

Otto Frederick Besse's last will

In the name of God's amen

Let all men known by these presents, that I the present village major here in Hornbach Otto Frederick Besse recognized the fragileness of the human life and, besides, I considered that all people are mortally and subjected to the temporal death, however, the hour of this would be uncertain and hidden; thus I decided to write and to describe my last will in Christian and careful consideration and how it should be held with my temporal estate after my decease occurring sooner or later. Then for these reasons I do it by these presents – praise God – being in healthy body, of sound mind and memory and of my own free will in the best form and way, as it always should, could or may happen according to the general rights and local land statutes:

and

- 1st) first I recommend my body and soul into the hand of God, the heavenly father to his groundless mercy and favor, soon*
- 2nd) if by God's will my heart-beloved wife Anna Dorothea, née Weber, was still living with my stepping up from this world, I prescribe and want that, she receives the apartment in one of mine here in the town and suburb situated houses with required room and furnishings, also bed and with accessories, then and so that she is supplied at her age, how fair and right, so that she may be able to keep somebody for her household and service, the yearly receive of the interests of ten thousand guilders under which her taught money is included, which should be taken with 500 guilders, local course, by the capital which is deposited here to lent, as well as on the bank in England, in hope that she can behave as a dear mother up to her end of life - how up to now - against the whole children and from that what leave to her arrangement she will do no advantage, but what remains to her, she will allow to approach to the children.*
- 3rd) Because the insertion of a heritage is the foundation of a testament, I make following my dear children and the grandson who live even today, to my true and undoubted heirs, namely Jean George, mine of my late daughter Maria Elisabetha with the priest Erb created child, called Maria Elisabetha and respectively grandson, Henrich Daniel, Catharina Elisabetha, Maria Susanna, Maria Sophia, Philipp Friederich, Henrich Philipp und Henrietta Dorothea, all still single, and in such a way that to my mentioned children, sons and daughters the least one should not be charged and be drawn off from her heritage serving, has received neither the study costs, nor what one or other for learning of the manners or languages with and after my life and what has cost this and also will still cost. Rather her whole inheritance should be divided to them. Provided that my aforementioned granddaughter Maria Elisabetha is still alive after my death, she should likewise inherit the whole hereditary interest, however, with the condition that her father should never administer about that point himself. Reason is the duty oblivion shown against me, which I do not want to mention, nevertheless, after her circumference and gravity because of Christian love here. At this place a loyal guardian should be ordered about that which itself should administered on the best the inheritance. It should be delivered to my meant granddaughter when she is old enough and met a decent marriage with satisfaction of my family. If this should not be obeyed*

obediently, it should be disinherited up to the legal portion, however, honorabili heredis Institutionis titulo¹, however, herewith should be prescribed expressly that - if God it has intended thus - my grandson would pass away sooner or later without leaving lawful legitimate heirs, should her inheritance which it should receive by this testament fall back not on her father, but on me and them my family. It should be only authorized to let formulate a testament, Codicill, Legatum, Donation or other common last will in favor of own lawful legitimate heirs.

- 4th) I order to all my children that they should hold her mother for life in proper honor. They should be very submissive to her. Without her advice none of the children should be authorized to marry or also what concerns the younger ones, without consensus of the older brothers and sisters*
- 5th) None of them should have differently the power about the approaching inheritance to him, than in favor of lawful legitimate heirs or if none exists, they may dispose at most in favor of a spouse, however, not over the legal portion and by consent of the remaining brothers and sisters, however, all remaining one should fall back any time either on my wife living about even then or on my remaining children.*
- So that now my testament which was written after ripe consideration and from touching causes in all parts may be execute, I want to request pressing and subservient the high land authorities, to pay mercifully attention on the execution; to the document and certitude I have written my preceding fatherly last will single handedly and have sealed. Hornbach 4th June 1756*

Pro Copia Weber Commissarius

(L. S.) Otto Frederick Besse

(Origin: Land archives Speyer F 20 No. 64)

¹ *honorabilis, honorably' (Georges, Bd. 1, S. 3072), heredis institutio ,Installation of a person as successors' (Benke/Meissel S. 144), titulus ,Legal argument, i.e. of one disposal justifying reason' (Benke/Meissel S. 346); here probably: by the honorable naming as successors.*