

## WILLIAM WILCOXSON

The compiling of the genealogy of the clan in diaspora is a very difficult process but herein the writer, who sometimes styles himself, "the compiler," submits the known data on his own personal clan; The Descendants of William Wilcoxson. As indicated previously this data was accumulated over a long period of years, either from textual or living sources. Some of these will be mentioned in place .

### WILLIAM WILCOXSON OF WIRKSWORTH, ENGLAND

William Wilcoxson, head of our clan in America, came to New England with his wife Margaret Birdseye and son John on the ship Planter in the summer of 1635 AD. This much we have positively from *Hotten's Lists*, a source which also affirms that our ancestor was 34 years old at that time. This identifies his birth year as 1601. William Wilcoxson, his fellow passengers and some of his later neighbors in Stratford, Connecticut, appear to have known each other previous to the transatlantic journey. In all probability some of them had been old neighbors in Derbyshire. There is also evidence that some of them were related to each other as in-laws and distaff cousins.

The group which sailed on the Planter were vouched for in a blanket certificate of character by a Church of England minister who was then accredited to St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England. Because of this circumstance various investigators, including this compiler, were first led, as by a "bum steer," to suppose that the former Wilcoxson home was in Hertfordshire. How this theory was finally exploded is explained in two or three pages of the Preliminary Report.

However misleading the Hotten account may have been as to the geographic origin of our ancestor, there was one little notation in it that has been fruitful of results. That was the notation to the effect that William Wilcoxson's occupation was a "lynen weaver."

So, he was a weaver of linen cloth. This led me to researching the economic history of flax growing and linen weaving in England. I found that the industry of flax growing and linen weaving was only in the embryo stage at that time, being confined almost wholly to the shire of Derby. From *Victoria History of Derbyshire*, Vol. 2, pg. 372, I gleaned a significant passage which reads:

There was a small manufacture of linen sheets, tapes and other articles at Belper, Chesterfield and Wirksworth. This had gone on for centuries.

Reverting then to works of a more biographical character I found the new lead paying off splendidly. Members of the Wilcoxson family did live in Derbyshire, both prior and subsequent to 1635. I got this from the parish records of Derbyshire, fifteen of which have been printed. Indeed, Wilcoxsons appear in several Derbyshire villages and there is the same embarrassment of similar given names that one finds at a later time in Connecticut. Namely, it is difficult to determine who was the son of whom.

In an attempt to solve the mystery of William Wilcoxson's immediate parentage I sent to Lichfield, England some time ago. Old records for Derbyshire are still extant there. I asked for photostats of any Wilcoxsons deceased between 1550 and 1650 AD. However, when my long awaited treasures arrived they did not prove too revealing. For

one thing, the English script is nearly as illegible to modern eyes as the cursive writing of Arabia might be. Nevertheless, I struggled with the photostats until I made out the names of the Wilcoxson testators in each case as well as the persons among whom the estates were partitioned. Of the entire bunch of testaments I settled at last upon the will of a certain William Wilcoxson, who had deceased at Wirksworth, Derbyshire in the year 1626. In this document he made behest to:

1. George Wilcoxson
2. William Wilcoxson (described as "my younger brother")
3. Ann Wilcoxson
4. "Mazie" (the name may have been Margie or Margaret)

At the bottom of this document appears the name of Peter Wilcoxson who signed as a witness.

Here, then, we have a William Wilcoxson, son of a William Wilcoxson, who was 25 years old when his father died. Considering the fact that Wirksworth was a center of the linen industry and that our ancestor was a "lynen weaver," I consider the matter of his immediate forerunner definitely settled. His father was another William Wilcoxson, born probably about 1560 in Derbyshire.

Among my new treasures I also have a photostat which purports to be an inventory of the estate of a certain Edward Wilcoxson of Biggin, Derbyshire. He died in 1635. Unfortunately the will itself appears to have been lost. Nevertheless, this inventory is enough to establish that there was such a person and that he lived in Biggin. This village is not above 12 miles of Wirksworth and I consider it probable that Edward Wilcoxson was our William Wilcoxson's uncle and the father of Edward Wilcox, later of Rhode Island. I have something more to say in this connection a little farther along.

### TRACING THE WILCOXSONS BACK TO WALES

But the Wilcoxsons who lived in Derbyshire in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries were not the originators of the name. The name, Wilcoxson, began at least two centuries before they lived. Back in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, before they began to appear in Derby there was a considerable colony of Wilcoxsons living around Croston, Lancashire. At that time the name was written variously: Wilcockson, Wylcockson and Willcocsonne. But subsequent to 1550 or thereabouts the name began to disappear in the long form although there were still plenty of Wylcocks and Wilcocks about. In this connection it is evident that even four centuries ago the individual members of the family often took it upon themselves to shorten the paternal name.

But long before the Croston settlement Wilcoxsons in various spellings had appeared in the records of Denbigh and other Welsh shires. We observe then that the general course of migration for our family in that age was out of Wales into the shires of England. This was because of the fierce wars waged intermittently against the Welsh people by the Norman and Plantagenet kings. The latter having brought all of Anglo-saxondom under subjection were now determined to reduce every acre of Welsh soil to the sovereignty of the Crown. And what further contributed to the misery of the ordinary Welshman was the bitter recurrent feuds between his native princes. During the 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries Wales was in no sense a land of "peace and quiet." Thus the motto of migrants in that time could well have been: "Go Ease young man into the shires of England."



Our backtrack of the name, Wilcoxson has, therefore, brought us to Wales of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. But the name itself, how did it begin? Well, let us all take a "new look" at our name. Does the name imply that the son of some Wilcox person suddenly decided to encumber himself with "son" as an affix? No, the whole tradition has been just the opposite of that. People born with the name Wilcoxson drop the "son." No one has ever added it. Moreover, in the Wales of that time Wilcox did not occur as a family name. A man might be dubbed Griffith ap Owen but he was never so and so Owen. However, Wilcox was used in Wales very early as a given or Christian name. I have observed several instances of such usage in Welsh historical tracts. An example is a certain Wilcox Craddock of Powys, who was living around 1400 AD. He is mentioned in an American book, *Welsh Founders of Pennsylvania*. In this instance, incidentally, both the given and the surname are of significance to us. Craddock was anciently written Caradoc. There were several princes of this name in the Cynfynian dynasty which ruled Powys for three centuries or more.

This and other Wilcox – Craddock connections are hinted in a passage lifted from *Pittman's Americans of Gentle Birth*, Vol. I, Page 55. The passage reads:

Captain John Wilcox, Gentleman, who came from Wales, issued no doubt from the Craddocks with whom many intermarriages are noted in Welsh pedigrees.

I wish to make a suggestion to anyone who has the time and patience for research (I will never have time myself). Go through the record of Welsh marriages of that period and note every case in which Wilcox was used as a given name. Is it not a fact that this given name was only applied to men of the Bleddynian gens. If it can so be shown then all that I contend in the pages to follow will be positively verified.

But all of this does not answer our initial query as to how the curious name of Wilcoxson began. The answer, I think, lies in the significance we give to the second syllable of the name. Let us remember that COX is merely how the Welsh word COCH sounded to the Englishmen. When the English census clerks first met the Welsh population that is the way they wrote it down; either as COX or COCKS, like the plural of rooster.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WELSH WORD, COCH

But what does coch mean in the Welsh language? Basically, it means red – the plain, everyday color red. Because of a symbology which goes back for ages in the traditions of the Cymric people coch has associated connotations.

So far as the Welsh were concerned coch was never a surname. Nor was it a given name when used alone. It had more the character of a title of honor. The person addressed as Coch was invariably someone special. As the Spanish would say he was an hidalgo; that is, the son of somebody. In Wales the name was written both Coch and Goch and was restricted to certain gifted scions of princely blood. It doubtless referred back to a time when the several classes of the old Cymric society wore distinctively colored garments. Thus the druids dressed in symbolic white. The bards dressed in sky-blue. The Ovates dressed in green. The ruler and kindred immediately related to him dressed in the traditional purple. Purple, scarlet and various colors with a shade of red were all called coch. The Welsh language is rather deficient in words for the many shades of color.

## WHO WAS OUR NAME FATHER?

If we have strayed a bit into the customs of far antiquity it was because we deemed it necessary to make the significance of the word coch clearly understood.

But how did our name, Wilcoxson, begin and who was our first name father? We imagine the situation which gave rise to it was something like this: Some time, somewhere after the former rulers had been deposed, Wales swarmed with English functionaries seeking information about the inhabitants. Some time our own patrilineal ancestor was hailed and asked to deliver: "Well, who are you? What is your name?" Our unhappy ancestor (unhappy because he had lately been bereft of everything previously held dear) must have replied in the form current in Wales at that time: "I am William ap Will Coch." This the clerk wrote in English as William Will Coch's son. In this are some comparable situation, we verily believe, was the name Wilcoxson first created.

For the modern reader, whether he be of the Wilcoxson line or not, this only begs the question: Who was Will Coch?

## WHO WAS WILL COCH?

I imagine that 999 out of any thousand people who were asked this question would flunk it. Medieval Welsh history has little place in American curricula. History teachers are weeded to the vandal glories of the conquering Saxons and Normans and give little place to the Welsh who were the aboriginal Britons. They ignore America's vast debt to the Welsh. This, we think, is a thankless way to teach American history. For the migration to New England prior to the Revolution was heavily waterlogged with Welsh blood. Indeed, the whole idea of the Revolution was born out of the old Welsh habit of resisting and defying the monarchical government at London.

Will Coch was otherwise known as William de la Pole, Lord of Mowddy, a political division of North Wales. The span of his life ran from 1260 to 1315 AD. Will Coch's line runs back patrilineally to Bleddyn, founder of the Cynfynian dynasty which ruled North Wales as an independent, sovereign country for three centuries. Bleddyn's own derivation was always a matter of historical controversy. By his contemporary enemies he was often called an "upstart" who grabbed the throne in the right of his wife, daughter of the previous dynasty. By his friends Bleddyn was described as the "Cenedl of Brochmel" If the latter is true then Will Coch's line of patrilineal ancestors goes back to a dizzying antiquity which far antedates any of the royal families of Europe. However, his line back to Cynfyn is all that concerns us now and is shown below.

1. CYNFYN AP GWERISTAN: married Angharad, daughter of Meredith, ruler of South Wales. This was around the beginning of the present millenium.
2. BLEDDYN AP CYNFIN: founder of the Powysian dynasty and ruler of North Wales. Through his mother Bleddyn was also descended from Howell DDA (The Good) Welsh lawgiver and king of all Wales. Bleddyn was killed 1073 AD.
3. MEREDITH AP BLEDDYN: This individual had three sons: lowerth Coch, Madog (died 1160 AD.), Griffith (below)
4. GRIFFITH APO MEREDITH: "Lord of Cyfeliog and Prince of Powysland.
5. OWEN CYFEILOG: The "Prince bard" married Gwenllian dau. of Owen Gynedd. Owen Cyfeiliog died 1197.



6. GWENWYNWN: married Margaret, dau. of Corbet of Caus. He died 1216 AD.
7. GRYFFD or GRIFFITH: married Hawise, dau. of John le Strange. He was styled variously Cyfeiliog, de la Pole and Prince of Powys.
8. OWEN DE LA POLE: the last independent Prince of Powys. He surrendered his lands and titles to the Crown. He then received the lands back and the title of baron. Thenceforth he was merely a member of the English nobility with the requirement that he do homage to the king. Owen died 1293 AD.
9. WILL COCH: 4<sup>th</sup> son of GRIFFITH, and brother of OWEN. He received the lordship of Mowddy, a division of North Wales. Will Coch died in 1315, aged 55.
10. WILL COCH'S SON: presumptive name-father of the Wilcoxson's family and of such modern Wilcoxes as derive from that stock.

This rationalization of the origin of the gens of Wilcoxsons was arrived at after considerable reading in medieval Welsh history and reflection thereon. Most of our kinsmen, I believe, will be ready to accept the logic of it.

Nevertheless, this book is to go into various libraries where it may in time be inspected by professional genealogists and historians. Such gentry are invariably carping critics and always standing about like a wolf's companions eager to catch him at a disadvantage. These servants (know-it-alls) are sure to exclaim: "Why, there is no record that Will Coch ever had a son named William." Then they may go on to cite a passage which may be seen in Dwywn's "*Herald Visitation of Wales*" Vol II, page 242.

William or Wilcock, surnamed de la Pole, from the town of Pool in Powis land, was dead in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Edward, 1315 and his only son and heir (John) was at that time a minor.

However, in a work called *Sheriffs of Montgomeryshire*, page 367, we find this statement:

William Wilcock Lord of Mowddy, had a son Griffith, and a granddaughter Maud who had Sir Griffith Vaughn.

And in old Latin script I have myself seen an illusion to a certain Ricardus filius Wielmus Cocci. This was in Denbigh in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In modern English we would write this Richard Will Coch's son (Wilcoxson).

Thus historians are not at all in agreement about how many sons Will Coch had. As a matter of fact the Welsh princes and nobility of that age invariably had a number of sons who never got into the English records. In fact, few records, English or Welsh, were kept in that time. When a landlord died his eldest son won a place in the record as the next in succession. Not often was anything said about the younger sons. Sometimes they were numerous.

I wish to say a few words about the monarchical policy of that age. At that time the British Crown was in process of liquidating all independent Welsh sovereignty and placing it under the monarch. The clever Plantagenet kings devised a pattern of land succession which worked very well for their purpose.

Among the Welsh people succession to the land and what went with the land (suzerainty over the inhabitants) came down after gentile law, in the male line only. But when the

Plantagenets came into Wales they ignored that age-old custom entirely. Like Lycurgus "they set aside the people's law and instituted a plan that reminds us of the modern term, "Social Change." They affirmed that when a former landlord passed off of the worldly scene without apparent male heirs then the succession went to the oldest female child, if any had been born. Then this daughter with her entire entailment of territory, gentility and suzerainty was bestowed in marriage to one of the king's courtesans; someone "whom the king delighted to honor."

This method effectuated nearly as devastating a social change as Lenin's late revolution in Russia. It converted a great part of England to the immediate lordship of strangers and newcomers from the continent and to the overall control of the monarch.

One instance, right out of the history of the de la Pole family will serve to illustrate the general pattern of the land succession effected by the Plantagenets. When Owen de la Pole passed away he left no sons but did leave one daughter, Hawise. However, Owen left four brothers, including Will Coch. By old Welsh tribal law the succession in Powysland (Montgomeryshire) should have passed to the next older brother, Griffith. But the king altogether ignored the brothers and confirmed Hawise in the succession. He then married her off to John de Cherleton, one of his favorite henchmen. That is how the trick was done and how much of Wales and England was wrenched from "the people of the land" and bestowed upon strangers without demonstrable cynicism in Britain.

The king validated "John of Mowddu" as Will Coch's son and heir. But when his John died soon after leaving four daughters he found this very convenient for his purpose. Naturally, he did not look around much for other sons of Will Coch. He quickly found husbands for John's four girls and married them off.

John of Mowddu's daughters and their husbands:

1. Elizabeth, married Thomas Newport
2. Ancreda, married John Leighton
3. Isabel, married John Singer
4. Eleanor, married Thomas Mytton

The descendants of these four couples have figured in the aristocracy of Wales and England for centuries, their chief claim to land succession and gentility being that they could trace descent to Will Coch through one of his granddaughters.

WE observe also that the term, Will Coch's son was not passed on in the line of John of Mowddu. Nevertheless, believe it or not, Will Coch has plenty of name-line descendants today and it is our purpose to record a few of them in the later pages of this book.

After the dispossession the de la Poles and Will Coch's sons did not linger long in Powysland. The sight of strangers in possession of their former lands and honors – obtained force – fully by abducting their own sisters and female cousins – was too much to bear the sight of. They departed out of the land that had been their home for immemorial ages – from Arthurian times and before. They sought refuge in Lancashire, Derby and other English shires. There, after a few generations they merged with the yeomanry of England, the glory of their ancestors entirely forgotten.



We will mention a little item that points the kinship of all the above families to each other, to the de la Poles and to the Wilcoxsons. The arms flourished by these families all bear a close resemblance. Only after near inspection can one discover minor differences.

Moreover, as we follow the trail of the Wilcoxsons for two centuries or so after they left Wales we usually find them associated in the same neighborhoods with members of the de la Pole family. The de la Poles were prominent in Derby from the time of Gwenwynwyn. In one of his numerous deals with King John the Powysian prince was granted the manor of Ashford. That place is in the general vicinity of where several members of the Wilcoxson family were living in 1600 or thereabouts.

I could go on multiplying little facts and instances like this which, taken singly, amount to little, but which taken in summation constitute a preponderance of evidence as the lawyers say. It all points to the truth that the de la Poles and Will Coch's sons were close agnate cousins; that both were of the gens of Bleddyn and of the cenedl of the more ancient Brochmel.

I must hasten on to the account of Will Coch's sons in America but before bringing the medieval section of the book to a close I wish to submit a bibliography to any who may have time for reading and research on their own account. Only in the larger libraries of America is this entire list likely to be found. The Congressional Library and the New York Public Library would likely have all or most of them.

1. Heraldic Visitations of Wales
2. Sheriffs of Montgomeryshire
3. The Royal Tribes of Wales – Yorke
4. Annals & Antiquities of the Cymry – Williams
5. The Welsh People – John Rhys
6. The History of Powys Fadog – Lloyd
7. The Four Ancient Books of Wales – Skene
8. History of Wales – John E. Lloyd
9. Owen Glendower - Arthur G. Bradley
10. History of Wales – Gilbert Stone

Compiler also suggests to any of our people who happen to be in London at any time, that they visit the British Museum and ask to see Edward Owen's Catalogue of Manuscripts. This relates to ancient and medieval Wales and might be very fruitful information.

## WILCOXSONS AND WILCOXES IN EARLY AMERICA

We now bring our history of the Wilcoxsons to this side of the Atlantic. But first, in order that we may be better qualified to distinguish between the various branches of the family, let us make some mention of various Wilcoxson and Wilcox immigrants.

So far as New England is concerned only three individuals of these names appeared there in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. They were:

1. John Wilcox who settled at Hartford, Connecticut
2. Edward Wilcox who settled at Aquidneck, Rhode Island
3. William Wilcoxson who settled at Stratford, Connecticut

The descendants of these three men are now well distributed throughout the northern and western states of the U.S. Indeed, their descendants can be found in every state of the Union.

In my own researches I have never found any information to indicate that John Wilcox and his descendants were derived from the Wilcoxson family. Most sketches relating to them start off with the assertion that their first ancestor was of "Anglo-Saxons derivation and seated at Bury St. Edmunds, County of Suffolk, England before the Norman conquest." As to the truth of this statement I have nothing to offer in proof or disproof.

In early Connecticut records the descendants of John Wilcox are found in the towns of Hartford, Middletown, Berlin, Chatham, Portland and elsewhere. But in the great hegira to the West they often settled down in the same towns with the Wilcoxsons. As the latter had already dropped the son in most instances it became exceedingly difficult to distinguish one family from the other.

Although we cannot find place for them in this book, the descendants of Edward Wilcox of Rhode Island are of more than casual interest to us. For, there are several little items of circumstantial evidence which point to them too as Will Coch's sons. We believe them to be descended more immediately from Edward Wilcoxson whom we found deceased at Biggin, Derbyshire in 1635. The time frame is about right for Edward Wilcox of Rhode Island to have been his son. In all probability Edward was born under the name Wilcoxsons but dropped the "sons" when he came to America, as so much excess baggage.

But, how can we make such a bold assumption on such slender evidence? However, we are not through yet. There is another piece of evidence to present; the piece de resistance as the writing fellows would say.

We think that William and Edward were close cousins and that they had both known each other back in Derbyshire, because of the close personal ties which each of them had with a third person who also hailed from Derbyshire. The man we mean was Thomas Hazard who, when he first came to America sojourned for a time with the William Wilcoxson family at Stratford.

How do we know this? Well, some time ago we obtained a photostat of William Wilcoxson's will from the Conn. State Library at Hartford. The will is now badly mutilated (one ear torn off) and is just as difficult to read as are the English wills of a generation previous. Some account of William Wilcoxson's will and what it contains have been given in various printed accounts. However, we will have to claim credit for discovering



a fact that has never before been mentioned. The name of Thomas Hazard appears at least twice in the will. Nothing in the will is more readable than his name. At one place we can make out that it was the desire of William Wilcoxson that one of his children (name unreadable) was to have "that certain piece of land that had formerly been Thomas Hazard's."

This place Thomas Hazard in the town of Stratford at a time so early that his name never got into the town records. Evidently he had laid claim to town proprietorship in the town and then hearing from the other Wilcox(son) in Rhode Island he decided to join him there. Nothing more is heard about Thomas Hazard in Stratford or anywhere else in Connecticut. Subsequently, however, he figures in Rhode Island history in association with Edward Wilcox. Indeed Thomas's daughter Hannah, married Stephen Wilcox, son of Edward.

How did it happen, then, that Thomas Hazard turned over his proprietor's interest in Stratford town to William Wilcoxson. Right here, we think, might be found a solution to a mystery that has intrigued several generations of Wilcoxsons. Who was Margaret, our first American ancestress? What was her maiden name? The frame of circumstances whereby Thomas Hazard (back in Derby the name was written Hassard) turned over his interest in the new town to William Wilcoxson would fit perfectly if we supposed that they were brothers-in-law; that Margaret was Thomas Hazard's sister. We will be ready to accept this solution any time any consistent record of Margaret Hazard is found back in Derbyshire.

But, previously to the Thomas Hazard discovery, I had become pretty well convinced that Margaret was a Harvey. For generations back in Derbyshire and clear back to Wales the two families had lived side by side. In fact, they must have been pretty much interbred. (the name of the Harvey family in Wales was Hervie) Just prior to the American argonaut there is a record of the marriage of Richard Harvey of Danby, Derbyshire to Margaret Wilcoxson of Woodhouse, 9/20/1601. This was not the Richard Harvey who accompanied William Wilcoxson on the Planter – the latter was a much younger man who could have been a son of the couple indicated. Mr. Donald Lines Jacobus in a recent article in his journal about Derbyshire families mentions a James Harvey who had a daughter, Margaret Harvey, born 2/23/1610. This date coincides almost perfectly with our Margaret who was shown as 24 years old in 1635. However, we had better call Margaret's identity unsolved until a more exhaustive search is made of the Derbyshire records.

We will now mention three undoubted Wilcoxsons who came to America at a much later time than William and Edward.

One was Peter Wilcox of New Jersey. I have run into his descendants so many times that I had to compile a tentative chart of them in order to conveniently distinguish them from William's descendants. Peter first showed up at Jamaica, Long Island where he married Phoebe Badgley, Sept. 15, 1715. Later modern Westfield. There his descendants lived for several generations. I am pretty sure he was a Wilcoxson and not an "Anglo-Saxon" because of several little clues. There are several samples of his signature still extant and it can be noted that the name Wilcock or Wilcox trails off into some kind of suffix, scarcely legible but most likely meant for a "son." We remember also that Peter Wilcoxson of another generation of course, signed our ancestor's will at Wirksworth and that several of that name had lived in Derbyshire.

With his family in the far off New England wilderness. Sometime ago we ran across a passage I Benjamin Trumbull's *History of Connecticut*, page 410. He was writing about Reverend Adam Blakeman and the first settlers of Stratford:

Mr. Adam Blakeman who had episcopally ordained in England, a preacher of some note first at Leicester and afterward in Derbyshire, was their minister and one of the first planters. It was said that he followed by a number of the faithful into this country, in the language of Ruth:

Intreat us not to leave thee for whither thou goest we will go. They people shall be our people and they God our God.

William Wilcoxson was of this group of Blakeman-admirers. He had probably known Blakeman in Derbyshire and had heard him preach. Incidentally, it was probably Blakeman who, on the strength of some previous acquaintance with the Church of England minister at St. Albans, was able to wangle from the latter the required certificate of character for the group on the Planter.

The earliest map of Stratford shows the town as it was laid out and occupied by the Wilcoxsons and 16 other families in the year 1639. This map shows William Wilcoxsons' lot in the center of the town. On one side of it was the lot of William Wilcoxson and on the other that of John Peat. Across the street lived widow Elizabeth Curtis, Francis Nichols, Thomas Fairchild and Arthur Bostwick. Farther down the street lived Richard Harvey who, with William Beardsley, had come over on the Planter with William Wilcoxson.

In the years immediately following other families settled in Stratford. Their names should be remembered as our first neighbors in America. Indeed, many of them were neighbors and in some cases in-laws and distaff cousins back in Derbyshire. Among these let us remember Beach, Hull, Pickett, Groves, Porter, Hayden, Stiles, Judson, Hurd, Wheeler, Wells, Preston, Rice or Royce, Sherman, Sherwood, Nichols, Beers, Titterton, Tomlinson, Brinsmade, Birdseye, Mills, Coe, Blakeman, Booth, Hawley, Quemby and Ufford.

## THE VILLAGE OF STRATFORD

At the very beginning of its settlement Stratford was called Pequennocke after the ancient Indian names of the environing region. The name was first changed to Cupheag Plantation and later into Stratford. This name, of course, suggests Stratford-on-Avon which is located in the shire next to Derbyshire! However, I question if this had anything to do with the classic name of Shakespeare. At that time Shakespeare's writings had attained little vogue and it is doubtful if any of the Cupheag settlers had ever heard of him.

However it came by its name, the site of Stratford, on the western shore of the Housatonic River near where that stream empties into Long Island Sound, was ever a spectacle of haunting beauty and charm. It may be that modern Stratford is more or less overshadowed and swallowed by the great modern industrial city of Bridgeport but in his own day Orcutt could still say of it.



Stratford was and is a beautiful spot of earth and they who have wandered from it and have looked back with pride as well as with longing hearts have also wished that the destinies of men would have allowed them to tarry by the old hearthstones of their ancestors until the work of life should have been accomplished and many more will look back from the far distant countries and proclaim with joy that they descend from the early planters of this good old town.

Such was the first permanent home of the Wilcoxsons. The town has been described quite fully by William Howard Wilcoxson, present town clerk in his *History of Stratford*. This work was published in 1939 on the tri-centennial of the founding of the town.

#### WILLIAM WILCOXSON'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY

In Stratford six more children were born to William and Margaret. The entire family comprised nine children, all of whom lived to adulthood, married and had families of their own. We compute that by the year 1725 the strain of William Wilcoxson, through his daughters, granddaughters, and great granddaughters, must have already passed into the bloodstream of at least seventy Connecticut families. By the time of the Revolution there were several thousand of his descendants in Connecticut. At that time it was impossible for a Wilcox to travel far in his native state without meeting some kind of kinsman. Obtaining so great a distribution at so early a date we would imagine that there is today scarcely anyone with pre-Revolutionary lines who cannot trace distaff descent from William Wilcoxson. In our Preliminary Report we referred to him as FATHER OF CONNECTICUT. By sheer paternity we believe he deserves such a title.

Of course, the great majority of William Wilcoxson's descendants are through females. Daughters and daughters-daughters to the nth generation. As a genealogist it has seemed to me sometimes that the main social function of our family in America has been to supply other families with ancestresses.

Let us pause to think of our first American household as it existed in its happiest days, about 1650, before the spectre of death and separation had appeared and while all the children remained under the Stratford roof-tree.

At mealtime what a picture the whole group must have made, seated about the rough hewn trencher board – the parents at either end; the children in the order of their stature; John and Joseph on either side of their father; Timothy, Elizabeth, Samuel, Hannah and Sarah filling up the mid-table and little Obadiah and baby Phoebe sitting down next to mother Margaret.

And the parents – what were their thoughts as they beamed at each other through this gamut of carefree, youthful eyes? Did they imagine a time when the descendants of these devoted children would be almost “as the sands of the sea for multitude?” Did they envision the infinitely varied adventures and destinies in store for this brood and their many descendants? Could they conceive that out of these loins would come men and women who would pioneer states, cities and communities then undreamed of; that

from them would descend soldiers, captains and generals to take part in struggles for the establishment and preservation of a great nation; that from them would come judges, senators, ministers, missionaries, scientists and any number of undistinguished but honorable citizens, each taking some part in a highly complex civilization?

The ultra-individualistic W.W. descendant of today who thinks that he has nothing in common with a tenth cousin in far away Oregon, Alaska, Florida or California, should think sometimes of this first family and reflect that when we go far enough back on the tribal stem all Wilcoxsons coalesce and join at the Stratford hearth.

Lamentably William Wilcoxson did not live to be an old man. He died early in the year 1652. This we know from the fact that there is record of the inventory of his will on June 16, 1652. Hence, all of the nine children were under age when he passed away. John, the oldest, was but 19, while Phoebe, the youngest, was but a babe in arms. Thus came the first tragedy to a family that was to suffer more than its due share of untimely deaths, orphaned children and scattered kinsmen.

For the years immediately subsequent to 1652 there is no record to indicate how the widow Wilcoxson and her brood managed to exist in that wild, raw country. However, neighbors were generous in those days. They were few in numbers but those few were all of kindred race and similar religion. All were bound to each other by a feeling of loneliness in those vast solitudes, so far removed from pleasant-remembered England. Quite like the family were aided after the father's death by their pioneer neighbors and friendly counsel of the good minister, Rev. Adam Blakeman, pastor of the first Stratford Church.

Just when or where it was that the widow Wilcoxson met William Hayden (an immigrant of 1630) of Windsor we do not know. It may be that the two families had known each other in Derbyshire or that they had become acquainted at Concord. However, the legend, as given in *Records of the Connecticut Line of the Hayden Family*, is to the effect that Margaret married William Hayden sometime in the year 1663. The latter had then removed from Windsor to Hamonoscett (later Kenilworth, Killingworth and finally Clinton) with his three motherless children and there he was joined by Margaret and the younger Wilcoxson children. By that time, John, Joseph, Timothy and Elizabeth were already married. Of these, John and Timothy remained at Stratford with their families. Elizabeth removed with her husband, Sergeant Henry Stiles, to Windsor while Joseph, already the father of three children, followed his mother and father-in-law to Killingworth. There he settled permanently. Samuel, who married the following year at Windsor, probably did not live long at Killingworth, if at all. The unmarried children who accompanied their mother to Killingworth and threw in their lot with the Haydens were, therefore, Hannah (who, the following year became the bride of her stepbrother, Daniel Hayden) Sarah, Obadiah and Phoebe.

Margaret Wilcox Hayden, our first ancestress in America, died at Killingworth in 1675. We now formally list the children of William Wilcoxson and wife Margaret, as follows:

1. John                      born 1633 in England
2. **Joseph**                **born in 1636 at Concord, Mass.**
3. Timothy                circa 1638 at Concord, Mass.
4. Samuel                circa 1640 at Stratford, Conn.
5. Elizabeth            circa 1642 at Stratford
6. Hannah                circa 1644 at Stratford



- |            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| 7. Sarah   | circa 1646 at Stratford |
| 8. Obadiah | circa 1648 at Stratford |
| 9. Phoebe  | circa 1651              |

The above arrangement of the order of their arrival of William Wilcoxson's children is the one given in History and Genealogy of Old Fairfield and the one which to us seems the most reasonable in view of their respective marriage dates. No birth record exists anywhere for any of these children but that all of them were actually born, lived, married and had families is attested by abundant evidence – not the least of which is the many thousands of descendants which each has in the world today.

*The remainder of this report has been abbreviated to focus on the lineage resulting in the marriage of Elmira Jane Wilcox to Samuel Prescott Wright. Descending through the Wilcox line as follows: William, Joseph, Joseph (2), Joseph (3), Nathan, Joel I, Joel II, John, Elmira). [rcb]*

### JOSEPH WILCOX

He was born about 1636 at Concord Massachusetts and was brought by his parents to Stratford, Conn. in 1639. He evidently married at Stratford as there is a record of his oldest children being born there. Later Joseph Wilcoxson removed with his mother and father-in-law to the new settlement of Killingworth. He died there as a relatively young man in 1689. The original papers in the settlement of Joseph Wilcoxson's estate are said to be on file in Connecticut State Library at Hartford, File 5717. In 1708, the widow, Anna Wilcoxson was still alive because she then petitioned for the custody of her Farnum grandchildren. Prior to that time, in October, 1697, the Connecticut General Assembly at Hartford had passed the following act:

Anna Wilcoxson, widow and relict of Joseph Wilcockson late of Killingworth, deceased, being aggrieved with the Act of the County Court at New London, June 6, 1683, concerning her interest in the real estate of the said Joseph; which act being an abridgment of her just rights according to lawe, this Court doth declare the same to be void and doe order that the said Anna shall have the one third part of the reall estate of said Joseph according to lawe to be hers during her natural life, ye said act notwithstanding. (Public Records of Conn. Vol. 4)

It is now pretty well established that Anna, the wife of Joseph Wilcoxson was a Shailor (also spelled Shaler). There are several allusions to the Shaler family in the earliest Killingworth records. In one place William Wilcoxson is mentioned as heritor of 12 acres "which were formerly Goodman Shailers," the inference being that the latter was William's grandfather and Anna's father.

We note incidentally that the Shailor family originated in Warwickshire, England, near Stratford-on-Avon. Their first home in America was the Island of Jamaica. However, their residence there must have been brief for Thomas Shailor appears among the first planters of Killingworth. The earliest generations were seafarers, the most notable being Captain William Shailor whose Journal now forms an early California historical source. There was also an Alexander Shaler, "native of Middlesex County" who rose to the rank

of Major General in the Civil War. Nathaniel, Southgate Shaler in his day was a noted author, educator and physician.

The children of Joseph Wilcox and Ann Shailor were the following:

1. **Joseph Wilcoxson II**      **born 10/29/1659 at Stratford**
2. Thomas      b. 11/13/1661; died May 1694 unmarried
3. Samuel      b. 1663
4. Hannah      b. 1/19/1665. According to "History of Middlesex County" Hannah Wilcoxson was the first white child born in Killingworth. She married Peter Farnum and had seven children of that name.

### **JOSEPH WILCOXSON II**

on Joseph II needs updated.

Joseph Wilcoxson, son of Joseph, was born at Stratford but was taken as a small boy to the new settlement of Killingworth. He married there 2/14/1693 Hannah Kelsey (dau of Lieut. Joseph Kelsey and Hannah Disborough) Killingworth records of the marriage give the name as Wilcoxson. By the next generation, however, the name had become either Willcox or Wilcox. Joseph was known as Lieutenant Joseph Wilcoxson from the rank he held in the local train-band company. He also served Killingworth as Deputy to the General Assembly at Hartford for the years 1726, 1730, 1738, 1741, 1743 and 1745. He died Sept. 29, 1747. Children of Joseph and Hannah:

- |                  |                                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Hannah        | b. 1/16, 1694                       |
| 2. <b>Joseph</b> | <b>b. 1/17, 1695</b>                |
| 3. David         | b. 3/10, 1700                       |
| 4. Abel          | b. 10/6, 1702                       |
| 5. Elisha        | b. 1/12, 1706                       |
| 6. Stephen       | b. 1/12, 1706                       |
| 7. Lydia         | b. 7/28, 1713 m. Capt. Samuel Buell |

### **JOSEPH WILCOXSON III**

Joseph Wilcoxson, known as "Deacon Joseph, son of Joseph II." (He already wrote the name Wilcox with either one or two l's) He was born at Killingworth 1/17/1695. Married 8/13/1724 Rebecca Hurd. She was a daughter of Ebenezer Hurd and his wife Sarah Pickett Lane and it is through the latter that all descendants of this ancestress are eligible for the Mayflower Society. Sarah Lane's mother was Ruth Brewster, granddaughter of William Brewster, one of the Mayflower passengers.

Our Joseph Wilcoxson or Wilcox served his town as Justice of Peace and as Deputy to the Hartford Assembly. About the time of his marriage he removed from the southern part of the township (which later became the town of Clinton) to the northern part which still bears the name Killingworth. At that time it was an unpeopled wilderness. He settled on an area around Tower Hill which remained in branch of the family for three generations, being sold by his grandchildren, Nathan, Joel and Elon Wilcox in 1800. (see Vol. 16, pg. 39 Killingworth Land Records) Joseph died 5/3, 1774. Rebecca died 12/26, 1770. Both are buried in **Union District Cemetery, Killingworth**. The gravestones were still standing in 1935 when this compiler visited the graves. Children:

1. Elijah      b. 7/18, 1725
2. Rebecca   b. 2/29, 1726; m. Nathaniel Kirtland
3. Joseph     b. 9/11, 1728; died unmarried 6/15, 1747
4. **Nathan**    b. **3/29, 1730**
5. Hannah    b. 12/7, 1731; m. Simeon Hough 10/27, 1763
6. Adam      b. 4/1, 1734
7. Lucy       b. 2/1, 1741; m. Samuel Hull 12/31, 1767
8. Sarah      b. 2/1, 1738; m. John Hull
9. Abigail    b. 8/23, 1743; m. Abner Post
10. Joseph    b. 9/18, 1747

### NATHAN WILCOX

Born at Killingworth, 3/29, 1730. Nathan married 1/11, 1760 Thankful Stone (Daughter of Joseph Stone and Hannah Hotchkiss of Guilford, a descendant of Rev. Samuel Stone, early immigrant to New England) Nathan lived all of his life at Tower Hill in North Killingworth and died there Jan. 2, 1797. Only the children, Nathan II, Joel and Thankful are of record at Killingworth. Elon is added on the strength of Nathan Sr.'s will which the compiler has seen in the Conn. State Library. Also there is a deed of record from Nathan Sr. to son Elon, 3/30, 1796 for Tower Hill, Killingworth. Hence Nathan's children are listed below.

1. Nathan II   b. 11/16, 1760
2. **Joel**        b. 8/24, 1762
3. Thankful   b. 12/16, 1764; m. Crippen Hurd of Haddam
4. Elon        b. abt. 1766

### JOEL WILCOX

Joel Wilcox, son of Nathan was born at Killingworth, Aug. 24, 1762. In the will of his father he was bequeathed two parcels of land from the old farm at Tower Hill, North Killingworth, one of 9 acres and one of 16 acres. In Vol. 15, Killingworth Land Records it is shown that Joel Wilcox, "of Woodbury" sold Jan. 30, 1798 "nine acres received from his father, Nathan" In the same book, page 199 it is record that "Joel Willcox, in the county of Litchfield, State of Conn. Sold 16 acres received from his father, to Nathan Willcox 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jan. 29, 1798." It is evident from this that Joel lived some 14 years at Woodbury before going to Ohio. This town was also the home of his father-in-law, Mulford Coan. Note also that at that time the town clerk spelled the name with two l's.

This is the compiler's own line (great grandfather) and our traditional record is that Joel Wilcox removed, about 1812, with the younger members of his family, to Madison County, Ohio. This is shown as his residence (Union Twp.) at the time he applied for a pension in 1818. He also lived for a time at Chillicothe. A query directed to the War Dept. brought the following information about the revolutionary service of Joel Wilcox:

Went to the Alarm of East Have, July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1779. Enlisted 6/27, 1780 in Capt. Aaron Steven's Company, 7<sup>th</sup> Conn. Regiment, Col. Heman Swift; discharged 12/31, 1780. Enlisted 3/1, 1781 in Caleb Baldwin's Company, Second Conn. Regiment; transferred in May to the Sixth Company. Sent home sick in July, 1783.



In the year 1936 while at the Congressional Library, this compiler pursued an early Chillicothe (Ohio) newspaper. In it were several references to Joel Wilcox. However, I did not jot down the information.

Joel Wilcox, our present subject, married at Killingworth, 10/22, 1786. His bride was Elizabeth Houd Coan, daughter of Mulford Coan. We have no information concerning the date and place of Elizabeth's death, nor do we have much data on the subsequent careers of Joel's daughters. It may be that a search of the records at Woodbury, Conn., for the period 1798 to 1812 would reveal something more about the family. The older girls evidently married there. Below is listed the complete family of Joel Wilcox and Elizabeth Houd Coan, as we have now have it. Their children:

1. Loammi    b. 8/27, 1787 at Killingworth. He removed as a lad with the family to Woodbury where his father bound him out as an apprentice to a Mr. Thaddeus Minor. Loammi probably left Conn. Before the family. There is mention of him in the local histories of Onondago County, N.Y. He married there, Hannah Paddock (dau. of Jonathan Paddock and Hannah Kronkhite) see Onondago Centennial, Vol. 1, p. 698 which mentions Loammi as the owner of a farm known locally as "Seven Pastures." It was located near Elbridge N.Y. Loammi died in Onondago County, May 15, 1836. Hannah died at Joliet, Ill. July 22, 1866.
2. Ann Ruth    born at Killingworth – She is said to have married a British officer (Muir) stationed at Quebec. We know of at least one son, Peter Muir who visited our grandfather's family in Ohio about 1852.
3. Cynthia    born at Killingworth. She went to Ohio with the family and married there, Stephen Kingery. She and her husband went to Putnam about the same time as her brother Joel II. From grandfather's reminiscences we have: "Stephen Kingery died a short time (in Putnam County) from exposure and his family left the county." By 1850 Cynthia had married again, a Mr. Warburton, and was living at Sidney Ohio.
4. Lucinda    Probably born at Woodbury Conn. All that we know of her is that she went to Ohio with the family and married a Mr. Shaw. They were living in Sidney, Ohio in 1850.
5. Nancy    d. young
6. **Joel II**    (compiler's grandfather) **born 6/10, 1800 at Woodbury Conn.**
7. Alvin    b. 7/2, 1802 at Woodbury, Conn.
8. ?    b. abt. 1804. She married in Ohio, Joseph Worley. We last heard of this family in Marion Co. Iowa abt. 1856.

## JOEL WILCOX II

Joel II son of Joel I was born June 10, 1800 at Woodbury, Conn. In 1812 he removed with his father's family to Southern Ohio. There he met and married Sarah Williams (Feb. 21, 1821) She was a daughter of Captain Richard Williams and wife Mary McCartney who had lived previously in Westmoreland County Pennsylvania. The following is copied from a family memorandum written by the compiler's "Aunte Lyde" Sarah Eliza Wilcox. She wrote about 1905:

In 1827 grandfather Wilcox moved from Madison County into the wilderness of Northwestern Ohio (what later became Putnam County). There was plenty of bear and wolves and Indians. He Joel Wilcox I was a man of great

firmness and determination. Out of the wilderness he carved a home – the finest on Blanchard River in those days. He was a stock raiser..he would start with two or three men on horseback to drive a hundred young steers to the market at Cincinnati. He helped to organize the first militia company of his county of which he was captain. In politics he was a Whig; in religion he was a Methodist. Grandfather was the third white settler between what is now Ottawa, Ohio and the junction of the Blanchard and Auglaize Rivers. At that time Ottawa was only a large Indian encampment called Tawatown, from which the little creek flows through it gets the name of Tawa River. For many years Kalida was the county seat and the chief town in the county and where grandfather paid his taxes and where his old militia company used to “muster.”

There are eleven typewritten pages in Aunt Lyde’s sketch. It relates more to early Ohio history than to genealogy. Place cannot be given for all of it here.

Howe’s Historical Collections gives some account of our family in connection with the great flood which occurred the first year our people settled there. While Joel was away from home looking for his strayed horses the river rose and his wife Sarah and her two young children were marooned on a little area of higher ground. The account relates how she was rescued by Johnny Appleseed, the famous early Ohio character, who happened to be going down river about that time in his canoe.

Although Joel Wilcox was doing very well in Putnam County and although his lands in the rich bottom of the Blanchard far exceeded in acreage and productivity the rocky hill land held by his father and ancestors in Connecticut he nevertheless made the unwise decision to move again. The period which immediately followed the year 1846 was a restless and uprooting one for the Wilcoxes as it was for many other American families. Tales began to float in from the Far West. Settlers were needed in Oregon to hold it against British encroachment. At the same time the Mexican War and the consequent enlargement of territory in the Southwest had added new fields for adventure. It was difficult indeed to resist such lures.

At any rate, during the winter of 1846-7 Joel Wilcox made the fateful decision to go to Oregon. He outfitted himself with ox teams, Conestoga wagons and equipment and supplies for the long transcontinental journey. He did not even remain to sell his rich 400 acres of bottom land on the Blanchard River but left it for another settler to squat upon. He pulled out of Putnam County, some time in April, 1847. At that time both he and his wife were 47 years old. They were already the parents of nine children. Of these the seven youngest accompanied their parents while the oldest, Mary and John, already married, remained behind.

Aunt Lyde, then three years old, had a vague recollection of being lifted up into a wagon to take final farewells from her grandparents. For weeks and months after they left Ohio letters came back at intervals to the John Wilcox home. Now the folks were passing through Illinois. Now they had crossed the Mississippi. Now they had passed Independence and now they had joined Magoney’s wagon train. Later still the word was that they were slowly plodding through Indian territory up the Platte River Valley. At length they reached Ford Bridger and paused for rest and reoutfitting. Unfortunately the intervening generations did not preserve these letters. They would now be priceless as a contribution to the general historical information.

Everything went well enough until the final stage of the long journey. Then tragedy overtook the Joel Wilcox family. So tedious a trip, continued day after day for seven months, was bound to wear down the strongest constitutions. The Wilcox entourage was particularly difficult because of the number of cattle they were taking across the continent. I have before me a photostat copy of the will of Joel Wilcox (from the original in the office of the County Clerk, Oregon City, Oregon) Attached thereto is an itemization of personal effects and of cattle. It is far too long a paper to copy here but I count on it 38 head of cattle and one "Indian horse." Of the cattle six were yoke oxen and 8 "unbroken oxen."

What effort and labor it must have taken to bring this livestock all the way across the plains. However, the family would probably have made it through without tragedy save for an epidemic common among the wagon trains of the period. It was described then as "mountain fever." Others have described it simply as "measles." I do not know what modern physicians would have called it. At any rate the malady was responsible for three deaths in the Joel Wilcox family. The younger members stood the deaths in the ordeal best. Those who died were, first, the mother, Sarah Williams Wilcox, who passed away October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1847. The wagon train was then encamped at the Dalles on the Columbia River. Leaving his outfit at the Dalles Joel obtained the help of some Indians with a canoe and took the body of his wife down the Columbia to the **Old Fort Vancouver Cemetery** for burial. He then returned up river and rejoined his outfit. However, soon thereafter he was himself stricken, dying at the Dalles, Nov. 10, 1847. He also was buried at Vancouver. Loammi, the oldest boy to cross the plains, was also stricken soon afterwards, dying late in November, 1847.

The particular wagon train in which the Joel Wilcox family journeyed to Oregon was captained by Joseph Magone or Magoney. *The Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 3. Pag. 283 (Sept. 1902) contains the reminiscences of a certain James Jory who was a member of his train. He recalled that:

At the Dalles Captain Magoney still stayed by his party, to see that the last one got through. He had indeed made all the young men promise that they would stay by the families until all were at journey's end. There were some, however, that never came through. A family named Wilcox contracted the measles early on the way, and owing to exposure and looking after their cattle in the rain, the entire family except two girls and a little boy, died."

James Jory was 82 years old when he gave this account of something that happened 55 years previously. Obviously he was unconsciously exaggerating. The Wilcox tragedy was bad enough but not as bad as he suggested. There were three boys and three girls of this family who finally reached the Willamette Valley and who married and left descendants:

The family of Joel and Sarah Williams Wilcox.

1. Mary        born in Madison County, Ohio. She was one of the children rescued via canoe by Johnny Appleseed. She married Elijah Stalnaker.
2. **John**        b. 3/12, 1825 in Madison County Ohio (see below)
3. Loammi      b. 1827; one of the first white children born in Putnam County. He died in Dalles Oregon wagon encampment in November of 1848. Presumably buried with parents at Fort Vancouver.



4. Elmira      b. 2,26, 1930 in Putnam County. She accompanied the family across the plains and en route met William B. Chatfield whom she married as his second wife. He older (b. 10/27, 1812). Their address in 1854 was Tualatin Washington County, Oregon.
5. George      b. 12/26, 1831 in Putnam County Ohio
6. Clarissa    b. 9/24, 1850 in Putnam County. Married Hiram Fellows Aug. 24, 1850. Granted 320 acre "donation" claim at Highland Oregon City where they lived nearly 50 years.
7. William     b. 7/28, 1836 in Putnam County.
8. Emmeline   b. ? m. at age 15 William Allen m. 2 Rem Harmon.
9. Edward     b. 1/22, 1844 in Putnam County.

### **JOHN WILCOX**

John Wilcox, son of Joel II was born in Madison County, Ohio in 1827 and was taken by his parents to Putnam County, Ohio in 1827. He grew up in that region then peopled only with Indians and wild game. He was one of the children rescued by Johnny Appleseed at the time of the great flood in Northwestern Ohio.

John Wilcox, the compilers grandfather, married when eighteen years old, 11/9, 1843, Jemima Hopkins (she the daughter of Daniel Hopkins and his wife Sarah Carter) at Kalida, Ohio by Rev. John McNabb, a Methodist minister. When his father, Joel Wilcox started for Oregon in the Spring of 1847 John was already settled on a farm in Putnam county and preferred to remain. My grandfather's family continued to live on their Blanchard river farm until 1849. In that year they removed to Mercer County, Indiana and bought a quarter section of land. Their home became the local meeting house of a Methodist circuit and also an "underground station" for negro slaves escaping to Canada. While in Mercer County John served one term as county clerk. In 1854 the family removed again to Eddyville, Wapello County, Iowa where, eventually a farm of 420 acres was acquired.

At the beginning of the Civil War John enlisted in Company I, 7th Iowa Infantry. He participated in the battles of Belmont, Ft. Henry, Ft. Donelson, Shiloh and luka. After becoming a lieutenant he resigned his commission and went home to Eddyville. He served in this cavalry organization in campaigns against the Indians around Ft. Kearney, Nebraska Territory until May 1866 when he was mustered out with the ran of Major, by brevet, Lieut. Col.

Returning to Eddyville he held various county offices and served for a time as postmaster at Eddyville. For some years he was publisher and editor of the Des Moines Valley Gazette at Eddyville. The local Post of the G.A.R. was named the John Wilcox Post in his honor.

I have copies of letters which grandfather wrote to his sister, Mary Stalnaker, while serving in the Indian campaign. A copy of his military journal was recently donated to the Kearney Historical Library, Kearney, Nebr.

In War of the Rebellion Reports, Series I, Vol. XLVIII page 322, will be found grandfather's report of an action with the Indians at Horse Creek, Dakota Territory, June 14, 1865. In the same volume he is mentioned several times in connection with troop

movements in the vicinity of Julesburg, Colorado, O'Fallon's Bluff and Pole Creek, Dakota Territory.

A biographical sketch of John Wilcox will be found in *Portrait and Biographical Album of Wapello County* page 214. My grandfather was the author of an interesting sketch relating to conditions and mode of life in northwestern Ohio when he was a boy. It appeared in Ohio papers around 1880.

Major John Wilcox died June 3, 1881 at the soldiers hospital in Dayton Ohio where he had gone for treatment. He had been severely wounded during his military service and never fully recovered. He is buried at the soldier's cemetery at Dayton {first row near the monument rcb}

John Wilcox of this title was married twice: first to Jemima Hopkins, as already indicated and second to Mary Jane McKay (Mary Drummond). All of the children except the last one, Della, are by the first wife.

1. **Sarah Eliza** (whom we called "Aunt Lyde" and who wrote the family memorandum of early Ohio and Iowa experiences) was born 9/22/1844 in Putnam County Ohio and was 10 years old when her parents went to Iowa. She became a school teacher and served in various localities in Michigan, Ohio and Arkansas. She married 4/18, 1867 in Michigan, Ohio and Arkansas. She married 4/18, 1867 Alfred Staley Brower of Putnam County. She buried at Pomeroy Cemetery June 14, 1925.  
Their Children:
  - i. Milford M. Brower b. 1867. He served for many years in the pension bureau at Washing D.C. and then Seattle Wash. Married Isabel Laws of Cutlet, Va. Dec. 20, 1893
  - ii. Florence Brower; m. Guy Burlingame once a police captain in Washington D.C.
  - iii. Lulu Brower; m. Albert Chittenden a professor at the University of Michigan. She later lived as a widow in Bradenton, Fla.
  - iv. Laura married William Johnston of Berryville, Ark.
  - v. Irwin became a printer. He strayed away and became entire lost to his family.
2. Almon Wilcox, second child of Major John Wilcox. He was born 11, 27, 1846 in Putnam County. The peculiar name came from the mother's side (from Uncle Almon Hopkins an early merchant of Toledo) In the Eddyville farm school Almon was called the smartest boy by his teachers. He died 11/10, 1859 of typhoid fever and is buried on the old farm there.
3. **Elmira Jane Wilcox**, born 12/16, 1848 in Putnam County. She married 3/1, 1869 Samuel Prescott Wright. She died 5/29, 1900. Her husband died 8/11, 1889. They lived in or near Fort Wayne, Indiana. She was a zealous member of the Methodist Church.
  - A. William Arthur Wright, died in infancy.
  - B. **Prescott P. Wright** b. 10/15, 1871. Married Emma A. Patterson May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1892. They lived for many years at Lima. Their Children (then)
    - i. **Clinton Gerald Wright** m. Florence Leasure.
    - ii. Zelda E. Wright b. 12/16, 1894 m. Floyd Baxter, they lived at Lima and had 6 children.

- iii. Glenn Clifford Wright, b. 2/8, 1896. He is an engineer who has lived at Los Angeles for many years a bachelor.
  - iv. Carroll D. b. 6/29, 1898; m. Thelma Haruff, Feb. 1921. Four children, he lived in California for years.
  - v. Gilson P. b. 8/25, 1905; m. Amy Benton. Last account of him he was a member of the Oxford Ohio University faculty and had one daughter. [ died in 1998 at Oxford Ohio ]
  - vi. Harold Wilcox Wright b. 9/9, 1908; m. Catherine Coffman
- C. Charles Wright was born April 9, 1874. He married May 1896, Addie Rayhouser. He was in the insurance business in Fort Wayne for many years. He died some 15 years ago. There was one daughter, Helen Wright but I do not know what became of her.
- D. Manfred Clinton Wright b. June 30, 1876. Married 1<sup>st</sup> Orpha M. Smith 11/30, 1911. Married second, subsequent to 1936 Gloennie ? He was a Methodist minister who officiated in various Indiana cities throughout his life. After retiring he lived for several years in Fort Wayne. Children by his first wife:
  - i. Margaret
  - ii. Dorothy (twins)
  - iii. Manfred Jr.
  - iv. Caroline Jane
 All four children married.
- E. Carrie Wright b. 8/16, 1880. Married Henry Ridenour a farmer of Putnam County Ohio, died 3/13/1935 no children.
- F. Otis Kelly Wright born 9/2/1883. Married Odessa ? OK? Was a veteran of three wars – Filipino Insurrection and World Wars I and II. In later years he held the rank of Major of Ordnance. He and his wife lived for some years in Chicago and finally moved to Los Angeles. No children. He died in L.A. July 17, 1956. The writer attended his funeral which was well officiated by several service organizations. He was buried in the beautiful old Rosedale Cemetery at Los Angeles.
- 4. Martha Wilcox was born 12/26, 1850; m. 1<sup>st</sup> Charles Woodward; second Jacob Switzer. She died April 14, 1921. Children include
  - i. Frank Woodward b. Jan. 20, 1873. M. Anna Bowman. They lived at Bryan Ohio.
  - ii. Thomas Woodward b. 1/9, 1875; m. Martha
  - iii. Slayton Woodward, another who wandered away.
  - iv. Mary Woodward, b. 4/21, 1881. Married Raymond C. Gephart b. 3/20, 1910.
- 5. Frank Pomeroy Wilcox (fifth child of Major John) born at Eddyville, Iowa July 5, 1854. Married May Dutton 4/3, 1894. In earlier years uncle Frank was employed by a seed house as a traveling salesman. In later life he owned and operated a tailoring establishment on Fort Street in Detroit, Michigan. He was prominent in the Masonic Order, high priest for the state of Michigan and the founder of an order for juvenile masons. Burton's History of Detroit, Vol. 5, pub. In 1922, includes a two page sketch of the life of Frank Pomeroy Wilcox with a full page picture. He died July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1931. His children:
  - i. Catherine b. 9/25, 1898. She m. Clyde Matteson & they lived in Detroit. No children.
  - ii. Frank Pomeroy II, b. February 3, 1903 m. Adaline Plom June 22,



1926. He served on the Cleveland Police force and a Major in WW II. One son Frank P. III, born Jan. 3, 1930.

6. Charles Fremont Wilcox; son of Major John. He was born at Eddyville Iowa, December 19, 1857. Married Minnie Crennen. As a boy in his teens this uncle of mine studied telegraphy and obtained employment at that occupation on the Lake Shore Railroad at Toledo, Ohio. From there he went to Springfield, Ill. And served as dispatcher for three years. Afterwards he was made trainmaster of the Wabash R.R. and officiated from Peru, Indiana. He was also prominent in Republican Party affairs and a close friend of Governor Chase of Indiana. He was a member of St. Johns Commandry, Knights Templars of Logansport, Ind. Uncle "Monty" with four other railroad men were killed in a train wreck which occurred at 1:20 am (the time at which his watch stopped), July 3, 1892. Indiana papers of the date carried extended accounts of the sad affair and lengthy eulogies. The Indianapolis Journal mentioned: "One of the pathetic phases of the accident is that afforded in the arrival of P.K. Wilcox of Dallas, Texas (i.e. Peter K. Wilcox, the compilers father) and brother of the trainmaster. The brothers had not met for ten years. The brother arrived at 3:00 am and while waiting for breakfast heard the trainmaster's name mentioned in connection with the wreck. He made inquiry and found that his relative had been dead for two hours." The body of Charles Fremont Wilcox was taken to Toledo by special train and there interred. His children were Charles Justus Wilcox born Aug. 13, 1879 and Germain (Jerry) born 5/27, 1881. He lived at 2531 Lawrence Ave., Toledo and they had three daughters. Margaret, Marian and Germaine (deceased).
7. Peter Kelly Knox Wilcox; (the middle names were given to him by his parents with the idea of perpetuating a friendship with two neighbor families in early Wapello County) But my father always disliked the names he had been given. In later life he assumed the style of Paul K. Wilcox. He was born April 29, 1859 at Eddyville, Iowa. "Kelly" as he was called by his older brothers and sisters, left home while still in his teens and wandered into the great Western world. For many years his folks saw and heard little of him. He acquired the trades of carpenter and millwright. But most of his time was spent wandering over the Western states from Texas to Washington. He worked irregularly, spending the remainder of his time prospecting, dreaming or writing poetry. He was a man of peculiar artistic gifts but eccentric opinions.

My father came to Arizona for the first time in the eighteen-eighties when the West bore a more primitive aspect than at present. He served briefly in the campaign against Geronimo. Of all the states he liked Arizona the best. Through his prospecting jaunts he probably knew the terrain of that state as well as any man of his day. Loading two burros with supplies he would disappear into the desert and would not be seen again for months.

During the last twenty years of his life my father lived alone at Shasta, Calif. He died Jan. 13, 1947, lacking but four months of being 88 years old. He married twice, firstly to Mrs. Robert Summerrow of Austin, Texas (her maiden name was Emma McDonald) The only child of this union was the compiler of this history. Thomas Wilcox, born at Austin, Texas, Dec. 20, 1889. The subject man never married and is here too pinched for time and space to submit an autobiography. Peter then married Emmerette Randall (Fuller) of Navajo County Arizona. Their only child Paul K. Jr. Born July 20, 1910 in Arizona

8. Clara Emma Wilcox; youngest child of John Wilcox and Jemima Hopkins, born July 1863 and died March 8, 1864. She is buried with her brother Almon on the old farm overlooking the Des Moines River near Eddyville.

By his second wife Major John Wilcox had...

9. Della Emma Wilcox, born July 8, 1869. She grew up at Eddyville, graduated at the local High School and obtained civil service work at Washington D.C. There she met Dr. James L. Whiteside, a dentist whom she married Oct. 10, 1902.