

Thomas Higgins of Hillend, Eastnor, gentleman, 1637

Ref: Herefs. RO 49/3/5

[will fragile]

In the name of God, Amen, 8 November in the year of Our Lord God 1637, in the 13th year of the reign of our sovereign lord King Charles, I Thomas Higgins of Eastnor in the county of Hereford, gentleman, being weak in body but of good and perfect memory, thanks be given to Almighty God, well knowing the uncertainty of man's life and to the intent to settle that estate which it hath pleased Almighty God to lend me in this world: **First** I do willingly (when it shall please Almighty God) with a free heart render and give unto the hands of Almighty God my creator and redeemer my spirit which he of his goodness gave me when I was first fashioned in my [mother's womb] [line lost in tear and fold] and blessed saints; and touching my body I will then give it over and commend it to the earth whereof it came, not doubting but according to the article of my faith at the general resurrection I shall receive the same again by the mighty power of God, not a corruptible, mortal and weak body as now it is, but an incorruptible body and perfect like unto his glorious body. **Item** I give, devise and bequeath unto Anne Higgins my loving wife, for the term of her natural life, the occupation and free use of all that my messuage or tenement, freehold land, meadows, leasows, coppice woods and hopyards, with the appurtenances, situate and being at the Woolpitts in the parishes of Ledbury and Eastnor in the county of Hereford or in either of them, which I had and purchased of John Cam, gentleman. And I do further give, grant, demise, let and devise unto the said Anne my wife, her executors and assigns, all my said messuage or tenement, lands, meadows, leasows, coppice woods and hopyards with the appurtenances at the Woolpitts aforesaid, which I purchased of the said John Cam, to have and to hold the same unto her the said Anne, her executors, administrators and assigns from and immediately after her decease for and during the term of 4 score years thence next ensuing fully to be complete and ended. Provided nevertheless, and my will and meaning is and so I do hereby nominate, set down and appoint that if Robert Higgins my son, his heirs and executors or administrators or any of them shall within the space of 5 years next after my decease well and truly content and pay or cause to be paid unto my said wife her executors, administrators or assigns the full sum of £120 of lawful money of England at or in my now mansion or dwelling house called Hillend, situate in the said parish of Eastnor, without fraud or guile, that then the said sum being so paid, my said wife shall hold and enjoy the said messuage or tenement, lands, meadows, pastures, coppice woods and hopyards during the term of her natural life only and that then from and immediately after her decease the same and every part thereof shall descend remain and be to the said Robert my son, his heirs and assigns forever. **Item** I give and bequeath unto Thomas Higgins my son £3 of lawful money to buy him a ring. **Item** I give and bequeath unto Anne and Elinor, my son Robert's daughters, to either of them a feather bed, bolster, blanket and covering to be delivered unto them immediately after the death of my said wife and £10 apiece in money. **Item** my will is that my said wife shall have, use and enjoy all my bedsteads, truckle bedsteads, cupboards, tables, stools and chairs during her natural life, and after her decease the same to remain in my house to and for the use of Robert Higgins, my said son. **Item** I give and bequeath to the poor of the parish of Eastnor 20s, to the poor of the parish of Yarpoll [Yarpole?] 20s, and to the poor of the parish of Ledbury 20s. **Item** I

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give and bequeath to my son Francis the sum of £50 to be paid him by £5 every half year until the said sum be fully satisfied (if he shall [1½ lines illegible in tears and folds] [**All the** **rest** of my goods, cattle, chattels and plate I give and bequeath unto my said wife, my debts being paid and funeral discharged, upon her faithful promise to me to bequeath it at the time of her death unto such of my children as shall best deserve it at her hands. **And** I do make my said wife my sole executrix of this my will.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and year first before written. Sealed, subscribed and published in the presence of: Richard Todd, Thomas Higgins, Mary Knotteford, Richard Relsham, John Webley

Note: There is no burial entry in the Eastnor registers for Thomas Higgins nor, apparently, in the Ledbury registers, although three of his children and two of his wives were buried at Ledbury:

1628 Elinor daughter of Thomas Higgins of Eastnor, gent.

1630 Anne daughter of Thomas Higgins

1633 Elizabeth wife of Mr Thomas Higgins gent. And an infant born of the said wife Elizabeth

1640 Mr Anne Higgins of Eastnor, widow

There is a ledger stone in Ledbury church with the following inscription:

HERE LIETH THE BODY OF THOMAS HIGGINS OF EASTNOR GENT: WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
ye XVth DAY OF NO ANNO DNI 1637 in the 68th yeare of his Age haveing been a Clarke in
the King's Remembrancers office in the Exchequer for the space of 46 yeares

Here also lieth ye Body of Robert Higgins late of the Woollpitts Gent He died August
ye 15th 1721 Aged 66 Years

and Also Here lieth the Body of Mary the Wife of William Meek of the Woollpitts (and
Relict of the above mentioned Robert Higgins Gent) She departed this life the 2nd Day of
February 1765 Aged 86 Years