Transcription of John Morgan Will

Here's the complete transcription of the will from all the pieces we reviewed:

"In the Name of God Amen...

Imprimis, I give and bequeath unto my beloved Wife Mary Two Milk Cows likewise her Choice of all my Stock of horn and also I give Two sheep, her Choice of my flock, as also I give her bed and furniture, her Choice of my beds. I likewise give her one small Table.

Item, I give unto the said Mary my beloved Wife one Spinning wheel, and half of the produce now in my possession. And it is my desire that she two cows and sheep above mentioned have free liberty of Pasture and be regularly fed with hay and other forage as usual.

Item I do direct, and it is my will and Pleasure that Mary, beloved Wife, have free and undisturbed possession of the dwelling house I now live in during her natural Life.

Item I give unto my said Wife Mary (and I request that it may be strictly observed by my heirs) Twenty Bushels of good Sound Grain viz: Eight Bushels of Wheat and ten Bushels of Indian corn, to be delivered on the first day of December yearly either at the said dwelling house, or at the Mill I now possess at her Election.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son Samuel Morgan and to his heirs forever all that Part of my lands which I now possess on an Equitable title, which lies to the southof a Black Line marked in the Presence of Samuel McClanon, William Briggs and Ephraim Garriot, including the Grist and Saw mills. I also give and bequeath unto my said son Samuel one half of my Stock of every kind except the two Cows, two sheep above mentioned, & also an equal moiety of the house hold furniture of every kind except what I have disposed of to my Dearly beloved Wife as above mentioned.

Item I give and bequeath unto my son Hugh Morgan & his heirs and assigns forever all that Part of my lands which I now possess on an Equitable title which lies to the North of a Black line marked in the Presence of Samuel McClanon, William Briggs & Ephraim Garriot, together with all and singular the improvements and appurtenances thereunto in any wise belonging except the dwelling house I now live in, and which I have given my said Wife during the Privilege of as above mentioned, except also the liberty of Pasture for the two Cows and two Sheep above mentioned. The said two Cows and two Sheep are to have the usual access to Pasture fields.

Item I give and bequeath unto my said son Hugh, the other half of my Stock of every kind, except as has been above Excepted, & also an Equal moiety of my house hold furniture of every kind except as above Excepted.

Lastly and finally I do nominate and appoint my Son Samuel Morgan, and Ephraim Garriot my lawful Executors to carry this my Last will and Testament into full Effect, Ratifying and Confirming this to be my Last Will and Testament and as such Published and Pronounced in the Presence of the Subscribing Witnesses, and with my own hand and seal, this twenty ninth day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand Seven hundred and Ninety Six.

[Signed by:] William Brice Samuel McKinnon Daniel Herbert

Allegheny County Before me Samuel Jones Register of Wills and granter of Letters of Administration in and for said County, Came William Brice and Samuel McKinnon and was duly sworn according to Law Deposeth and Saith that they seen John Morgan the Testator sign seal Publish & pronounce the above Instrument of Writing as his Last will & Testament and that he was of sound and memory to the best of their knowledge..."

[End of available text]

CopyRetry

SG

Beautiful thanks

Edit

You're welcome! This appears to be an interesting historical will from 1796 in Allegheny County, showing how John Morgan provided for his wife Mary and divided his property between his sons Samuel and Hugh. The careful attention to details like annual grain allowances, pasture rights, and even specific mill access shows how thorough people needed to be in documenting property division in that era. Would you be interested in knowing more about wills from this time period or this region of Pennsylvania?

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SG

Yes, please

Edit

In late 18th century Pennsylvania, particularly in places like Allegheny County, wills provide fascinating insights into colonial and early American life:

1. Common Characteristics of 1780-90s Wills:

* Opening with "In the Name of God, Amen" was standard religious phrasing
* Careful attention to both real property (land) and personal property (furniture, livestock)
* Special provisions for widows, who had limited property rights under law
* Specific agricultural provisions (like the grain allowances we see in this will)

1. Property Rights and Widow's Provisions:

* The concept of "dower rights" guaranteed widows a third of their husband's estate
* Provisions like Mary Morgan's housing rights ("during her natural Life") were common
* Annual grain allowances were typical to ensure widow's survival
* Specific household items (bed, furniture, spinning wheel) were standard bequests

1. Regional Context in Western Pennsylvania:

* Allegheny County was relatively newly settled in 1796
* References to "Equitable title" suggest the land might have been recently acquired
* Mills were valuable property in frontier regions
* The presence of both grist and saw mills indicates this was a substantial estate

1. Agricultural Elements:

* The mention of specific livestock (cows, sheep) and crops (wheat, Indian corn)
* Pasture rights were crucial and carefully specified
* Annual grain payments show the agricultural basis of the economy

1. Legal Formalities:

* Required multiple witnesses (here we see three)
* Needed to be proved before a Register of Wills
* Witnesses had to testify to the testator's mental competency
* The appointment of executors was crucial

Would you like me to elaborate on any of these aspects? Or would you be interested in hearing more about a specific element of colonial-era estate planning?

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3.5 Sonnet (New)

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