

The Last Will and Testament of Maria Robaina de Bethencourt

5 January 1779

In the name of God and his most holy mother Mary, our Lady, Amen

Know all who may read this my last will and testament that I, Maria Betancour, am a native of the Canary Islands and a resident of this city. I was married to Juan Rodriguez Granado, my first husband, and that we had five children, three boys and two girls. I was married the second time to Martin Lorenzo de Armas and we had five children, four boys and one girl.

Now that I am afflicted with all the infirmities and aches inevitable to old age and, realizing that I must die without knowing when or where, but believing, as I firmly believe, in all the mysteries which we are taught and believed by our Holy Mother Roman Catholic Church, as I also believe in the Holy Ghost and wish to die with this faith, I now name as my advocate and guide the Empress of the Heavens, Holy Mary, my Lady and Mother. I hereby publish this last will and testament of all my property in the following form:

First, from this instant until the last moment of my life I commend my soul to God who created it and redeemed it at the price of His precious blood. I order and command that my body be consigned to the earth which it was formed and buried at the base of the font of Holy Water in the Parochial Church of this city with whatever ceremonies my executors desire. I order that my wishes be observed.

I declare as my property one day of irrigation water with the accompanying land in the lower labor.

I declare as my property the suerte or corner of land called Del Palo Quemado.

I also own the stone house in which I live and its solar besides the portion of land which I have already sold to Joseph Seguro.

I declare that I obtained all this property by free gift and donation from the King, our Lord, who gave it to me and my five children of the first marriage. The suerte or corner of land called Del Palo Quemado I acquired when I was married to my second husband Martin Lorenzo de Armas. I declare this to be true.)

I declare that with my permission and consent, my son Pedro, has bought the shares of the house and solar which should descend to my other three children.

I declare as my property all the cattle which have not been sold and which bear my brand, except a milk cow with its calf which I sold to Fernando Beramendi for four and one half pesos, a sum he loaned me to pay a debt. My son Juan will know which cow it is.

I declare as my property a ranch which is situated on the other side of the Cibolo Creek and is adjacent to the ranch of Vicente Trabieso on the west side.)

Among my personal effects I also have one chest which I brought from the Canary Islands, an image of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, and four other images of various saints.

I declare that my son, Basilio sold his share of the land Del Palo Quemado, with my consent, to my daughter Antonia.

I declare that I do not recall any debts which I owe or may be due me. If however, anyone should appear bearing proof that my husband, Martin Lorenzo de Armas or I owe anything, I order my executors and heirs to pay these promptly so that my soul may rest in peace.

I declare that my children shall be my sole and universal heirs of all the property which I have herein named, except a yearling calf which I gave to daughter Antonia, and three others which I gave to my grandchildren, the children of my son Juan Granado. Likewise, I gave my daughter Josefa the chest, described above, which I brought from the Islands, To my granddaughter Gertrudis Padron, I have left the mattress and quilt which I am using. I gave the woolen skirt to Josefa de Seguro. I leave the branding iron to my son Juan as he is the youngest of my children.

Although I have received the Blessed Sacraments, as a Christian should, with absolute faith, and I have paid the penance which was imposed on me, to be more certain of my eternal salvation, I order that a mass be celebrated for the repose of my soul and any other masses which my daughters may wish to have celebrated.

I Direct that the funeral and burial expenses be paid from the most liquid of my goods.

I declare that my children, Pedro, Manuel, Juan, Francisco, Josefa, Antonia, and the children of my deceased daughter Paula shall be my sole, universal and lawful heirs of the residue of my estate after deducting the sum named in the clause immediately preceeding. Also they shall inherit all my

rights and rights of action which at any time might accrue to me in whatever manner they may come to me.)

I declare as executors and administrators of my estate my sons Pedro and Manuel Granados who, in case of doubt or difficulty in the partition of property, shall seek the advice of persons who have knowledge and experience in such matters. Therefore, this being my last will and testament, I hereby give all the power and authority which the law requires and is necessary to my to my executors to observe and fulfill the provisions of this will and each separate clause thereof. This will shall not be invalidated for lack of expression, requisites, formulae or legal requirements; and whatever my executors do shall have the same force and effect, in court or out of court, as if I were doing it myself, because as to everything incidental to my will or dependent upon my will, I have given them full power and authority. To make this binding I requested Fernando de Beramendi to sign for me as I do not know how to write.)

This will was executed in the Royal Presidio of San Antonio de Bexar, January 5, 1779 before me, Joseph Antonio Curbelo, Alcalde of the first election of this city and the witnesses with whom I act as delegate Judge where no notary is available.) It was written on common paper because no other kind was used here.) To which I bear witness.

(signed) Joseph Antonio Curbelo

(signed) Fernando de Beramendi

Witness: Juan Andres Alvarez Travieso

Witness: Vicente Flores

Transcribed will of English translation of Maria Robaina de Bethencourt by Roger Hernandez, 2015. The English translation can be found in "Los Bexarenos Genealogical Register"

The original will is located in the Bexar County Archives, San Antonio, Texas.

Maria Robaina de Bethencourt is my 8th great-grandmother. She died 26 January 1979, San Antonio, Bexar, Texas, USA.