

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE WILL OF MARY COLTON (nee Mary Burton Davis)
WIDOW and RELICT of Jacob Colton, our second generation in the
colonies, and the first generation born here, Jacob's father, JOHN
COLSON, having come from Scotland.

This will is a photographic copy of the original, and is dated 1732,
making the handwriting and the spelling something under 250 years old.
It is extremely difficult to read in places; an attorney and a friend
who is familiar with the "will" language and who has done a lot of
research in her own family wills, and I have spent a good portion of
two weeks trying to make out some of the words in Mary Colton's
will, but cannot determine what she is saying.

Please consider that at that time, illiteracy was very high, and that
the peculiarly spelled words are not necessarily typing errors, as I
have tried to give you the will just as it was written, and in this
will, the "sic" will be omitted in favor of the contents of the will.

Later on, I will try to "copy" a few samples of the handwriting so
you will better understand some of the problems in translation (?).
Also, you will have similiar-to sample of the handwriting of then.
Also, words were spelled like the writer thought they sounded, and
not necessarily correctly spelled; people also, not knowing how to
write, spell, and read, often misspelled words and mispronounced
words because somebody said it like they thought somebody else had
said it. The best example that comes to mind is from the will of
Sanders Coalson, 1765 - 1853, Trigg Co., Kentucky. In his will,
he leaves to wife "Bashabay", and if you toss that word around for
long enough, you might finally revert to his wife's name Bathsheba.
Or, maybe if you slur "Bathsheba" enough, you could come out with
BASHABAY.

But, at least, they were ahead of the game of living in that they
did have wills ---, thus probably providing us with the information
that goes back to them, and then some.

IE:

In The name of god Amen: I Mary Coltson widow and relict
of Jacob Coltson Decesed: being sick and weake of Boddy; but of
perfect minde and memmory and calling to mined the mortality of
the boddy; & that it is appointed for all flesh once to Die

Item: First and Just I recomend my soule to the hands of allmighty
god that gave it; and my boddy to be decently burryd at the
Discretion of my Exe^{tors} hereafter named: and as to ? king
such Worldly good as it hath pleased God to bless me with
Dispose of as follows - - - -

Item: I give and bequeath to my loving son William Coltson one Negro
wench Cato Cate two bedds two blankets & a rugg two sheets (?)
eight Pewter Dishies two Bafons (bassons) one Dozⁿ plats two
Dozⁿ Spoons three Iron Pottes & pott hooks one frying pan