
Reconsidering the Immigration Story of President Woodrow Wilson's Paternal Grandparents

By Erick Montgomery

Accounts of James Wilson and his wife specify different origins in the North of Ireland, imply varying dates, and disagree on other details. Which facts hold up to today's standards?

Successive biographers refine and reinterpret American presidential histories. They may repeat incorrect information, including ancestry, without revisiting documentation, using today's research technologies, or applying modern genealogy standards. This was the case with stories of President Woodrow Wilson's paternal ancestry.

The president's grandfather, James Wilson of Steubenville, Ohio, was born on 20 February 1787 and died on 17 October 1850.¹ He was a newspaper publisher, Whig politician, successful businessman, and abolitionist.² His wife, Ann (Adams) Wilson, born on 29 December 1791, died at her daughter Elizabeth Begges's home in Cleveland, Ohio, on 6 September 1863.³

TRADITIONAL REPORTS

Accounts of James Wilson and his wife specify conflicting origins in the North of Ireland, imply varying dates, and disagree on other details. Sources include

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1. Union Cemetery (Steubenville, Ohio), James and Ann A. Wilson gravestone; photograph by author, 2004; author's files. Also, "Sudden Demise," *Steubenville Weekly Herald*, Steubenville, Ohio, 23 October 1850, page 2, col. 2. Also, 1850 U.S. census, Jefferson Co., Ohio, population schedule, Steubenville, p. 53, dwelling 774, family 813, James Wilson household; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm M432, roll 699.

2. Osman Castle Hooper, "James Wilson's Western Herald," in *History of Ohio Journalism 1793–1933* (Columbus: Spahr and Glenn, 1933), 46–50. Also, Francis P. Weisenburger, "The Middle Western Antecedents of Woodrow Wilson," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 23 (December 1936): 375–90. Also, "The Leaders of the Federal Abolition Convention," *Ohio Statesman*, Columbus, 24 February 1840, page 3, col. 4.

3. Union Cemetery, James and Ann A. Wilson gravestone. Also, *Steubenville Daily Herald*, Steubenville, Ohio, 7 September 1863, page 3, col. 1. Also, 1860 U.S. census, Cuyahoga Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Cleveland, Ward 4, p. 545, dwell. 1379, fam. 1399, Adam J. Biggs [Begges] household; NARA microfilm M653, roll 952.

Wilson family lore, biographies published as Wilson's popularity increased, and Irish newspapers and politicians.

WILSON FAMILY LORE

President Wilson heard few family stories from anyone besides his parents. His immediate family—the only part of the clan to move South before the Civil War—aligned with the Confederacy. Joseph Ruggles Wilson, Woodrow's father, split with his siblings, nephews, and nieces.⁴ The future president's paternal grandfather died almost six years before Woodrow's birth, and his paternal grandmother died in distant Ohio when he was six years old.

Letters reveal President Wilson's ignorance of family lore. In 1909 his cousin Mary (Larimore) Fenn replied to an inquiry from Wilson about family history:

If in your searches you learn anything concerning our Wilson name I would thank you very much if you would share it with me. If Aunt Lizzie [Elizabeth (Wilson) Begges] were living we could doubtless get something from her. – Why did we not think of it sooner? I have often wondered what grandmother Wilson's maiden name was. I remember that she came – with her parents of course – from Ireland when she was nine years old. – I think this is not a legend. – Should I in any way learn anything of our early history it shall immediately be yours.⁵

Mary also offered to consult mutual cousins in Cleveland, Annie (Begges) Hickox and Emma (Wilson) Leach. Emma had letters from their grandfather, James Wilson.⁶

Perhaps Emma knew more than others about the family: "If Mrs. Wilson [the president's wife] wishes any information about our now distinguished family, I have Grandma Wilson's family Bible for reference."⁷ Today that Bible is lost.⁸ Derivative family records, however, preserve names and birth dates of James and Ann Wilson's children.⁹

4. "Gov. Woodrow Wilson As His Biographer Knows Him," *New York Times*, 28 July 1912, magazine section, part five, page 2, cols. 1–7.

5. Mary (Larimore) Fenn to Woodrow Wilson, letter, 10 February 1909; series 2: Family and General correspondence, 1786–1924, chronologically arranged; Woodrow Wilson Papers, 1786–1957; Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (LOC), Washington, D.C.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Emma (Wilson) Leach to Woodrow Wilson, letter, 9 November 1912; series 2, Woodrow Wilson Papers, LOC.

8. Mrs. Leach had one child, who had no children. Contact author for documentation. The Bible has not been found in likely collections: Woodrow Wilson Papers, LOC; Woodrow Wilson Collection, Mudd Library, Princeton University; Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum, Staunton, Va.; The Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson, Augusta, Ga.; The Woodrow Wilson Family Home, Columbia, S.C.; and The Woodrow Wilson House, Washington, D.C.

9. John Adams Wilson and Ida Gordon Wilson, Wilson-Adams family chart, privately held; digital photographs, author's collection.

Woodrow Wilson met his first cousin John Adams Wilson, a Franklin, Pennsylvania, oilman, when they were adults.¹⁰ During about 1912–18 John and his wife, Ida, compiled charts on Wilsons, Adamses, and other family branches. Their charts say James Wilson was born in the “North of Ireland,” but not which county, and that his mother, Margaret, was born in Ireland and died in Steubenville, Ohio, about 1824–30. The charts also name siblings of the president’s grandmother, Ann (Adams) Wilson, and identify her parents as David and Mary. Suggesting the Adamses immigrated in 1794–96, the charts say “Annie Adams came to Phila when about 3½ years old.”¹¹

Ida passed down her handwritten genealogical scrapbook begun about 1908.¹² She wrote that James and Ann (Adams) Wilson were born in county Down, Ireland, and married in 1808 in Philadelphia at “1st Presbyterian Church.” In 1914 John told a journalist about the emigration:

[The president’s grandfather] never talked much about his family in Ireland. . . . [The president’s] ancestors came from County Down and his grandfather, the first of the immediate family to go to America, was a printer in that country. This ancestor left there for America early in the nineteenth century and established a newspaper at Steubenville, Ohio. The trouble of 1798 led to large emigration from the North of Ireland in that period.¹³

Born a year after his grandfather’s death, John conveyed secondhand information. Likely it came from his grandmother, who died when John was twelve, or his father.¹⁴

BIOGRAPHIES

An early biographical sketch of Woodrow Wilson appeared in 1895, while he was a professor at the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. It says his paternal grandfather was a native of county Down and his paternal grandmother, “Anne,” came from Londonderry.¹⁵

10. Arthur S. Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, 69 vols. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966–94), 8:427–28, citing John Adams Wilson to Woodrow Wilson, letter, 17 January 1894. Also, Barr Ferree, ed., *Year Book of The Pennsylvania Society 1924–1925* (New York: the society, 1925), 98–99, sketch of John Adams Wilson.

11. Wilson and Wilson, Wilson-Adams family chart, privately held.

12. *Family Genealogy and History*, blank book (no publisher or date); collection of Theresa Wilson Calascibetta, Glendale, Ariz.; photocopy, author’s files.

13. Harry Wilson Walker, *The Ancestors of Woodrow Wilson* (New York: M. B. Brown, 1914), 2.

14. For John’s birth, on 5 June 1851, see *FindAGrave* (www.findagrave.com), memorial 42926448, for “Terri,” digital image of The Franklin Cemetery (Franklin, Pa.), John A. Wilson and Ida Gordon Wilson gravestone.

15. John Bell Henneman, “The Work of a Southern Scholar,” *Sewanee Review* 3 (February 1895): 172–88. Mrs. Wilson’s name appears in most records as *Ann*. Other recorded variants include *Anna*, *Anne*, *Annie*, *Agnes*, and *Nancy*.

William Bayard Hale wrote Wilson's first comprehensive biography. Published serially in 1911, when Wilson was New Jersey's governor and a potential presidential candidate, it was converted into a single volume a year later.¹⁶ It says James Wilson and Ann Adams emigrated on the same ship from Ireland in 1807 and settled in Philadelphia. There James apprenticed with William Duane, printer of the *Aurora*, a newspaper established by Benjamin Franklin's grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache. On 1 November 1808 James and Ann married at Philadelphia's Fourth Presbyterian Church. Hale also wrote:

To her latest days she [Ann] used to love to talk of their North of Ireland home, from which she said they could see the white linen flying on the line in Scotland; so she must have been a County Down or a County Antrim lass.¹⁷

In July 1912 Hale told *The New York Times* about his sources for the president's ancestors: "I had to go into extensive correspondence, gathering a fact here and another there, until we had the material with which to reconstruct the ancestral history."¹⁸ If the correspondence survives, its location is unknown.¹⁹

Subsequent biographers adopted Hale's immigration story, occasionally adding details. In 1919 a slightly different version appeared:

The Wilson family had been one of pioneers and their early history dated back to the time when James Wilson, an Irish immigrant boy, landed at the port of New York, shortly before the end of the eighteenth century, seeking a place in the new world. James Wilson proceeded to Philadelphia, where he entered the employ of William Duane, a newspaper publisher. There it was [that] he learned to set type by the old hand method and there he met Anne Adams, a young Irish girl who had come over on the same ship with him.²⁰

Following the president's wishes, his widow asked Ray Stannard Baker to write Wilson's official biography. Baker's voluminous papers show he had access

16. William Bayard Hale, "Woodrow Wilson—A Biography," *The World's Work* 22 (October 1911): 14,940–53; 23 (November 1911): 64–77; 23 (December 1911): 229–35; 23 (January 1912): 297–310; 23 (February 1912), 466–72; and 23 (March 1912): 522–34. Also, William Bayard Hale, *Woodrow Wilson: The Story of His Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page, 1912), 3–7.

17. Hale, *Woodrow Wilson: The Story of His Life*, 7. Hale does not specify this statement's source.

18. "Gov. Woodrow Wilson As His Biographer Knows Him," *New York Times*, 28 July 1912, magazine section, part five, page 2, cols. 1–7.

19. William Bayard Hale's papers at Yale University (Sterling Memorial Library MS 814) do not include materials gathered for his 1911–12 biography of Wilson. Searches of *WorldCat* and HOLLIS (the library catalog of Harvard University, Hale's alma mater) produced negative results for Hale collections.

20. William Dunseath Eaton and Harry C. Read, *Woodrow Wilson: His Life and Work* (Atlanta: R. L. Phillips, 1919), 23.

to Wilson's papers, friends, relatives, and associates.²¹ Baker quoted a 1913 letter, where the president wrote "My father's father . . . had no brothers on this side of the water. The family came from the neighbourhood, I have understood, of Londonderry." Baker wrote that James had come to America as an only child with his mother.²²

IRISH CLAIMS

Irish newspapers claimed James Wilson's origin in two counties. In November 1912, shortly after Wilson's election, *The Irish Times* reported "Dr. Wilson's grandfather emigrated to the United States from County Tyrone."²³ On 4 March 1913, Wilson's inauguration day, *The Belfast Telegraph* asserted "President Wilson's grandfather was a County Down man."²⁴ Three days later, *The Irish Times* quoted an unidentified "well-known authority on genealogy in Tyrone" saying "Dr. Wilson's grandfather emigrated from Strabane in the year 1787." Besides implying James came as an infant, *The Irish Times* says he was a printer with "Dunlop" and together they published the *Aurora* in Philadelphia. It adds that Anne Adams came from Sion Mills, not far from Strabane, in county Tyrone.²⁵

Errors in these accounts cloud their claims. The "well-known authority" likely confused William Duane, the *Aurora* printer, with John Dunlap, a ten-year-old Strabane native who immigrated to the American colonies in 1757. On 4 July 1776 Dunlap printed the first broadside of the Declaration of Independence, making him, still today, a favorite son in county Tyrone.²⁶

Reinforcing the idea that James Wilson came from Tyrone, rather than Down, the chairman of the Strabane Urban Council cabled President Wilson, "Strabane sends heartiest congratulations, and is justly proud of a descendant of one of her citizens." President Wilson's acting secretary of state replied

21. Woodrow Wilson File, 1836–1941, 54 boxes on 36 microfilm rolls; Ray Stannard Baker papers 1836–1947, mss 11593; Manuscript Division, LOC.

22. Woodrow Wilson to Mrs. George H. Bosworth, letter, 30 September 1913; quoted in Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters*, 8 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1927–39), 1:6–7.

23. "Ulster-Scot President," *Irish Times*, Dublin, Ireland, 16 November 1912, page 6, col. 1. Other papers were more circumspect. See, for example, "The New President," *Belfast Newsletter*, 7 November 1912, page 7, col. 4. It reported "Dr. Woodrow Wilson belongs to a North of Ireland family, his grandfather having emigrated at the beginning of the last century."

24. "Descendant of Co. Down Man Made USA President," *Belfast Telegraph*, 4 March 1913, page 3, cols. 2–4.

25. "New President of the United States: His Connection with County Tyrone," *Irish Times*, 7 March 1913, page 8, col. 6.

26. John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, eds., *American National Biography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7:87–89, s.v. "Dunlap, John." Also, Joseph Jackson, *Market Street, Philadelphia: The Most Historic Highway in America; Its Merchants and Its Story* (Philadelphia: Joseph F. A. Jackson, 1918), 54.

noncommittally: “The President directs me to express to you his high personal appreciation of the kind congratulations from Strabane.”²⁷

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE MEETING MODERN STANDARDS

Biographers say the president’s grandfather, James Wilson, came from Ireland in 1807 with his mother.²⁸ Does this assertion hold up to today’s standards?²⁹

JAMES WILSON

Immigration and Naturalization

Soon after James Wilson began work in Steubenville he published an introductory letter from his Philadelphia employer. William Duane made James foreman by 1810 and gave him the *Aurora*’s control in 1813.³⁰ On 28 March 1815 Duane noted having worked with James for “nearly 18 years.”³¹ The next year Duane wrote he had known James “even from his childhood.”³² These comments date their relationship to 1797, when James was about ten. Duane returned to America from Ireland in 1796.³³ He likely met James the following summer in America.

In 1816, a year after settling at Steubenville, James was elected to the Ohio legislature.³⁴ Since eligibility required citizenship, James was naturalized

27. “Ulster: Strabane and United States President,” *Irish Times*, 22 March 1913, page 9, col. 6. Also, “President Wilson’s Cablegram to Strabane,” *Irish Times*, 9 April 1913, page 8, col. 8.

28. Baker, *Woodrow Wilson*, 1:6. Also, Hale, *Woodrow Wilson: The Story of His Life*, 3–8. Also, Josephus Daniels, *The Life of Woodrow Wilson, 1856–1924* (Chicago: Johnston, 1924), 28–29. Also, William Allen White, *Woodrow Wilson: The Man, His Times and His Task* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), 5. Also, Henry Wilkinson Bragdon, *Woodrow Wilson: The Academic Years* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1967), 3–4. Also, George C. Osborn, *Woodrow Wilson: The Early Years* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 3–4. Also, August Heckscher, *Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Collier, 1991), 4–6. Also, A. Scott Berg, *Wilson* (New York: Putnam, 2013), 28–29.

29. Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards* (Nashville, Tenn.: Ancestry.com, 2014).

30. *Democratic Press*, Philadelphia, 25 September 1810, page 2, col. 1. James’s name began appearing as the printer in Philadelphia’s *Weekly Aurora* by 11 May 1813, page 1, col. 1. For context on Duane and the *Aurora*, see Nigel Ken Little, “Transoceanic Radical: The Many Identities of William Duane” (Ph.D. dissertation, Murdock University, 2003), 265–66. Also, Garraty and Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, 1:821–22, s.v. “Bache, Benjamin Franklin”; 6:934–35, s.v. “Duane, Margaret Hartman Markoe Bache”; and 6:935–37, s.v. “Duane, William.”

31. *Western Herald*, Steubenville, Ohio, 20 April 1815, page 1, cols. 1–2, transcription of letter, 28 March 1815.

32. *Weekly Aurora*, 1 October 1816, page 273, col. 3.

33. William John Duane, *Biographical Memoir of William J. Duane* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen, and Haffelfinger, 1868), 4.

34. Hooper, *History of Ohio Journalism 1793–1933*, 47.

between 20 February 1808, when he turned twenty-one, and 1816, when he first held public office.³⁵

Three James Wilsons were naturalized in Philadelphia between 1808 and 1816.³⁶ Two handwriting experts compared the applicants' signatures with those on ten letters from the Steubenville newspaper publisher.³⁷ They agree that the letter-writer signed a naturalization petition on 21 September 1808.³⁸

Naturalized seven months after his twenty-first birthday, James said he had lived in the United States more than six years and in Pennsylvania more than two.³⁹ He had therefore arrived in America before 1802, consistent with Duane's 1815 statement that he had known James for almost eighteen years.

A later Philadelphia naturalization record may explain misstatements regarding James's immigration and origin. On 16 January 1811 another James Wilson filed his declaration of intention in Philadelphia. He said he "migrated from Londonderry to the United States, and arrived at the Port of New York on or about the Twenty sixth Day of June A.D. 1807" and that he was born in County Tyrone on or about 4 November 1784. His birth date, handwriting, and signature differ from those of President Wilson's grandfather.⁴⁰

35. Constitution of the State of Ohio, 1802, article 1, section 4, transcription, *Ohio Fundamental Documents* (<http://ww2.ohiohistory.org/onlinedoc/ohgovernment/constitution/cnst1802.html>).

36. P. William Filby, ed., *Philadelphia Naturalization Records: An Index to Records of Aliens' Declarations of Intention and/or Oaths of Allegiance, 1789–1880* (Detroit: Gale, 1982), 696–97. Also, James Wilson, petitions for naturalization, 21 September 1808 and 16 January 1811; series 21.18, Petitions for Naturalization, 1800–1897, 1914–1930; record group (RG) 21, Quarter Sessions Court records; Philadelphia City Archives (PCA). Also, James Wilson, petition for naturalization, 19 January 1814; carton 3, container 6-1147; series 33.75, Naturalization Papers, 1794–1819, 1821–1868; RG 33, Records of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania: Eastern District; Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg.

37. James Wilson to Ethan Allen Brown, letter, 4 March 1819; folder 7, box 1; MSS 290, Ethan Allen Brown Papers, 1806–1845; Ohio Historical Society (OHS), Columbus. Also, *ibid.*, 7 December 1822; folder 1, box 3. Also, *ibid.*, 15 February 1825; folder 7, box 3. Also, James Wilson to Thomas Worthington, letter, 22 December 1819; folder 5, box 9; MSS 289, Thomas Worthington Papers, 1731–1908, OHS. Also, James Wilson to William D. Gallagher, letter, 1 October 1840; VFM 1310, William D. Gallagher Papers, 1840–1856; OHS. Also, James Wilson to Elisha Whittlesey, letters, 22 March 1834, 23 February 1841, 20 March 1841, 6 May 1841, and 2 May 1843; folder Williamson–Wing, box 40; series I, Letters Received by Elisha Whittlesey; Ms. 1200, Elisha Whittlesey Papers; Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland.

38. Sandra J. Boling (Senior Archivist, Reference Services; Georgia Department of Archives and History, Morrow) to author, letter, 29 September 2007; author's files. Also, Eileen M. Page (Scituate, Mass.; Life Member and Proficiency Recognition Certificate, World Association of Document Examiners) to author, letter, 19 February 2008; author's files.

39. James Wilson, petition for naturalization, 21 September 1808, series 21.18, RG 21, PCA.

40. James Wilson, declaration of intention, 16 January 1811, series 21.17, RG 21, PCA.

Philadelphia Residency and Marriage

At Philadelphia's Fourth Presbyterian Church James Wilson "of this city" and "Anna" Adams "of Delaware county" married on 1 November 1808.⁴¹ Pennsylvania has no civil marriage records for that period, but a newspaper corroborates:

Married, last Tuesday morning by the Rev. Mr. Potts, Mr. James Wilson, Printer, of this city, to Miss Ann Adams, eldest daughter of Mr. John Adams of Ridley township, Delaware county.⁴²

James Wilson, printer, lived at various Philadelphia addresses from 1806 through 1815. The 1806 listing shows he lived in Philadelphia a year earlier than Wilson's biographers say James immigrated. In 1814 he appears as the Aurora's publisher.⁴³

James's Mother

In April 1815 James acquired and began publishing a Steubenville, Ohio, newspaper.⁴⁴ In May 1820 it carried his mother's death notice:

Departed this life, on Wednesday night, the 17th inst. Mrs. Margaretta Wilson, mother of the Editor of this Paper, in the 63rd year of her age. In consequence of the above melancholy event, no paper was issued from this office last week. The outside of this paper having been printed last week, for the purpose of being issued on Saturday the 20th is dated for that day.⁴⁵

"In the 63rd year of her age" (thus age sixty-two), James Wilson's mother was born in 1757–58. The paper's one-week publication hiatus implies she lived and died in or near Steubenville.

41. Fourth Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia), Marriages, 1800–1835, chronologically arranged, Wilson-Adams, 1 November 1808; Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS), Philadelphia; microfilm 558,299, Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City.

42. *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, 3 November 1808, page 3, col. 3.

43. *The Philadelphia Directory for 1806* (Philadelphia: James Robinson, 1806), and *ibid.*, 1807, alphabetically arranged, James Wilson. Also, *ibid.*, 1809, 315; and *ibid.*, 1810, 307. Also, *Census Directory for 1811* (Philadelphia: Jane Aitken, 1811), 355. Also, James Robinson, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1811* (Philadelphia: Woodhouse, 1811), 353. Also, John A. Paxton, *The Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1813* (Philadelphia: B. and T. Kite, 1813); and *Kite's Philadelphia Directory for 1814* (Philadelphia: B. and T. Kite, 1814); alphabetical, James Wilson. No listing for James was found for 1808. See *The Philadelphia Directory for 1808* (Philadelphia: James Robinson, 1808), alphabetical, Wilson listings. Apparently no Philadelphia directory was created for 1812.

44. Joseph B. Doyle, *20th Century History of Steubenville and Jefferson County, Ohio and Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Richmond-Arnold, 1910), 306–12.

45. *Western Herald and Steubenville Gazette*, Steubenville, dated 20 May 1820 and issued 27 May 1820, page 2, col. 2.

If James and Margaretta were in Philadelphia in 1800, they lived in someone else's household. James's mother headed neither of two Margaret Wilson households in Philadelphia in 1800:

- One Margaret, age sixteen to twenty-five, was too young for James's mother.⁴⁶ She likely was the shopkeeper living at 46 South Second Street.⁴⁷
- The other Margaret's household did not include a male under sixteen, when James was thirteen.⁴⁸ She likely was the "gentlewoman" at 224 Third Street.⁴⁹ She lived at various addresses through 1821, after James's mother had died in Ohio.⁵⁰

In 1810, two years after he married, James headed a Philadelphia household that included a female over forty-five, likely his mother.⁵¹ Otherwise, she may have headed her own household. Three Margaret Wilson households in Philadelphia can be eliminated, however:

- Margaret Wilson of West Southwark headed a free non-white household.⁵²
- Another Margaret Wilson of West Southwark likely was the gentlewoman in Philadelphia through 1821, after the president's great-grandmother's death in Ohio.⁵³
- "Margret" Wilson appears in Philadelphia's Chestnut Ward, immediately before William J. Duane and William Bache, son and stepson of William

46. 1800 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, New Market Ward, p. 251, Margaret Wilson (earlier entry); NARA microfilm M32, roll 43.

47. Cornelius William Stafford, *Philadelphia Directory for 1800* (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1800), 137.

48. 1800 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, New Market Ward, p. 251, Margaret Wilson (later entry).

49. Ibid.

50. See, for Margaret Wilson or Mrs. Wilson, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1801* (Philadelphia: Cornelius William Stafford, 1801), 101. Also, *The Philadelphia Directory, City and County Register for 1802* (Philadelphia: James Robinson, 1802), 263. Also, *ibid.*, 1803 (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1803), 276. Also, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1804* (Philadelphia: James Robinson, 1804), 256. Also, *ibid.*, 1805; *ibid.*, 1806; *ibid.*, 1807; *ibid.*, 1808; and *ibid.*, 1809; alphabetical. Also, *ibid.*, 1810, 308. Also, *Census Directory for 1811*, 355. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1813*, *Kite's Philadelphia Directory for 1814*, and *The Philadelphia Directory for 1816* (Philadelphia: James Robinson, 1816), alphabetical. Also, *Robinson's Original Annual Directory for 1817* (Philadelphia: Robinson, 1817), 473. Also, John Adems Paxton, *The Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1818* (Philadelphia: E. and R. Parker, 1818); and *ibid.*, 1819 (Philadelphia: John Adems Paxton, 1819); alphabetical. Also, Edward Whitely, *The Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1820* (Philadelphia: McCarty and Davis, 1820); and *ibid.*, 1821; alphabetical.

51. 1810 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, New Market Ward, p. 689, James Wilson household; NARA microfilm M252, roll 55.

52. *Ibid.*, West Southwark, p. 779, Margaret Wilson household.

53. *Ibid.*, West Southwark, p. 808, Margaret Wilson household.

Duane, James Wilson's employer. Duane's entry was inserted late, at the end of the enumeration.⁵⁴ Also, Margaret's address was not contiguous with those of Duane or Bache. The only Margaret Wilson with a Chestnut Ward address in 1810 lived on Letitia Court. Bache lived at Franklin Court and Duane lived at 98 High or 77 South Eleventh.⁵⁵ A "tailoress" through at least 1821, this Margaret was not James Wilson's mother.⁵⁶

Margaret Wilson of Locust Ward, over age forty-five, headed an 1810 household with a man between twenty-six and forty-four and others.⁵⁷ She likely was Margaret Wilson, "gentlewoman" and widow, perhaps James's mother.⁵⁸ More likely, however, his mother was the older woman in James's 1810 household.

No source suggests James's father came to America. He could have immigrated but, if so, he died without naturalizing—had James's father become a citizen, James would not have needed to naturalize separately. James's father may have died in Ireland before Margaretta and James left.

ANN ADAMS'S FAMILY

The newspaper account of James Wilson's marriage identifies the bride as "Miss Ann Adams, eldest daughter of Mr. John Adams of Ridley township, Delaware county."⁵⁹ John and Ida Wilson's chart, however, identifies her father as David Adams, born in Ireland. It also names his wife Mary, born in Scotland, and their children Margaret, Martha, Ann (married James Wilson), Jane (married Dr. Martin Barr), William (married Marion Yorke), and Mary (married James P. Smith).⁶⁰

John Adams's family was closely associated with the church where Ann Adams married James Wilson. From 1800 through 1808 John and Mary Adams had five children baptized there, including three on John and Ida Wilson's

54. 1810 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, Chestnut Ward, p. 487, Margret Wilson, Wm J Duane, and Will^m. Bache households. Someone added Robert Patton and Wm J. Duane and altered the totals at the bottom of the page. In any case, adjacent census entries often do not reflect physical proximity, and interlining at an enumeration's end makes proximity even less likely.

55. *Philadelphia Directory for 1810*, 23 (Bache), 86 (Duane), and 308 (Wilson).

56. *Ibid.*, 308. Also, for Margaret Wilson or Mrs. Wilson, see *Census Directory for 1811*, 355. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1813*, *Kite's Philadelphia Directory for 1814*, and *Philadelphia Directory for 1816*, alphabetical. Also, *Robinson's Original Annual Directory for 1817*, 473. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1818*; and *ibid.*, 1819; alphabetical. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1820*; and *ibid.*, 1821; alphabetical.

57. 1810 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Locust Ward, p. 585, Margaret Wilson household.

58. *Philadelphia Directory for 1810*, 308; and *ibid.*, 1811, 354.

59. *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, 3 November 1808, page 3, col. 3.

60. Wilson and Wilson, Wilson-Adams family chart, privately held.

chart.⁶¹ From 1810 through 1814 James and Ann (Adams) Wilson's three eldest children were baptized there.⁶²

Baptisms of three of John and Mary's children—likely their eldest, born before their sister Elizabeth in 1798—were not recorded at Fourth Presbyterian Church. The Adamases do not appear in records of other Presbyterian churches in Philadelphia.⁶³ Thus, the Adamases' elder daughters, including Ann, likely were baptized in Ireland.

Five John Adams households appear in Philadelphia and Delaware counties in 1800. John and Mary's family composition matches only one. They lived in western Northern Liberties, a township in Philadelphia County.⁶⁴

61. Fourth Presbyterian Church, Baptisms, 1800–1819, chronologically arranged, for Elizabeth Adams (b. 4 August 1798), 12 October 1800; Joseph Adams (b. 25 July 1800), 12 October 1800; Mary Adams (b. 28 December 1802), 14 April 1803; William Adams (b. 24 April 1805), 9 June 1806; and Margaretta Adams (b. 4 August 1808), 12 September 1808; PHS; FHL microfilm 558,299.

62. *Ibid.*, William Duane Wilson (b. 21 September 1809), 2 March 1810; Mary Jane Wilson (b. 3 October 1811), 7 February 1812; and Robert Crawford Wilson (b. 4 September 1813), 25 Aug 1814.

63. The author examined the following records: First Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia), Baptisms 1793–1806, Communicants 1802–1807, Marriages 1760–1803, and Baptisms 1760–1792; PHS; FHL microfilm 468,374, item 4. Also, *ibid.*, Session Minutes 1807–1830, Communicants pre-1806–1830, Members Received 1806–1823, Deaths 1828–1829, Incorporation 1796, Dismissals 1818–1820, and Communicants 1810–1811; PHS; FHL microfilm 505,535, item 2. Also, *ibid.*, Pew Books 1798–1801, 1806–1808, and 1811–1816; and Pew Receipts 1803–1805; PHS; FHL microfilm 505,533, items 1–6. Also, Second Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia), Baptisms 1769–1870, Marriages 1768–1865, Burials 1782–1833 and 1879, Pastors, Church Officials, Communicants; PHS; FHL microfilm 973,460, items 1–6. Also, *ibid.*, Session Minutes 1744–1841; PHS; FHL microfilm 505,469. Also, *ibid.*, Congregational and Corporation Minutes 1772–1805 and 1810–1830; PHS; FHL microfilm 505,494. Also, *ibid.*, Burials, Arch St. Cemetery 1782–1821, and Miscellaneous Papers 1790–1914, Disinterments, Arch and Noble St. 1851–1909, Interments, Arch and Noble St. 1784–1856; PHS; FHL microfilm 504,291. Also, Third Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia) also known as Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church, Marriages, Baptisms, Communicants 1768–1839; PHS; FHL microfilm 901,398, items 1–2. Also, *ibid.*, Pew Rents Records Index 1797–1814; PHS; FHL microfilm 901,397, item 2. Also, Scots Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia), Minutes 1779–1899, and Session Minutes 1782–1822 and 1768–1791; PHS; FHL microfilm 504,371.

64. 1800 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., West Northern Liberties, p. 166, John Adams household; NARA microfilm M32, roll 42. None of the twelve households enumerated before and after John Adams—those for Conrad Wyland, Tho^r Jones, Jonathⁿ Willian [sic] Es^a, W^m Adams, Peter Grove, Jacob Wheeler, John Adams, Peter Price, Harmon Lake, John Myer, Moses Blackman, George Grogg, and Justace Black—appear in *Philadelphia Directory for 1800*, likely because those households were outside the city. At page 12 the directory lists two John Adamases, in the city, the United States president and a grocer living above Vine in North Water Street.

Mount Pleasant

In 1815 Ann (Adams) Wilson's sister Jane, "daughter of William [John] Adams of Mount Pleasant near Philadelphia" married Martin Barr.⁶⁵ In the late 1700s and early 1800s Jonathan Williams owned Mount Pleasant, an estate overlooking the Schuylkill River. In 1800 Jonathan appears four households before John Adams in western Northern Liberties.⁶⁶

On 2 January 1798 Williams and "John Adams, Yeoman," signed an agreement for Adams "to cultivate the said farm, called mount Pleasant . . . under the direction & with the approbation of the said Williams, whose orders in all matters related to the farm shall be obeyed by the said Adams without hesitation or delay." The four-page contract permitted Adams to live in a pavilion near the house for one year starting 1 March 1798, unless they mutually agreed to extend the agreement. Adams was to find his own firewood, repair fences, fence off a garden for the landlord's and tenant's families, furnish vegetables to the family in the mansion house, and procure laborers to cultivate and harvest crops.⁶⁷ The relationship between Williams and John Adams continued.⁶⁸ On 17 March 1800 Adams wrote Williams from Mount Pleasant:

Dear sir I recieved your leter Dated the 8 of Febuary And I ame sorry that I did not rit you Answer swoner But I hope Your Honour will not be Disabldged at Me For not riting soner_r your rote to Me About pruning the Apell treas which I pruent them About A week After you rot Me_r the ise house I filled up the second time as well as posabell."⁶⁹

Adams also discussed putting pork in Williams's smoke house, taking "great care" of the "Big house," a stove in his garret, the quarry, the poor quality of the stone he worked, and not encroaching on off-limits ground.⁷⁰

Likely by 4 March 1802 Adams was no longer associated with Mount Pleasant. Williams's wife wrote she had leased the pavilion and two orchards

65. J. M. McCarter and B. F. Jackson eds., *Encyclopedia of Delaware: Historical and Biographical* (Wilmington: Aldine, 1882), 540–41. Also, "Barr Family Bible," transcription of the family Bible, published in 1793, of John and Elizabeth Barr (Martin's parents); and "Barr Bible," transcription of the family Bible, published in 1811, of Martin and Jane Barr; in Barr Family History Folder; Delaware Historical Society, Wilmington.

66. 1800 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., West Northern Liberties, p. 166, "Jonath" William [sic] Es" household.

67. Jonathan Williams to John Adams, articles of agreement, 2 January 1798; Williams, Jonathan mss.; Lilly Library Manuscript Collections; Indiana University, Bloomington.

68. *Ibid.*, John Adams to Jonathan Williams, bond, 17 May 1799.

69. *Ibid.*, John Adams to Jonathan Williams, letter, 17 March 1800.

70. *Ibid.*

by the lane.⁷¹ In April 1802 Williams once again advertised Mount Pleasant for lease or sale.⁷²

John Adams's Naturalization

John became a citizen on 11 October 1802. The petitioner's signature matches those on John's agreements with Jonathan Williams. Born in Ireland, Adams had lived more than five years in the United States and more than two in Philadelphia.⁷³ Thus, he immigrated in 1797 or before, when his daughter Ann was about five or younger.

Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Between 1802 and 1805 John had moved to Ridley Township, Delaware County, ten to fifteen miles west of Philadelphia's Fourth Presbyterian Church. In 1805, 1808, 1810, and 1811 he paid tax on 165 acres (by 1808 reduced to 135 acres), livestock, and buildings.⁷⁴ His 1810 household contained fifteen people, suggesting boarders, relatives, employees, or a combination lived with the Adamases.⁷⁵

Three Delaware County lawsuits give a glimpse of John's activities:

- In October 1807 Isaac Culin alleged that John Adams, Alexander Wier, John Anderson, and Robert McMullen, all Delaware County yeomen, took Cullin's shallop "with force of arms."⁷⁶
- In April 1809 John Adams brought an ejectment case against George Budd, who occupied nearly fifteen acres in Tinicum Township.⁷⁷
- That same month John brought another ejectment case, this time against Jacob Rothwell, Nathaniel Vernon, and John Clawges, alleged occupiers of 103 acres and other property in Ridley Township.⁷⁸

71. *Ibid.*, M. Williams to Jonathan Williams, letter, 4 March 1802.

72. *Philadelphia Gazette*, 27 April 1802, page 4, col. 3.

73. John Adams, petition for naturalization, 11 October 1802, series 21.18, RG 21, PCA.

74. No Adams appears in transcriptions for 1795, 1798, and 1802. See *Ridley Township History* (http://ridleytownshiphistory.com/ridleytown_tax1795.htm), "1795 Tax Information 1795 Federal Tax"; *ibid.* (http://www.ridleytownshiphistory.com/ridleytown_tax1798.htm), "1798 Window Tax Information"; and *ibid.* (http://ridleytownshiphistory.com/ridleytown_tax1802.htm), "1802 Tax Information." For 1805, 1808, and 1811, see Robert Plowman (Archivist, Delaware County Archives) to author, e-mail, 26 September 2013; author's files. Dr. Plowman examined original tax rolls at the Delaware County Archives and abstracted the *John Adams* entries. For 1810, see *Ridley Township History* (http://ridleytownshiphistory.com/ridleytown_tax1810.htm), "1810 Tax Information," John Adams.

75. 1810 U.S. census, Delaware Co., Pa., Ridley Township, p. 478, John Adams household; NARA microfilm M252, roll 47.

76. Delaware Co. Court of Common Pleas, *Culin v. Adams and Wier*; and *Adams v. Culin*; both in October 1807; civil case files, 1789–1929; Delaware County Archives, Media, Pa.

77. *Ibid.*, *Adams v. Budd*, April 1809.

78. *Ibid.*, *Adams, v. Rothwell and Vernon*, April 1809.

By February 1810 Adams operated a stone quarry on Crum Creek in Ridley Township:

Building, Curb and Foundation Stone.

John Adams,

Respectfully informs the Carpenters, Bricklayers and others, intending to build, that he will be able, as soon as the navigation opens to supply them with any quantity of building and curb stone, from his quarries on Crum Creek. The stone is of the first quality, and shall be furnished on the most reasonable terms. Stone and ballast, can also be had at the shortest notice. Apply at the quarry or to William Adams, South west corner of Third and Chestnut streets.⁷⁹

John Adams's Death and Administration

After a short illness, John Adams of Ridley Township died on 1 September 1811, "in the 48th year of his age." He was buried at the Fourth Presbyterian Church's cemetery.⁸⁰ John's age indicates a birth in 1763–64.

John's widow, Mary Adams, and son-in-law James Wilson, told the Philadelphia Orphan's Court that John had left no will. On 6 September 1811 the court granted an eight-thousand-dollar bond to "Mary Adams of Ridley Township Delaware County Widow, James Wilson of the City of Philadelphia printer, Adam Rowan of the same place Storekeeper, and William Adams of the same place Grocer" to inventory John's property. The \$1,607.67 assessment suggests he had been a prosperous farmer. James Wilson and Mary Adams filed estate accounts for 1813 through 1815.⁸¹

Widow Mary Adams

John's relict may have been the widow Mary Adams living in Philadelphia on Schuylkill Sixth Street below High from 1818 through 1821.⁸² A poor match for John's widow is Mary Adams, over forty-five, enumerated with two young women, age sixteen to twenty-five, in South Philadelphia's Mulberry Ward.⁸³

In her later years John's widow was affiliated with the First Independent Church.⁸⁴ Two of her children married there in 1829: William Adams, of

79. *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, 8 February 1810, page 3, col. 5.

80. *Ibid.*, 5 September 1811, page 3, col. 3. Also, *Weekly Aurora*, 10 September 1811, page 116, col. 3.

81. Philadelphia estate file A-177-1811, John Adams; Register of Wills.

82. For Mary Adams, see John Adams Paxton, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1818; ibid.*, 1819; *ibid.*, 1820; and *ibid.*, 1821; alphabetical.

83. 1820 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., South Mulberry Ward, p. 27, Mary Adams household; NARA microfilm M33, roll 108. Ages and household composition make this an unlikely household of John Adams's widow.

84. Chambers-Wylie Memorial Presbyterian Church [formerly First Independent Church] (Philadelphia), ledger, 1831–1873, p. 1, for Mrs. Adams, widow; Miss Martha Adams; Elizabeth Adams, dead; and Mary Adams; archives call no. 95 1027, box 1; PHS.

Baltimore to Marion Yorke on 15 January, and Mary Adams to James Passmore Smith on 7 May.⁸⁵

Mary moved to Middletown, Delaware, to live with her daughter Jane (Adams) Barr's family. "In her 69th year," Mary died there on 10 February 1833.⁸⁶ Thus she was born in 1764–65. Mary and her unmarried daughters are buried at Forest Cemetery in Middletown.⁸⁷

LIKELY KINSMEN OF JOHN AND MARY ADAMS

Philadelphians William Adams, grocer, and Adam Rowan, shopkeeper, were sureties on Mary Adams and James Wilson's bond to administer John Adams's estate.⁸⁸ Their pledge suggests a personal or business relationship with John or his widow.

William Adams

A tenant at Mount Pleasant, William Adams, was John Adams's brother. In March 1799 Mount Pleasant's owner gave William a recommendation:

The Bearer William Adams is a Gun Stock maker who arrived from Ireland last Summer[,] being the Brother of my Tenant he has been since living on my place, & working among the neighbourhood as a carpenter.⁸⁹

William lived out his life in the Philadelphia area:

- In 1800 he was enumerated in western Northern Liberties just after Jonathan Williams and three households before John Adams.⁹⁰
- In 1801–4 William, a carpenter, lived on Walnut Street.⁹¹

85. *Baltimore Patriot*, 26 January 1829, page 3, col. 1. Also, *National Gazette and Literary Register*, Philadelphia, 9 May 1829, page 3, col. 2.

86. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 February 1833, page 2, col. 6.

87. Forest Cemetery (Middletown, Del.), Barr-Adams gravestone; photograph by author, 2006; author's files.

88. Philadelphia estate file A-177-1811, John Adams.

89. "Recommendation of William Adams," *Papers of the War Department: 1784 to 1800* (<http://wardepartmentpapers.org/docimage.php?id=30737&docCollID=52649&page=2>), digital images of Jonathan Williams to Samuel Hodgdon, letter 10 March 1799; from Revolutionary War Papers, RG 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

90. 1800 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., West Northern Liberties, p. 166, "Jonathⁿ Willian [sic] Es^t," W^m Adams, and John Adams.

91. *Philadelphia Directory for 1801*, 112. Also, *Philadelphia Directory, City and County Register for 1802*, p. 14. Also, *ibid.*, 1803, p. 14. Also, *Philadelphia Directory for 1804*, p. 14.

- In 1805–6 he was a carpenter at Chestnut and Third Streets, the location mentioned in John Adams's 1810 quarry advertisement.⁹² From 1807 through 1810 William was a grocer at the same address.⁹³
- In 1811–17 he lived at 46 South Second Street, corresponding with Mary Adams's 1811 advertisement about her stone quarry.⁹⁴
- In 1819–28, with changing partners, William ran a grocery at a series of addresses. He lived west of the Schuylkill River in Mantua Village, Blockley Township.⁹⁵
- William retired in 1833.⁹⁶

William died at home on 25 September 1848 and was buried at The Woodlands Cemetery on John McAllister Jr.'s lot. Later reinterred with William was his wife, Margaret, who had died on 28 May 1831, age seventy.⁹⁷

William devised his estate to his "beloved niece, Rachel Allen her Heirs and assigns for ever." He mentioned three lots in Mantua Village, including one let to John McAllister Jr. William nominated McAllister and John Trucks, both of Philadelphia, as executors. Trucks qualified, but McAllister renounced the role.⁹⁸ Joseph E. Van Meter and Robert Glendenning valued the estate at \$860.04.⁹⁹

92. See, for William Adams, *Philadelphia Directory for 1805*; and *ibid.*, 1806; alphabetical. Also, *Paulson's American Daily Advertiser*, 8 February 1810, page 3, col. 5.

93. See, for William Adams, *Philadelphia Directory for 1807*; *ibid.*, 1808; and *ibid.*, 1809; alphabetical. Also, *Philadelphia Directory for 1810*, 14. Also, 1810 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, Walnut Ward, p. 12, Will^m Adams household.

94. See, for William Adams, *Philadelphia Directory for 1811*, 8. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1813*, *Kite's Philadelphia Directory for 1814*, and *Philadelphia Directory for 1816*, alphabetical. Also, *Robinson's Original Annual Directory for 1817*, 41. Also, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, 12 September 1811, page 3, col. 5.

95. See, for William Adams, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1819*; and *ibid.*, 1821; alphabetical. Also, *The Philadelphia Index or Directory for 1823* (Philadelphia: Robert Desilver, 1823), 2. Also, *ibid.*, 1824, 2. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Stranger's Guide for 1825* (missing title page), 9. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Stranger's Guide for 1828* (Philadelphia: Robert Desilver, 1828), 1. Also, 1820 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, Chestnut and Walnut Wards, p. 14, W^m. Adams; NARA microfilm M33, roll 108. Also, 1830 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Blockley Twp., p. 28, William Adams; NARA microfilm M19, roll 158.

96. Stephen N. Winslow, *Biographies of Successful Philadelphia Merchants* (Philadelphia: James K. Simon, 1864), 225–27, s.v. "John Trucks." Also, 1840 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Blockley Twp., Division No. 92, p. 176, W^m Adams household; NARA microfilm M704, roll 489.

97. *FamilySearch* (www.familysearch.org) > Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915 > digital folder 1906779(004009826) > image 1135, William Adams, 25 September 1848. Also, *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, 27 September 1848, page 2, col. 4. Also, Woodlands Cemetery (Philadelphia), card for section C, lots 273–78, grave 29. Also, *National Gazette*, Philadelphia, 2 June 1831, page 3, col. 4.

98. William Adams, Last Will and Testament, dated 20 December 1841 and filed on 7 October 1848; Philadelphia estate file W-243-1848 and Will Book 21:118; Register of Wills.

99. Inventory, Appraisal and Account, John Trucks, executor; Philadelphia estate file W-243-1848, William Adams.

Another William Adams and his wife, Elizabeth, belonged to Philadelphia's Fourth Presbyterian Church, where John and Mary Adams were members. They had two children baptized there on 8 November 1802.¹⁰⁰ Fifty-seven-year-old Elizabeth died on 12 January 1825 and was buried in the Fourth Presbyterian Church Burial Ground.¹⁰¹ At eighty-five, William died from "old age" on 14 June 1848.¹⁰² His relationship, if any, to the brothers John and William Adams is unknown.

Allens and Trucks

As William Adams's niece and heir, Rachel Allen may have been a child of his sister or of a sibling of William's wife. Rachel was born in Pennsylvania or Ireland in 1802–3.¹⁰³ She likely was the woman in her thirties in William Adams's 1840 household.¹⁰⁴ Rachel never married. After her uncle died and through 1880, Rachel lived with William's executor John Trucks and his wife, Eliza (Brown) Trucks, Pennsylvania natives. In 1880 Rachel was identified as Eliza's "friend."¹⁰⁵ Rachel died on 28 June 1890 at the Riverton, New Jersey,

100. Fourth Presbyterian Church, Baptisms, 1800–1819, for John Adams (b. 7 August 1799), 8 November 1802, and Margaretta Adams (b. 20 September 1802), 8 November 1802.

101. *FamilySearch* > "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915" > digital folder 1905409(004009793) > image 696, Elizabeth Adams interment record, 8–15 January 1825. Also, *National Gazette*, 13 January 1825, page 3, col. 5.

102. *FamilySearch*, "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915," digital folder 1906777(004009824), image 1049, William Adams, 14 June 1848. Also, *North American*, Philadelphia, 16 June 1848, page 2, col. 6.

103. 1850 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., pop. sch., Philadelphia, North Ward, p. 137, dwell. 1262, fam. 1611, John Trucks household; NARA microfilm M432, roll 817. For "Ireland," see *FamilySearch* > "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915" > digital folder 2080619(004058727) > image 720, Rachel Allen undertaker's certificate, 1 July 1890.

104. 1840 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Blockely Twp., Division No. 92, p. 176, William Adams household.

105. 1850 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., pop. sch., Philadelphia, North Ward, p. 137, dwell. 1262, fam. 1611, John Trucks household. Also, 1860 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., Philadelphia, 9th Ward North of Market St., 25 June 1860, p. 137, dwell. 780, fam. 828, John Trucks household; NARA microfilm M653, roll 1159. Also, 1870 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., pop. sch., Philadelphia, District No. 29, p. 22, dwell. 135, fam. 105, Eliza Trucks household; NARA microfilm M593, roll 1395. Also, 1880 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., pop. sch., Philadelphia, 15th Division of the 10th Ward, enumeration district 81, p. 7, dwell. 53, fam. 59, Eliza Trucks household. Also, Winslow, *Biographies of Successful Philadelphia Merchants*, 225–27, s.v. "John Trucks."

home of Joseph E. Van Meter, then married to Kate Trucks, John and Eliza's daughter.¹⁰⁶

Besides Rachel, William Adams associated with three other Allens:

- John Allen, born in 1775–95, was a partner in Allen and McCartney.¹⁰⁷ About 1816 John Trucks apprenticed with that firm. After John's death he became a partner. Trucks managed the store for Allen's widow, and William Adams soon purchased the business.¹⁰⁸
- William Allen and William Adams were business partners in 1823. In 1823 and 1824 William Allen lived at the same address as John Allen of Allen and McCartney.¹⁰⁹
- William Henry Allen, age eight, the only son of John M. and Eliza N. Allen, died in Philadelphia on 12 November 1848.¹¹⁰ The account of William Adams's estate includes an expenditure on 27 November 1848 to Wm. H. Moore, undertaker, for both William Adams's and William Allen's funerals.¹¹¹

The significance of William Adams's Allen connections and association with John Trucks is unknown. An Adams may have married an Allen or a Trucks. In any case, the associations may help trace President Wilson's ancestry in Ireland.

106. *FamilySearch* > Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915 > digital folder 2080619(004058727) > image 715, Rachel Allen interment, week ending 5 July 1890; and image 720, Rachel Allen undertaker's certificate, 1 July 1890. Also, Woodlands Cemetery (Philadelphia) lot card, section F, lot 1590164, owned by Eliza Trucks. Also, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1 July 1890, page 6, col. 1. Also, Old Saint Paul's Church (Philadelphia), Records 1830–1865, folio 63v, Van Meter-Trucks marriage, 5 October 1854; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://search.ancestry.com/search/>) > Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Church and Town Records, 1708–1885 > Philadelphia > Philadelphia > Roman Catholic > Old St Paul's Church > image 567. Despite the waypoint *Roman Catholic*, Old Saint Paul's was an Episcopal church.

107. 1820 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., North Ward, p. 93, John Allen and "Allen & M^cCartney" (two lines apart); NARA microfilm M33, roll 108. One person in Allen's household was engaged in commerce. For John's age, see *Robinson's Original Annual Directory for 1817*, 44 and 284.

108. Winslow, *Biographies of Successful Philadelphia Merchants*, 225–27, s.v. "John Trucks."

109. *Philadelphia Index or Directory for 1823*, 2 and 5. Also, *ibid.*, 1824, 5.

110. *FamilySearch* > "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915 > digital folder 1906878(004009827) > image 510, William Henry Allen death record. For his parentage and address, see *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, 13 November 1848, p. 2, col. 5.

111. Inventory, Appraisal and Account, John Trucks, executor; Philadelphia estate file W-243-1848, William Adams.

Adam Rowan

Only one Adam Rowan lived in Philadelphia before 1850. He was born on 10 May 1771 or in 1773–74 and died on 28 or 29 January 1849.¹¹² From 1807 through 1824 and from 1836 through 1840 he was an accountant and clerk in various Philadelphia businesses.¹¹³ Adam's wife, Mary, was born in England in 1778–79.¹¹⁴ Reportedly seventy-five, she died on 17 April 1854.¹¹⁵

Adam was naturalized on 9 October 1802, two days before John Adams. Born in Ireland, Adam had lived in Philadelphia for five years. His sponsor, William Wray, lived in Philadelphia County.¹¹⁶

CONCLUSION

President Woodrow Wilson's grandfather, James Wilson, immigrated to the United States by 1797, at least ten years earlier than the date presidential biographers have claimed for more than a century. James likely immigrated with his mother, Margaretta, who was born in 1757–58 and died in Steubenville, Ohio, in 1820. James, perhaps with Margaretta, came to Philadelphia before 1806. President Wilson's grandmother, Ann (Adams) Wilson, likely immigrated with her parents, John—not David—and Mary Adams, also by 1797.

James, an infant in 1787, was not apprenticed that year in Strabane. Discounting Strabane, in county Tyrone, adds credibility to the family's repeated, though inconsistent, reports of origin in county Down.

Reconsidering President Wilson's paternal grandparents' immigration story has helped document their lives, confirm dates, and establish other details and

112. "Graceland Memorial Burial Ground," transcription of "W.P.A. Survey from 1936," *Delaware County History* (<http://www.delawarecountyhistory.com/yeardonborough/GracelandMemorialBurialGround.htm>). For 1773–74 and 29 January, see *FamilySearch* > Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915 > digital folder 1906879(004003072) > image 999, Adam Rowan, 29 January 1849. Also, *North American*, 30 January 1849, page 2, col. 6.

113. See, for Adam Rowan, *Philadelphia Directory for 1807*, alphabetical. Also, *ibid.*, 1810, 241. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1813* and *Kite's Philadelphia Directory for 1814*, alphabetical. Also, *Robinson's Original Annual Directory for 1817*, 376. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1819*; *ibid.*, 1820; *ibid.*, 1821; and *ibid.*, 1822; alphabetical. Also, *Philadelphia Index or Directory for 1823*; and *ibid.*, 1824; alphabetical. Also, *Philadelphia Directory and Stranger's Guide for 1835 and 36* (Philadelphia: Robert Desilver, 1835), 156. Also, *McElroy's Philadelphia Directory for 1837* (Philadelphia: Rackliff and Jones, 1837), 190. Also, *ibid.*, 1840 (Philadelphia: Isaac Ashmead, 1840), 217.

114. 1850 U.S. census, Philadelphia Co., Pa., pop. sch., Philadelphia, New Market Ward, p. 55, dwell. 297, fam. 353. Mary Rowan household; NARA microfilm M432, roll 817.

115. *FamilySearch* > Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915 > digital folder 1927777(004009843) > image 989, Mary Rowan, 17 April 1854. Also, "Graceland Memorial Burial Ground," transcription, *Delaware County History*.

116. Adam Rowan, petition for naturalization, 9 October 1802; series 30.14, Petitions for Naturalization, 1794–1903; RG 20, Common Pleas Court; PCA.

associations. This information may facilitate research into the president's Irish ancestry.

Poorly documented information concerning President Wilson's ancestry has produced inaccuracies that have misled generations of biographers, genealogists, historians, and preservationists on both sides of the Atlantic. Despite choruses of biographical works repeating old claims, the ancestry of well-documented public figures should be subjected to today's genealogy standards. With modern technologies and resources, thorough examination, or re-examination, of original records and firsthand accounts can reveal errors, overlooked details, and erroneous assertions. More important, careful research can produce accurate accounts.

Enumeration of a Dead Man

[Mary Ann Whelan, petition for letters of administration, 5 February 1879; in Kings Co., N.Y., file, 5 January 1879, for John M. Whelan; Surrogate's Court, Brooklyn, N.Y.]

I Mary Ann Whelan (cor. Franklin & Calyer) of the City of Brooklyn . . . say, that I am the widow of . . . John W. Whelan deceased; that said deceased departed this life at the city of Brooklyn on the 31st day of January in the year 1879. . . [The] said deceased left surviving, your petitioner the widow of full age and two children to wit : Laurence Whelan aged 7 yrs and Mary Whelan aged 5 yrs.

[1880 U.S. census, Kings Co., N.Y. population schedule, 17th Ward, ED 168, pp. 7–8, dwelling 28, family 62, 47 Franklin St., John W. Whelan household; microfilm publication T9, roll 851, National Archives and Records Administration. The enumeration date was 1 June and the visitation date was “2 & 3” June 1880.]

Whelan, John, age 30, Saloon keeper
 “ Mary, age 27, Wife
 “ Lorange, age 7, Daughter, At School [end of page 7]
 Whelan, Mamie, age 5 [*relationship* left blank], At School

[Notes: Underlining designates information handwritten on a printed form. *Corner of Franklin and Calyer Street* and *47 Franklin Street* are equivalent addresses.]

—Contributed by Sandra M. Hewlett, CG