
WILL OF ROBERT TERRILL, OF ORANGE COUNTY,
VIRGINIA.

Contributed and annotated by Mrs. Joseph P. Wiggins, Indianapolis, Indiana, together with data on the Terrills, obtained by Mrs. Wiggins from England.

In the name of God amen, I Robert Terrill, of the County of Orange and parish of St. Thomas being sick and weak in Body but of sound mind and memory thanks be to Almighty God for the same, do make and ordain this my Last will and Testament in manner and form following.

First after I shall quit this mortal Body I desire that I may be decently buried at the discretion and with the Solemnity that my Executors hereafter may think fit and proper.

Item. I give to my son Robert Terrill the land I purchased of Spencer Bobo in the County of Culpeper containing four hundred acres more or less to him his heirs or Assigns forever.

Item. I desire that the land I now live on Containing Two hundred and Thirty one acres also the land I hold in Culpeper which I purchased of Charles Grymes Containing by Estimation five hundred acres after my Decease may be sold by my Executors and the money Arising from the sale thereof pay such Legacies and be Divided as I shall hereafter mention.

Item. I give and bequeathe unto Robert Moore, Francis Moore, Bernard Moore and Alexander Moore, children of my daughter Ann Moore decd., one hundred pounds Current money to be equally divided Between them.

Item. I give and bequeathe unto Lyda Murray and Elizabeth Murray, children of my daughter Sarah Murray Decd., one negro girl named Lara to be equally divided between them or their heirs forever.

Item. I give and bequeathe to my grandchild William Moore, Son of my daughter Ann Moore, decd., one negro Boy named George and five pounds Current money to him his heirs or assigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeathe unto my sons Robert Terrill, John Terrill, William Terrill and my daughter Mary Hudson remainder of my slaves to be equally divided between them to them their heirs or assigns forever.

Item. I give and Bequeathe unto Mary Towles, Ann Towles, Joseph Towles, Jane Towles, Fanny Towles, Children of my daughter Sarah, Decd., which she had by Joseph Towles, Decd., Two hundred and twenty pounds Current money to be equally Divided between them or their assigns forever and to remain in the hands of my Executors till they come of age or Marry, and if either of them should die before that time then to be equally divided between the surviving Children above named.

Item. I give and bequeathe to the surviving Children of my son Edmund Terrill, Decd., Two hundred and Twenty pounds Current money to be equally divided between them, their heirs or assigns forever, and the sd. money to remain in the hands of my Executors till they come of age or marry and if any of them should die before that time their part to be equally divided between the surviving ones.

Item. I give unto Ephraim Rucker, Reuben Rucker, Mary Creed and Elizabeth Herring, children of my deceased Daughter, Elizabeth, Two hundred and Twenty pounds Current money to be equally divided between them and their heirs and assigns forever, (Except Mary Creed who I here has disposed of her part expected of my Estate, now if that should be the case then her part I give to be equally divided between her children that she may have of her Body Lawfully begotten).

Item. It is my will and desire that the residue of my estate of what kind soever be divided into several equal Divisions and I do give and dispose of Each Division as follows, one of the said divisions I give to my son Robert Terrill to him his heirs or assigns forever, One other division I give to my son John Terrill to his heirs or assigns forever. Also another of the said divisions I give to be equally divided between the surviving children of my son Edmund Terrill, deceased, or their heirs or assigns forever. Also, another of the said divisions I give to my son William Terrill to his heirs or Assigns forever. Also, I give another of the said divisions to my daughter Mary Hudson to her and her heirs or assigns forever. Also, another of the said divisions I give to be equally divided between Ephraim Rucker, Reuben Rucker, Mary Creed, and Elizabeth Herring, children of my daughter Elizabeth Rucker, Decd., to their heirs or Assigns forever. Also, one other division I give to be equally divided between Mary Towles, Ann Towles, Joseph Towles, Jane Towles, Fanny Towles, children of my daughter Sarah that she had by Joseph Towles, Deceased and remain and go in the same manner as mentioned in the Clause where I left the money.

Item. I have partly agreed with my Grandson, Rush Hudson, for the Tract of land I have in Pamunkey containing five hundred acres for which he was to give me the sum of one hundred and ten pounds current money, now if he complies with the bargain I then desire that my Executors may execute deeds to him for the said land and the

money arising from the sale thereof to be divided after the Legacies are satisfied into seven Equal divisions and disposed of as above mentioned and Lastly I do nominate and appoint my two sons John Terrill and William Terrill Executors of this my Last Will and Testament revoking all other Wills by me heretofore made. In witness I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 13th Day of February 1786.

Robert Terrill (Seal)

Nath'l Welch.
James Taylor

At a court held for Orange County on Thursday 23rd March 1786. This last Will of and Testament of Robert Terrill, deceased, Being presented into Court by John Terrill, one of the Executors therein named and proved by the oaths of James Taylor and Nathaniel Welch witnesses thereunto, and ordered to be recorded and on the motion of the said Executor, who made oath according to law, Certificate is granted him for obtaining probate thereof in due form, whereupon he, with James Taylor and Benjamin Porter, his Securities, entered into and acknowledged their Bond for the same in the sum of four thousand pounds Currency.

Teste.

James Taylor, C. O. C.

A copy Teste (signed by C. W. Woolfolk) Certified copy.

TERRILL NOTES.

Robert Terrill, of the Will, was the son of Timothy Terrill and his wife, Elizabeth Foster. He was born in New Kent Co., Va., and baptized on the 25th of December, 1697 in St. Peter's Parish Church in which his father was a vestryman. See St. Peter's parish Register, p. 38. There is, also, on same page, record of a son Joseph born to Timothy and Elizabeth Terrill.

Robert Terrill married first, Mary Foster, daughter of John Foster whose wife, it is supposed, was Ann Moore, daughter of Captain Augustine Moore, of Elizabeth City Co., Va.

When the writer of this sketch was apprised of the existence of Robert Terrill's Will by an elderly correspondent, who for a term of years—almost forty—had been a faithful delver in the original records, he remarked in his letter: "Ann Terrill married her cousin." This statement seemed significant; and together with the names of Ann Terrill Moore's sons (distinctive of the Moore family of Chelsea) as given in her father's Will, and indicates a clue to Ann Foster's family setting. [The name Augustine frequently appeared in the family of Moore, of "Chelsea," of King William Co., and in that of Elizabeth

City and York, but there was certainly no relationship, in Virginia at least, between the two families.—EDITOR.]

This deduction is given in the spirit of investigation, in the hope that it may meet the eye of a reader personally interested and who may be in possession of documentary evidence and, through it, be able to authenticate this tracing.

There was such a tendency in early times toward consanguineous marriage that the same patronymic in close generations implies relationship; consequently, it is supposed that Robert Terrill's wife was his own cousin; his mother, likewise, being a Foster.

There are indications, too, that John and Elizabeth Foster were brother and sister to Joseph Foster (a vestryman in St. Peter's parish Church) and that they were born after 1671, the date of the Will of William Bassett, in which mention is made of "Nephew Joseph Foster and his two sisters, Ann and Mary Foster," each under age at date of Will.

I have been so impressed with the frequency with which the name "Mary Foster" meets the eye on records of her descendants that my curiosity is keen regarding this elect lady of so many namesakes. I find the name on page 54—second part of Green's St. Mark's Parish under the head of the Will of Richard Sims—April 16—1809: "Wife Mary; Children, Robert Terrill Sims; Richard Michlin; Edmond; Joseph T.; Henry; Sallie Butler, Avel Collons, Nancy Tucker; and Mary Foster Sims." The line is obviously that of the offspring of Robert Terrill, Jr., son of the Testator mentioned above.

Of the posterity of Robert Terrill and wife Mary Foster, my investigations have been mainly in the line of their son Edmund Terrill. From an old Bible, now in possession of a descendant of the late Mr. Edward G. Cornelius, of Indianapolis, Indiana, I have copied the following table: "Edmund Terrill b. March 21st. 1740; Peggy Willis b. February 25th., 1741. Married, November 26th., 1760.

Issue:—Elizabeth Plunkett Terrill; born April 4th. 1762; Mary Foster Terrill b. June 12th., 1766; John Terrill b. Aug. 13th. 1768; Edmund b. Feb. 9th., 1770; Sarah Terrill b. January 4th. 1772; Jane, b. April 4th., 1774; Robert, b. April 3rd. 1777; James b. June 22nd., 1779; Nancy b. June 22nd 1781; Frances & Lucy (twins) b. Aug. 6th. 1783.

As there has been some speculation as to the parentage of Mrs. Peggy Willis Terrill and a jump-at conclusion accepted by certain of her descendants. I take this opportunity of proving its fallacy. The tradition alluded to has been given a wide circulation and is to the effect that Peggy Willis, wife of Edmund Terrill, was the daughter of Col. Henry Willis, founder of Fredericksburg. In such statements there is no argument so strong as precise dates for the knocking down of a tradition. Col. Henry Willis died on September 14th, 1740, O. S.,

and Peggy Willis was born February 25th, 1741, O. S., making her birth just seventeen months after Col. Henry Willis's death.

In Orange County, Va., there is a Will on file of one John Willis dated 1762; in which mention is made of Wife, Elizabeth; Executors, son William Willis and Edmund Terrill. To the latter he left two slaves. Following, is mention of "Walter Shropshire & the others" (of this, later), then the names of nine children all under age. John, Benjamin, Joshua, Reuben, James, Frances, Moses, Lewis and Mary.

To those familiar with a custom of early times (which entitled the husband to be the recipient of his wife's patrimony, as in the present instance and where the name of the wife is not mentioned in her father's Will, but her husband is), there is no question as to the existence of such daughter. But I have been told that this circumstance with certain descendants has ruled Peggy out as a daughter. I recall a case in the enlightened age of the "Seventies" of a highly intellectual clergyman in a western city who, apparently, was so used to the ancient custom that when it transpired that the expected legacy through his father-in-law's Will was left to his wife instead, he was greatly agitated.

In the figuring out of a genealogical problem baptismal names, especially grouped, have much to do in determining the facts in the case.

The reader who is interested will note that Peggy Terrill's eldest daughter is recorded in the family Bible as "Elizabeth Plunkett," which would signify that she had given her mother's full name to her first-born. Thus we infer that John Willis married Elizabeth Plunkett.

Returning to the Will and its opening clause, "Walter Shropshire & Others," who were left a trifling amount: The conclusion as to the place in the family of those mentioned is confusing, and can only be explained on the conjecture that the Shropshires were step-children of John Willis who perhaps married Elizabeth as the widow Shropshire. There is a deed of record dated 1750 in Orange County showing that John Willis and Walter Shropshire are joint guardians of John and Ann Shropshire, children of the late John Shropshire, which encourages the theory advanced.

There is a Will extant in Orange County dated 1760, of Mrs. Sarah Turberville, widow of Edward Turberville, which contains mention of Sons John Willis and William Willis; showing that her first husband was a Willis. There was no Turberville issue, but there were several children, evidently by intermediate husbands two in number.

In the beginning of my Willis quest, I corresponded with the late Col. Thomas M. Green, of Kentucky, who was a recognized expert in the genealogy of the Willis family. It was his opinion that Peggy Willis Terrill descended from William Willis of Craney Creek, Gloucester County. Middlesex county records show that William Willis and Bridget Robinson were married the 23rd of June, 1685, and William Willis, son of William and Bridget Willis, was baptized on the

4th of January, 1693. And according to authority cited below, must have been the father of John Willis of the Will of 1762.

Following the deduction of Col. Green, it would seem that the father of William Willis, who married Bridget Robinson, must have been Henry Willis who died before 1689. (See Willis Family Genealogy, page eleven.) This Henry Willis left five children: Francis, William, Susanna, Mary and Alice.

Westmoreland county abounds in records of Willis and kindred families, as do the adjoining counties, and I have no doubt that if a quest were put into the hands of a person of acumen in such matters we might have the consecutive links in the Willis chain.

SARAH HENDERSON WIGGINS.

(To be continued)