

Transcribed below are an undated will of John Robb and an official record of proof on 8Feb1804 by two of the witnesses. The transcription is based on four photocopy pages furnished to me by Mrs. Barbara Robb Mansfield (no current address available), a descendant of the testator. A study of the handwriting and of the paper indicates that these photocopies represent two original sheets folded once, together—two “folios”, the recto sides containing an autograph will, and the verso sides containing, respectively, the ancient docketing “Will of John Robb, Deceased,” said to be “Registered in Will Book No.2. pages 11, 12 & 13” , and a record of its proof. The proof is in the hand of the signatory clerk, John E. Sanderson, and the signatures of the witnesses are the same for both will and proof. Probably the original itself is still to be found at the Washington County courthouse in WashingtonPA.

Both the will and its probate have been copied into Will Book 2:11-13 (FHL film 863624/2).

I also have photocopies of a typescript transcription of this will from the papers of Mr. E.G. Chapman. This typescript version of the will is docketed “John Robb, Deceased,” which matches the caption of the copy in Will Book 2. Photocopied with this version of the will is a note, dated 2Nov1933, and endorsed “R.J. Coulson, Register” which reads “We have no record of any date of signing in the will mentioned. The date of probate being Feb. 8, 1804 the same as your [sic] have mentioned.”

The text of the original, of the copy, and of the typescript are substantially the same, except that the married surname of testator’s named daughter, Agnes, which is “Andrew” in the original, appears to be “Andre” in the will book copy, and is definitely truncated to “Andre” in the typescript. Apart from the fact that the “Andrew” could have easily been misread by the clerk making the copy, the name is also the last item in the lower right corner of page 11 and its ending is obscured by the clip used to hold down the page for microfilming. Ironically, the loose probate papers for John Robb’s estate show that the name is actually “Andrews”, as they include a receipt for \$26.67 “being in ful the share left to A[g]ness Andrews by her father”, signed John Andrews.

Although the original will is undated, a blank space is left for the insertion of a date. The somewhat irregular signature of testator suggests that he was in failing health, and the contents of the will suggests that his wife, Barbara was too, since all the devises and bequests are predicated on her death. Most likely, probate of the will was delayed until Barbara’s death, since it was, until then, substantially incapable of execution. If this is so, then it was *Barbara* who probably died shortly before 8Feb1804, the date of probate; John may have died some little time before this. Wife Barbara does not figure at all in the loose probate papers, the first of which is dated 8Feb1804, she purchases no items in the “vendue” which is held not later than 14May1804, and she is not mentioned in the final estate account filed 26Apr1805 (WasPA Probate Packet R15-1805, folder 1703, on FHL film 1711784/3).

I offer below, for comparison, two transcriptions of this will, the first according to the Robb Modernized Method of transcription (RMM), the second in the more literal Robb Expanded Method format (REM). The conventions I have used for these transcriptions are defined [here](#).

Will of John ROBB of Washington Co., PA, undated, proved 8Feb1804

transcribed (RMM) from photocopy of original will—copy in WashingtonCoPA Wills 2:11-13 (FHL film 862624/2)

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. I, **John Robb** of Robi[n]son Township, County of Washington and State of Pennsylvania, being weak of body, but of sound and perfect mind and memory, blessed be Almighty God for the same, do make and publish this, my last will and testament, in manner and form following. (That is to say,)

- First, it is my will that immediately after the decease of my beloved wife **Barbara Robb**, my moveable property and chattels be sold by my hereafter to be named executors at public vendue, out of the monies arising from which, my funeral expenses and all just debts shall be discharged, and that whatever shall remain, together with all money due by virtue of a bond given by my brother, **Joseph Robb**, shall be divided into four equal shares betwixt my sons **Andrew Robb**, **David Robb**, **Joseph Robb**, and **Moses Robb**, excepting nevertheless the sum of twenty pounds to be given out of said monies to my daughter **Isabella Robb**, otherwise **Little**, and the sum of ten pounds to my daughter **Agnes Robb**, otherwise **Andrews**, together with all the expenses which may attend the decease and funeral of my wife **Barbara Robb**.

- After which, I bequeath to my beloved wife, **Barbara Robb**, her bed with all the clothing thereunto belonging, the use of her bedroom during her natural life, as al[/so] whatever may be necessary for her comfortable support during life, together with the kitchen shelf and all the furniture thereunto belonging.

- It is also my will that my land be sold either by public or private sale as soon as possible after my wife's decease, and when all expenses attending the deeding of it shall be discharged, whatever remains shall be divided into eight equal shares betwixt my sons **William Robb**, **John Robb**, **James Robb**, **Andrew Ro[/bb]**, **Samuel Robb**, **David Robb**, **Joseph Robb** & **Moses Robb**, in manner following, that is to say

- My sons **John** and **Jam[/es]** shall receive their proportions out of the first payment, if sufficient - if not, the residue is to be discharged out of the second payment;

- After this, my sons **Andrew** and **Samuel** shall receive their shares, so soon as the payments for the land will admit;

- Again, **David** and **Joseph** are to have theirs in same manner;

- And lastly, **William** and **Moses** are to have theirs.

And lastly, I do hereby appoint my son, **William Robb**, of the Township, County & State aforesaid, and **James Little** of Fallowfield Township, County and State aforesaid, the sole executors of this, my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills by me made, in witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this [*blank*]

Signed, sealed, published and declared by the above named **John Robb**, to be his last will & testament, in the presence of us, who have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses in the presence of the testator.

D[avi]d Witherspoon

James Calvin

John Porter

John Robb [*no seal*]

Washington County

Be it remembered that on the 8th day of February, A.D. 1804, personally appeared before me, the Deputy Register for the probate of wills etc. in and for said County, **David Witherspoon** and **John Porter**, two of the subscribing witnesses to the within instrument in writing, who, being duly sworn according to law, do declare and say that they were personally present and heard and saw **John Robb**, the within named testator, sign, seal, publish, pronounce and declare the within instrument of writing as and for his last will and testament, and at the time of the execution thereof, he, the said testator, was of sound and well disposing mind, memory and understanding according to the best of these deponents' knowledge, observation and belief, that they signed their names thereto as witnesses in presence of the testator and at his request, and in the presence of each other, that they saw **James Calvin**, the absent witness, sign his name thereto in the presence of the testator.

D[avi]d Witherspoon
John Porter

Sworn to and subscribed before me, **John E. Sanderson**

Registered the Eighth day of Feby A.D. 1804 [*This line appended to WashingtonCoPA Will Book2:13*]

Will of John ROBB of Washington Co., PA, undated, proved 8Feb1804

transcribed (REM) from photocopy of original will—copy in WashingtonCoPA Wills 2:11-13 (FHL film 862624/2)

In the Name of God Amen; I, John Robb of Robi[n]son Township, County of Washington and State of Pennsylvania, being weak of body, but of sound and perfect mind and memory, blessed be Almighty God for the same, do make and publish this, my last will and Testament, in manner and form following; (That is to say,)

First, it is my Will, that immediately after the decease of my beloved wife Barbara Robb, my moveable property and chattells be sold by my hereafter to be named Executors at public Vendue, out of the monies arising from which my funeral Expenses, and all just debts shall be discharged, and that whatever shall remain, together with all money due by Virtue of a bond given by my brother Joseph Robb, shall be divided into four equal Shares betwixt my Sons Andrew Robb, David Robb, Joseph Robb, a [||nd] Moses Robb, excepting nevertheless the Sum of twenty pou [||nds] to be given out of said Monies to my Daughter Isabella Robb otherwise Little, and the Sum of ten pounds to my Daughter Agnes Robb otherwise Andrew, together with all the Expenses, which may attend the Decease and funeral of my Wife Barbara Robb - Afte [||r] which, I bequeath to my beloved Wife Barbara Robb her bed with all the cloathing thereunto belonging, the use of her Bedroom during her natural Life, as al [||so] whatever may be necessary for her comfortable suppor[||t] during Life, together with the Kitchen Shelf and all the furniture thereunto belonging. It is also my will that my land be sold either by public or private Sale as soon as possible after my Wife's decease, And when all Expen [||ses] attending the deeding of it shall be discharged, whatever remains shall be divided into eight equal Shares betwixt my Sons William Robb, John Robb, James Robb, Andrew Ro [||bb], Samuel Robb, David Robb, Joseph Robb and Moses Robb, in manner following, that is to say; My sons John and Jam [||es] shall receive their proportions out of the first payment, if sufficient, if not, the residue is to be discharged out of the second payment; After this my sons Andrew and Samuel shall receive their Shares, so soon as the payments for the land will admit; Again, David and Joseph are to have theirs in same manner, And lastly, William and Moses are to have theirs. And lastly I do hereby appoint My Son, William Robb, of the Township, County and State aforesaid, and James Little of Fallowfield Township, County and State aforesaid, the sole Executors of this, my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all former wills by me made, In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and Seal this [blank]

Signed sealed, published and declared by the abovenamed John Robb, to be his last Will & Testament, in the presence of us, who have hereunto subscribed our names as Witnesses in the presence of the Testator.

D[avi]d Witherspoon

James Calvin

John Porter

John Robb [no seal]

Washington County

Be it remembered that on the 8th day of February, A.D. 1804, personally appeared before me, the deputy Register for the probate of Wills etc. in and for said County, David Witherspoon and John Porter two of the subscribing witnesses to the within Instrument in writing, who being duly sworn according to law, [did] declare and say that they were personally present and heard and saw John Robb the within named Testator sign seal publish pronounce and declare the within instrument of writing as and for his last will and Testament and at the time of the Execution thereof he the said Testator was of sound and well disposing mind memory and understanding according to the best of these deponents knowledge observation and belief, that they signed their names thereto as witnesses in presence of the Testator and at his request and in the presence of each other - that they saw James Calvin the absent witness sign his name thereto in the presence of the Testator.

D[avi]d Witherspoon
John Porter

Sworn to and subscribed before me, John E. Sanderson

Registered the Eighth day of Feby A.D. 1804 [*This line appended to WashingtonCoPA Will Book2:13*]