

The Life and Ancestry of Francis Rogers Hiscock

of Stour Provost and Farnham in Dorset
who lived 1849 to 1903

By Mark Wareham, first edition 13th February 2013



Introduction

Francis Rogers Hiscock was my great x 2 grandfather on my paternal grandmother's side. My grandmother Violet Doris Hiscock was one of the daughters of Robert Hiscock, Francis' son. Robert Hiscock, who was at various times in his life a farm bailiff, farmer and thatcher, had nine children (three sons and six daughters), all of which were married and may have themselves had offspring. My grandmother Violet also had a lot of children and with the addition to the other numerous grandchildren of children of Francis Rogers Hiscock, it means that this life and history is probably of ancestral interest to a lot of people alive today or yet to be born.

Pictured below are my grandmother Violet and her father Robert at his house in Wimborne in Dorset in about 1980 and shortly before Robert died aged 89. Violet died aged 66 in 1985 and was buried in Shaftesbury.



This work is dedicated to the memory of my loving grandmother Violet.

The Life of Francis Rogers Hiscock *(1849 to 1903)*

Francis Rogers Hiscock (pictured on the front page in his early years) was baptised in the church at Stour Provost in Dorset on 30th December 1849. He was the youngest son of Edwin Hiscock and Anne Gray and he grew up on his father's farm at Lyde Hill in Stour Provost.

The first reference to Francis as an adult comes with his marriage to Emily Riman of Woodcutts, a hamlet near Sixpenny Handley in Dorset. Francis and Emily married in New York in the USA on the 29th December 1871. This is the only marriage of an ancestor of mine that I have found to



have taken place outside of the UK since medieval times, so why this unusual marriage place? We can only presume as to their motives but I think that there are probably two main reasons. Firstly Francis was the son of a wealthy and successful farmer, whilst Emily was the daughter of a poor labouring family. The Riman family (pictured left, with young Emily shown at the back on the right) had lived at Sixpenny Handley since the early 18th century and were farm labourers. Some of the members of the family had become involved in the agricultural Swing Riots in north Dorset in 1830. These riots were a reaction to growing poverty and unemployment amongst labouring people thanks to the introduction, they perceived, of mechanisation on farms by wealthy farmers. I would not be surprised if Francis' family did not look kindly upon his marriage to a bride from a family well below their own station in rural Dorset.

The second reason why they may have married abroad is that Emily was just seventeen years old at the time even though she declared that she was twenty years old on the marriage certificate

(see next page). It was unlawful at the time for people to marry before twenty one in England without the consent of the parents. I believe that in New York that the legal minimum age to marry, even in 1871, was eighteen. This strongly suggests that they had to travel abroad to marry because they could not gain parental consent and this may be both due to the different social backgrounds of the families as well as concern about the young age of Emily.

During their short time in the USA, Francis apparently worked in the timber business. According to my great aunt, Francis promised Emily that they would return to the UK to start a family and they must have done this before 1873 as their first child, Edwin Francis Hiscock, was born in October 1873 at Newtown, Farnham in Dorset and was baptised at Sixpenny Handley. It is interesting to note that Francis and Emily had returned to live in the Riman family's part of Dorset and not to the Stour area where Francis' father was still a farmer. This may show that there may have been some lingering issue between father and son about the marriage.

In 1876 Francis and Emily had a second child called Edith Emily born at Piddlehinton in mid-Dorset. At this time Francis was working as a farm bailiff. The third son Frank was born in Melbury Abbas and a child Laura May was baptised in 1879 in Farnham. By 1879 they had returned to live near Francis' father. There may have been a reconciliation, because by February that year Francis and Emily were running the Crown Inn pub in East Stour, not far from Lyde Hill.

To the Bureau of Records of Vital Statistics,
Health Department of the City of New York.

RETURN OF A MARRIAGE.

1. Full Name of HUSBAND *Francis N. Hiscock*
2. Place of Residence. *Emigrant*
3. Age next Birthday. *22* years.
4. _____
5. Occupation. *Farmer*
6. Place of Birth. *England*
7. Father's Name. *Edmond*
8. Mother's Maiden Name. *Anne Gray*
9. No. of Husband's Marriage. *one*
10. Full Name of WIFE. *Emily Himes*
Maiden Name, if a Widow. _____
11. Place of Residence. *Emigrants*
12. Age next Birthday. *20* years.
13. _____
14. Place of Birth. *England*
15. Father's Name. *James*
16. Mother's Maiden Name. *Sarah A. Chown*
17. No. of Wife's Marriage. *one*

N. B.—At Nos. 4 and 13 state if Colored; If other races, specify what. At Nos. 9 and 17 state whether 1st, 2d, 3d, &c., Marriage of each.

New York, *Dec 29* 1871

We, the Husband and Wife named in the above Certificate, hereby Certify that the information given is correct, to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Francis N. Hiscock (Husband.)
Emily Himes (Wife.)

Signed in presence of *A. W. Blodgett*
and _____

Francis' time as a landlord does not appear to have lasted a long time, the incidents in the news cutting below may show why. In February 1879 (*Western Gazette*) Francis had a run in with the local law when he assaulted a police constable who was trying to arrest one of his customers for drunkenness.

the case, and defendant was fined 10s and costs; if it was hard labour in default.—Edward Francis, alias Street, was summoned for being drunk, at East Stour, on the 25th of January. Mr. Davies defended.—P.C. Tom Upward said on the 25th January, he was on duty at East Stour, about 10 o'clock at night. He saw a man come out of the Crown Inn, and fall down. Another man lifted him up, but, as he would not walk let him fall again. Witness then went to lift the man up, and found it was the defendant, who was drunk.—Elisha Maidment and William Stone corroborated the evidence of the constable.—For the defence, it was urged that the defendant was not drunk, but that he hitched his foot just as he got out of the door, and fell, and that the fall stunned him.—John Austin, William Austin, and Emily Hiscock (wife of the landlord) gave evidence in support of this view of the matter.—Defendant, who had been many times convicted of drunkenness, was fined 10s and costs.

ASSAULTING THE POLICE.—Francis Rogers Hiscock, landlord of the Crown Inn, East Stour, was summoned for assaulting P.C. Upward, while in the execution of his duty, at East Stour, on the 25th January.—This case arose out of the last.—Mr. Davies defended.—P.C. Upward said that on the 25th January, about 10 o'clock at night, he was on duty at East Stour. He went to a man who was drunk, and lifted him up from the ground.—The defendant came to him, and he (witness) complained of the man being so drunk. Defendant began cursing and swearing, and said he would have his jacket off if he (witness) did not get off his premises. Defendant took hold of him by the nose and face, and tried to put him off the premises. Just as they got off, they both fell down. He got on the top of the defendant, and liberated himself, and went into the road.—Defendant said if he came on his premises again he would beat his brains out.—After cross-examining the constable, Mr. Davies pleaded guilty on behalf of his client, and a fine of £2 and costs was inflicted.

In June that year some beer was stolen from him. Francis was still in East Stour in December 1879 when he was selling some land for the upkeep of animals. But by 1880 he had left the pub trade and had returned to farming. He took out the tenancy of Rookery Farm in Farnham, not far from Emily's family home at Sixpenny Handley.

Rookery Farm, pictured below, was the property of General Pitt Rivers of the Larmer Tree at Farnham. The General is remembered as being the father of modern archaeology. In 1891 Francis' son Frank discovered some flints on the farm that ended up in the Pitt Rivers collection now in a museum at Oxford and previously located in the village of Farnham.

Rookery Farm was probably diverse with a mixture of crops and possibly, like today, keeping sheep. It also had a large wood and Francis appears to have kept in with the timber trade. He is pictured below next to a

large tree trunk and with his team of workers and horses outside of a house near Wimborne, possibly after having transported the timber from the Pitt Rivers estate.

The years 1880 till 1882 appear to have been successful ones from Francis and Emily. He was in control of his rent obligations to his landlord and was paying about £127 a year. He is in the 1881 census at Rookery holding



a farm of 166 acres employing three men and one boy.

In 1882 they had their fourth child Willow Micah baptised at Farnham.

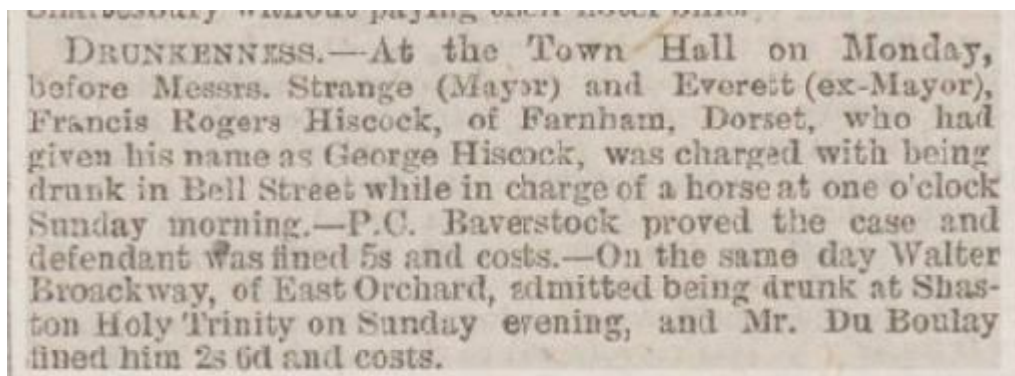
In 1883 things appear to have taken a turn for the worse for Francis and he started to struggle to meet his rent. In January 1883 he significantly



reduced the size of his holding at Rookery and he was forced to put a lot of his farming stock and equipment up for sale by auction. His rent then fell to about £42 a year, about a third of the level that it used to be.

In September 1883 Francis and Emily had their fifth child, Ivor, baptised at Farnham.

The difficult time that Francis had during this period may have affected his health. In December 1882 Francis appeared before a town court in Shaftesbury for drunkenness (*clipping right, Western Gazette*).



The period 1884 to 1890 appear more settled and Francis was again on top of his rent to Pitt Rivers. In

1887 and 1890 they added to their family with the birth of son Perry Arthur and daughter Sarah.

Francis and Emily do not appear to have subscribed to formal education for their children. The log books for the school at Tollard Royal in Wiltshire (probably closer to the farm than Farnham school) shows that their children were poor attendees and not high achievers academically. In 1887 son Edwin is shown as having attended school for just twelve sessions out of one hundred and eight. In 1890 daughter Laura is recorded as being a poor attendee but also being “subject to fits and is very deficient”. In 1891 Frank was taken off the register as despite the school managers writing to Francis and Emily a number of time, he was not attending. In June 1895 it is recorded that “The Hiscocks have attended better this week as Mistress warned them that if they came so badly, she would be forced to put them down into lower classes. Mistress has found it necessary to put Louisa Alner and Percy Hiscock on the infant register this quarter as they are unable to do the Standard I work owing to ill health and consequent bad attendance”. In July 1895 Ivor (aged just twelve) is not at school because “his father wants him”, no doubt work on the farm, and the school managers complain they were powerless to do anything because their school was in Wiltshire whilst the father lives in Dorset. Finally in October 1898 it is recorded that Perry and Sarah Hiscock have left to attend the school in Farnham but that they were “... very irregular here and quite behind the other children of their age”.

In May 1891 the last child of Francis and Emily, Robert Samuel, was born at Farnham.

The year 1893 appears to have been a disaster for Francis. He made no rent payment to Pitt Rivers and it is not clear why. He obviously did not have the money but whether this was due to some problem on the farm, personal financial issues or sickness is not clear. From this year until Francis was to die, he was in arrears to Pitt Rivers and struggled to catch up on these rent demands. However Francis did continue as a tenant on Rookery and there is evidence that life continued normally.

In late 1894 Francis and Emily's second child Edith married and this was reported in the Southern Times newspaper in January 1895 –

“HARRIS-HISCOCK.- Dec. 29, at Tollard Royal, by the Rev. *- H. WATERFALL, Charles, fourth son of Mr. Henry Harris, of the Manor House, Farnham, to Edith Emily Hiscock eldest daughter of, Mr. F. R. Hiscock, of the Rookery Farm, Farnham”

Then in late 1895 their eldest son Edwin married Edith Emma Harris (who was born in Exeter in Devon) and this was reported in the Western Gazette –

“Tollard Royal - Marriage of Mr Hiscock and Miss Harris - a marriage in which much local interest was evinced was that of Mr E Hiscock of Rookery Farm and Miss E Harris of Rushmore solemnised in the parish church on Wednesday. A large congregation assembled in the church to witness the ceremony which was performed by Rev W Waterfall. The brides dress was an electric blue, trimmed with cream silk. She carried a handsome bouquet and was attended by four bridesmaids - Miss F Harris (sister), Miss E Batten and the Misses M and S Harris (sisters of the bridegroom).”

In April 1897 Francis and Emily attended the seventeenth birthday of his landlord General Piit Rivers at the Larmer Tree. Unfortunately the General was not able to make the party due to illness and his son was there in his place.

The Piit Rivers family regularly held events at the Larmer Tree grounds and being a close neighbour, with the Rookery Farm being located next to the main road to the house, no doubt attended them but also assisted. Francis is given credit for making his land available for stabling of horses attending a race and sporting event in September 1898 and for accommodating horses and conveyances for a fete in September 1899.

In 1898 Francis's son Frank married Elizabeth Allen.

Francis appears to have become involved in local administration and in September 1898 he is recorded as being the overseer of polling in the election of that year in Farnham, although he and his colleagues were reprimanded for not providing the Conservative candidate with appropriate information that he had requested and which had been given to the 'Radical' (Liberal) candidate. In March 1899 Francis had become Chairman of the parish council at Farnham, no doubt he had also been on the parish as a councillor for many years before being elected as Chairman.

In March 1900 Francis' son Willow (aged seven or eight) was taken before petty sessions with two friends for throwing stones and assaulting a local man near the stores in Farnham. Willow's younger brother, Ivor, gave testimony in his defence. The case was however dismissed as the witness could not swear as to the identity of the young assailants.

In April 1900 Francis and Emily attended the funeral of his cousin William Hiscock at East Stour.

The picture on the right of Francis and Emily, probably taken in Blandford, was probably taken in about 1900.

On 16th August 1903 Francis Rogers Hiscock died, probably as the result of a tragic accident when he was kicked in the head by one of the horses in his farm. His death certificate records



“Francis Rogers Hiscock, male, 53 years, farmer, cause - cerebral thrombosis, cerebral softening, convulsions & coma, informant - F Hiscock, son, Yorkshire”

Francis was buried in the churchyard at Farnham.

A sad and sudden end to Francis' life and his wife Emily must have been devastated. Emily was left with a farm and arrears of rent. She had about five children at home, although two were about twenty years old and could help her in this difficult situation. It isn't clear when Emily left Rookery Farm but by 1911 she was living with her son Perry Hiscock and daughter Laura May Hiscock (both unmarried) at Newton, Sturminster Marshall in Dorset. Perry was working as a carter on a farm. Emily died on 17th May 1823 aged 68, whilst living at number 5, West Gomeldon near Salisbury in Wiltshire. She was buried in Farnham with her husband Francis and their arched gravestone is pictured in the foreground of the church below. I am pictured at the far bottom paying respect to my ancestors in 2010.



The gravestone at Farnham also records two of Francis and Emily's grandsons who both died in World War One in France, aged 19 – Francis (no doubt named

after his grandfather) George and William James Harris (they are pictured below).

Of Francis and Emily's other children –

- Ivor was to marry Sarah Bacombe at Blandford in 1905.
- Perry married a woman called Jane after 1911.
- Sarah married William Kimber.
- My great grandfather Robert married Ethel Sophia Kelly at Tollard Royal in 1910.



Some Pictures of the children of Francis and Emily Hiscock

Edwin and Emily Hiscock



Charles and Edith (nee Hiscock) Harris



Ivor Hiscock and family



Perry Hiscock



William and Sarah (nee Hiscock) Kimber



Robert Hiscock and, separate, his wife Ethel Sophia) and below Robert and Ethel Sophia at a family wedding at Cann (my grandmother Violet pictured front left foreground)



A copy of Robert and Sophia's wedding certificate (with reference to Robert's deceased father) –

1910		Marriage solemnized at <i>Parish Church</i>			in the <i>Parish</i>			
		of <i>Tollard Royal</i>			in the County of <i>Wilts</i>			
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
238	August 28 th 1910	Robert Samuel Hiscock	19	Bachelor	Foreman	Colchill Street	Francis Rogers Hiscock	Farmer
		Ethel Sophia Kelly	19	Spinster	—	Tollard Royal	James Kelly	Labourer
Married in the <i>Parish Church</i> according to the rites and ceremonies of the <i>Church of England</i> by <i>Charles Morgan Kelly</i> or after <i>Banns</i> by me, <i>Rowland John Palmer Hill</i> Rector.								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>Robert Samuel Hiscock</i> <i>Ethel Sophia Kelly</i>		in the presence of us,		<i>Flora Ann Elliott</i>		

Edwin Hiscock
(1821 to 1889)

Edwin was baptised, the youngest child of Edward and Edith Hiscock, at East Stour Church (see below) on 21st October 1821. He grew up on his father's farm at Hunger Hill which is between Gillingham and East Stour and when his father died young in 1830 his mother Edith took over the farm and continued to run it with her young family until she died in 1841. Edwin's older unmarried sister Jane Hiscock took over as head of the farm at Hunger (or Hungry) Hill and she was a dairywoman with Edwin being recorded in the census that year as being nineteen years old and a farmer.



Edwin Hiscock married Anne Gray at East Stour in Dorset in 1843. Anne Gray was the daughter of **Francis Rogers Gray** (see later) and his wife Hannah Lawrence and she was baptised at St John the Baptist church in Tisbury (pictured right) on 18th June 1816. Their marriage record is shown below –

1843 Marriage solemnized by <u>James</u> in the Parish of <u>East Stour</u> in the County of <u>Dorset</u> .								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
30	1843	Edwin Hiscock	Full age	Single	Farmer	East Stour	Edward Hiscock	Farmer
		Anne Gray	Full age	Single	—	East Stour	Francis Rogers Gray	Farmer

MARRIED in the Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Catholic Church by me, J. Johnson

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Edwin Hiscock in the Presence of us, Jasper Gray and Martha Hiscock

Some time between 1841 and 1843 Edwin moved from Hunger Hill to take over the farm at Lyde Hill in the parish of Stour Provost. In 1845 Edwin Hiscock is first recorded as being a trustee of the school at Stour Provost, which is opposite Lyde Hill Farm and his children, including Francis, almost certainly went to school here. Edwin was to continue to have close links with the school for the rest of his life.



In 1844 Edwin and Anne baptised their first son Elijah Edwin at Stour Provost. Daughter Sarah Ann followed in 1846 and then Eliza Jane in 1848. Son Francis was born in 1849.

In 1851 Edwin held 100 acres at Lyde Hill Farm and was employing three men. In 1861 he had increased his holding to 130 acres and was employing three men and one boy.

Edwin and Anne's last child Edith Hannah was born in 1855 and baptised at Stour Provost. In the election of 1857 Edwin was entitled to vote as a copyhold tenant.

Edwin evidently was a good entertainer and at festive entertainments at East Stour in December 1863 the local newspaper (Western Gazette) recorded –

“About forty sat down to a sumptuous supper and did ample justice to the viands. The cloth being removed, the band played several pieces very admirably after which singing and dancing became the order of the evening. Messrs Hiscock, Davis and Stone added to the pleasure of the evening by signing interesting songs, which were loudly encouraged especially Mr Hiscock's "couldn't help it". All passed off well and everyone enjoyed themselves: the party broke up at an early hour, Mr Robert David proposing "three cheers for the East Stower Band which was loudly responded to.”

Between 1861 and 1865 Edwin bought nearby Woodville Cottage, pictured right.

In about 1865 Edwin also bought the lease of Chequers Farm at Stour Provost and Edwin continued to prosper. By 1871 he was now holding 168 acres of land and employing four men and three boys.



In 1866 Edwin's oldest son married Lucy Snook at Stour Provost. In 1870 and 1871 there were other marriages of Edwin's children –

- 1870 Eliza Jane married John Metyard in Dorchester
- In 1871 Francis Rogers married Emily Riman in New York and also that year Sarah Ann married David King.

Edwin was evidently active in the local Conservative Party and in 1873 he was at the head of the table in hosting a dinner celebrating the election of Tory MP Benett-Standford (MP for Shaftesbury from 1871 till 1880).

In about 1875 Edwin retired as a farmer and passed the farm business to his eldest son Elijah Hiscock, who then held Lyde Hill, Chequer and Angel Farms. In 1881 Edwin is recorded as living as a retired farmer aged 59 at Woodville Cottage.

In May 1882 there were celebrations of the anniversary of the local friendly Society and en-route to the Church the East Stour Village Band stopped to play outside of both Lyde Hill Farm and Woodville Cottage, no doubt as a mark of respect to the Hiscock farmers there who supported local charity. After dinner and speeches the club celebration moved to Duncliffe Hill and in a field adjoining the College Arms pub the young people of the area danced and made merry.

In 1884 Edwin's daughter Edith Hannah married John Snook of Seneca, Illinois (second son of William Snook of Stour Provost) at the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York. Maybe there was a connection to New York here between Edith's marriage and that of her older brother in New York in 1871?

Anne died in 1880 aged 59 and Edwin died at Stour Provost (leaving a will with an estate of about £2600) and was buried at Christ Church, East Stour on 1st October 1889. Edwin and Anne's tombstone is still visible in the west of churchyard today (pictured below), even though the lettering has faded away completely in recent years. In 1890 Edwin's family sold his property and Woodville Cottage and children Elijah, Francis and Edith benefited from that sale.



Edward Hiscock (1781 to 1830)

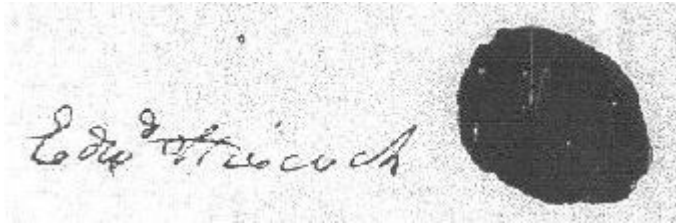
Edward was baptised at Kington Magna in Dorset, son of Lazarus and Elizabeth Hiscock, and in 1799 he was living in the parish of Marston Magna when the militia list was taken recording him as being a 'labourer' and 5' 5" tall. In 1800, whilst living at Margaret Marsh in Dorset, he married Edith Andrews at Fontmell Magna (little is so far known about the ancestry of Edith and her Andrews family line). Edward and Edith had eight children, six sons and two daughters –

- James Green was baptised in 1800 at Margaret Marsh, he married Elizabeth Jup at Mere in Wiltshire in 1826,
- William was baptised at Fontmell Magna in 1802, he married Elizabeth Read at Gillingham in 1833,
- Edward was baptised at Fontmell Magna in 1804, he married Elizabeth Cox at Gillingham in 1837,
- John was baptised at Margaret Marsh in 1807, he married Eliza Parham at Compton Abbas in 1843,
- Elijah was baptised at Fontmell Magna in 1810, he married Sarah Gray at East Stour in 1838,
- Elizabeth Edith was baptised at Margaret Marsh in 1814, she married John Crop at East Stour in 1836,
- Eliza Jane was baptised at East Stour in 1819, she married Charles Morgan in 1843,
- Edwin was baptised at East Stour in 1821 (see above).

In 1806 Edward was a major beneficiary in will of his cousin James Green, who was a farmer at Hartgrove in Fontmell Magna and he inherited James' copyhold estate at Stour Provost called 'Willetts' as well as other land. The fact that Edward Hiscock and James Green must have been close friends as well as cousins is also shown in the fact that Edward chose the name James Green Hiscock for his eldest son.

Between 1801 and 1816 Edward is recorded as being a farmer at Hartgrove, probably as a result of his inheritance from James Green. Then in 1817 Edward moved to take the tenancy of Hunger Hill farm in East Stour (pictured right and below), his landlord being a Mr John Rogers (see later). Between 1825 and 1830 Edward was one of the overseers of the poor in East Stour parish.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Edward Hiscock". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, textured paper. To the right of the signature is a large, dark, circular ink blot or smudge.

Edward died young at just 50 years old in 1830. His will (signature shown left) left all of his property to wife Edith whilst she continued to be alive. Then when she dies he ordered that his property be equally divided between his children apart from sons James Green and

William Hiscock who received £10 at the time of his death (James and William had already been provided for in his cousin James Green's will in 1806). See the tithe map (coloured red) on page 21 which shows the land held by Edward's daughter in Edith Hiscock's name at East Stour in 1842 (just after she had died). Edith was buried at East Stour on 15th January 1841 aged 58.

Lazarus Hiscock
(1725 to 1795)

Lazarus was baptised at Tisbury on 8th October 1725 to William and Mary Hiscock. In 1749 Lazarus, whilst living at Motcombe in Dorset, married his first wife Ann Hunt at Stour Provost. Lazarus and Ann had four children, only one of which survived past infancy –

- Mary was born about 1750 and baptised at Stour Provost in 1754, she married John Mead at East Stour in 1770,
- Susannah was born about 1752 but was buried at Stour Provost the same year,
- a second Susannah who was baptised at Stour Provost in 1753 but was buried there the same year,
- and Anne who was baptised at East Stour in 1756 but was buried there in 1764.

Lazarus' wife Anne died in 1776 and was buried at East Stour.

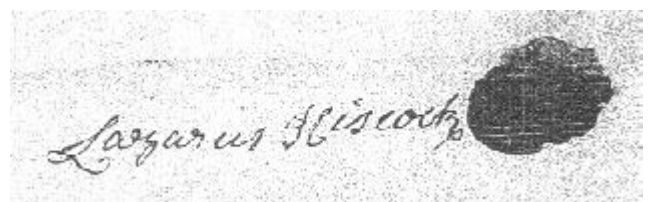
On 25th July 1778 52 year old Lazarus married his second wife, 24 year old Elizabeth King (daughter of Robert and Martha King of Madjeston in Gillingham), at Gillingham in Dorset. Lazarus was living at Bleet Farm in Gillingham (pictured below). I think that Lazarus remained at Bleet until about 1782 when he moved back to Stour Provost.



Lazarus and Elizabeth had five children –

- William was baptised at Gillingham in 1779 (he married Hannah Cossen at Iwerne Minster in 1803),
- Edward was baptised at Kington Magna in 1781 (see above),
- John was baptised at Stour Provost in 1782 and was buried there in 1785.
- James was baptised at Stour Provost in 1785 and was buried at East Stour in 1796.
- Martha was baptised at Stour Provost in 1786, she married John Barnes at Stour Provost in 1815.

Lazarus wrote his will in 1783 (signature shown right) and in it he left all his property to his new wife Elizabeth whilst she remained alive. When she died he willed that the property be split equally between his sons William and Edward. He died in 1795 at Stour Provost and was buried on 29th July at East Stour. Wife Elizabeth lived to 70 and was buried on 1st December 1825 at East Stour.



William Hiscock **(1689 to 1765)**

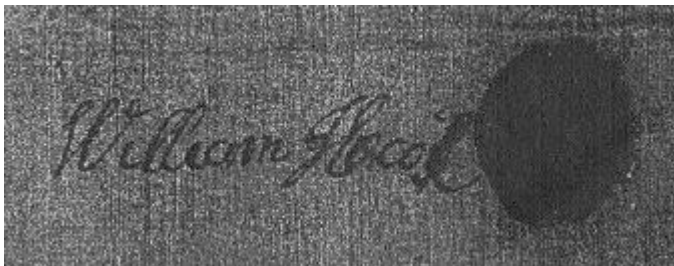
William was baptised on 26th May 1689 at Gillingham in Dorset, son of William and Alice Hiscock. On 14th September 1720 William married Mary Turner, when both were living at Tisbury in Wiltshire, at both Tisbury and Salisbury Cathedral. It was certainly an unusual marriage with it being recorded first at the main cathedral church in the county at Salisbury and at the local parish church where they lived.

Mary's Turner family ancestry, as far as I can trace it, goes back eight generations to a John Turner who was a husbandman (farmer) in Tisbury and who left a will in 1552.

William and Mary had the following children –

- Martha was born in about 1723, she married William Street at Stour Provost in 1743,
- Lazarus was baptised at Tisbury in 1725 (see above),
- Susanna was born in about 1730, she married William Francis at Holy Trinity in Shaftesbury in 1749,
- Mary was born in about 1730, she married Benjamin Crabb in about 1760,
- William was born about 1730, he married Susanna Hunt at Stour Provost in 1756.

William's movements during his life and his property and holding are not completely clear. Not enough evidence survives from the 18th century to be able to trace his life. It appears that he did live in Tisbury before and after his marriage to Mary but that some time he moved back to the Gillingham area, when his children started to marry in north Dorset.



William's wife Mary died in 1762 in Motcombe and was buried at East Stour. William also died at Motcombe and was buried at East Stour on 1st May 1765. William left a will (signature left) and he left most of his property to his youngest son William with small amounts of money to his son Lazarus and son-in-laws William Street and William Francis.

Previous Hiscocks

William Hiscock was baptised at the church at Gillingham (pictured below) in 1663, he married Alice Hall in Gillingham in 1686 and he was buried in Gillingham in 1728. I can find no documentary evidence about his life or occupation but I assume that he was a husbandman (name at the time for a farmer). Alice Hall is interesting because her father (or possibly grandfather) Robert Hall of Gillingham was buried at Bishops Cannings in Wiltshire on 22nd March 1673 and his burial record says –

“Robert Hall of Gillingham in Dorset found dead on the downs of Horton 17th March and buried”

What on earth could have led Robert Hall to be so far away from home and to have died in such a remote place? Another burial in 1676 in Bishops Cannings may suggest at the cause



as someone was “killed of cold on Horton”, it being a desolate and exposed area of countryside. It is very probably that, unless he were murdered, that Robert hall also succumbed to the cold weather on these downs whilst travelling for business, either as a carter or possible driving cattle or sheep across country.

William’s father, John Hiscock, was a husbandman and was baptised in Gillingham in 1628, married Alice Alford (daughter of Gilbert Alford, a carpenter of Newbury in Gillingham) at Gillingham in 1658 and was buried at Gillingham in 1708.

John’s father, William Hiscock, was baptised at Mere in Wiltshire in 1574, married Mary Tristram (a servant of Richard Greene, gentleman) at Gillingham in 1626 and was buried at Gillingham in 1636.

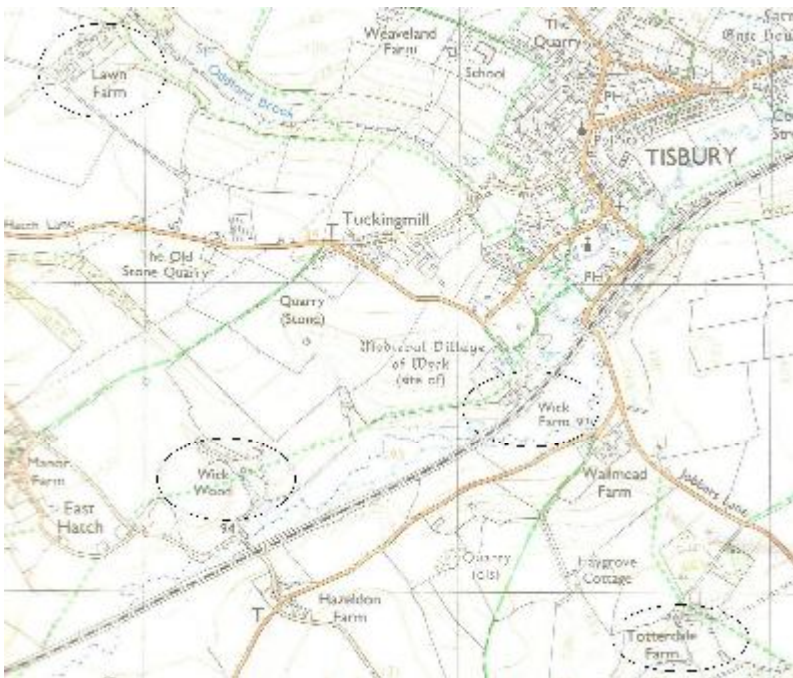
William’s father John Hiscock was born in about 1550, he married Joanne Forward at Mere in 1570 and was buried at Mere in 1608.

John’s father Thomas Hiscock was born in about 1520 and was buried in 1587 in Gillingham. In the Tudor muster lists of 1539/42 Thomas ‘Hyscotte’ (probably Thomas Hiscock) was recorded as being an archer and having possession of a bow and twelve arrows. This was of course a time when it was mandatory for men in England to be trained in fighting in case they were called upon to fight for their King and before standing armies existed. Archery was a particular skill that common men and yeomanry were encouraged to undertake and the value of the bow and arrow on the medieval battlefield was demonstrable. In the Tudor subsidy roll of 1545 (an old form of tax list) Thomas “Hyscoke” is listed as being at Gillingham.

The early 16th century is as far as I can currently get back to on this Hiscock male line. I do not know where the Hiscock’s come from before this although we know that the origin of the name is a 'son of Richard', from a pet form of the name Richard - Hich or Hitch – and is particularly common in 13th century Cheshire. We don’t know who this Richard was or whether different families adopted the name ‘Hiscock’ when it became compulsory to have a family surname in the period of King Henry VIII and so maybe Thomas who lived in Gillingham in about 1540 (when King Henry VIII was still on the throne) was the first Thomas, son of Richard, or Thomas ‘Hiscock’?

Francis Rogers Gray (1789 to 1866)

Francis Rogers Gray (father of Anne who married Edwin Hiscock) was baptised at Tisbury church on 18th January 1789. The parish register records him as being the illegitimate son of Dinah Gray and his father's name is not mentioned. I believe that there is a clear indication as to who his father was in the use of the second name 'Rogers'. Dinah was the servant of the Rogers family of Wickwood farm in Tisbury and she was unmarried and 31 years old when she conceived her child. In my experience from extensive family history research, when parents named children in the 18th and 19th century it was highly unusual for a second name to be recorded in the parish register and where it is, it is often a clue about the father's surname. It was also very uncommon for two names to be adopted for a child which have a direct reference to the mother's employer, if it wasn't connected to parentage. It really would not have been the 'done thing' for there to be an implicit suggestion about a child's parentage with the use of the names 'Francis' and 'Rogers' without there being a direct connection to the child's background. The rest of this ancestral story of the Rogers line relies on this link but I am convinced of its authenticity even if there is no absolute proof.



The Rogers name was further passed on from Francis Rogers Gray to Francis Rogers Hiscock. No doubt because of a close bond between Anne Gray and her father Francis and I think that it is also likely because of the Rogers family ancestry. There is no documentary proof and there was no 'bastardy bond' (where the parish overseers of the poor would have sought recompense from the father for having to look after the mother and her young child) recording the parentage of Francis Rogers Gray. But I think that the lack of any such bond is actually further evidence of parentage because Dinah Gray probably did not have to call on the parish poor law for

assistance. Instead of having to seek such relief I think that it is fairly certain that she and her child were supported by the Rogers family and that she remained in their employ until in June 1793 when she was married to another local farmer, Alexander Godwin.

Francis Rogers Gray married Hannah Lawrence at St Michael's Church (pictured right) at Mere in Wiltshire on 16th October 1810. They were both aged 21.

Hannah's Lawrence family ancestry, as far as I can trace it, goes back about eight generations in Mere to a Thomas Lawrence who left a will in 1593.

The first reference to Francis' employment is in the baptisms of their children and he is noted as being a 'dairyman' at 'Toterdale'. This is almost certainly Totterdale Farm which is shown on the map above to the south east of Tisbury. Wickwood and Wick farms are also

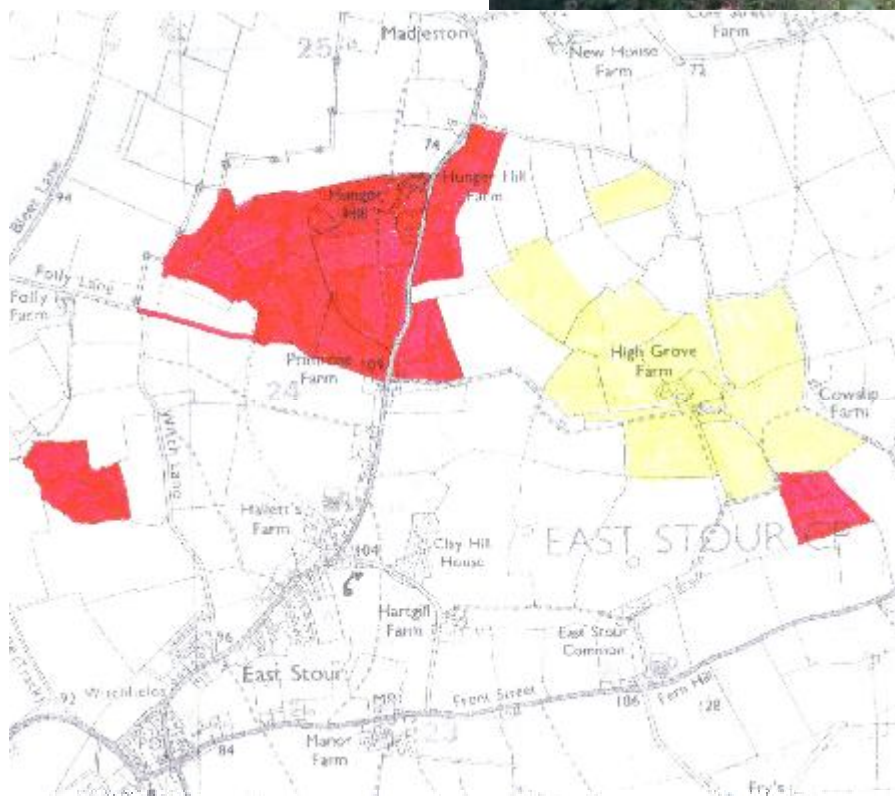


highlighted - Wickwood Farm was where Francis' mother worked and where Francis was probably born and Wick Farm had links to the Rogers family in the 18th century, as we shall see. Also highlighted on the map in the top left is Lawn Farm where Francis grew up from age four after his mother married the farmer Godwin.

Francis and Hannah Gray had the following children - 1811 **Dinah**, 1813 Jasper, 1814 Sarah, 1816 Elizabeth, 1818 **Nicholas** and in 1820 Anne. Francis and Hannah probably used the names of both his father and mother in naming their children as shown in bold and I shall speculate as to the connection to Nicholas Rogers senior in due course. Sadly young Nicholas, who was born in 1818, died aged just ten in 1829. He was buried in the churchyard in Tisbury.

Maybe because of their loss, or possibly some other reason, in about 1830 Francis and his family moved from Tisbury in Wiltshire to East Stour in Dorset and he took on the tenancy of High Grove Farm (pictured below). This was quite a step up for Francis and it may have been his first step into the responsibility of having his own farm as in his younger years he was probably in employment as a dairyman. Francis may well have been aided by his stepfather Alex Godwin who passed away in 1827, but he may also have been helped by his family link to the Rogers family of Tisbury. The Rogers family had also improved their social status through marriage and good fortune in farming and had become gentry. This was in fact a return to a tier of social class that the Rogers family had enjoyed in previous generations, as we shall see later. The Rogers family owned some land in East Stour and I think that this connection helped Francis Rogers Gray buy the lease of High Grove Farm in Dorset.

In 1831 Francis Rogers Gray was a freeholder. This freehold of a farm enabled him to vote and his is listed in the register of electors in the Shaftesbury division of north Dorset.



In 1832 Francis is listed as a yeoman farmer and as being eligible to serve on juries. So Francis was now at quite a respectable station in rural society, after being born an illegitimate son of a serving woman he was now a freeholding farmer on a decent sized farm. This is clearly a tale of great success. No doubt it was well earned through hard work and labour as a dairyman and working on a farm in his 20's, but I also suspect that he was helped by his family link to the well off Rogers family and, if so, this suggests that they knew very well that he was a brother and cousin and helped him in his progress in life.

In the 1841 census Francis is shown as still residing at High Grove Farm. He is shown living with his daughter Anne aged 20 and an Ellen Lush, almost certainly a family servant. In the cottage nearby is the labouring Brown family, probably in Francis' employ.

In 1842 the tithe register of East Stour (shown on the previous page) shows Francis as holding almost 100 acres of land, which is shown in yellow on the map. The land shown in red was held by Edith Hiscock, Edwin Hiscock's mother, who was a tenant to Francis' relative John Rogers and also tenants to John Boys Tucker. Francis' daughter Anne Gray later married Edwin's son Francis Rogers Hiscock.

In 1844 Francis' wife Hannah died and she was buried at East Stour.

In the 1851 census Francis Rogers Gray is shown aged 62 and holding 97 acres of land as a farmer. He is employing four labourers. Also listed with him are his grandchildren, Sarah Ann White (a servant) aged 15, Ellen Hiscock (a scholar) aged 9 and Francis Rogers Hiscock aged 1.

1857 Francis is again shown on a register of electors as being a freeholder in the area.

By 1861 Francis had retired. He is shown in the census as living at a cottage near 'Stower' Farm at East Stour.

Francis died in 1866 and was buried at East Stour, but there is no record of where the grave was located. The gravestone still survives, though it has been moved to rest on the wall near to the entrance to the churchyard. It is pictured right and is the stone on the left. The stone on the right is the memorial to Francis' grandson, son of his son Jasper Gray, who was also a farmer in the area.



The memorial, though well worn by time, is still fairly legible and reads –

'to the memory of Hannah wife of Francis Rogers Gray died April 20th 1841, aged 61

"a Tender Mother and Wife sincere,
To him from this world of sorrow ...
To yonder realms of bliss we hope she is gone,
To... the merits of God's only Son."

and to Nicholas their son died Nov 26th 1829 aged 11 buried churchyard of Tisbury,
Wiltshire

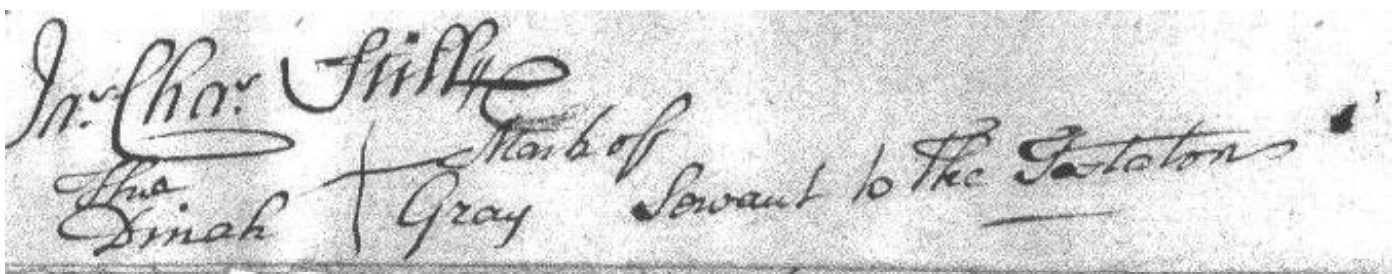
also to the memory of Francis Rogers Gray who died May 31st 1866, aged 77 years'

Dinah Gray
(1757 to 1834)

Francis' mother Dinah was baptised at Mere in 1757 to Thomas and Rose Gray. Thomas was a labourer his ancestry can be traced back to an Adrian Gray who was buried at Mere in 1697. The Gray family of Mere appear to have been poor. Rose was baptised in 1734 to John and Jane Case just over the border in Kilmington in Somerset. Thomas and Rose Gray both worked for the Merryweather family, who were farmers at Mere.

It isn't recorded exactly when Dinah went to work for the Rogers family at Wickwood Farm but she was not married by aged 31, when she conceived Francis Rogers Gray. It is not clear whether her choice of the name 'Francis' for her child indicates that her employer Francis Rogers senior was the culprit, however he was age 73 at the time and was still married. It is not out of the question of course but if it isn't Francis then it was more likely that it was one his younger sons who were roughly the same age as Dinah. If that was the case then I think that the most likely suspect is Nicholas Rogers who was born in 1761. It is unlikely to have been the elder son John Rogers because he had married in 1783 and although he can't be ruled out completely, the name 'John' does not appear as one of Francis Rogers Gray's later children and in this era sons often named children after their parents or grandparents. It was also not likely to have been the second son, Francis Rogers junior, because he had died earlier in 1783 as is confirmed by a memorial at Tisbury churchyard. Nicholas is most probable candidate as father of Francis Rogers Gray because he would have been the right age to have become involved with Dinah, he being 27 years old at the time, and I also have found no reference of Nicholas marrying before 1789. Francis also later named one of his children 'Nicholas' and that was not a name which appeared on his wife Hannah's side of the family. Nicholas Rogers also held land at East Stour in later life and in 1804 he was involved in an exchange for certain plots of this land. I think that it is more than just coincidence that Francis Rogers Gray, Nicholas' possible illegitimate son, became a freeholding farmer at East Stour where Nicholas also had had an interest. It is also more than coincidence I think that both of the plots of land exchanged in 1804 (numbers 154 and 179 in the legers) are ones attached to High Grove Farm in East Stour and exactly the same ones that Francis Rogers Gray held from about 1830.

In 1787 Dinah's employer Francis Rogers made his will and she acted as a witness to it. I think that this shows that she was close to Francis Rogers senior and a trusted servant. She was not named as a beneficiary in the will but probably received some recompense for appearing as a witness. Dinah could not write and signed with her mark of a cross as shown below from the original copy of the will held in the Wiltshire Archives.



In. Char. 1787
Dinah Gray
Witness to the Testator

Even though Francis Rogers senior died in early 1789, the will was not proven until 1792. This delay is rather strange because one would normally expect a will to be dealt with within days or weeks of the death. I would not be surprised if the delay was due to some problems with inheritances because, although it was clear who the beneficiaries would be when the will was written, by the time of his death in 1789 Francis Rogers probably did not just have two surviving sons, John and Nicholas, and a widow Phillippa, he almost certainly had another grandson and this may have complicated matters. This illegitimate grandson was not provided for in the will and this may have caused a complication with Dinah Gray who may have felt poorly treated if Nicholas Rogers had no intention of marrying her. Whatever the reason, the will was eventually

proven in June 1792 and there is no record that Francis' widow Philippa or their sons were under scrutiny by the poor law overseers for provision for young Francis Rogers Gray, or indeed that any other father was being chased to account for his upkeep. I think that it is almost certain that the widow Philippa Rogers continued to look after Dinah and her young son until, in June 1793, Dinah was married to another local farmer, Alexander Godwin. I expect that widow Philippa was probably young Francis Rogers Gray's grandmother.

Alexander Godwin was farming at Lawn Farm in Tisbury and between 1793 and 1802 he and Dinah proceeded to have children, half brothers and sisters of Francis - 1793 William, 1796 James, 1799 Thomas and 1802 Martha.

Alex Godwin died in 1827 and Dinah died in 1834, when she was apparently living at 'Tisbury Lane' in Tisbury. Both are buried in Tisbury churchyard.

Francis Rogers
(1720 to 1789)

Francis Rogers, very probably the grandfather of Francis Rogers Gray, was baptised on 19th December 1720 at the church in Tisbury to John and Margaret Rogers. He was born at Wickwood Farm (pictured below). Francis later inherited the farm from his father and it is where he would live for the whole of his life.



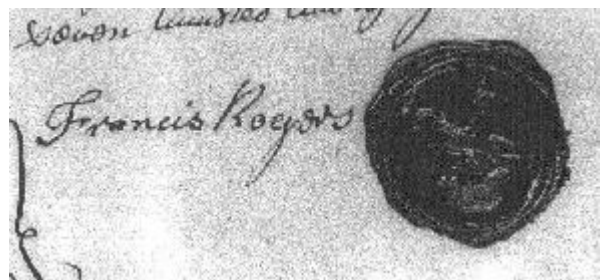
In 1756 Francis married Philippa Coombes, the daughter of John **Coombes** (see below) who was the farmer of neighbouring Wick farm, a farm that the Rogers family also once held. Philippa Coombes was to outlive Francis by about 19 years.

Francis and Philippa Rogers had the following children –

- 1756 John who married in 1783 to Mary Rixon of Semley and was buried aged 59 when still of 'Weekwood Farm'). In 1783 and he took over Wickwood farm after father Francis died. John's son John also took over Wickwood farm when John senior died in 1816 and because of good marriages (Mary was the niece of gentleman William Hacker of Semley) he became a gentleman and increased his land holdings to Tisbury and Semley in Wiltshire and East Stour in Dorset.
- 1759 Francis, who died in 1783,
- 1761 Nicholas, who I think was probably the father of Francis Rogers Gray.

Wickwood Farm was owned by the Bennett family of Pitt House near Tisbury. However Francis also rented land from the Arundell family of Wardour - in 1781 he leased four holdings from Henry, Lord Arundell, at Spelsbury Lane in Tisbury.

Francis Rogers died in 1789 and was buried on 25th April in Tisbury, just three months after his base born grandson, Francis Rogers Gray, had been baptised at the same church. Francis left a simple will naming sons John and Nicholas and widow Philippa and signed it with his seal (copy on the right).



Widow Philippa died a few years later and she was buried in the tabletomb pictured below. This tomb had been erected before Francis and Philippa's burials as it has memorials to their sons on the side panels. The other tomb is other members of the same Rogers family. I think that it shows quite clearly that Francis was a quite wealthy farmer to have afforded such a memorial which still stands proud in the churchyard today in front of the church.



The Coombes family of Tisbury

Philippa, wife of Francis Rogers, was the daughter of John Coombes of Wick Farm. The name 'Philippa' appears to have been passed down from her great x 2 grandmother Philippa whose maiden name was Feltham. The Coombes family (the 's' in Coombes was actually a later addition and in early centuries they were called Coombe or Coomb, sometimes with just one 'o') are of particular interest because they descend from a John Coombes who held Place Farm in Tisbury in the late 16th century. This John Coombes was the great x 3 grandfather of John, father of Philippa.

John Coombes of Place Farm (or Place House) was Bailiff of the Manor of Shaftesbury and he left a will in 1600. In 1568 John Coombes had married Alice. He was a churchwarden at Tisbury in 1580.

Place farm was originally the court lodge, or grange, of the Manor of Tisbury which also belonged to the Abbess of Shaftesbury and was granted to Sir Thomas Arundell in 1540. It was known at the time as being one of the best corn farms in the county. Place Farm is well known because of the fabulous manor house building that still survives and the magnificent tithe barn, the largest (but not the longest) in the country. The Place Farm buildings were built during the 14th and 15th centuries by the Abbey at Shaftesbury. Pictured below are the tithe barn (*Wikipedia, author Rwendland*), the gatehouse (*Wikipedia, author Jim*) and main farmhouse (from www.geograph.org.uk) -



John Coombe who held Place Farm was the son of another John. John senior was a joint tenant with his son of lands in Cann, near Shaftesbury, called 'Formages' and 'Barkers' with a 'Gryndstone myll' and the Mill-close. This John was a tenant of lands of Shaftesbury Abbey and also held land at East Orchard as well as at Cann. John senior's daughter, Joanne, married

Robert Grove of Donhead (an ancestor of the current Grove family of Donhead) and Robert was a friend of Sir Thomas Arundell. It is quite probable that the links between Robert Grove, the Arundells and the Abbey is how the Coombes family came to settle in Tisbury.

John Rogers
(1689 to 1755)

John Rogers (Francis' father) was baptised at Tisbury on 12th May 1689, the son of John and Mary Rogers. I think that he was born at Wick Farm rather than Wickwood Farm. Wickwood Farm (pictured below from another viewpoint, looking east towards Tisbury) was inherited by John in 1721 from his older brother Nicholas, who had died without an heir. Nicholas in turn had inherited it from his uncle Nicholas Rogers who also had also died without an heir the year previously.

On inheritance John moved into Wickwood Farm and in 1723 and 1730, when his children were being baptised, he was recorded as being of 'Weekwood' in the parish registers of Tisbury.

Wickwood Farm was built in about 1700 probably when held by the Rogers family. The name 'Wick' actually means 'farm', therefore Wickwood Farm is actually 'Farmwood Farm' and 'Wick Farm' is 'Farm farm'! Wick is an Anglo-Saxon word which was adopted from the 12th century settlement nearby which may have reduced in size at about the time of Black Death. The remains of the old settlement can be seen in the ground between Wick Farm and the railway line west of Tisbury station.



John Rogers married, when he was aged 20, at Sutton Mandeville in Wiltshire to Margaret Knight. Margaret was from another farming family who were resident at Hazeldene near Tisbury. The name 'Francis', which was adopted by later generations of Rogers and Hiscocks up to my great x 2 grandfather (and even up to one of my cousins who has it as a second name), appears to have come mainly through Margaret and her Knight family. Margaret's father was Francis Knight and he was buried in 1718 in the churchyard at Tisbury. Margaret's grandfather was also called Francis and he was buried in 1681 at Fonthill Gifford. As far as I can tell the name Francis then goes back to Margaret's great x 2 grandfather Francis Knight (a farmer at 'Stoppe' in Fonthill) who was buried in 1652 at Fonthill Gifford.

John and Margaret Rogers had the following children in Tisbury - 1713 John, 1717 Nicholas, 1720 Francis, 1723 Elisha, 1730 Mary.

John's made a will in 1755, signing it with an elongated cross as shown below, and he left money to his surviving children Francis, Nicholas and Elisha, daughter-in-law Mary Rogers, son-in-laws Matthew Coombes and Renalder Freake and granddaughter Mary Target. John's widow Margaret was made executor of his will and son Francis inherited most of the property. It is not clear why the third eldest son Francis did so well from John's will and why second eldest son Nicholas was left with just one shilling. There may have been a falling out, or Nicholas had already been provided for during his father's life and was not due to inherit any more than he had already received. But in a society where primogeniture (eldest surviving son inherits) is the norm then this is certainly worthy of note.

The mark } of John Rogers



John Rogers
(c 1650 to 1705)

John Rogers senior was born in about 1650 and whilst I cannot find his baptism, it is possible to deduce from other wills of the Rogers family, along with certain name associations, that he was the son of Nicholas and Dorothy Rogers of Hatch, which is a hamlet to the west of Tisbury. John married his wife Mary in about 1680 but I have yet to find their marriage record in a parish register, it may not have survived. John and Mary had the following children - 1684 Mary, 1686 Elizabeth, 1689 John and at other dates Nicholas, Francis and George.

They lived at Wick Farm (pictured below) in the late 17th century. The house was rebuilt in 1700, possibly by John Rogers who in 1705 refers to himself as 'of Wick' or John Coombes, who in a



will in 1703 saying he was of 'Week' in Tisbury. There was of course more than one building at 'wick' which was the main farm. As we know, John Coombes' granddaughter Philippa married John Roger's grandson Francis.

John Rogers died in 1705 and was buried in the churchyard at Tisbury. The memorial tombstone pictured on the right is to John and his widow Mary, who died in 1720. It is a small narrow gravestone that is flanked by the larger tabletombs of the Rogers family built in the later 18th

century.

John Rogers left a will (his signature on the will is shown below) in which he leaves most household items to widow Mary but also names his cousin William Rogers, daughter Mary Adlem and her son John, son-in-law and daughter Thomas and Elizabeth Scammell and son John who is left with £40. The main property goes to his elder son Nicholas who is also made executor of the will. However as we know Nicholas did not marry and 15 years later and after inheriting from his uncle Nicholas he left all his property to his brother and my ancestor John Rogers.



Nicholas Rogers (c 1630 to 1689)

Nicholas was probably born sometime between 1630 and 1634, his parents had married in 1624, and he was baptised in 1634 in the parish church of St Michael in Mere. He was the son of William Rogers of Mere and his wife Mary. Nicholas married very young in about 1648.

There is not a lot of documentation about Nicholas' life other than the baptism of his children which took place at Tisbury –

- 1648 Nicholas,
- 1656 Mary (who later married a Mr Widmore),
- and at other dates John, Katherine and an unnamed son who later married a woman called Susan.

Nicholas who was born in 1648 left a will in 1720 and he described himself as of 'Weekwood' in Tisbury. He married late in life and all his children, John, William and Martha, all died young and his wife Susanna predeceased him. In his will in 1720 he refers to his late brother John's son Nicholas who succeeds him, his sister-in-law Susan Rogers and her son William and also his sister Mary Widmore. These references in the will clearly link John born in 1650 (see above) to this Nicholas who was his brother and all the name connections and dates link the later Rogers family of Tisbury and the earlier family of Mere, as we shall see later.

Nicholas must have moved from Mere to Tisbury in about 1648, probably at the time of his marriage to Dorothy. Nicholas was probably still in Mere 1643/1644 when nearby Wardour castle was besieged firstly by the forces of Parliament and then by the forces of King Charles I. He may not have been in Hatch when soldiers would no doubt have been looting the countryside thereabouts to feed themselves and recruit new people into their service. He would however have moved into the area when memories were still fresh of this period of immense suffering and he would have been quite familiar with the troubles of the age and locality having lived not far away in Mere in his childhood.

Nicholas' wife Dorothy died in 1691 and she was buried in the churchyard at Tisbury. Nicholas died in 1694 and is recorded in the parish register of Tisbury as being of 'West Hatch', a hamlet between Tisbury and Mere shown on the map below (from the Wiltshire Archives website).

There is no record of Nicholas or Dorothy having left wills or what Nicholas did for employment. He was probably a small tenant farmer.



William Rogers, gent
(1603 to 1665)

William Rogers was a gentleman. He was buried under that title in Mere in 1665 and was also married with this title in the parish register. To be called a 'gentleman' in this era is not an idle commentary on manners and conduct, although that would be expected, rather it is a record of a man of status, property and lineage. To be gentry in 17th century England was to be someone of property who generally did not have to live by the labour of their own hand. It was a term that started to be used in the late medieval period to delineate a growing class below that of nobility but above that of the labouring classes and peasantry. This propertied elevated status was often connected to having been descended from branches of nobility such as knights or esquires (younger offspring of nobility) but was not exclusively so, as such as in the case of the nouveau riche (or 'new rich'). William appears to have received his status from his parents and also through marriage. His mother Alice was buried as 'Mrs Rogers' at Mere in 1641 and the prefix 'Mrs' at this time was used to denote a 'lady' or gentry, as 'Mr' was used for a gentleman. William's mother Alice was widow of Thomas Rogers who died before 1640. Alice was the daughter of William and Elizabeth Kendall of Mere, William appears from his will dated 1609 to have been a well off farmer.

I have yet to find a firm connection, but William's father Thomas Rogers may well have been connected to the gentrified Rogers family of nearby Stourton who descend from nobility.

William Rogers married at Mere church (pictured to the right) on 27th December 1624 to Mary **Goddard** of Sedgehill. They had the following children –

- * 1626 Marie, who was buried later the same year,
- * 1629 Alice,
- * about 1630 William (who married an Anne and died in 1673 at Tisbury),
- * about 1631 Nicholas (see above)
- * and Margaret and Mary (who left a will 1666 which was administered by her brother William Rogers of Mere).



Not much else is known about William, for example where exactly he lived, what property he owned or what else he may have done in his life. But he left a verbal will in 1664, probably on his deathbed, which has a reference to his daughter Alice, to whom he left £40, and the rest of his property he left to his widow Mary.

The Goddard family

Mary Goddard (1604 to 1670)

Mary was the wife of William Rogers and through their marriage in 1624 we can trace a medieval ancestry to various ennobled family lines that follow on subsequent pages. Mary was the daughter of John Goddard and his wife Frances **Awbrey**. Mary's medieval ancestry comes through her mother Frances (see page 19). Mary was baptised at Mere in 1604 but her father died just three months afterwards in January 1605 and he was buried under the chancel of the church at Mere. Widow Frances then remarried a gentleman called James Rives at Mere in 1606 and no doubt Mary was then raised by her mother and stepfather. Mary also had two half-brothers James and Robert, who were born to James and Frances in 1609 and 1613, and three younger half-sisters.

John Goddard, gent (c 1580 to 1605)

John was a gentleman. He was described as such on his marriage and later burial. He was the son of Thomas and Cecily Goddard of Sedgehill where he was most probably baptised and raised although parish registers no longer exist for this period in this area. John had three children with his wife Frances - 1601 Margaret, 1602 Nicholas, 1604 Mary.

Thomas Goddard (c 1560 to 1587)

Thomas was the son of William and Joan Goddard and he was probably a farmer. He left a will in 1587 and refers to –

- his son John to whom he leaves his messuage (or house) in Sedgehill where he was living
- and his son Thomas of Knoyle who he leaves grounds called 'westmarsh' in Sedgehill.

William Goddard (c 1540 to 1586)

William was the son of John and Elizabeth Goddard and he was a yeoman farmer at Sedgehill.

He had three daughters - Edith, Mary and unknown and two sons – Nicholas and Thomas.

In 1561 William bought Woodhouse farm in Sedgehill from Richard Audley and later passed it to his son Nicholas.

Woodhouse is shown on the 1810 map above from Wiltshire Archives but in the latter 19th century it was merged with and renamed Pitts farm.



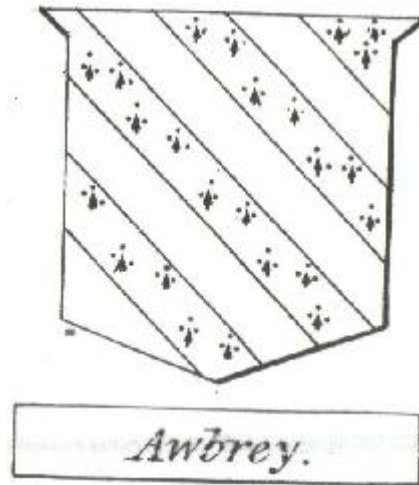
John Goddard
(c 1520 to 1555)

John is the earliest traceable ancestor on the Goddard line and in 1550 he made a will which was proven in 1555. In the will he says that he was to be buried in the chapel of Saint Katherine of Sedgehill (pictured to the right from a 1903 picture at Wiltshire Archives). He leave money to the Church at Sedgehill, the Cathedral Church of New Sarum (Salisbury) and the church at East Knoyle amongst bequests to children and grandchildren.



In 1564 John's widow Elizabeth died and her property was administered mentioning 'lodes of haye, swyne, feather bedd, blankets, brasen pott, skyllets, tubbes, apparell'.

The Awbrey family



The coat of arms above are from 'A History of Wiltshire by Sir Richard Colt-Hoare 1822' and the section on the history of the Manor of Chadenwick in Mere. These arms are recorded in the Harleian (Royal Heralds society) Visitations of Wiltshire in 1565.

Frances Awbery (1580 to after 1635)

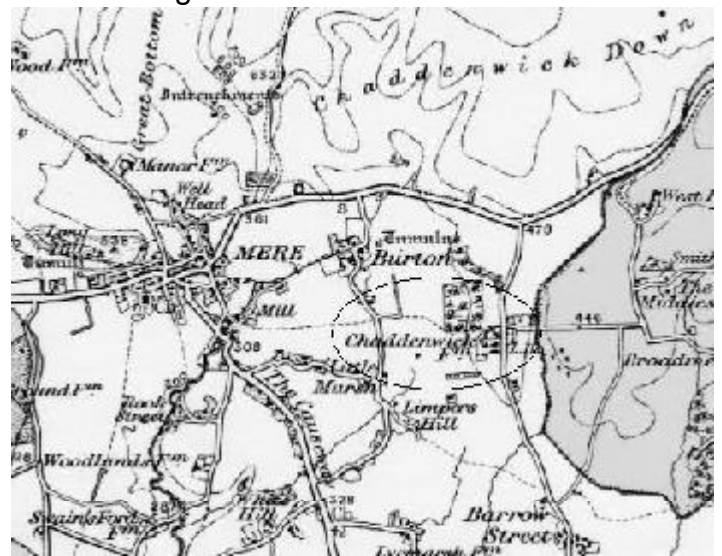
Frances was baptised to Thomas and Dorothy Awbrey at Mere on 8th May 1580. She married John **Goddard** at Mere on 16th June 1600.

Thomas Awbrey, gent (c 1560 to 1635)

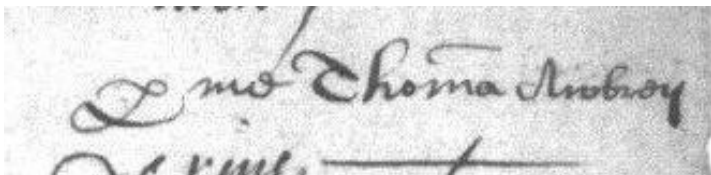
Thomas was born in about 1560 to Thomas and Dorothy Awbrey. He married in about 1579 to Dorothy **Michell** (who died in 1600) of Kingston Deverill (see later page). He became Lord of the Manor of Chadenwick in Mere in 1590 and held the title of 'gentleman'. As well as land in Mere he held land in Sedgemoor.

Chadenwick Manor, which later became a farm, is shown circled to the west of Mere on the map on the right. It was sometimes also known as 'Charnage'.

Thomas died in 1633 and left a will, a copy of his signature below. In his will he named his son-in-law Arthur Hartgill, gent, his daughter Frances Rives, and her three unmarried daughters but not Mary Rogers, and daughter Mary Coleford. He also named two male servants Robert Hiscock (son of my great x 10 grandfather John Hiscock of Mere) and William Sanger and a number of maid servants. He made his son William Awbrey his sole



executor who inherited most of his father's property.



Thomas Awbrey, gent
(c 1540 to 1590)

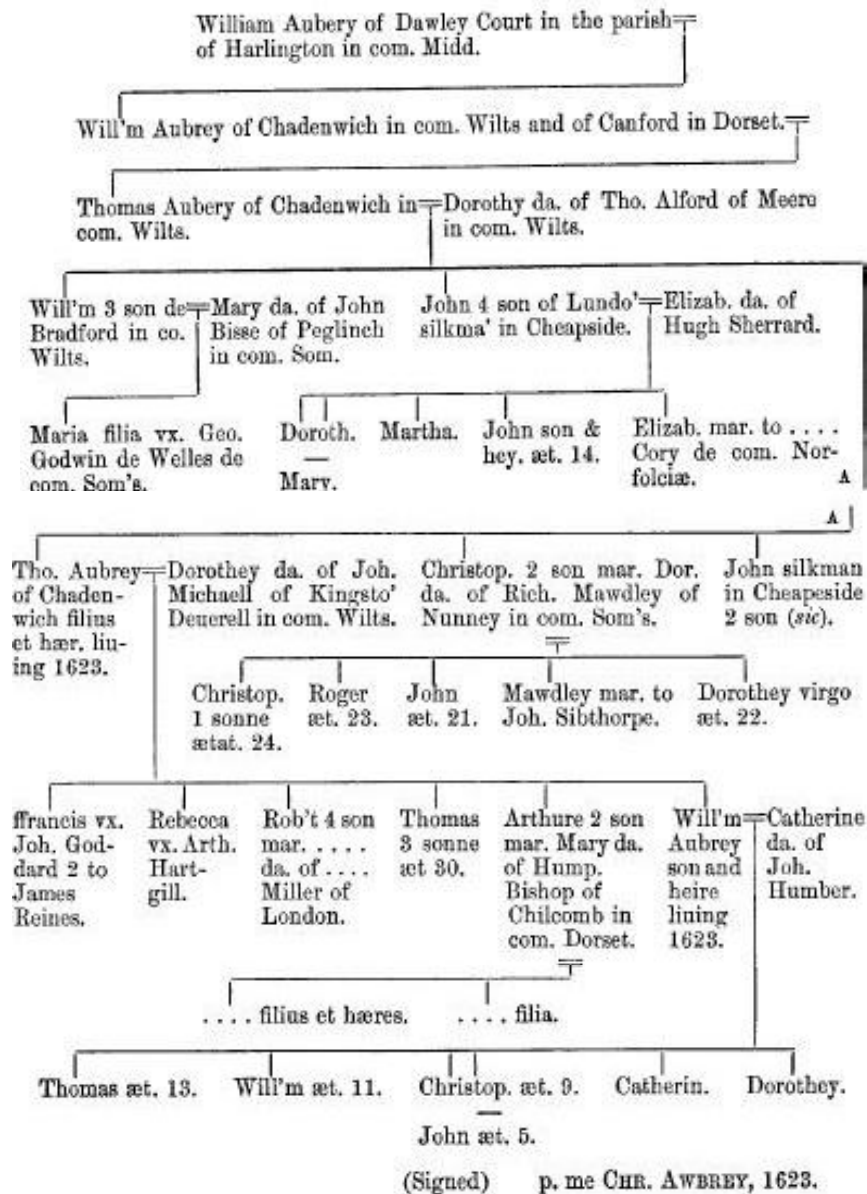
Thomas was the son of William Awbrey, an Esquire of Chadenwick in Wiltshire and Canford in Dorset. In about 1560 he married Dorothy daughter of Thomas Alford of Mere.

One interesting point of note about this parentage is that in father William's will of 1549 he refers to Thomas as 'my base sonne' when he grants him the lease of the farm at Chadenwick near Mere. The fact that William refers to him as his son confirms that he was his father but being 'base' means that he was conceived and born outside of marriage and not to his later wife Alice, or at least not when they were married. But Thomas was an heir and child of Williams's as confirmed in this will and in the 1623 visitation report which was presented to the royal heralds by Thomas juniors' son Christopher Awbrey.

Awbrey.

[Harl. 1166, fo. 54.]

ARMS.—Quarterly—1, Bendy of eight ermine and gules; 2, Azure, a lion rampant or, crowned of the same; 3, Azure, a fess nebulée ermine between three chess-rooms (?) argent; 4, Argent, a saltire between four hawks' heads erased gules.



In 1571 Thomas bought the Manor of Chadenwick that he had previously been leasing (and other lands in West Knoyle and Sedgehill) from Lord Compton (1st Earl of Northampton, in 1549 William still held it from the late Sir William Compton) paying £1400, or £244K in today's money. In 1571 (and again in 1586) Thomas was appointed a 'reeve' of the Manor of Mere, a 'reeve' being a manor official appointed by the lord.

In 1573 Thomas Awbrey and a William Grove jointly purchased the Manor of Sedgehill from Richard Audley.

In October 1589 Thomas wrote his will and he was buried at Mere on 23rd April 1590. His wife Dorothy outlived him by 31 years. Amongst items in his will he left –

- £3 to the poor of Mere to be distributed on his day of burial,
- Property and lands of 'Easthasellholde' in Gillingham and other property in Mere for his widow Dorothy,
- Children - Thomas, William, Richard, Christopher, John (junior and senior), Grace, Edith and Dorothy,
- His grandchildren through his son Thomas - Francis, William, Arthur, Thomas, Richard, Robert, Rebecca and Marye – each receiving £3-6-8 when they reach 21 years old
- His 'mother' Alice Horde, widow of William Awbrey,
- 100 sheep and 40 hogs,
- A furnace and great chest in his chamber,
- Various servants and friends including servant Walter Hiscock (almost certainly another relative of the Hiscocks of Gillingham / Mere).

William Awbrey, Esquire **(c 1500 to 1549)**

William Awbrey was an Esquire who was associated with Chadenwick Manor as early as 1530. In 1528 he is named as one of the bailiffs of the 'late' Sir William Compton on lands in 'Chadenwiche, Westknoyle, Norton and Kylmyngton, Kyngton Magna and Langenham'.

In 1542 William was elected as a Member of Parliament for the constituency of Weymouth in Dorset and the website <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org> has this to say about him –

“As a young man William Aubrey was bailiff of six manors in the west country belonging to Sir William Compton, at a yearly fee of 40s. Compton granted one of these properties before his death in 1528 to Aubrey on a lease which had not expired when Aubrey made his will in 1549: the remaining years of the farm of Chaddenwicke in Wiltshire Aubrey then bequeathed to his base son Thomas Aubrey, together with the household stuff there and the stock of 500 sheep. In later life William Aubrey was connected with Secretary Wriothesley, with whom in 1540 he received a lease of Christchurch priory, Hampshire. Wriothesley may have favoured Aubrey's election at Weymouth in 1542, but more probably Aubrey himself, as bailiff of the crown's manor of Canford, was sufficiently well-placed to secure his own election. A few years before this Aubrey was said to have many friends in Dorset. The statement, made by a legal opponent, may have been common form, but the suit shows something of Aubrey's powers: he had obtained the bailiwick of Canford for himself by procuring a royal commission to investigate the conduct of the previous bailiff, Robert Bingham, which resulted in Bingham's dismissal.

Aubrey was never a justice of the peace in Dorset although he was a subsidy commissioner in 1545, at which time his own wealth was assessed at £26 13s.4d. in lands. His name also appears among those appointed in December 1550 to collect the third payment of the relief in Dorset, but this must be a mistake since he died on 4 Sept. 1549, being succeeded in his manor of Dawley, Middlesex, by his brother, John Aubrey, then aged 42 or more. William Aubrey was not long married to his second wife, and he left no legitimate child; after stipulating a burial

according to ‘ceremonies as may stand and be not repugnant unto the King’ and providing for his illegitimate son, he bequeathed £100 and plate estimated at another £100 to his brother’s four children, to be divided equally between them. The will, made on 12 Aug. 1549, was proved in November by John Aubrey, the widow being unwilling to act as executor. She married as her third husband a kinsman of Andrew Horde.”

In 1544 William may have been the ‘Wm Awbrey’ listed in the preparations for King Henry VIII’s invasion of France. This Awbrey is listed as being a ‘horseman of the chamber’ and also providing two archers for the assault.

In 1547 William faced trial at the Court of the Star Chamber in London for assault, the plaintiff being one Walter Whyte and William Awbrey of Canford being the defendant. I haven’t got hold of the paperwork for this trial yet from the national archives but we may assume that he was found innocent.

William died in 1549, as mentioned above, at Canford in Dorset and left his will in which he refers to his ‘case son’ Thomas, brother John Awbrey and his children, servants, wife Alice who is made sole executrix and cousin Thomas Alford who was a clothier in Mere.

Previous Awbreys

William descended from a family who were Lords of the Manor of Dawley Court in Harlington (in west London north of Hounslow) in Middlesex. In 1450 William’s great x 2 grandfather Robert Awbrey came into the possession of Dawley Court from the Lovell family. Robert died in 1488 and the line and Manor then passed from Robert to his son Robert who died in about 1515. Then it passed from Robert to his son Thomas who died in about 1540. It then passed to Thomas’ son William Awbrey who was father of William Awbrey of Chadenwick and Canford. Dawley Court then passed to William Awbrey senior’s son John and then John’s son William Awbrey before being sold out of the Awbrey family at the end of the 16th century.

The Michell family

Dorothy Michell **(c 1560 to 1600)**

Dorothy, wife of Thomas **Awbrey** (see above) was the daughter of John and Dorothy Michell of Kingston Deverill in Wiltshire.

John Michell, gent **(c 1540 to 1579)**

John was a gentleman and son of Cuthbert Michell of Kingston Deverill. In 1550 he was left 40 shillings by his brother Cuthbert Michell in his will.

Between 1550 and 1560 John married the widow Dorothy Presse. Her maiden name had been Dorothy **Mompesson** (see below). Dorothy was the widow of George Presse and she died before John.

In May 1579 John left a substantial will referring to –

- The poor of Kingston Deverill to whom he left £6-13s-4d.
- Son-in-law (son of his wife through her first marriage) Robert Presse.
- Livestock on his farm at Kingston Deverill including 100 hogs, 100 lambs, yews, 10 oxen, heifers, steers and mares. Also crop of corn and wheat. Also refers to malt.
- Sons-in-law Thomas Awbrey and Nicholas Joyce, to whom he left featherbeds with associated furniture.
- Daughters Dorothy Awbrey, he leaves a silver salter and ‘a little ambling mare called Hubb’ and Grace Joyce he leaves another silver salter, silver goblet and a black ambling mare.
- Daughter Margaret and husband William Strangewidge.
- Numerous servants.
- Sister Edith Adyn he leaves his wife’s wedding ring.
- Brothers John and Robert Chettell (suggesting that his mother married a second time to a Mr Chettell).
- Sister Dorothy and Elizabeth, latter of Motcombe in Dorset.
- Cousin William Poton he leaves his signet ring with the red stone in it.

Cuthbert Michell **(c 1510 to ?)**

Cuthbert received the lease of the Manor of Kingston Deverill in 1530. It is not clear when he died but it was probably before 1550 when son Cuthbert left money to Cuthbert’s four other sons in his will.

The Mompesson family



The coat of arms of the Mompesson family above are quarters of –

- Top left – Mompesson
- Top right – Goodwin
- Bottom left – Drewe
- Bottom right – Watkins

Dorothy Mompesson **(c 1540 to before 1579)**

Dorothy was the daughter of Richard Mompesson, an Esquire of Maiden Bradley in Wiltshire, and his wife Edith. Dorothy married firstly George Press, with whom she had a son Robert, and secondly John Michell of Gillingham in Dorset (and later Kingston Deverill in Wiltshire), with whom she had a daughter Dorothy.

Dorothy's brother John became 'John Mompesson of Salisbury' and it is through this line that there eventually descended Charles Mompesson who built Mompesson House in the Cathedral Close in the 18th century. On the front gate of Mompesson House can be seen the same lion crest of the Mompesson family that Dorothy too had claim to from her father Richard.



Richard Mompesson, Esquire
(c 1480 to 1562)

Richard was the son of Drewe Mompesson, an Esquire of Seagry and Bathampton in Wiltshire, and his wife Agnes daughter of William and Agnes **Watkins** of Calne in Wiltshire (see later page).

In the early 15th century Richard married Edith daughter of a Mr South of Amesbury in Wiltshire. They had sons John, Vincent, Edward, William and Christopher and a daughter Dorothy.

Richard died in 1562 without a will and his administration refers to his son Edward. He was buried at Maiden Bradley.

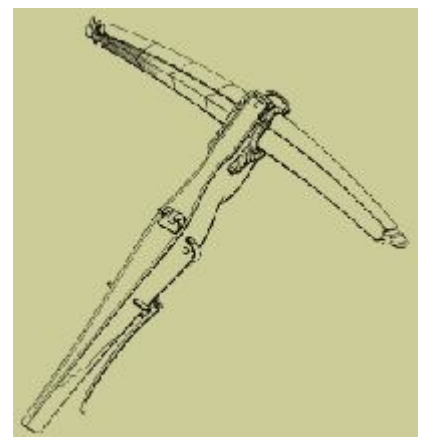
Drewe Mompesson, Esquire
(c 1460 to 1488)

Drewe was the son of John Mompesson, an Esquire of Bathampton, and his wife Isabel **Drewe**, daughter and heir of Thomas Drewe, Esquire (see later page).

Drewe and Isabel has three sons – John, Richard and Thomas. Richard became seated in Madien Bradley and Thomas at Corton in Wiltshire.

Drewe left a will in 1488 which is one of the more interesting wills that I have read because it makes reference to a number of interesting objects and other stipulations about his family -

- To be buried in the chapel of St Nicholas in Bathampton,
- Leaves money to the Cathedral Church of Sarum (Salisbury) and the Church at Seagry in Wiltshire
- He leaves the 'rule' of his oldest son to his father and the rest of his children to be guided by their mother by advice and counsel of his father and mother,
- His brother Henry he leaves a book called 'Polycronycon' (a book written in the 14th century by a monk called Higdon about history and theology. The version that Drewe held was probably the one printed by William Caxton in 1482).
- His brother Thomas he leaves his best gown.
- His eldest son he leaves his 'signett' (probably signet ring).
- He leaves crossbows (which would have been similar in design to the one pictured) to his brother William, brother 'Merven', brother 'Whitened' and cousin .Bonenam'.
- To his uncle 'Unewyn he leave his best wood knife.
- He leaves a bill (a weapon pictured on the right) to his cousin Thomas and his cousin Stradling and returns a bill to Nicholas Rogers.
- He leaves his 'closid sawter' to master Robert Burton to pray for him (probably a 'closed Psalter' which would be his book of common psalms).
- He wills that his servants 'be trewly content ther wages and over that that my executors reward them with the remnant of my array after ther discrecion for ther true service'.
- He asks his executors to pay a 'virtuous' priest to pray for his soul at Seagry for the course of a year.
- He asks that his books on law be delivered to one his children when they are able to use them if any of them are



disposed to that course of study (my interpretation).

- Finally in his will he quotes a verse of prayer which appears to be something about misery and forgiveness from God and makes a blessing to his father and mother.

He died before his father and was buried in St Nicholas Chapel at Bathampton in Wiltshire (pictured below).

John Mompesson. Esquire **(c 1440 to 1500)**

John was the son of Robert Mompesson, an Esquire of Bathampton in Wiltshire, and his wife Alice **Goodwin** (see later). Through the marriage John inherited wealth from his mother's family estates.



In 1478 and 1482 John was Sheriff of Wiltshire.

In 1483 John was on a list of a commission from King Richard III to raise forces for his cause in the county. Whether he did take the King's side against Henry Tudor (future King Henry VII) and fight in the subsequent Battle at Bosworth is unknown.

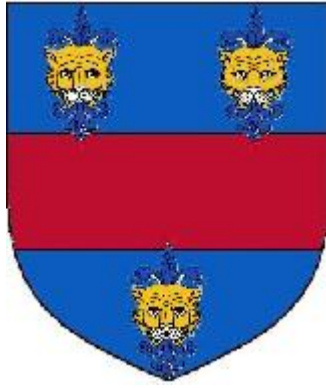
In 1500 John requested burial in the 'new chapel' at Bathampton in Wiltshire.

The Norman Montpinsons

The following comes from 'http://www.1066.co.nz/library/battle_abbey_roll2/chap00.htm' about Norman families descended from the 1066 invasion –

"Ralph de Montpinson was Dapifer to William the Conqueror... His son Hugh, who married a daughter of Hugh de Grentemesnil, and his grandson Ralph, are also mentioned by Ordericus. Philip de Montpinson witnessed 1132 the foundation charter of Fountains Abbey, York ... The family appears afterwards in Lincoln, Essex, Hertford, Norfolk, Wilts; and in 1165 the barony of Montpinson in Normandy consisted of fifteen knight's fees... They bore D'argent a une lion de sable, a une pinzon de or en le espaule. Fulk de Montepincernoun, first of the name, "by marriage with Agnes, only daughter and heir of Ralph Facatus, shortly after the Conquest, obtained several lordships in Norfolk, where the family continued to flourish till [1315], when William the son of Sir Gyles, sold his estates. From that time till the reign of Edward IV. the Montpinsons continued in a state of obscurity. The first who rose to any public notice in Wiltshire was Robert Mompesson, who by marrying the heiress of Godwyn and Bonham obtained considerable property; his son John ... bore the arms as above given, which he must have derived from the Norfolk family, and most probably was well aware of his descent from them."

The Watkins family



Agnes Watkins who married Drewe Mompesson was the daughter of William Watkins who was Lord of Heddington Cauntelo Manor in Calne in Wiltshire.

William took possession of the Manor after marriage to his wife Agnes who was granddaughter of Richard Cheddar and his wife Elizabeth Cauntelo.

Elizabeth was the granddaughter of Robert **Cauntelo**, Lord of the Manor of Heddington in Calne in Wiltshire and his wife Maud **Berkeley** (see below).

The Cauntelo (or de Cantelupe) family

Robert Cauntelo

(c 1320 to c 1400)

Robert inherited Heddington Cauntelo Manor in about 1329 from Maud Cauntelo, presumably his mother. His first wife was called Joan and second wife Maud Berkeley outlived him and held the Manor in 1402 when she died and when the Manor passed to their granddaughter Elizabeth.

Robert Cauntelo

(c 1290 to c 1320)

This Robert, presumably Robert's father, held the Manor of Heddington Cauntelo in 1319 but by 1329 it was held by Maud, presumably his widow.

Roger Cauntelo

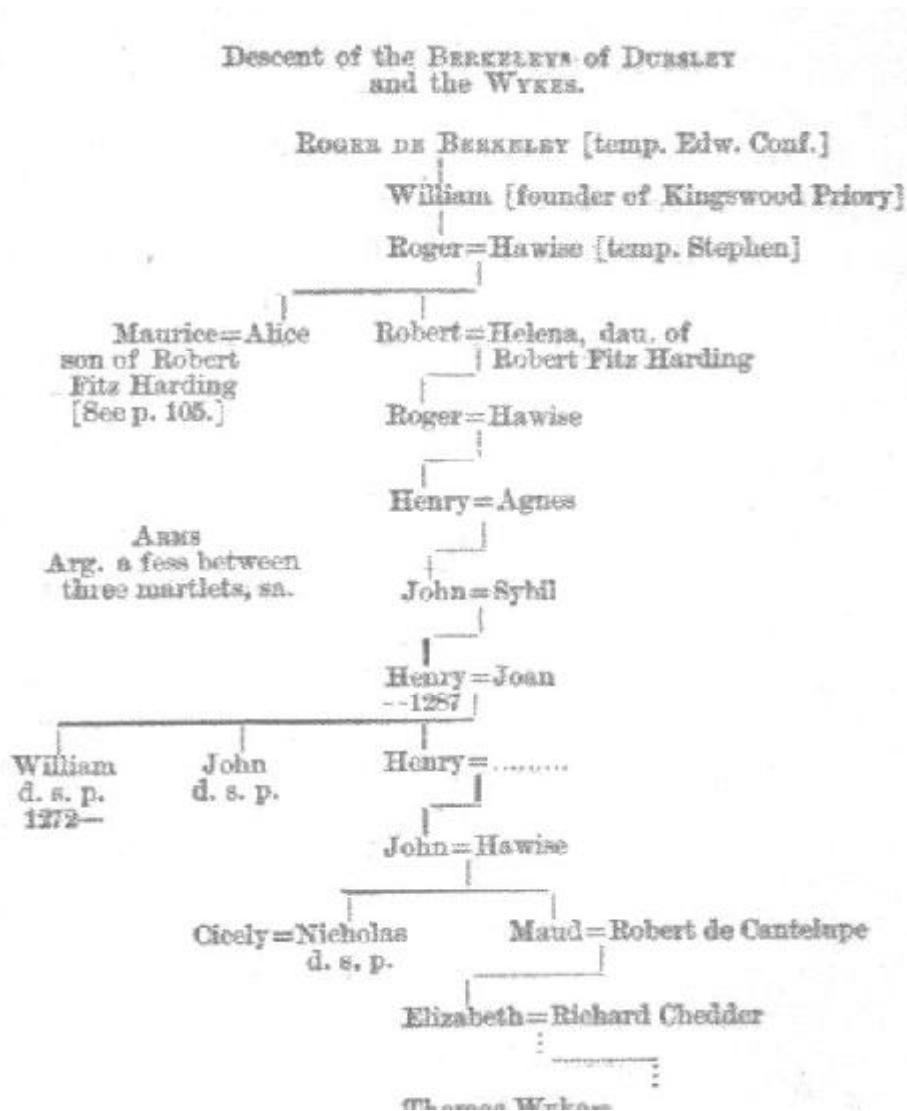
(c 1220 to ?)

Roger, presumably an ancestor, received part of the Manor of Heddington, Calne in Wiltshire from Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford.

Robert and Roger and probably attached to the 'de Cantelupe' family of Calne and descend from Fulk Cauntelo (de Cantelupe) (uncle of William de Cauntelo who died in 1251 in Calne) who held land at the Manor of Calne in 1199. I think that this Fulk was born in about 1161 at Longueville, St Saviour in the Channel Islands to Walter and Amice de Cantelou. He in turn was the son of Walter and Emecine de Cantelou of Canetlu, Saint-Maritime in France.

The Berkeley family

Maud Berkeley who married Robert **Cauntelo** was the daughter of John Berkeley. Lord of the Manor of Newington Bagpath in Gloucestershire, and his wife Hawise. Her line of descent is shown in the diagram below from an 1887 book on the history of Dursley in Gloucestershire by Reverend Blunt.



Maud inherited the Manor from her brother Nicholas Berkeley who died without an heir in 1382. Nicholas had inherited the Manor in 1349 from his father.

John Berkeley inherited Newington in 1300 when his father William died (although the diagram above says that John was in fact the son of Henry).



William Berkeley inherited from his father Sir Henry Berkeley when he died in 1287 and he was his son through his wife Joan from whom Sir Henry held the manor of Newington in dower.

Sir Henry Berkeley was Lord of the Manor of Dursley (shown in the map to the left, from Wikipedia) in Gloucestershire and he came of age in 1262. Sir Henry inherited from his father John (whose wife was called Sybil) and he in turn was son of Sir Henry son of Sir Roger Berkeley. The first Sir Henry died in 1221 only two years after his father Sir Roger.

In 1220 Henry senior made a grant as Lord of the Manor concerning the Hospital of St Batholemew in Gloucester and a tenement in Ludgershall in Wiltshire, in consideration of annual rent from the prior and brethren, and their engaging to receive him into their confraternity, of his claim of a sparrow hawk which was delivered to him yearly on the Feast of St Oswald. The document has the seal pictured to the right which has the inscription 'S[ig] Henrici de Berkeleye'.



Roger de Berkeley who died in 1219 was the son of Sir Robert and Helena Berkeley. Helena was the daughter of Robert **Fitzharding** (see next page).

Sir Robert was the son of the second Roger de Berkeley who in 1153 built a castle at Dursley. This castle no longer stands but is recreated in the picture below from the website

<http://www.xnm15.dial.pipex.com/dursley.htm#preface> -



Roger de Berkeley and his father William, who founded Kingswood Priory, fought in the civil war between rivals for the Crown - 'Empress' Matilda Plantagenet and King Stephen. The Berkeleys fought for King Stephen and were financially devastated by the wars. As a result they lost the castle of Dursley to the Fitzharding family but due to later friendly marriages between the families it was later restored to their family line.

The Fitzharding family

Robert Fitzharding

(c 1095 to 1170)

Robert Fitzharding was the father of Helena who married Robert Berkeley and Maurice who married Alice Berkeley. A Fitzharding brother and sister married a Berkeley brother and sister.

Robert was born in about 1095 and was a son of Harding who was Sheriff in Bristol and had a house in Baldwin Street in the City. He later built a large house on Broad Street on the River Frome and became a burgess in the City and bought several lands from Robert, Earl of Gloucester.

Robert married Eva, founder and first Abbess of St Augustine Abbey, St Michael's Hill, Bristol.

In 1140 Robert Fitzharding founded St Augustine's Abbey in Bristol and he chose the first Abbott.

Robert sided with Robert of Gloucester, brother of Empress Matilda, in the civil war and was rewarded after her victory with lands confiscated from the Berkeley family including Dursley.

In 1153–54 Fitzharding received a royal charter from King Henry II giving him permission to rebuild the castle at Berkeley.

Some time before his death Fitzharding became a canon of the abbey he had founded. He died in 1170.

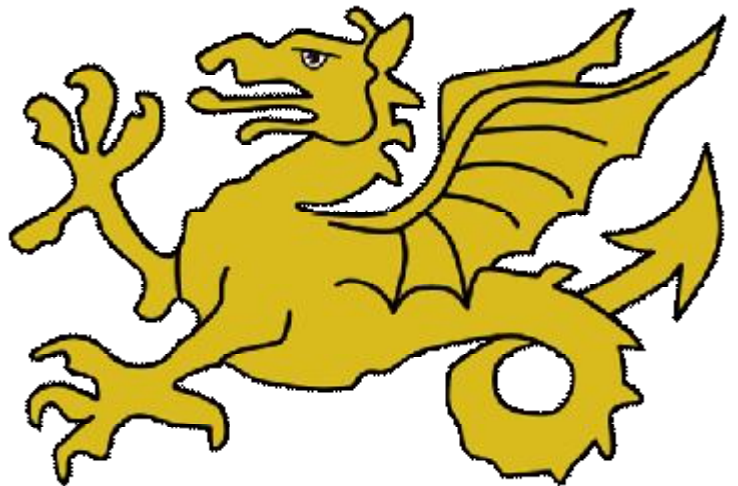
Eadnoth

(c 1030 to 1068)

Eadnoth was the father of Harding and the grandfather of Robert Fitzharding. He was known as 'Eadnoth the Staller' and was an Anglo-Saxon landowner. He was a steward to the Kings of Wessex (the arms of Wessex shown on the right, from Wikipedia) - Edward the Confessor and Harold II. He had holdings throughout Wessex before the Norman Conquest.

After the Conquest Eadnoth gave his allegiance to new King William and in 1068 he was killed at Bleadon in Somerset opposing an invasion by the deceased King

Harold's two sons Godwine and Edmund. They were not to succeed in attempts to regain the Crown of Wessex or England which was to remain fully under the control of the Normans who created a dynasty that traces its descent to our modern royalty.



The Drewe family



Isabel who married John Mompesson Esquire was the daughter of Thomas Drewe Esquire of Seagry in Wiltshire. Thomas had claim to the Drewe coat of arms above and in 1433 he is listed amongst the gentry of Wiltshire. Thomas died in 1451.

Thomas Drewe **(c 1400 to 1451)**

Thomas was eldest son and executor of his father Laurence Drewe of Seagry.

Laurence Drewe **(c 1360 to 1417)**

The following biography of Laurence comes from <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org> by author L S Woodger –

“Laurence was the son of a locally distinguished father, Thomas Drew of Seagry, steward of a number of liberties in Wiltshire in the 1360s and 1370s and a JP there between 1362 and 1382. His own career was to have much wider significance, as a lawyer to whom Richard II looked for advice as a member of his council in the last five years of his reign.

Drew's inheritance from his father apparently consisted of property at Littleton Drew and Grittleton, in Wiltshire, and land at Bentworth in Hampshire. This gave him an annual income which was to be assessed in 1412 for the purposes of taxation at £26 6s.8d. (At that time the paternal estate at Seagry itself, worth £30 a year, was held by Emma Drew, perhaps his father's widow, although it reverted into his possession not long afterwards.) Drew's Berkshire manor of Southcote (assessed at £15 a year) had come to him through marriage to the **Restwold** heiress (Lucy - see later page). The match had probably been made by May 1379, when Drew was party with Thomas Restwold (the then owner of Southcote) in a bond of 200 marks to two citizens of London and a royal serjeant-at-arms; and he shortly afterwards acted as mainpernor for Restwold's occupation of the royal bailiwick of Rye. Southcote passed to Drew within a few years; and in 1387 he was amerced for failing to repair a causeway and ditch there as well as the nearby 'Stokyngrbrugge'. In addition, he acquired an interest in the manor of Horton in Buckinghamshire.

Drew was introduced to parliamentary affairs in 1379 when the abbot of Malmesbury appointed him as a proxy in the Parliament due to assemble in April, and, as he evidently performed the task satisfactorily, he was nominated again for the session of January 1380. His impressive service on royal commissions, including those of the peace, began immediately after this Parliament's dissolution, and in the following year, while still a young man, he was made King's

attorney in the common pleas, earning a fee of £10 a year. Although he did not occupy this post for long, throughout the 1380s he was kept busy on commissions in Wiltshire and Berkshire, and as time went on he also became increasingly involved in official duties at the centre of government. He began, too, to make influential acquaintances: for example, just after the close of the Parliament of 1391 (Drew's fourth as a Member of the Commons), he stood surety at the Exchequer for Sir William Sturmy, knight of the shire for Devon. Drew's diligence in administration led to his being retained by Richard II as a King's esquire, with an annuity of 40 marks for life, and, from the very same day — 18 Feb. 1394 — as a permanent member of the King's Council, with a substantial salary of 100 marks a year. All manner of tasks were allotted to him as a consequence. That autumn he was involved in organizing the equipment of the fleet at Milford Haven for transporting Richard's forces to Ireland. He himself was intended to stay at home (he agreed to act as attorney for John, Lord Lovell, and Sir William Drayton during their absence), but in December he did himself sail for Ireland, as bearer of £16,000 of the King's treasure for financing the campaign, and returned to England early in 1395 with letters from Richard requesting further funds. In February he made a formal report to the Council about the King's progress against the rebels in the province, and it seems very likely that it was he who then declared the news to the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament. He was present at a meeting of the great council held at Eltham in July 1395, following the King's return home.

In the course of the next four years Drew continued to be active as a councillor, and his talents were put to use in the arbitration of disputes, such as the confrontation between his fellow councillor Sir William Bagot and the civic authorities at Coventry. Indeed, even though in the autumn of 1397 his position on the Council was redefined, limiting his attendance '*en cas coursables de la ley et non pas autrement*', he nevertheless continued to be employed in a wide variety of conciliar matters, and to be among the most assiduous attenders of meetings of the Council in Richard II's last years. His tasks included surveying the estates in Surrey and Sussex forfeited by the King's enemies by judgement of the Parliament of September 1397, and he naturally came into close contact with others on the Council engaged similarly in the furtherance of Richard's ambitious policies. (For instance, in April 1398 he stood surety at the Exchequer for Sir Henry Green) Yet, unlike his fellows, Drew did not benefit directly from the extensive confiscations made by the Crown in 1397-9, in the way of grants by royal letters patent; indeed, save for his annuities his work went largely unrewarded, and it may have been for this reason that he escaped vilification by the chroniclers. In June 1398 in the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, he saw fit to take out a royal pardon, presumably as an insurance against prosecution for any misdemeanours committed in the course of his official duties. In October he was summoned to come to the Council with all possible haste, respecting certain affairs of the kingdom. This may well have been in order to prepare for a journey in the company of Sir Henry Green and Sir John Bussy to the borders of Scotland, where, on 6 Nov., as commissioners for England, they were to agree with their Scottish counterparts on certain articles for observance of the truce. On 3 Dec., following his return south, Drew was given a wide-ranging brief to tour the ports of England in order to make a thorough investigation into fraud in the collection of customs and subsidies, to remove incompetent officials and compel delinquents to reform. Having received £20 as an advance on his wages, he began his arduous task with a journey to Cornwall. Then, in March 1399, he was empowered, along with Edward, duke of Aumâle, Green and Bussy, to treat for peace with Scotland, and on 14 Apr. received £26 13s.4d. as payment prior to travelling north again, this time in Aumâle's retinue. The truce with Scotland was renewed in May, and Drew, having parted company with the duke (who crossed to Ireland to join the King), returned home on 16 June. As had happened five years earlier, he again agreed to act as Lord Lovell's attorney during his absence overseas with the royal army, and once more he himself was instructed to assist in the government of the realm while the King was away. It was while he was at St. Albans with fellow members of the Council that, on 11 July, the treasurer, William Scrope, earl of Wiltshire, authorized a grant to him of the wardship of the lands of a deceased tenant-in-chief, Brian Windsor, during the minority of the heir. When, at the end of the month, the duke of York, the guardian of the realm, made an accommodation with Henry of Bolingbroke, Drew was among those who refused to join in the general defection and prepared to fight for the

King. He was accordingly committed into custody at Berkeley while Bolingbroke advanced on Bristol.

Drew was fortunate to escape the fate of Scrope, Bussy and Green; indeed, it was not long before Bolingbroke set him at liberty. Yet although he was appointed to the commission of array set up by the new King, Henry IV, in the following December, and was kept on as a JP, he was too closely associated with the old regime to expect further rehabilitation. He lost his annuities (140 marks) as a royal retainer and councillor, and Henry never saw fit to employ him in an advisory capacity. All the same, he did not entirely lose influence at Court: he proved able to recover custody of the Windsor wardship which one of Henry's esquires had wrested from him, and to have the value of this wardship augmented in a series of royal grants at the Exchequer; furthermore, he won a sympathetic response to his petition to the Parliament of 1401 for release from proceedings in Chancery and at the Exchequer stemming from his investigation of the customs service (on the ground that his extensive reports had been lost when the house of the former treasurer, the earl of Wiltshire, had been pillaged '*en la poursuite de Roy Richard*'). When, in October 1402, the King sent out letters requesting benevolences, Drew was one of two men to whom these were directed in Berkshire. As a member of Richard II's council, he had no doubt attended the Parliaments of the late 1390s *ex officio*; his election in 1406 came, however, after an absence from the Commons of 15 years. It is the report of proceedings in this particularly long Parliament that reveal him as a prominent figure in the Lower House, and, moreover, one who took a major part in deliberations. On 3 Apr. he was named on a delegation of six Members (headed by the Speaker) sent to discuss with the King's Council various provisions in the agreement recently concluded between the government and the merchants, regarding the safeguard of the sea. Then, on 19 June, he and Thomas Childrey, his companion from Berkshire, were among the six shire knights appointed as auditors of the accounts of the retiring treasurers of war (Thomas, Lord Furnival, and Sir John Pelham). That same day four members of the Lords were named as arbitrators in the dispute between the heirs of the late Lady Mohun and Sir Hugh Luttrell over the lordship of Dunster (Somerset), and when, on 22 Oct., one of them (the bishop of Exeter) was excused attendance in Parliament, the King, with the assent of the parties to the suit, appointed Drew in his place, under oath '*de faire [son] loial poair et diligence en la matire*'. Finally, on 22 Dec., Drew was put on the committee of 12 commoners delegated to oversee the engrossment of the Parliament roll. Two months after Parliament was dissolved, he secured office as collector of customs at Southampton. Even though he was permitted to appoint a deputy for routine business, he evidently took the task of augmenting royal revenues seriously, for in February 1408 he was given a reward of £20 for so doing.

Drew's official concerns left him little time for private business. Nevertheless, those qualities which had turned him into an efficient and hard-working administrator, unsullied by the charges of corruption levelled at his fellows, were appreciated by a number of his acquaintances, who asked him to serve as executor of their wills. In 1405 Robert Bullock' entrusted him with all his moveable goods, and it was no doubt in order to perform Bullock's testamentary depositions that two years later he took possession of the deceased's manor of Arborfield (which his eldest son was to return to the Bullocks after his death). Drew was on good terms with Richard Metford, bishop of Salisbury (sometime secretary to Richard II); in 1406 and 1407 he occasionally dined with the bishop's household and in April of the latter year he took on the executorship of Metford's will. At the time that Sir William Langford composed *his* last testament, in August 1411, Drew had in his safekeeping a coffer belonging to him, and as executor and trustee of Langford's estates he was to carry out his final wishes."

In the course of his career Drew had shown little interest in religious foundations, save for two small grants, both made in association with others: namely, in 1383 in a conveyance of lands worth £2 a year to Amesbury priory; and in 1392 in a gift of rent to the monastery at Edington. His will, drawn up on 18 Jan. 1417, displayed a similar indifference to the established Church. Although he made small bequests to Salisbury cathedral, Reading abbey and the parish church at Seagry, he asked simply to be buried 'in the ground', and with no more ceremony than was

strictly in keeping with the occasion. To each of his three daughters, who were left in the care of his widow, he bequeathed £100 for her marriage. Thomas Drew, his eldest son and executor, was to have the livestock at Seagry, and his two younger sons certain specified items of furniture. He died before 7 Feb., the date of probate.”

Thomas Drewe
(c 1340 to c 1380)

Thomas inherited the Manor of Seagry from his parents Thomas and Joan Drewe in about 1370.

Thomas probably descended from a Drew (or the Norman version - Drogo) Fitzpons who held the Manor of Seagry after the Norman Conquest.

The Restwold family

Lucy Restwold who married Laurence Drewe in about 1379 was the daughter of Henry Restwold of Berkshire.

Henry Restwold (c 1350 to after 1379)

Henry inherited the Manor of Southcote, to the south west of Reading in Berkshire, from his parents Thomas and Alice Restwold. Thomas and Alice are first recorded as holding the property in 1365.

There is a 'Restwold Close' in Reading today which has evidently been named after this family and near to the old family seat of Southcote as shown marked by the 'A' on the Googlemap below.



The Goodwin family



Alice Goodwin married Robert Mompesson in about 1450. Alice was the daughter of William Goodwin and his wife Elizabeth **Bonham** (see next page).

William Goodwin was Lord of the Manor of Enmore near Gillingham in Dorset. This manor was inherited from his father William the elder and was passed to Alice because William the younger had no male heirs. Through Alice's marriage to Robert Mompesson the estate of Enmore passed through to his grandson John Mompesson, brother of Drewe Mompesson and it passed out of the family in 1555.

The Bonham family

Elizabeth Bonham was the daughter of Thomas Bonham, Esquire of Bathampton, and his wife Catherine Knottingleigh.

Thomas Bonham, gent **(c 1360 to 1420)**

Thomas was born in about 1360 at Great Wishford in Wiltshire. His wife Catherine was the daughter of John Knottingleigh and through whom Thomas Bonham inherited the Manor of Bathampton. Elizabeth, the widow of John Knottingleigh, held Bathampton in 1385 and she passed it to her daughter on her death.

The website 'historyofparliament.co.uk' has the following biography for Thomas Bonham produced by LS Woodger –

“Thomas’s career was similar to that of his father, Nicholas, who sat in eight Parliaments for Wiltshire between 1355 and 1383, served as a Justice of the Peace’ and on many other royal commissions, and held office as steward of the borough of Wilton, but although he himself apparently sat in just three Parliaments, he became a more prominent figure in the administration of the county. Under the terms of Nicholas Bonham’s will, made in 1386, his lands were divided between his three lay sons: John, the eldest, inherited the manor of Bonham; Nicholas acquired more scattered properties, and Thomas himself received a moiety of the manor of Great Wishford, subject to the life interest of his mother. Yet in time, the portions of both John and Nicholas were to revert to Thomas’s branch of the family. Some four years previously Thomas had obtained, through his first marriage, the manors of Hanging Langford, Deptford and Bathampton ‘Wylde’, all also in Wiltshire. In 1412, his estates, including property in Salisbury, were assessed for the purposes of taxation at £45 a year.”

The Bonhams were closely involved in the affairs of the religious houses of the region: Thomas’s father had been a generous benefactor of the Church; two of his brothers had entered the priesthood (William was rector of the family living of Great Wishford, and Thomas was rector of Baverstock); while two of his sisters were nuns (one at Shaftesbury abbey, the other at Wilton). It perhaps followed naturally that Thomas’s own abilities as a lawyer would frequently be put to the service of ecclesiastical institutions. He is first recorded, in April 1380, standing surety for his brother John when the latter farmed the Wiltshire estates pertaining to the alien deanery of Mortain (a lease John was to retain for no fewer than 20 years); and five years later he performed a similar service for the prior of Watton. In 1392 he joined with Sir Thomas Hungerford, Laurence Drew and others in making a grant of land in Wiltshire to Edington priory, and in the following year he witnessed another benefaction to the same house offered by the abbess of Shaftesbury. This was but one of many occasions on which Bonham was party to the affairs of Shaftesbury abbey, and it seems likely that, especially in later years, he was steward of the house’s estates. (It is interesting to note that his brother John was, by 1405, steward of the other major Benedictine house of the region, Wilton.) Certainly, in November 1394 Thomas was one of those appointed to take custody of the convent at Shaftesbury, following the election of an unfit person as abbess, and his friendship with a later abbess, Cecily Fovent, led to his involvement in 1406 in the foundation of a chantry in the abbatial church, his role being that of a feoffee of property in Shaftesbury and elsewhere belonging to Robert Fovent and other members of her family. In 1410 he and Cecily were granted at the Exchequer a rent of 8s. from burgages in Shaftesbury; and in the following year he was party to a gift of property in Kelston, Somerset, for the maintenance of the abbey. Bonham was also closely associated with the canons of Salisbury: in 1394 and again in 1399 he had acted as attorney for one of them, John Boor, who was also dean of the King’s chapel, during his absence in Ireland, and another, Master John Chitterne, was a co-executor of Bonham’s father’s will. John Waltham, bishop of Salisbury, was also one of Nicholas Bonham’s executors, and in his own will, made in 1395, he left Thomas ten

marks. Bonham was, naturally enough, connected with Waltham's successor as bishop, Richard Metford, whom he served as steward of the estates of the bishopric. He is recorded as dining in the episcopal household on several occasions in the year before Metford's death in May 1407. Bonham's interest in the affairs of religious houses is reflected, too, in his frequent appointment to royal commissions concerned with the possessions of alien priories and the interests of Tarent abbey, Hyde abbey and Amesbury priory, as well as by his readiness to act as a mainpernor for such as the prior of Bruton.

Bonham's professional skills were by no means confined to services for the Church, as his record as a JP (for over 21 years), sheriff and escheator (for three terms in each office) suggests. Furthermore, from 1401 for at least eight years, he served as steward of the duchy of Lancaster estates in six counties, for a fee of £22 a year. This appointment, which betokens a high degree of professional ability, may have come about through his tenancy of the duchy manor of Great Wishford. Not surprisingly, Bonham was in demand to perform legal transactions on behalf of other Wiltshire landowners. He was a friend of the future Speaker William Stourton, whose seat at Stourton was in the same parish as the Bonhams' manor of Bonham: in 1388 the two lawyers had acted as attorneys for Thomas Strete, a retainer of William Montagu, earl of Salisbury, during his absence on the earl's lordship of the Isle of Man; both were feoffees of the lands in Crookham, Berkshire, which the earl granted to Strete; and together they held land in Othry, Somerset, by the earl's gift. (It may well be the case that, like Stourton, Bonham served as a member of Montagu's council.) Bonham was Stourton's feoffee in Wiltshire and Somerset, while Stourton's brother, John I, acted in a similar capacity on Bonham's behalf. One of the trustees of Bonham's father's estates was the prominent Lancastrian retainer, Sir Thomas Hungerford, and Bonham preserved this connexion, standing surety for Sir Thomas at his last election to Parliament in 1393, and witnessing deeds for his son, Sir Walter Hungerford. Among those for whom Bonham held trusteeships were John Lisle of Wootton and Sir Walter Romsey. Perhaps a more important connexion was with John, Lord Lovell, and his wife Maud, whom Bonham assisted in various transactions concerning land. Indeed, Henry Popham, who was engaged in a lawsuit with the Lovells, alleged that Bonham was actually Lord Lovell's retainer, and ought, therefore, to be removed from the Wiltshire bench for being biased in his lord's favour.

Although returned to only three Parliaments himself, Bonham showed his interest in parliamentary affairs by attending the Wiltshire elections of 1407, 1413 (May), 1414 (Apr.) and 1419.

Bonham died on 4 Oct. 1420. The heir to his first wife's property was his grand daughter, Alice, wife of Robert Mompesson, but the rest of his landed holdings passed first to his elder son William, who died before attaining his majority, and then to his second son, Thomas."

Nicholas Bonham, gent
(c 1330 to 1386)

Nicholas was the son of Sir John Bonham and he inherited the estates of Wishford and Bonham through his elder brother Robert. Nicholas was married to Edith who survived him. The picture to the right from St Giles in Great Wishford is the effigy of Nicholas Bonham (courtesy of Wikipedia).



Sir John Bonham
(c 1300 to c 1350)

Sir John was a Knight of the Shire in the reign of King Edward II. He held the Manor of Bonham in Stourton in Somerset after inheriting from his father Maurice.

Maurice Bonham
(c 1270 to 1302)

Maurice was the son of a Mr Bonham and his wife Juliana D'Aubigny. Juliana, and her sister Clarice, inherited estates including Wishford from her brother Henry D'Aubigny who died in 1278. Henry in turn had inherited from his brother Walter in about 1270. Juliana, Clarice, Walter and Henry were all children of Henry D'Aubigny and he had inherited from his father William D'Aubigny, son of Niel D'Aubigny. Niel was the son of Henry D'Aubigny who married Cecily daughter of Patrick de **Chaworth** and Henry held the Manor of Great Wishford from her in about 1125.

Henry who married Cecily de Chaworth was the son of Niel D'Aubigny and Amice de Ferrers, daughter of a Norman soldier Henry who had fought at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and had been granted very large amounts of land after the conquest. Nigel D'Aubigny was the son of the Norman Lord William D'Aubigny who was born in Saint-Martin-Aubigny, Coutances, La Manche, France in about 1035 and who came to England in the conquest. William was the son of another William, born in about 1010 to Nigel de St Sauveur and Adela D'Eu (a daughter of the 1st Count of Brionne), and his wife who was from the de Plessis family.

Nigel de St Sauveur born in about 968 and was the son of Viscount Nigel de Sauveur and Helena of Normandy.

Patrick de Chaworth
(c 1050 to c 1125)



Patrick was the son of Hugh de Chaworth, a Norman Lord who came to England with William the Conqueror. The coat of arms above are those attributed to this Norman family. Patrick received the Manor of Great Wishford in Wiltshire from King Henry I.

Patrick married Matilda de Hesdin in about 1079 in Salisbury, Wiltshire. Matilda was the daughter of Arnulf de Hesdin from Hesdin, Pas-de-Calais in France.

Hugh de Chaworth was the son of Ernald de Chaources who was born in about 1000 in St Symphoro in Lamans, Maine, France.

Terminus

It is here that we reach the end of this family history. We have traced a line from Francis Rogers Hiscock in the 20th century back to the and before the Norman conquest. I hope that this story has been of interest to you.

Please note – this is an essay purely for the benefit of telling the family history to fellow descendents of Francis Rogers Hiscock of Stour Provost and Farnham and the Rogers family of Mere and Tisbury. It is not intended as an academic work in itself but is based on sound research and source material. For information about any sources please contact the author via e-mail - mark.wareham2 at(@) ntlworld.com

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