

July 29th 1837

In the name of God Amen I John Stephen of
the County of Lincoln & State of North Carolina,
Being sound in mind & Memory but Aged & infirm
in body, do make & publish this to be my last will
and Testament And what earthly Goods it hath
pleased God to bless me with, I will and bequeath
in the following manner,

1st As for my two first Wives Children I have
as they severally became of Age & left me gave them
each such portions of my property as I intended
them to have,

I will & bequeath unto my beloved Wife Elizabeth all
my estate, both personal & real, during her natural
Life time Or widowhood at the termination of either
My will is that my real & personal estate, shall by
my Executors at such time as they may think best
put the 1st real & personal Estate to sale to the best
Advantage & the proceeds of the real Estate to be
equally divided between my three sons, Francis
Josh & Melchor And the proceeds of my personal
Estate, I wish divided equally between my sons &
daughters Eliza, Frederick, Josh, Geo, Nancy,
Melchor & Leah, After my decease my will is that
so much my estate shall be put to sale by my
Executors as shall be sufficient to discharge my
debts provided there is not money & notes on hand
to discharge them, Furthermore I authorize my

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Executors that in case my daughters should marry
off that they should receive some household furniture
if it could be shared, & a reasonable charge made
against them for it, which will then be deducted
from their distribution share. When my whole estate
shall be sold. For the faithful discharge of this
my last Will & Testament I reposing confidence
into, authorize nominate & appoint my wife
Elizabeth Stearns & my friends Mr. W. Abornathy
My Executors.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my
hand & affixed my seal.

Sealed signed & acknowledged

In the presence of us
who saw this signature
made & acknowledged

his
John H. Stearns (seal)
mark

William Abornathy

John Delp. In 1831 or 1832.

Elizabeth Stearns Executrix