

THE LAST JOURNEY OF ELIZABETH, DUCHESS OF CLARENCE

1364

NATIONAL ARCHIVES: E101/394/19/001

Notes:

Thanks are due to Dr. Kate Jewell for all her hard work and enthusiasm in teaching the Mediaeval Latin Palaeography class at Ipswich Records Office and also to members of the Mediaeval Latin Palaeography Support Group for their help with this document.

This translation from the Latin account is designed to be accessible to the general reader rather than a word for word literal translation. Punctuation has been added where helpful.

Modern dating is used throughout.

Editorial comments are in square brackets which also indicate unreadable words.

Lines 1 – 3

Details of the account of Nicholas of Fladebury (cleric) and John of Neuborne¹, officials, assigned by the Lord, Duke of Clarence², concerning expenses made relating to the burial of the body of the Lady Elizabeth³ recently the Duchess of Clarence. Specifically from the first day of February in the 38th year of the king's reign⁴ continuously to the 11th day of March next following.

Lines 4 – 6

[these lines are mostly unreadable – they appear to be a summary of the document]

..... 38th concerning expenses for a journey made with the body of Elizabeth recently Duchess of Clarence from the town of Neston in Wyrhale⁵ all the way to the manor of Bruisyard⁶

£20

Lines 7 – 8

The same respond to the account, for the safe keeping of the body of the same Duchess at Neston in Wyrhale from the agreement made by the aforesaid Nicholas and John, specifically for 14 days

18d

Line 9

And for 1 wagon with 4 horses hired at the said town of Neston carrying the aforesaid body unto Chester

4s

Lines 10 – 11

And for 1 other wagon with two men and 6 horses hired to carry the aforesaid body from Chester unto Coventry for 6 days of which wagon the cost per day 6s 8d

44s⁷

Lines 12 – 13

And for one other wagon with two men and 4 horses hired to carry the aforesaid body from Coventry unto Bruisyard in the county of Suffolk for 10 days of which wagon per day

20s

[the rest of this line is unreadable]

¹ John of Neuborne brought back Lionel's remains from Italy after his death in 1368. He is buried in Clare Priory. *I do not have a source for this comment – it is quoted by John Ashdown-Hill in an article on nerdalicious.com.au/history*

² Lionel, Duke of Clarence, second surviving son of Edward III

³ Died 10th December 1363 in Dublin, Ulster

⁴ Edward III 1364

⁵ Modern day Wirral peninsular in NW England

⁶ Bruisyard is in NE Suffolk

⁷ 6 days at 6s 8d gives 40s

Lines 14 – 16

And for wages for Thomas Fot esquire to the Duke of Clarence for 29 days taking per day 12d. He came from London on the first day of February the same year unto Neston in the aforesaid Wyrhale to be able to follow the above said body and that with the carriage from the said Neston unto the aforesaid Bruisyard

29s

Lines 17 – 20

And for wages for the same from the aforesaid town of Bruisyard carrying letters from the Lord Richard⁸ to the Bishop of Norwich about the burial of the aforesaid body, celebrating it, and going back and unto [????] day of the burial - specifically the 11th day of March at Bruisyard⁹ – and for helping in various offices for 11 days costing per day 12d¹⁰

11s

Lines 20 – 21

Item in three ells of linen strips of Rennes purchased by John Neuborne for the coffin of the above said body [????] price per measure 22d

5s 6d

Line 22

In 2 measures of red muslin purchased by the afore said John for making a cross made upon the said coffin

2s

Line 23 – 24

Item for the boat hire¹¹ and transport of one hanging and one black bier from Westminster¹² unto London to the household of the Duke of Clarence next to Aldgate¹³

⁸ This is possibly a mistake and Lionel is actually meant. There is no mention of Lord Richard elsewhere in the document. However, we do not know where Lionel is and it is possible that the arrangements for the interment were being made by a suitable person at Bruisyard in his absence. A possible candidate would be the priest who was chaplain to the nuns.

⁹ Bruisyard Hall (formerly Roke Hall) was given by Lionel, Duke of Clarence to a college of chantry priests in 1354. In 1364 Maud of Lancaster (the mother of Elizabeth), with an endowment from Lionel, founded a convent for Poor Clares there. Poor Clares were an enclosed Franciscan order with four convents in England.

¹⁰ It seems that Maud wished her daughter to be buried nearby. Excavations have shown that there was a chapel at Bruisyard Hall. The parish church is about a mile away and was not part of the convent complex. Given that the Poor Clares were a strictly enclosed order, it is likely that Elizabeth was buried within the convent. However, there is a brass matrix showing two figures in the church. These are believed to be Elizabeth and Maud. Maud died 5th May 1377, so the brasses postdate the burial of Elizabeth.

¹¹ This is the hire of a boat on the Thames.

¹² At this time London was very small and essentially enclosed within the city walls (which in part were the old Roman walls). Westminster was a small village centred on Westminster Abbey. Travelling by boat up and down the Thames would have been a common mode of transport. The hanging and bier described were probably held by Westminster Abbey and would have formed part of royal funereal accoutrements. Lionel, as the second surviving son of Edward, would have had the use of them.

¹³ Aldgate is the area north of the Tower of London. Elizabeth de Burgh (Elizabeth's grandmother – The First Lady of Clare) was buried at the house of Minoresses (Poor Clares) outside Aldgate in London.

6d

Line 25

And for the recovery and boat hire of the same from the said household unto the said Westminster

6d

Line 26 -27

And for the wages of one groom following the said hangings and said black bier from London unto Bruisyard [?????], and with the same going back, for 15 days taking per day 12d

15s

Line 28

And for the purchase of 20 iron hooks for the aforesaid hangings and room

6d

Lines 29 – 30

And for the fees of Nicholas of Fladebury assigned from the first day of February until the 11th day of March made upon the aforesaid expenses at the time of this account costing per day 3s 4d for 40 days

£6 13s 4d

Lines 31 -32

Item for the arranged fees of John of Neuborne agreed assigned upon the aforesaid expenses for 40 days costing per day 3s 4d within the time of this account

£6 13s 4d