

I Sir John Randolph of Williamsburgh Knight being in good health and of sound mind and memory for preventing disputes in my family about the estate I may leave at my death which I have acquired honestly tho' by a profession much exposed to temptations of deceit and extortion do make this my last will and testament. But whereas I have been reproached by many people especially the clergy in the article of religion and have by the freedom and sincerity of my discourses drawn upon me names very familiar to blind zealots such as deist heretic and schismatic and gained the ill will or perhaps the hatred of some few I think if necessary in the first place to vindicate my memory from all harsh and unbrotherly censure of this kind and to give this last testimony of my faith.

I contemplate and adore the Supreme Being the first cause of all things whose infinite power and wisdom is manifested throughout all his works of which none can entertain the least doubt but fools or madmen. I do sincerely believe from the evidence of the sacred writings as well as of prophane authors that Jesus was the Messiah who came into the world in a miraculous manner to give light to mankind at that time lost and wondering in miserable darkness and abandoned to horrid

superstitions and ignorance of the true religion to destroy all factions and parties about it to persuade us to love one another which comprehends the whole moral law as the only way to eternal life and to establish peace and liberty among all nations. I am also thoroughly persuaded by the authority of his word that the dead shall rise at God's appointed time which is my greatest hope and comfort and that we shall then be judged not for any errors or mistakes in matters of speculation but for the immorality of our lives and above all for that fierceness with which mankind is inspired in religious disputes despising reviling and hating one another about trifling and insignificant opinions. That we shall be rewarded if the corrupt state of humane nature can merit anything only according to the degree of virtue which we have practiced in this life wherein I am assured mankind have a perfect liberty and are undoubtedly exempted from fate and necessity. This is the religion I have learned from the gospel and do believe it to be truly christian as it is suited the weak capacities of men easy to be understood and needing none of the explanations and comments of learned Doctors whose labors seem to be in vain because while by their reasoning they confute the gross errors of others they have not sense or courage enough to establish a true uniform consistent system of their own but strive to make the religion of Christ a science of mighty difficulty and mystery against his own authority and by the weight of their great learning and abilities have only made their adherents more fierce and obstinate fixing irreconcilable animosities among them about unintelligible propositions and senseless doctrines having no tendency to influence mens minds to amend their lives but weakening the eternal obligations of morality whereby the true christian unity is destroyed which cannot be founded but in a strict obedience to the precepts of the gospel. And it is upon this account that my veneration to the ways and means publicly established for the reformation of our lives and turning us from our vicious courses is quite worn out. And I beseech God the father almighty if these opinions are erroneous that I may be enlightened with better thoughts. That he will direct my steps in the ways of truth honesty and charity and that I may be always ready to resign this life with patience and cheerfulness; retaining a firm confidence in his mercy that I shall not be dealt with according to the errors and frailties of my life but may be admitted to some degree of that everlasting peace which his son has promised to those that believe in him.

As to my body I care little about it not doubting but more ceremony will be used with it than is necessary. Yet it is my desire if I should die in this town to be buried in the chappel of William and Mary College with as little trouble and expense as may be.

For the maintenance and support of my dear and most beloved wife who for her faithfulness affection and prudence deserves to be remembered in the first place I make the following provision I give

and devise to her during her life all my houses and lots in the city of Williamsburgh and the plantation and lands adjoining to the town which I purchased of Mr. Thomas Corbin and Mr. Thomas Bray with the appurtenances and also my household servants and slaves and the slaves living and residing upon the said plantation. I also give her during her life the use of all the furniture of my house in Williamsburgh of what kind soever my plate and linnen of all sorts all the goods which are or shall be provided for the use of my several plantations and the liquors and other things laid in for my housekeeping and all the stocks of cattle and sheep upon the said plantation allowing her to take firewood from the said land for the use of the house. I also give her forever my coach chariot and chaise with every thing that belongs to them and my coach horses riding horses mares and colts which are kept in town also all her own wearing apparel rings jewels and other paraphernalia also all the pieces of money whether gold or silver which I have given her and one hundred pounds sterling. I also give her the profits of all my other plantations and negros or other slaves until my several sons shall respectively attain the age of twenty four years or if any of them should die until that time would have been accomplished if they had lived if she should live as long. And after that my will is that she shall receive of my sons one third part of the profits of my said plantations and slaves for her dower. And my will is that the profits of my estate be received by my wife in trust for her better support and the maintenance and education of my children. After her death I give all my said houses and lots in Williamsburg and at the college landing and the said plantation and lands lying near or adjoining to the town upon Archers hope creek which I purchased of the said Thomas Corbin and Thomas Bray and my household servants and slaves and slaves belonging to the said plantation and other the premises before given to my wife during her life to my son Peyton Randolph and to his heirs and assigns forever. I also give unto my said son Peyton his heirs and assigns all my lands tenements and hereditaments with the appurtenances lying and being in Martin's hundred in the county of James City and all the slaves horses hogs cattle sheep and other goods and chattels belonging to the said lands or at the time of my death living residing or being upon the same.

I also give unto my said son my whole collection of books with the cases in which they are kept hoping he will betake himself to the study of the law: But if he dies before he comes to the age of twenty four years, I give the same to my son John if he lives to be of the age of twenty one; otherwise I leave them to my residuary legatee.

I give and bequeath to my said son John all my plantations lands tenements and hereditaments with the appurtenances lying and being in the Parish of James City upon Chickohominy river in the county of James City which I purchased of Robert Porteous Esqr and all the

slaves horses hogs cattle sheep and other goods and chattels belonging to the same or living residing or being upon the said plantations to hold to him and his heirs forever.

I give and bequeath to my daughter one thousand pounds sterling when she attains the age of twenty one years or marries but if she dies before I give the same to my residuary legatee.

Whereas my negroes Peter and Hull do not live constantly at any plantation I give Hull to my son Beverley and Peter to my son John. I also give unto my son Beverley the mulatto boy Billy and all the rest of my estate both real and personal. Appointing my wife, brethren William Randolph and Richard Randolph and Henry Whiting Esqr. my executors and guardians to my children. In testimony whereof I have signed my name to every page of this my will containing five pages and affixed my seal the 23rd day of December MDCCXXXV.

Published and declared to be my last will and testament in the presence of these witnesses

John Randolph L. S.

Chas. Bridges

Philip Ffinch

Virginia Sc./

Memorandum that on the XXVIIIth day of April MDCCXXXVII—this Will was presented in the General Court by William Randolph Esq. Richard Randolph and Henry Whiting Gent executors therein named who made oath thereto according to law and the same was proved by the oaths of Charles Bridges and Philip Ffinch the witnesses to it and ordered to be recorded.

Teste. Matt. Kemp Clk.

Whereas I Sr. John Randolph have heretofore made my last Will and testament in writing bearing date the three and twentieth Day of December in the year of our Lord 1735 I do now confirm and republish the same with the additions and alterations contained in this codicil which shall be received and taken as part of my said Will. First I desire that the house at Eaton Hill be repaired in the manner I have already provided for and according to such directions as I shall leave for that purpose then that it be furnished with beds ffurniture (of which several are already provided) and otherthings which may be found necessary also that North River Hill may be rebuilt: the expense of all which to be defrayed out of the profits of my estate in Gloucester. I give to my eldest son the following negros, a negro girl named Ffrank who lives with Mr. Pasteur a negro girl Lucy who lives with Mr. Bridges a mulatto girl called Nanny who lives at my quarters at Archer's house and a negro girl called Easter and I also give him my great silver cup. I give to my son Peyton a parcel of land I lately purchased of colonel Custis and his son adjoining to my land at Archers

have also the wardrobe and land thereunto belonging which I do
 desire about twelve months ago of the executors of John Randolph
 Esq deceased as laid in law and his heirs forever and I give that I
 desire her called Levy and will further is that all the money in
 standing and due to me be placed out at interest upon such security
 as my executor shall approve and if it shall happen that any of the
 money for money I have already placed out should be required or
 necessary I desire the same may be called in and the money placed
 upon better security and I do appoint the interest arising from the
 same to be applied to the better maintenance and education of my
 children until my son Peyton comes of age yet I do not intend for
 the payment of my Daughter's portion should be delayed in case of her
 marriage before that time but shall be paid as soon as the money can
 be called in. I also desire that a fair catalogue may be made of my
 books and that they be carefully preserved in the places where they are
 now or far as they can contain them and I desire that these places be
 fully repaired and have new books and maps and that new other ne-
 cessary provisions be provided for the better keeping the rest of the books.
 Lastly my will is that an inventory be made of my estate without any
 appointment or security to be given for the administration I trusting
 entirely to the fidelity and honesty of my executors. And I do appoint
 my worthy and honest friend John Carter Esq. one of the guardians
 of my children. In testimony whereof I have signed and sealed the
 writing this anniversary day of the month of July last publishing and declaring
 the same to be a correct and true copy of my last will before mentioned
 Signed sealed published and declared in the
 presence of us who subscribed our names to
 the presence of the Testator

John Randolph L. E.
 Will. Smith
 Joshua Fry
 William Dawson
 John Symmes
 Esq. Reader

Virginia So./

Memorandum that this will of the last will and testament of St
 John Randolph Esq deceased was presented to the General Court
 the XXVIIIth day of April 1734 by William Randolph
 Esq. Richard Randolph and Henry Whiting (executors in the said will
 named) who made oath thereunto according to law and the same was
 proved by the oaths of William Smith Joshua Fry William Dawson and
 Benjamin Reader witnesses to it and together with the said last will
 and testament ordered to be recorded.

Teste Meis. Esq. Ch.

The foregoing are true transcriptions from the record of the
 will and testament of St John Randolph.

Teste R. P. Howard

Ch. General Court.