



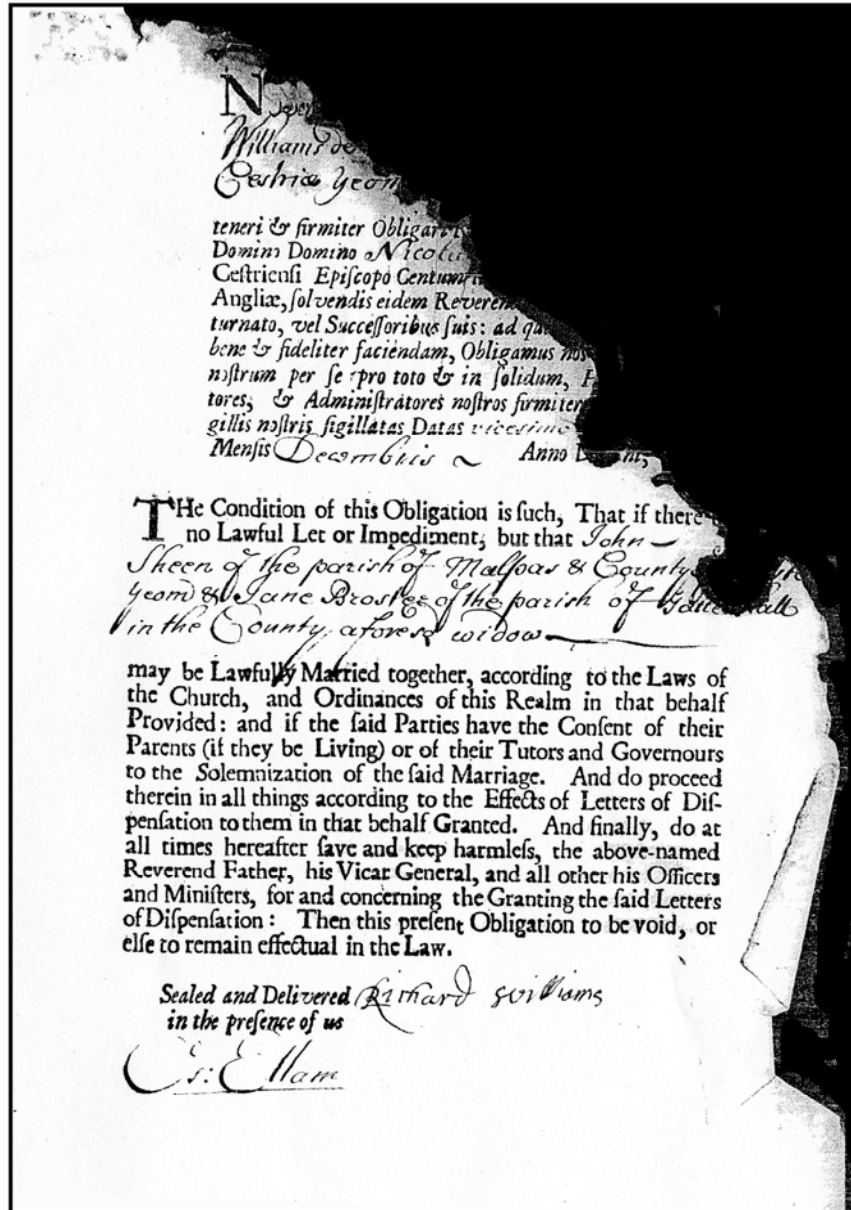
The Mysterious Ancestor John Sheen

Who was John Sheen?

The naming of John Willson's son Sheen Wilson and two grandsons John Sheen Wilson virtually demands that the maternal grandfather of John Willson or Rebecca Faulkner was named John Sheen. John Willson had no daughters that we know of, but his son John (who came to America) named his own first daughter Mary Rebecca (Rebecca after his mother Rebecca Faulkner and, perhaps, Mary after his father's mother), so we will take it as a working hypothesis, for the time being, that the maiden name of John Willson's or Rebecca Faulkner's maternal grandmother was Mary Sheen (or Neild), and that she was the daughter of John Sheen (or Henry Neild).

Our investigations have sought to determine whether the speculated Mary Sheen may have been the daughter of John Sheen [III], son of Sarah and John Sheen [II], of Darklane, Tattenhall. John Sheen [II] was the son of John Sheen [I] of Darklane, who first married a woman named Sarah, who died in 1709; he then married Elizabeth Manley in 1709. Darklane is quite near John Willson's Squarehouse Farm. John Sheen [II] was buried on 12 March 1746, and his will (dated 21 Sept 1745) was proved 10 days later.

The 1745 will of John Sheen [II] lists his wife, Sarah (still living), and children John Sheen [III], Joseph, Elizabeth [Watt], Daniel, Anne, Margaret, Martha and Mary. Mary, like all of her sisters except Elizabeth, is not listed as having a married name, but it's still possible that she was married; she would have to have married a Wilson by this time in order to give birth to our John Willson in 1740/1. She remains our best possibility for a connection to the Sheens of Tattenhall.



Damaged but legible marriage license for John Sheen of Malpas and Jane Broster of Tattenhall, 22 December 1694 in Tattenhall.

John Sheen [III] is known to have married Jane Broster of Tattenhall on 22 Nov 1694. Jane had married James Dewsbury the the year before, but he must have died

shortly thereafter; she is listed as a widow at the time of her marriage to John Sheen [III]. Jane Broster (born ca. 1675) was probably the daughter of Hugh Broster of Tattenhall (died 1690)—John Sheen [III] is listed as an appraiser on Hugh Broster's will. Hugh Broster was probably the son or grandson of Thomas Broster of Tattenhall (died 1586). Jane Broster Sheen, wife of John Sheen [III] and proposed mother of our hypothetical Mary Sheen, died in Darklane on 1 November 1709, perhaps in childbirth..

Mary Sheen, proposed daughter of John Sheen [III] and Jane Broster of Tattenhall, was probably born ca. 1700-1709. John Sheen [III] (his residence given variously as Broxton [Hundred], Malpas, Tattenhall, and Dark Lane, Broxton) died in 1763. His will is remarkably brief, listing only his daughter Mary (wife of *Samuel Bromfield*, not John Willson) and several children of Mary and an unnamed and presumed dead daughter who had married a man named Downes. No daughter at that time married to John Willson is mentioned, so we have a problem in making a connection to the known John Sheen families of Tattenhall. The daughters of John Sheen II and III are mentioned in wills in 1745 and 1763, and none are indicated as being the wife of a Willson in 1740. John Sheen III is listed in the Tattenhall church records as having served as a Churchwarden in 1696-1697 and again in 1724-1725. Unless it was Henry Neild's daughter who married our Willson, a connection must exist between John Willson (1740/1-1816) and a John Sheen, probably in the Tattenhall area.

Buried. Anno Dom: 1709
 Tho: Hlorjoy May this 3^d
 John son to Edward Wright May 5^o
 Anne Howollin of Buckley June 4th
 Rich: son to Tho: Critchley June 5^o
 Edward son to Tho: Critchley June 21^o
 John Paraz Parish Clerk July this 5th
 Phill: son to Jaml: Wingfield July 6^o
 Moses Dutton August: this 17th
 John son to Edward Wright August: 30th
 John Ratliff October this 20th
 → James wife to John Sheen of Darklane, No: 1.
 Rich: Pinnington Novemb: 10^o
 Rich: Whitfield sun December this 6th
 Bridgett Wright: widow? Down: this 18^o

Tattenhall Parish burial record for Jane Sheen, wife of John Sheen of Darklane, parents of John Sheen and grandparents of Catherine Sheen, wife of William Faulkner. (Nov. 1, 1709)

The best bet at this point is Mary, daughter of John Sheen II. However, the 1723 Oath of Allegiance enumerated no less than four other John Sheens who were heads of households in Cheshire that year: in Tilston, Barnhill (Malpas parish), Broxton (Malpas parish) and Bunbury. It seems very likely that “our” John Sheen, thought to have been born between 1660 and 1690, is one of these various John Sheens that we have identified, and it only remains to find the exact connection.

The following Sheen wills have thus far been examined:

Elizabeth Sheen of Tilstone Fearnall 1683
James Sheen of Tilstone Fearnall 1756
John Sheen of Broxton 1664
John Sheen of Broxton 1745
John Sheen of Broxton 1763
John Sheen of Tilstone Fearnall 1729
John Sheen of Tilstone Fearnall 1817
John Sheene of Broxton 1763
Moses Sheen of Tilstone Fearnall 1822
William Sheen of Tilstone Fearnall 1770

