

John Adams's Book

Being Notes on

A Record of the Births, Marriages & Deaths
of Three Generations of the

Adams Family

1734-1807



Compiled by HENRY ADAMS

Printed for the BOSTON ATHENÆUM

1934

John Adams's Book



THIS title is written on a blank page, cut from a large book, upon which are recorded the births, marriages, and deaths of three generations of a family. The page was supposed to have been cut from the family Bible until 1934, when a copy was found with a notation by John Quincy Adams that it came from "Willard's Body of Divinity." This volume, now with President John Adams's books in the Boston Public Library, is a collection of two hundred and fifty sermons by Samuel Willard (1639-1707), pastor of the South Church, Boston. The collection, printed in 1726, was known throughout New England; and every farmer who could pay £2-15s. for it valued it next to the family Bible in which he recorded his children's names.

The entries begin with the name of an obscure New England farmer, and run down through the names of two presidents and a famous minister to England. The names of those with national reputations speak for themselves. It is what one familiar with the domestic side of this family sees in all these entries that makes them interesting. They are a tale in themselves, and in the following pages each entry tells its part.

John Adams's Book Jan:'. 5 1727/8
Prise £2-15-0

THIS JOHN ADAMS, the father of John Adams, the president, was in the fifth generation from Henry, the first of the family to come to this country. In 1638 Henry Adams settled in Braintree, Massachusetts, as a small freeholding farmer, and from him the family traces its descent. John Adams, the owner of this book and the first to acquire any property, was born in 1691/92 and died in 1761. His mother was Hannah Bass, a direct descendant of Priscilla Alden of Plymouth. A common farmer, he identified himself with the town of Braintree, his name, styled as that of a "cordwainer" or shoemaker and "farmer," appearing in the records for a period of over forty years. Of the various offices he held only three will be mentioned here. Between 1734 and 1749 he was an officer of the "train band" or militia. In 1749 his military career ended because he refused to desert his superior officer, Colonel John Quincy, when one Joseph Gooch, intriguing to supersede his colonel, offered John Adams a captaincy. By a strange coincidence, long after the death of John Adams, the name of his colonel was given to John Adams's grandson, John Quincy Adams, who became president and whose mother, Abigail Smith, was a granddaughter of Colonel John Quincy. In 1747 John Adams was appointed a deacon of the church, and held that position for fourteen years. Consequently, in the family records he is known as "Deacon John." He was also selectman of the Town of Braintree for nine terms. His grandson, President John Quincy Adams, wrote of him: "If my grandfather himself had received the same education [I have], he would have been distinguished either as a clergyman or a lawyer.

*'But Knowledge to his eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll.'*

And the summit of his political distinction was the office of a selectman of Braintree."

If the Quincys were perfect types of the colonial gentry, it may also be said that the owner of this book was a perfect type of the colonial yeomanry. Without the advantages of an education to enable him to attain a more

prominent position, he yet succeeded in scraping together enough to give that education to his oldest son, John, who became president.

1734 October 31 I was married to Susanna
Boylston JOHN ADAMS

SUSANNA BOYLSTON (1709-97) was the daughter of Peter Boylston of Muddy River or Brookline. Her great-grandfather, Thomas, came to this country in 1635 and settled in Watertown. His son, Thomas (1648-1722), moved to Brookline in 1665, and built what was a large and fine house for those days, overlooking what is now Brookline Reservoir, and near the house, now standing, which his son, Dr. Zabdiel Boylston (1680-1766), built in 1738. This Dr. Zabdiel Boylston, Susanna's uncle, was the first to introduce smallpox inoculation into this country. It was at first looked on as a strange and dangerous experiment. When John Adams, the president, had himself inoculated, just before his marriage, Abigail, his wife, in her letters made several references to the risk he was running from the poison passing through his veins.

Of Susanna all that is known is that she was a public-spirited woman and had many activities outside her home. Her older sister, Ann (1706-70), married Deacon John's younger brother, Ebenezer (1704-69).

When Susanna died, her son, John Adams, was in Philadelphia, just inaugurated as the second president. Because of his mother's illness, Abigail, his wife, remained in Quincy to take care of her. On April 26, 1797, Abigail wrote to John Adams: "This, I hope, is the last letter which you will receive from me at Quincy. The funeral rites performed, I prepare to set out on the morrow . . . Our aged parent is gone to rest. My mind is relieved from any anxiety on her account. I have no fears lest she should be left alone, and receive an injury. I have no apprehensions that she should feel any want of aid or assistance, or fear of becoming burdensome. She fell asleep, and is happy."

On Susanna's headstone is this old-fashioned epitaph:

*The sweet Remembrance of the Just
Should flourish when they sleep in Dust.*

The

John Adams's Book
Jan. 15 1727/8

1734 October 31 I was married to Susanna Boylston
October 19th 1735 Sabbath Day. John Adams the son of John
Adams and Susanna his wife was born.
1738 October 16th Peter Boylston, Clerk of Borne. Monday
May 29th 1741 Elias Adams was born. Friday

1764 Oct 25th John Adams the son above named was married to Abigail
Smith.
1765 July 14th Abigail Adams, the daughter of John Adams and Abigail
Smith, was born (Sabbath) was baptized
in the afternoon, by Mr Smith, at Braintree

1767 July 11 John Quincy Adams son of John Adams and
Abigail his wife, was born and being Saturday was baptized
the next day by Mr Smith at Braintree. The civil great grandchild
for whom he was making was dying when he was baptized.
1768 Dec 28 Susanna, the daughter of the above John and Abigail
was born, on a Wednesday at Boston and the next Sabbath
1st January 1769 was baptized by Dr Cooper. died Feb. 4th

1770 May 29 Charles, son of said John and Abigail was born, Thursday
morning at Boston, and the next Sabbath was baptized by Dr Cooper.

1772 Sept 15 Thomas Boylston Adams, was born at Braintree
and christened the next Sunday by Mr Smith. Mrs. Adams
great, great grandchild, was of the name of Thomas Boylston, and still the old name
at Braintree when my father was born. my mother also had an Uncle of the
name Adams, the father of the late Sir. Joseph Adams. The present Thomas Boylston
Adams.

1797 July 26 John Quincy Adams, was married to Susanna Johnson in London.
1801 April 12 George Washington Adams, was born at Boston, in Virginia - son of the said John Quincy
Adams.

The Boylsons, being an old English family, had the right to a coat of arms. It was with the seal of his mother's family, the Boylston arms, that at the end of the Revolution John Adams, the president, affixed his signature to the Treaty of Paris. The seal he used, known as the "Treaty of Paris Seal," is still owned by the Adams family, and is passed from eldest son to eldest son as John Adams desired. President John Adams always looked on the part he played in negotiating this treaty as the greatest work he had ever done.

October 19th 1735 Sabbath day. John Adams the Son of John Adams and Susanna his wife was Borne.

WHEN Deacon John made this entry in his book he did not know that he was recording the birth of the second president of the United States. He certainly could not have foreseen—being a loyal subject of King George II—that the colonies were to break away from England, and that his son, born that day, was to be one of those who led their revolt, and took part in framing and signed their declaration of independence.

1738 October 16th Peter, Boylston, Adams was Borne. on Munday

THIS second son, named for his mother's family, like his father never rose above the activities of Braintree. He became a captain in the militia, selectman, and was chairman of the Braintree committee that passed on the state constitution in 1780. He married Mary Crosby, who owned a tavern or stagecoach hotel of those days, not far from the house John Adams purchased when he became president. Like many others unknown to fame, he was one of those who were the sinew of this country. He lived to see independence won, dying in 1823, three years before his more famous brother, the president.

May 29th 1741 Elihu Adams was Borne. Fry-day

THIS third son, Elihu, married Thankful White in 1765, and settled in Randolph, Massachusetts. Like his brother, he was one of the colonial yeomanry. An officer in the militia, he joined the army when the British were beleaguered in Boston. Recounting the repulse of British foragers from the islands near Quincy, Abigail wrote to John Adams that his brother had acquitted himself well. Elihu Adams was commissioned a captain, but, contracting dysentery during the siege of Boston, he died March 18, 1776. Another of those colonial yeomanry who did their part, he gave all he had, and died unknown, except for this entry in Deacon John's Book.

With this entry, the handwriting of Deacon John ends. There is a wide space, and the tale goes on in the handwriting of John Adams, the president. To one familiar with the family manuscripts the handwriting is easily recognized. The names appear in large rolling script, as he signed his own name to the Declaration of Independence and often wrote the opening words of letters; then comes the smaller hand which he used to save space and time in making notes and interlineations. It is to be regretted that he did not write the date when he took over his father's book, as Deacon John did. His first entry is the date of his marriage.

1764 Oct. 25th John Adams the Son above-named was married to Abigail Smith.

ABIGAIL SMITH (1714–1818) was the daughter of the Rev. William Smith of Weymouth and Elizabeth Quincy. Through her mother she was the granddaughter of the Colonel John Quincy whom Deacon John had elected to stand by. It was through her family

that the Adams yeomanry became connected with the colonial gentry. In the colonial days the ministry and gentry ranked far above the yeomanry; for a daughter of a minister to marry into the small-farmer class was to marry beneath her. There was also objection to lawyers. When Abigail Smith's older sister, Mary, married Richard Cranch, an immigrant of high standing, her father, pleased at the match, preached a sermon to his people from the text: "And Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Yet, when two years later on the marriage of his second daughter to John Adams, a lawyer, her friends expressed some disapproval of the match, William Smith rebuked them in a sermon after the wedding, taking for his text: "For John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine,—and ye say, 'He hath a devil.'"

William Smith (1706–83), the father of Abigail, was born in Charlestown, Massachusetts, the son of William and Abigail Fowle Smith. He was educated for the ministry at Harvard, graduating with the class of 1725. Called to the pastorate of the Weymouth church, he was ordained in 1734 and held that position until his death in 1783—a period of forty-nine years. The ministers of those days exerted an influence over their flocks in temporal affairs much wider than they do to-day. As will be seen, William Smith's pastorate covered the period of unrest leading up to the Revolution and ended in 1783, the year his son-in-law, John Adams, signed his name to the Treaty of Paris that gave this country independence. He was greatly respected by all who heard him, and his guidance did much to allay the uneasiness that all felt during the war. His meetinghouse was burned down in 1752 by accident. As it was the custom of those days to keep the powder belonging to the town wherever convenient, the authorities had stored three barrels in the loft of Parson Smith's church. This naturally blew up when the fire reached it, and Parson Smith's whole church went heavenward, but fortunately without the congregation. In recording the event, Parson Smith wrote that the explosion made a "surprising noise."

Abigail Smith is remembered not because she was the wife of John Adams, the president, but because of their letters, published by her grandson. Had it not been for these she would be forgotten to-day; but few, except those who have read the memoir that accompanies these letters, realize that Abigail never went to school. She was not strong enough to leave home, and therefore all the education she received was from her father and from her grandmother on the Quincy side. Never a strong woman, her early life was spent amid the turmoil of the Revolution. While the Battle of Bunker Hill was being fought, she stood on the brow of Penn's Hill near her house, holding the hand of her nine-year-old son, John Quincy Adams, the future president, as she watched the smoke roll up from the field of battle and listened to the growl of the distant cannon. For all she knew, the untrained provincial army might break, the British march out over Boston Neck and lay the country waste, and her husband, if captured, be executed as a traitor. In spite of her frailty, Abigail Smith had the qualities of a leader. When John Adams was away, she not only managed their farm but cared for their children; and in the autumn of 1775, with deaths all around her and everyone in her household at one time or another down with dysentery, she alone carried the burden of management and responsibility.

When the war was over, Abigail joined her husband in France after a separation of eight years broken only by a few short visits. From then on, she never left him and was part of the life he led. In the world of politics, she was as much at home as on her farm. Of these two, their grandson Charles Francis Adams, minister to England, when sorting out their letters for publication, wrote in his diary:

"27 July

"27 July 1833. I passed my time very quietly looking over old papers. A packet which I opened contained the love letters of the old gentleman in 1763-4,—just before his marriage. They were mostly written during the period of three or four weeks when he went up to Boston to be inoculated for the small-pox. At that time considered as a great exertion, not without much of personal hazard. The subject is of course an odd one for lovers, but they both seem to be so honest and simple-hearted in discussing it that after all these letters are far more true to nature than the sophistications of studied refinement. . . .

"July 31. With what a mixture of feelings do I look over these old papers. They contain the secret history of the lives of a single couple. Joy and sunshine, grief and clouds, sorrow and storms. The vicissitudes are rapid, the incidents are interesting. Happy are those who pass through this valley with so much of innocence. Vice stains no one of these pages. Occasionally there is fierceness of passion, but it commonly grows out of public events and has no accompaniment of bitter remorse and self up-braiding for the contamination of guilt. I think the gloomy predominates, and yet there have been few persons whose story altogether comprises so much of what the world calls prosperity.

"August 1st, 1833: A fine day. I passed it in my usual occupation. I am making out a pretty complete set of the letters of my Grandfather and Grandmother to each other. The former are amusing from the short concise and yet humorous style in which they are written. The latter interest from their gravity. My Grandmother was a thorough politician. She passed her life in the midst of one of those crises in Society, when the old work was pulled down and the new one put up. These papers are all that remain of a very extraordinary woman."

1765 July 14th *Abigail Adams, the Daughter of John Adams and Abigail his Wife, was born and (it being Sabbath,) was baptized in the afternoon, by M^r Smith, at Braintree*

THIS first child was baptized the day of her birth. It was the custom of that period to baptize on the Sunday following the day of birth, for there was a belief that until baptized no child was sure of heaven. The Mr. Smith was her grandfather. This Abigail, with her mother, joined John Adams in Paris after he had helped negotiate the Treaty of Paris that ended the Revolution, and then went with him to London when he became minister to England. There, in 1786, she married Colonel William Stephens Smith, her father's secretary. Colonel Smith, an officer with a good record as a member of Washington's staff, was sent over by Congress to be John Adams's secretary when he was appointed to the Court of St. James's. Colonel Smith, of New York and Pennsylvania descent, was entirely unknown to John Adams or his daughter. In June, 1788, they all returned to America, and this Abigail and her husband finally settled in Lebanon Valley, Long Island, New York. Her life was a succession of good and bad turns of fortune. In 1813 she developed cancer, but hid the fact from her parents till death was near. When she knew she could live but little longer, accompanied by her son, her daughter, and her sister-in-law, she journeyed to Quincy that she might see her father and her mother for the last time and die in their house. The journey was hard. Travel in those days was so slow, and over such rough roads, that it took them fifteen days to cover the three hundred miles they had to go. In her parents' home she was made as comfortable as possible, but nothing could be done for her, and after a brief period of great suffering she died, on August 15, 1813, and lies in the family vault in the old burying ground in Quincy. Abigail, her mother, writing to John Quincy Adams in Russia to tell him of his sister's death, although

deeply grieved, wrote that she could not wish that her daughter had lived longer. This entry is of interest because it fixes the child's given name at birth as Abigail Adams, not Abigail Amelia as was supposed in Miss Katharine Metcalf Roof's book *Colonel Smith and Lady*. The name "Amelia" was a pen name, such as was often used in signing letters. To perpetuate it she gave it to her daughter, Caroline Amelia Smith—it being the name she and her husband had used. The portraits of Colonel and Abigail Smith hang in the Long Room in the Adams Mansion in Quincy.

1767 July 11 *John Quincy Adams Son of John Adams and Abigail his Wife, was born and it being Saturday was baptized the next Day by M^r Wibirt at Braintree the Childs Great Grandfather for whom he was named was dying when the Child was christened.*

IN his rolling, bold hand, as he wrote his own name, John Adams here passes on this name to his son, who was to be the sixth president. The Mr. Wibirt was Anthony Wibird, minister of the North Precinct of Braintree. John Adams had a poor opinion of him, and said his soul was lost in "dronish effeminacy." Abigail referred to him as "our inanimate old bachelor." Apparently, long after making this entry, John Adams interlined that the child's great-grandfather, Colonel John Quincy for whom he was named, was dying when the child was christened. At the time of his birth, the child's grandmother, Elizabeth Quincy, the daughter of Colonel John Quincy, was present. The next day, when the child was baptized, she requested that it be given her father's name. Long afterward the child thus named wrote of this incident: "It was filial tenderness that gave the name. It was the name of one passing from earth to immortality. These have been among the strongest links of my attachment to the name of Quincy, and have been to me through life a perpetual admonition to do nothing unworthy of it."

In 1792 the North Precinct of Braintree was set off from the town and was named Quincy in memory of this Colonel John Quincy. Colonel Quincy was colonel of the Suffolk regiment, prominent in the Continental Congress, and a leader in the affairs of his town.

1768 Dec^r 28 *Susanna, the Daughter of the above John and Abigail was born, of a Wednesday, at Boston, and the next Sabbath 1st January 1769 was baptized by D^r Cooper. died Feb. 4th—1770*

THIS child was named for John Adams's mother. A little over a year after making this entry of her birth, John Adams reopened his book to interline the record of her death. In this generation three children bore this name—children of Susanna Boylston's three sons. This is the record of one. Of the other two: the daughter of Peter Boylston Adams married Darius Boardman of Cambridge, Massachusetts, but died childless; the daughter of Elihu Adams married Aaron Hobart of Randolph, Massachusetts, and may have descendants alive to-day that have the name. In the next generation, on March 2, 1818, a granddaughter of John Adams named Susanna Boylston gave birth to a girl in John Adams's home in Quincy, the Adams Mansion on Adams Street, whom they christened Susan Maria. Abigail Adams wrote of this birth: "We have a little spring bird, born in this house. A lovely little . . . [torn]. Susan has a daughter." Since then no other children in the Adams family have been given the name. It may be hoped that some day the name of the mother of the second president may again be given to one of her descendants.

The

The Dr. Cooper who baptized the child was the Rev. Samuel Cooper (1725–83), pastor of the Brattle Street Church in Boston, the fourth church of the Puritan order established there. In 1743 he was elected to this pastorate when his father was senior pastor; in 1747 he became senior pastor, and held this position till his death. He was intimate with John Adams, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and James Otis—leaders in the revolt against Great Britain.

1770 May 29. *Charles, Son of said John and Abigail was born, Thursday Morning at Boston, and the next Sabbath was baptized by Dr Cooper.*

CHARLES married Sarah Smith, the sister of Colonel Smith, his sister Abigail's husband. It was to his daughter, Susanna Boylston Adams, that the child, Susan Maria, was born in the Adams Mansion. He died in New York on November 30, 1800—the autumn his father was defeated for reelection as president.

His daughter, Susanna Boylston Adams, married Charles Thomas Clarke, a lieutenant in the United States Navy, on August 13, 1817. Her only child was born March 2, 1818; her husband died the same year. The mother came to live with John and Abigail Adams and was with them in their house in Quincy when they died. Abigail died in the October following the child's birth. John Adams died on July 4, 1826. In their letters and diaries are many references to their granddaughter Susanna.

1772 Sept. 15 *Thomas Boylstone Adams, was born at Braintree and christened the next Sunday by M^r Wibirt. Mem. the Childs great, great Grandfather, was of the Name of Thomas Boylstone, and built the old House at Brooklyne where my Mother was born, my Mother also had an Uncle of the Same Name, the Father of the late Nick. Boylstone Esq. & the present Thomas Boylstone Merchant.*

BECAUSE John Adams gave this child his mother's family name (his daughter Susanna who bore this name having died), he later added the memorandum to this record explaining the name. It should be noted that he christened the child "Boylstone," as the names of two of the child's forbears, "Edward Boylstone, Merchant" and "Dr. Zabdiel Boylstone, Surgeon" are spelled in the list of subscribers printed in this book. Although it seems as though John Adams wished to perpetuate the name as originally spelled, it has never been spelled this way since. The child always wrote it "Boylston." "Dr. Zabdiel Boylstone, Surgeon" was the Dr. Zabdiel Boylston who first introduced inoculation for small-pox into this country. He was a grand-uncle of this child.

The "Uncle of the Same Name" was Thomas Boylston of Boston, "saddler and shopkeeper." Except that he was a prosperous merchant of those days, little is known of him. He died in 1739. Of his sons—"the late Nick. Boylstone Esq. & the present Thomas Boylstone Merchant"—more is known, for John Adams and this son whom he named Thomas Boylston have left entries in their diaries concerning them. Nicholas Boylston (1716–71) had a fine house on School Street, across from King's Chapel. Thomas Boylston (1721–98) was an unpopular, tight-fisted merchant of Boston. The following entry tells its part in this tale. John Adams wrote in his diary:

"January 16, 1766, Thursday. Dined at Mr. Nick Boylston's, with the two Mr. Boylstons, two Mr. Smiths, Mr. Hallowell, and their ladies—an elegant dinner indeed! Went over the house to view the furniture, which alone cost a thousand pounds sterling. A seat it is for a

nobleman, a prince. The Turkey carpets, the painted hangings, the marble tables, the rich beds with crimson damask curtains and counterpanes, the beautiful chimney clock, the spacious garden, are the most magnificent of anything I have ever seen.

"The conversation of the two Boylstons and Hallowell is a curiosity. Hotspurs all, Tantivy Nick, is a warm friend of the Lieutenant-Governor [Oliver] and inclining toward the Governor [Hutchins]. Tom, a fire-brand against both. Tom is a perfect viper, a fiend, a Jew, a devil, but is orthodox in politics, however."

In 1820, John Adams made a visit to "the old Houfe at Brooklyne where my Mother was born." He was in his last years, but the years were treating him kindly. Although Abigail had died, his son John Quincy had come home from the Court of St. James's to be secretary of state in Monroe's administration, and the presidency lay ahead of him. John Adams's own affairs were going well, his personal quarrels and disappointments had been forgotten, and the republic which he had helped to launch was prosperous. These last years fell in the period known as the "era of good feeling." Something of this spirit appears in the following letter he wrote to his cousin, Ward Nicholas Boylston, to tell him of his visit to the Boylston homestead. In this letter the names of those he had recorded in Deacon John's Book appear again. The letter is headed "Montezillo," as he sometimes called his home in Quincy. No one knows why he selected this name; Jefferson called his home Monticello.

"WARD NICHOLAS BOYLSTON.

Montezillo September 16, 1820

My Dear Cousin BOYLSTON: O that I had the talent at description of a Homer, or Milton, or Walter Scott—I would give you a picture of all that I have visited.

Mr. David Hyslop has been importuning me for seven years to dine with him in Brookline. I have always declined till last Wednesday. When taking my grandson George Washington Adams for my guide and aide de camp—I went to visit the original habitation of the Boylstons—where my mother was born and where she carried me frequently in my infancy and where I used to sport among the fine Cherries and Peaches and Plums and Pears, as well as among the Flowers and Roses, in that fertile Garden. It is more than seventy years since I set my foot upon that Hill. Indeed my mother seemed to have an aversion to visiting or thinking of it after her father sold it, to his Brother Dr. Zabdiel Boylston and removed into Boston. There are ancient Trees, Elms, and Buttonwoods—some I seem to remember, but: I have inherited the feelings of my mother . . . I ascended the Hill . . . White's Hill was full in view, the seat of my great grandfather—and the birth place of my grandmother; all these lands have passed into the hands of other families and other names—I said to Mr. Hyslop—"If I was worth money enough upon the face of the whole Earth I would buy it of you!" Your Uncle Nicholas was well Born—he had a soul 'bien usée,' but Thomas had not; otherwise he would certainly have purchased it and given it to you.—We had a very agreeable Company at dinner, very good cheer, and very pleasant sociability—But then I took my final farewell of Boylston and White's Hill—My Grandfather and grandMother were desirous that my father should purchase it—when it was sold to Dr. Boylston—and my mother was very desirous that he would—But my Father was a very cautious man—had a great aversion to being in debt, and although my grandfather was willing to take his Bond for the purchase, and wanted only the interest of the money, My Father was afraid he should not be able to accomplish and fulfill so large an engagement—and now I fear the Estate has departed from the name and the Blood forever,—unless you will purchase it and give it to your Son, or Grandson.

George

George who bears his honors meekly, is now humbly employed in writing this letter for,

Your Affectionate Cousin

7 October 3rd, 1820"

JOHN ADAMS.

Thomas Boylston Adams (1772–1832) became a judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He married Ann Harrod of Haverhill, Massachusetts. He had seven children, four boys and three girls. The four boys went into the service of the country, and three died in that service. None of them ever married. Of the three girls, the oldest had no children, the second never married, and the third died in childhood. This branch of the family is extinct.

Again there is a space, except for the memorandum on the margin "here endeth 2 Lefson." With this notation—made as though the records were being kept on the fly-leaf of a Bible—John Adams made his last entry. Again the handwriting changes, and his son, John Quincy Adams, takes up the tale.

1797. July 26. John Quincy Adams, was married to Louisa Catherine Johnson—in London.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS probably made this entry years later, for the three entries all look as though they had been made at the same time. On the fall of the Federalist Party in 1801 he returned to America to start all over again. For a little while he lived in the old red farmhouse where he was born. In 1802 he was elected state senator and then United States senator. In 1809 he was appointed minister to Russia. This book was probably given to him on his return from Russia in 1817, for he makes no reference to his girl baby who was born in St. Petersburg in 1811 and died the next year. He records only those living at the time of his return.

Of his wedding John Quincy Adams made this brief record in his diary: "At nine this morning I went, accompanied by my brother, to Mr. Johnson's, and thence to the church of the parish of All Hallows, Barking; where I was married to Louisa Catherine Johnson, the second daughter of Joshua and Catherine Johnson, by Mr. Hewlett. Mr. Johnson's family, Mr. Brooks, my brother [Thomas Boylston Adams], and Mr. J. Hall were present. We were married before eleven in the morning, and immediately after, went out to see Tilney House, one of the splendid country seats for which the country is distinguished."

His grandson, Henry, in the *Education* tells more: "She was born in London in 1775, daughter of Joshua Johnson, an American merchant, brother of Governor Thomas Johnson of Maryland; and Catherine Nuth, of an English family in London. Driven from England by the revolutionary war, Joshua Johnson took his family to Nantes, where they remained till the peace. The girl Louisa Catherine was nearly ten years old when brought back to London, and her sense of nationality must have been confused; but the influence of the Johnsons and the services of Joshua obtained for him from President Washington the appointment of Consul in London on the organization of the government in 1790. In 1794 President Washington appointed John Quincy Adams minister to the Hague. He was twenty-seven years old when he returned to London, and found the Consul's house a very agreeable haunt. Louisa was then twenty.

"... Louisa was charming, like a Romney portrait, but among her many charms that of being a New England woman was not one. ... He married Louisa in London, July 26, 1797, and took her to Berlin to be head of the United States Legation. During three or four exciting years, the young bride lived in Berlin; whether she was happy or not, whether she was content or not, whether she was successful or not, her descendants did not surely know; but in any case she could by no chance have become educated there for a life in Quincy or Boston. In

1801 the overthrow of the Federalist party brought her and her husband to America, and she became at last a member of the Quincy household, but by that time her children needed all her attention, and she remained there with occasional winters in Boston and Washington till 1809 [when John Quincy Adams was sent to Russia]." As he remembered her in her old age, when her husband after his presidential term went to Congress, Henry Adams wrote: "Then it was that the little Henry, her grandson, first remembered her, from 1843 to 1848, sitting in her panelled room, at breakfast, with her heavy silver teapot and sugar-bowl and cream-jug, which still exist somewhere as an heirloom of the modern safety-vault. By that time she was seventy years old or more, and thoroughly weary of being beaten about a stormy world. To the boy she seemed singularly peaceful, a vision of silver gray, presiding over her old President and her Queen Ann mahogany; an exotic, like her sèvres china; an object of deference to every one, and of great affection to her son Charles; but hardly more Bostonian than she had been fifty years before, on her wedding-day, in the shadow of the Tower of London."

1801. April 12. George Washington Adams, was born, at Berlin, in Prussia—Son of the said John Quincy and Louisa Catherine Adams—He was baptized May 4. by the Rev.^d William Proby, Chaplain, to Lord Carysfort the british Minister then at Berlin.

IMMEDIATELY after his marriage, John Quincy Adams, just appointed minister to Prussia, took his young wife to Berlin. There their first child was born. The sole entry in John Quincy Adams's diary that day was: "I have this day to offer my humble and devout thanks to Almighty God, for the birth of a son, at half past three o'clock afternoon." On May 4 he wrote: "At one o'clock afternoon my child was baptized by Mr. Proby the chaplain of the English legation. Lord Carysfort and myself were the god-fathers; and Lady Carysfort the god-mother. Mrs. Adams was not well enough to be present, and the ceremony therefor was made as private as possible, having only the persons present absolutely necessary, and the family. The child's name is George Washington, and I implore the favor of Almighty God, that he may live, and never prove unworthy of it. Walk'd with Lord Carysfort under the lindens until dinner time." Lord Carysfort was intimate with Mr. Adams, and later sent him the beautiful, specially printed Grenville Homer, issued by his brothers, which is in the Adams collection in the Athenæum. The boy George was brilliant as a young man, attained high rank at Harvard, and was elected to the Legislature. He was lost from a steamboat on Long Island Sound, April 30, 1829, when he was twenty-eight years of age. His lack of systematic application makes it doubtful that he would have attained prominence had he lived.

1803. 4. July. John Adams, son of the said John Quincy and Louisa Catherine Adams, was born; and on Sunday July 17. baptized by the Rev.^d William Emerson, at the first church—Boston.

JOHN ADAMS (1803–34) married Mary Hellen, his mother's niece, in the White House at Washington on February 25, 1828. He then practised law in New York and afterward was in business in Washington until his death. He had two children, girls. The elder, Mary Louisa, married William C. Johnson. Her descendants, are still living in Utica, New York. William C. Johnson was himself a grandson of the Charles Adams of the preceding generation. The other daughter, Georgiana Frances, died

died at the age of nine, in the Adams Mansion in Quincy, in the same room and bed in which she had been born.

On the birth of his son, John Quincy Adams wrote in his diary: "July 4—Independence Day—I returned to Boston [from Quincy] early this morning, and on my arrival received from the countenance and mouth of Mrs. Shaw [a sister of Abigail Adams] the news that I have a second child—a son—born at 3 o'clock this morning. The mother and the child are both as well as I could hope. For this new blessing I desire to offer my humblest gratitude to the Throne of Heaven."

The Rev. William Emerson, who baptized the child, was then the settled minister of the First Church of Boston, and was the father of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

1807. 18. *August. Charles Francis Adams was born at Boston, and on Sunday 13 September baptized by the Rev.^d William Emerson.*

AT the birth of this son, who was to become our Civil War minister to England, John Quincy Adams in his diary recorded the event only. At the christening on September 13 he wrote: "My child born the 18th of last month, was this afternoon baptized by Mr. Emerson, and received the name of Charles Francis Adams—the first of which I gave him in remembrance of my deceased brother, and the second, as a token of honor to my old friend and patron, Judge Dana. Mrs. Adams was not well enough to attend at the church, but went to the door and waited in the carriage until the ceremony was performed."

The Judge Dana for whom he named the child was Francis Dana, our representative in Russia during the Revolution. John Quincy Adams, a boy of fourteen, had accompanied his father to Paris and then to The Hague. From The Hague he went to St. Petersburg in 1781 to be Mr. Dana's secretary and French interpreter. He was in St. Petersburg a little over a year, and during that time was so impressed by Mr. Dana that his admiration for him lasted throughout his life.

In 1809, when John Quincy Adams was appointed minister to Russia, he took the child, Charles, with him, leaving the two older boys in Quincy. During the *Cent Fours*, Louisa Catherine Adams, with the five-year-old child, left St. Petersburg in her traveling carriage, and traveled to Paris, where her husband, after helping negotiate the Treaty of Ghent, was awaiting her. At this time Napoleon, back from Elba, was in Paris. John Quincy Adams, appointed to the Court of St. James's, was on his way to London. There the boy remained till his father, in 1817, came home to be secretary of state in Monroe's administration. Charles Francis, after graduating from Harvard, practised law. He was soon elected to the Legislature and then to the United States Senate. When the Civil War broke out, President Lincoln appointed him to the Court of St. James's—a difficult position in those days for there was an imperfect cable communication with Washington. Because he prevented England from recognizing the South and from building war vessels for the Confederacy, it has been said that if Grant, on our right, defeated the Confederacy in this country, Minister Adams, on our left, defeated the Con-

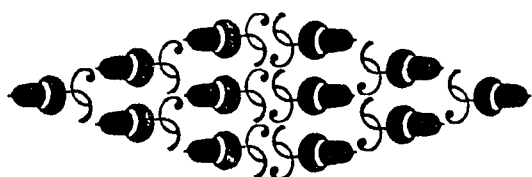
federacy in London. His services as minister, and then at the Geneva Tribunal—covering about thirteen years in all—comprised the famous part of his life. It has always been a much discussed question whether Charles Francis Adams was or was not abler than the two presidents. It has been agreed, however, that he did better than they would have done in the situation he had to face. Having neither his grandfather's hot temper nor his father's oratorical bitterness that made him so many enemies, he met the haughty aloofness of the Englishman of the Civil War period with a greater coldness and indifference—which won British respect in the only way it could be won.

With the entry of Charles Francis Adams's birth, the leaf from Deacon John's book closes. It might have been the last entry of President John's male descendants also, for, since the Thomas Boylston branch of the family died out, and John Quincy Adams's two older sons had no male children, Charles Francis became the only descendant through whom the name could be carried on. When, at the end of his presidential term, John Quincy Adams returned to his home in Quincy, his affairs were desperate: not only did his political career seem ended, but he was also facing bankruptcy. On July 4, 1829, just three years after the day his grandfather, the president, died, Charles Francis Adams wrote of the situation in his diary:

"Quincy July 4, 1829—This is the anniversary of our Independence and therefore a public day. I am not fond of noise and bustle, and therefore prefer a quiet residence at home. I had this morning much conversation with my father upon the prospects of the family. John has decided to desert the State, poor George is now no more, and I am the only one who remains to keep the name and the family, in our branch at least, from destruction. This result I have never before suspected and it presents to me most perplexing circumstances, I will do my best. After an earnest conversation we walked to my uncle's [Thomas Boylston Adams]. . . . On our return we crossed over a part of the farm, the boundaries of which my father appears anxious that I should know. How little did I ever think that this would be my lot. Degrand [Peter Paul Francis de Grand, a banker who was an admirer and friend of John Quincy Adams] dined here and talked about money. We drank the Fourth of July with great spirit."

Since then there have been three more generations. In the seventh generation—counting Deacon John as the first—in the line of the two presidents six male children of the name, descendants of Charles Francis Adams, are living.

In the different branches of the family, records in books like this or in family Bibles were kept up a little longer. The Thomas Boylston Adams Bible is in the Adams Mansion at Quincy. The Bible in which John Quincy Adams kept his family records he gave to his son, John. This Bible is now owned by one of his descendants. John Quincy Adams also gave to each of his grandchildren a Bible with his name written on the fly-leaf, but all are now kept as treasured heirlooms, not as family records. That old custom has passed away.



One hundred and fifty copies printed by
D. B. UPDIKE, THE MERRYMOUNT PRESS, BOSTON
in the Month of May
1934
