

## Thomas Branch of Eastnor, 1635

Ref: TNA, PROB11/168

**In the name of God** Amen. I Thomas Branch of Eastnor in the county and diocese of Hereford do, upon this 25 April in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of our dread sovereign lord Charles, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc., [1635] make and ordain this to be my testament, declaring herein my last will in manner and form following, that is to say: **First** and principally I do heartily commit and bequeath my soul into the hands of our most high and almighty God and creator of all things in heaven and earth, from whom I received the same, most unfeignedly trusting that he will, for the dear sake of the merits of his son and our saviour Christ Jesus, receive it again into his holy kingdom when it shall please his divine majesty to separate the same from this my vile body, and my said body then I will to be interred in the churchyard of Eastnor aforesaid, near unto the place of burial where my ancestors have been laid at the time of their several deceases, not doubting but that in the last day my said saviour shall raise it again to unite the same to my said soul to live in joy eternally. **Then next** I will give and bequeath to and for the poor of Eastnor aforesaid 10s. to be delivered unto them immediately after my decease by the discretion of my executors and the trustees herein nominated. **Item** I do moreover give unto Joan my daughter, the wife of William Smith of Putley, £40 of money to be paid unto her at the end of half a year next after my decease by my executors; and whereas my said daughter Joan is now at the writing hereof with child, my will is that if she live and her child, that then the said £40 shall remain to her and her child and to the longest liver of them, but if it happen that she should die and her child also within one year and a day next after the birth of her said child, that then my will is that William Smith her said husband shall have £20 of the said £40 and no more. And the other £20, I will that out of it shall be given to the six children of Valentine Branch by his second wife and the two children of Margaret Coles 12d. apiece, and the residue, being £19 12s., shall be given to my friends that are to me next of kin, as my executors shall think fit. **Item** I do give to Alice Branch my sister of Worcester 20s. to use during her life, and after her decease to remain to her husband's son called John Prichard. **Item** I do give to Joyce the wife of my late deceased brother Leonard Branch 20s. to use during her natural life and after her decease to remain to her daughter Mary. And to the said Mary I do give my bible book and also a book called the Country Farm. **Item** I further hereby ordain and my will is that if I and my now wife named Elizabeth do hap to decease leaving no issue of our two bodies betwixt us lawfully begotten, that then Joan my said daughter shall have to her and her issue (after the deceases of me and my said wife Elizabeth) my house in the which I now dwell in Eastnor aforesaid and the orchard thereto adjoining, to remain to her and her issue for ever, but if the said Joan die and leave no issue of her body, then I will that my said house and orchard shall be to my next of kin. **Item** I give to John Prichard my cousin of Worcester 3s. **Item** I do give unto Thomas Elcox 2s. 6d. **Item** I will and bequeath unto John Branch my brother £3 of money to be paid within half a year next after my decease, to use during his life and after his decease to remain to his six youngest children equally. **Item** I do will and give unto Rowland Branch, the son of my brother Leonard, to acknowledge my love unto him, 2s. 6d. **Item** I give to the child which my said daughter Joan goeth withal, if God permit it life, half a year after it is born, 2s. 6d. **Item** I do will and give and I do bequeath unto Elizabeth my said wife by virtue of this my will, to confirm a promise that I made unto her at our marriage, £10. **Item** I do give and bequeath

unto her my said wife more £5. **Item** I do moreover ordain, give and bequeath unto her my said wife, my funeral expenses discharged, all the rest of my goods, money and implements and rents and household stuff whatsoever unbequeathed, and I do ordain, make and appoint her my said wife Elizabeth and John Branch my said brother to be my executors of this my last will. And also I do will and ordain hereby that the said Elizabeth my wife and the said John Branch my brother shall not by any manner of means do any manner of things in the execution of this my will and true meaning without the help, consent and good agreement the one with the other, but they shall lovingly and truly proceed to all that is required by virtue hereof with all honesty without striving. **And** I do appoint, upon my love and trust which I have unto them, William Howland my neighbour and John Cotes my kinsman and Daniel Danford to be overseers, to assist and give their counsel unto my said executors in the execution of this my will. **And** I do unto this my last will and testament put my hand and seal the day and year first above written. Thomas Branch. **Witness** hereunto William Bache, John Evans, William Smith, Margaret Green, Valentine Branch.

**Memorandum** that I the said Thomas Branch do further add to this my will and testament, and it is my full mind and intent, that I do give unto my said daughter Joan more the sum of £3, and to her child if it lives 10s. **And** moreover I do hereby ordain and my will is that if my said wife Elizabeth after my decease shall marry with Edward, the son of Edward Bache and Eleanor his wife, that then all my gifts and bequests for her herein written shall be of no force, but it shall be then given to my next of kin, by the discretion of my brother John aforesaid and my overseers herein appointed. **Witness** Valentine Branch, John Prichard

Probate granted 16 June, 1635 to Elizabeth Branch widow and John Branch brother of the deceased.

**Note:** Thomas Branche was buried at Eastnor on 5 May 1635. A Judith, wife of Thomas Branche had been buried on 22 February 1628, and there is a marriage for Thomas Branche and Elizabeth Evans on 13 November 1634. There is a gap in the registers for the years 1580 to 1590, and no record of the marriage of Thomas Branch with Judith or of the baptism of their daughter Joan has been found. (Herefs. RO BO93/1).