

THE WILKINS FAMILY OF GRAVESEND, KINGS COUNTY, NEW YORK¹

An excerpt from “Gravesend Settlers: Ancestors and Descendants”²

BY WILLIAM H. STILLWELL (1832–1895)³



CAUTIONARY FOREWORD TO THE EXCERPT THAT FOLLOWS

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One must proceed with great caution when using Stillwell’s manuscript, “Gravesend Settlers: Ancestors and Descendants”; it is a vexing mix of the known, the possible and the impossible. It is evident that Teunis G. Bergen relied heavily on Stillwell’s manuscript in the preparation of *Early Settlers of Kings County*.⁴ Although the research efforts of those who have gone before us are always sincerely appreciated, I must echo and generalize the comments of John Stillwell:

I am distrustful of the correctness of the dates affixed to many of the Kings County Stillwells from this time onward. They were supplied me by the late T. G. Bergen, Esq., and William H. Stillwell, Esq., and, inaccurate as some of them must be, I am constrained to print them having had little access to the records of this line of the family. These errors were made by these gentlemen by the frequency of their transcriptions, and the profound myopia of William H. Stillwell, Esq., and the frequently undecipherable hand writing of T. G. Bergen, Esq. Their sincerity and activity remain unimpeached and their unrequited labors are enormous.⁵

Every statement made by Stillwell and Bergen must be validated. For an example of the *significant* corrections that will be found through such analysis, please refer my series on the “The Griggs Family of Gravesend and New Jersey,” as published in *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*.⁶

Publishing a fully annotated and corrected copy of Stillwell’s manuscript would be a very worthwhile project. I have no intention of tackling that challenge but I hope that others will be inspired to do so! Please contact me if you are interested in sharing scholarly research on “Gravesend Settlers,” especially the early generations of the GRIGGS, GULICK, LAKE, OPDYCK/UPDIKE, SPICER and WILLIAMSON families.



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¹ The Town of Gravesend existed until 1894 when it was absorbed in to the City of Brooklyn. Since 1898, the area has been part of the Borough of Brooklyn in the City of New York.

² Manuscript held by The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society.

³ William Hubbard⁸ Stillwell (*Stephen*⁷, *Nicholas*⁶, *Joost*/*George*⁵, *Nicholas*⁴, *Richard*³, *Nicholas*²⁻¹).

⁴ Teunis G. Bergen, *Register in Alphabetical Order, of the Early Settlers of Kings County, Long Island, N.Y., From Its First Settlement by Europeans to 1700* (New York, 1881).

⁵ John Edwin Stillwell, M.D., *Historical and Genealogical Miscellany: Data Relating to the Early Settlers of New York and New Jersey*, 5 vols. (New York, 1903-32); 2:18.

⁶ Volumes 136-137 (October 2005–April 2006).

6th.

Pennoyer, - Wilkins.

he gave Capt Jonathan Allen power to Collect.

XXIV

William Wilkins

Nothing is known of William Wilkins prior to 1643 when he was of the party that undertook the first settlement of Charward In 1645 on the successful settlement he was chosen one of the first magistrates and was allotted a horse lot and farm in the first allotment Feb 20 1646. Was chosen Magistrate in 1647. 48, 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. ~~55~~ 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62 May 12 1664 the Genl Court Warford appointed him March 23 1655 Wm Bourne Edward Pennock and Wm Wilkins magistrates delegated thanks by their loyal neighbors petition the Director and Council to postpone the election of magistrates In 1657 he had 13 acres under cultivation. July 4. 1661 he sued the widow of Cornelius de Potter for some mill stones bought of her husband and she was ordered to deliver them June 15 1670 Bartholomew Applegate sued William Wilkins charging "that he did suspect the defunctant to have committed adultery with his wife and produced eight witnesses who proved some circumstances" The defendant denied it but the jury found for the plaintiff that he had just cause for a suspicion of adultery, ordered the Defendant to pay costs and be bound to the next court of Assize. June 15 1671 Bartholomew ~~sued~~

Wilkins

65

Applegate sued William Wilkins. Dec 29 being a wedding
William Wilkins and Ann widow of Nicholas Stillwell
were married. The same year he was assigned two lots in the
"West meadows" He died in 1675

1 William Wilkins

11 Obadiah Wilkins

Second Generation

1. William Wilkins as well as his brother was allotted
land in the division of "Nesb" or 15 Acre lots in 1675 soon after
which he appears to have died single and intestate.

2. Obadiah Wilkins son of William was also allotted
a "Nesb" lot in 1675 March 1 1681 his mother threw the wife
of William Foster of Jamaica with her husband Amory

4 Obadiah Wilkins all this interest in his fathers estate.

Obadiah Wilkins died prior to 1691 leaving 5 children

viz

1 Martha Wilkins who married John Briggs

11 Eleanor Wilkins who married Benjamin Cooper

11 William Wilkins who had a wife Celia

11 Celia Wilkins

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XXV

Thomas Applegate.

Thomas Applegate lived in Weymouth Mass in
1635 and was licensed to keep a ferry from there