

IjamsFAQ

An Ijams 'Frequently Asked Questions' document should help a new member, or newly curious member, of the Ijams family find some organized information about our shared history.

Responses to these frequently asked questions are from members of the family who have been in contact with other branches of the family from around the country and/or who are currently active in genealogical research.

Q. When someone asks me 'What kind of name is Ijams,' what should I say?

A. Welsh, most likely. Our family is very likely from the British Isles, probably from Wales or southwest England.

Q. Where was William Ijams, the immigrant, born, where did he live and where is he buried?

A. The Eyoms/Iiams/Iams/Ijams/Ijames family started on the North American continent with the immigration of unknown ancestors. He was born about 1640, spent most of his [life in Maryland](#) starting about 1665 and died on July 29, 1703. He is buried in All Hallows Parish in Anne Arundel Co., Maryland.

Q. What do we know about William's life in Maryland?

A. William married Elizabeth Cheney, daughter of Richard and Charity Cheney. They had six children as follows:

- [William IJAMS](#). Born 1670 in Anne Arundel County, Md and died in 1738.
- Elizabeth IJAMS. Born 1670 in Anne Arundel County, Md and died in Md.
- Richard IJAMS. Born 1673 in Anne Arundel County, Md.
- George IJAMS. Born 1676 in Anne Arundel County, Md.
- Susannah IJAMS. Born 1677 in Anne Arundel County, Md.
- Hester IJAMS. Born 1678 in Anne Arundel County, Md.

Richard Cheney, William's father-in-law, gave 100 acres of Cheney's Resolution, on the south side of South River in Anne Arundel County to his son-in-law and daughter, with "natural love and affection." This land came from the 400 acres originally granted to Richard Cheney on May 29, 1663. (JR)

Q. What hard evidence is there of our heritage in Europe?

A. There is none. A number of family members, some of whom are very competent genealogical researchers, have searched through the years for uncontested documentary evidence of where William was born, what his parents' names were, where he lived, when he crossed the Atlantic and so forth. To date, no such firm evidence of any connection to the European continent has been found. *There are no records showing William's entry into Maryland. No proof has been found of his financing his own passage, being transported by another or coming in as an indentured servant.*(RI)

I wish I could tell you some more positive information, but my great-grandmother was an Iams and I've done a lot of research on the early generations of this family. Unfortunately, most of the pre-1650 information on this family is unsubstantiated and almost certainly incorrect.

The connection between the family of William Iiams/Ijams/Eyams, the emigrant to Maryland, and the family of Robert "Ians" Innes and Grizel Stewart of Scotland is clearly wrong, although it continues to be perpetuated as proven fact by many members of the family (largely, I believe, because Grizel Stewart was the granddaughter of King James V of Scotland and people want to have a royal ancestor or two). Another claim, that William was the son of a fellow named Ion or Ians from Cornwall, is based on name similarity only, and to my knowledge there is no primary source documentation on it.

Sad to say, but at this time, the only thing I've seen which is reliably documented is from William Iiams on forward. Where William himself came from, and what his parents' names were, are unknown. It seems likely that he was Scottish or Welsh in origin, but even that is a guess.
(GB)

Q. What are the main theories of our connections to Europe?

A. *There are at least three theories about William's origins. One group of genealogists believes he was born 1652 in Stratton, Cornwall, England, and immigrated ca 1665 to Anne Arundel Co., Maryland. A leading proponent of this theory is Lois Hartman, who spent considerable time in England, and found a fragmented pedigree of the family whose name was spelled I'Ans. Most of these individuals lived in Cornwall and North Devon.*

The earliest record was that of David Ion date from 1370. The family came to prominence when a coat of arms was presented to Robert I'Ans of Whitstone by Elizabeth, her Master of Ordnance and Her Majesty's Privy Council in Ireland, whose family lineage dated to 1640. The original William is thought to be a son or grandson of this Robert I'Ans. (I think, but I may be confusing this part with the Scottish theory.)

Another contending history of William Iiams proposes a Scottish ancestry. These researchers believe Robert Innes of Scotland (House of Gordon) and Lady Grizel Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Murray were his parents. The Scottish version says William descended from King James I of Scotland (born in 1397). In this version William and many Catholic followers of King Charles I fled to Europe and on to America between 1645 and 1660, because of Oliver Cromwell's puritan Revolution.

And still the third explanation of his origins identifies him as Welsh, moving to Cornwall or London, and then to Maryland. Someone else says he immigrated first to Boston before moving down to Maryland.

I have no first hand knowledge of any of this. (PC)

Q. What are the main branches of the family and where are the concentrations around the country today?

A. *Very early Ijams (William Jr's line) settled in western Maryland and in Ohio in Fairfield Co. The Ohio group includes early relatives of the Judge Isaac Ijams who later settled in California and about whom such [wonderful stories \(1.4m pdf\)](#) have surfaced.*

George Ijams' descendants moved to North Carolina traveling through Kentucky & Tennessee. A few of these families moved to Missouri.

A large part of Richard Iiams family moved to Pennsylvania with some settling in Washington & Green Counties. Some of these families moved on to Ohio, Indiana and to the West. (RI)

Sizable groupings of Ijams/Iams/Ijames/etc. settled in Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, Illinois, Kansas, California and Arizona. [Here](#) is a partial look at Wm Ijams' children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Q. What can you tell me about the multiple spellings and pronunciations of our family name?

A. *Eyoms, Ijams, Iiams were some of the ways the early Iiams were known. Some early Iiames in Maryland, probably descendants of William and Richard, changed the spelling to 'Iames' then to 'Iams' then to 'Imes.' Richard's descendants kept the spelling as Iams except for a couple who said "we changed the spelling to Imes because the name of Iams was being confused as Jones."*

The Iiames spelling was maintained by some of the settlers in Washington Co., Pa. and continued on to Ohio with some going to Oregon. (RI)

The pronunciation of the "J" in Ijams stems from the time that Thomas Plummer Ijams (son of Captain John Ijams and Rebecca Jones) moved from Maryland to Ohio and ran for (and was elected) to public office. No one could spell his name when pronounced imes so he (and his three brothers who moved to Ohio with him) started pronouncing the "J" to help him get elected. Everyone I have met/emailed/spoken with who pronounces the "J" (i.e. EYE-jums) has been from this line. Thomas Plummer Ijams was elected to the Ohio State Assembly in 1809, 1810 and 1811 then elected to the Ohio State Senate in 1821 and 1822. (JR)

Q. Did any of the members of our family fight in the American Revolution or the Civil War?

A. Yes, quite a few. The Daughters of the American Revolution ([DAR](#)) organization has accepted the following family members as documented participants in the Revolution as of January 2010:

- John Ijams, SR. b. 1712, d. 1783 AA Co., MD
- John Ijams b.1725 d.1789 AA Co, MD
- Thomas Ijams b. 1745 d.1806 AA Co., MD
- Plummer Ijams Jr, b. 1748 d. 1795 AA Co., MD
- William Ijams b. 1748 d. 1816 Fairfield Co., OH
- John Iiams b. 1750 d. 1823 West Bethlehem Twp, PA
- John Ijams Jr. b.1755 d. 1823 Federick Co., MD
- Vachell Ijams b. 1759 d. 1833 Lauderdale Co., Alabama
- John Federick Ijams b. 1765 d. 1839 Grainger Co., TN (JR)

Q. Do we have any famous relatives?

A. William's daughter Elizabeth Iiams's second husband was Samuel Duvall. One of their daughters married a Tyler and President [Harry S. Truman](#) and Vice President [Richard Cheney](#) are from this line. The Duvall line of Susannah Iiams and Samuel Duvall are remotely connected to President [Barack Obama's](#) mother, Stanley Ann Dunham. The line of William's son William Iiams produced John Glenn, Senator and astronaut. (RI)

Q. What is the story behind the naming of Ijamsville, Maryland?

A. The short version is that William Jr's son Plummer Ijams, Sr's son Plummer Ijams, Jr allowed the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to go through his property near Frederick, Md., which included the creation a depot called Ijams' Mill. On June 22, 1832, a Post office was added, Plummer Ijams, Jr became the first postmaster and the name of the village was changed to Ijamsville. I recommend reading the book, "Ijamsville: The Story of a Country Village of Frederick County Maryland" c) 1951 by Charles E. Moylan. (JR)

Contributions from (RI) Roberta Iames, (GB) Gordon Bonnet, (PC) Peggy Cacciamatta, (JR) Jenny Redo

Managed by Donald S. Ijams of Tucson, Az. Family connection: Wm>WmJr>John>Isaac>OH>CA>AZ This is translated as Donald is related to 1) William the immigrant, 2) William Jr, 3) Capt. John and 4) Isaac, from Isaac's home in Ohio to subsequent generations in California and currently in Arizona.

Please direct corrections, additions or comments to: dsijams@gmail.com or 520-222-3824
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