

Item. All the rest residue <sup>X-3</sup> and remainder of my estate  
 real, personal & mixed; both that which I now hold & all  
 that I may hereafter acquire, I give & bequeath to the  
 Mayor & Corporation of the City of Philadelphia for the  
 time being and to their successors in office forever in Trust  
 for the purchase of a sufficient plot of ground in the  
 City of Philadelphia or in the neighborhood thereof, and  
~~thereon~~ to erect or cause to be erected suitable buildings  
~~and~~ accommodations for an Hospital or Asylum, to be  
 denominated "The Wills Hospital for the Relief of the Indi-  
 gent Blind & Lame". The Funds thus appropriated are

Fig. 1. Will of James Wills, Jr. May 8, 1823

## WHY AN EYE HOSPITAL, MR. WILLS ?

by

Charles E. Letocha

This paper is an attempt to add some information about James Wills and the founding of Wills Eye Hospital; material not already available in the standard works by Posey and Brown<sup>1</sup> and by Tasman<sup>2</sup>.

In The American Daily Advertiser of January 31, 1825, the Mayor of Philadelphia published this letter: "To the Presidents and Members of the Select and Common Councils. Gentlemen – I have great pleasure in laying before you a letter from Messrs. Isaac Elliott and William Morrison, Executors to the estate of the late James Wills, Grocer, containing an extract from the Will of the deceased, from which it appears, that this good man and estimable citizen, has bequeathed to the Mayor and Corporation of the city of Philadelphia, for the time being, and to their successors in office, forever, as residuary legatees, an estate estimated at \$75,000, for the foundation and support of an Hospital to bear his name, and for the humane purpose of relieving the Lame and Blind, - Councils will please to take such order in relation to this matter, as they in their discretion may deem proper. Very respectfully, I have the honour to be, &c, Joseph Watson, Mayor."

*"...all the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, real, personal, and mixed, both that which I now hold and all that I may hereafter acquire, I give and bequeath to the Mayor and*

*Corporation of the City of Philadelphia for the time being and their successors in office forever, in trust for the purchase of sufficient plot of ground in the city of Philadelphia, or in the neighborhood thereof, and thereon to erect or cause to be erected suitable buildings and accommodations for an hospital or asylum, to be denominated – 'The Wills Hospital for the Relief of the Indigent Blind and Lame'."* From the will of James Wills, Jr., signed May 8, 1823 and proved January 26, 1825 (Appendix A). (Fig 1, p.188)

What information is available about this man whose generosity established this hospital? The answer is: almost nothing. The facts are few. He died January 22, 1825, age 48, of "obesity" (Fig 2, p.190). The records of Friends Burial Ground, where he was buried, state, "He was not attended by a physician but from information received, I am of the opinion that his death was caused by obesity – Joseph Parrish, M.D."

There is no record of his birth and no record of a baptism. One newspaper account of his death says that he died "in his 48th year". The Cemetery record and the Meeting records list age 48 at the time of death.<sup>3</sup> This would seem to indicate that 1777 was the most likely year of his birth. There is no record of what education he might have had. When his parents joined the Society of Friends in 1802, he is mentioned as part of the family. He never married and he had no offspring. Even people who knew him wrote sparingly and in generalities about him after he had died. A newspaper biography of his father, but written when James, Jr. died (appendix B), mentions him in only one sen-

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6	7	Rebecca Savery	7X80 21	
6	7	William Warner Son	2 50 7mo	Catarrh Fever
8	9	James C Marshall Son	2X50 4	Group
10	11	Benjamin Allen	5X87 43	Erysipelas
10	12	Israel Hooper	5X63 56	Territonacum
15	15	Sarah Ann Jarretson	3X10 9	Drop on the Br
17	18	A Child of	2X50	Still Born
21	23	Hannah Fairbank	8 63 77	Decay
22	23	Samuel Edwards Son	2X50 1	Inflammation of the
24	25	James Wills	7X50 48	Meaty
29	30	James Bonfall	5 63 22	Disease of the Chest
29	31	Jemima Knowl	5X63 65	Palsy
31	2	A Child of	3X25 6 month	

Fig. 2. Burial ground record for James Wills, Jr.

tence: "The Son differed little from the Father, and led an inoffensive and industrious life."

In his dedication speech at the opening of Wills Hospital March 5, 1834 (appendix C), Joseph R. Ingersoll stated: "Industrious in his habits, without ostentation in his manners, frugal in his living, punctual and exact in all his dealings, he accumulated, as a natural consequence, a considerable fortune. But modest and unassuming in all his ways, and entirely withdrawn from the more conspicuous scenes of life, he locked up in his own bosom a design full of generous purpose. It had probably been long growing there to maturity, and we may fairly presume it formed the most cherished subject of his secret thoughts. All his cautious abstinence (which the misjudging world may have mistaken for avarice), all his zealous industry (which it may have erroneously deemed superfluous and without an object), were slowly but surely contributing to enable him to give full effect to his well digested plans. Let the hasty observers of human actions learn from his example, not to judge rashly of the motives or the conduct of those about them from external indications exhibited to the world. While he seemed to be hoarding up unnecessary treasure, and denying to himself at least the luxuries of life, and to others the benefits of his

**Benevolent Eccentricity.**

The eccentric mortal, whose WILL we publish below, was one of those (now no longer rare) instances of *public charity* getting the mastery over the secret benevolence of the heart, for the lust of fame;—in laying the foundation of an HOSPITAL to be called by *his own name*. Posthumous vanity is often greater than the living passion, and we know none more extravagant than this. The objects of his bequests are certainly laudable; but who could imagine that in such a breast resided the *lust of fame*? Mr. Wills was, we believe, an illiterate man, by business a *small grocer*, who conscientiously refused to retail *spirits*! Yet he has contrived to secure himself a *name*, by the means of that sordid treasure which he spent a life in accumulating;—but which, like a true *Philosopher*, he refused to enjoy, that he might dedicate it to the happiness of others. The only thing to be regretted is, that he should have overlooked the poor helpless *WOMEN and Children*, of his own *kin*, to heal the lame and blind of future generations of strangers.

Fig. 3. From *Columbian Observer*, February 27, 1825





Fig 4. St. Michael's Church

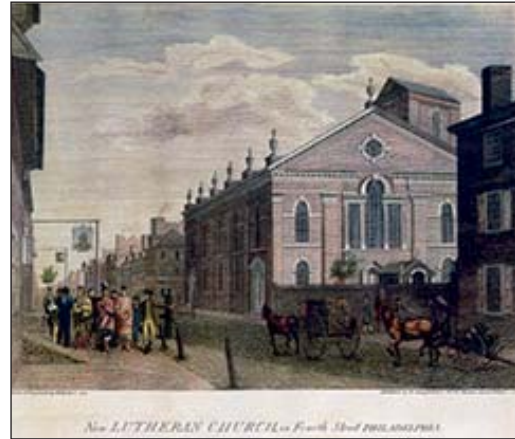


Fig. 5. Zion Lutheran Church

possessions, he was almost lavish in the profusion, and unwearied in the practice of his benevolence. His private memoranda show, that while the expenses of his household scarcely exceeded four hundred dollars a year, his charitable donations for similar periods were nearly fifteen hundred. Until death had rendered him deaf alike to the voice of censure and applause, his munificence was unknown. It disclosed itself even then in no lofty monument, no blazoned record. Humble as his walk in life, was the consistent appropriation of his honest gains. His alliances were not among the affluent and the exalted, and his characteristic bequest records him as the friend of those who are the most likely to be friendless.”

In the annual report for the year 1874,<sup>4</sup> Dr. A. D. Hall commented: “The memory of our founder fades fast from the minds of his fellow-citizens. No marble bust, no curious trick of canvas shows forth the man ‘in his habit as he lived.’ Nothing remains of him, nothing save this House, but by it and through it, he being dead yet speaketh, and will speak long after our warm hearts and generous hands are still in dusty death.” It would appear that the image of James Wills, Jr. was not very favorable during his lifetime: an introverted man, seemingly unknown by all but a very few (fig 3, p.190).

Little is also known about Hannah Roberts Wills, his mother. She died of “phthisis” [probably tuberculosis] December 6, 1813, aged 74, according to the Friends’ records. She left no will. She had married James Wills on August 4, 1774 in St. Michael/Zion Church (fig. 4, 5), with Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg officiating (fig.



Fig. 6 Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg)

6).<sup>5</sup> The records of the two churches were later merged, so the exact building where the marriage took place is not known. Muhlenberg was well-known for marrying non-German-speaking couples and even those of other faiths.<sup>6</sup> The marriage license was dated August 2. Hannah Roberts listed her home as “Bristol, in Bucks County” (fig 7, p.192).

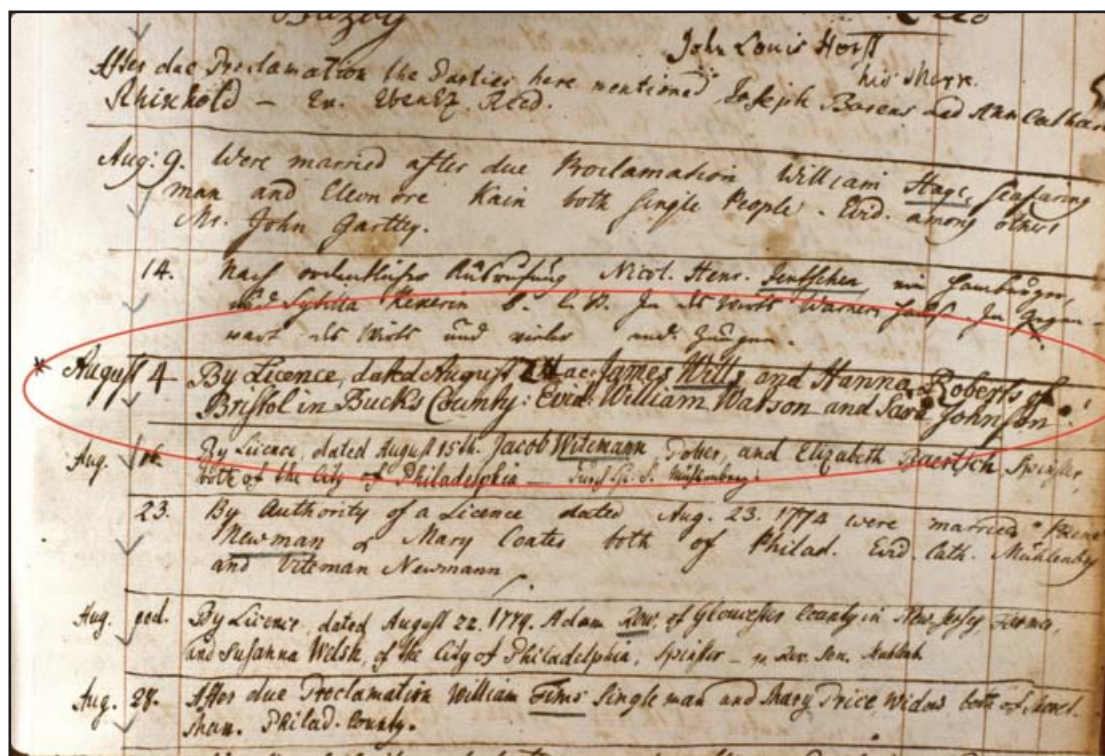


Fig. 7. Marriage Record

No comments about this marriage, James Wills, or Hannah Roberts appear in Muhlenberg's lengthy diary. Despite diligent searching, I have not been able to determine to which Roberts family Hannah belonged. Presumably, the family was at least moderately well off. Caspar Souder Jr.'s *History of Chestnut Street*<sup>7</sup> states: "We have heard it said that when the elder Wills married, it was against the wishes of the friends of his wife who 'cut' the young coachman and grocer. But time sped on, and things changed with its progress and when the friends of the lady discovered that she had a rich husband, they were disposed to become very intimate; but, it had now become the turn of the worthy grocer to retort and he 'cut' his would-be friends as 'dead' as they once cut his family." A Hannah Roberts was taxed in the Mulberry Ward of Philadelphia in 1767 and 1769.<sup>8</sup> Mulberry Ward was bounded by Front and Seventh Streets, Arch Street on the south and Vine Street on the north. Her assessment was only £2, a low figure for that time period. The biography of James Wills in the *Columbian Observer* (appendix B) states: "[Wills] married a respectable and industrious woman in Strawberry Alley, who kept a small huckster store." Strawberry Alley was a north/south alley from Chestnut to Market,

between 2nd and 3rd Streets, not in Mulberry Ward. It can be seen in an 1850 drawing (fig. 8, p.193).

I have been able to discover some new information about James Wills, Sr., the protagonist of the family business. Much of this comes from the newspaper biography previously mentioned (appendix B). Although anonymous, the writer clearly was a friend of Wills and came to his defense against other, critical, newspaper accounts of Wills' character. "James Wills...was born in London, where he was apprenticed to a Patent Coach-spring maker, with whom he served six years, much to the satisfaction of his master, being as remarkable for his industry, as he was exemplary for his rectitude. When of age he took a shop of his own, and in the simplicity of his heart, unconscious of infringing the right of another person, he set up the same business for himself. This, however was not so agreeable to his old master, who waited upon him, to inform him that he could not carry on business in the manufacture of his patented article. James, of course, immediately desisted; but still urgent for a livelihood, resolved to go to Dublin, to which Kingdom, patents at that time (before the Union) did not extend. At Dublin he again commenced



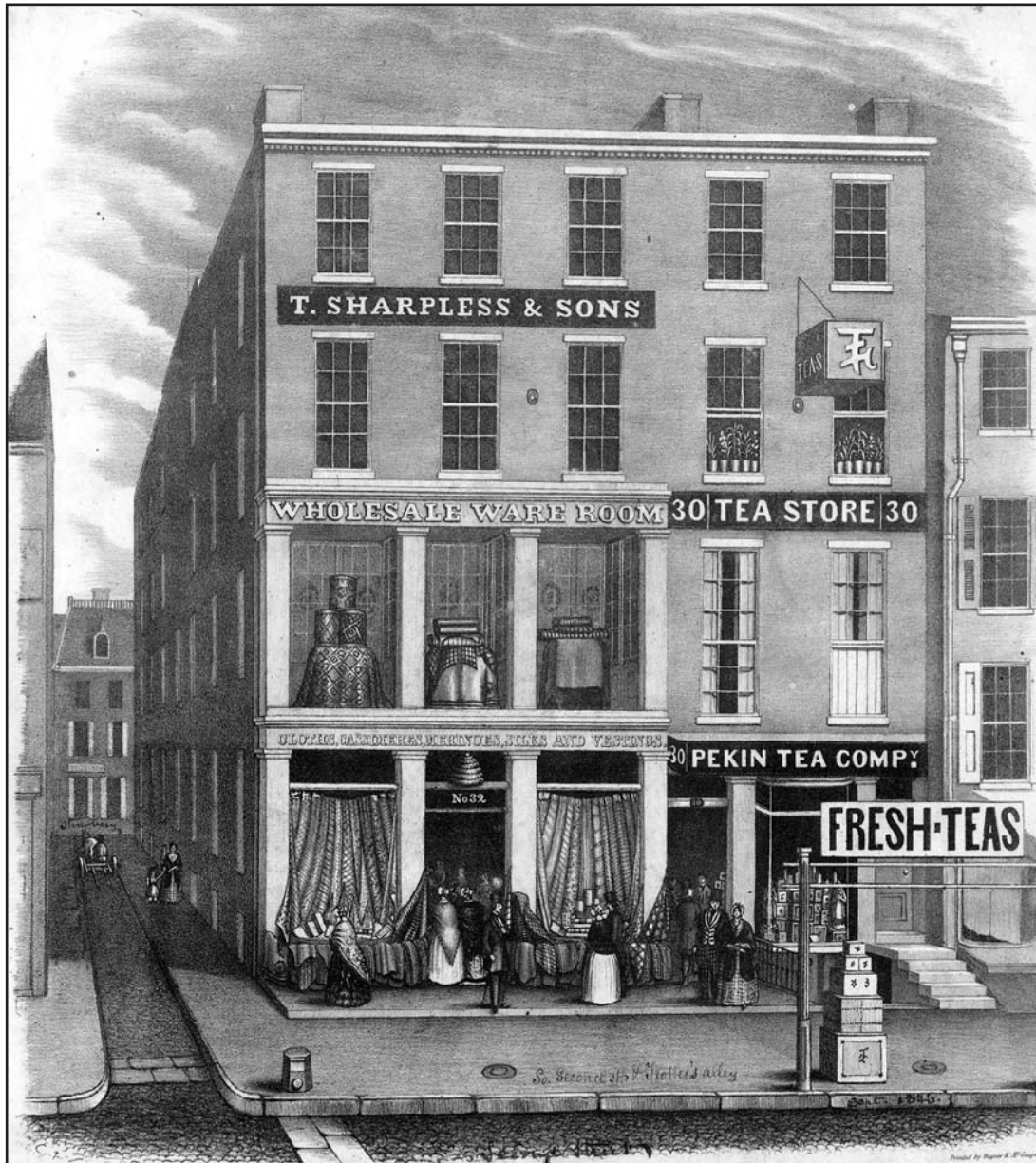


Fig. 8. Strawberry Alley, 1850. Looking north from Chestnut St.

Courtesy, Library Company of Philadelphia.

business, but was left unmolested only for a short time. The Mechanics' Company, jealous of their rules, enquired into the term of his apprenticeship, and finding he had served six years, instead of seven, notified him that he could not proceed in his trade. These were discouraging circumstances to any man; but the patient fortitude, and unruffled perseverance of the mind of honest James Wills made light of them. He immediately sold off his little stock of tools, etc., and taking passage in a vessel bound to America, arrived safely at Philadelphia. He here purchased a sloop and went up and down the river on little trading

voyages – a kind of land and water or amphibious pedlar; an occupation at that day very lucrative, especially to one of James's industrious and frugal habits. After being engaged in this business a few years, which has led to his being miscalled at one time of life a Sailor, he married a respectable and industrious woman in Strawberry Alley, who kept a small huckster store. Here James became settled. But he was not made to be idle, and finding that his wife left him nothing to do in the business of the shop, he hired himself to James Pemberton (*fig. 9, p.194*), as a Coachman, in which capacity he continued several



Fig. 9. James Pemberton

years daily adding to his golden store and domestic comfort.

The sloop, in the meantime was sold. With only one son, the cost of living was small, and profits accumulated. The huckster shop was enlarged into a grocery; and business extended. His punctuality gave him credit, and his silent march to wealth excited neither attention nor envy; so that when he died, he left to his son most of his property, 150,000 dollars, (recently bequeathed to charities) with an injunction, that should his son have no children, he would so dispose of it, and he particularly enjoined him to found a Hospital for the Lame and Blind. With the desire of his worthy father, the son leaving neither wife nor children, has strictly complied.”

There may be another version of the story. A James Wills arrived in America from Ireland via New Castle on July 27, 1773.<sup>9</sup> “James Wills. Who was under an Indenture of Redemption to John Patterson which was lost now cancelled in consideration of fifteen pounds paid to Patterson for his passage from Ireland. Bound a servant to William Wilson of New Castle Hundred, New Castle, this assigns two years and a half from the 5th instant the day of arrival to be found all necessaries he has to have the usual allowance according to the custom of the county in the like kind”. This ship had departed from Newry but it was not uncommon

for such vessels to make other stops (such as Dublin) before commencing the trans-Atlantic crossing. This type of indenture was an immigrant servant contract. The immigrant pledged his labor as a servant in order to borrow passage fare and in fact entered a servant contract in America if he couldn’t come up with the cash to repay the passage debt upon landing (personal communication, Farley Grubb, PhD, 2/26/96). This contract would have been in effect until January, 1776 and it would have been extremely unusual for an indentured servant to marry (James Wills married Hannah Roberts August 4, 1774). If this is the correct James Wills and if he was indeed indentured, he must have bought out his servant contract prior to his marriage date. There is no record of any James Wills having been a runaway servant during this time period. Hannah Roberts was about 35 years of age when she married James Wills, who was about 24 years of age in 1774. That was older than usual for a first marriage and one could speculate that Hannah put up the money to buy James his freedom.

Whichever account is correct, it does appear that James Wills arrived from Ireland in the early 1770s. This was a period of mass migration from the British Isles, perhaps best documented by Bernard Bailyn.<sup>10</sup> He married Hannah Roberts in 1774 and their only child, James, Jr., was born about 1777. A James Wills appears in the Lower Merion tax records on 1779 and 1780. This man was listed as an “oilmaker”, in possession of 1 cow and was assessed £400, a comparatively small amount. Of some interest, is that he is listed next to Hugh Roberts, whose assessment was £3800. Whether this Roberts was related to Hannah I have not been able to determine. James Wills first appears in the Philadelphia tax records in 1785, renting from the “Widow Leech”, on the south side of Chestnut Street between Front and Second (figs 10 and 11).<sup>11</sup>

streets	persons
Wilson John, shopkeeper, Second b. Market and Chestnut-streets	
Wilson Silas, innkeeper, Callowhill b. Second and Front-streets	
Willing, Morris and Swanwick, merchants, Penn-streets	
Willing Ann, gentlewoman, Pine b. Front and Second-streets	
Wills John, Windsor chair maker, Eighth b. Walnut and Chestnut-streets	
Wills Joseph, house carpenter, Fifth b. Vine and Race-streets	
Wills Thomas captain, turner, Front b. Arch and Race-streets	
Wills Edward, bricklayer, Callowhill b. Front and Second-streets	
Wills Jonathan, flour merchant, Water b. Walnut and Chestnut-streets	
Wills Seth, merchant, corner of Front, Spruce and Water-streets	
Wills James, shopkeeper, Chestnut b. Second and Front-streets	
Will William, Esq, member of assembly, Second b. Vine and Race-streets	
Willet John, captain, Union b. Second and Front-streets	
Wilcock Samuel, lumber merchant, Arch b. Fourth and Fifth-streets	
Wilcox John, merchant, Second b. Front and Walnut-streets	
Wilcocks Alexander, Esq, counsellor at law, Arch b. Third and Front-streets	

Fig. 10. 1785 City directory.



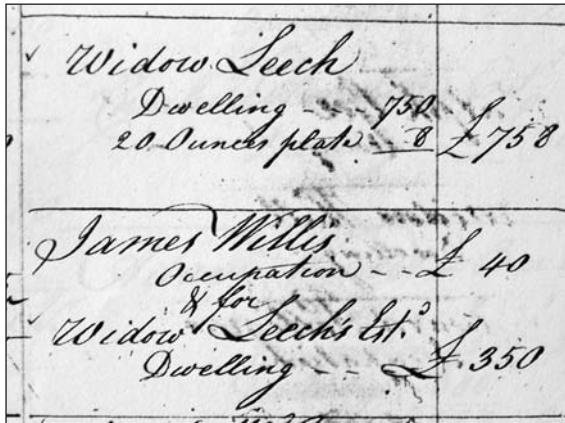


Fig. 11. 1786 tax record

His occupation was not listed but it was valued at £10. In 1786 his occupation was assessed £40 but at £30 pounds the following year. He purchased #84 Chestnut Street from Dr. Benjamin Rush on July 9, 1787. "James Wills of said City, yeoman, and Hannah his wife for 700 pounds current money of Pennsylvania. Paid in gold and silver coin. 16'6" wide, 40' deep widening westward to 21'6" then of that breadth 108' to alley known as Orphans Court. 5' wide alley west of #84." Rush had purchased the lot and building in 1784.<sup>12</sup> According to the will of James Wills, Jr., Wills, Sr. purchased #86 Chestnut Street from William Ogden and #82 Chestnut Street from Zachariah Poulson. The years of these purchases have not been determined. In 1799, Wills enlarged the property by the addition of two substantial back buildings. Each was simply finished. The two story square building was completely unplastered and was used to store groceries; the other larger building housed a kitchen and probably additional living quarters. Apparently, the "small kitchen" behind the dwelling house was demolished. In 1801, Wills erected a new building at #84. In keeping with his frugal style, even his new building was quite plain: "the lower story hath a rough coat of plaster, no other part of the building is plastered, the floors not planed, stepladders, trap door, and arched dorm-



Fig. 12. Re-creation of the south side of Chestnut Street, ca. 1820.

Courtesy: Cindy Owens.

ers, a straight bulk window, with large glass, and large glass in the front, a pediment, and architrave at front door." (appendix J) In 1813, #86 Chestnut was significantly renovated. The Wills buildings were on the south side of Chestnut Street, between Second & Third Streets, about 5 buildings east of Third (fig 12).

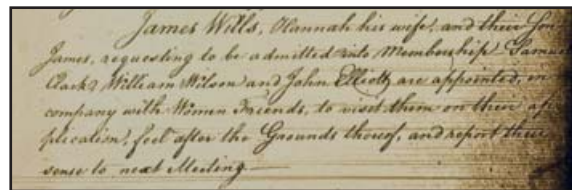
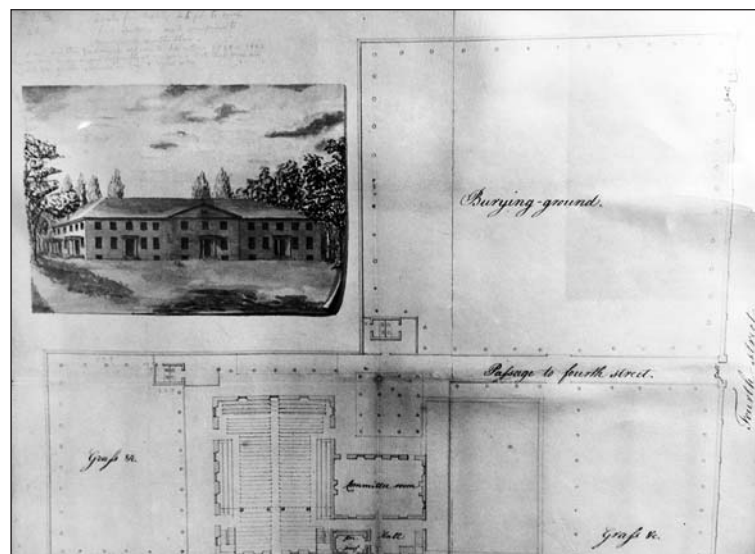


Fig. 13. Application to Society of Friends, 1802.

Fig. 14 (below). Society of Friends, Arch Street Meeting





In the 1789 tax records, Wills is listed as a grocer, with an assessed value of the property of £425 and his occupation as £25. In 1802, the Wills family joined the Society of Friends (*fig 13*).

Their religious beliefs and practices prior to this are unknown. They remained members in good standing until their deaths. They were buried in Friends Cemetery, near Fourth and Arch Streets (*fig. 14, p.195*).

James, Sr.'s will was signed April 16, 1823 and he died 8 days later, April 24, 1823 of "pectoral affection and general anasarca" [presumably pulmonary edema with generalized edema]. James Jr.'s will was signed May 8, 1823, two weeks following his father's death. He died January 22, 1825.

### Why an eye hospital?

What would have induced a grocer to endow an eye hospital? The entire concept of eye



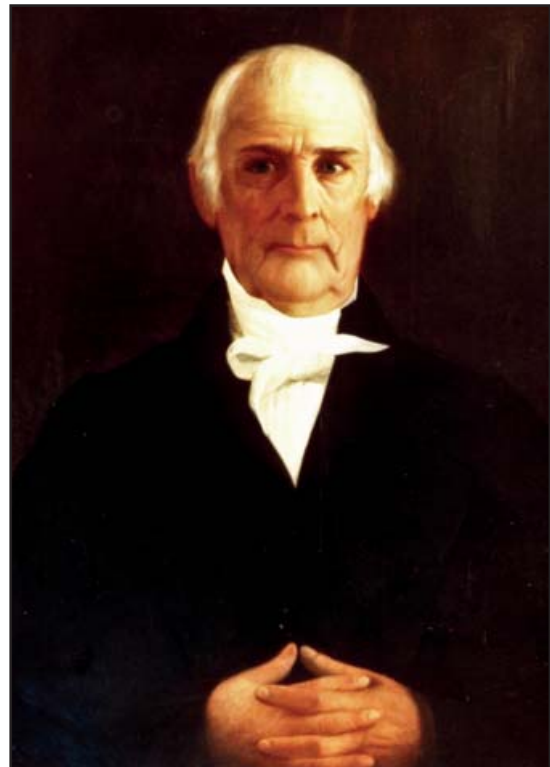
*Fig. 15. Georg Joseph Beer*

hospitals was new at the time. Georg Joseph Beer of Vienna established the first one in 1786 (*fig 15*).<sup>13</sup> It consisted of two rooms in his dwelling for use by indigent patients. Twenty years later it was expanded into a public institution by order of Kaiser Joseph and, in 1818, consisted of 3 halls, one for lectures, the other two wards, totaling 18 beds. The Lon-



*Fig. 16. John Cunningham Saunders*

don Infirmary for Curing Diseases of the Eye and Ear was founded by John Cunningham Saunders in 1805 (*fig 16*).<sup>14</sup> The work of this institution was limited to diseases of the eye in 1807 and new quarters were built in 1821. The West of England Eye Infirmary was founded at Exeter in 1808. These were fol-



*Fig. 17. Elisha North*



Fig 18. North advertisement



Fig. 19a Edward Delafield  
courtesy Clermont State Historic Site, NYSOPRHP

lowed by the Bristol Eye Hospital (1810), the Royal Manchester Eye Hospital (1814) and the Birmingham and Midland Eye Hospital (1823).

In 1817, Dr. Elisha North of New London, Connecticut established the first eye infirmary in the United States (*figs 17, p.196 and 18*).<sup>15</sup> The exact details of it are not known but, apparently, eye diseases were treated in his home. Presumably, patients also stayed at the home for treatment and post-operative care of surgical cases. This infirmary was in operation at least until 1829.

On August 14, 1820, Edward Delafield and John Kearny Rodgers (*fig. 19a+b*) founded the New York Eye Infirmary.<sup>16</sup> Their rationale was expressed in advertisements in all the New York newspapers (*fig. 20, p.198*). The original infirmary consisted of two small rooms on the second floor of an old building. All professional care and medicines were supplied free of charge. In the first seven months, 436 patients had been seen. On March 9, 1821, a meeting to garner public support for the institution was held. Bylaws, rules and regulations for the public infirmary were drawn on April 21, 1821 and the institution has flourished since its inception. Information about this new venture was



Fig.19b John Kearny Rodgers

published in the National Gazette [Philadelphia] on March 15 1821. "It is acknowledged on all hands, that the diseases of the eye have heretofore very little engaged the attention



## NEW YORK EYE INFIRMARY.

The subscribers have associated themselves for the purpose of founding an institution, under the title of the "NEW YORK EYE INFIRMARY," for the gratuitous treatment of diseases of the eye.

The Infirmary will be modelled after one of a similar character in London, founded by the late Mr. Saunders; a charity which has been found by experience to have been eminently useful, not only in curing diseases of the eye, and saving the vision of a large number of persons, but in improving the knowledge of physicians and surgeons in one of the most difficult & important branches of their science.

By confining the object of an infirmary to the treatment of a single class of diseases, it has been found that many persons have applied for relief who would not have asked it from any general Infirmary or Hospital; and from the same cause a greater degree of attention can be paid to them.

To fulfil these objects, the subscribers have determined to devote a portion of their time, and will attend at the Infirmary, No. 45 Chatham street, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, between the hours of 12 and 1, P. M. to give advice and dispense medicines to all persons with diseases of the eyes who apply to them.

EDWARD DELAFIELD, M. D.  
 J. KEARNEY RODGERS, M. D.  
 WRIGHT POST, M. D.                   } Consulting  
 SAMUEL BORROWE, M. D.           } Surgeons.

Fig. 20. August 12, 1820 notice of founding of New York Eye Infirmary

of the physicians of this country." "No institution existed, where a sufficient number of patients were collected either to give the physician much experience...or afford a practical school...to become familiar with them." "it is hoped the infirmary will prove itself an useful object for the encouragement of our

fellow citizens." Whether or not James Wills read this article is unknown.

Coincident with this, on April 14, 1821, George McClellan opened an eye infirmary at the corner of Swanwick and Walnut Streets in Philadelphia, the first in this city.<sup>17</sup>



Fig. 21. George McClellan

(figs 21 and 22, p.199) “Dispensary for Diseases of the Eye – For the increasing number of indigent blind people in the city of liberties, a number of gentlemen have been contemplating the institution of a society to afford gratuitous relief; and though circumstances at present prevent more than a limited founda-



Fig. 22. 19th century Swanwick Street, as envisioned by Frank Taylor in the early 20th century.

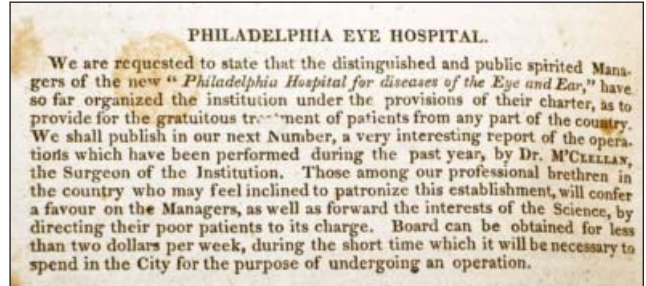


Fig. 23. Notice of McClellan's eye hospital. *American Medical Recorder*. Vol. 6, p. 384 (1823)

tion, they indulge reasonable expectations of being able, in the course of a few months, to establish a much more extensive charity.” One can only speculate whether McClellan's venture was related to the one in New York (fig. 23).

A native of Woodstock, Connecticut, McClellan graduated from Yale in 1815 and from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in 1819. Highly ambitious, he began to teach anatomy and surgery privately immediately after graduating. A forceful speaker and excellent surgeon, he soon attracted a number of students to his classes who might otherwise have attended those at the University. Unpopular with the faculty at Penn, even as a student, this incursion into potential Penn students led to a lifelong rift with the Penn faculty. This reached its peak when he founded a rival medical school in 1825. Medical disputes were often aired in the public newspapers and privately printed pamphlets in the 1820s. A particular enmity arose between the Professor of Surgery at the University, William Gibson, and Granville Sharp Pattison, who was allied with McClellan (figs 24 and 25, p.200).

A sidelight of this tension is reflected in the history of the secret medical society, Kappa Lambda.<sup>18</sup> The Philadelphia chapter was founded in 1822. As a secret society, it had the power to include or exclude whatever doctors it might choose. The vast majority of its members were affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania. One prominently excluded doctor was George McClellan.

The Pennsylvania Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear was established February 8, 1822 (fig 26, p.200 and appendix D).<sup>19</sup>



TO THE PUBLIC.

WHEREAS NATHANIEL CHAPMAN, M. D. Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, &c. &c. has propagated scandalous and unfounded reports against my character; and WHEREAS when properly applied to, he has refused to give any explanation of his conduct, or the satisfaction which every gentleman has a right to demand, and which no one having any claim to that character, can refuse, I am therefore compelled to the only step left me, and POST the said DR. NATHANIEL CHAPMAN, AS A LIAR, A COWARD, and a SCOUNDREL.

GRANVILLE SHARP PATTISON.

*Philadelphia, Oct. 23d, 1820.*

Fig. 24. Pattison on Chapman, of the Penn faculty

pendent professor, with powers and privileges equal to those possessed by my colleagues. That one man was, if qualified by abilities and education, equal to any professorship. If Dr. Horner's acquirements fitted him for the delivery of a part of the lectures, he must be qualified for giving the whole; and that if he had not talents which qualified him to become the single professor, it was certainly neither for my interest nor for the interest of the University, that such an association should be formed. I therefore begged that the proposal might be considered as refused.

very fond of exchanging pistol-bullets, he had better not call on any one, unless he is certain their principles are against fighting." This little story I related the following morning at breakfast, to the amusement of my brother and sister.

Fig. 25. Pattison on Horner; another Penn faculty member

Pennsylvania Infirmary for  
Diseases of the Eye & Ear-

February 8<sup>th</sup> 1822-

A meeting of the Managers was held this evening James Gibson Esq in the chair.

D. Hays was appointed secretary & Richard C. Wood Esq. elected Treasurer.

On Motion it was resolved that the surgeons be a committee, with authority to procure a room for an Infirmary, and to make such arrangements for carrying into effect, the objects of the Institute.

Reported Feb 20<sup>th</sup> 1822

Fig. 26. Establishment of Pennsylvania Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear.

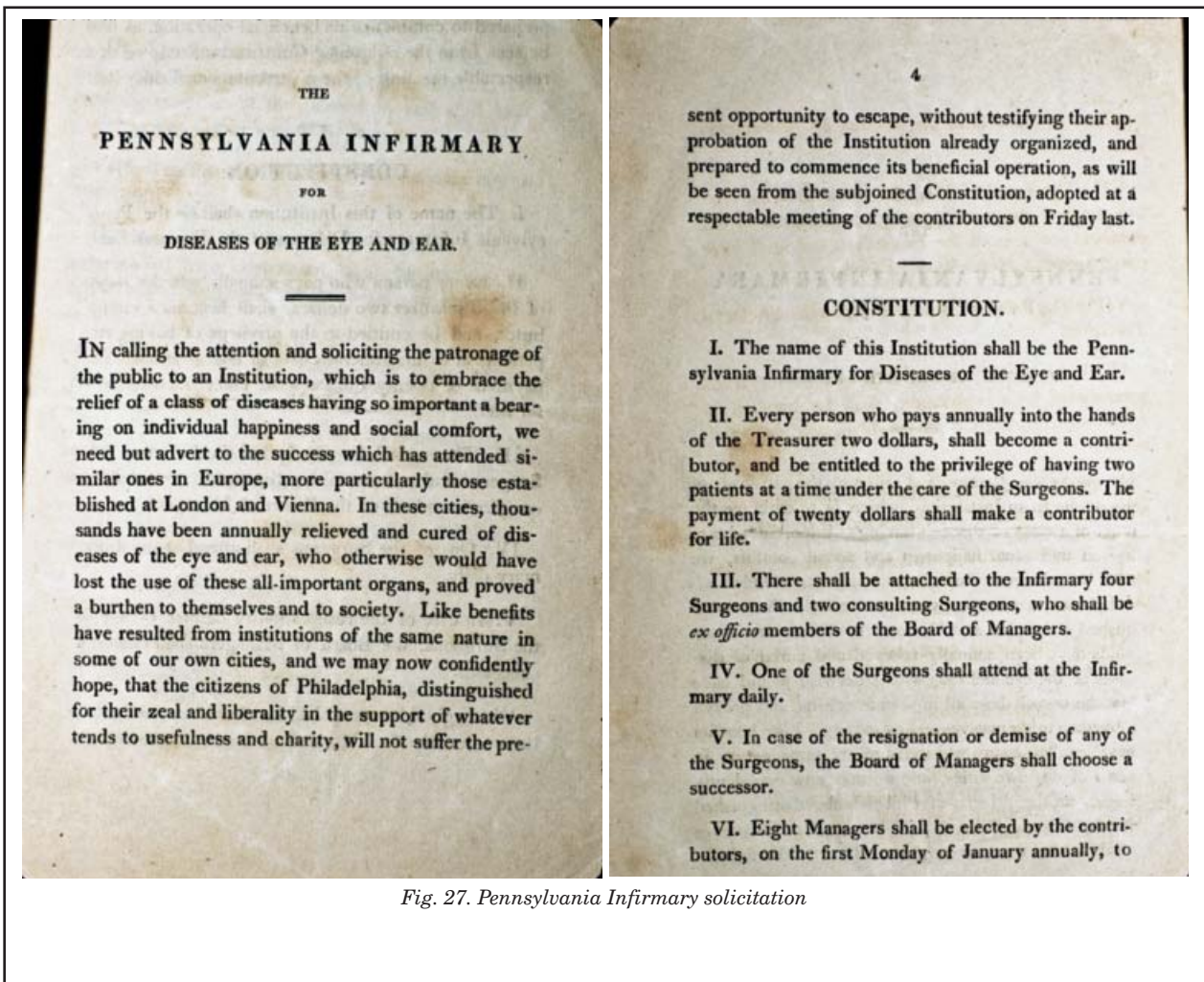


Fig. 27. Pennsylvania Infirmary solicitation

### Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye & Ear

Its members were allied with the University of Pennsylvania. Shortly thereafter, a room to conduct its business was rented at No. 4 South Seventh Street. The first surgeon was Dr. George B. Wood but he soon resigned to be replaced by Dr. William Darrach. By 1825, the surgeons listed were Drs. Isaac Hays, R. Eglesfield Griffith, and John Bell. Newspaper articles describing the Infirmary, including a request for funds, were published in at least two Philadelphia newspapers, the National Gazette and Literary Register on February 12, 1822 and the Pennsylvania Gazette and Daily Advertiser on February 26, 1822. The Infirmary also solicited public support via a pamphlet later in 1822. In both the newspaper announcements and the brochure, the following language was employed: "In calling the attention and soliciting the patronage of the public to an Institution, which is to embrace the relief of a class of diseases having so important a bearing on individual

happiness and social comfort, we need but advert to the success which has attended similar ones in Europe, more particularly those established at London and Vienna. In these cities, thousands have been annually relieved and cured of diseases of the eye and ear, who otherwise would have lost the use of these all-important organs, and proved a burthen to themselves and to society. Like benefits have resulted from institutions of the same nature in some of our own cities, and we may now confidently hope, that the citizens of Philadelphia, distinguished for their zeal and liberality in the support of whatever tends to usefulness and charity, will not suffer the present opportunity to escape, without testifying their approbation of the Institution already organized, and prepared to commence its beneficial operation, as will be seen from the subjoined Constitution, adopted at a respectable meeting of the contributors on Friday last." (fig. 27 and appendix D)



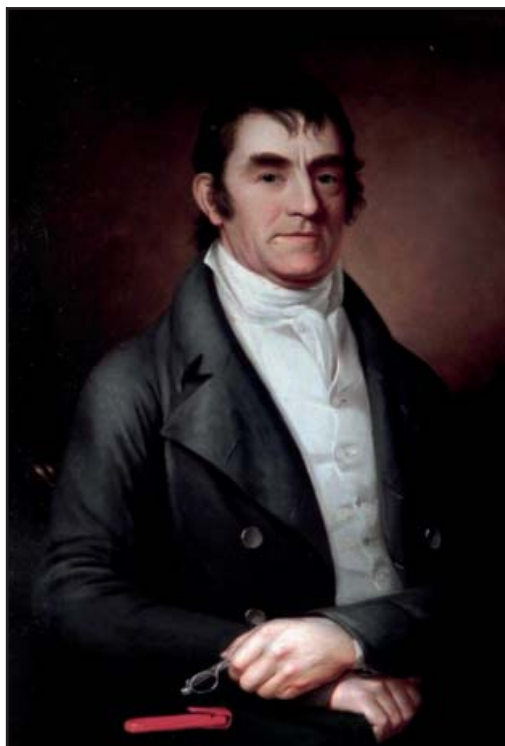


Fig. 28. John McAllister, Sr. Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Fig. 29. Charles Watson, Wills' blind neighbor. Courtesy, Library Company of Philadelphia.

Based on the list of contributors, it appears that solicitations were made door to door. At least 2 men in the 200 block of Chestnut Street (modern nomenclature) donated: John McAllister (#48 Chestnut) (fig. 28) and Charles Watson (#92 Chestnut) (fig. 29).

James Wills was not listed among the donors but it seems probable that he was solicited for funds. Charles Watson's clothing store (the finest in Philadelphia) was at #92 Chestnut, two doors west of Wills. Watson was blind most of his life.<sup>6</sup>

One can only speculate whether it was the rift between George McClellan and the Penn faculty that indirectly prompted James Wills to fund an eye hospital. But, an intriguing hypothesis is that the appeal for funds for the Pennsylvania Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear suggested a charitable use for his fortune to Wills. Similarly, there is no record whether his neighbor's blindness suggested this venture. "...he particularly en-

joined him [James, Jr.] to found a Hospital for the Lame and Blind. With the desire of his worthy father, the son, leaving neither wife nor children, has strictly complied." Previous accounts<sup>1,2</sup> have hypothesized Wills having been influenced by his Quaker affiliates, Anthony Benezet or the Quaker physician, Joseph Parrish. It appears that Wills was a coachman for James Pemberton, not Benezet; but Pemberton himself was a good role model for charitable works: a pacifist and abolitionist, he was a co-founder, manager, and secretary of the Pennsylvania Hospital. He worked for the fair treatment of the Native Americans. Certainly, Wills lived within easy walking distance of both McClellan's dispensary on Swanwick Street and the Pennsylvania Infirmary on 7th Street and might have known of their work (fig. 30).

In 1820, when the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb was founded, a survey to determine the number of people in need of its services was taken. Coincidentally, the



Fig. 30. Map, showing Wills' store, McClellan's dispensary, and the Pennsylvania Infirmity.

survey discovered a larger number of blind and visually impaired residents than had been known.<sup>20</sup> Discussions about services that might be provided for these people were held, mostly among members of the Society of Friends. Lack of financial resources caused this effort to be shelved at that time. Whether either James Wills, who were members of the Society of Friends, was aware of this survey is unknown.

Although it was written in 1824 (a year after Wills' will was written), Isaac Hays' review of George Frick's *A Treatise on the Diseases of the Eye* (Fig.30a) contains an interesting summary of the state of eye care in the U.S. at that time (appendix E).<sup>21</sup> "The advantages derived in Europe from institutions founded for the cure of these diseases, both as affording experience and a wide field for observation to the surgeon, means of obtaining clinical instruction to the student, and above all relief to the poor, whose subsistence depends upon their daily labour, and who, without this, would be deprived of the means of living, and thrown a burden on society, is most forcibly impressed upon the minds of all who visit these institutions. The wish to extend these benefits to this country has induced some public spirited individuals to found charitable establishments for similar purposes in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. The New York Eye Infirmity, established in 1820, has realized the most sanguine expectations of its patrons: during the first sixteen months that it was established, it afforded relief to upwards of eight hundred patients, and the number has since greatly increased, as the institution has become more extensively

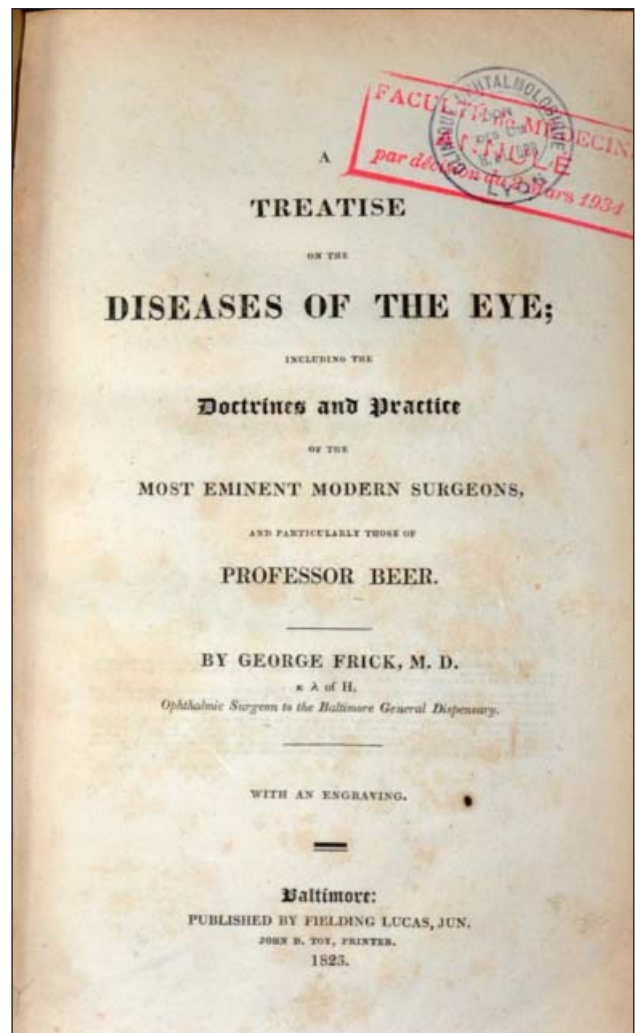


Fig.30a George Frick, a student of Georg Beer, wrote the first American textbook of ophthalmology. This copy was owned by Henri Dor (1835-1912) a close friend of Albrecht von Graefe.

(Collection Jean-Paul Wayenborgh, Paraguay)



known. We are sorry to learn, that the Pennsylvania Infirmary for the Diseases of the Eye and Ear, established in 1822, is in a languishing state, from want of necessary funds. We trust that these will no longer be withheld. In no other way can greater benefits be diffused at a small expense. Frightfully rapid in their progress, diseases of the eye frequently run on to a stage which puts at defiance all subsequent remedial efforts, before the sufferer thinks of applying to the ordinary sources for relief; and before a practitioner unacquainted with the nature of these affections, suspects any danger, the sight is irretrievably lost. The unfortunate wretch is thus shut out from the principal source of pleasure, and the means of obtaining a livelihood – becomes a burden to himself and to society – while a small portion of the alms which our sympathy cannot now refuse him, if it had been applied to the support of institutions for the relief of these diseases, might have been preserved him in the enjoyment of his faculties, and a useful member of society. In Europe, experience has fully confirmed the utility of these institutions, and we trust that Philadelphia, distinguished for the number of her charitable institutions and the liberality with which they are supported, will not let an institution, calculated to do credit to her generosity – to furnish instruction to the numerous medical students who annually flock to her schools - and preserve to the community many valuable citizens- languish for want of funds, when a little foresight, too, would show, that there is an actual saving in such an appropriation. For a small portion of what would be required for the support of persons who have lost their sight, and which must eventually be paid in the shape of poor rates, would suffice for its support.”

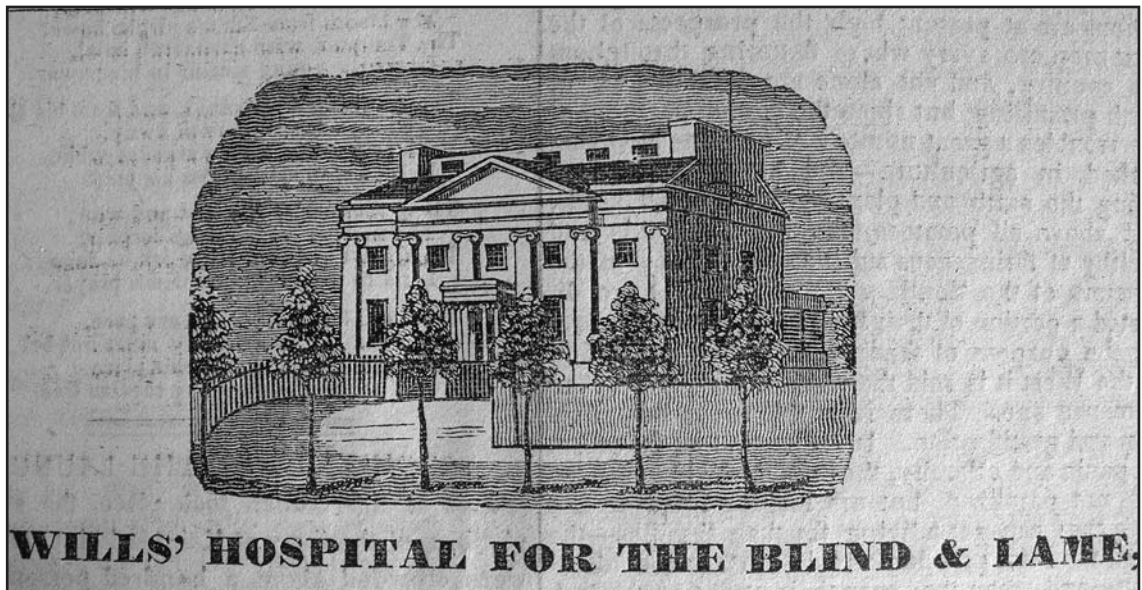
### **James Wills’ Legacy**

When the provisions of James Wills, Jr.’s will became public knowledge, shortly after his death on January 22, 1825, interest in the man and his money became keen. No one had expected a humble grocer to amass a fortune of this magnitude and no one had expected him to leave it to charity.

At the May 9, 1825 board meeting of the Pennsylvania Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear, a committee consisting of Messrs. Meredith, Bancker and Eyre was

“appointed to make inquiry concerning the provisions of the late Mr. James Wills’ legacy for the blind and lame, and to confer with the committee appointed some since by councils on this subject, if that committee be still in existence.”<sup>22</sup> No support for the Pennsylvania Infirmary was forthcoming. In fact, the matter ended up in the courts for many years.

Joseph Watson, Mayor of Philadelphia, formally requested Elliott and Morrison to release the money from the estate to the City of Philadelphia on June 21, 1826. When the executors failed to comply, the City filed suit to collect the money in July, 1826. The executors were loathe to release the money mainly on technical, legal grounds. The first was an error in the bequest which said “the mayor and corporation of Philadelphia”; the proper corporate title was “the mayor, aldermen and citizens of Philadelphia”.<sup>23</sup> As stated in the National Gazette of February 14, 1826: “for their own security, they have applied to able counsel for advice, who recommended an opinion of the court.” The second reason was vagueness of who was to be helped and the term “Philadelphia and its neighborhood.”<sup>24</sup> The third reason was the allegation that the City was not competent to take such a trust.<sup>25</sup> The case was heard in the Supreme Court, for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. At that time, the Supreme Court heard cases primarily, not just as an appellate court. The case was finally tried before Judge Tod and a special jury November 21, 1829. The final decision in favor of the City of Philadelphia was not reached until February 5, 1831. The court decided that the City did have the power to take in trust for the charity and that the validity of the charity had been decided in *Witman v. Lex*.<sup>26</sup> Isaac Elliott, one of the executors, was a conveyancer and neighbor of James Wills, his office at #82 Chestnut Street. He was a member of City Council and a long-time manager of Wills Hospital. In addition, he was the treasurer for the Pennsylvania Institution for Instruction of the Blind. William Morrison was also a neighbor; he was a brewer with his business at #79 Chestnut and residence at #76 Chestnut. He also became a manager of the Wills Hospital. It appears clear that these men did not hold up distribution of the money for their own personal gain; rather, they wanted to make sure the legal i’s were dotted and the t’s crossed.



*Fig. 31. Wills Hospital, 1837*

The cornerstone for the Hospital was laid April 2, 1832. As reported in the Philadelphia Gazette for April 8: "The cornerstone of the "Hospital for the Blind and Lame" was laid on Monday last. The edifice is to be raised in pursuance of directions made in the last testament of James Wills, Esq. Whose beneficent bequest for such an institution is well known. The edifice is to be erected opposite to the public square in Race street, near Schuylkill Fourth street, and the Orphan Asylum. A copy of the will, this Gazette of Saturday last, and the morning papers of the day, were enclosed in a bottle, hermetically sealed, and placed in the corner stone; together with the following memorandum or inscription:- 'Founded by the bounty of James Wills, who died in this city on the 22nd day of January, 1825-bequeathing by his will the residue of his estate for the construction and support of an Hospital for the indigent Blind and Lame. Erected by the Mayor, Aldermen and citizens of Philadelphia, under the direction of a Committee of the Select and Common Councils, composed of the following members, viz:- William J. Duane, Joshua Lippincott, John R. Neff and Daniel Grover, of the Select Council, and John Moss, Lewis Ryan, Silas W. Sexton, and John M. Hood, of the Common Council. Thomas N. Walter - Architect. Nathan P. Sullivan - Carpenter. William Ingram - Mason. Joshua Andrews & Son - Bricklayers. Garrigues & Sailor - Stone cutters. Benjamin W. Richards, being

Mayor of the City. George Wolf, Governor of the State of Pennsylvania, and Andrew Jackson, President of the United States. This cornerstone was laid on the 2nd day of April, 1832, at 10 o'clock A.M.' The following address by John Moss, Esq. Of the common Council, was made on the laying of the stone. The speaker did not overrate the blessings which will result from the institution. Time alone will develop the good which it will confer upon that unfortunate portion of the community, for the alleviation of whose miseries it is especially designed. It may be the place where some ophthalmic remedies may be discovered, or improved,-or where some nice exposition of medical science may arise of incalculable benefit:- 'Gentlemen:- we have assembled here this day to lay the cornerstone of an edifice destined for an Asylum for the indigent Blind and Lame. We are indebted to the benevolence of the late James Wills for this shelter from the storm, and quiet retreat for those, who are shut out from the light of heaven; and to whom even the earth has denied a pleasant habitation. So quiet and unobtrusive were the habits of the founder of this institution, that he was almost unknown to his fellow citizens, but in the way of private charities; here his heart and his purse always expanded to the crying of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, and the true objects of charity never went empty away. In the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-five, he entered upon that



glorious reversion held in reserve for all good men; and given to them in perpetuity. And although during his life he was but little known, in ages yet to come, many a blessing shall fall from tottering frames, and faltering lips, for his godlike gifts; and, at his name, eyes, though they cannot see, shall weep for gratitude, and wounded hearts shall leap for joy. Now may that Great Being who overthrows all human greatness, and treads to dust the proudest workmanship of his hand, condescend to bless this work – smooth every care, and cause the children of sorrow here to forget their woes, and the aching restless head, here to repose in peace.” The cost of the building, including the lot, was \$57,203, leaving a balance of \$65,345 in the endowment, the interest from which was used to operate the facility (*fig. 31, p.205*).

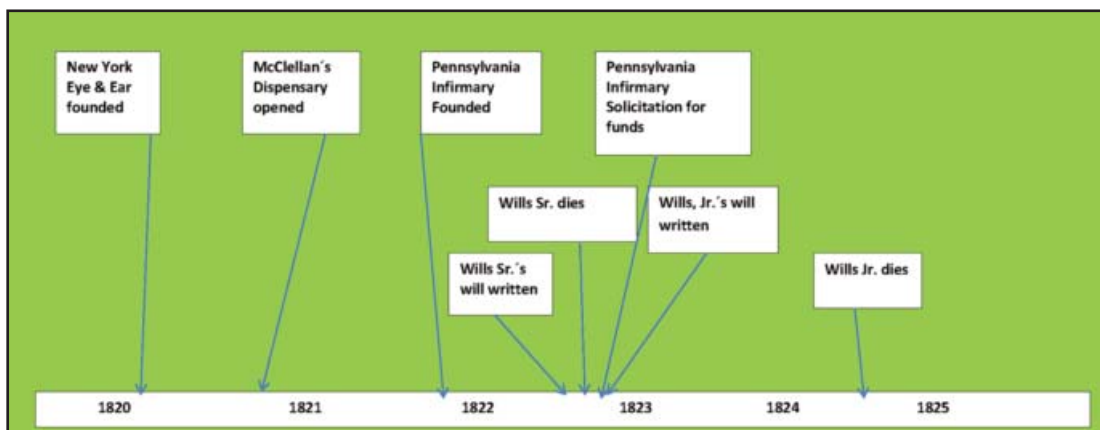


Fig. 32. Timeline showing the founding of eye institutions during James Wills' lifetime.

## CONCLUSIONS

Some new information about James Wills and the founding of The Wills Hospital has been presented. It appears that Wills was a Londoner who came to America via Ireland in the early 1770s. Whether he arrived as an indentured servant or as a free man has not been determined. The only James Wills documented in the official records did arrive indentured. Wills married a shopkeeper, Hannah Roberts, in 1774; she was about 10 years older than he. Their only child, James Jr., was born about 1777. The father started as a huckster, transporting goods up and down the Delaware River in a small boat.

Then, he worked as a coachman for James Pemberton and, eventually, with his wife in her shop. He is first identified as a grocer in the 1789 tax records, two years after purchasing #84 Chestnut Street from Benjamin Rush. This combined shop and home, between Second and Third Streets, was in the heart of the commercial district throughout Wills' lifetime. The Willses lived very frugal lives. Based on the inventory of his estate (*appendix F*), the value of James Wills' possessions at the time of his death was a mere \$100.75! There was no adornment to their buildings; just bare necessities.

George McClellan founded the first eye infirmary in Philadelphia in 1821. In re-

sponse to that, the Pennsylvania Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear was started a year later. Its solicitation for funds, which stressed the importance of an eye hospital, likely was seen by James Wills, Sr. It is possible that this solicitation gave Wills the idea to found such an infirmary. Whether or not he was aware of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary is not known. Another influencing factor might have been the blindness of his neighbor, Charles Watson. The wills of the father and son were written in 1823, just a couple of weeks apart. Based on the newspaper "biography" of the father, it appears he, not the son, was the architect of the concept of the hospital. Figure 32 shows the timeline on which this theory rests.

#### APPENDIX A WILL OF JAMES WILLS, JR.

Be it remembered that I, James Wills, of the City of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, Son of the late James Wills of the City aforesaid (Grocer) being of sound disposing Mind & Memory do make and ordain my last Will & testament in manner following, that is to say.

*Imprimis.* I direct al my just Debts & funeral expenses to be paid & satisfied as soon as convenient after my decease.

*Item.* I give & bequeath unto the "Orphan Society of Philadelphia", their successors & assigns one of those three 3-story brick buildings or tenements & lot of ground thereunto belonging on the south side of Chesnut Street between Delaware, Second & Third Streets in the said City of Philadelphia & extending southwards, in depth to Carter's Alley (to wit) No 86 which James Wills Senr purchased of William Ogden & the lot of ground thereunto belonging with all and every the appurtenances, to hold to the "Orphan Society of Philadelphia" aforesaid their successors...

And the other two of the above mentioned messuages or Tenements situate as aforesaid on the south side of the said Chesnut Street to wit. No 82 which was purchased of Zachariah Poulson & No 84 which was purchased of Dr Benjamin Rush by James Wills Senr late of the City of Philadelphia aforesaid with the lots of ground thereunto belonging and all and every the appurtenances I give and devise the same to the three Dispensaries

in the City and County of Philadelphia for the medical relief of the poor. To wit, "The Philadelphia Dispensary", "The Northern Dispensary" and "The Southern Dispensary," to hold to them their several respective successors and assigns in equal undivided third parts as Tenants in common and not as joint Tenants forever.

*Item.* I give & bequeath to Rachel Wise my housekeeper the sum of One hundred Dollars per annum to be paid unto her in equal quarterly payments for and during the term of her natural life provided she continues in my employment until the time of my decease.

*Item.* I give & bequeath to my executors the sum of Five thousand Dollars in trust for the use of an institution near Philadelphia known by the name of "The contributors to the Asylum for the relief of persons deprived of the use of their reason" and to be paid by my said executors to the Treasurer for the time being of the said Institution.

*Item.* I give and bequeath to the "Magdalen Society of Philadelphia" the sum of Five thousand Dollars for the use of said institution.

*Item.* I give & bequeath to "the Society for the establishment and support of Charity Schools" of Philadelphia the sum of one-thousand Dollars.

*Item.* I give & bequeath to Elijah Conrad, Isaac Elliott, & Charles N. Robinson, the Sum of One-thousand Dollars each.

*Item.* I give & bequeath to Mary Kane, granddaughter of Rachel Wise the Sum of One hundred Dollars.

*Item.* I give and bequeath to William Brewer, Jane Worrell & Elizabeth Worrell all three now residing in Friends Alms House Walnut Street, the Sum of one-hundred Dollars each.

*Item.* All the rest, residue and remainder of my estate real, personal & mixed, both that which I now hold & all that I may hereafter acquire, I give & bequeath to the Mayor & Corporation of the City of Philadelphia for the time being and to their successors in office forever in Trust for the purchase of a sufficient plot of ground in the City of Philadelphia or in the neighborhood thereof, and thereon to erect or cause to be erected



suitable buildings and accomodations [sic] for an Hospital or Asylum, to be denominated "the Wills Hospital for the Relief of the Indigent Blind & Lame." The Funds thus appropriated are to be put out on good Mortgage security or City Stock and after expending the necessary Sum for the Lot and improvements heretofore mentioned the income of the remainder is to be exclusively applied to the comfort and accommodation of as many of the indigent blind & lame as the income will admit of after defraying the necessary expences [sic] incident to such an establishment. And to the aforesaid Mayor & corporation of the said City & their successors in office is entrusted the duty of appointing Trustees or a Managers and all other matters & things in any wise appertaining to the due fulfilment [sic] of the aforesaid bequest, the right regulating of the establishment & ensuring the right application of funds to the purposes heretofore stated & for the sole use and benefit of the Indigent blind & lame giving a preference to those persons resident in Philadelphia & its neighborhood.

*Item.* Should any dispute or misapprehension arise respecting any informality in a legal sense or otherwise in any of the preceding bequests I will & ordain that they be taken according to their literal meaning & acted upon accordingly so as not to defeat the just & charitable intentions of the said Testator.

*Item.* I nominate & appoint Isaac Elliot & William Morrison to be the Executors of this my last Will & testament hereby revoking all Wills & Testaments by me at any time heretofore made and declaring these Presents only to be and contain my last Will & Testament. In witness whereof I the said James Wills the Testator have hereunto set my hand and seal this 8th day of the 5th month in the year of our Lord, One thousand, eight hundred & twenty three (1823).

Signed, Sealed published  
And declared by the above  
Named Testator as and for } James  
Wills [signature]  
His Last Will and Testament  
In the Presence of Us,

Charles Morrison  
Elijah Conrad

## APPENDIX B COLUMBIAN OBSERVER, FEB. 1, 1825

Some account of James Wills, the father of the person who a few days ago made such bounteous bequests to many of our public Charities besides founding an Hospital for the LAME and the BLIND will no doubt be found interesting to many of our readers, notwithstanding the humble tenor of his prosperous life was made brilliant by no flashes of genius, nor rendered conspicuous by the lustre of fashion, or the associations of the great. Unspotted integrity in every situation of life, however lowly, should be publicly honored; and the man who has spent a long and useful one without reproach, leaving the fruits of his industry as a healing balsam to the afflicted, and the means of comfort to the poor, has at least a claim to our curiosity, as well as esteem. We understand the Son did not accumulate, but inherit the large property of which he died possessed.

James Wills, his Father, who acquired the fortune in question, was born in London, where he was apprenticed to a Patent Coach-spring maker, with whom he served six years, much to the satisfaction of his master, being as remarkable for his industry, as he was exemplary for his rectitude. - When of age he took a shop of his own, and in the simplicity of his heart, unconscious of infringing the right of another person, he set up the same business for himself. This, however, was not so agreeable to his old master, who waited upon him, to inform him that he could not carry on business in the manufacture of his patented article. James, of course, immediately desisted; but still urgent for a livelihood, resolved to go to Dublin, to which Kingdom, patents at that time (before the Union) did not extend. At Dublin he again commenced business, but was left unmolested only for a short time. The Mechanicks' Company, jealous of their rules, enquired into the term of his apprenticeship, and finding he had served six years, instead of seven, notified him that he could not proceed in his trade. These were discouraging circumstances to any man; but the patient fortitude, and unruffled perseverance of the mind of honest James Wills made light of them.

He immediately sold off his little stock of tools, etc., and taking passage in a vessel

bound to America, arrived safely at Philadelphia. He here purchased a sloop and went up and down the river on little trading voyages - a kind of land and water or amphibious pedlar; an occupation at that day very lucrative, especially to one of James's industrious and frugal habits. After being engaged in this business a few years, which has led to his being miscalled at one time of life a Sailor, he married a respectable and industrious woman in Strawberry Alley, who kept a small huckster store. Here James became settled. But he was not made to be idle, and finding that his wife left him nothing to do in the business of the shop, he hired himself to James Pemberton, as a Coachman, in which capacity he continued several years daily adding to his golden store and domestic comfort. The sloop, in the meantime, was sold. With only one son, the cost of living was small, and profits accumulated. The huckster shop was enlarged into a grocery; and business extended. His punctuality gave him credit, and his silent march to wealth excited neither attention nor envy; so that when he died, he left to his son most of his property, 150,000 dollars, (recently bequeathed to charities) with an injunction, that should his son have no children, he would so dispose of it, and he particularly enjoined him to found a Hospital for the Lame and Blind. With the desire of his worthy father, the son leaving neither wife nor children, has strictly complied.

James Wills will afford a laudable example to the young man of industry and enterprise, to attend to his own business - shun evil associates - abstain from meddling with the concerns of others - that to cure poverty, we have only to be industrious, and that when rich Charity is the first law of a good heart. Mr. Wills is said to have been bountiful and benevolent during his life time; and that he did not practice mean parsimony, although rigidly just, and sternly exacting justice. The Son differed little from the Father, and led an inoffensive and industrious life.

#### **APPENDIX C DEDICATION SPEECH**

*AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE  
OPENING OF THE WILLS HOSPITAL  
FOR INDIGENT BLIND AND LAME.  
MARCH 3, 1834*

*JOSEPH R. INGERSOLL*

UNDERTAKINGS of a public character are, for the most part, commenced with an explanation of their objects, and the occasion and motives for establishing them. Placed, as they are, before the public eye, and relying, as they often do, upon public patronage for their active exercise, the whole community has a right to be familiarly acquainted with them. Accordingly, the earliest opportunity is taken by those to whom the care of this institution is confided, to conform to a practice so entirely unexceptionable. They desire to make known the means by which they are enabled to contribute to the general mass of practical benevolence; to disclose the character and extent of their contribution - its present limits and its future hopes; to exhibit the genuine claims of those whom it is their especial object to protect and comfort, and to show how much they merit and how much they may be relieved; to bespeak the sympathies of a generous community, and to prove that the institution itself deserves to be identified with their best feelings, as it is connected with some of their truest interests.

In nothing is the advancement of the age more distinctly marked than in acts of genuine and enlarged benevolence. The prevailing spirit of the day is one of diffusive charity. Scarcely a subject that is worthy of attention has escaped its notice. There is hardly a spot where civilized or even savage man has fixed his abode within the reach of the enterprize of his fellow man, which has not been visited and ministered to by it. Few and unenvied are the individuals who have failed, either in their single efforts or their united strength, to disseminate it. Around us on every side stand monuments of active benevolence. They are adapted to various descriptions of want and suffering, and are admirably calculated to relieve them. They meet and alleviate the distresses of disease and poverty - of the ignorant and the outcast - of the widow and the orphan. But among them all there was no peculiar provision here for the kind of deprivation which is now happily provided for by this establishment. It was reserved for the unpretending citizen whose name it bears to endow a charity as kindly intended, judicious and discriminating, as, it is devoutly hoped, it may prove to be extensive and salutary.



Industrious in his habits, without ostentation in his manners, frugal in his living, punctual and exact in all his dealings, he accumulated, as a natural consequence, a considerable fortune. But modest and unassuming in all his ways, and entirely withdrawn from the more conspicuous scenes of life, he locked up in his own bosom a design full of generous purpose. It had probably been long growing there to maturity, and we may fairly presume it formed the most cherished subject of his secret thoughts. All his cautious abstinence (which the misjudging world may have mistaken for avarice), all his zealous industry (which it may have erroneously deemed superfluous and without an object), were slowly but surely contributing to enable him to give full effect to his well digested plans. Let the hasty observers of human actions learn from his example, not to judge rashly of the motives or the conduct of those about them from external indications exhibited to the world. While he seemed to be hoarding up unnecessary treasure, and denying to himself at least the luxuries of life, and to others the benefits of his possessions, he was almost lavish in the profusion, and unwearied in the practice of his benevolence. His private memoranda show, that while the expenses of his household scarcely exceeded four hundred dollars a year, his charitable donations for similar periods were nearly fifteen hundred. Until death had rendered him deaf alike to the voice of censure and applause, his munificence was unknown. It disclosed itself even then in no lofty monument, no blazoned record. Humble as his walk in life, was the consistent appropriation of his honest gains. His alliances were not among the affluent and the exalted, and his characteristic bequest records him as the friend of those who are the most likely to be friendless. Nearly the whole of his ample fortune was bequeathed in different charities; this institution being endowed with about one half of his estate.

Man, above all other created beings, requires the aid of those about him. Unassisted, and without the benefits of instruction, he is the frailest and most impotent of animals. His instincts are less acute. His foster parent, nature, is less protective in her immediate support, because she has planted in his mind the seeds of reason, and given to his body, when in its proper condition, the most

happily constructed agents for the service of that godlike faculty. But how especially does he require assistance, when the natural infirmities peculiar to his race are combined with those of an adventitious character. Poverty and ignorance are ills which industry, and bodily and mental vigour may overcome: but when the mind or body is itself incompetent to the duties which are assigned to it, the evils may be lasting as the life of those who suffer them. That intellectual gift, which should be matured into more than reason, remains, from the want of cultivation and exercise, less than instinct. And all the faculties which are wont to move in infinite and admirable harmony, adapted to each other as they are, and set in motion by the hand of God himself, remain inactive and comparatively useless, if some essential part be wanting. To supply by imperfect but humane exertions that defective part, and thus in a degree to give to all, their energy and tone, and symmetry and grace, were in humble and pious charity to further the designs and imitate the works of Providence. If the essence of benevolence consists in the extent and efficacy with which it labours to do good; in the peculiar application of relief where suffering humanity needs it most; in the restoration or the gift of enjoyments which, without its exercise, could scarcely be hoped for; the establishment now about to be opened is entitled to the cordial co-operation and support of all who are alive to the distresses of their fellow creatures, and willing to alleviate them - of all who admire and cherish this blessed virtue. Look round to all the afflicted family of man. Trace him through his abodes of misery,

*“Where men groan beneath the  
burning axle,  
Or suffer from the rigours of the  
frozen bear.”*

Say, what can beset humanity with more intense severity, and yet be susceptible of relief, than a combination of poverty, lameness and want of sight. These are ills, which, if left to themselves, imply the absence of all the external comforts, and many of the absolute necessities of life in present and painful reality; and deny to the sufferer even the consolation of hoping for their attainment in the wildest dreams of fancy. It is not meant to communicate the idea that this bounty will be denied to every individual who

may not chance to suffer under all the afflictions named. But indigence, and at least one of the heavy calamities adverted to besides (want of sight or imperfection of limb), seem to present the condition for which the testator intended to provide.

Such are the wonderful bounty and wisdom of Providence; so ample, and yet so useful are its provisions; so well arranged, and so completely adapted to their several objects, are its plans; so little is there to ask for, and yet so little to reject, that it is impossible to contemplate the absence of any one of the senses without the deepest conviction of the blessings which are derived from its possession and of the thousand ills which are occasioned by its loss. But sight is far the dearest of them all. The treasures of the world are a price too humble to compensate for the want of this, not only the most comprehensive of our senses, but one which for many of its uses, admits of no substitute. If philosophy be right in asserting that there are no innate ideas, what a world of perceptions must be unknown to those who have not the means of conveying to the mind even one of the myriads of objects of the sight. Take from an individual almost any other natural gift, and you leave him much which, by his own efforts, may be rendered the source of instruction and delight. With one that is deaf and dumb, a mere observance of the actions of others, and an indulgence in his own natural imitative powers and propensities, lead at least to occupation, the sterling antidote to human misery; and from occupation, the road is straight and plain to positive enjoyment. To him the verdant fields display their beauty and pledge their fruitfulness. They generously yield their products to the wholesome labour of his hands. To him the starry heavens reveal a God. Withhold from the blind the helping hand of charitable sustenance or of more charitable instruction, and they live and die in hopeless impotency. The world, and all its gay and glittering scenes to them are nothing - less than nothing; for they are the sources of an aching curiosity which can never be informed. Of all that we behold - man, motion, earth and sky - beauty or grace in nature or in art - landscapes and living things - the waving wood or flowing stream - all their perceptions must be dim, confused and perplexing. Their dreary days consist of one continued, never ceasing night,

*“Oh worse than chains,  
Dungeon or beggary, decrepit age.  
Oh dark, dark, dark - amid the blaze  
of noon,  
Without all hope of day.”*

To this denial of positive enjoyments, is added the painful consciousness of a dependence on others almost entire, for even the little measure that is left them of the blessings of humanity. Not an unaided step is taken without both real and imaginary danger; not a posture is assumed without exposure to unknown and exaggerated bodily harm. They are defenseless as the infant, but without the consolation of infancy - of being unconscious of approaching ill. Can they not then shut out the world, as the world shuts out them, and, turning to the natural fertility of fancy, seek from their own thoughts a cheerfulness that is denied them from abroad? Alas ! where is the ray of cheerfulness that finds admission to the benighted mind? No diversity is afforded to the monotony of human existence, which constitutes its burthen; no relief from the tediousness of life, which is sometimes too burthensome to be borne. The spontaneous productions of an uncultivated mind are gloomy thoughts. Left to itself, it becomes assimilated to the horrors which people it, and which no returning light dispels. For the radiant hues of religion, are substituted superstitious glooms. The cheering beams of hope are excluded, and in their stead prevail the clouds and darkness of despair. It is said that Sesostris, the Egyptian monarch, who attained the summit of human greatness, and assumed the proud title of king of kings, could find no consolation, in all his grandeur, for the blindness with which he was afflicted, and sought relief in suicide.

Mournful indeed would be the lot of this portion of our fellow beings, if their condition, whether the result of natural or adventitious causes, admitted of no alleviation. Well might they then be tempted to look forward with solicitude for the consolations of the grave. Happily it is otherwise. Inquiries are now made into the numbers of the blind; not with a view to their abandonment or sacrifice, which might have been their fate in a barbarous nation or a different age; not to their exclusion from the great human family: but to the means of their support and instruction; to the admission of them upon terms, al-



though not of absolute equality, yet of liberal participation, to the privileges common to others; to the advantages and delights of rational intercourse and even of elevated science; to a share in much that art can furnish and accomplishments afford; to an indulgence in the refinements of taste, and many of the comforts and conveniences of polished life. Fewer attainments are absolutely beyond their reach than a superficial observer would suppose, and not a few are peculiarly accessible to them. If the loss of one sense do not actually render those which remain more active and powerful, it at least quickens the attention from an obvious and painful necessity of cultivating and applying it, and it lessens the distraction which is sometimes suffered from a conflict among different means of acquiring knowledge. A habit of reliance on the touch gives it new sensibility. A consciousness that the ear alone is the avenue to the mind, doubles its devotion and augments its strength.

The memory, which is little more than prolonged attention, is, in general, extremely retentive among the blind. An instance very recently occurred in one of our courts of justice, in which the testimony of an individual who was perfectly blind from his birth, was fuller and more precise than that of almost any other of the witnesses, with regard to a very complicated genealogy. In all other respects he was more helpless than a child. Perhaps the imagination too, unfettered by the attractions of external things, is especially daring and successful in its flights. Some of the most elevated conceptions of poetic fancy are undoubtedly those which have been exhibited in the productions of the blind. Is it not, properly considered, almost a privilege to be withdrawn from many temptations to vicious indulgence which surround the more gifted man, and to have the heart retain its purity, while the understanding in all its faculties may be improved?

But how inestimable is the consolation that skill and science afford (to those who might, without their aid, drag on a life of wretchedness), in the hope of possible cure? The first great object of this institution is direct and absolute relief - to bestow sight itself where it has been previously denied. This is styled by its founder a HOSPITAL, not a school. If among the many individuals

doomed apparently to hopeless darkness, even some few fortunate persons can be entirely relieved from their affliction, the utmost exertions of benevolence will be most amply repaid. The ecstasies that are said to be experienced by those born blind at the result of a successful operation upon their eyes, are not to be described. If, to human apprehension, there can be brought home something like a foretaste of future bliss, it may be conceived to be afforded in the sudden awakening of this glorious sense. And then, if, through the remainder of their lives, the great and happy change remains; if every rising sun is hailed with rapture by the opening eye, and the living world retires from its delighted vision only when nature herself seeks repose in the shades of night; if every human face and form are greeted as things once unknown, unconceived - the comparison can scarcely fail to shed its influence upon the heart, and to call forth perpetual gratitude and praise for the merciful dispensation of which they are the happy instruments. These are individuals who are afflicted, neither because they have sinned nor their parents, but in their protection and their cure, may we not humbly trust that God will be glorified?

To effect this primary object, neither unwearied efforts nor consummate skill will be wanting. It is not to be supposed, that, at any moment, the best directed exertions will be withheld from actively co-operating in the benevolent design. The immediate concerns of the institution are committed to the care of eighteen persons, whose disinterested kindness will form the most powerful impulse to their activity and zeal. At the head of the Board, as it is already constituted, is placed a gentleman, who, to well-tryed experience and shining professional acquirements, unites all that can be desired in kindness of feeling, and a deportment as full of gentleness as the amiable spirit from which it springs. An example of so much generosity affords a pledge, that whenever co-operation and assistance are needed from abroad, they will be found among the master spirits that abound in the advanced stage of science which distinguishes the age, the nation, and the city in which we live.

The views of the benevolent founder were not confined, though anxiously directed,

to the hope of positive cure. Devoutly indeed were it to be wished, that every child of sorrow could have its peculiar affliction absolutely removed. But misery often visits its victims with a hand so heavy, as to baffle the exertions of the skilful and to forbid the sufferer the approach of hope. Blindness and lameness may be incurable; and the subject of them may be destined to feel, with every throb of life, the consciousness of their inevitable continuance until the last pulse has ceased to beat in his afflicted frame. Even then the institution is calculated to reach the most generous and useful purposes. s/should the best directed efforts to relieve the victims of these maladies absolutely fail, and their deprivations still remain, where can the wretched better seek for refuge, where can they find more certain protection and support, or kinder care, than will be afforded them within these walls? Here is their ASYLUM, in which it is intended to draw largely from the various sources of alleviation which experience and observation have multiplied in behalf of those who are the especial objects of its care. An intercourse of kindred suffering will soften its intensity, though it may not diminish its actual weight. Similarity, even in the few and simple employments of the helpless and infirm, will facilitate the exercise of them; and alacrity and comparative cheerfulness will be the consequences of a well-regulated companionship. Every created being seeks its kind. Congeniality in habits, capacities, information and pursuits is the very cement of society. Ideas which are derived through similar channels, and language which is expressive of these ideas, mingle in an intercourse far more harmonious than those which want a common origin, and are therefore perplexing and dissimilar. Lonely affliction broods over its calamities, and magnifies and multiplies them. That which asks for compassion, and finds indifference, or at the utmost pity, suffers aggravated grief.

Sympathy of itself alleviates suffering; and when the deserted and solitary condition of the blind, which constitutes one of their prominent evils, is exchanged for a state of equal and mutual dependence and assistance, a prolific source of sorrow is dried up. A comparison, then, with those about them leaves little cause for envy of their companions, or for repining at wants which are not restricted to themselves; and the narrow cir-

cle of enjoyments which surrounds them is moved in by each with an equal and successful claim to participate in all that it affords. Every variety of aid which art and genius have invented to facilitate to the blind the exercise of all their bodily and mental faculties, it is hoped, will be provided here. The young will find, in active and productive employments, intellectual exercise and improvement. The old will rest in the tranquil contemplation of a better destiny that awaits them in a world of light. They will be surrounded, while their feeble frames remain on earth, with all that can soften the pillow of disease, and assuage the agonies of death.

Munificent as was the bequest on which this charity is founded, it was still the humble offspring of private and single handed benevolence. It is therefore necessarily limited in its extent. The amount actually handed over by the executors to the city of Philadelphia (that corporation being selected to give stability at least, and perhaps public interest to the trust) amounted to \$108,396.35; and this accumulated during the progress of the work to \$122,548.57. Of the sum thus actually received, there has been expended in the purchase of the lot and construction of the building in which we are assembled, including all contingencies, not much less than one half, or \$57,203.69; leaving as a capital to support the establishment, only \$65,344.88. This narrow provision can of itself supply the wants of few, very few of the numerous individuals who are within the scope of the comprehensive design. It is computed that in Pennsylvania there are between five and six hundred blind persons. Of these, many are happily above the reach of want and are therefore not embraced by the provision of Mr. Wills. But with every allowance of this sort, the indigent sufferers are far too numerous to receive assistance from the institution, as it is at present endowed. The destitute among them are for the most part advanced in life, having in many instances outlived the friends on whom in their earlier years they had depended for support. Some, it is believed may be able to contribute partially to their own subsistence. But to render sensibly effective the design, or at least to give it an effect corresponding with the generous intentions of the testator and the liberal quota furnished by himself, the managers must look abroad for assistance.



The noble institution in Boston of a similar kind received from Mr. Thomas Perkins a conditional donation, which served as the happiest and most successful incentive, and was rendered effectual only on its being augmented from other sources to a certain practically useful extent. Means of like productiveness must be resorted to here, or the scheme will fall far short of the utility which it contemplates, and of which it is (with the necessary aid) altogether susceptible. The young and the comparatively active may, and probably will, furnish by their own hands means either partially or totally adequate to their own support. But the aged and the helplessly infirm must depend entirely on the funds of the house. These, as they stand at present, are far below the necessities of the seventy individuals which the building is now constructed to accommodate.

The patronage of a legislature never backward in devoting a portion of the resources of the great commonwealth which they represent to works of useful public benevolence, may, it is hoped, be seasonably extended over this roof. But it is characteristic of the various charitable institutions which ennoble our city, that they rest mainly on the basis (and it is happily broad and strong) of private voluntary contribution. It is the proud characteristic of the country itself, and one of the happy effects of the frame of government under which we live, that private munificence should be the abundant source of public benefit and prosperity. Every individual forms an important, and, it maybe, a prominent member of the great family of which he is the son and brother, and not the subject or the slave. The good of the whole is his individual prosperity; the elevation and advancement of the whole is, or ought to be, his individual aim.

In other countries, princely fortunes are lavished on the decoration and embellishment of private edifices and estates - in the display of costly retinues or glittering equipages. What is the consequence? Why, that the means of genuine beneficence are often reduced even below the standard which a moderate income would attain. One who is perhaps the richest private man in Europe is understood very recently to have been brought to the brink of insolvency by the expenditures called for by his individual estab-

lishment; and the result, if report be true, may be ascribed in some degree to the mere magnificence of his dress. Such display is congenial to the spirit, and even useful to the support and embellishment of governments, of which the parties who make it are still but the subjects, although they exhibit, in many instances, a more than royal state. But it cannot, from the nature of things, serve, in its greatest conceivable abuse, as a drain to opulence, or as an object of pride or devotion, in the existing state of American manners. It is unsuited to the simple tastes and frugal habits of a nation whose chief magistrate receives a stipend infinitely less in its annual aggregate than the cost of a coat of an Austrian prince, which is said to have lost a hundred pounds worth of pearls every time it was worn; of a nation upon whose whole civil list, the retinue of a single British nobleman might starve. Here the avenues to costly liberality are peculiarly of a charitable nature. The foundation of a hospital or an asylum proclaims the munificence of a rich American. His proudest retinue consists of a host of fellow beings rescued by his hand from poverty and affliction. His noblest monument is a house of charity, made vocal with the voice of heartfelt gratitude. Shall it be that while elsewhere a generous citizen literally acts the part of his own executor to his own bounty, in the wise and liberal devotion of his abundant means to the noblest ends, that we shall not find a combination of similar resources reaching the same results among ourselves? If it be so, the character of our city must have changed, and the honourable pledges of continued liberality, which have been so often given, and which stand in humble but undeniable assurance of the spirit of their departed founders, will serve, unredeemed, as a reproach upon the degeneracy of the age.

For the most part, the work of beginning constitutes the greatest difficulty. But when a rallying point is fixed, around which the feelings may centre, in which they may safely rest, where there is no danger than generosity may be without an object, or that good feelings will be misspent, half the work is accomplished. Permanence and stability are insured to this institution, by besting its superintendence in a body appointed from time to time by the very corporation of the city itself. No caprice can materially change

the course in which the stream of generosity is destined, it may be hoped, to flow for ages. No storm of party strife can essentially agitate it. No misdirection can be reasonably anticipated; and if it should for a moment occur, it must, of necessity, be merely temporary.

In indulging the fervent hope that the exertions of medical skill may not unfrequently relieve the inmates of this house, and that, when a cure is impracticable, they may at least enjoy the comforts of a place of rest, the views of those who are to watch over it expand beyond even these kind results. A still wider scope of individual happiness and public benefit is embraced by them. The subject of blindness in all its phases is brought into consideration, and universal attention and concern are more especially invited to the relief, the instruction and the care of those, wherever their lot is cast, who may chance to be its victims. In softening the rigorous fate of particular individuals, the great ill itself may happily be deprived of some of its darkest hues. The extent of literary instruction will necessarily be limited; and it may, with respect to those of the most suitable age, be safely left to the excellent, though recently established institution, which is already in fair and successful operation among us. That institution proposed "to make blind persons of rich or easy families happy members of society." The care of this is confined exclusively to the poor. They look to the period of youth, which is usually considered the best adapted to receive instruction, when the mind is yet ripening into maturity, and receives impressions with promptitude and facility. We embrace the whole round of human life, if its necessitous condition should require relief, from early infancy to extreme old age. They justly hope to conduct their pupils into the higher regions of scholarship, and to give them various attainments and accomplishments. We do not look to confer upon the children of indigence the brilliant distinctions of learning and philosophy. But practical and elementary knowledge is within the design. Opportunities will be afforded, and anxiously embraced, to confirm the assurance and diffuse the information that the blind are capable of becoming the masters of useful knowledge, and even of lofty and distinguished attainments. Efforts will be made to place them, generally, as in some remarkable

instances they have been already placed, by education, upon ground of scarcely discernible inequality with those who see. In the barbarous policy of a Turkish despotism the expedient of putting out the eyes has often been resorted to as a cure for ambition, and a means of tranquilizing the most daring usurpation in its possession of the throne. The impotency which it was supposed to create might not, perhaps, have proved unworthy of regard or dread, if the present sources of instruction had been known. When we contemplate indeed various instances which have occurred, blindness might almost seem to have ceased to be an affliction. Ordinary calculation is baffled by the happy adaptation, which has been practised, of new means to known and definite results; an adaptation which, except under the spur of necessity, could not have been conceived. Philosophical deductions, to all appearance the best founded, are disappointed and corrected by well authenticated facts. An obvious and intimate acquaintance is frequently found among the blind, with subjects which cannot reach their minds through the natural and accustomed channels, for they do not possess them. In practice and in theory, conduct is influenced and knowledge is acquired among them by some process, to which those who see are strangers, and for which they can but imperfectly and unsatisfactorily account. Perhaps a far deeper reach of reflection may be the consequence of excluding the influence of bodily sight, and a consequent discovery of the inmost recesses of the human soul and the things contained in them, which are beyond the efforts of penetration of ordinary thought. It is said of an ancient philosopher, that he put out his own eyes in order that he might pursue his contemplative studies with the greater effect. This extreme self-denial, imputed to Democritus, is perhaps a fable; but it harmonizes with the undoubted truth that studies and employments and accomplishments of a contemplative character have been those which are the most willingly and successfully pursued and mastered by the educated blind. For music, as a source of recreation and amusement, they have generally the keenest relish; and for attaining a knowledge of its theory and a proficiency as performers, they possess more than ordinary powers. It is not necessary here to trace the (possibly secret) springs of this unquestionable truth; but the admirers of that enraptur-



ing art will discover in the fact a powerful argument in favour of the elevated moral sense and amiable tendencies of those who so eminently possess the kindred feeling which usually accompanies them. At least a ever failing source of harmless occupation is thus peculiar to them as a class. As such, it diverts the thoughts from melancholy channels. It often soothes the troubles of an over anxious spirit. It contributes largely to avert the influence of discontent, and the exposure, as a natural consequence, to temptation to error; and, in the result, an indulgence in the formation of evil designs and the perpetration of evil deeds.

It is a most interesting fact, one that should furnish a rich source of consolation, if not an active stimulus to exertion, that, of the two greatest poets that have graced the annals of mankind, one is known to have been blind, and the other (although at the distance of so many centuries little personal knowledge of him remains) is supposed to have been the subject of the same calamity.

Similar habits of contemplation lead to a fondness for the exact sciences, and occasionally to a high degree of proficiency in them. The mathematics, as they are ordinarily studied and applied, depend for many of their uses, and most of their illustrations, directly upon the objects and exercise of the sight. Sight seems almost indispensably requisite to study and become acquainted with the minute and complicated structure of figures, and all their combinations and varieties of lines and angles. Its necessity would appear still more absolute for the purpose of applying these principles practically to the measurement of heights and distances, of surfaces and solid bodies, and of reaching the often wonderful results. Yet no principle of this almost magical science has been hidden from the searching penetration and scrutiny of the BLIND. All its beauty and all its exactitude, every angle and every curve, every complex figure and every abstruse and intricate calculation, have become as familiar to their instructed understandings as if they had been able to borrow divine assistance from the brightest sunbeams, or as if the sublime and mysterious explanation were exhibited to their opened and astonished vision upon the firmament, in characters of radiant light.

To learn and to teach mathematics, would seem to be the very utmost effort of which individuals are capable who have not the gift of sight. But let them rejoice that the adventurous flight of human intellect, under apparently the most pressing disadvantages, is not to be restrained; that it may yet soar through every region, and aim successfully at the loftiest heights. They have before them examples of the exercise of almost every description of useful, honourable and happy employment among themselves. Sculptors have given shape and feature, and the various expressions of the countenance, which they never could have witnessed in the living physiognomy, to the marble block. Orators have communicated through the medium of eloquence, the influence and contagion of their own sentiments and passions, without the fascination of the sympathetic eye. Profound scholars, learned linguist, physicians, chemists, natural philosophers, artists in various departments of mechanical industry - all have been found among the blind. They have even ventured with wonderful success to explore the peculiar regions of sight itself, to emulate the sublime labours of Newton in philosophizing and experimenting upon lights and shades, to teach the wonders of the prismatic spectrum, to unfold the variegated beauties of the rainbow and all its interesting phenomena, to explain the theory of vision, to lecture on optics as a science, and to disclose to those who possess that delicate and precious organ which is denied to themselves, the mysteries of the eye. They have sometimes selected occupations which might be supposed the most inaccessible and opposite to their condition. They have served as guides to travelers through the sandy deserts of Arabia; as wagoners, and even projectors of highways along the difficult recesses and lofty heights of mountains. Employments, these, in which all the aid of the keenest vision would be brought to bear by those who ordinarily discharge them. A blind person was not long since well known in Kensington, whose business consisted of cleaning clocks; a work which, it is believed, he performed with skill, and without detriment or danger to the delicate machinery in his hands. The facilities are well known with which even the slightly instructed among these individuals have earned a subsistence by means of a slender stock or musical skill, and a sort of instinct which aids them in their journeys to

and from their places of exhibition. A blind fiddler at Easton was asked how he was able to walk through the streets without danger or running against the objects that were about him. He explained that his protection arose from the habit of uttering as he went a sort of chirping with his tongue, which was echoed by objects as he approached them. Such an echo has certainly no existence in the ears of one who sees. It may serve, however, to explain the faculty which has been imputed to blind persons, of being able to tell with wonderful accuracy the size of an apartment, independently of measurement or any other obvious sources of information. Echoes may be both increased and multiplied to an extent that is almost incredible. Lord Bacon tells us of one, near a small town upon the river Seine, which returned the voice sixteen times. Sound is undoubtedly susceptible of reflection as well as light, and in its faint and scarcely audible return from an object which it strikes, it may readily inform the acutely attentive and practised listener of its distance, and consequently of his danger.

Such, and so various at least, are obviously the resources, as they have been the occupations of the blind. They altogether manifest a power and a fitness for useful exertion, to be measured and limited only by the boldest enterprise. A conviction of this truth will lead to relief, enjoyment and honourable occupation for themselves, and to extensive and varied usefulness towards their fellow beings. Almost all that man can do or dare, is within their power. Where the objects to be accomplished are such as the same organs are applied to by others, the equality ought to be nearly, if not quite entire.

But when the sphere of instruction and employment is opened, which belongs peculiarly to those who see, in which they exercise their peculiar and exclusive properties, the blind are originally as much strangers to its concerns, as the inhabitants of another planet to the usages of this world. Yet the instruction which is employed to strengthen and direct their own particular powers, affords food for curiosity, and gives a zest to the ambition which pants for still more extensive attainments. Wisdom and intelligence cannot remain partial and incomplete. The soul imbibes new desires with every additional acquisition. Every height it gains serves only

to extend its view, and tempts it to a loftier, wider reach. Philanthropy urges, that even these fond desires should be gratified. Each particular sense is then called on to perform, not only its especial office; but duties properly belonging to other senses, when they exist, are confided to it. A knowledge of all that books afford of the lessons of morality and religion, of the bright examples of the glorious dead, of the glowing precepts of living wisdom, is usually acquired by means of the sight. The same great vista is opened to the blind through the practised and improved sensibility of their touch. How consolatory is the hope which this single illustration gives - the power of reading is exercised by the finger instead of the eye. All indeed, it must be acknowledged, within this especially range is still imperfect. It is the feeble, though fortunate substitute of art of nature - of the work of man for the power of God. Yet it affords all that ought to be desired, and all perhaps, that is deserved.

These our fellow beings, uninstruced - unredeemed, are like a priceless jewel buried in the earth, and shrouded in darkness apparently impenetrable. Taken from its gloomy bed, and aided by the hand of skill, it receives the cheering influence of "hold light" and it reflects with keen and active lustre the bright effluence of the skies - returning beam for beam and ray for ray. Should the eyes of these our brethren continue dim, and their native brightness never be restored - at least their hearts will gleam with heavenly gratitude. Shedding the softer, gentler light of the immortal spirit from which it springs, the influence of this feeling will last when nothing earthly of them shall remain; when all that is best of man, that which stamps him, notwithstanding his imperfections and infirmities, as the image of his maker - reason itself, sublimed into a still purer essence, shall be either utterly absorbed or infinitely exalted.

#### **Biographical note:**

Joseph Reed Ingersoll

He graduated from Princeton College in 1804. He studied law with his father, was admitted to the bar and commenced practice in Philadelphia. He was elected in 1834 as a Whig anti-Jacksonian candidate to the Twenty-fourth Congress. He declined to be a

candidate for renomination in 1836, serving 1835–1837. He resumed the practice of law. Ingersoll was elected as a Whig to the Twenty-seventh Congress to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of John Sergeant. He was reelected as a Whig to the Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, and Thirtieth Congresses. He declined to accept the nomination as a candidate for reelection in 1848. In all, his second stay in office lasted from 1841 to 1849.

He was the chairman of the United States House Committee on the Judiciary during the Thirtieth Congress. He was an advocate for protection and a firm supporter of Henry Clay. One of his noted efforts in the House was a defense of Clay's tariff of 1842.

In 1852, President Millard Fillmore sent him to the United Kingdom as the U.S. Minister. He served about a year, and then retired to private life, devoting himself to literary pursuits. The degree of LL.D. was conferred on him by Lafayette and Bowdoin in 1836, and that of D.C.L. by Oxford in 1845.

He died in Philadelphia in 1868. Interment in St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Churchyard.

#### **APPENDIX D PENNSYLVANIA INFIRMARY SOLICITATION**

##### *THE PENNSYLVANIA INFIRMARY FOR DISEASES OF THE EYE AND EAR*

In calling the attention and soliciting the patronage of the public to an Institution, which is to embrace the relief of a class of disease having so important a bearing on individual happiness and social comfort, we need but advert to the success which has attended similar ones in Europe, more particularly those established at London and Vienna. In these cities, thousands have been annually relieved and cured of diseases of the eye and ear, who otherwise would have lost the use of these all-important organs, and proved a burthen to themselves and to society. Like benefits have resulted from institutions of the same nature in some of our own cities, and we may now confidently hope, that the citizens of Philadelphia, distinguished for their zeal and liberality in the support of whatever tends to usefulness

and charity, will not suffer the present opportunity to escape, without testifying their approbation of the Institution already organized, and prepared to commence its beneficial operation, as will be seen from the subjoined Constitution, adopted at a respectable meeting of the contributors on Friday last.

#### *CONSTITUTION*

The name of this Institution shall be the Pennsylvania Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye and Ear.

Every person who pays annually into the hands of the Treasurer two dollars, shall become a contributor, and be entitled to the privilege of having two patients at a time under the care of the Surgeons. The payment of twenty dollars shall make a contributor for life.

There shall be attached to the Infirmary four Surgeons and two consulting Surgeons, who shall be ex officio members of the Board of Managers.

One of the Surgeons shall attend at the Infirmary daily.

In case of resignation or demise of any of the Surgeons, the Board of Managers shall choose a successor.

Eight Managers shall be elected by the contributors, on the first Monday of January annually, to continue in office until the election of their successors.

The Board of Managers shall have the control of the finances; and the superintendance of the domestic concerns of the Infirmary; and shall have power to make all necessary By-laws.

The Board of Managers shall annually elect a Treasurer.

Every case of disease of the eye and ear, if recommended by a contributor, shall be attended to under such regulations as the Managers shall prescribe.

Clinical instruction may be given under such regulations as shall be prescribed by the By-laws.



This Constitution shall not be altered, unless at the annual meeting of contributors, two-thirds of those present consenting thereto.

The following gentlemen shall be Managers until the next election.

JAMES GIBSON,  
WILLIAM MEREDITH,  
CHARLES N. BANCKER,  
MANUEL EYRE,  
ROBERT M. PATTERSON, M.D.  
CLEMENT C. BIDDLE,  
WILLIAM M'ILVAINE,  
RICHARD C. WOOD.

The following gentlemen are appointed Surgeons:

GEORGE B. WOOD, M.D.  
ISAAC HAYS, M.D.  
JOHN BELL, M.D.  
ROBERT E. GRIFFITH, M.D.

And the following gentlemen consulting Surgeons:

PHILIP S. PHYSICK, M.D.  
WILLIAM GIBSON, M.D.

Subscriptions in aid of the above Institution will be received by Richard C. Wood, Treasurer, or any of the Managers.

Patients, by applying at the Infirmary, No. 4, South Seventh Street, will be immediately attended to.

#### **APPENDIX E FROM A REVIEW OF FRICK'S TEXT-BOOK**

Excerpts from the book review of George Frick's *A Treatise on the Diseases of the Eye*; including the Doctrines and Practice of the most eminent modern Surgeons, and Particularly those of Professor Beer. Baltimore: Fielding and Lucas, jun., 1823 by Isaac Hays, Philadelphia Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences. Vol. 9 (No. 18), 1824.

Page 409: The neglect to which disorders of the eye were too long consigned is truly astonishing. We might have expected that the diseases of an organ, by which we receive our most pleasing impressions - an organ essential to our comforts, nay, almost to our hap-

piness - would have been investigated with all the ardour and zeal which the importance of the subject should always inspire. Very different, however, has been the case: prepossessed with an idea that there was something peculiar in the diseases of the eye, as if there was no analogy in similar diseases attacking different parts, physicians entirely abandoned these affections to persons who were exclusively devoted to them, and were totally ignorant of the laws which influence diseases of other organs. To this cause is to be attributed the slow progress which the science of ophthalmology made during many centuries. The history of this science shows that while it made most rapid advances in improvement, by the investigations of medical men, it invariably, when abandoned to professed oculists, not only ceased to advance, but actually retrograded.

Pages 411-413: In England, the honour of being the first to apply the doctrines of modern pathology to the diseases of the eye, is due to Mr. Wardrop: but it is to the impulse given by the zeal and industry of the late Mr. Saunders, and the extensive field for observation and experience afforded by the London Infirmary for curing Diseases of the Eye, established, at his suggestion, in 1805, that the present advanced state of the science in England is owing. The institution founded by Mr. Saunders, was unfortunately early deprived of his services by his death; but his place was ably supplied by Mr. Benjamin Travers, assisted by Dr. Farre; and subsequently by Mr. Lawrence, the present senior surgeon of the Infirmary. The work recently published by Mr. Travers, containing the result of his experience, should be in the hands of every surgeon. It exhibits deep research, minute observation, and correct deductions, and shows that in correctness of pathology, fidelity of diagnosis, and efficacy of treatment, ophthalmic surgery has attained to a degree of perfection equal to that of any other department of the medical art.

In this country, much apathy has existed, and we fear still exists, with regard to these affections. Some of our distinguished surgeons have not, it is true, entirely neglected them; yet the mass of medical practitioners have paid little attention to them, and the science has advanced so rapidly during the last few years, that we believe few have kept pace with the improvements that have

been made. The length of time that generally elapses before opinions of European writers are diffused in this country - the want of regular lectures - and above all clinical instruction - and the opportunities furnished of observing these diseases which can be extensively afforded only in institutions established for the reception of these cases - are the cause, no doubt, of the present state of the science among us. We trust, however, that these difficulties will not much longer exist. The advantages derived in Europe from institutions founded for the cure of these diseases, both as affording experience and a wide field for observation to the surgeon, means of obtaining clinical instruction to the student, and above all relief to the poor, whose subsistence depends upon their daily labour, and who, without this, would be deprived of the means of living, and thrown a burden on society, is most forcibly impressed upon the minds of all who visit these institutions. The wish to extend these benefits to this country has induced some public spirited individuals to found charitable establishments for similar purposes in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.

The New York Eye Infirmary, established in 1820, has realized the most sanguine expectations of its patrons: during the first sixteen months that it was established, it afforded relief to upwards of eight hundred patients, and the number has since greatly increased, as the institution has become more extensively known. We are sorry to learn, that the Pennsylvania Infirmary for the Diseases of the Eye and Ear, established in 1822, is in a languishing state, from want of necessary funds. We trust these will no longer be withheld. In no other way can greater benefits be diffused at a small expense. Frightfully rapid in their progress, diseases of the eye frequently run on to a stage which puts at defiance all subsequent remedial efforts, before the sufferer thinks of applying to the ordinary sources for relief; and before a practitioner unacquainted with the nature of these affections, suspects any danger, the sight is irretrievably lost. The unfortunate wretch is thus shut out from the principal source of pleasure, and the means of obtaining a livelihood - becomes a burden to himself and to society - while a small portion of the alms which our sympathy cannot now refuse him, if it had been applied to the support of institutions for the relief of these

diseases, might have preserved him in the enjoyment of his faculties, and a useful member of society.

In Europe, experience has fully confirmed the utility of these institutions, and we trust that Philadelphia, distinguished for the number of her charitable institutions, and the liberality with which they are supported, will not let an institution, calculated to do credit to her generosity - to furnish instruction to the numerous medical students who annually flock to her schools - and preserve to the community many valuable citizens - languish for want of funds, when a little foresight, too, would show, that there is an actual saving in such an appropriation. For a small portion of what would be required for the support of persons who have lost their sight, and which must eventually be paid in the shape of poor rates, would suffice for its support.

#### APPENDIX F INVENTORY, JAMES WILLS, JR., 1825

##### Inventory of the Goods & Chattels, Rights & Credits of JAMES WILLS Decd

Cash, found in House	59
Ditto in Bank of North America	11.24
James C. Keen's Bond for Interest due thereon from September 23rd, 1824	1000
William Kurtz's bond for Interest due from September 25th, 1824	1000
Lewis Walker's Bond for Interest due from June 1st, 1823	7000
John Wilson's bond for Interest due from October 20th, 1823	3000
James Dunlap's Bond for Interest due from April 4th, 1823	2000
Abraham Wartman's Bond for Interest due from July 19th, 1823	1500
Joseph Burden's Bond for Interest due from October 16th, 1824	1000
George W. Tryon's Bond for Interest due from May 21st, 1824	3387
John Rossetter's Bond for Interest due from November 3rd, 1823	3000
Robert A. Parrish's Bond for Interest due from April 30th	2500
Elizabeth Reford's Bond for Interest due from June 4th, 1824	1100
James Cummisky's bond for Interest due from September 1st, 1824	2500
John McCrea and John Jackson's Bond for Interest due from May 6th, 1823	8500

Enoch Snyder's Bond for Interest due from September 4th, 1824	1200	Charles C. Watson	62.58
Eliza M. Cumpston's bond for Interest due from May 14th, 1824	2600	Charles C. Watson & Sons	2.78
James Mitchell's Bond for Interest due from July 1st, 1824	600	William Tilghman	8.31
James Mitchell's Bond for Interest due from July 27th, 1824	1500	John Watson	7.50
Thomas Connaroe's Bond for Interest due from August 1st, 1823	4000	John Chapman	8.50
Derick Peterson' Bond for Interest due from June 26th, 1824	2500	John Dickinson	4.60
William H. Tod's bond for Interest due from August 6th, 1824	2500	Estate of Joseph Pleasants	52.62
William H. Tod's bond for Interest due from September 22ne, 1824	3600		434.42
Andrew B. Clymer's Bond for Interest due from January 15th, 1825	2000	Premiums on four	
John Richardson's Bond for Interest due from January 15th, 1825	4000	Policies of Insurance	209.00
John H. Brinton's Bond for Interest due from November 25th, 1824	5000	Balance of rents due from	
John H. Brinton's Bond for Interest due from October 1st, 1824	4000	Estates in Nn Liberties	171.00
John H. Brinton's Bond for Interest due from August 27th, 1824	11000		105,007.33
John H. Brinton's Bond for Interest due from Noember 1st, 1824	5000	<i>Isaac Elliott &amp; William Morrison</i> } <i>executors</i>	
John H. Brinton's two Bonds for Interest due from November 5th, 1824	3000	<i>Household Goods and Stock-in-Trade late of</i> <i>James Wills, decd.</i>	
John H. Brinton's Bond for Interest due from July 24th, 1824	7000	1 sopha [sic]	5.00
John H. Brinton's Bond for Interest due from November 7th, 1824	2500	2 tables	4.00
John H. Brinton (balance due on Bond of)		1 candle stand	1.00
Interest due from January 10th, 1825	1300	6 chairs	2.40
Six shares of Stock in the Bank of North America at Par	2400	1 looking glass	2.00
Note of Jesse Kersey payable in two Years for	435	1 waiter	.20
Note of Jesse Kersey payable in two Weeks for	250	1 carpet	1.00
Note of William Wise payable in two Years for	100	1 Lot of China	2.00
Note of Silas Hughes payable in One Year for	50	1 Lot of Glass	2.00
Check of Matthew Randall on Farmers and Mechanics Bank for	100	1 lot of Crockery	.50
<i>Amount brought over,</i>		30 oz. (at one Dollar per oz) of Silver	30.20
Dollars	104,192.91	Viz	
<i>Book debts - Viz.</i>		6 table spoons	
Deborah Logan	160.92	12 Tea Spoons	
George Fox	74.64	1 pr. Of Sugar Tongs	
Jonathan W. Condy	51.97	1 Cream Sug. And	
		1 soup ladle	
		2 prs of silver buckles	
		at 50/100 per Pair	1.00
		1 Castor	.25
		1 Foot Stove	.10
		3 Silver Watches	9.00
		1 Telescope	5.00
		1 Thermometer	1.50
		1 Set of Mathematical instruments	1.00
		1 Burning Glass, Shoe horn, etc.	.10
		1 Entry Carpet	.25
		1 Time Piece	4.00
		2 Prs of Andirons at \$1	2.00
		2 Prs. Of Tongs and Shovels at 25/100	.50
		1 Pr. Of Candlesticks	.30
		6 Chairs @ 20/100	1.20
		1 Carpet	1.00
		1 Hearth Brush	.50
		1 Lot of Crockery	2.00
		A Set of Crockery and Pewter	1.00



1 Coffee Mill	.25
A Lot of Knives and Forks	.50
A Lot of Tin Ware	.50
1 Toaster, pair of Bellows, etc.	.50
1 Bell Metal Kettle	1.00
1 Copper Tea Kettle	.50
A lot of candlesticks	.25
1 Copper wash kettle	1.00
1 Bake Iron, Bake Kettle, Gridiron & Skillet	3.00
1 Tin Over & Boiler	2.00
2 Jars & Mortars	.50
1 Basket, 1 Dough Tub & Slaw Knife	.50
1 Table	.50
A Lot of Earthen Ware	.25
3 Pairs of Sadirons @ 25/100	.75
1 Stove and Pipe	5.00
1 Chair and Stool	.15
1 Waiter	.05
1 Bureau \$2 & 1 Looking Glass \$1	3.00
Carried forward, Dollrs	100.75
	<b>105, 007.33</b>

**APPENDIX G**  
**WILL OF JAMES WILLS, SR.**

*Will of James Wills, Sr., written 4/16/1823*

Be it remembered that I, James Wills, of the City of Philadelphia in the State of Pennsylvania, Grocer, being of sound disposing Mind and Memory do make and ordain my last Will and Testament in Manner following, that is to say,

Imprimus I direct all my just Debts and funeral Expences [sic] to be fully and satisfied as soon as conveniently may be after my Decease.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my House Keeper Rachel Wise an annuity or Yearly Sum of One Hundred Dollars to be paid to her in equal quarterly Payments from the Time of my Decease for and during all the Term of her natural Life.

Item, I give and bequeath unto "The Northern Dispensary" in the County of Philadelphia and to "The Southern Dispensary" in the said County the Sum of One Hundred Dollars apiece to be paid to their respective Treasurers for the Time being and applied towards carrying on the charitable Designs of the said Institutions respectively.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my executor herein after named the Sum of Five Hundred Dollars in trust for an Institution near Philadelphia known by the Name of "The Contributors to the Asylum for the Relief of Persons deprived of the use of their Reason" and to be paid by my said Executor to the Treasurer of the Time being of the said Institution.

Item, I give and bequeath unto William D. Roberts, Son of William Roberts late of the City of Philadelphia deceased and Amy his Wife the Sum of Five Hundred Dollars to be paid to him as soon as conveniently may be after my Decease.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my Friend Elijah Conrad the Sum of Five Hundred Dollars.

Item, I give and bequeath unto Elizabeth Worrell and Jane Worrell the Sum of Fifty Dollars apiece.

Item, I give and bequeath unto Mary Kane the Sum of Twenty Dollars, and to Andrew Moss the like Sum of Twenty Dollars.

Item, All the Rest Residue and Remainder of my Estate real, personal and mixed whatsoever and wheresoever I give devise and bequeath unto my Son James Wills Junior to hold to him my said Son James Wills Junior his Heirs executors & Administrators and, Assign forever.

Item, I nominate and appoint my said Son James Wills Junior sole Executor of this my last Will and testament hereby revoking all Wills and Testaments by me at any Time heretofore made and declaring these Presents only to be and contain my last Will and testament. In Witness whereof I the said James Wills have hereunto set my Hand and Seal this Sixteenth Day of the Fourth Month called April in the Year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and twenty-three. 1823.

*Signed sealed published [sic] and declared by the above named Testator as and for his last Will and Testament in the Presence of Us,*  
*Isaac Elliott (signature)*  
*Samuel Thackara (signature)*

Philadelphia, May 5th, 1823. Then personally appeared Isaac Elliott and Samuel W. Thackara the witnesses to the above will & on their solemn affirmation according to law did declare & say that they did see and hear James Wills, Senior, the testator in the said will named sign, seal, publish and declare the same as his last will & Testament & that at the doing thereof he was of sound mind, memory, and understanding to the best of their knowledge & belief.

Coram Peter S Mühlenberg, Register (signed)

#### APPENDIX H INVENTORY, JAMES WILLS, SR., 1823

Valuation & Appraisal of the personal Estate and Effects late of James Wills Senr dec. viz

Two feather beds, bedsteads & bedding	\$30
Six leather bottom'd Chairs	2
Andirons, Shovel & tongs	2
A Copper tea Kettle waiter & Candle Sticks	3
An old mahogany Bureau & looking glass	4.50
Two feather beds, bedsteads, bedding & a mattress	40
A mahogany Bureau & looking glass	10
Six chamber chairs	1.50
Sundry articles of clothing	50
Two chests	1.50
One breakfast table & oil-cloth cover	3
One eight-day time piece	20
One carpet rug	3
Andiron & shovel & tongs	5
Nine Windsor chairs	3
Mahogany card tables	10
One looking glass	5
One hair sofa	10
One candle stand	75
One carpet	3
Silver cream jug, sugar tongs, soup ladle, 13 tea & 6 table spoons	40
China tea cups & saucers, plates, etc.	5
Wine glasses, tumblers, & decanters	2
Sundry articles of crockery & tin ware	4.50
One silk umbrella	2
An old fashioned silver watch, double cased	3
One tin plate stove & pipes	8
One brass bell, metal kettle, candle sticks, Snuffers, etc.	3
Sundry tin & pewter ware	2

Andirons, shovel, tongs, & plate irons	2
Two new pots, 1 tea kettle, frying pan, skillet, Cake iron, etc.	3
One copper wash kettle	2
Three work tubs, 1 lye tub & two buckets	4
One old family Bible	1
	<b>\$288.75</b>

*James Wills Junr, Executor of the Last Will & Testament of James Wills, Senr, dec.*

To personal estate (consisting of household, furniture, clothing, etc.) according to Inventory made by E. Conrad & I. Elliott

	<b>\$288.75</b>
Bond, Enoch Walker, Balance due on do Isaac Elliott with interest to this date	243.73 245.93
Note, Silas Hughes to Jas Wills	50
An undivided half part of stock and capital in trade under the firm of Jas Wills & Son	
Viz. cash	\$410
Stock of goods	1886
Debts due for goods Sold	1667.50
The half part of	3963.50
6 shares of N. America Bank stock	1981.75
1 share Philadelphia Library Company	
An undivided half-part of twenty-nine mortgages accompanied with bonds, from the value of eleven thousand dollars to one thousand dollars each, with interest	
An undivided half-part of five dwelling houses or Tenements with the appurtenances near North Fourth & Tammany Streets	
Three 3-story Tenements or dwelling-houses with the appurtenances thereunto belonging situated on the South-side of Chesnut below Third Streets (numbered 82, 84, & 86) and extending in depth to Carter's Alley	\$2810.16
Contra	
By cash, paid Register	\$ 2.50
do ex. N. Elliott's bill	3.75
do paid Register for	
Certif of Transfer	.50
do on presenting inventory of personal estate	.30
do paid Elijah Conrad	
his Legacy	500
do Jane Worrell her do	50

do Elizabeth Worrell do	50
do Sarah Osborne's bill	10
do Andrew Moss, his Legacy	20
do Mary Kane, her do	20
do William D. Roberts his do	500
do Francis Walnut's bill (barber)	4.50
do Doctr Parkes' bill for medical attend.	30
By case, paid to R. McMullen for Southern Dispensary a Legacy	100
do J. Barclay for Northern Dispensary a Legacy	100
do G. Vaux for Friends Asylum for the Relief of Persons deprived of the use of their reason a legacy	500
do Ly Paulson for advertising notice respecting the settlement of the Estate	1.25
do to John Chapman for bill of Coffin, etc.	27.50
Balance (retain'd by J. Wills Junr residuary Legatee	<b>889.86</b>
By b. shares N. America bank stock retained by J. Wills	
Exr as residuary legatee	
1 share Library Company stock ditto	
An undivided half-part of twenty-nine mortgages with Bonds accompanying from 11000 to 1000\$ each, with interest ditto	
An undivided half-part of 5 tenements near 4th & Tammany Streets ditto	
Three 3-storied tenements South Side of Chesnut, & lots extending to Carter's Alley (Nos. 82, 84 & 86) ditto	<b>2810.16</b>
[signed]	
James Wills, Exr	

#### APPENDIX I 1813 SURVEY OF NO 86 CHESTNUT STREET

(from the records of the Mutual Assurance Company [later Green Tree])

SURVEY OF James Will's new three story Brick house, situate No 86, on the south side of Chesnut, between Second & third Streets. Front 20 feet 10 inches, including a 2 feet 10 inch alley. Depth 31 feet. — First Story. In one, and occupied as a Confectionary and Liquor Store, washbds & windows Cased, 1 plain Square Bulk window 24 lights, glass 12

by 18 inches in Arch head front door, plain Jambs, Brick Arch — second Story, 2 Rooms, neat mantle, Surbase, washbds, windows Cased & Inside Shutters, Stucco Cornice in one Room marble to the Chimnies. Third Story, 2 rooms, neat mantles, washbds, Closets, windows Cased & Inside shutters, 1 flight painted Strait handrail Stairs, Close String, Garret, 2 rooms, plaister'd, Trap door, Battlement — 2 dormer windows, one of them Arch head, 12 lights each, glass 11 by 12 inches, — 2 floors heart pine narrow, other floors narrow white pine bds, Piazza, 8 feet 6 inches by 10 feet three Stories high, 2 flights open newell. Dogled'd painted \_\_ handrail Stairs. Close String Roof 1 fourth worn, — Back Building, 13 feet by 32 feet, three stories high, — First Story, 2 parts, one a parlour, plain mantle, \_\_, washbds, Closets & windows Cased — other part a Kitchen, as Customary, — Second Story, 2 Rooms, sililar to parlour below, — Third Story, 2 Rooms , similar to second Story,, roof 1 fourth worn, — floors heart pine bds, Stud & bd partitions. Glass 68 lights 11 by 17 - 52 do 11 by 14 & 228. Do 9 by 112 inches, party walls 9 inches, — an ash hole, — East & West, three Story Brick houses, South in the yard, about 6 feet off, is a one story Brick Building a part occupied as a distillery of Cordials, other part as a Bake house for Confectionary, Access by an Aley from Dock Street & Chestnut Street, water plenty.

Philip Justus \$3000  
Feb 1, 1813

#### APPENDIX J 1801 SURVEY OF No 84 CHESTNUT

(from the records of the Mutual Assurance Company [later Green Tree])

Survey of a New Three Story Grocery Store, situate on the south side of Chestnut Street between second and third streets belonging to James Wills, Dimensions 16 feet 3 inches front and 40 feet deep, the lower story hath a Rough coat of Plaister, no other part of the Building is plaistered, the floors not plained. Step ladders, Trap Door, and arched Dormers. A straight Bulk window, within large Glass, and large Glass in the Front, a Pediment and Architrave at Front Door, the former Building was Insured in this office.

Oct, 1801 £750



N.B. If any damage should be done to the windows in case of fire it shall be estimated at the same rate as if the glass had been of the size of eight by ten inches.

On viewing the above describ'd premises, I find the former front door + Bulk window remov'd, and in their place are 2 neat Strait Bulk windows, each 25 lights, glass 11 x 21 inches, a square head folding sash front door, 12 lights, glass 8 x 22 inches neat fancy transom sashes over the door & window, neat pilasters shutters portable - The whole surmounted by a neat architrave, frieze & Cornice.

I also find erected in the Celler, a furnace for warming with heated Air, Coal fuel, gas pipe leads into a brick flue. The whole structure appears Safe.

Febr'y 12th, 1835  
Philip Justus

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3. *Manuscript information is maintained at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College*. Swarthmore PA 19081-1399
4. Wills Eye Hospital. *Report for the Year Ended Dec. 31, 1874*. 1875. (copy at College of Physicians of Philadelphia).
5. *The original marriage certificate is held at the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia*, 7401 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia PA 19119-1794.
6. personal communication, Pastor Frederick Weiser
7. Souder, C, Jr. *History of Chestnut Street*. This scrapbook, assembled in 1860, is maintained in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Souder's writings originally were serialized in Thompson Westcott's Sunday Dispatch between April 1858 and October 1859.
8. Microfilm copies of the 1767 tax records can be found at the University of Pennsylvania; of the 1769 tax records at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
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10. See, for instance, Bailyn B. Does a Free-born Englishman Have a Right to Emigrate? *Am Heritage*. 1986; 37(2): 24-31 and Bailyn B. *Voyagers to the West*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf; 1986.
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12. Insurance information about the Wills buildings is found in the records of *The Green Tree Company*, now in the possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Also, see Garvan ANB, Koch C, Arbuckle D and Hart D. The Architectural Surveys 1784-1794. Vol. 1. Philadelphia, Pa.: *The Mutual Assurance Company*; 1976: 76-78.
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