



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

Female Ancestor Number: 194

Name: Wishart, Ann (Betson)

Dates: (c. 1690 - 16 Jan 1770)

Colonial Society: PA

Date added to ROA: 12-22-2024

Service: Woman of Distinction: Tallow Chandler/Candlemaker & Merchant

Authority: Wulf, Karin, *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, p. 149; Philadelphia County Wills, 1682-1819. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1900, Philadelphia Will Book O, pp. 459-460 [FHL film 21726, image 541]; "Minutes, 1745-1755," Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, held 31st of 6th mo. 1750, p. 147, Haverford College Quaker and Special Collections.

Biography:

Ann Betson (or Battson) was about 20-years old when she declared, at the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, along with her intended, Peter Wishart, her intentions to be married (second month, 1710). Her father, Thomas Betson/Battson, was a carpenter. We can speculate that Ann was born in Philadelphia after her family immigrated on a Penn ship. Witnesses to their marriage would include many familiar names such as Anthony Morris and [Sarah Read](#).

Like her neighbor [Rachel Draper](#), Ann was an integral part of the industrious High Street Ward. When Peter died in 1741, Ann was in the beginning her fifth decade of life, which included working as a candlemaker (and soap maker), calling herself a tallow chandler. While her children, Jemima (Edwards), William, Ann, and Thomas, were adults, the business was a family affair, and Ann (Sr.) was the head of the household. Their home was located on the corner of Front Street and Pewter Platter Alley, which also included their workshop and retail shop. One sign of their relative prosperity is that Ann owned an enslaved man who helped run the business. Ann's widowed daughter Jemima, herself an entrepreneurial shopkeeper, lived just down the block. Two of Ann's children, Ann (Jr.) and Thomas, were apprenticed to their mother as chandlers. She also apprenticed others, as recorded in the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (1750), where she agrees to take on Samuel Farmer for £5 to be paid by John Armitt. When Ann wrote her will (in July 1759), she proudly declared herself a tallow chandler. Her will was proved in February of 1770, shortly after her death at about age 80 years. Her estate was jointly administered by Ann (Jr.) and Thomas. The siblings would stay together in the family house and continue to run the chandler business as partners. Thomas, in recognition of his family's position in the community, was elected as tax assessor of the High Street Ward in the 1770s.