

REPORT
TO THE
WILSON ASSOCIATION, U. S. A.,

MADE BY
H. O. SMITH,

A. D. 1856.

Containing reports and information which has been collected
from various sources relative to the Wilson property
in England, and several pedigrees of different
branches of the Wilson Family
in America.

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1866.

ORGANIZATION.

Many members of the Wilson Family held a meeting in Brandon, Vt., on the 7th day of October, 1865. The object of this meeting was to collect, from the different branches of the family, information in their possession relative to the Wilson property in Fryingpan Alley, London, and in Stoneleigh Abbey, in the County of Warwick, England, or elsewhere, said to be worth millions of dollars, and belonging to the Wilsons in America.

It was thought the time had then arrived when there should be joint action in the matter, and some steps should be taken to ascertain for a certainty whether this property could or could not be recovered by the Wilsons in America, and if it could not, then have the long agitated question set at rest forever.

As C. M. Fisher, the partner of Columbus Smith, was then (and now is) in England, attending to similar business, it was thought a favorable opportunity then presented itself to have that claim thoroughly investigated.

After mature deliberation, the following constitution was adopted :

PREAMBLE.

WHEREAS, Certain Wilsons died in England, leaving real and personal property at the time of their death to the amount of three millions of dollars or more, and whereas, the next of kin and heirs to this property are said to be in America, now, in order to prosecute the investigation and procure the pedigree of the family and ascertain whether or not there is any such property, we, the undersigned, do hereby agree to form ourselves into an Association under the following

CONSTITUTION.

ART. 1st.—This Society shall be called the Wilson Association.

ART. 2d.—C. M. Fisher, of Vergennes, and Columbus Smith, of Salisbury, Vt., are hereby appointed agents for the purpose of investigating the case in England, and are required from time to time to make printed reports of their doings to the members of this Association.

ART. 3d.—Harrison O. Smith, of Monkton, and J. M. Wallace, of Sudbury, Vt., are hereby empowered to raise two thousand dollars, to cover the necessary expenses attending the matter of investigating the case in England, and all other necessary incidental expenses connected therewith, by issuing such an amount of Scrip as shall be necessary, which said Scrip shall be a lien upon the property when recovered.

- ART. 4th.—Every Scrip shall be sold for five dollars, entitling the purchaser to one hundred dollars out of the first money recovered from said Estate by any member of the Association, and no more scrip shall be sold by said agent than shall be necessary to raise the aforesaid sum of two thousand dollars, together with the expenses of the sale thereof, which shall in no event exceed ten per cent. of the receipts of the sale of each Scrip.
- ART. 5th.—The said Smith and Fisher are to be allowed fifteen hundred dollars, for making a thorough investigation of the case in England, with reference to whether or not there is property there, if any, its situation and also the pedigree of the party leaving the same, and in addition thereto, we agree to pay them ten per cent. of all we, or any of us, or our heirs, may recover from said estate.
- ART. 6th.—No member of this Association shall be liable to pay more than three dollars, as expenses, or compensation, or otherwise, to any person or persons whatever.
- ART. 7th.—Any member of the Wilson Family may become a member of this Association by paying three dollars to H. O. Smith, of Monkton. Vt., and signing this Constitution, entitling each member to a printed report of all information and reports made in the case, and also to the sum of fifty dollars out of the money recovered.
- Brandon, Vt., October 7th, 1865.

Names and residences of the members of the Wilson Association :

H. H. Merritt, Brandon, Vt.	Dewitt C. Clark, Codrington, Canada West.
Wylcom C. Wilson, Weybridge, Vt.	Walter R. Clark, Codrington, Canada West.
John M. Wilson, Eden, Vt.	Catharine Clark, Woodstock, Illinois.
Benjamin J. Wilson, Bolton, Vt.	E. C. Falls, Middlebury, Vt.
John O. Raymond, for Adeline Wilson, Crowell, Vt.	Albert Wilson, Kingsbury, N. Y.
John Horton, Rutland, Vt.	George Wilson, Kingsbury, N. Y.
Daniel P. Wilder, Tyson's Furnace, Vt.	Noah Whiting, Hinsdale, N. H.
Julius M. Wallace, Sudbury, Vt.	Grovenor Wallis, Sudbury, Vt.
W. R. Smith, Danby, Vt.	Martha A. Fleming, adopted daughter of N. C. Brooks, Brooksville, Vt.
G. D. Spooner, Rutland, Vt.	Heldah E. Humphery, Pittsford, Vt.
George Smith, Sudbury, Vt.	Willis Clark, Butler, Ohio.
Phineas S. Wilson, Waddington, N. Y.	Jacob W. Clark, Butler, Ohio.
Harriet A. Chamberlin, Plattsburgh, N. Y.	Heman Wilson, P. O. address Elizabethtown, N. Y.
Caleb Wilson, Topsham, Vt.	S. G. Cowles, Franklin, N. Y.
Eliza A. Loomis, Champlain, N. Y.	Albert Foote, Franklin, N. Y.
Merritt B. Wilson, Champlain, N. Y.	Alonzo Cobleigh, for wife, Hyde Park, Vt.
Betsy Egan, Shoreham, Vt.	Lewis M. Wilson, Bakersfield, Vt.
Jane A. Dene, Shoreham, Vt.	Milan Wilson, Colchester, Vt.
Alonah L. Wilson, Burpee, Greensboro, Vt.	Nathaniel E. Wilson, Colchester, Vt.
Eben R. Wilson, Pawnee City, Nebraska.	W. F. Jennings, Dunham, Canada East.
Ebenezer J. Ormsbee, Brandon, Vt.	E. W. Wilcox, North Hyde Park, Vt.
Asa Goodno, Brandon, Vt.	William Wilson, Fairfax Co., Va.
Charles O. White, Middlebury, Vt.	Sarah H. Potter, Fort Edward, N. Y.
Durfee R. Wilson, Tolono, Illinois.	
Mary Clark, Codrington, Canada West.	

NOTE.—In order to give every member of the Wilson Family an opportunity of becoming members of the Association, the Wilson Constitution has been printed and sent, for signers to various members of the family in different parts of the country; but many of these have not yet been returned, so that the names of many members cannot here appear.

REPORT.

TO THE WILSON ASSOCIATION :

In accordance with the wishes of your Association, I here submit to you the following report which, in the present state of the case, must be very imperfect. Many members of the family have not forwarded to me pedigrees of their family branch sufficiently perfect to have printed. On that account most of them I have omitted, thinking it will be far better to omit than to have them printed imperfect and erroneous. Very much of the following information has been furnished me by Columbus Smith, of Salisbury, and by J. M. Wallace, of Sudbury, Vt.

Almost every member of the Wilson family have long heard that that there was a great property in England thought to belong to the Wilson family in America, and at many different times the Wilsons, principally in New England, have become much interested in this matter, and have tried to have an examination of their claim made in England.

About 1848, the family seem to have taken a deep interest in this matter, and at that time had many family meetings and formed an association for the purpose of having their claim investigated in England.

The following notice was taken from the *Voice of Freedom*, printed in Brandon, showing the names of the officers of the Wilson Heirs Association at that time :

OFFICERS OF THE WILSON HEIRS ASSOCIATION.

PORTER HOWE, West Rutland, Vt., President.

H. H. Merritt, Sudbury, Vt., Vice-President.

Everard C. Eells, Sudbury, }

J. W. Boynton, Orwell, }

C. E. Lockling, W. Rutland, }

J. Boynton, Orwell, Treasurer.

Cor. Sec's.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE.—At the meeting of the Association, March 2, 1848, the following named gentlemen were appointed a special

committee for employing an agent to secure the property in England, claimed by the heirs of Jeremiah Wilson :

William Wilson, Brighton, Mass.

J. M. Wallis, Sudbury, Vt.

Grovenor Wallis, Sudbury, Vt.

J. W. Boynton, Orwell, Vt.

ADOPTED RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

Any person can become a member of this Association by advancing, to the Treasurer, the sum of Five Dollars, free of expense.

Should the estate in prospect, not be secured, the funds, unexpended in the effort to obtain the property claimed, will be divided among the members of the Association.

Should the property in anticipation be secured, those who shall have become members, but cannot substantiate their claims to heirship, will receive back the amount of money they advanced, and will be liberally compensated for their advances—risk and delays.

SETH KEELER,
For Association.

March 2d, 1848.

I understand the Association raised considerable money for the purpose of having this claim thoroughly investigated. E. F. Hodges, Esq., of Boston, now of New York City, was employed by them to examine their papers and make a report of the case. I find the following in the *Voice of Freedom*, printed at Brandon, March 9th, 1848 :

WILSON HEIRS ASSOCIATION.

According to previous notice, this Association convened at the Brandon House this day, at 10 o'clock, A. M., and organized by appointing SETH KEELER, President pro. tem.

J. W. BOYNTON, Secretary.

The meeting being organized, the following highly valuable Report, prepared by E. F. Hodges, Esq., of Boston, was presented, discussed, and adopted.

TO THE WILSON ASSOCIATION.

Last summer the official authorities of your Association submitted to me certain papers touching the title to property in England, for the investigation of which you have united. At the request of your officers, I have carefully examined and compared those documents, and have applied for further information at such sources as gave promise of light, this side of the Atlantic. Though the authentic facts discovered in the course of these researches are few, and of

remote connection with the main subject of inquiry; yet the indications developed are numerous,—consistent with each other, and directly declare the existence of landmarks beyond the sea, which, if discovered, will be unequivocal evidence of the rights of the heirs of Jeremiah Wilson to a large and valuable property in England. I therefore beg leave to present to you the theory which the information I have gained seems to support, and to offer a few suggestions concerning the means to be adopted by you to develope, and if possible, confirm to the heirs in this country, the title to these estates.

The following narrative presents what I believe to be the facts which bear upon the title to this property, and though my belief is based upon no *authentic* evidence, yet it is supported by such circumstances as can not fail to produce a moral conviction of its truth :

Robert Wilson was the owner of certain estates in England, viz : farming lands situated at Stoneleigh, in Warwickshire, and several houses (supposed to be 46 in number) in Fryingpan Alley in London. He died in 1644, leaving two children, one, William, the younger, to whom he devised the estate at Stoneleigh, and another, Benjamin, the elder, to whom he devised the reversion in the houses in London, having given them by the same will to his wife, for her life.

In 1665, Benjamin came to this country and settled at Charlestown, near Boston. In 1681, and probably upon the death of his mother, the widow of Robert Wilson, Benjamin went to England, and while there, died. William, his younger brother, procured from his widow in this country the documents necessary for the settlement of his estate, and the confirmation of the rights of the widow and children. Benjamin's children died without heirs, save Jeremiah, who left six sons, and from whom are descended all the persons interested in this property.

William died without heirs, about 1735. After the death of William, a person pretending to be an agent of Lord Leigh's, of Stoneleigh, came to this country and procured from Jeremiah and his eldest son, a lease of the Stoneleigh property, and a power of attorney to collect the rents of the London houses, and gave a bond for the payment of a large sum of money,—probably £10,000. Or, instead of giving the bond, it is more likely that the payment of this sum of money was stipulated in the lease, and that the lease was an indenture in two parts, one for each party. The lease was probably for sixty years, though it may have been for ten only. These papers were made by, and probably acknowledged before, Joseph Wilson, Esq., one of the Justices of the quorum. I am inclined to believe the estates were entailed, and therefore this agent found it necessary to have the eldest son of Jeremiah join with the father in making the lease for the purpose of securing the estates against him,

for the term of sixty years, should the father die before the termination of the demise. Or, it may be, that the proceedings before Mr. Wilder were intended by this agent to have the force of a common recovery, a mode of barring entails, devised by the English lawyers after the passage of the Statute of Westminster. If, however, such was his design, the proceedings were utterly insufficient for that purpose. The only circumstance that gives any foundation for this suspicion, is, the oft repeated averment in the family that Judge Wilder, of the Probate Court, made a record of the lease, power of attorney, or bond,

One copy of the lease and the power of attorney, were taken by this pretended agent, the other copy of the lease, which was left with the Lessor, and was then the only evidence of title in their hands, was subsequently abstracted from their possession by a stranger who seemed to be an Englishman, and who took great pains to get the document into his hands. The heirs in this country have at different times made efforts to obtain the property, but they have been fruitless, save that in their progress, a few facts have been developed from which an inference may be drawn favorable to the claim. The most important of which are these:—Different branches of the Leigh family, between 1825 and 1830, had a long contested suit concerning the title and estates at Stoneleigh. At this time Mr. White was employed by the heirs in the United States to investigate their claims. He recommended that the heirs should make terms with one or the other of these parties—after which recommendation, his conduct and silence gives reason to suppose he was bribed to betray his employers, or at least to forego any effort to aid them. Also the character of the occupants of the houses in London has been shown to be such as to warrant us in believing that their titles might be defective, and yet no notice be taken of the defect. Who was to ask, whether the landlord of this thief, or that receiver of stolen goods, held the premises by virtue of an expired lease, or a valid deed absolute?

The general features of this tale, such as relates to the existence and locality of the property; the devise of it by Robert Wilson; the emigration and death of Benjamin Wilson; the giving the lease and the loss of the counterpart, or bond, from the hands of Jeremiah Wilson, are supported by no *authentic evidence*. This should be clearly and definitively understood. There is not, nor, as far as I have been able to discover, has there been since the loss of this lease or bond, in the hands of the heirs in this country, any authentic evidence of these facts. But there are proofs only one degree below authenticity, which carry moral conviction of their truth.

The numerous documents gathered by Luke Wilson and by this Association, from different descendants of Jeremiah Wilson, and the traditions handed down from generation to generation, now found

fresh and clear in the minds of the collateral branches of the family so far removed in relationship from each other that they have not even traditionary connection, all telling substantially the same tale; seem very conclusive evidence that there is a foundation of truth upon which this narrative is based. Fabulous stories, identical in even minute particulars, would hardly spring up spontaneously in scattered families, having no personal association and no connective tie, save what is found in tracing backward the thread of their descent till they meet in a common ancestor.

We will suppose the general features of this story true. It should also be remembered that nothing adverse is to be argued from the absence of authentic proof; for no evidence of title could be in the family, save the bond or lease: these, all the traditions say, were stolen. The title deeds were with Robert Wilson in 1664; after his death William took the deeds of Stoneleigh, and probably the deeds of the London property remained with his widow. When Benjamin went to England in 1681, for the purpose of collecting rents, he must necessarily have taken all the papers he had connected with this property. These circumstances, together with the fact that after his death William sent to this country for further vouchers for the purpose of confirming the title, would, it seems, most satisfactorily account for the absence of evidences of title that we could call authentic. In fact, the death of William without heirs, left these estates with no agent to care for them; and their heirs in this country with no proofs of title. When, then, the bond or lease was stolen, there could by no chance exist any evidence of title, save what was in the hands of William's representatives and the Leighs' lessees of Jeremiah and John Wilson. For, it is to be noticed that there are no offices for the general registry of deeds in England, and the deeds themselves are carefully preserved as the only vouchers of title recognized in law. At the expiration of the lease to Leigh, there was of course no one in England to call upon the lessee to surrender, and no prying, curious neighbor to look into the registry of deeds and tell him his title was defective, and that the heirs of Jeremiah Wilson were true inheritors of a large portion of his fair domain.

I believe then, gentlemen, that the heirs of Jeremiah Wilson were once entitled to these estates in England, whatever may be their present rights. I am led to and confirmed in this belief by the prevalence in every branch of the family, of the same tradition, and by the consistency in all the particulars of this tradition with each other and the whole.

I will now, with your leave, briefly offer a few suggestions concerning the future course to be adopted. I have visited Cambridge, Lancaster and Leominster, and carefully examined the records of those towns and of the old courts, for information. I have also

written to the Consul in London for a like purpose, and I find nothing is to be learned from these sources that can in any manner avail. I am, therefore, disposed to believe that the most feasible plan by which any satisfactory conclusion can ever be attained, touching this involved and complicated matter, is, for you to select some one, competent to make careful legal investigations—send him to England, and let him pursue the line of search indicated by the papers.

The suit for a long time pending between the Leighs, relative to Stoneleigh Abbey, must undoubtedly have revealed much concerning the property of the Wilsons, in Stoneleigh. These papers should be examined by one competent to give legal force and interpretation to the discoveries. If the Leighs now hold the Stoneleigh estate, once owned by Robert Wilson, their title can be examined in no way so readily and profoundly as by exploring the depths of the suit by which their family quarrel was settled, and the papers exposed in its progress.

Touching the houses in London, your agent will be materially aided by the City Registry, but to follow the titles through will require the utmost diligence and sagacity, as it may involve the nicest questions under a complicated branch of English law, viz. conveyancing. Finally and chiefly, your agent must search out the depository of the papers left by William Wilson when he died. I have no doubt he held deeds and wills by which the title to this property would be confirmed to the heirs of Jeremiah Wilson. None of the persons employed by the heirs have sought in this channel for evidence, but it seems to me, clearly, that the evidence is there, and that this is the most important thread in the whole case.

Since I commenced my investigations, there have been handed me some notices of the advertisements in England, for the heirs of Robert Wilson, with a suggestion that, upon the payment of a small sum, the advertisement would be copied, &c. This offer is certainly reasonable, and would recommend itself to you, but for the fact that whoever takes upon himself the burden of this investigation should examine these advertisements, and the payment of this sum to any other person would only be so much additional expenditure; and it would therefore seem most advisable at this time, not to advance this money.

You find, in your respective families, traditions touching these estates, which have never been investigated to approval or denial. The proof of their truth is not authentic nor undeniable. A full investigation of the subject will be somewhat expensive, and may not result in any discovery of available or material facts. To those who will not contribute for this purpose without a promise of a return, I could not offer encouragement; but to those who are willing to pay something to determine favorably or unfavorably, this vexed question, I would say, this is certainly a fair opportunity to probe

the subject to the bottom, and the bread thus "cast upon the waters *may* return after many days."

All of which is respectfully submitted by your humble servant,

E. F. HODGES.

Boston, January 1, 1848.

After the adoption of the foregoing Report, the Association voted unanimously to procure the services of a competent and efficient Agent, to embark for England, and make such further examination of the validity of title, to the Estate of Benjamin Wilson, as shall be deemed advisable.

The Association also voted to procure the publication of this Report—the proceedings of the present meeting, also such other action of this body as may be had from time to time, in the *Voice of Freedom*, a paper published in this Village.

SETH KEELER, President pro. tem.

J. W. BOXTON, Secretary.

Brandon, March 2, 1848.

The above report of Mr. Hodges is full, really seeming to be an able and fair report.

Subsequently the following appeared in the *Voice of Freedom*:

WILSON HEIRS ASSOCIATION.—As will be seen on perusal, the Report adopted by this Association on Wednesday of last week, shows a vast amount of research in the way of tracing historical evidences of title to the large estates named in the report. We think this production may be studied to advantage by those laying claim to other estates in England.—According to the evidence here traced, there can be no doubt that of *right* there is a vast amount of property in England belonging to the legal heirs of Benjamin and Jeremiah Wilson; but the puzzle seems to be to find the man who can look it up and substantiate the claim. So much time has elapsed since the *written* title has been traced, that it must take a shrewd man and one well versed in English laws, to probe the matter to the bottom and secure to the claimants their demands.

But should all who could prove themselves legal heirs to the said Wilsons, contribute Five dollars each, the aggregate sum would *thoroughly* investigate the matter, and if they lose, the expense would be light, but if they gain, the return will be great.

The following appears in the *Voice of Freedom*, July 6th, 1848:—

EXTRAORDINARY CHARGE AGAINST LORD LEIGH.

ALLEGED MURDERS AT STONELEIGH ABBEY, THIRTY YEARS AGO.—The most extraordinary and intense excitement has been raging at Stonleigh Abbey, the last few days in consequence of a development of the most terrible and bloody kind of a series of murders alleged to have been perpetrated by the present noble possessor of the Leigh estates. It appears that about thirty-five years ago the title of the present Lord Leigh, then Mr. Chandos, was contested by a family of the Lancashire Leighs, who, however, were defeated, and eighteen of them arrested and consigned to prison for a forcible entry on the estates during the absence of the successful contestant at Paris. From this time strange rumors got about in relation to the habits of the present Lord Leigh, and certain dark secrets were whispered of in his family, which made the simple village shudder when they were hinted at. In 1812 and shortly after the contest for the title, a man named Barnett was called in by Lord Leigh, and taken to the family vault at Stonleigh Church, where he was directed to wrench off nine of the coffin plates. A short time after this, a woman named Sarah Silk, since Mrs. Smallbones, who seemed to be acquainted with all the family secrets, was discovered burning a number of the old family portraits, but when questioned on the subject, at the time, refused to give any account of the circumstance. On her death-bed, however, some years after, she said her conscience troubled her for some great crimes she committed for the Leigh family, and that she had once poisoned a man.

In 1814, Lord Leigh employed a number of laborers to build a massive bridge in his park. Barnett, who had torn off the coffin plates, was the foreman. The names of the men, Matthew Billinge, William Forbes, Alexander Munro, Thomas Proud, Joseph Smith, John Wilcox, William Wood and William Blisset. These men were at work on the bridge for a long time, and rumor said that they had possessed themselves of some very extraordinary secrets which, however, none of them seemed disposed to say much about. Lord and Lady Leigh used frequently to superintend the work, and it seems that they had heard of the talk of some of the workmen about the doings of the family. There was a huge stone to go in one of the abutments of the bridge, and it had a large cavity some ten feet deep to receive it. When the bridge was nearly finished, Lord Leigh showed a great anxiety to get it done, and made the men work nearly all night. One night, at near 12 o'clock Lord and Lady Leigh, with some of the members of their family came down to the place where the men were at work. Billinge

and Forbes were in the hole spreading mortar for the reception of the stone, and the stone was poised above the hole and hanging from a crane already to be lowered. Two of the men named Shaw and Munro had hold of the winch, and Barnett the foreman had hold of the guide rope, when the Lord looking round and seeing none others near, gave the word to let go. At the repetition of the order the men let the winch fly, and the stone descended upon Billinge and Forbes, dropping in the socket, and giving no evidence of the deadly work it had performed, except about a pint of blood that worked up through the crevices of the stone. On the following day Barnett saw the bodies of Proud and Smith tied in sacks and buried in the other abutment. Shortly after, Blisset was shot by the Lord's game-keeper. The rest of the men took good care after this not to breathe a word of what had taken place, but dispersed in different parts of the country, and one or two more of them shortly after died. Nothing more was thought, or at least heard of the matter, until a few months ago, when Barnett, hearing that the present representative of the Lancashire Leighs was about to revive his claim of title, disclosed the foregoing facts to that person's solicitor who laid them before the authorities of Warwick. In pursuance of this information an investigation was had last Saturday, (May 6,) before Justices Rattray, Greenway, Wise and Cowan. Joseph Pollock, Esq., of Manchester, appeared for the prosecution, and Mr. G. Jones, a relation of Lord Leigh, volunteered, in the absence of the noble defendant, to appear for him. The case was heard in the Grand Jury room, so as to accommodate as many of the excited crowds in attendance as possible.

[The evidence, which here follows in detail, chiefly by Barnett, the foreman on the work alluded to, simply confirms the foregoing statements.]

The investigation lasted from 1 o'clock in the day until 10 o'clock at night; and it is almost needless to say, the deepest interest was taken in the proceedings. On Barnett signing his deposition, in allusion to the spot he had pointed out as where the bodies were buried, he said to the Magistrate's clerk: "I'll lay my life down, Sir, if they are not found."

This is certainly a very extraordinary affair, and we trust it may be further investigated; as it stands now, it is almost impossible to decide whether it is a conspiracy or a revelation.

ADDITIONAL PARTICULARS.—Since receiving the above account, the following additional particulars have come to hand by the steamer Acadia.

The London Despatch says that subsequently to the above investigation Mr. Jones, who appeared before the magistrates at Warwick in defence of Lord Leigh, produced before the Police Court at Liverpool a man calling himself William Billinge, a stonemason,

and the son of Matthew Billinge, alleged to have been murdered in the bridge at Stoneleigh Abbey. He stated that he was present with his father at the building of the bridge, and that the reported murder was all a lie and hoax. That his father died in 1825 or 1826, whereas the bridge was built in 1814. He produced a letter from his father, dated in 1822. The Despatch adds :

To the minds, however, of those who knew the power of money, and the prevalence of baseness, the testimony of this witness does not settle this terrible problem. We look for still further investigation in this case.

From the Boston Traveler.

This case, aside from the fearful attraction lent to it by these horrible details, is not without other interest to parties this side of the Atlantic.

Robert Wilson, the owner of a large agricultural property in Stoneleigh, and of a number of houses in London, died about 1644, leaving by will his Stoneleigh property to his son William, and his London property to his son Benjamin. Benjamin came to this country about 1665 and died in 1681, leaving a son Jeremiah, from whom the Wilsons in this country are descended. His other children left no heirs. William Wilson, to whom the Stoneleigh estates were devised, died about 1735 without issue, leaving the descendants of his brother Benjamin his heirs at law. Soon after his death, a man calling himself the agent of Lord Leigh, of Stoneleigh Abbey, came to this country and procured from Jeremiah Wilson a lease of the Stoneleigh property for a long term of years, at a high rent. The counterpart of this lease was stolen from Jeremiah Wilson by an Englishman, who as a traveler, had spent a few days at his house. This of course left Jeremiah without any evidence of title to the Stoneleigh property; for William Wilson had the title deeds, and upon his death they were placed in the hands of his executor or administrator—and, there being no public registry of deeds in England, with few exceptions, Jeremiah Wilson had no evidence of title in his hands. All his rights rested upon the deeds and papers in the hands of William Wilson's administrator.

When the lease to Lord Leigh expired, about 1795, the descendants of Jeremiah Wilson could make no claim to the estates save through those deeds and papers. May not the seizure of *those* papers and deeds be one of the secrets the Leigh family thus conceal in the gloom of murder? However improbable the story told by the witness may appear, it seems certain there is some mystery connected with the title to the Stoneleigh property. It should here be added, that the Lancashire Leighs reviewed their claims to these estates in 1844, and from information communicated in the course of their preparations, the charge was preferred against his Lordship.

and the disclosures above set forth were elicited. It would not be surprising if the Wilson heirs should in the course of this investigation find the evidence they have so long sought for.

There has been an association formed by some of the heirs of Jeremiah Wilson for the purpose of establishing their claims to this property, but as yet they have made nothing more than mere preliminary steps. It would seem most desirable that they should put themselves in a situation to profit by the disclosures made in the subsequent stages of this examination. H.

Wm. S. Wilder, of Mass., was appointed, by the Wilson Heirs Association, Agent for the Association, in the early part of A. D. 1849. He was provided by that Association with funds, and instructed to proceed to England and investigate the Wilson claim to property in England. In the month of July of the same year he sailed for Liverpool from Boston.

The following is a copy of his first letter to the Association from England:

COVENTRY, ENGLAND, July 23d, 1849.

J. M. WALLACE, ESQ.,

*Dear Sir :—*I embrace the earliest opportunity after my arrival here, and having obtained sufficient information to be of interest, to address you on the subject of my mission here on behalf of the Association.

I had a very pleasant passage of a little more than eleven days to Liverpool, from Boston. Coventry, where I now stop, is about one hundred miles from Liverpool and about the same distance from London. Stoneleigh Abbey is about five miles from this place. The day after my arrival here, I rode out to the Abbey in company with the Landlord with whom I am stopping. It has heretofore been customary for strangers to visit the place, and they have been permitted to ride through the park and see the bridge, of which we have heard so much as an object of great curiosity for its architectural beauty, and my Landlord thought we could be permitted to do the same, but we were refused permission. No visitors are now allowed the privilege. The trial of Lord Leigh, for murder, has resulted in his acquittal; but, I am told that half of the people in Coventry believe him guilty of more or less crimes in connexion with that estate. And yet, I find here a fearfulness on the part of citizens in expressing their convictions in relation to it, lest they should be made to suffer from it. In fact, I was told in confidence by a respectable gentleman with whom I have had a little confidential

acquaintance since here, that, in his opinion, a person's life would not be safe here, if it would be for the interest of the Leighs to suppress evidence in regard to that estate. He says there is a singular mystery hanging over that estate. Several of the tenants have lately been removed peremptorily for expressing an opinion unfavorably to the Leigh's.

The Crown has taken no action whatever, as I can learn, about the estate. The question of title to the property was not so much the question at law as the question of murder of persons supposed to be in the secret of the titles. The Attorney who conducted the prosecution, has been sued for libel on Lord Leigh, tried, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment at Warwick. There is much sympathy manifested on his behalf by the people. His name is Griffin, and I supposed I should be able to learn from him something of importance to us, but if I can see him at all it must be only in the presence of a government officer; and then it is a question, in my own mind, whether it will be safe to enquire what is necessary. You may rest assured that I shall leave no stone unturned that may contain the desired information. This much I have learned already: Some part of the estate has been in the undisputed claim of some one by the name of Leigh, for over three hundred years. About 1680, there was a large accession made to this estate by purchase or otherwise, from some person or persons unknown. In 1618, Robert, the Earl of Warwick, [no other name used only this,] died, and was succeeded by his oldest son, Robert, to the Earldom. This much I have obtained from undisputed history, and it may lead to other discoveries hereafter. There is a man living on a small estate, enclosed by the land of the Stoneleigh estate, by the name of Wilson, and it is in that part nearest Warwickshire or Warwick. You must understand that I am conducting all of my enquiries without causing the least suspicion that I am interested in the Stoneleigh estate. Although I have not yet succeeded in learning anything directly to our advantage, I think I have been so far highly favored in the object of my visit here. I intend to visit London next week. Should anything transpire worthy of note before the sailing of the next Steamer, I shall write.

You will probably like to know something about this estate. Let me say that no American, who has never visited this country, can dream of its loveliness and splendor. The estate, of which Lord Leigh now holds possession, is considered one of the best in England—best in its landed property. It consist of about 25,000 acres of the most fertile land in the kingdom. Its income is between \$500,000 to \$600,000 annually. This income is realized from the rent of farms on the estate, which embraces but a small part of the territory in extent. Much of it is laid out in a beautiful Park for deer and other wild game. I rode around it and through it on the

public roads. The Abbey, which is the residence of Lord Leigh, is distant from the main roads and can be seen only in the rear. No one can have a view of the front or the bridge without passing the lodges, as they are termed, where there are gates securely fastened on the entrance to the Abbey, and protected by family servants who reside at these entrances for the purpose of watching them day and night. Such are the laws here, that, should any person pass these gates, or scale the fences to enter any part of an estate thus secured, he is liable to prosecution and imprisonment for not less than three months. I send you a paper of Coventry, see the poetry on Stoneleigh.

Truly yours,

WM. S. WILDER.

The three following letters are all, (if I am rightly informed), that the Association afterwards received from Mr. Wilder; and, I am informed, considerable pains has been taken, since his return to America, to see him, but without success. Thus, mystery seems to be added to mystery.

159 ALDERSGATE ST., London, Aug. 2, 1849.

MR. WALLACE,

As the Steamer sails for America on Saturday, I write you from here without being able to communicate much information, only knowing you will be anxious to hear from me often as to my whereabouts. I can say truly that, since my arrival in England, I have not been idle; I have passed myself off as an antiquarian, and my researches have been in perfect keeping with my business. Records, churches, tombstones, monuments, armorial inscriptions, family arms, castles, history, biography, peerage, &c., &c., have been examined for some tangible data and evidence upon which I could pursue more definitely my investigations, and, I think, not wholly without effect. It is true that there has been much mystery thrown around our claim to property here, arising from incorrect dates, names, and places. Although I have yet no new evidence of our claim, and yet there is still a mystery surrounding it. I am more than ever convinced that there is an immense property here that rightfully belongs to the Wilson heirs. Before I left Coventry, I employed an individual in whom I have the fullest confidence, to make some investigations, that it would not be safe for me to make there, which, I trust, will aid me on my return to that place, as I contemplate doing in a few days. Yesterday, I found a man who has lived for 35 years in the immediate vicinity of what used to be called Fryingpan Alley. The ground is near London

Bridge. Seventeen years ago, the old London bridge and the old houses in the vicinity, including Fryingpan Alley buildings, were removed, and a new bridge has been erected and the streets newly arranged. On Fryingpan Alley, there is a large warehouse on one part, and the east is used for a passway to St. Saviour's dock. Hon. Mr. Humphrey, one of the present Alderman of the City of London, and formerly its Mayor, holds this land on a lease—from whom I have not yet heard, but shall probably soon. My informant assures me, that there is no one here who has any legal claim to it. This appears to be a notorious fact. The locality is one of the most valuable of any in London, on that side of the river now. The bridges on it are expensive. So much for fact.

And now, as to tradition of the family of Wilsons—there has been many error entertained. There has been no Wilson, Earl of Warwick. Arthur Wilson, born in Yarmouth in 1596, became a General under the Earl of Essex, in the war with the Dutch in 1625; and, in 1637, was steward to Earl Robert Greville, Earl of Warwick, and died in Felsted, Essex Co., in 1652. Robert Greville, Earl of Warwick, died, or rather was killed in battle in 1643. Francis Greville succeeded his father, and died the same year. Robert Greville, brother to Francis, was the next Earl, and he died in 1676, and the present Earl of Warwick is a regular descendant of that family. There has been no Lord Mayor of London by the name of Wilson. I find that the name is very common all over the kingdom. Some have been eminent as statesmen, some of military note, some eminent clergymen, historians and artists named Wilson, are enterwoven honorably in the history of England. But enough at present, I can only hope to write more favorably hereafter.

Respectfully yours,

WM. S. WILDER.

17 BUTTON ST., Liverpool, Sept. 11, 1849.

DEAR SIR:—I have for some time, since I last wrote you, been very busy, truly, in examining records and everything else almost concerning my business here, and am now to sail for America in the *Roscius*, bound to New York. I have not now time to state to you very particularly the result, but shall do so, I hope, soon by letter or personally. The end is not yet. I have left the pursuit to be still continued by one in whom I have the utmost confidence. I have thrown off all secrecy about my mission for some time past, what would not have been prudent at first; but now, from the acquaintance I have formed with persons in London, Coventry, Warwick, Litchfield, Birmingham, and in this place, I regard as safe. I have found friends on every hand in all of these places

which I have visited, and a willingness on their part to render any assistance required. No satisfactory evidence has yet been found to establish our claim. But, I am sure, if it is anywhere in existence it will be found. The assistance of Mr. Griffin is needed, but, as I think I told you before, he is in prison and cannot act. An effort is to be made to have him released from close confinement, and probably he will be within a few months. Matters are now in such a state that it is useless for me to remain longer at present. I can truly say, only as my firm belief, that the Wilson heirs are justly entitled to a portion of the present Stoneleigh Abbey Estate, and that Lord Leigh will not long remain so securely in his ill-gotten possessions as he has been.

In haste. yours, &c.,

WM. S. WILDER.

AT SEA, Sept. 21, 1849.

DEAR SIR:—I am now on my return to America, having done all that, I think, can be done at present with reference to our claim in England. I have arrived at certain facts which may lead to an important and a desirable result. It is certain that the prosecution of our claim to the property, either in London or Stoneleigh, is a matter that cannot be done in haste, nor effectually done without some more tangible evidence than has yet been discovered. The property, both at Stoneleigh and in London, is now occupied by individuals that have, of themselves, no evidence of ownership. The Stoneleigh property to which we can pretend to have any claim, is only a part of the Stoneleigh Abby Estate, and that estate is held by Lord Chandas Leigh, only by permission of the Crown; and, probably, the Crown will never confirm to him any stronger title than he now has, and a train of procedure is now in progress which may soon divest him of all claim or possession. That in London is in the possession of the city corporation, and Alderman Humphrey holds a lease of it from the city of London. I have not yet been able to find any evidence of the existence of any Robert Wilson, at any time, having two sons, named Benjamin and William. Wilson is a very common name all over England. I find in the Doctor's Commons six Wills, of six different persons named Robert Wilson, proved between the years of 1632 and 1740, but none of them had either a Benjamin or a William named in these Wills, or any property in London or Stoneleigh. I found, in Litchfield, three Wills of three different Robert Wilsons, but with no better success. I found, also in Litchfield, one Will of Ann Wilson, of Stoneleigh parish, enumerating a large personal property given to various persons, but nothing to identify the object of my pursuit. I found

also in Litchfield, the administration of an estate of a Benj. Wilson about 1700, of Warwickshire, but nothing of any papers to identify the property disposed of. I found in Dugdalis' History of Warwickshire, the mention of a Wm. Wilson who resided there about 1680, but nothing connecting his name with the Stoneleigh estate; —also, a Nicholas Wilson who disposed of land in Warwickshire, about the same time. I have the exact dates of these, but they are not now before me while writing. I could not find any connection of any Wilson with the ownership of the Stoneleigh Estate, or as Lord Mayor of London, or Earl of Warwick. In fact, I think this all must have been false tradition. The only plausibility that appears to favor such an idea is the fact that, in possession of certain estates, persons have assumed the name connected with those estates. I am told that the present Lord Leigh was once known by the name of Smith, but was really a descendant from one of the ancient Leigh family. There is another family of the Leighs who claim a more direct descent. The whole history of the Leighs and of the Stoneleigh estate, is involved in mystery. I have used the best means of which I was capable, while in England, to ferret out some substantial evidence, but so far without any satisfactory result. I feel assured that if any thing can be done, it will yet be done. There are hundreds of persons who believe that the most enormous crimes have been committed to conceal the evidences that would dispossess Lord Leigh of the Stoneleigh estate. And I found, after making known my business publicly as I did, soon as I found it safe to do so, that everywhere there were those who would cheerfully aid me so far as they could safely do it. Solicitor Griffin collected together a vast amount of evidence against Lord Leigh, and had it published and circulated in a pamphlet form. This book was the ground of prosecution by Lord Leigh against Griffin. For this he was indicted and tried, and the jury brought in a verdict of guilty for a libel on Lord Leigh. There are a large number of copies in existence somewhere, but I was not able to obtain a copy until just before I sailed, for the reason that to circulate the book makes the person liable to imprisonment. Hence, with the exception of the gentleman who furnished me with this copy, I found no one who dared to let me have one at any price. At present, all that can be done, can be as well done through the means which I have put in requisition, as though I should remain longer in England and perhaps better; for although, during the last two weeks I was there, I felt no fear of danger, yet I was cautioned by my friends that my life was less secure there than it would be in America. I am in hopes of seeing you before long.

I remain, respectfully,

Yours, &c.,

WM. S. WILDER.

We can only say of these letters written by Mr. Wilder, that they are very singular, but his conduct since his return in not reporting to the Association nor holding any further communication with them is more singular. It is impossible to conjecture what his object can be.

The following was printed in Walpole, September 12, 1806, taken from a Boston paper: "Died, in England, the Hon. Mrs. Leigh, of Stonley. By her death an estate which sixty years since rented at £17,000 per annum devolves upon some unknown heir at law."

Columbus Smith informs me that there has been at different times six Fryingpan Alleys in London, viz :

1. Fryingpan Alley, on the North side and about the middle of Tuthil Street, Westminster.
2. Fryingpan Alley, on the Ely side of Turnmel Street, near Clerkenwell Green.
3. Fryingpan Alley, in the West part of Spettlefields, a passage from Petticoat Lane to Bell Lane.
4. Fryingpan Alley, on the Abby side of Long Lane, near Kent Street, Southwork.
5. Fryingpan Alley, on the East side of Maes in Southwork.
6. Fryingpan Alley, running West out of Wood Street, Fleet Street, against the Church.

From dates he feels confident that the Wilson property could not have been any other than the Fryingpan Alley near Clerkenwell Green. This, he informs me, he went through about ten years ago, still bearing the name of Fryingpan Alley. It is a narrow Alley with brick buildings on each side, and at that time it was not considered very valuable, being inhabited by the lowest people in London. It was in this neighborhood that thieves congregated. That while he was there the buildings in front of this Alley were all torn down and a splendid street was laid out running from Black Friars Bridge. So that this property must have become very valuable, as business was fast working that way.

In 1857 the following letter was received from London :

LONDON, Oct. 5th, 1857.

To the descendants of Jeremiah Wilson, living in Brandon and vicinity, Vermont :

Having accidentally learned, before leaving New York in May last, that the descendants of the above named person reside in

Brandon, Vt., and that they claimed to be heirs to certain property in England. I have since my arrival here made some enquiries respecting such claim, and am fully convinced that the property claimed by such descendants consists in part of "Stoneleigh Abbey," also there is other property in London, situate in Fryingpan Alley, which place I have recently visited. I have also gained some information relative to a case styled "the very mysterious Lea Case."

If from what few hints I am at this time able to give you relative to this claim, you should fancy yourselves interested in this matter, I should be pleased to hear from you, and also, if you wish it, make a further investigation of the claim; which I will do on the most liberal terms.

Trusting that I shall hear from you relative to this matter,
I remain very respectfully yours,

J. A. KNIGHTS.

P. S. My address for the present is, Reading Room, British Museum, London, England—care of H. Hind, Esq.

I am not aware that this letter was ever answered.

Mr. Knights, I am informed, is an American now in London, and during the rebellion has edited a paper there, having been there previously engaged in investigating American claims.

The foregoing information speaks for itself. I think there can be no doubt but the Wilsons in America, descending from Jeremiah Wilson, are justly entitled to millions of dollars worth of property in England. And as we all of us know of large estates long standing having been recovered in England for American claimants, why cannot this mysterious case be ferreted out and the property recovered for its real owners.

It truly seems to be a case worthy of the prompt attention of the claimants. For if the property can be recovered, certainly those ought to enjoy it who are justly entitled to it; and if it cannot be recovered the sooner it is known the better it must be for the claimants.

It is hoped that all the Wilson descendants will now feel an interest in this matter and become members of the Wilson Association, and that many of them will take Scrips so that the money shall soon be raised to pay the expenses of a thorough investigation in England. The Scrips are now ready for sale, many have already been taken by members of the family. The Wilson Association

make very liberal offers in the Scrips to their purchasers. If successful, it will be seen that a large amount of money must first be paid to the holders of the Scrips. It is thought best, first, to offer to members of the family these Scrips before giving the chances to strangers, so that, if successful, most of the money shall remain in the hands of those who are now interested. Such as are not taken by the members of the Wilson family, will be offered to strangers. So we hope that all members of the Wilson family who desire Scrips will send for them without delay.

P E D I G R E E S .

- I. Benjamin Wilson; Jonathan Wilson; ——— Wilson, died young.
Benjamin Wilson married and had issue, viz :
- II. Benjamin Wilson, Jr. ; Samuel Wilson.
Benjamin Wilson, Jr., married and had issue by his first wife
- III. Joseph Wilson; and by his second wife,
Nathaniel Wilson, John Lucius Wilson, Jonathan Wilson and Ezekiel Wilson.
John Lucius Wilson, above named, married. He lived in Killingsby, Conn. He had issue, viz :
- IV. William Wilson.
Francis Wilson, who married Abigail Fellows of Tolland, Ct., February 10, 1757, died January 15, 1767, from amputation of his leg, aged 34. He settled in Coventry, Conn. The children of Francis and Abigail were,
- V. 1. Anne Wilson, b in Coventry, Conn., Jan. 1st, 1757.
2. Abigail “ “ “ July 1st, 1759, m Holbrook.
3. Ruth “ “ “ April 3d, 1761, m Crane.
4. Francis “ “ “ January 11th, 1763, m Temperance Giddings, (cousin of Joshua R. Giddings,) studied medicine with Nathan Smith, settled and practiced medicine in Lancaster, N. H., and died June 9th, 1811. His wife died August 31st, 1811.
5. Stephen Wilson, b in Coventry, November 14, 1764.
6. Submit “ “ February 12, 1767, m Buck.
The children of Dr. Francis and Temperance, were,
- VI. Harvey Wilson, who married, 1st, Betsey Rogers of Middlebury, Vt., next Charlotte Keyes of Burlington, Vt., and finally Fanny Pomeroy of Otisco, N. Y., and lives now in Auburn, N. Y.
Anna Wilson married Wrightman Chapman of Middlebury, Vt., and died in Brandon, Vt.
Mary Wilson married John Vaillette of Middlebury, Vt., and still lives there.

Harriett Wilson died unmarried in Middlebury, Vt.

Francis Wilson, born in Lancaster, N. H., Oct. 9th, 1803, married Rachel Lucretia Leavenworth of Hinesburgh, Vt., where he settled and died September 37th, 1864.

Caroline Wilson married David B. Drake, and resides in Stockholm, N. Y.

The children of Francis and Rachel L. Wilson, above named, were,

VII. Lucretia Leavenworth Wilson, who was born in Hinesburgh, Vt., married Rev. J. B. Perry, and died March 28th, 1857.

Henry Miller Wilson, born in Hinesburgh, May 31, 1835, and married Sarah A. Greggs of Corning, N. Y., September 3d, 1857, and now lives in Hinesburgh. Their children are

VIII. Francis Wilson, born January 10th, 1861, and died December 9th, 1861.

Robert Howland Wilson, born December 26th, 1862.

The following has been received by E. J. Ormsbee, of Brandon :

Benjamin Wilson (the first) was born in England. After emigrating to America, he married a Fuller and had two sons and seven daughters. The daughters married:—Ruth a Jacob ; Rebecca a Whiting ; Elizabeth a Carpenter ; Bethiah a Willmott ; one a Cobb ; one a Hallet, and one a Franklin. The boys were Benjamin and Samuel. Benjamin married a Ross, in New Jersey:—his sons by his first wife, Joseph, Moses and Francis,—Benjamin married for his second wife, widow Elizabeth Darril, whose maiden name was Sprague ; by whom he had seven sons and one daughter—the sons of Benjamin, by his second wife, were Nathaniel, John, Lucas, Ami, Benjamin, Jonathan and Ezekiel.

Jonathan Wilson, son of Benjamin by widow Elizabeth Darril, married Lucy Blondin of Phelocuth, Mass., by whom he had nine sons and three daughters. The oldest, James, married Molly Rich ; Jonathan married Matilda Rich ; William Blondin married for his first wife Sally Rich ; for his second wife Polly Rich ; Ebenezer married Polly Redfield ; Christopher married for his first wife Charissa Rich, for his second wife Lucy Rich ; Ezekiel married Elizabeth Rich ; Shubel died unmarried ; Reuben married Lucinda Rich ; Joseph married, for his first wife, Eunice Ball, for his second wife Nancy Reed, for his third wife widow Ball ; Lucy married Moses Leonard ; Roxanna died unmarried ; Sally married Jacob Rich.

William Blondin Wilson, had, by his first wife, six children,—by his second wife, seven children. The children by this first wife who survived childhood, were : Phebe, who married Charles Oliver ; Lucy, who married Joshua Healey ; Sally who married Charles Stevens, (all raised large families who now live in Dansville, Steben County, New York.

The children of William Blondin Wilson by his second wife, were, Polly ; William G., who now resides in Shoreham, Vt. ; Louisa, who died young ; Ebenezer, who, I think, is in Minnesota ; Rosina, who married Joshua Atwood, who now resides at or near Briggsvill, Wis. ; Lucinda, who married Edwin R. Cudworth, and now resides in Shoreham, Vt. ; Alvira, who married Edwin R. Rich, who now lives in Shoreham, Vt. ; Polly married John M. Ormsbee, who now resides in Brandon, Vt. The children of John M. Ormsbee and Polly Wilson, were, John M., Jr., now in Sacramento, California ; William M., now of Geneva, Ill. ; Ebenezer J. ; Mary L. ; Lydia, deceased ; Charles J., deceased ; Edgar F., deceased ; Agnes H. and Abby E., of Brandon, Vt.

All of which is respectfully submitted by

E. J. ORMSBEE,

N. B.—Benjamin, the elder, had two brothers, one of whom was named Jonathan, and was a lawyer.

Brandon, Vt., February 12th, 1866.

The following pedigree has been forwarded by Caleb Wilson, of Topsham, Vt.

- I. Benjamin Wilson, of Fryingpan Alley, London, came to America in 1665. His son, Jeremiah, was born the same year in Charlestown, Mass.
- II. Jeremiah m ———, and had issue, viz :
- III. Jonathan was born in Dewsbury, Mass., September 2d, 1703.— Executor of his father's will, 1743. Joseph Wilder, Probate Judge. Jonathan died in Leominster, Mass., March 31, 1789. He married and had issue, viz :
- IV. Jacob, Caleb, David and Luke, and four daughters.
Caleb, son of Jonathan above named, m and had issue, viz :
- V. Susan Wilson married Aaron Butterfield.
Caleb, born, June 17, 1775, Winchendon, Mass., married Polly McKeith in Topsham, April 25th, 1800, and died in Topshams, April 12th, 1856. Their children were,
- VI. Jane, born March 14, 1801, died March 23d, 1844.
Caleb, born April 25th, 1803.
Harris, born February 4th, 1805.
George McKeith, born March 22d, 1809.
Sarah McKeith, born March 4th, 1811, died June 20th, 1842.
Mary, born October 10th, 1813.
Susan, born May 28th, 1820.
William George, born July 21st, 1822.
Duncan McKeith, born May 14th, 1824.
Luke Dexter, born March 7th, 1827, and died January 1st, 1860.

The following is a very full pedigree of a branch of the family, but the dates are wanting, consequently very imperfect.

- I. Benjamin Wilson came to America, A. D. 1665, and settled in Leominster, Mass., and had issue by his wife Ann, viz :
- II. Jeremiah, born in Charlestown, Mass., October 26th, 1665, and died March 22d, 1743. He married and had issue, viz :
- III. Joseph, Nathaniel, Samuel and Jonathan.
Jonathan Wilson was born September 3d, 1703, and died in Leominster, March 31st, 1789.
Joseph married Rebecca Phelps, and had issue, by his first wife, viz :
- IV. 1. David married Abigail Scott. 2. P. Page. 3. Elijah married Lucy Chamberlin. Joseph had, by his second wife who was a Wilson, 4. Abner, who married Lydia Chamberlin and Deliverance. Elijah and Lucy, above named, had issue, viz :
- V. 1. Lydia Wilson, who married Samuel Chamberlin, and had issue, viz : Samuel, Levi, Joshua, Caleb and Rebecca.
2. Elepha married Elisha Flagg, and had issue, viz : Earl, Elijah, Sarah and two others.
3. Molley married ——— Smith, and had two sons by him ; and by her second husband ——— Stone, had issue, one daughter.
- III. Nathaniel Wilson, the son of Jeremiah, married Eunice Dayenport, and had issue, viz :

- IV. 1. Peter married Hepsabeth Wilson, his cousin. 2. Paul married Ruth Burnham. 3. Molly married her cousin, John Wilson. 4. Eunice. 5. Thankful married Richard Townsend. 6. Bewlah married Ismael Sawyer. 7. Rhoda married John Burnham.
- III. Samuel Wilson, son of Jeremiah, married Molley Davenport, and had issue.
- IV. John Wilson married Molley Wilson. Samuel married Susan Divol. Benjamin married ———. Betsey married Ezra Freeman.
- III. Jonathan Wilson, son of Jeremiah above named, was born in Tewksbury, September 2, 1702, married Hepsalieth Wilder, and had issue, viz:
- IV. 1. Jacob; 2. Caleb; 3. Luke; 4. David, and daughters, 5. Louis; 6. Mary; 7. Hepsalieth, and 8. Betsey.
5. Louis married Mikel Wood, and had issue, viz: Abel, Louis, Elepha, Susan and Hepsabeth.
6. Mary married Joseph Houghton, for her first husband, by whom she had four children, viz: 1. Elijah; 2. Martha; 2. Thankful, and 4. Mary. She married for her second husband, David Wilson, and had by him five children, two of whom had heirs, viz: Ashel and Thankful Wilson.
- V. 1. Elijah, son of Mary and Joseph Houghton, above named, married Polly Gray, and had eight children, viz: Euriab, Sophia, Polly, Thankful, Amos, Martha and Emory.
2. Martha Houghton, daughter of Mary and Joseph, married John Law, and had two children, viz: Joseph and John.
3. Thankful married Israel Sawyer, and had one son, viz: Elijah.
4. Mary Houghton married Joel Lockling, and had children, viz: Chloe, Silvanus, Almon, Martha, Joel, Joseph, Curtis, Free-love and Florinda.
- IV. 7. Betsey, above named, daughter of Jonathan, married Ebenezer Wilder, and had issue,
- V. Seven children, Jacob, Perry, Paul, Jonathan, Betsey, Nancy and Bewlah.
- IV. Hepsabeth, daughter of Jonathan, married Peter Wilson, and had children, viz:
- V. Gardner, Peter, Caleb, Charles, Eunice, Thankful, Hulda, Hepsabeth.
- IV. 1. Jacob, son of Jonathan above named, married P. Freeman, and had issue, viz:
- V. Jacob, David, Esther, Polly and Hepsabeth.
- IV. 2. Caleb married Phoebe Divol, and had issue, viz:
- V. Susan and Caleb.
- IV. 3. Luke married Anna Wilder, and had issue four children, Ezra, Lydia, Nancy and Esher.
- IV. 4. David married Dorcus Osgood, and had issue, viz:
- V. Dorcus, Jonathan, Olive, Luke, Calvin and Betsey.

The principal part of the following pedigree was furnished by Mrs. J. A. Doane, of Shoreham, Vt., mostly taken from a family record in the

Bible of John Wilson, who settled in Taunton, now in possession of Mrs. Blinn, in Shoreham. This bible was printed in 1741.

- I. John Wilson settled in Taunton, Mass., married and had issue, one son, viz :
- II. John Wilson, who married Mary Green, of Worcester, Mass., and had issue, a son and a daughter, viz :
- III. Dorcus and John Wilson, who married Cynthia Gould, February 5th, 1781, and settled in Warwick, Mass. He practiced medicine, and died February 6th, 1829, and she died March 5th, 1824. They had issue, viz :
- IV. 1. Gardner Wilson, born Feb. 3d, 1783, married and had issue, viz : Catherine, who married ——— Clark, now living in Woodstock, Ill., and S. P. Wilson, now living in Waddington, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y.
2. Betsey Wilson, born July 30th, 1785, married Dr. E. Blinn, who died March 28th, 1842. She is now living in Shoreham, Vt.
3. John Wilson, born Jan. 25th, 1788, married Deborah Cushman, June 14th, 1812, resided in Shoreham, Vt., and had seven children, viz :
- V. 1. Jaze Ann Wilson, born July 1st, 1813, married Schuyler Doane, where they reside.
2. Mary Ann Wilson, born May 22d, 1815, married Abner Wells, both dead, s. p.
3. John Blin Wilson, born Sept. 19th, 1817, died, his widow is in Lassur, Michigan.
4. Charlotte Wilson, born Oct. 13th, 1820, died young.
5. John Wilson, born Oct. 21st, 1822, died young.
6. Clark Wilson, born April 17th, 1825, is now at 117 Bowery, New York city.
7. William Wallace Wilson, born May 20th, 1828, resides in Lassur, Michigan.

Durfee Wilson, born in Leicester, Mass., Jan. 23d, 1788, had four brothers, viz : John, Daniel, Wesswell and Nathaniel, and five sisters.

Durfee Wilson, died in Colchester, Vt., Oct. 17th, 1850, leaving children, viz :

Eliza Ann m Loomis, lives in Champlain, N. Y.

Merritt B. Wilson, " " "

Durfee R. " lives in Tolono, Ill.

Henderson C. Wilson, lives in Colchester, Vt.

Nathaniel E. " " " "

Harriett A. Chamberlin, lives in Plattsburgh, N. Y.

The following pedigree is taken from Dr. Bond's History of Watertown, Mass., page 975, purporting to belong to the Wilson family.

WOOLSON.—Thomas Woolson, Sen., was selectmen 1699, 1700, 1702, 1703. It is probable that the correct orthography of this name is

Wilson, and that Thomas Woolson was related to a family of Wilsons in Newton. In the church records of Weston, it is sometimes written Wilson, and likewise in Watertown records.

Thomas Woolson, Jr., and family, moved to Watertown, 1715.

Capt. Jonas Woolson, of New Ipswich in 1739, one of the first five settlers therein, m., June 23, 1742, Susanna Willis, of Townsend. He died 1790, aged 78, and his wife died 1796, aged 70. Chil.,

1. Elizabeth, born 1743, went to Wat., May, 1766, and caution entered; died 1794.

2. Susanna, born 1745. 3. Martha, born 1751. 4. Jonas, born 1757. [See His. of New Ipswich, p. 444.]

Sybil Rooper was probably a daughter of Ephraim and Sybil, of Sudbury.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

H. O. SMITH.

Monkton, Vt., April, 1866.