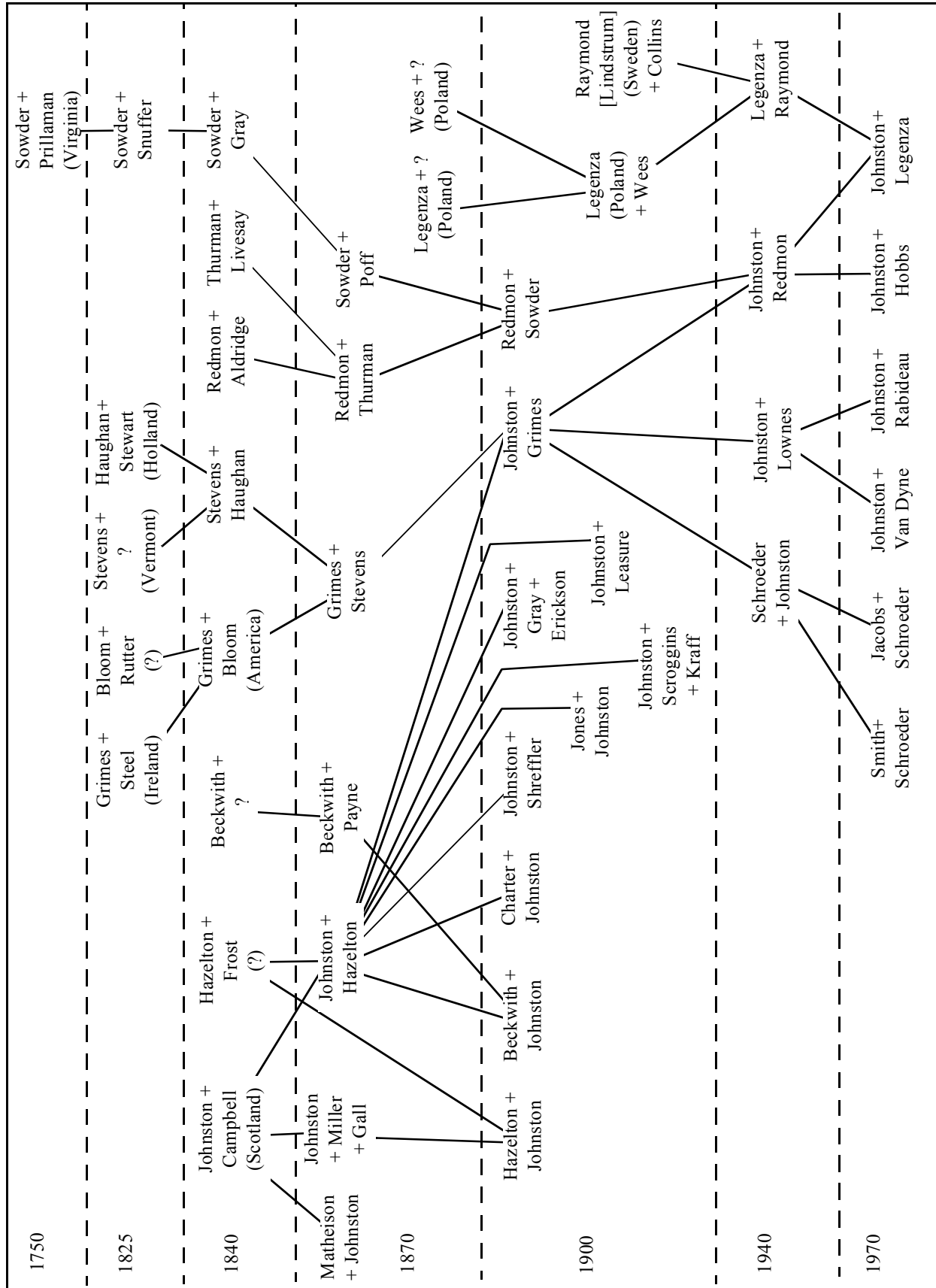

In this chapter is a brief introduction to some of the families that intersected the John Johnston family line through marriage. A number of these are considered pioneer families of Will County, and hence the name of the chapter

6.1 Family Intersections
Figure 6.1

Family intersections.
(next page)



6.2 Geography

6.2.1 Historical (1895) Will County

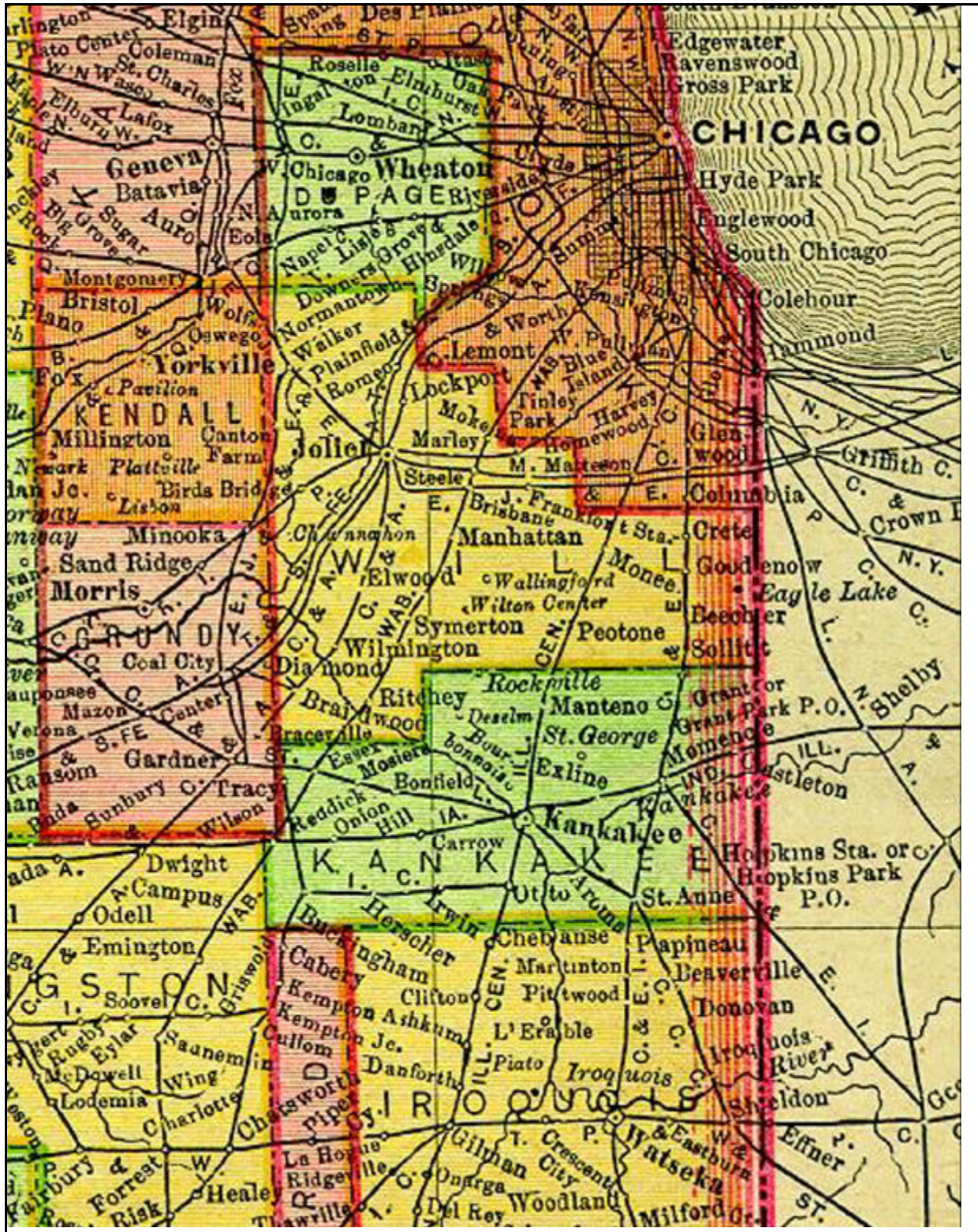
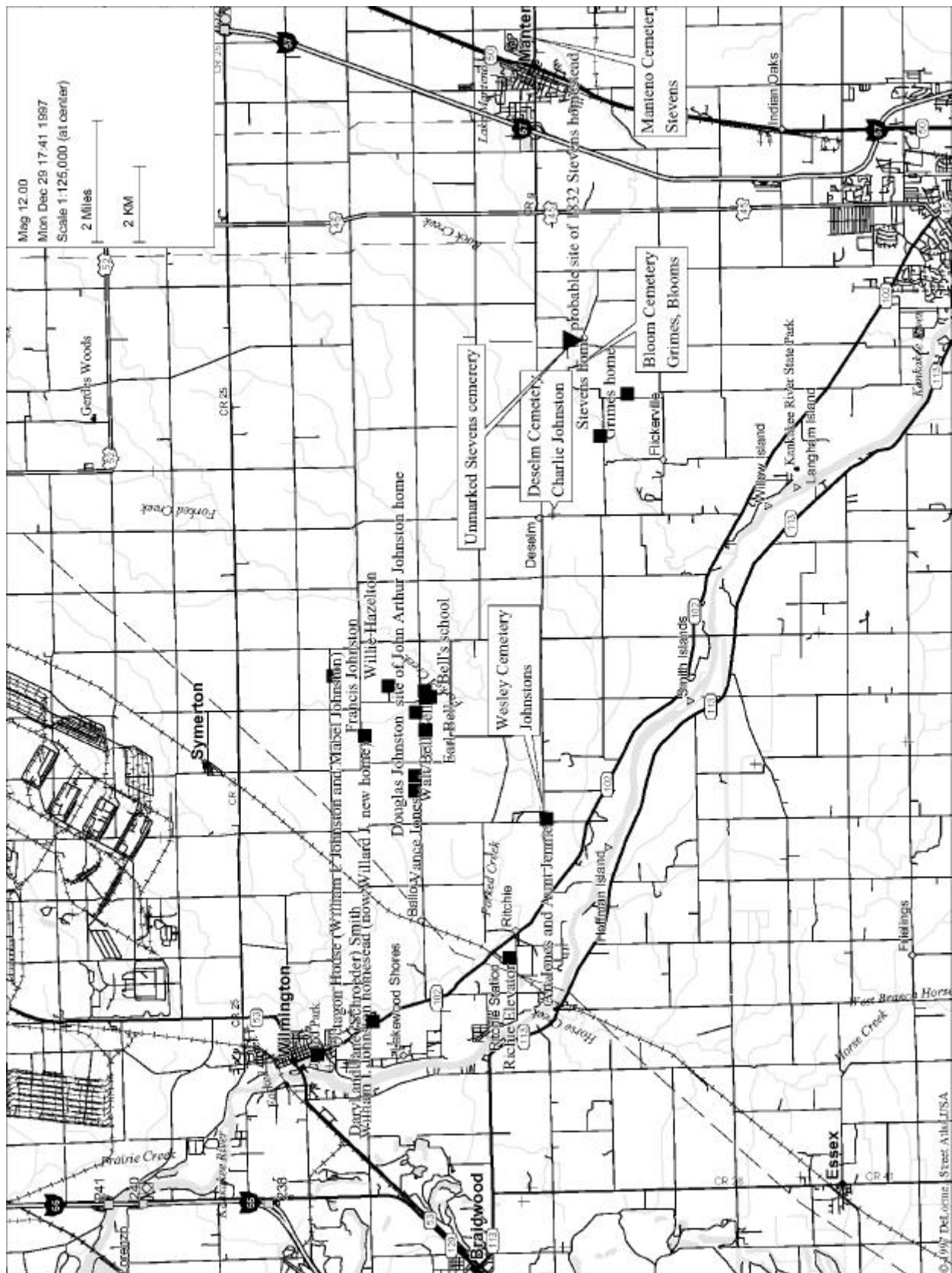
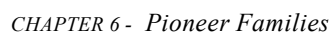


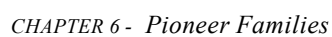
Figure 6.2

Historical Will Co. and area - 1895.

6.2.2 Wilmington Area







6.3 Beckwith

[From a newspaper clipping, date and origin unknown. Probably an obituary.]

George M. Beckwith was born Sept. 14, 1794, at Washington, on the Juniata river, Pennsylvania. When quite a lad his people emigrated to the then so called Gorham and Morris purchase, buying land near Newark, Wayne county, New York. From here George M. and his brother Dan W., went to Olean, in that state, in 1816, and thence down the Allegheny and Ohio rivers and up the Wabash river to Pt. Harmon, now just above the northern suburbs of Terre Haute. About the same time Harry Luddington, well known in Danville as "Uncle Harvey," and Malchia Vredenburg, appeared in the same vicinity, all being from New York state. The Beckwith brothers, and Luddington boarded with Mr. Vredenburg and his wife.

The next year the Beckwith's crossed the Wabash over into Illinois territory, and entered and put a sod fence around 80 acres of land some four miles northeast of Paris on the so called North Arm prairie. At time Jonathan Mayo and two or three other families composed the most northern settlement on the east side of the state excepting, of course, Ft. Dearborn, now Chicago. The brothers boarded with Mr. Mayo and his excellent wife that year, when Dan W. came up to the Vermilion river country and built a cabin on its northern bluff, a little west of south of the present "old red seminary" on West Main street, near an oak tree, which is still standing.

In 1819, immediately after the land in this neighborhood was ceded by the Kickapoo Indians to the United States, George M. came up from below with Seymour Treat, the two Blackman brothers and Ira Whitcomb, to a salt lick just above the mouth of the Middlefork. Luddington followed, and thus began the digging and boring for salt water, from which the manufactured salt gave this country a wide notoriety lower down and on both sides of the Wabash and northwest to the settlements on the Illinois river. It was a wild unbroken prairie then in all the country between.

George M. was a carpenter by trade, to which the skill of a millwright and cabinet maker was added. A frame house which he built, and in which he lived, is still standing on the north side of Water street, just across the alley from the present county jail. He built and ran a sawmill on the North Fork of the Vermilion, northwest of the present Lincoln park. The mill site, until within a few years past, was well known to the old settlers as Beckwith's mill. Here his wife died with milk sickness, in a log cabin of one room.

In 1827, at the time Ft. Dearborn was threatened with an attack by the Winnebago Indians, a company of volunteers was raised in this county to go to the relief of that post. Among those who went was Peleg Spencer, Hezekiah Cunningham, Othneil Gilbert, son of Solomon Gilbert, and Richard and Orlando Gilbert, sons of Jesse Gilbert, and the two Beckwith brothers. Achilles Martin was selected as captain. George M. was also out in the Black Hawk War.

He was a man of some education, his father having been a school teacher, and was a man of sterling integrity and energy. He held a very warm love for his friends and was quite as independent of those of whom he did not like. He was over 6 feet high, broad shouldered and straight as an Indian. He had great physical strength and courage, and was quite temperate withal. He had no controversies on his own account, but was swift to vindicate the wrongs of his friends. He was a prominent and highly esteemed character along the Kankakee, as he had been in the Vermilion river country.

The first wife of George M. Beckwith was a Miss Gilbert, daughter of Jesse Gilbert, who died Feb. 10, 1831. On July 30, 1835, he married Miss Phoebe Barden. She was a relative of the Bicknell's, and lived in Solomon Gilbert's family, with whom she emigrated from New York to Dan-

ville. Shortly after their marriage they moved to the north side of Kankakee river, a mile below the mouth of Rock creek, then in Will county, this state.

George M. Beckwith died at his farm in Will Co., May 9, 1845. The town of Georgetown, Vermilion county, was named after him, as was also the town of Danville named after his brother Dan. He had one daughter by his first wife who is deceased, and has two daughters and one son by his second marriage all living viz: Mrs. Hannah Ackerman, Mrs. Harriet Kelly of Kankakee and Guy Beckwith who still occupies a part of the old homestead. Their son was named after Guy Merrill, long judge, master in chancery and county surveyor of our county. He was also guardian of Hiram W. Beckwith, son of Dan W., after his father's death and until his majority.

6.4 Grimes



Figure 6.3 **Laura Grimes (standing)**
Charles Edgar Grimes, Hazel Grimes, Bernard Grimes, Dimis (Stevens) Grimes
(1899)



Taken in 1879
 1 yr before Ethel was
 mother at 39 yrs.
 father 42 "
 Laura 14
 Bernard 16
 Hazel 6
 (H. 1873)

Aunt Hazel's notes.

Figure 6.4

C. E. Grimes and family.

C. E. Grimes and Dimis Grimes are my great grandparents. They are the parents of Grandma Laura Johnston, the mother of my father (Lester).

Bernard Grimes is the father of Rachel Biddick, whose husband was Reginal. Their children - Roger, John, and Chris are my contemporaries. - WEJ

6.5 Hazelton



Figure 6.5

“Father and Lizzie”

Elizabeth (Johnston) Hazelton and Willis Hazelton, ca. 1885.

Elizabeth Johnston was the daughter of Joseph Johnston, the brother of my great grandfather William. Willis Hazelton was the brother of Elizabeth’s father’s brother’s wife. In other words, Willis was Elizabeth’s “uncle” by marriage. This was a long and successful marriage as you can see from the next figure.



Figure 6.6 Elizabeth (Johnston) Hazelton (“Aunt Lizzie”) and Willis A. Hazelton (“Uncle Willie”), ca. 1930s.

6.6 Johnston

6.6.1 Mary Johnston Freeland Article

WESLEY PIONEER RESIDENT

(From the Wilmington Advocate, June 10, 1981.)

Wilmington, Illinois

By: Elma O. Barnes

Mrs. Mary Johnston Freeland, formerly of Wilmington, now of California, has through the years, carried fond memories of her native city.

She has added interesting facts to my historical writings, as my late parents, Frank Eugene Butterfield, the late Henry Avery and others have done.

We value these comments because they are authentic, having lived through that particular era.

Because there is an interest and curiosity, we again take from our scrapbook the previous feature to bring to readers the following.

Mrs. Mary Johnston Freeland is an offshoot of the Johnston's who migrated from Ayrshire, Scotland in 1851.

Some years ago Mary engineered the Will County Club in California to successful heights. (A special article appeared on this.)

Joseph Johnston, of the Wesley area, was her father. His brothers were William and Thomas.

Mrs. Freeland has the citizenship papers of Joseph Johnston dated 1857, Joliet.

Brothers William and Thomas served in the Civil War. At the close of the war, Joseph and William settled on the prairie now known as Wesley Township.

Those residing now in that area who have the Johnston surname, trace their heritage back to William and Joseph who had two daughters and one son. A daughter, Elizabeth, married Willis Hazelton, a half-sister of Mrs. Mary Freeland. She passed away in the 1950's at the age of 98 or 99.

Joseph and his wife moved from the farm to Wilmington in a home where now the Mar Theatre is located.

In a few years, his wife died and Joseph Johnston married Annie Gall, a maid for the Odell family.

The town of Odell was named for this family. Mr. Odell was connected with the Commerce National Bank of Wilmington.

Their home was purchased by the Jim McIntrye's later by Jim Butcher, which was located on Kankakee Street and still stands.

Annie Gall was 32 years old when Mary Johnston Freeland was born, with her father being 63 years old.

Jonathan and Mary Gall arrived from England to settle in Essex. They had one son, Theodore, who operated the farm with Jonathan and Mary Gall Johnston residing in a small home on North Washington Street, next door to the Frank and Mary Rowland home.

It was on this location Mary Freeland inherited, by promise, the home due to her, being christened Mary Ann as requested. It was 1914 when the home finally came into Mary's possession and she married Bert Freeland.

To this union, one daughter, Blanche, was born and in 1918, Mary, with her family and mother, moved to, California.

At the time, I originally composed this article. Daughter Blanche was head counselor in a large high school in the area of Panorama City, California. Two grandchildren of Mrs. Freeland reside in Berkley, California and Guadalajara, Mexico, respectively.

Mrs. Freeland stated the Johnston families in the Wesley area were interwoven by marriages, with other families in the vicinity, namely Johnstons, Hazeltons, Bells and Beckwiths making pioneer history.

{note} Should include Grimes and Shreffler in this list. - LWJ

Guy Beckwith and William Johnston were two pioneer grandfathers of Willard Beckwith, with his mother, a daughter of William [Aunt

Minnie] and Martha Hazelton Johnston, a son and a first cousin of Mary's.

{note} something wrong with "a son and a first cousin of Mary's"

Miss Harriet Beckwith, Santa Monica and Ruth Harstedt, a niece who resided with Harriet, were close friends of Mrs. Freeland.

{note} Harriet was George Beckwith's sister, and an aunt of Willard. She lived in Redlands and retired to Santa Monica.

{note} Ruth (Beckwith) Harstedt was Willard's sister.

William Johnston retired from the farm, residing in the round house, owned today by Mrs. Harold Schutten (Bertha Johnston Schutten). Prior to the Schutten family, Mable Johnston resided in the octagon home.

{note} Aunt Mable lived alone in this house until John Arthur Johnston died. This death was a great shock to the family. Floyd and Gladys Johnston then moved in with Aunt Mable. They lived there after Aunt Mable went to Calif. Schutten bought the house from Floyd when Floyd moved to Colingia, Calif.

{note} LWJ remembers family dinners in this house given by ggf William. The doors that opened on the central hallway were left open, and nail kegs were set up with planks, and these benches were loaded with food.

We featured the octagon home February 1968 before the home was renovated. Later, we featured it again, including the beauty salon.

On June 12, 1970, this antique home was referred to in the feature on ex-mayor Bob Carter, as his grandfather David Monteith owned the house in 1902 and did reconstruction of the house.

In 1910, William Johnston purchased the octagon home from Monteith.

In September 12, 1973, issue of the Advocate, the home, owned by the Harold Schutten, had been renovated and we featured it

due to the wide interest by the community and newcomers.

Bertha Johnston Schutten's aunt, Mable Johnston, employee of the Wilmington post office, a sister of Bertha's father, George Johnston, resided there prior to making her home in California.

Mrs. Freeland was interested in an article concerning Willard Beckwith, who had two pioneer grandfathers, William Johnston and Guy Beckwith. Willard also had a brother named Guy Beckwith.

{note} There were two brothers - Guy and Norman.

At this writing, both of these men are deceased.

Willard and Guy Beckwith's mother was one of the daughters of William and Martha Hazelton Johnston, thus Willard was one of the sons of Mrs. Freeland's first cousins.

{note} George was hard to get along with (got this from his mother, who was also hard to get along with). Norman and Willard, and eventually Harriett, moved to South Bend, Ind. - LWJ

Due to the age difference and Mrs. Freeland moving to California, she doubted if Willard ever heard of her.

In another article written by this writer in 1972, we told of Mary's mother marrying: Joseph Johnston, who was her father and houseman to Mr. Odell. Mr. Odell passed away in 1906 and was a member of the Knight templers.

Mrs. Freeland, during her girlhood, was the recipient of pretty dresses and coats from material purchased in Chicago and presented to her by Mr. and Mrs. Odell.

Mrs. Eva Robson, mother of Mrs. Jeanette Robson Heck, was a seamstress and fashioned the clothes.

When Mr. Odell died and the will was read, Mary Freeland received a treasured piano. It was taken with them in 1918 to California and

today this antique treasure is proudly displayed in Mary's living room. Mary stated it is an antique of high quality.

Good to hear from you Mary.

6.6.2 Wilmington Octagon House Article



Figure 6.7 **Wilmington Round House Formerly Sheltered Slaves in Flight to North**

By Elmer Ott

WILMINGTON-- During the middle 1800s octagon-shaped homes became a popular type of architecture, but the vogue was shortlived.

One of the few remaining in northeastern Illinois is at 600 S. Water St. in Wilmington, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Schutten.

The century-old house is an attraction for tourists traveling through Wilmington and has been photographed by hundreds. Arranging furniture in a five-sided living room can pose some problems, as Mrs. Schutten discovered while attempting to find a spot for a davenport.

Doors are in great number on the first floor of the home. Some of the rooms have as many as six openings and there are 16 doors on the first floor. Walls are ornamented with tall, fluted fancy work.

Windows in the home require extra long draperies, extending almost the full eight feet from floor to ceiling.

Following the idea used by many builders of older homes, insulation of walls and floors is of several inches of hardened clay. This keeps the home warm in winter and cool in the summer, but the material makes installation of electric wiring and plumbing a difficult task.

In the beginning the house was heated by four stoves on each floor with chimneys on four sides of the house, but they have since been removed and the openings closed.

There are only a few such homes in existence in Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio and some other states.

The idea of such architecture reportedly was conceived by Orson Squire Fowler of New York, a phrenologist who dabbled in architecture as a hobby.

Fowler had a book published in 1849 which advocated a change in the traditional, square type of architecture to the eight-sided, home since it was the closest thing to a sphere.

The John Richards home in Madison, Wis., was constructed in 1853 and it is said to be the finest and best preserved example of this type of architecture. The home is now a museum.

David Aldrich, a carpenter, purchased the land where the Wilmington home now stands in 1855 and the house was completed a year later. It is likely that the Schutten residence was the last structure of its kind to be built.

Eight might have been the number for Aldrich. The cupola atop the flat roof of the house had eight sides and the post supporting the porch roof are also octagon-shaped. Each of the eight windows in the cupola has eight panes of glass.

The house also has a square keystone which extends from the basement to the roof. The staircase winds around the hollow shaft.

Sizes and shapes of rooms vary from floor to floor, as a telephone company employee discovered while making an installation.

The exterior of the house was once ornate with "gingerbread" decorations, which have since been removed. Fancy brackets once hung from the eaves. Spindle railings have all been removed since the wood was rotting away.

The basement of the house contains several rooms. There are eight rooms on the first floor and two bathrooms. The second floor has been remodeled into an apartment.

The home is generally known in the community as the "round house."

It has been said that the old house was one of three Wilmington stations on the "underground railway" by which escaped slaves from the South were spirited to havens in Canada during Civil War times.

The Monteith family acquired the home in 1902 and it was sold to William Johnson in 1910. Johnston was Mrs. Schutten's grandfather.

{note} This article is probably from the Wilmington Advocate, maybe the Feb. 1968 referred to in the "Wesley Pioneer Resident" article).

{note} LWJ remembers well the big family dinners that ggf William I. Johnston held at this house. The doors of the first floor rooms would be opened up and planks placed on nail kegs to make serving tables for the food. The children had a great time with the central spiral stairway that went from basement to cupola. As many as 60 people attended these dinners.

{note} LWJ worked on wiring this house in the late 1930s. He encountered the walls full of brick - for insulation and mouse-proofing - but which made wiring all but impossible. The outer walls from ground to second story roof were brick filled.

6.7 Stevens

6.7.1 Zenus and Amanda (Haughan) Stevens

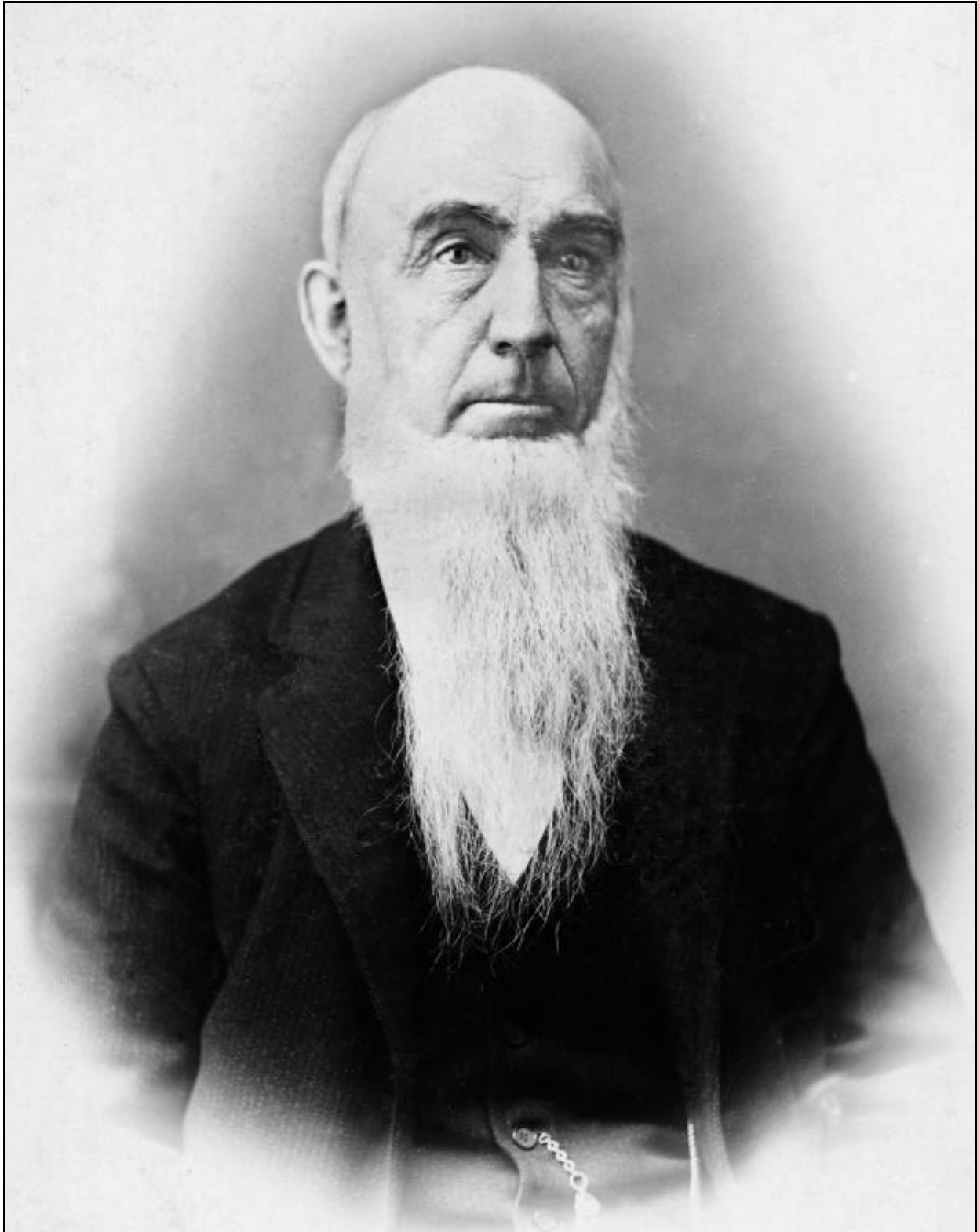
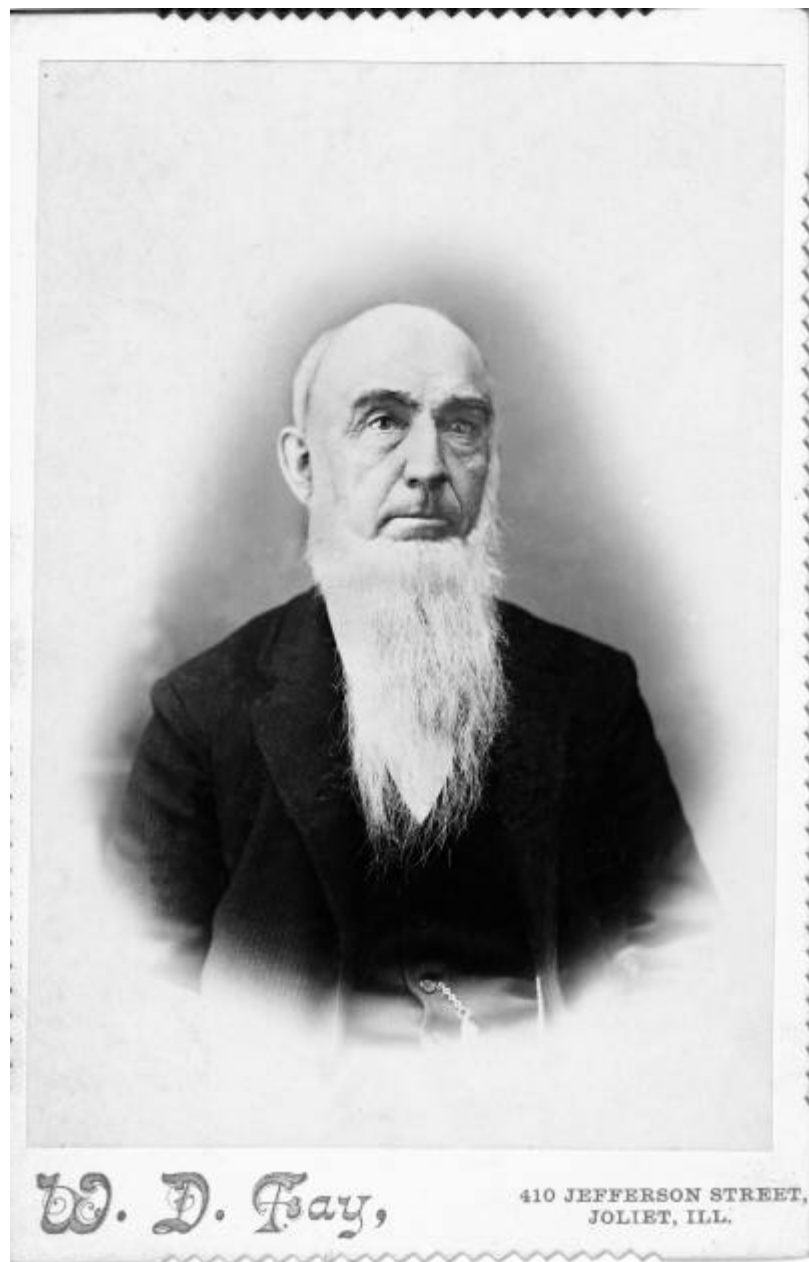


Figure 6.8

Zenus Stevens, ca. 1905.



Grandpa Stevens
Zenus B. 1829
He died in 1912
Photo 1900 - 1910?

Notes of ??

Figure 6.9

Zenus Stevens

Zenus Stevens was the father of Dimis (Grimes) Stevens, who was the mother of Laura (Grimes) Johnston, my grandmother. - WEJ.



Figure 6.10

Amanda (Haughan) Stevens, ca. 1905.



Grandma Stevens
Amanda B. 1828
She died in 1915
prob 1900-1910?

Notes of ??

Figure 6.11

Amanda (Haughan) Stevens

Amanda Stevens was the mother of Dimis (Grimes) Stevens, who was the mother of Laura (Grimes) Johnston, my grandmother. - WEJ

6.7.2 The Stevens Sisters



The five Steven's Sisters in 1880
Left to Right

1. (standing) Lavinie Ann 1865-1945 Age 15
2. (seated) Marilla Jane (Jennie) 1858-1951 Age 22
3. (standing) Effie Elvira 1861-1926 Age 19
4. (seated) Elsie Amelia 1862-1915 Age 18
5. (standing) Dimmis Eliza 1860-1959 Age 20

Figure 6.12

The Five Stevens Sisters in 1880.

These are the children of Zenus and Amanda (Haughan) Stevens. (Notes of LWJ.)