

WILL OF ROBERT FORDE, 2 MARCH 1575/76

Folger Shelf Mark: Z.c. 9, (416), recto.

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Editorial conventions

<u>Underlined letters</u>	In abbreviated words the missing letters are underlined
< >	Broken brackets enclose deleted letters or words
[]	Square brackets enclose editorial interpolations
“j”	The “j” is used for the long “i”
“3”	This numeral is used for the yogh

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[Will:]

In the name of god amen the seycond daye of marche the yeare of our lord
god a thousand ffyve hundrethe seaventye ffyve
and in the Eightenthe yeare of the Raigne of our soueraigne Ladye
Elizabeth by the grace of god Quene of England ffrance and Irelande
Defendour of the ffaithe &c' I Roberte ffourde of Plymtree in the Countye
of Devon' gentleman' beinge sycke of Bodye but whole and perfect of
mynde (praysed be god) doe make this my laste will' and Testamente in
manner and forme followinge **ffirste**, I geve and bequeathe
my soule to almightie god my onlie maker and redemer, and my bodye to be
buried in Christian' buriall' **Item** I geve and bequeathe
to wardes the Reparacions of the Church of Plymtree too shillinges **Item**
I geve and bequeathe towardes the Reparacions of the Church of
Hemiocke too shillinges **Item** I geve and bequeathe to fouretene pore
howsholdes in Plymtree afforesaid ffyftene shillinges to be equallie
Devided emongest them' **Item** I geve and bequeathe to Eightene pore
howsholdes in Hemiocke afforesaid syxe pence a pece of them'
Item <to>I geve and bequeathe to ffoure pore howsholdes in Culmedavye
eighte pence apece of them' **Item** I geve and bequeathe to
twentie pore howsholdes in Wellington' sixe shillinges eight pence to
be equallie Devided emongest them' **Item** I geve and bequeathe to euery
of
my godchildren' twentie pence a pece **Item** I geve and bequeathe to the pore
prysoners with in the Quenes Gayle in the County of Devon'
ffyve shillinges **Item** I geve and bequeathe to the pore howse of Saint Annes
in Saint Sydwell's parishe with out Easte gate at exeter' tenne
shillinges
Item I geve and bequeathe to my sister Annys Walronde three poundes **Item** I
geve and bequeathe to three of her youngest Children'
to euery of them' thyrtye shillinges **Item** I geve and bequeathe to
Roberte Hitchcocke of Culmestocke ffyve poundes **Item** I geve and
bequeathe
to my brother Charles ffourdes doughters and to euery of them' three
poundes tenne shillinges to be paid at their daye of maryage **Item** I
geve
and bequeathe to Richard ffourde the sonne of Charles ffourde my baye mare
saddle & bridle trappings butes and spurrs/ **Item** I geve and
bequeathe to my sister Sysley per smore my white Nagge **Item** I geve and
bequeathe to the wedowe Anne Tye in Plymtree afforesaid
three poundes/ **Item** I geve and bequeathe to euery person' in Peter
Holwayes howse in Hemiocke afforesaid too shillinges a pece
Item
I geve and bequeathe to George ffourde sonne of the said Charles ffourde
all' my quarter Lande in neyther Symons Bowroughe which one Iames
More theare nowe holdethe, to <t>him and his heires in ffée for euer **Item**
I geve and bequeathe to Mellaney Goddard my seruaunte tenne shillinges
The Reste of all my goodes moveable and vnmmoveable my legacyes paid and my
funerall' donne I geve and bequeathe to my brother
Charles ffourde whom I ordayne and make my hole executor of this my said
last will' and testamente **Item** I ordayne, make and
hartelie desire Master Nicholas Marstone Clerke to see this my said laste
[will] and testament performed these beinge Witnessse Peter
Holwaye and Iames Bowreman' with others//

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This will represents a shift in the way wills were written in the second half of the sixteenth century. Forde does not appeal for intercession to the Blessed Virgin or any saints, but places his salvation in the hands of God alone. This may well indicate the testator's Protestant faith. But according to Eamon Duffy, it might also represent pressure from above to conform to new practices or even a pragmatic strategy of Forde's to protect his legacy. The probate attached to this will, not reproduced in this image, is evidence that the will has been officially authenticated.

For more information, consult Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400–c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).