

Last Will and Testament of Michel Nostradamus

The year of Our Lord one thousand five hundred and sixty-six and the seventeenth day of the month of June. Just as there is nothing more certain than death, nothing is more uncertain than its hour. For this reason it is that in the presence of myself, Joseph Roche, royal notary and sworn scrivener of the present town of Salon, Diocese of Arles, and of the witnesses hereinafter named, there was present in his person Master Michel Nostradamus, Doctor in medicine and Astrophile of the said town of Salon, Counselor and Physician-in-Ordinary of the King.

The latter, considering and being in his full understanding, resting well and seeing and understanding, and although all-told not being weakened, because of his ancient age and certain bodily illness, by which he is at present confined, wishes to provide while he is alive for his possessions that God the Creator has given him and lent him for this mortal world, to the end that after his decease and passing, there will be no question, process and difference over these possessions.

Therefore the said M. Michel Nostradamus of his own mind, pure and free will, by his own movement and deliberation, has made, ordered and established, and by these presents makes, orders and establishes his non-cupative will, disposition and final ordinance in the form and manner that follows:

Firstly, as a good, true and faithful Christian, he has recommended his soul to God the Creator, begging Him that when it will be His good pleasure to call him, that it may please Him to collect his soul into the eternal Kingdom of Paradise.

Because after the soul the body is the most worthy thing at this time, the said testator has willed that when his soul has departed from his body, the latter will be carried to burial in the Church of the Convent of St. Francis of the said Salon, and between its great door and the altar of St. Martha, where he has willed that a tomb or monument be erected against the wall. He has willed that his said body be accompanied by four candles, of one livre each, and he has willed also that all his obsequies and funeral rites be conducted at the discretion of his executors hereinafter named.

He has also bequeathed, willed and ordered incontinent that six sous be given to each of thirteen beggars, one time only after his death. He has also bequeathed to the Friars of the Observance of Saint-Pierre-de-Canon one crown once only, payable incontinent after his death. He has also bequeathed to the Chapel of Notre Dame des Penitents-Blancs of the said Salon one crown payable once only incontinent after his death. He has also bequeathed to the Friars Minor of the Convent of St. Francis two crowns once only, payable incontinent after his death.

He has also bequeathed to Madeleine Besaudine, daughter of Louis Besaudine his first cousin, the sum of ten gold pistolets, which he has willed be given her when she becomes married, and not otherwise, so that if the said Madeleine dies before she is married, the said testator has willed that the present legacy be null and void.

Likewise the said de Nostradamus, testator, has bequeathed and left to Miss Madeleine Nostradamus the legitimate and natural daughter of himself and of Madame Anne Ponsarde his common wife, the sum of six hundred gold crowns, payable once only the day that she becomes married.

Likewise he has bequeathed and bequeaths to Misses Anne and Diana de Nostradamus the legitimate and natural daughters of himself and of the said Anne Ponsarde his common wife, and to each of them, the sum of five hundred gold crown-pistolets, payable to each one of them the day that they become married. And in the event the said Misses Madeleine, Anne and Diana, sisters, or one of them, die in pupillarity, or otherwise, without legitimate and natural heirs, in the said case he has substituted for each of the said Madeleine, Anne and Diana his heirs hereinafter named.

He has also bequeathed and left to the said Madame Anne Ponsarde, his beloved wife, the sum of four hundred gold crown-pistolets, which the said testator has willed be dispatched to the said Ponsarde incontinent after the end and death of the said testator. These four hundred crowns the said Ponsarde will enjoy as long as she lives a widow in the name of the said testator. In the event that the said Ponsarde comes to remarry, in the said event the said testator has willed that the said four hundred crowns be restored to his heirs hereinafter named. If the said Ponsarde does not

come to remarry, in the said case the said testator has willed that she can bequeath and leave the said four hundred crowns to one of the children of the said testator, to whichever one or ones will seem proper to her, provided always that she cannot leave them to anyone other than the said children of the said testator.

Likewise he has bequeathed and bequeaths to the said Ponsarde his wife the use of and abode in a third of the entire house of the said testator, which third part the said Ponsarde will take as she chooses, and which she will enjoy as long as she lives as a widow in the name of the said testator. He has also bequeathed to the said Ponsarde a walnut chest, called the Great Chest, located in the hall of the house of the said testator, together with the little one next to it near the bed, as well as the bed located in the said hall, with its mattress cover, mattresses, spring, bolster, tapestry cover, and the curtains and drapes located in the said bed; also six winding sheets, four towels, twelve napkins, a half-dozen dishes, a half-dozen plates, a half-dozen porringers, two pitchers large and small, a cup and a salt cellar, all of pewter. And of the other movables of the house which will be necessary for her according to her station, three casks to hold her wine, and a little square bowl located in the cellar, which movables after the death of the said Ponsarde, or in case she remarries, he has willed to return to his heirs herein after named He has also bequeathed to Madeleine Besaudine, daughter of Louis Besaudine his first cousin, the sum of ten gold pistolets, which he has willed be given her when she becomes married, and not otherwise, so that if the said Madeleine dies before she is married, the said testator has willed that the present legacy be null and void.

Likewise the said de Nostradamus, testator, has bequeathed and left to Miss Madeleine Nostradamus the legitimate and natural daughter of himself and of M adame Anne Ponsarde his common wife, the sum of six hundred gold crowns, payable once only the day that she becomes married.

Likewise he has bequeathed and bequeaths to Misses Anne and Diana de Nostradamus the legitimate and natural daughters of himself and of the said Anne Ponsarde his common wife, and to each of them, the sum of five hundred gold crown-pistolets, payable to each one of them the day that they become married. And in the event the said Misses Madeleine, Anne and Diana, sisters, or one of them, die in pupillarity, or otherwise, without legitimate and natural heirs, in the said case he has substituted for each of the said Madeleine, Anne and Diana his heirs hereinafter named.

He has also bequeathed and left to the said Madame Anne Ponsarde, his beloved wife, the sum of four hundred gold crown-pistolets, which the said testator has willed be dispatched to the said Ponsarde incontinent after the end and death of the said testator. These four hundred crowns the said Ponsarde will enjoy as long as she lives a widow in the name of the said testator. In the event that the said Ponsarde comes to remarry, in the said event the said testator has willed that the said four hundred crowns be restored to his heirs hereinafter named. If the said Ponsarde does not come to remarry, in the said case the said testator has willed that she can bequeath and leave the said four hundred crowns to one of the children of the said testator, to whichever one or ones will seem proper to her, provided always that she cannot leave them to anyone other than the said children of the said testator.

Likewise he has bequeathed and bequeaths to the said Ponsarde his wife the use of and abode in a third of the entire house of the said testator, which third part the said Ponsarde will take as she chooses, and which she will enjoy as long as she lives as a widow in the name of the said testator. He has also bequeathed to the said Ponsarde a walnut chest, called the Great Chest, located in the hall of the house of the said testator, together with the little one next to it near the bed, as well as the bed located in the said hall, with its mattress cover, mattresses, spring, bolster, tapestry cover, and the curtains and drapes located in the said bed; also six winding sheets, four towels, twelve napkins, a half-dozen dishes, a half-dozen plates, a half-dozen porringers, two pitchers large and small, a cup and a salt cellar, all of pewter. And of the other movables of the house which will be necessary for her according to her station, three casks to hold her wine, and a little square bowl located in the cellar, which movables after the death of the said Ponsarde, or in case she remarries, he has willed to return to his heirs hereinafter named Likewise the said testator has bequeathed and bequeaths to the said Aime Ponsarde, his wife, all his robes, clothes, rings and jewels, so that she may take of them all that she wills and pleases.

The said testator has also left by preference legacy each and all of his books to that one of his sons who will profit most by study, and who will have drunk the most of the smoke of the lamp. These books, together with all the letters that will be found in the house of the said testator, the said testator has willed not to be catalogued at all, nor placed

by their description, but to be tied up in parcels and baskets, until the one who is to have them is of age to take them, and that they be placed and locked up in a room of the house of the said testator.

He has also left by preference legacy to Cesar de Nostradamus his legitimate and natural son, and of the said Madame Ponsarde his common wife, the house in which the said testator lives. Likewise, he has left him by preference legacy the cape which the said testator has double-gilded with silver, and also the large chair of wood and iron, the legacy made to the said Ponsarde his wife remaining at all times in force and virtue, as long as she remains a widow in the name of the said testator. This house will remain in common undivided as regards usage between the said Cesar and Charles and Andre his brothers, until all the said brothers are of the age of twenty-five, after which time all of the said house will belong entirely to the said Cesar, to do with as he may please and will, there remaining in force and virtue at all times the legacy made to the said Ponsarde his mother, with regard to the said house.

He has also left by preference legacy and leaves by preference legacy to the said Charles de Nostradamus his legitimate and natural son, and of the said Ponsarde his common wife, the sum of one hundred gold crown-pistol-ets, once only, which hundred crowns the said Charles can take as his entire heritage, before leaving, when he reaches the age of twenty-five.

He has also left by preference legacy to the said Andre de Nostradamus, his legitimate and natural son, and of the said Ponsarde his common wife, the sum of one hundred gold crown-pistolets, once only, which hundred crowns the said Andre can take for his heritage before parting when he reaches, as is stated, the age of twenty-five.

Each and all of his other possessions, movable and immovable, present and future, rights, names, actions, debts he has left to his heirs at large, named from his mouth by their names and surnames, the said Cesar, Charles and Andre de Nostradamus the legitimate and natural children of himself and of Anne Ponsarde his common wife, in equal parts and portions interchangeable, if they come to die in pupillarity, or otherwise, without legitimate and natural heirs.

If the said Anne Ponsarde his wife should be pregnant, and give birth to one or two sons, he has made them heirs equally with the others, with similar substitution; and if she gives birth to one or two daughters, he has bequeathed to each of them the sum of five hundred crowns, with the same payment and substitution as the others.

The said testator has willed that his said sons and daughters cannot be married without the consent and approval of the said Ponsarde their mother, and of the nearest relatives of the said testator. In case all die without legitimate or natural heirs, he has substituted for the latter the said Misses Madeleine, Anne and Diana de Nostradamus their sisters, and daughters of the said testator.

The said testator, realizing that his estate consists mostly of cash and debts, has willed that the said cash and debts when collected be placed in the hands of two or three solvent merchants, for gain and honest profit.

And because he realizes his children to be of low age and in pupillarity, he has provided them with a guardian and testamentary administratrix of their persons and possessions, in the person of the said Anne Ponsarde, his wife, to whom they are especially entrusted. It is provided that she be held to keep a good and true inventory, and at all times she can be constrained from selling any movables or utensils of the house of the said heritage for as long as she lives a widow in the name of the said testator. She is forbidden to alienate movables in any way whatever while they are being held for and then divided amongst the said children, when they come of age.

This guardian will take and withdraw the profits from the said money that will be placed in the hands of the said merchants, and from the said profit she will provide for herself along with her children, to shoe them, clothe them and provide them with what will be necessary according to their station. Excepting the said fruits, she will be held to render an account thereof solely to provide for her said children as is stated.

The said testator expressly forbids his said heirs from demanding their share of the said heritage, as far as the money is concerned, before they reach the age of twenty-five. Concerning the legacies made to his said daughters, they will be taken from the funds of the money which will be placed in the hands of the said merchants, when they will come to be married, according to the said legacies.

The said testator wills furthermore that none of the brothers of the said testator can have any handling and charge of the said heritage. He has left the entire rule and government of it and of the persons of his said children to the said Madame Anne Ponsarde his wife.

He has made the executors of his present testament Pallamedes Marc, Esq., lord of Chateauneuf, and the Hon. Jacques Suffren, burgher of the said Salon, to whom, etc., abrupt, etc., and all incontinent the said Nostradamus has spoken and declared, in the presence of the witnesses hereinafter named, that he has in cash the sum of three thousand four hundred and forty-four crowns and ten sous, which he has exhibited and shown, actually, in the presence of the said witnesses above-named and in the species hereinafter specified. Firstly, rose nobles 36; simple ducats 101; Angelots 79; doubleducats 126; old crowns 4; gold lions in the form of old crowns 2; a crown of King Louis; a gold medal worth 2 crowns; German florins 8; imperials 10; marionettes 17; half-crowns 8; crowns 1,419; crown-pistolets 1,200; 3 pieces of gold said to be Portuguese, worth 36 crowns. So that all the said sums of cash together come to the said sum of 3,444 crowns and 10 sous. He ha[^] also made it clear, by his book as well, that by obligations and notes of hand, and guarantees, he has debts to the sum of 1,600 crowns. These sums of cash have been placed in three coffers or chests located in the house of the said de Nostradamus, the keys of which have been entrusted, the one to Palla-medes Marc, lord of Chateauneuf, the other to the Hon. Jacques Suffren, burgher of the said Salon, which they have actually received, after the money had been placed in the said chests by themselves.

Done and passed in the said Salon, in the study of the house of Master Nostradamus, testator, in the presence of the honorables Joseph Raynaud burgher, Martin Manson consul, Jehan Allegret treasurer, Pallamedes Marc esquire lord of Chateauneuf, Guillaume Giraud, the noble Arnaud d'Ami-ranes, Jaumet Viguer, Esq., and Friar Vidal de Vidal, Superior of the Convent of St. Francis of the said Salon, witnesses named here, who are undersigned except for the said Raynaud.

Signed thus: michel nostradamus, martin manson *consul*; jehan allegret *treasurer*; friar superior vidal *witness*, balthezar d'amirane *witness*, P. marc *witness*, J. de viguer, guillaume giraud. roche, *notary*.

Codicil of the Same

The year of Our Lord one thousand five hundred and sixty-six, the last day of the month of June. Know all present and to come by these presents that before and in the presence of myself, Joseph Roche, royal notary and sworn scrivener of the present town of Salon, Diocese of Aries, undersigned, and of the witnesses hereinafter named, there was present in person Master Michel Nostradamus, Doctor in medicine, Astrophile and Physician-in-Ordinary of the King.

The latter, considering and reducing in his memory, as he has said, has made his last nuncupative will taken and received by me, the said and undersigned notary in the present year on the seventeenth day of the present month of June, at which time among other things contained therein, he made his heirs Cesar, Charles and Andre de Nostradamus his children.

Because the right to codicile and to make his codicils after his will is legal and is permitted to everyone, so that he can add to or withdraw from his said will, or otherwise entirely abolish it, the said M. Michel de Nostradamus, wishing to make his codicil, and at present oodicilling, and adding to his said will, has bequeathed and bequeaths to the said Cesar de Nostradamus, his beloved son, his brass Astrolabe, together with his large gold ring with the corneline set in it and this above and beyond the preference legacy made in his favor by the said Nostradamus, his father, in his said will.

He has also bequeathed and bequeaths to Miss Madeleine de Nostradamus, his legitimate and natural daughter, beyond that which has been bequeathed to her by his said will, two walnut coffers which are in the study of the said codicillant, together with the clothes, rings and jewels that the said Miss Madeleine will find in the said coffers, without anyone being permitted to see or loolc at that which will be therein. Thus by the said legacy she has been made mistress of it incontinent after the death of the said codicillant. This legacy the said Mademoiselle can take as her authority, without being held back from taking them by the hand of another nor for the consent of anyone.

In each and all of the other things contained and declared in his said will the said M. Michel de Nostradamus codicillant has approved, ratified and confirmed and has willed and wills these to stand and to have always perpetual

value and strength. This codicillant has willed and wills this present codicil, and others, and by right of all other last will, and by the best form and manner that can be attained, and has required and requires me the undersigned notary and the witnesses hereinafter named, to remember his said present codicil. These witnesses he has known well and named by their names. These witnesses have also known the said codicillant. The said M. de Nostradamus codicillant has willed the act to be done through them and by them, to whom by right it belongs, and by me the said and undersigned notary.

Done and passed, and published in the said Salon, and in the house of the said codicillant, in the presence of the Hon. Jehan Allegret, treasurer; M. Antoine Paris, doctor in medicine; Jehan Giraud, sumamed de Bessoune; Guillaume Eyraud, apothecary, and M. Gervais Berard, surgeon of the said Salon, witnesses requested and called here. Which codicillant and witnesses are undersigned, except for the said witness Giraud, who has said he does not know how to write.

Signed thus: M. Nostradamus, jehan allegret, cervais berard, a Paris, guillem eyraud. roche *notary*.