leaves his wife Cecilia in charge of his apprentices [those learning the trade] and also leaves her his houses in the city. [Printed in R.R. Sharpe, Wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings, London II. (London, 1890) p. 299]. The original is at London Metropolitan Archives Catalogue ref: CLA/023/DW/01/120

Tasks

- What does it tell us about women's working lives that Cecilia is left to run his business?
- An apothecary was a medical professional, providing remedies and medicines for people. How do you think Cecilia would manage training John's apprentices

Source 7c

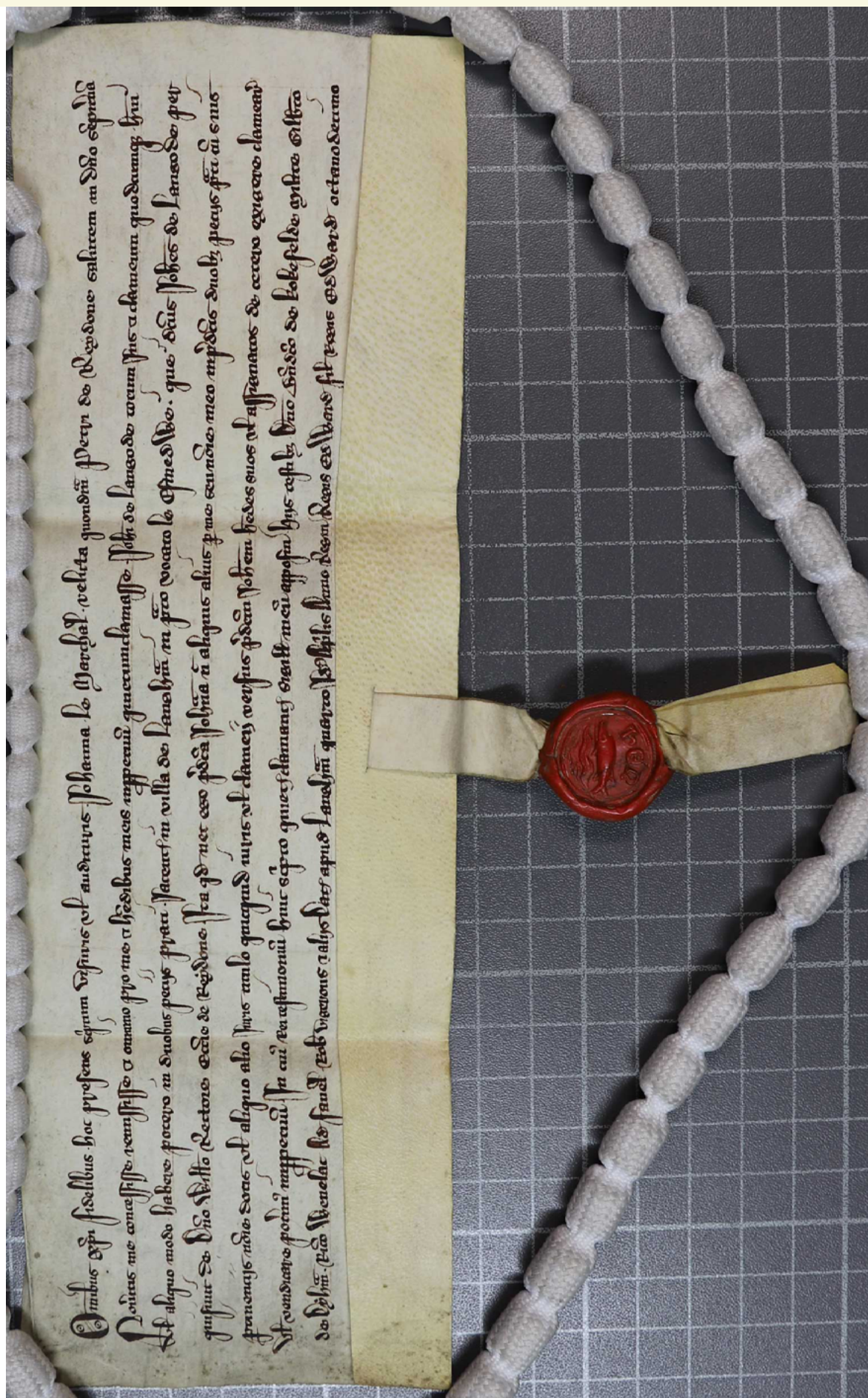
This is a will from a woman in 1349 who has an apprentice. It is printed in R.R. Sharpe, *Wills enrolled in the Court of Hustings London I* (London, 1899), p. 106]. The original is in the London Metropolitan Archives Catalogue ref: CLA/023/DW/01/076

- What kind of work did Matilda do?
- What does this will show about the roles of medieval women in the towns?
- What kind of equipment do you think she is leaving her apprentice William?
- Who is going to take over William's training? For how long?
- Does this will reveal anything about the character of Matilda?
- What do the terms of Matilda's will also reveal about medieval society?

Notes

Source 1: Grant with seal concerning Joan Marshal

Catalogue Ref: DL25/1515



Transcript

To all Christ's faithful to whom these present writings come, whether seen or heard, from Joan Marshal, widow of Peter de Raydon, greetings. Know that I have granted, returned and entirely given up for myself and my heirs in perpetuity [for ever] to John

de Langwode the whole right and claim which I had and in any way will have in two pieces of meadow in the village of Langdon, in the part called 'the east meadow', which John de Langwode sought to obtain from Master William, the rector [priest] of the church of Raydon. So that I, Joan, and any other, for me or in my name in the name of my dowry or by any other ownership by law, by any in law or claim will not be able to expel, to claim or to sell the said two pieces of meadow with their appurtenances [rights] against [the rights of] John, his heirs and assigns in perpetuity. In testimony of this matter in writing of a quitclaim [deed declaring no claims on the land], I have placed my seal, with these witnesses, Master Benedict de Kokefeld, knight, Gilbert de Dyham, Richard Wenlac, Adam Favel, Robert Vigorous and others. Dated at Langham, 10 April (1325) 18 Edward II.

Simplified Transcript

Written greetings from Joan Marshal, widow of Peter Raydon. I have completely given up my rights, and those of my heirs, to two pieces of land in the village of Langdon, called the 'east meadow'. John de Langwode tried to buy these from the church at Raydon. Therefore I, Joan and anyone on my behalf, will not claim this land or try and sell it instead of John de Langwode the owner and his heirs. In order to prove this, I have written this deed giving up my claims and added my seal with these people as witnesses.

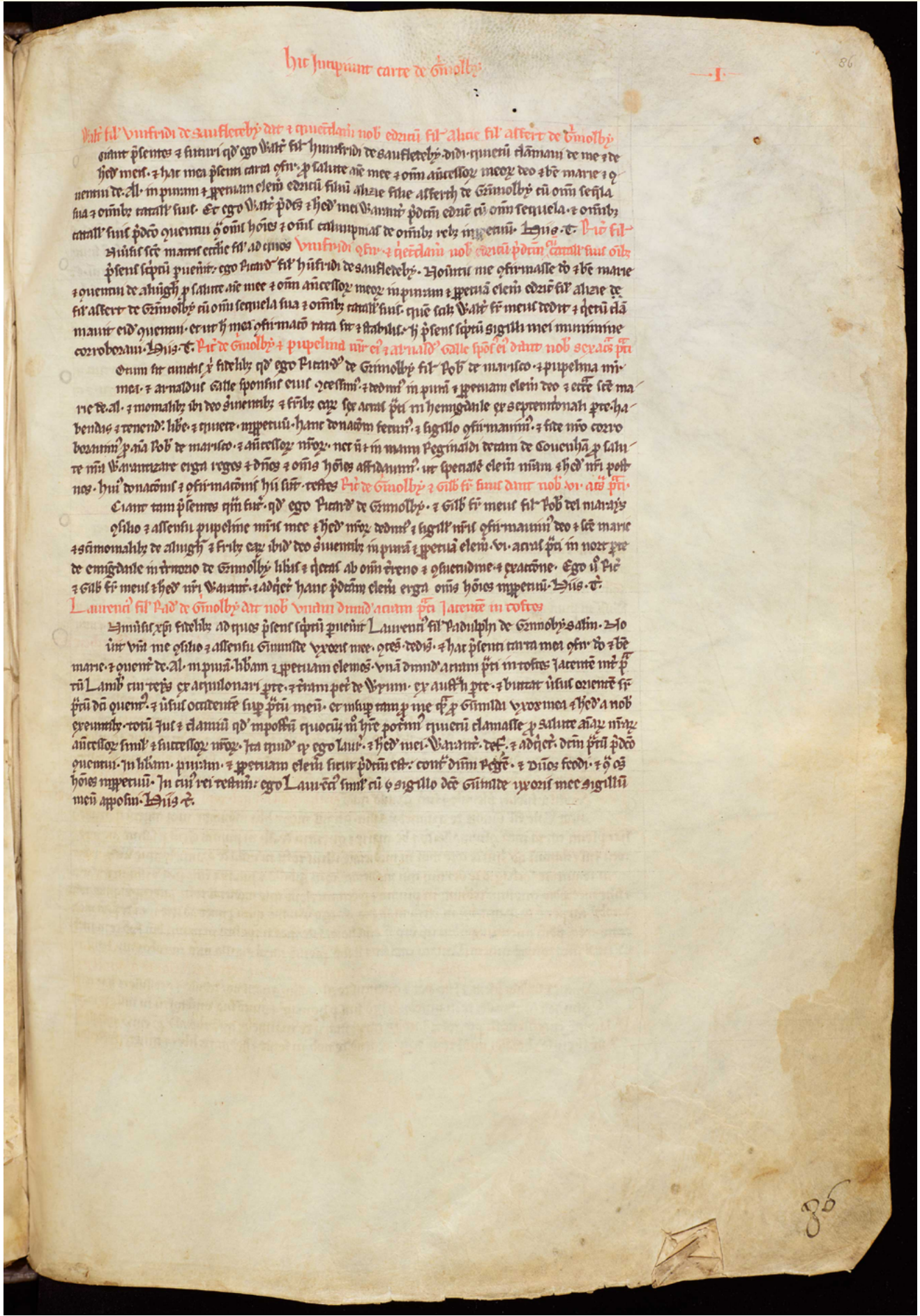
Transcript

Know all present and future, that I John and I Alan sons of Arnald Galle, with the help and consent of our mother Pupelina and our sisters Alice and Genevieve, are

selling and quit-claiming [giving up all claims to the land and property] for ourselves and our heirs to Odo Galle and his heirs all the lands which we hold in Saltfleetby that in that place 8 acres ... with all services, mills and exactions.. for 5½d [5½ pence] at Christmas, Easter, St Botulph's day [18 June], and Michaelmas [29 September]....

Source 2b: Charter from Alvingham Priory

Catalogue Ref: Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc. 642 folio 86r.



Hic incipit carte de Gmoltz

86

Willelmus filius Wulfredi de saulfereby dicit et quendam nob edricum filium Ahac filium affert de Gmoltz
 omni plemes et futuri qd ego Willelmus filius Wulfredi de saulfereby didi quenu clamari de me et de
 heredi meis et har mea plem carra qm p salute me mee et omni antecessor meoz deo et be mare et q
 nemu de Al in pnam et pnam elem edrici filii Ahac filie affert de Gmoltz cu omni sequela
 sua et omibz tamall fuit. Et ego Willelmus pdes et heredi mei Willelmo pdes edrici cu omni sequela et omibz
 tamall fuit pdes quenu qd omni hoies et omni calumpnat de omibz rebz in pnam. *Hic t. Willelmus filius*
Wulfredi filii marie ecclesie filii ad quos Wulfredi filii hufredi de saulfereby. Willelmus me confirmasse de be mare
 et quenu de alingh p salute me mee et omni antecessor meoz in pnam et pnam elem edrici filii Ahac de
 fil affert de Gmoltz cu omni sequela sua et omibz tamall fuit. que talis Willelmus filii mei redit et heredi da
 mant eid quenu. erit h mei confirmat rata sit et stabilt. h present scripti sigilli mei munimine
 corroboravi. *Hic t. Willelmus filius pupelina nri et Arnaldus Galle spones dant nob servas p*
 omni fir amant et hie hie qd ego Willelmus de Gmoltz filius Rob de marisco et pupelina mi
 mei et Arnaldus Galle spones eius. *Willelmus et Arnaldus in pnam et pnam elem deo et eccle scie ma*
 rie de Al. et monachis ibi deo sumentibz et fratribz eoz ser acut pti in hemigdale ex septemtonah pre ha
 bendis et tenendis. libe et quere. in pnam. hanc donacionem fecerunt et sigillo confirmavimus. et sic ino corro
 boravimus pna Rob de marisco et antecessor nroz. nec nri in manu Reginaldi de ram de Coueha p salu
 te nri Willelmarie erga reges et dnos et omni hoies affidavimus. ut spenale elem nram et heredi nri post
 nos. hui donacionis et confirmacionis hui snt. testes *Willelmus de Gmoltz et omibz fr suis dant nob servas p*
 Ciant tam plemes qm fut. qd ego Willelmus de Gmoltz. et Gille fr meus filius Rob de marisco
 Gille et assensu pupelime nri mee et heredi nroz. *Willelmus et Arnaldus nri confirmavimus deo et be mare*
 et monachis de alingh et fratribz eoz ibid deo sumentibz in pnam et pnam elem. et acut pti in nox pre
 de emigdale in mano de Gmoltz libit et heredi ab omni terno et pnam et pnam. Ego Willelmus
 et Gille fr meus et heredi nri Willelmarie. et ad heredi hanc pnam elem erga omni hoies in pnam. *Hic t.*
Laurena filia Rad de Gmoltz dicit nob unam dimid annam pti Jarente in costes
 Willelmus xpi fideles ad quos present scripti puenit Laurena filia Radulphi de Gmoltz. *Willelmus*
 in vna me Gille et assensu Gmoltz. *Willelmus me. pres. dedis. et har plem carra mei qm de et be*
 mare. et quent de Al. in pnam. libam et pnam elemos. vna dimid annam pti in totas Jarente me p
 rti Lamb cu regis ex aquilonari pre. et tam pet de Wyum. ex austri pre. et vinar lital oriente fr
 pti da quent. et lital occidente sup pti mei. et in sup tam p me et p Gmoltz. *Willelmus mei et heredi a nob*
 ex vna. totu fut et clamm qd impossu quocumq in hie potim quenu clamasse p salute nray nray
 antecessor nri et successor nroz. Ita quid q ego Laur. et heredi mei. Willelmarie. def. et ad heredi. dem pti pdes
 quenu. in libam. pnam. et pnam elem fut pnam est. cont dnm pte. et dnos fedi. et qd
 hoies in pnam. In cui rei testam. ego Laur. et filii nri et sigillo de Gmoltz. *Willelmus me. sigilla*
 mei apposui. *Hic t.*

86

Translation

Richard de Grimolby and Pupelina his mother and Arnald Galle her husband give to us [the priory] six acres of meadow.

Let it be known to all Christ's faithful that I Richard de Grimolby, son of Robert de Marisco, Pupelina my mother, and Arnald Galle her husband, grant and give in free and perpetual alms to God, the church of St Mary of Alvingham and to the nuns there serving God and to their brothers six acres of meadow on the north side of Heningdale, having and holding it freely and quietly in perpetuity. We made this grant and we confirmed it with a seal, and we strengthened it with our word for the soul of Robert de Marisco and our ancestors, and also we swore to warrant it before Reginald, dean of Covenham against kings and lords and all men for our special alms and our heirs after us. These are the witnesses to this gift and confirmation.

Simplified Translation

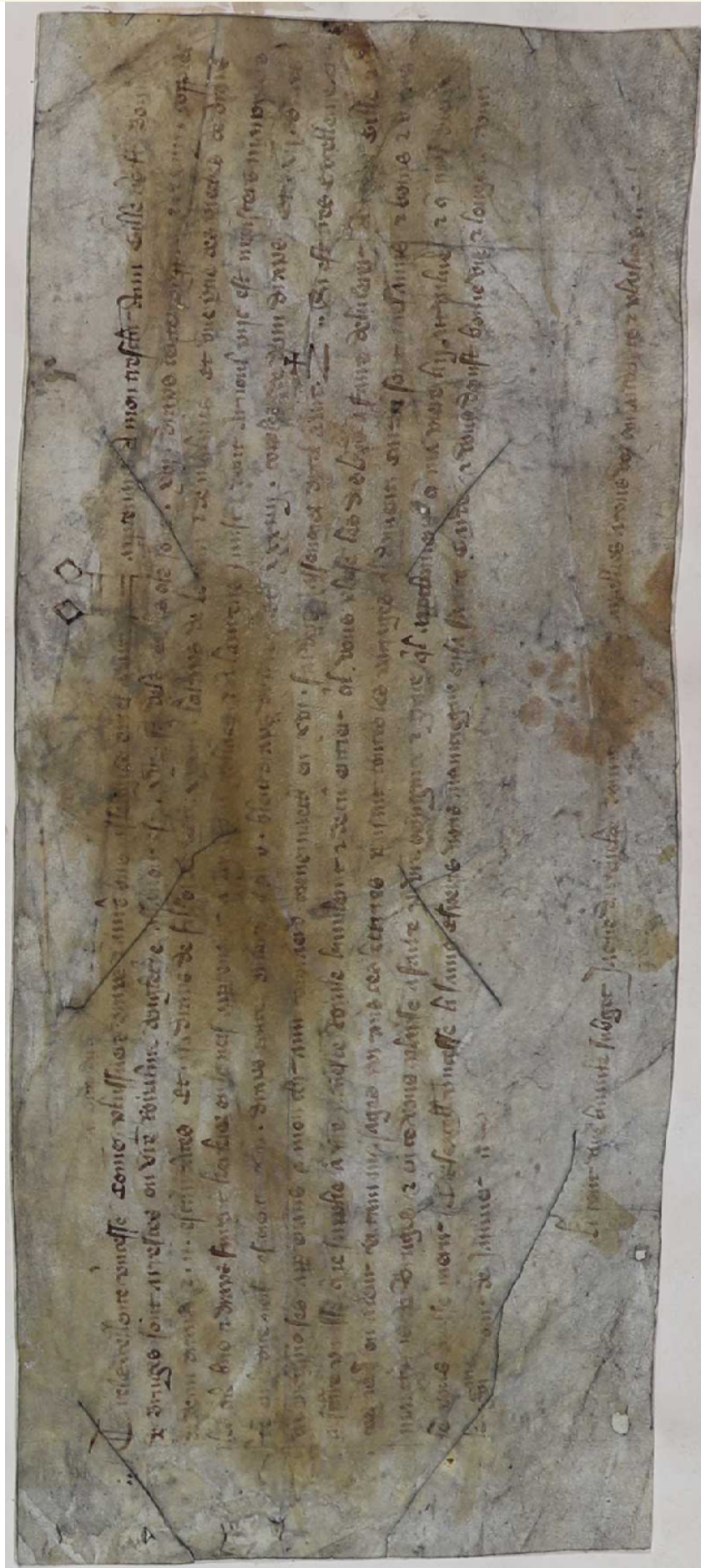
To all believers in God, Richard de Grimolby, son of Robert de Marisco, Pupelina my mother, and Arnald Galle her husband give six acres of meadow on the north side of Heningdale to the Church of St Mary of Alvingham for ever. The grant is made to God for their souls and the souls of their ancestors. We confirm this grant with a seal, and give our word on the soul of our father Robert de Marisco and all our heirs sworn before Reginald, Dean of Covenham and other witnesses.

Latin Transcript

Ricardus de Grimolby et Pupelina mater eius et Arnaldus Galle sponsus eius dant nobis sex acras prati [N]otum sit cunctis Cristi fidelibus quod ego Ricardus de Grimolby filius Roberti de Marisco et Pupelina mater mea et Arnaldus Galle sponsus eius concessimus et dedimus in puram et perpetuam elemosinam Deo et ecclesie sancte Marie de Al et monialibus ibi Deo servientibus et fratribus eorum sex acras prati in Henngdaile ex septemtrionali parte habendas et tenendas libere et quiete inperpetuum Hanc donationem fecimus et sigillo confirmavimus et fide nostro corroboravimus pro anima Roberti de marisco et antecessorum nostrorum nec non et in manu Reginaldi decani de Covenham pro salute nostra warantizare erga reges et dominos et omnes homines affidavimus ut specialem elemosinam nostram et heredes nostri post nos Huius donationis et confirmationis hii sunt testes.

Source 3: Petition to Philippa of Hainault by Jacques de Artevelde

Catalogue Ref: SC 1/56/57



Transcript

To the very excellent princess. I have heard that many cloths and other goods, entrusted [sent by ship] to the sea, belonging to my dear friend Gille Hoeft, burgess [townsman] of Bruges, have been seized [taken by force] in your kingdom of England, namely sixteen fardels [bundles] in which are sixteen cloths sent from Ypres and twenty-five covers of half-cloths and two escairlates [scarlets, a type of fine cloth] and two cloths of Filford and thirty-four cloths of Louvain and of Mechelen and a part of the pieces of cloth. These goods and cloths were taken on the ship belonging to Baldwin Goliaes and Laurens Just, of which Arnoul Piic is master, and in the said ship are sixteen cloths from Ypres, and five blue cloths of Ypres and thirty-five sets of half-cloths and twelve cloths of Valenciennes, belonging to my dear friend Conraerd Coene, merchant, in sixteen fardels, entrusted to the sea. Most excellent and most dear princess, I implore [beg] Your Royal Majesty humbly and with my whole heart, if it pleases you to have the said goods delivered [returned] to Gille and Coeraerd... because they are my friends and good and true [honest] merchants of Bruges. And may it please you to do this by your generosity and grace ...

Most excellent princess, may the saints keep you in their holy keeping and may you have a good and long life. 16 January [1343] Your most humble servant, Jacques de Artevelde, burgess of Ghent.

Transcript

[A commission [investigation]... is granted] to John de Reigate and Geoffrey Aguillon concerning a complaint by the prior and monastery of Malton in Yorkshire that although they had done nothing wrong, nor been excommunicated [no longer allowed to be a member of the church] by the church authorities, nor by orders of any church judge... Agnes de Vescy, Master Richard de Pywelsdon, Roger Clerk, John de Davile and other servants of Agnes attacked Brother William de Malton and

William de Cauncewyk, canons and other lay brothers [workers on the monastery's estates] of the monastery in the common road near the church of St Leonard's Malton. They seized them, imprisoned them and treated them badly and many times took their horses, sheep, oxen, cows and other animals and would not return them. They detained [kept] [the animals] without food... And by public proclamation [announcement] in Agnes' market of Malton forbade anyone from selling or taking any food to [the monastery] and from talking to them. They stole food and by various means prevented the monks from farming their lands, carrying their hay or storing their corn in their barns.

Transcript

Lady Maud de Lacy prays remedy [asks for justice] against the bailiffs of Agnes de Vescy, who are seeking to recover £24 from her for arrears [money owed] of [knight's] service. She also requests remedy against the bailiffs of Kildare, who are harassing [threatening] her for 100 shillings as a fine for the escape of felons [criminals]. She requests remedy against the bailiffs of Theobald de Verdon in Kells, who are seeking aids and premises which she never granted. She seeks remedy against William de Londres, who is trying to levy [demand] £39 from the rent of land which he and his brother hold of her in Nobber.

Transcript

This indenture [rental agreement] witnesses that Mistress Agnes Allesley, prioress of Catesby and the convent in the same place grant, hand over and convey [give] at farm [to rent] to John Horewood of Staverton, Alice his wife, and Thomas the son of the same John and Alice, one messuage [house] in Staverton aforesaid lying between a messuage [house] that John Odam inhabits on one side and the high road on the other side, with three parts of pasture and its appurtenances [rights of the land] in the town and fields of Staverton aforesaid, [mentioned] to have the same messuage [house] equally and wholly as William Braundon once had and held the aforesaid messuage, with three parts of pasture and its appurtenances for the said John, Alice and Thomas from the day of the present agreement until the end and term of their lives... they are to pay annually the prioress and convent and their successors fifteen shillings in good and legal money, in two equal portions, that is at Lady Day [25 March] and Michaelmas [29 September]. And the aforesaid John, Alice and Thomas are to repair, sustain and maintain the messuage at their own expense... Given at Catesby in the chapter house, 10 March 1457.

Transcript (Medieval French)

Chacun homme ou femme de quele estate ou condicion qil
soit, soit fraunc de mettre son fitz ou file dapprendre lettereure a quelconque escole
que leur plest deinz le Roialme

Translation

Each man or woman of whatever estate or condition [social status] be, be they that son or daughter to obtain learning at whichever kind of their free to set school that pleases him within the Realm.

Source 6b: Extracts from the poem: 'How the Goodwife taught her daughter'

Catalogue Ref: 'Women in England c1275-1525', edited by P.J.P. Goldberg, pp. 97-103

The Goodwife taught her daughter
Very many times and often
A truly good woman to be,
And said, Daughter to me dear,
Some good you must learn,
If ever you would thrive.

Go you not into town as if you were a flighty person
From one house to another in search of vain amusement;
And go not to the market your burrel to sell,^s
And then to the tavern to destroy your reputation.
For they that haunt taverns,
Their prosperity they bring down,
My dear child.

And wisely govern your house and your servants;
Be you not too bitter nor too kind with them,
But look well what most needs to be done,
And set your servants thereto both quickly and soon.
For ready when needed
Is a task already done,
My dear child.

Transcript

The Goodwife taught her daughter

Very many times and often

A truly good woman to be

And said Daughter to me dear,

Some good you must learn,

If ever you would thrive.

...

Go you not into town as if you were a flighty person

From one house to another in search of vain amusement

And go not to the market your burrel [a type of cloth] to sell

And then to the tavern to destroy your reputation

For they that haunt taverns

Their prosperity they bring down

My dear child.

...

And wisely govern your house and your servants

Be you not too bitter nor too kind with them

But look well what needs to be done

And set your servants thereto both quickly and soon

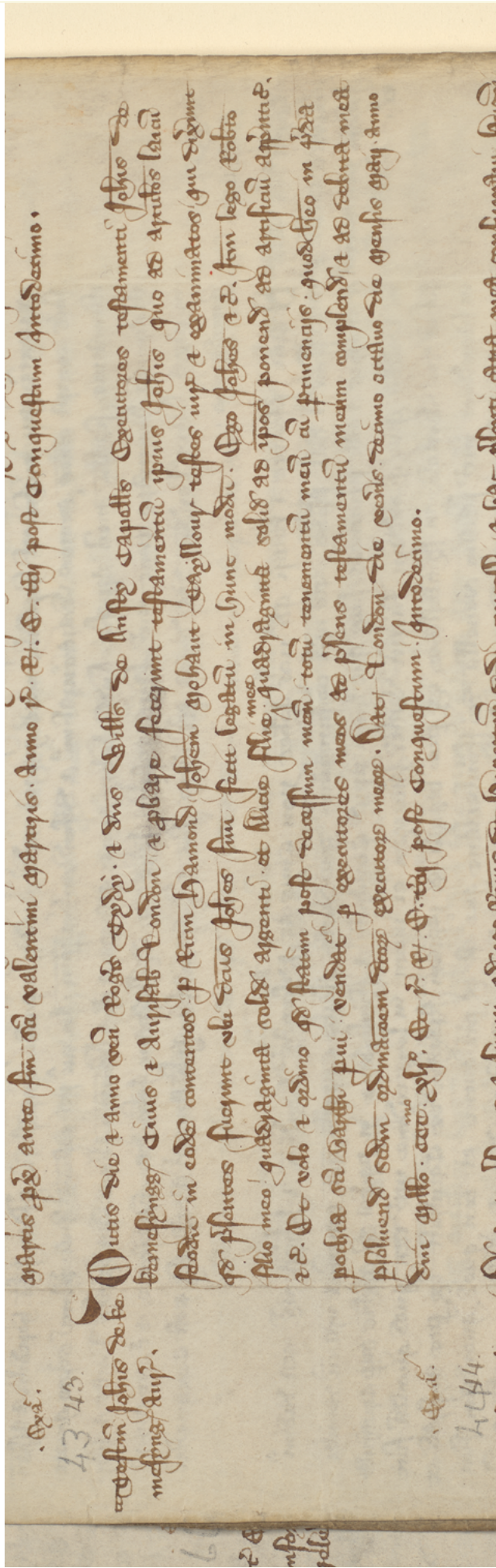
For ready when needed

Is a task already done

My dear child.

Source 6c: 14th Century Will

Catalogue Ref: London Metropolitan Archives CLA/023/DW/01/068

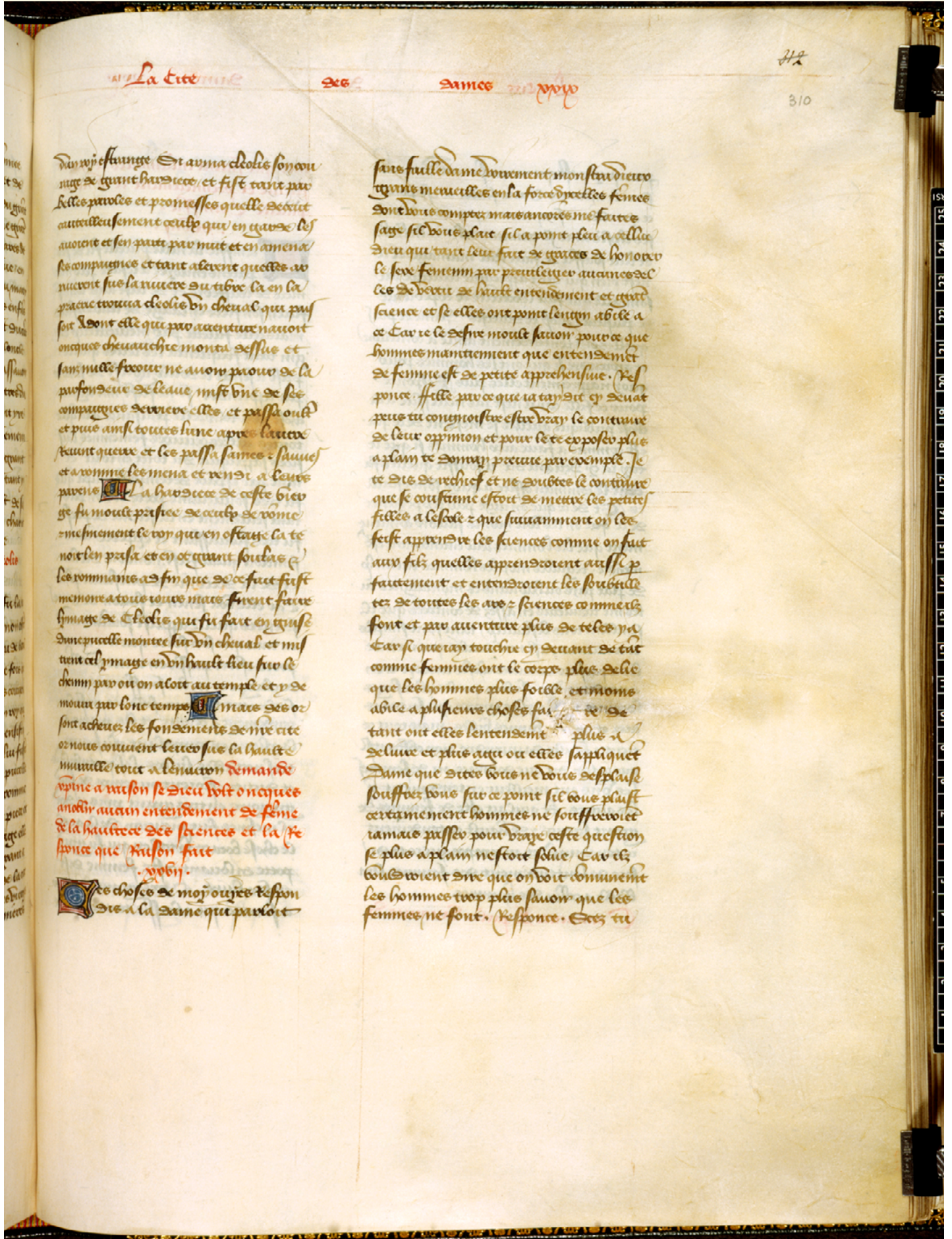


Transcript

Kemesyngg (John de), goldsmith.—To Robert his son and Alice his daughter forty shillings each, to put them out as apprentices to a trade. His tenement in the parish of S. Bartholomew the Less, London, to be sold to fulfil his testament and to pay his debts. Dated London, Friday, 18 May, A.D. 1341.

Source 6d: Christine de Pizan's Book of the City of Ladies

Catalogue Ref: British Library Harley MS 4431 f310r



La citee

des

dame

310

310

D'un vj^e estuange. Si avma deolis son cou
 nage de quant hars dice et fist tant par
 belles paroles et promesses quelle deoit
 avecelleusement ceulz qui en gars de les
 auoient et sen parta par nuit et en amena
 ses compaignies et tant alerent que elles av
 nuirent sus la nuere du tabac la en la
 praticie trouua deolis un cheual qui pas
 soit. Dont elle qui par aventure nauoit
 oncques cheuauchie monta dessus et
 sans nulde force ne auon prou de la
 parfondeur de leau mist vne de ses
 compaignies de uerue elles et passa out
 et puis amil toutes lune apres l'autre
 feunt queux et les passa sames saues
 et a romme les mena et vndi a lours
 parents. **L**a hars dice de ceste vier
 ge fu moult prafice de ceulz de romme
 meismement le roy qui en offraye la te
 noir len prafice et en quant soulas
 les rommans ad fin que de ce fait fust
 memorie a tous iours mais furent faire
 l'image de Etolis qui fu fait en guse
 d'unc pucelle montee sur un cheual et mis
 tant al ymage en un hault lieu sur le
 chemin par ou on aloit au temple et y de
 mouir par long temps. **M**ais des or
 sont acheues les fondemens de nre cite
 or nous couuent leuec sus la haulte
 muraille tout a lenuion **demande**
epine a un son se dieu doit oncques
anadir auant entendement de feme
de la haultee des sciences et la re
ponse que nul son fait
repon.

Que choses de moy ouyres repon
 dit a la dame qui parloit

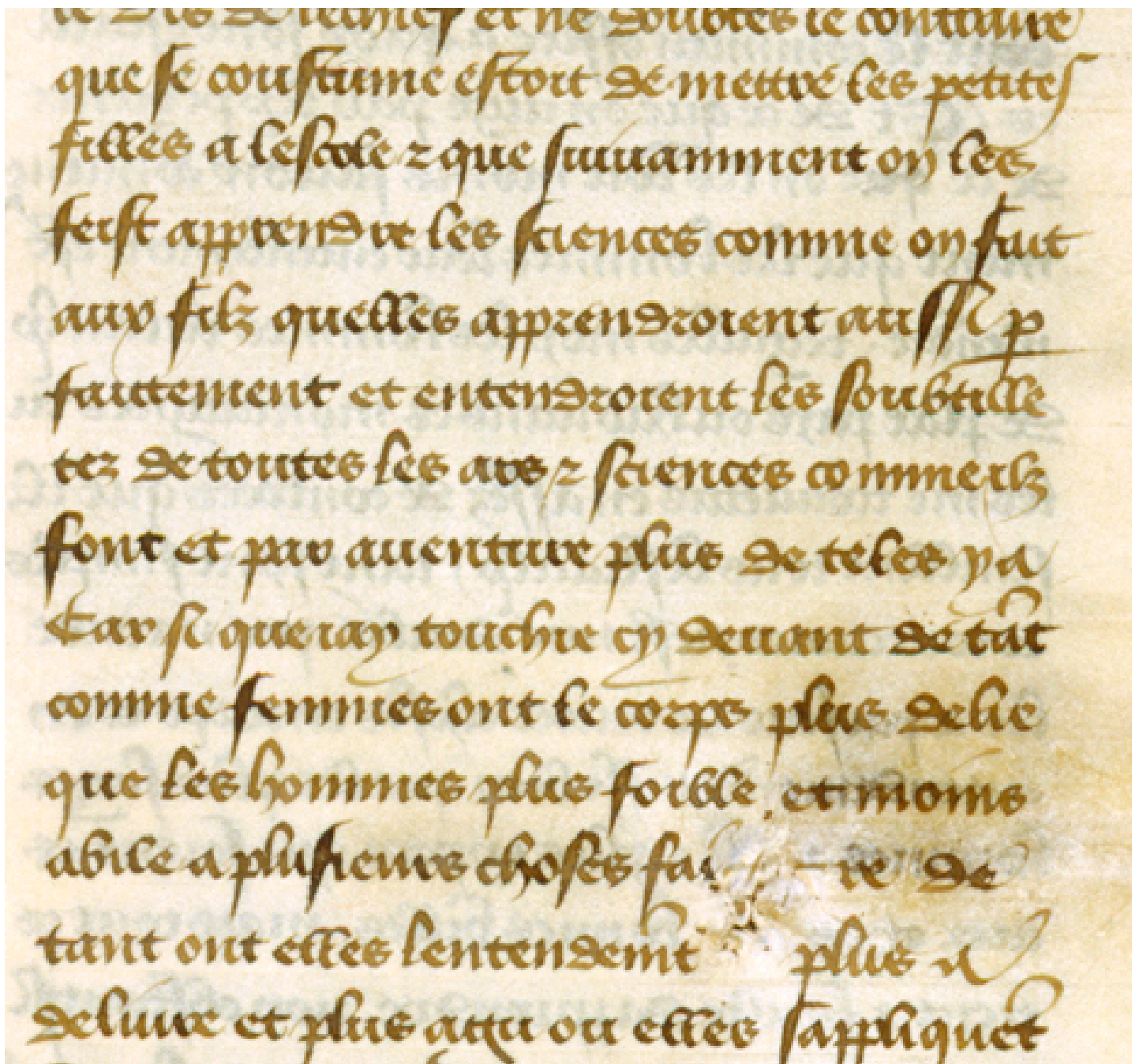
faire suille de me douement mon stande
 rans menueilles en la force de celles femes
 dont vous comptez mais auoies me faites
 sage sil vous plait sil a point plu a cellue
 dieu qui tant leur fait de graces de honore
 le sex femem par preuileger auant de
 les de verue de haulte entendement et grand
 sciencie et se elles ont point l'engin abile a
 ce. Car se le desir moult saouir pour ce que
 hommes maintement que entendement
 de femme est de petite apprehensue. Res
 ponce. felle par ce que ia tay dit cy deuat
 peus tu congnostre estre vray le contenu
 de leur oppinion et pour se te expose plus
 a plain te domay preue par exemple. Je
 te dis de rechief et ne soubtes le contraire
 que se courraime estoit de meure les petites
 filles a l'escole z que suuamment on les
 feust apprendre les sciences comme on fait
 aux filz quelles apprendroient auiss p
 faitement et entendoient les subtilite
 z de toutes les ars z sciences comme ilz
 font et par aventure plus de teles ya
 Car si que tay touche cy deuant de tat
 comme femmes ont le corps plus delie
 que les hommes plus forde et moins
 abile a plusieurs choses faire. **de**
 tant ont elles l'entendement plus a
 deliue et plus agi ou elles sappiquet
 Dame que dites vous ne vous desplaise
 souffrir vous sur ce point sil vous plust
 certainement hommes ne souffroient
 ramaie passer pour vraye ceste quefion
 se plus a plain ne fort solue. Car ilz
 vous voient dire que on doit communent
 les hommes trop plus saouir que les
 femmes ne font. **Responce.** **Es** **tu**

Transcript

'If it were the custom to put the little maidens [girls] to the school and they were made to learn the sciences as they do to the man children, it follows that they should learn as perfectly and they should be as well entered into the subtleties of all the arts and sciences as they [the boys] be... by so much they have the understanding more sharply there as they apply it'.

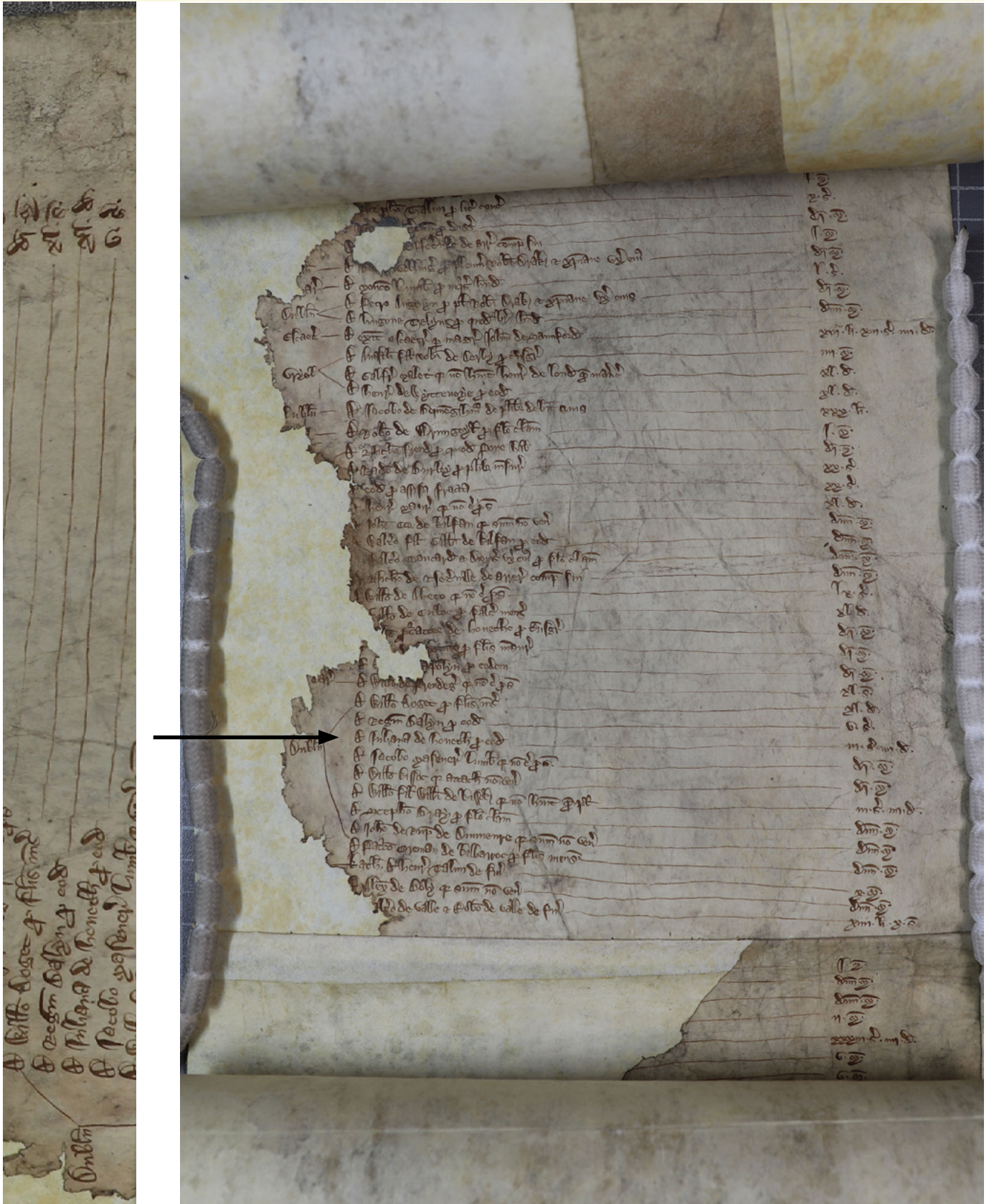
Original French

'que se coustume estoit de mettre les petites filles a l'escole, et que suivantment on leur fait apprendre sciences comme on fait aux filz, que ells apprendroient aussi parfaitement et entendoient les subtilitez de toutes les ars et sciences comme ilz font... de tant ont ells l'entendement plus agu ou ells s'appliquent'.



Source 7a: Payments from a brewer for false measurements

Catalogue Ref: E101/230/28 m.2



Translation:

Dublin. From Juliana de Howth [for false measures]: 3 shillings and 4 pence

Source 7b: Will of an apothecary in the City of London

Catalogue Ref: London Metropolitan Archives CLA/023/DW/01/120/121/204

204
 testm Johis Offham
 204
 205

Cora plura tenent in hystensio london die lune p̄ ante festum sancte rothe Abbatis Anno regni Regis Ricardi Secundi sextodecimo
 Dico die p̄ anno p̄batur fuit testamentum Johis Offham uny eius apotecary london p̄ Ricm
 Sprot apotecary et Johem Syddley Cisteriense testis nri et diligenter examinatos qui dixerunt sup̄ sacra
 mentu sui qd̄ p̄fentes fuerunt vbi dicitur Johis Offham sui condidit testamentum in hunc modum
 In noie sce et individue trinitatis patris et filij et spe sa amen Die vnde p̄ post festum sc̄oz Eboray
 et Daleyam Anno dmi millo et septentesimo sexagesimo primo Et anno regni Regis Edvardi t̄ij post
 conquestum Anglie tricesimo quinto Ego Johannes de Offham Cuius et apotecarys london in bona memoria
 existens cogitans de summis condico et ultimo testam meum sen d̄namam voluntatem meam in hunc modum
 In vni de et comendo animam meam deo omnipotenti creatori meo bre q̄ ayape Sgmi gl̄se marie sic et omibz
 sc̄oz et corpus meum ad sepeliendū in bre ayape magdalene de ayllstete london omis posthumis suis
 Item lego xpi de ecclie p̄ sepultura mea ibidem hēnd digna solidos Item lego summo altari eiusdem
 ecclie p̄ decimis et oblatiombz meis oblatas et nūq̄ decem digna solidos Item lego ayaperi clero eiusdem
 ecclie duos solidos Et nūq̄ clero duodecim denarij Et omibz capellano eiusdem ecclie duodecim
 denarij Item lego ad exequias meas finitū faciendū die sepulchri mee quatuor libras sterlingoz vel plus
 aut minus s̄dm̄ dispositiōem executorū meoz Item volo qd̄ executores mei ordinaro quinqz capoz
 rotundos quito capoz de xmy li. cezo vnde lego vni ad ardens coram ymaginem bre ayape ad sustentacōem hinc ibidem
 lene in dca ecclia et aliam vnam palm ante ymaginem bre ayape ad sustentacōem hinc ibidem
 Et t̄m̄ p̄p̄chitacōem mee de syokhū et quayem ecclie sa p̄p̄y apud cyrcōm de thape et quatuor
 ecclie de Bassingeshalbe Item lego ad missas celebrandas in p̄dca ecclia bre ayape magdalene
 videlicet p̄ ayapz d̄ni Johis de ayonte possulano p̄p̄y Sillings et ayapz om̄ fidelium defunctorū
 viginti solidos p̄ v̄siti p̄p̄oz Item volo qd̄ omes ayapoz mei deserviant ecclie xvi mee duranto
 Anno ayap̄t̄acōem eozdem p̄nt michi tenent et eadem ecclia d̄nom̄ eoz h̄ye voluit iumentū
 eis ayap̄t̄acōem p̄nt ego teneo Item lego t̄m̄ ayap̄t̄acōem ayap̄t̄acōem meo post t̄m̄ ayap̄t̄acōem
 v̄l̄t̄m̄ ayap̄t̄acōem meo si t̄m̄ se h̄yent et gesserit vsus p̄dcam eccliam xxi. Item t̄m̄ d̄m̄ d̄m̄ d̄m̄ d̄m̄
 Item lego vnam capellam ydones d̄m̄na celebratū in ecclia bre ayape magdalene p̄dca p̄ ma
 mea p̄is mea matris mee Walti et Alie et ayapz quibz teneo ac om̄ fidelium defunctorū p̄ duos
 p̄mos annos moventem post decessum meum p̄nt exco mei om̄ illi comenisse p̄ntem Item
 lego xxxij annos london viginti solidos Item lego p̄p̄o filio meo centum libras sterlingoz Item
 Thome filio meo quadraginta libras sterlingoz Item lego ayapz r̄izello Algay vni capellam de argento
 cum coop̄to cum quoz signo meo Item lego Gregorio ffanelore cum men gray Item lego Robto
 h̄yrlade vnam pec̄ argenti cum quod signo d̄m̄ Walti p̄p̄oz quoz ayap̄t̄acōem meo
 cum gl̄d̄m̄ vni par de plates et vni par cyrochay de plate et vni casinet meliorem et illa
 p̄p̄y p̄ca que h̄t in custodia sua demitno t̄m̄ d̄m̄ de om̄ bonoz meoz post debita mea in
 quibz legit teneo p̄mo et p̄napalē p̄p̄ita et p̄missa expleta lego ecclie xvi mee et ipa disponat
 sicut melius videret expedire et saluti aie mee p̄p̄id Item volo qd̄ omes libri mei cum pecunia
 illis legata sint et remaneant in custodia p̄dca ecclie xvi mee donec ad eadem p̄uenit competent
 Ita qd̄ p̄fata ecclia faciat sufficientem seruitutem d̄cam pecuniam p̄fatis libris meis fidelit saluendū
 et libandū Ita qd̄ p̄fata ecclia duos libros meos moventes sustentet et custodia melior modo quo sc̄nto
 expedire et eos in ayre competent faciat infermar p̄ quam eoz vnam honeste d̄m̄ possunt meliorem
 Item lego p̄fata ecclie xvi mee om̄a ten̄ mea cum omibz suis p̄nt que h̄o in civitate london et eozdem
 eadem ecclie ad totam vnam suam de capitalibz d̄m̄ fedi illi p̄ suaa inde debita et de n̄ye consueta
 Et post decessum p̄dca ecclie xvi mee volo qd̄ om̄a p̄dca ten̄ cum p̄nt integre remaneant p̄fato
 Thome filio meo et heredibz de corpore suo legitime p̄p̄oz de capitalibz d̄m̄ fedi illius p̄ suaa inde
 debita et de n̄ye consueta Et si p̄dca Thomas sine heredē de corpore suo legitime p̄p̄oz obierit t̄m̄
 volo qd̄ om̄a p̄dca ten̄ cum p̄nt integre remaneant p̄p̄o filio meo et heredibz de corpore suo legitime
 p̄p̄oz de capitalibz d̄m̄ fedi illius p̄ suaa inde debita et de n̄ye consueta Et si p̄dca p̄p̄oz sine
 heredē de corpore suo legitime p̄p̄oz obierit t̄m̄ qd̄ om̄a p̄dca ten̄ cum p̄nt remaneant aliter
 p̄nt meis me p̄dcam eccliam a me legitime p̄p̄oz et heredibz de corpore suo legitime exeruit
 Et si omes libri mei sine heredē de corpore alicuius eozdem legitime exeruit obierit t̄m̄ lego om̄a
 p̄dca ten̄ cum p̄nt t̄m̄ ecclie sc̄e ayape magdalene p̄dca et quatuor p̄briabz hoibz de p̄chie
 qui p̄ t̄m̄p̄e finit ad sustentacōem eiusdem capellam d̄m̄na celebratū in dca ecclia sc̄e ayape
 magdalene nūq̄m p̄ aia mea ecclie xvi mee p̄m̄ et ayap̄m̄ p̄nti h̄yfactoz et ayapz quibz teneo
 et ayapz om̄ fidelium defunctorū Item lego quandam d̄m̄nam quam h̄o vsus canongato in civitate
 crastien subdiacono d̄m̄p̄ h̄nd et tenend eadem subdiacono et successoribz suis nūq̄m de
 capitalibz d̄m̄ fedi illius p̄ suaa inde debita et de n̄ye consueta Ita qd̄ p̄dca subdiaconi
 et successoris sui om̄entur sp̄alē in missis suis ad ardens p̄ aia mea p̄is mei matris mee et
 ecclie xvi mee liboz n̄yoz et om̄ fidelium defunctorū h̄m̄s autem test̄ mei sen vltimē
 voluntatis mee meos faao et confirmo exco videlicet p̄dcam eccliam xvi mee p̄napalē
 executorum Gregoem ffanelore et d̄m̄ Wilhm̄ t̄m̄ ecclie bre ayape magdalene de
 ayllstete p̄dca quibz do plenam et legitimam potestatem meam om̄a p̄missa agendū exequendū
 et complendū p̄nt melius viderit expedire deo placet et saluti aie mee p̄p̄id In om̄is p̄a
 testiom hunc p̄fata testamento sigillum meum apposui Dat̄ london die anno emp̄dca

Transcript

Offham (John), apothecary.—to be buried in the church of St Mary Magdalen de Milkstrete. Bequeaths [leaves gifts] of money and wax tapers [candles] to the said church as well as to his fraternity [religious club] at Brokham and the churches of S. Peter at the Cross of Chepe and of Bassingeshawe. Bequeaths to his apprentices, who are to continue to serve Cecilia his wife; to a chaplain saying divine service in the church of St Mary aforesaid for the good of his soul, the souls of Walter his father, Alice his mother, and others; to the Friars Minors of London, to Peter and Thomas his sons, and others. To Master Nigel Algar he leaves a silver cup with covercle having his sign [engraved lid with his initials]. To Gregory Fanelore his grey horse (equum meum gray). To Robert Herlawe a piece of silver with a mark of an abbot. To William Ponk, formerly his apprentice, a sword, a pair of plates [breast plate armour] and a pair of gloves of plate [armour gloves], his best basynet [helmet] and a painted box. To Cecilia his wife he leaves all his tenements [houses] in London for life; remainder to Thomas and Peter his sons in successive tail; remainder to the maintenance of a chantry [money for signing of masses for his soul] in the aforesaid church of St Mary Magdalen. A certain house towards Canongate in the city of Chichester he leaves to the Sub-Dean of Chichester [Cathedral] and his successors for ever for their prayers. Dated London, Friday next after the Feast of SS. Tiburcius and Valerian [14 April], A.D. 1361.

Transcript

Myms (Matilda de).—to be buried in the church of St Mildred in the Poultry. To William her apprentice the third best part (*terciam partem meliorem*) of copies and instruments appertaining to [used in] the making of pictures [paintings], and one of her best chests for keeping them in; the said apprentice to be delivered over to the care and teaching of Brother Thomas de Alsham of the priory and convent of Bermondsey [Bermondeseye] for a term of three years. Her brewery near the chapel in Conynghoplane to be sold, and the proceeds given to chantries [priests singing masses] for the souls of the testatrix [the woman who made this will], John de Myms, her husband, and others. Dated IV. Nones April [10 April], A.D. 1349. Roll 76 (313).