**Thomas Benthall’s Will**

John Sharp, 02-Aug-2024

jhnshrp@gmail.com

The will of Thomas Benthall is shown in the 2 images at the end of this document. The transcription of the will is:

“In The Name of god Amen I Thomas Benthall of Northampton County being sick and weak of body but of perfect sense & Memory Blessed be god for the same do Constitute Declare and Appoint this my last Will and Testament hereby Revoking all other wills made by me heretofore. First I give and Bequeath my Soul to Almighty God & my Body to the Earth from Whence it came Desiring a Decent & Christian Like Burial, and as for my Worldly Estate [which] hath Pleased god to Endow me with I give in manner and form as followeth: viz. Item I give and Bequeath to my son John Benthall three hundred acres of Land lying in Northampton County on the Head of a Branch Call’d Dun Branch Nigh the Land of Major Peter Bowdoin to him & his Lawfull Heirs for ever.~~~

Item I give the use of My Land whereon I now Dwell by Estimation two Hundred and fourteen acres to my Loving Wife Ann Benthell during her Natural life or Widowhood [which] shall first happen, and then to my Son William Benthall for his Lawfull Heirs for ever, and for want of Such Heirs then to my son Matthew Benthall & his Lawfull Heirs for ever, and for Want of such Heirs then to my son Elias Benthall and his Lawfull Heirs for ever, and for Want of Such heirs then to my son Reuben Benthall and his Lawfull Heirs for ever.

My will and Desire is that my Loving Wife Ann Benthall have the use of all my Personal Estate During her Life or Widowhood and [?] her death or Marriage then my Will is that my Estate be Equally divided between my Loving Wife and all my children Except my two sons John and William to whom I have given my Land, and that my two said sons John & William have no part nor parcel of my Movable Estate and my Will is that my Estate may be not appraised , and my Will is that my young children remain with my Wife until Twenty one Years of Age. Furthermore, my Will and Desire is that my Loving Wife Ann Benthall and my son John Benthall be my Whole and sole Executrix and Executor of this my last Will and Testament in Witness thereof I have hereunto set my hand and [seal?] this Second day of October one Thousand seven Hundred and fourty four …

Sign’d Seal’d Deliv’d

Thomas (his mark) Benthall [L T?]

Presence of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Tho’s Marshall

Thomas Garris

Thomas Grice

[?] a Court held for Northampton County on Tuesday the 11th Day of December 1744 The Last Will and Testament of Thomas Benthall dec’d was Present’d [in? at?] Court by Ann Benthall and John Benthall his Executrix & Executor who made Oath thereto, and being Prov’d by the Oaths of Thomas Marshalls, Thomas Garris & Thomas Grice Witness thereto is Admitted to Record and upon the Motion of the said Ann and John, they Performing what [is?] usual in such Cases Certificate is granted them to obtain a Probate.

[?] in Due form

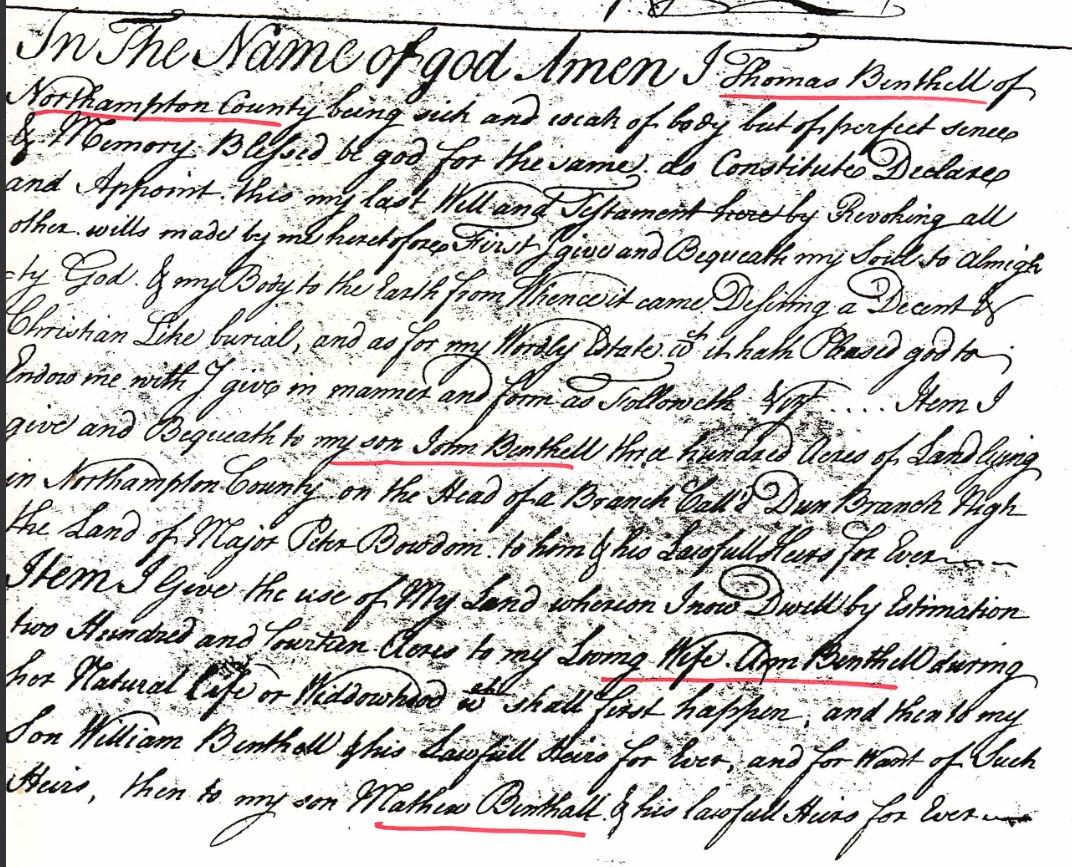
[?]

**John Sharp analysis of Thomas Benthall’s will**

From the will and the Court granting of a Certificate of Probate, we can see that Thomas died between October 2, 1744 and December 11th, 1744. It was probably closer to the October date, just thinking that it would take some time to get a Court date after a death.

Thomas mentions several sons: John, William, Matthew, Elias, and Reuben. These may be his grown sons, as later he says that he wants his younger children to stay with Ann Benthall until they reach 21 years of age.

John gets a 300 acre estate and William gets a 214 acre estate after his mother Ann dies or remarries. All the other children just get an equal division of Thomas’ “movable estate” after Ann’s death or remarriage. I haven’t found a inventory of Thomas’ movable estate yet, but if I do, I will come back and update this document.



A document with writing on it

Description automatically generated