

From Shropshire to the Weald

Kettles and their kin in Kent and Sussex

Part 3

Dodge – mainly Goudhurst; some Ticehurst

It is now time to follow another distaff line and explore the family of Daniel² Richardson's wife Dinah Dodge. As has already been noted, she married at Horsmonden in 1784, died at Withyham in 1821 and was buried alongside her husband in Horsmonden churchyard. She was born, however in Goudhurst, and baptised there on 7th October 1750, the third child of David Dodge and Ann Ash.

The Dodge clan didn't share the Kettles' wanderlust. Dinah was baptised and presumably born at Goudhurst, and, with the exception of her father and his siblings, who were baptised at Ticehurst, just over the county border in Sussex, the

Dodges had been in residence at Goudhurst for eight generations, from at least the mid 1500s.



Goudhurst from the churchyard

Goudhurst is a hilltop village. From the church tower there is a stunning panorama over the beautiful, rolling ridges of the Weald. According to the Goudhurst village website¹, a visitor over 100 years ago described the village as follows:

The whole neighbourhood is singularly beautiful with the sylvan pastoral beauty that is England's great characteristic. The village is straggling. Genius could scarcely have made it more irregular. It is built on the slope of an eccentric hill. Approaching it from the south you see a collection of red roofs one above another, picturesque and promising. At the summit of the hill you come to the church, ancient, large and interesting. The landscape is richly timbered. There are woods on all sides. The whole scene sparkles with a light and laughter that makes you joyous in spite of care...

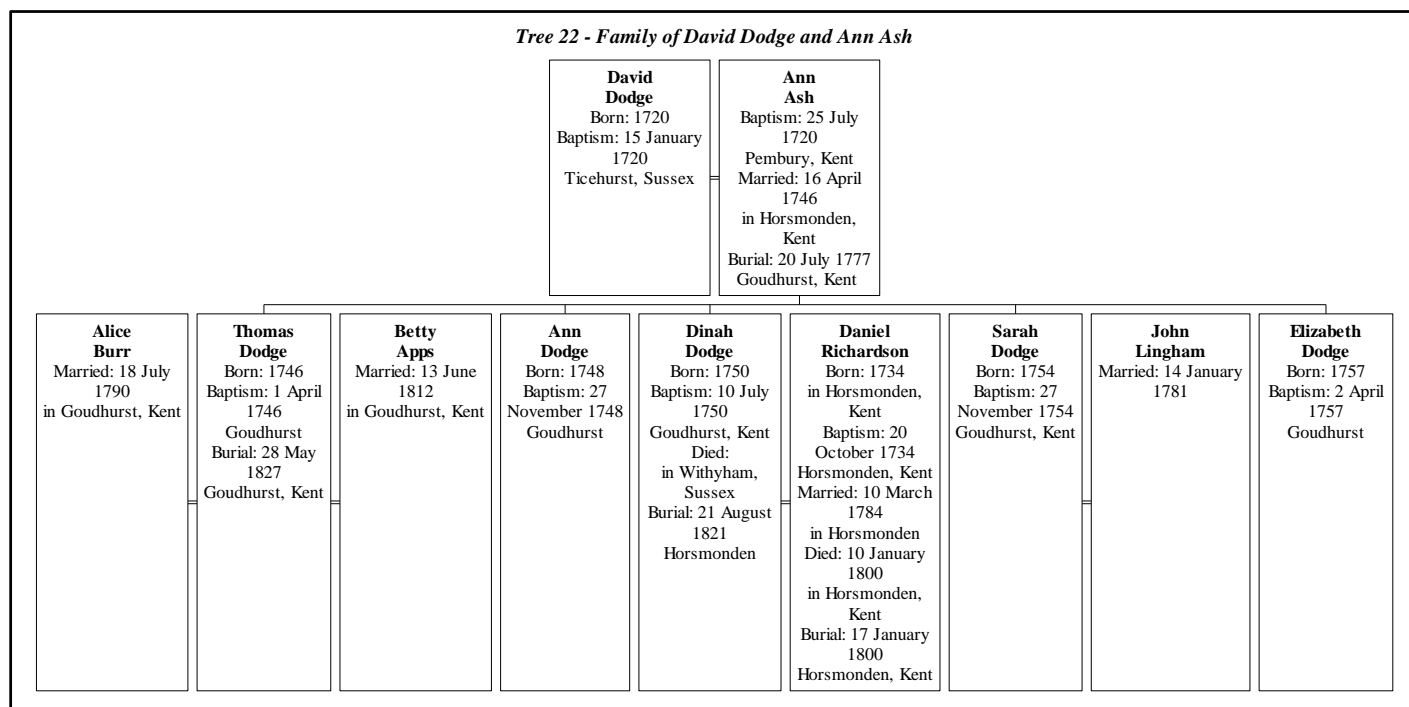
Despite the slightly fulsome language, the scene is still recognisable. No wonder the Dodges stayed put.

Dinah's two older siblings were baptised on 4th January 1746 – Thomas, and 7th November 1748 – Ann. Nothing more is known of Ann, but Thomas married late in life, first to Alice Burr, on 18th July 1790 and secondly to Betty Apps on 13th June 1812 – both times at Goudhurst. There do not seem to have been any children from either marriage as when Thomas made his will² in 1827, he appointed his nephew John Lingham as one of his executors. (He was buried on 28th May the same year.) After bequeathing part of his household goods and furniture to his wife for life, he directed that his whole estate should be put in trust and one half be divided between the children of his late sister Dinah Richardson. The other half was to be divided

¹ <http://www.goudhurst.co.uk/>

² CKS, PRC17/107/422a, will of Thomas Dodge, husbandman of Goudhurst, 1827

between the offspring of his late sister Sarah Lingham. This Sarah had been baptised on the 27th November 1754 and married John Lingham at Goudhurst on 14th January 1781. Dinah's youngest sibling, Elizabeth, was baptised on 4th February 1757 but I have found no further reference to her.



No David Dodge was baptised at Goudhurst in the right time frame, nor in the surrounding parishes in Kent. However, there was a baptism in the adjoining parish of Ticehurst in Sussex, on 15th January 1720, which would fit nicely, age-wise, with a marriage to Ann Ash at Horsmonden on 16th April 1746, almost exactly 9 months before the birth of Thomas at Goudhurst. The parents of this David were Thomas and Sarah Dodge, and at least some of the baptisms of David's nine siblings call Thomas a husbandman, the status David's son Thomas gave himself in his will. David himself left very little in the way of a paper trail. It's not even possible to assign an occupation to him. His father died young and his first appearance in official records is in the form of a Settlement Certificate³ for his mother Sarah Dodge and her children David, Arthur, Richard and Mary, in 1729. The existence of the certificate suggests that at this point in his life, recently orphaned, he was considered as potentially in need of parish relief, though there is no indication that Sarah asked for any help.

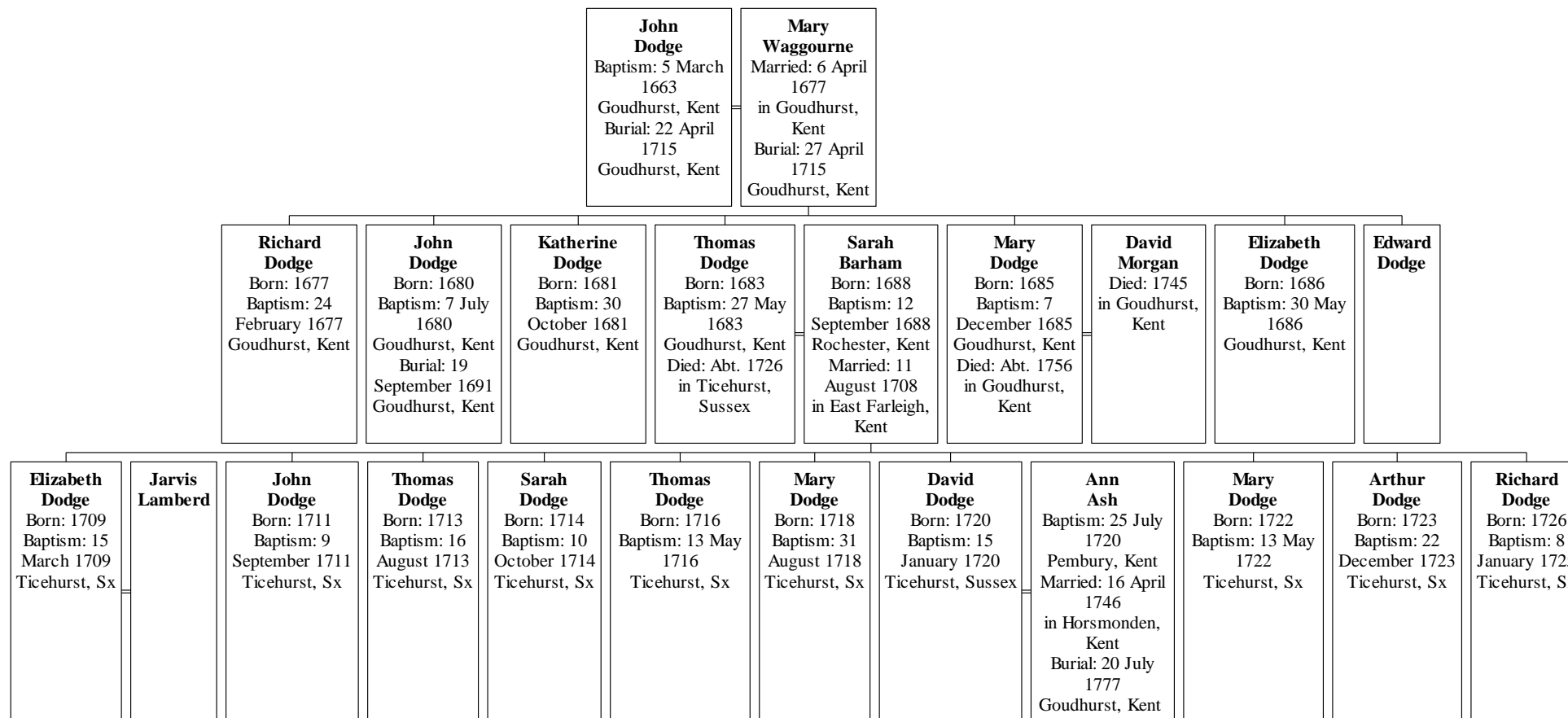
Presumably, the fears of the overseers were unfounded, as he next appears in the Goudhurst records in March 1757 paying tax:⁴ for the parish funds at six pence in the pound half rent:

David Dodge for late Austins	£16.10	8/3
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³ CKS, p178/13/36, Settlement Certificate – Sarah Dodge and her children, 1729

⁴ CKS, p157/4/1 Goudhurst Churchwardens' Accounts

Tree 23 - Descendants of John Dodge and Mary Waggourne



and similar entries appear up until his death in 1759.



St. Mary Ticehurst

It is possible that bequests from his uncle and aunt helped him set himself up, and it is the wills of these two Goudhurst residents which help link the Ticehurst family of the early part of the 18th century to Dodges living in Goudhurst later on. The second of these two wills was written by Mary Morgan, widow of Goudhurst⁵, around 1756. Her first bequest is to David Dodge, son of her deceased brother Thomas. The fact that both she and her husband, also called David, put him at the top of the list of beneficiaries suggests that perhaps they were godparents as well as aunt and uncle, and this maybe explains the sudden appearance of the name David in the family.

She goes on to make bequests to Thomas, Arthur and Richard – all David's brothers, and their sister Elizabeth, now married to Jarvis Lamberd of Goudhurst, and also names a cousin Elizabeth Dodge, daughter of John and Elizabeth, and the daughter of a brother Edward, whose baptism has not come to light. Her husband, David Morgan of Goudhurst, who died in 1745, referred to his nephew in his will⁶, calling him:

David Dodge my kinsman

along with Thomas Dodge and Thomas' daughter Elizabeth.

The only other fact known about David Dodge is the date of his burial, 7th July 1759 at Goudhurst. His wife Ann Ash is even more shadowy. She was baptised at Pembury on the 25th or 27th July 1720:

Ann, the daughter of Alexander and Elizabeth Ash of Brenchley

⁵ <http://www.ancestry.co.uk/>, Tyler Index to Wills

⁶ <http://www.ancestry.co.uk/>, Tyler Index to Wills

There is no obvious explanation as to why Anne was baptised at Pembury, the parish lying between Brenchley and Tonbridge, but the advantage is that the Pembury register records the mother's name as well as the father's:

Anne the daughter of Alexander and Elizabeth Ash of Brenchley was baptised on July 25th

Her siblings: Paul, baptised 21st February 1710, Mary – 12th September 1712, Elizabeth – 27th June 1714, Thomas – 15th July 1716, Sarah - 20th May 1718, Joseph – 24th June 1723 and Benjamin – 28th August 1725 were all baptised at Brenchley as children of Alexander Ash. Her parents had married at Tonbridge on 13 December 1709 as:

Alex. Ash and Elizabeth Park, both of Brenchley

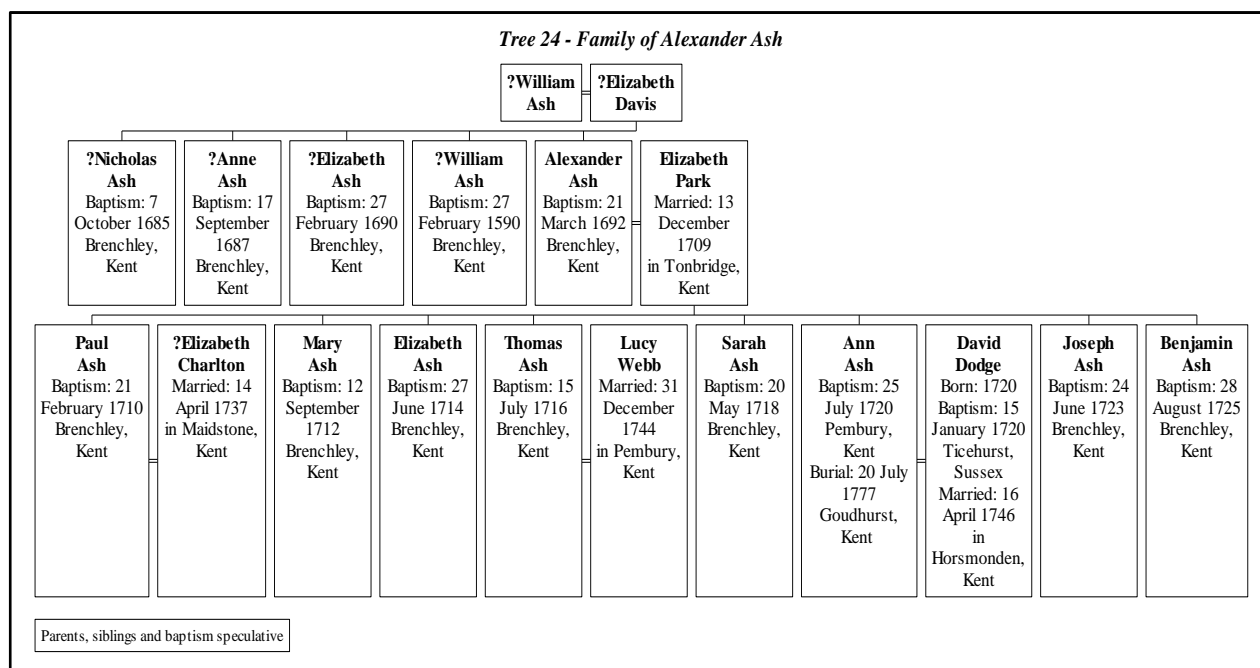


St. Peter and Paul Tonbridge

The only Alexander Ash at Brenchley was the son of William Ash and Elizabeth Davies and was baptised there on 21st March 1692. However, unless it was a late baptism (and nothing in the register suggests this) this would make him an exceptionally young groom - although that might be the reason for the marriage taking place in Tonbridge! I have found no other Alexander Ash in Kent who might be an alternative, so perhaps he did elope to Tonbridge at a very tender age. He died sometime after writing a will in which he describes himself as:

Alexander Ash of Brenchley in the County of Kent Yeoman being in health of body and of sound and disposing mind and memory

This was in 1743 and it was not proved until 1748, so maybe he didn't die until then. It mentions only his two older sons: Thomas and Paul, and his wife Elizabeth. His daughter Ann was still unmarried at that time, so her omission is unusual, as is the omission of any of her sisters still living. However, the will confirms that Elizabeth



is to have his house and land in Brencley called Upland, and that this would pass to Paul after her death, while the residue would go to Thomas, his executor.

After her husband's death, Ann Ash – recorded as Widow Dodge - paid his taxes⁷ for parish funds, beginning in 1760 and continuing until 1776. She was buried at Goudhurst on 20th July 1777.

David Dodge's parents, Thomas and Sarah married on 8th November 1708 at East Farleigh in Kent:

Thomas Dodge Tysurst, Sussex, married Sarah Barham of Hawkhurst, Kent

The story of Sarah's Barham family is a complex one, and will be followed later. The couple settled in Ticehurst, and a first child, named Elizabeth, was baptised there on 15th March 1709. It was she who married Jarvis Lamberd in Goudhurst in 1739. John came next and was baptised at Ticehurst on 9th September 1711, but also returned in adult life to Goudhurst where he and a wife Elizabeth had at least eight children. The third and fourth children were named after their parents; Thomas was baptised on 16th August 1713, but presumably died young, as another Thomas was baptised on 13th May 1716. It seems likely that he is the unnamed child of Thomas Dodge buried on 9th October 1717. Sarah, who came in between, was baptised on 10th October 1714. David, baptised on 15th January 1720, was sandwiched between two Marys – the first baptised on 31st August 1718 and the second on 15th May 1722. The next child – 22nd December 1723 - had the unusual name of Arthur, a fact which helped tie Sarah to her antecedents even though she was not born locally. He also later returned to Goudhurst where he and his wife Ann had seven children. The tenth and last child was baptised on 11th August 1725, and named Richard.

⁷ CKS, p157/5?, Goudhurst Churchwardens' Accounts



St. Mary East Farleigh

As a husbandman, Thomas presumably rented his land, but nevertheless he was required to pay land tax⁸ on it, from 1723 at least:

An assessment made in the parish of Ticehurst in the county of Sussex upon lands and after the rate of 2 shillings and two pence in the pound towards the raising of the sum of £246 1/7 ½ payable to our Sovereign Lord King George by virtue of an act of parlement entitled “An act for granting to his majesty as aid by a land tax in Great Britain for the year 1723.” ‘

1723 Pashley borough:	Rents	Moneys	Assessed
Thomas Dodge for Mrs Hawksworth	6 - 0	0 - 13 -	
1724 Pashley borough 2/1 ½ in the pound			
Thomas Dodge for Mrs Hawksworth	6/-	0	12/9
1725 Pashley Borough 2/1 ½ in the pound			
Thomas Dodge for Mrs Hawksworth	6/-	0	12/9
1725 Pashley Borough 2/1 in the pound			
Thomas Dodge for Mrs Hawksworth	6/-	0	12/9

However, the next year’s entry shows that tragedy had struck the family:

1726 Pashley Borough 4/3 in the pound			
Widow Dodge for Mrs Hawksworth	6/-	1	5/6

No burial has been found for Thomas Dodge, but it is clear that he had died at the relatively young age of 42, leaving Sarah with several small children, the youngest of whom was probably less than a year old. She paid land tax again the following year:

1727:	Rents	Money to	Assessed
Widow Dodge for Mrs Hawksworth	6/-	1	5/6
Rate: 4/3 in the pound.			

She must have found it hard to cope, though, and either returned to her home parish at some point or had to prove her legal settlement parish in order to stay in Ticehurst

⁸ CKS, PAR 492/26/3 Land Tax Asessments, Ticehurst, 1723 – 60

as there is a settlement certificate⁹ in the records of Hawkhurst parish, dated 5th April 1729, for Sarah Dodge and her children David, Arthur, Richard and Mary which suggests that, on her move back to Hawkhurst, the parish worthies feared that she might become a burden on them, and needed reassurance that the Ticehurst officials would accept liability for her and her family if need be:

We John Ollive William Watson Thomas Adds and Robert Noakes
Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish of Tisehurst in
the County of Sussex aforesaid do hereby own and acknowledge Sarah
Dodge and David, Arthur, Richard and Mary her children to be
inhabitants legally settled in the Parish of Tisehurst aforesaid....

After that, it is unclear what happened to her. A marriage took place in Ticehurst between John Martin and Sarah Dodge on 17th October 1731, and a burial of a Sarah Dodge took place in the same parish on 16th January 1739. However, it is impossible to tell which entry refers to the mother and which to the daughter. If it was Sarah junior married John Martin, she was only 17, which is young but feasible; however, it is equally feasible that Sarah senior would wish to remarry to provide security for herself and her children.

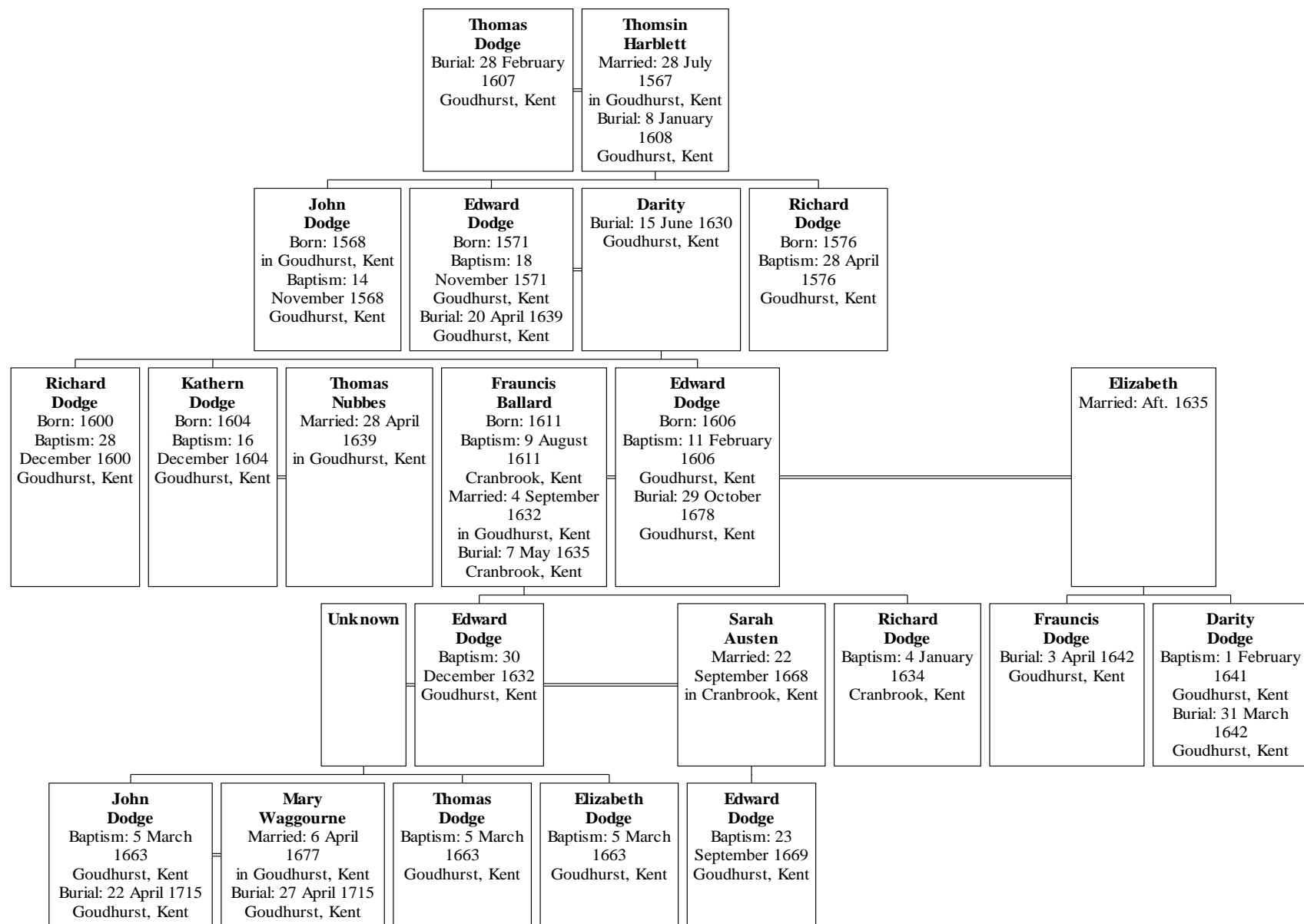
The Thomas Dodge whose life is outlined above was baptised at Goudhurst on 25th May 1683, middle child of John Dodge and Mary Waggourne, who had married at Goudhurst on 4th June 1677; all their children were baptised there. Their three older ones were Richard - 24th February 1677, John - 7th July 1680 and Katherine - 30th October 1681; the three younger were Mary - 12th July 1685, Elizabeth - 30th May 1686 and another John - born in 1691. Mary Waggourne could be identifiable with the daughter of William Waggourne baptised at Penshurst on 27th January 1647, but there is insufficient evidence to prove this.

Thomas' father, John Dodge, was the son of Edward, and was baptised on 3rd May 1663, which appears to make him too young to marry in 1677. However, two siblings, Thomas and Elizabeth, were baptised at Goudhurst on the same day, which suggests that they were born during the Commonwealth, when births were meant to be - but often weren't - registered as a civil event. Many families chose to baptise their children after the Restoration of Charles II. Another child, Edward, son of Edward and a second wife (Sarah Austen, whom he married at Cranbrook in 1668) was baptised on 23rd September 1669. The name of Edward senior's first wife is not known, nor is the year of her death.

In contrast, the names of both Edward senior's parents are known: another Edward Dodge, and his wife Fraunces Ballard, whom he married - at Goudhurst, of course - on 9th April 1632. The Edward discussed above was baptised 10 months later, on 30th February 1632, but was only just over two years old when his mother was buried at Cranbrook on 7th May 1635. His brother Richard was even younger,

⁹ CKS, p178/13/36 Settlement Certificate

Tree 25 - Descendants of Thomas Dodge and Thomsin Harblett



having been baptised at Cranbrook on 4th January 1634. Their half-sister Darity, daughter of a second wife named Elizabeth, was baptised at Goudhurst on 2nd January 1641, but she was buried a few months later on 31st March 1642 and her mother followed her to the grave on 20th April. This was a bad time for Edward, as another daughter, Frauncis – it's not clear which of his wives was her mother, probably Elizabeth – was buried on 3rd April the same year. In the right time-frame, there is only one burial recorded for an Edward Dodge at Goudhurst, which reads:

29th October 1678 Buried Edward Dodge, poor

It is impossible to say whether this is father or son, but I suspect the father, who would have been 72 by then, and maybe not in a position to support himself.

However, there is also only one Edward Dodge recorded at Goudhurst in the 1664 Hearth Tax¹⁰, which either implies that Edward senior was already dead – maybe during the Commonwealth, when parish registers were suspended - or that father and son were living under one roof, which is feasible seeing as Edward senior had lost the rest of his family with the possible exception of Richard. The Edward Dodge who is recorded has two hearths, but appears on a very long list of those not chargeable. In *Kent Hearth Tax Assessment Lady Day 1664*¹¹ Sarah Pearson notes:

Over the county as a whole, 32 per cent of houses were exempt, the average for the five lathes ranging between 30 and 33 per cent..... The difficulties faced in administering the tax are illustrated by comments in the notebook Sir Roger Twysden kept of his activities as a J.P. In 1662 he was concerned about whether or not poor people who did not pay church or poor rates, yet lived in houses valued at anything up to £13 a year, should be charged. He thought the problem was particularly acute in the Weald, in places such as Goudhurst where rich men, including clothiers, had engrossed farms and left poor carders, weavers and spinners in the former farmhouses. In his opinion the tenants should not be charged, for by taking away their land, the landlords were making these people into cottagers and thus exempt from the tax. The problem was clarified in 1664, when a new Amendment made the landlord liable but again this was not until after the return for Lady Day.

Maybe this goes some way to explain the poor status of the Dodge family at this time.

The family fortunes do seem to have fluctuated. The Edward who married Frauncis Ballard was baptised on 2nd November 1606, at Goudhurst, the third of three children of Edward and Darity Dodge. Richard, his older brother, was baptised on 28th December 1600, and Kathern, the only daughter, on 16th December 1604. When his father died in 1639 – he was buried on 20th April 1639 – he had left

¹⁰ http://www.hearthtax.org.uk/communities/kent/kent_1664L_transcript.pdf

¹¹ http://hearthtax.org.uk/index_files/Kent_online/Kent_Historical_Introduction.pdf

Kent Hearth Tax Assessment Lady Day 1664 ed. Duncan Harrington: Context and Analysis Sarah Pearson; London, The British Record Society Ltd, 2000

both a will and inventory¹², although all that survives of the will is a sentence in Latin, and does little to further understanding his life other than to confirm Kathern or Catherine (now married to Thomas Nubbes), Richard and Edward as the three children. It seems that Catherine contested the will, and this too may help to explain the poverty of the next generation, although the previous one was also evidently poor at the end of their lives. The value of Edward senior's estate was appraised modestly at just under £20, and consisted mainly of simple household artefacts, though the inclusion of:

One turning lathe... augurs... saws and other working tools 3/4

and:

Timber to work and other wood and timber and some lumber 43/-

along with other references to wood and lumber, and 'the shopp' may suggest that this Edward was a carpenter.

One final generation of Dodges can be traced at Goudhurst, the parents of Edward the carpenter. These were Thomas Dodge and Thomsin Harblett, who married in the parish on 28th July 1567, and baptised John – 14th November 1568, Edward, 18th November 1561, and Richard, 28th April 1576. Nothing more is known of Thomas Dodge other than that he was buried as poor on 29th February 1607. Thomsin died the following year and was buried at Goudhurst on 8th January 1608:

Dodge – widow of Thomas, poor

Ballard – Cranbrook



St. Dunstan Cranbrook

¹² CKS, PRC16/222/D22, Will and inventory of Edward Dodge of Goudhurst, 1639

The family of Frauncis Ballard seems to have been more financially secure than the Dodges, and this may be why Edward the carpenter was in the position to pass on goods, however paltry, to his children when he died. Francis was baptised at nearby Cranbrook, on 8th September 1611; her parents were Richard and Ann Ballard. There were two older brothers from an earlier marriage, Richard, baptised on 8th April 1605 and John – 14th July 1607; and a younger son, Walter, was baptised on 7th March 1614. Richard Ballard and Anne Johnson married at Cranbrook on 4th November 1608 and he was buried there 14 years later on 7th October 1625.

In 1609, he was listed, with others in the parish, as refusing to do work on the highways:

On Easter Tuesday [18 April] 1609, Richard Glover, constable of the hundred of Cranbrook, John Bennett and Thomas Cavell, churchwardens of the parish of Cranbrook, at Cranbrook, with other parishioners chose Thomas Knight and William Rogers, two honest persons of the same parish, to be surveyors of highways in Cranbrook for the following year and appointed six days before 24 June following for repairing the highways and on the Sunday after Easter gave public notice of the same in the parish church, yet [long list of names including] Richard Ballard, carpenter, have not repaired the roads on the said days. ¹³

The list includes 13 names; it almost looks like a mass refusal, but may just have been sloth. This document also confirms that he was a carpenter by trade, and this may explain why Edward Dodge was also a carpenter.

His will¹⁴, dated 8th June 1603, instructed his step-father and executor, Robert Nepeker, to sell his houses, barn and lands in Cranbrook. He was to give Richard's mother £5 yearly out of the proceeds, and divide the rest as instructed. £4 a year for life was set aside for his wife Anne, reduced to 40/- if she remarried, but she was also bequeathed;

one joyne bedstedde one flockbedd one feather boulster and blankette one green rugge 2 fether pillows 2 pairs of sheets more

along with a variety of pewter, brass and ironware, a chest, spoons, chairs, stools, tables, a box and a trunk – most of the moveable items in the house, it would seem. £70 each was bequeathed to his sons Walter and Richard, payable at 21 years and

unto Francis my daughter thirty pounds in money when she shall be of the full age of one and twenty years

This was £10 more than her husband's goods were appraised at when he died. The will was witnessed by his brother Robert and Theophilus Hills.

¹³ CKS, QM/SI/1609/19/12

¹⁴ CKS, PRC/17/64/34a, will of Richard Ballard of Cranbrook, 1625

Richard Ballard senior was born before the register at Cranbrook was begun, and in fact on the earliest entries for his children's baptisms, no parents' names are given. His marriage to Elizabeth Mattris on 17th November 1578 there is recorded, but a later marriage, to a lady named Katherine, is not. Given that the burial of Elizabeth has not come to light, it's not possible to be sure that all the children baptised at Cranbrook belong to Richard and Elizabeth.

Only the youngest child, also named Elizabeth, baptised on 9th March 1599, has even her father's name recorded. However, as the first child arrived exactly 9 months after the wedding, and the rest appeared regularly thereafter at 2 or 3 year intervals, it seems highly likely that Elizabeth was the mother of them all. Fortunately, all the children are named in the father's will, confirming at least the identity of the father. The only clue to the mother's identity lies in Richard junior's will, where he makes a bequest:

to my mother

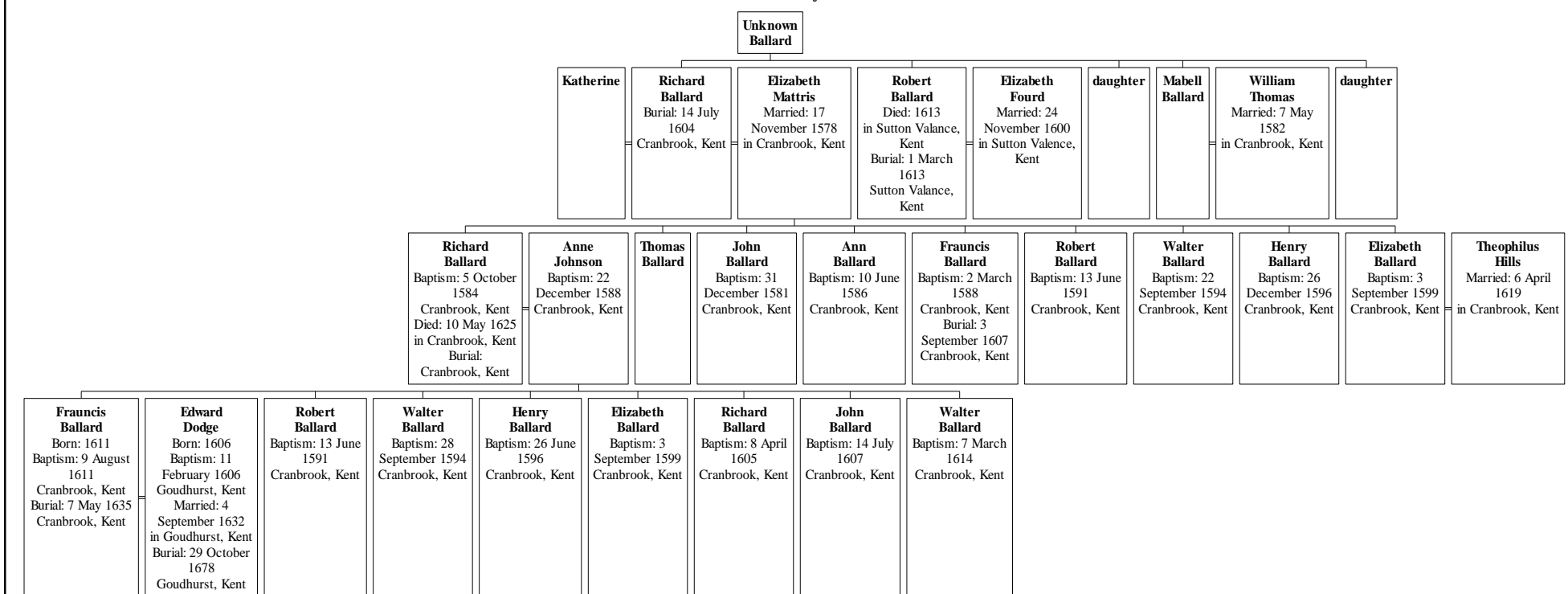
which could imply a blood relationship, but it could also just be that Katherine was the only 'mother' he had known.



St. Dunstan Cranbrook - interior

The first of the older Richard's children was Thomas, baptised at Cranbrook on 23rd August 1579; then came John, baptised on 31st December 1581. Richard (who died in 1625) was baptised on 10th May 1584. He was followed by Ann – 6th October 1586, Frauncis – baptised 3rd February 1588 and buried 9th March 1607, Robert – of whom more later, on 13th June 1591, Walter – 22nd September 1594, Henry – 26th December 1596, and finally Elizabeth in 1599.

Tree 26 - Ballard of Cranbrook



In 1587, Richard found himself executor to and beneficiary of the will of one John Matresse of Cranbrook¹⁵. This man describes himself as a husbandman, but this seems modest in the light of numerous bequests to servants and considerable amounts given to the poor of the parish. He had no children, and many bequests were made to members of the family of his wife, Marie Stevens, whom he had married 10 years earlier, but the residue of his estate was bequeathed equally to his wife Marie and Richard Ballard. My reading is that this man was Elizabeth Mattris' brother. It is strange that she is not mentioned, though, which adds to the mystery of when she died.

Richard senior died when his youngest child was only five years old, and was buried at Cranbrook on 14th July 1603. He left a detailed will¹⁶ dated 8th June 1602. In it, he identified himself as a carpenter, like his son, then bequeathed 20/- to the poor of Cranbrook. After that, he turned his attention to his wife, Katherine. She was given two cows – to be chosen by her – and all the household stuff. Provided she remained a widow, she would also receive the marital home with barn, buildings and all the lands belonging to them:

but if my said wife do happen to marry again then to content herself with the house, barn and half my said lands during her life and she to keep the said houses always well and sufficiently repaired and maintained

She was also to give half the household stuff to Richard's son Thomas if she remarried, so that he could share it out amongst his siblings.

After Katherine's death, the lands in Cranbrook were to be inherited by his son Richard, provided that he then give his brother Henry £20.

Richard senior also held land in Goudhurst, and left this, along with:

my house workhouse barns and building whatsoever

there to his sons Thomas and John with the proviso that these two pay their brothers Robert and Walter £30 apiece when they reach the age of 21. His three daughters (Ann, Francis and Elizabeth, though not named in the will) were to have £20 apiece on marriage or at the age of 21.

Thomas, Richard's son, was given the lease:

which I have from Mr. John Baker provided that it shall be lawful for my wife to make malt and to use the rooms that shall be necessary for that purpose there

while Thomas, John, Richard and Katherine were to share the lease of lands held from a Mr Roberts. The will goes on to make bequests to his siblings: 10/- to his

¹⁵ TNA, Prob 11/72, will of John Matresse of Cranbrook, 1587

¹⁶ CKS, PRC17/53/165, will of Richard Ballard of Cranbrook, 1603

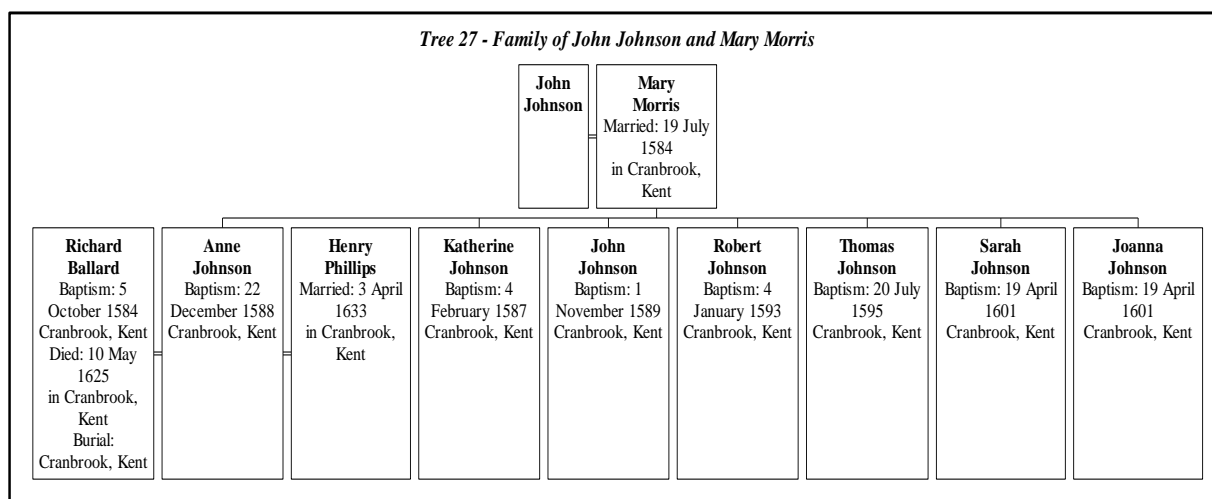
brother Robert; 5/- to his sister, the wife of William Thomas (this was Mabel, who married at Cranbrook on 7th May 1582) and two other unnamed sisters 10/- apiece. Mabel's three children were not forgotten – 2/6 to each of the girls and 5/- to godson Richard Williams. There were other godchildren, who each received 1/-.

His eldest son Thomas was made executor and received the residue of the estate, while his wife Katherine was given charge of the children, and Thomas Roberts of Glassenbury and William Sheafe were named overseers. Richard Ballard made his mark in the presence of Joseph Birchet, John Leighe and Nicholas Caponells. The will was proved on 12th August 1603.

Katherine Ballard did marry again, to the executor of Richard junior's later will, Robert Nepeker or Nippeker at Cranbrook, on 24th September 1604. Interestingly, though, the will of Richard senior's brother Robert Ballard of Sutton Valence¹⁷ leaves a bequest to:

my sister late widow of my brother Richard Ballard vis viii^d

referring to her as his brother's late widow rather than Robert Nepeker's wife. Robert's house in Sutton Valence and 3 acres of land in Langley were initially to go to his wife (Elizabeth Fourd, whom he married on 24th November 1600 at Sutton Valence) but after her death it was to pass to his brother Richard's eldest son (presumably Thomas). The rest of Richard's children received four marks each, as did Robert and Richard's sister Mabel Thomas, to be invested – she to have the interest, her son the capital after her death.



Anne Ballard née Johnson also married again, at Cranbrook on 4th July 1633; her new husband was named Henry Phillips. She had been baptised at Cranbrook on 22nd December 1588, daughter of John and Mary Johnson née Morris who had married at Cranbrook on 19th July 1584. She had six siblings: Katherine – baptised 2nd April 1587, John – baptised 11th January 1589, Robert – 1st April 1593, Thomas -

¹⁷ CKS, PRC 17/57/3406, Will of Robert Ballard of Sutton Valence, 1610/14

20th July 1601 and Sarah and Joanna, both baptised at Cranbrook on 19th April 1601. I have not managed to trace anything of Anne's later life.

Barham – mainly Hawkhurst, Ticehurst and Wadhurst

Having followed the Dodge line and its branches as far as possible, it's now time to skip back up some six generations to Sarah Barham who married Thomas Dodge at East Farleigh in 1708 as Sarah Barham of Hawkhurst. I knew that she and Thomas had raised a family in Ticehurst, just over the county boundary in Sussex, but neither of these parishes, or any close by, had a baptism for a Sarah Barham. To my surprise, it turned out that she had been baptised at St. Nicholas in Rochester, a city church right beside the cathedral, in 1688. There she was recorded as:

Sarah Barham the daughter of Arthur Barham by Mary his wife was baptised the 9 day of December



St. Nicholas Rochester

Although this may seem a leap of faith to accept this as the right baptism, there seems to be enough corroborative evidence to confirm that it is correct. Most of her story has been outlined above, so it is to her father Arthur that this account now turns.

Arthur Barham was baptised at Hawkhurst on 21st January 1650 as:

Arthur the sonne of Robert Barrum

His father was a clothier and comfortably off. After his death in 1684 Arthur received £39 6/8 from his father's estate¹⁸ – exactly the same amount as his four surviving siblings (or their spouses) out of the around £260 totalled in the inventory. Maybe he didn't want to follow in his father's footsteps; maybe his older brother Robert had taken over his father's business; maybe by this time it was no longer an option as the cloth trade had mainly moved elsewhere. Whatever the reason, Arthur opted to become a blacksmith. This was a good profession, as everyone needed well-crafted tools, and the blacksmith was often a respected member of the community. According to Zell¹⁹, in this period smiths ranked third, after clothiers and tanners, in terms of wealth in Wealden society, although blacksmiths would not have been as well off as the specialist toolmakers and scythesmiths. They were on a footing, nevertheless, with the better off farmers.



All Saints Frindsbury

Perhaps it was the death of his father, and the accompanying inheritance which provoked the move from Hawkhurst to the Rochester area. Maybe he had already met his wife, Mary Smith, whom he married by licence at Frindsbury, just over the Medway from Rochester, on 11th October 1685. Or possibly he thought he had a better chance of being a successful blacksmith in the cathedral town, some 26 miles from Hawkhurst. Perhaps, even, he worked at the Dockyard in Chatham. Whatever the reason, he and his wife baptised five children at St Nicholas': Vernon, on 21st January 1686, then Sarah, followed by Ann – 27th November 1691, and then Susanna – 11th April 1694, another Ann – 16th January 1695 and Arthur – 27th March 1701. Susanna, incidentally, baptised a child of her own at Hawkhurst in 1720.

Presumably Arthur had undertaken an apprenticeship at some point, as on 1st January 1691 one Thomas Knowlden was indentured²⁰ to:

¹⁸ CKS, PRC 2/40/172 1684

¹⁹ *Industry in the Countryside: Wealden Society in the sixteenth century*, Michael Zell, CUP, 2004, Cambridge

²⁰ CKS, p229/14/6 1691

Arthur Barham of Rochester, Blacksmith

to undertake his own training. The indenture witnesses the fact that:

Thomas Knowlden of Linton in the county of Kent Blacksmith ...doth put and bind himself to apprentice to Arthur Barham of the City of Rochester ...Blacksmith to learn his Art with him after the manner of an apprentice

As master, Arthur was enjoined to provide his apprentice with:

two suits of apparel for all parts of his body (that is to say) one for holy days and one for working days meet fit and convenient for his wearing

Shortly after the birth of Arthur junior Mary died, and was buried on 24th January 1703 at St. Nicholas as:

Mary Barham ye wife of Arthur Barham, A Smith

At some time after this event, and presumably before 1708 when his daughter Sarah was described as 'of Hawkhurst' Arthur returned home and was buried at Hawkhurst on 2nd December 1723 as:

Arthur Barham, blacksmith

The constant references to his occupation, and the relatively unusual first name, make a convincing case for it being the same man at both Hawkhurst and Rochester.

With the appearance of Arthur's father, Robert Barham, this story suddenly links into a family whose story was written up in an article by R.G. FitzGerald-Uniacke, a Victorian antiquary who seems to have specialised in genealogies. The article appeared in volume 56 of the *Sussex Archaeological Collections relating to the History and Antiquities of the County*. This was published in 1914, under the title *The Barhams of Shoemiths in Wadhurst*. FitzGerald-Uniacke was a prolific writer of family histories in the late Victorian period, and was clearly able to cope with Latin and palaeography which I find challenging. However, he didn't have the easy access to records which we have now via the internet, and he had a mind-set which sometimes overlooked the possibilities of the female line. His research, unquestioned, appears on innumerable internet sites, so I hope that the following account may at least make modern researchers look at the evidence again, as there are questions which need to be asked, especially as the account seems to have been written to flatter Sir George Barham of Snape, founder of the Express County Milk Company. There is no doubt that the Barham clan had some prestigious members and made connections through marriage to several important local families, but nevertheless, the evidence cited is on occasions shaky, and occasionally, I believe, plain wrong.



St. Lawrence Hawkhurst

Much is known and, I believe, indisputable about Arthur's father, Robert Barham or Barrum. On 11th July 1639, he married Ann Gibbon at Hawkhurst in Kent. The couple baptised eight children at the same church, starting with Ann on 18th July 1641. Mary was baptised on 26th March 1643 and grew up to marry Brian Ley (24th December 1671). John – 29th June 1645 – was followed by Sarah, born on 24th June 1646 and baptised 4 days later. She married twice – first to Thomas Goffe in 1665 and then John ?Washland. Robert junior, born on 24th April 1649 was baptised on 6th May. Arthur was baptised on 26th January 1650 and Richard on 17th July 1653. He had a short life and was buried at Hawkhurst on 28th June 1664. Francis, the youngest child, was born on 5th August 1656 and baptised on 28th.

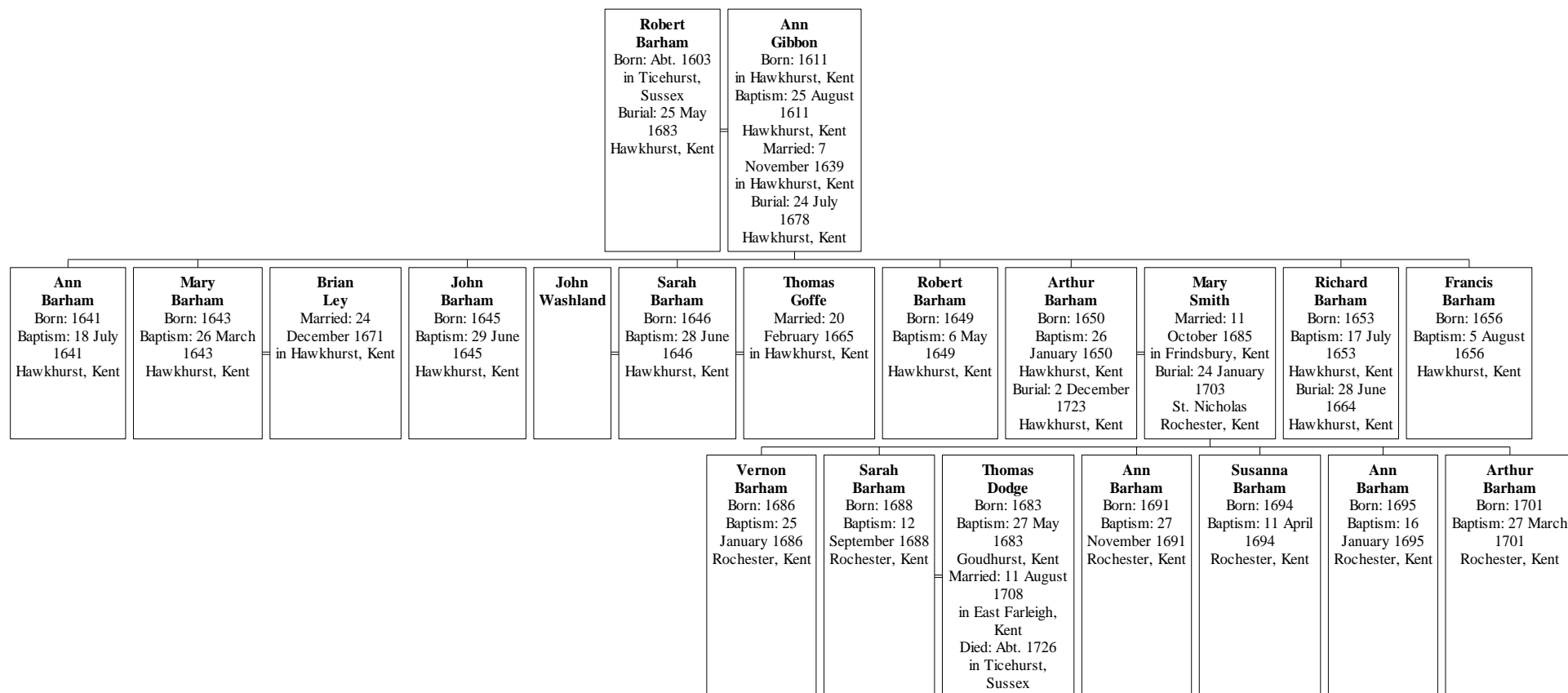
This was an era in which Christendom, and the Italian maritime states in particular, had lost control of the Mediterranean to the Turkish Empire, which not only dominated on land but encouraged piracy at sea. Consequently, money was often raised at parish level to ransom those unfortunates who had fallen into Turkish hands. Two entries in the Hawkhurst parish register exemplify this²¹. The first is undated, but was probably around 1671:

The charity of the parishioners of Hawkhurst in the county of Kent given and collected towards the ... put forth by his gracious Majesty for the raising of a certain sum of money in order to the ransoming of many of our poor Christian brethren that have been lately taken by Turkish pirates and kept in cruel slavery under them together with the contributors names as followeth ...

Mary Barham	4d
Robert Barham	6d

²¹ CKS, p178/5/8 Hawkhurst Churchwardens' Accounts 1515-1718

Tree 28 - Descendants of Robert Barham and Ann Gibbon



These are only two of a fairly long list of names. On August 2nd 1680, Robert made a further donation:

The collection of the parish of Hawkhurst for the distressed English
taken captive by the Turkish pirates of Algier.
Robert Barham 4d

Interestingly, Robert and his family were the focus of a case study of a clothier's family carried out by Anthony Poole²²

Robert Barham of Hawkhurst married Ann Gibbon there in 1639. He was comfortably off without being a particularly prosperous man: he paid tax on two hearths, was referred to as a 'clothier' in his inventory, and left goods, chattels and personal estate to the value of £261.

The development of his family shows some familiar features and some which show a contrast. The delay of 24 months between marriage and first known baptism is longer than usual; it may have been a purely natural one or it may be that there was a rapid birth for which we have no evidence. The intervals between subsequent baptisms fall either side of two years throughout the family build-up, until, towards the end, the intervals become more extended, to 30 and then 37 months. The exception is the interval between the baptisms of John and Sarah, a mere 12 months, which implies the death of John within days of childbirth.

Robert and Ann proved successful in nurturing most of their family. Eight children are known, of whom John probably died an infant and Richard at the age of 10. Francis, born in the period of secular administration (1653-60), was not baptized until he was nine years old. Ann lived for 22 years after the birth of her last child, dying after nearly 40 years of marriage, and her husband survived her by five years. As a result they saw their children through to maturity and beyond. On Robert's death intestate, his eldest surviving son, Robert, acted as administrator of the estate. He divided the personal estate, at £39 each, between his sister Anne, the husbands of sisters Mary and Sarah, and his brothers Arthur and Francis; he kept the residue of £31 for himself.

I think Poole is mistaken in believing Francis to have been baptised late, although he is correct that it was not uncommon in this period, but I think he may have mis-transcribed, as the register clearly gives both birth and baptism year as 1656. However, I owe him an immense debt of gratitude in pointing me towards the probate accounts, which have not been indexed. Because these are a rarely accessed source, I quote the account²³ almost in full:

The accompt of Robert Barham – naturall and lawfull sonne and
administrator of the goods and chattels and credits of Robert Barham

²² *A Market Town and its Surrounding Villages – Cranbrook, Kent in the Later Seventeenth Century*, Anthony Poole, Philimore & Co. Ltd., Chichester, 2005, p.87

²³ CKS, PRC 2/40/172 1684

late of the parish of Hawkhurst in the county of Kent and Archdeaconry of Canterbury deceased intestate, made and declared upon the administration in the same goods chattels and credits as followeth -

The charge

Imprimis this Accomptant (saving and excepting the hereinafter prayed) chargeth himself with all and singular the goods chattels and credits of the said Robert Barham deceased in one inventory thereof made and exhibited into this court amounting to the sum of _____ CCLx^{le} xiiijs^vd

Sum of the charge appeareth

Whereout this accountant prayeth to be allowed the several sums following by him necessarily paid and expended viz

The discharge

Imprimis paid for the funeral expenses of the said intestate the sum of _____ iiii^{li} xijs^{viii}d

Item paid for the of an Inventory taken of the said intestate's goods, for the engrossing the inventory and all other necessary charges thereabouts, the sum of _____ xxiijs^{viii}d

Item paid to Arthur Barham naturall and lawfull sonne of the said intestate for his part or share in the personal estate of the said intestate, the sum of _____ xxxix^{li} vijs^{viii}d

Item paid to Francis Barham another of the said intestates ~~deu~~ upon the same accompt the like sum of _____ xxxix^{li} vijs^{viii}d

Item paid to John ?Washland/Nackland who married the daughter of the said intestate for his part or share of the said intestate's estate in right of his said wife the sum of _____ xxxix^{li} vijs^{viii}d

Item paid Anne Barham a daughter of the said intestate for her part or share of the said intestate's said estate the sum of _____ xxxix^{li} vijs^{viii}d

Item paid to Bryan Ley who married Mary the daughter of the said intestate for his said wife's share or part of the said intestate's estate the sum of _____ xxxix^{li} vijs^{viii}d

Item paid for the drawing and passing of this accompt with the quietus thereupon under the ... of the court, allotment of the remainder and other necessary charges thereupon the sum of _____

xxxvs

Item This accomptant declareth that whereas it is and charged in the inventory that there was due to the said intestate in desperate debts upon bonds the sum of thirty pounds, he saith that the said debt is and was due of one Robert Smith late of Woodchurch deceased and that the same Smith at the time of the death of the said intestate and dyed insolvent and that he this accomptant never received any part of the said debt nor is he ever like to receive the same and thereof he prayeth an allowance and for the said sum of _ xxx^{li}

Item he prayeth to be allowed for his expenses of travel with sureties in coming to take the Administration aforesaid unto ... getting the goods apprizd and other necessary charges thereby occasioned to him _

xl^s

Sum of the Discharge is

CCxxx^{li} iisⁱⁱⁱd

Sum remaining in this Accomptants hands is _

xxx^{li} xvijs^xd

Robert had died in May 1683, and was buried at Hawkhurst on 25th of that month. As will be clear from the document above, he left no will, but his son Robert caused a full inventory²⁴ to be taken:

An inventory of the goods chattels and personall estate of Robert Barham late of Hawkhurst in the county of Kent clothier deceased taken and appraised the twelfth day of June Anno Dom. 1683 by them whose names are hereunder written.

In the kitchen chamber

	L	S	D
Imprimis his purse and money	00	05	00
Item his wearing Apparel woollen	01	15	00
Item his wearing Apparel linen	00	05	00
Item three yards and halfe of Kerzie	00	10	06
Item three pair of sheets and one sheet and two pillowcoates four tablecloths three towels and one ashcloth	01	10	00
Item one feather bed one feather bolster one coverlet one blanket one joyne bedstedde mat and cord one truckle and cord	03	10	00
Item three joyn chests three join boxes and two chairs And one sword and scabbard	01	01	00

In the hall chamber

Item one join bedstead matt and cord	00	13	04
--------------------------------------	----	----	----

In the outer chamber

Item one boarded bedstead one feather bed and bolster And one pillow one coverlet and one blankett	01	10	00
---	----	----	----

In the Garret

Item two axes one mattock one handbill and other lumber	00	11	06
Item one case of pistolls	00	06	00

In the kitchen

Item one table and cupboard one forme one joyn stoolle and three chairs	01	13	04
Item twenty pound of pewter one ?bedpan one one dripping pan one brass kettle one brass pot two skilletts one brass mortar and pestle one warming pan one brass skimmer	01	13	04
Item two iron pots one iron kettle one iron skillet one gridiron on toasting iron one spitt one andiron two ?creepers one pair of tongs one.... one fire pan one pair of pothangers one pair of bellows	01	00	00
Item one one gun one saw one ?drawshare	00	13	04

In the brewhouse

²⁴ CKS, PRC 11/47/16 1683

Item one furnace one brewing tub one keeler one ducking tub one old tub three ?skalders one salt store four barrels and one ?funnel one bill and two forks	02	00	00
--	----	----	----

In the buttery Item one cage eight truggs two bowls one butter platter one one cheese frame one table and frame one ... bailer one old tub and keeler and three	01	06	08
--	----	----	----

Item in bonds debts and ready money the some of	210	11	05
---	-----	----	----

Desperate debts upon bonds	30	00	00
----------------------------	----	----	----

Item things out of sight and forgotten	00	03	00
Some is	260	18	09

John Chittenden
William Whatman

Ex... 19 die Junii 1683
Robert Barham filius et
Admon

It is the only inventory I have seen which lists a case of pistols. Could this be a relic of service in the Civil War perhaps?

Thus far covers everything known indisputably about Robert Barham. No baptism has come to light, although all the surrounding Kent parishes, to a distance of nearly 10 miles have registers sufficiently ancient to have recorded such an event. However, the adjacent parish in Sussex, Ticehurst, while not providing a convenient baptism, does hold records for a Barham family that FitzGerald-Uniacke believes to have been Robert's, and although the evidence is not wholly conclusive, it certainly seems the most likely scenario.



St. Peter and Paul Wadhurst - churchyard

The branch of the Barham family just over the border had connections with both Ticehurst and Wadhurst – the adjacent parish. No Barhams were baptised at Ticehurst at this time, but the Wadhurst register, which frustratingly only starts in 1604 has two helpful entries. Joane, daughter of William³ Barham was baptised there on 8th November 1605 and a son James was baptised there on 6th May 1608 as:

James son of Willm Barham de Ticehurst.

Although James disappears from the records, presumably dying young, Joane is mentioned both in her father's will²⁵ and in the Court Book of Roberstbridge manor²⁶ upon which FitzGerald-Uniacke bases much of his argument about Robert's parentage. It is frustrating again that William³ Barham's will was nuncupative, i.e. a spoken will, usually suggesting that the testator was close to an unexpected death and doing his best to pass on his dying wishes to whoever was at hand. Unfortunately, in extremis, he didn't name all his heirs. His two daughters were named, as was his eldest son and:

three of the other sons of the said William

but not Robert.

Fortunately, the Court Book²⁷ makes good the deficit, as after her husband's death, Barbara Barham went to the manorial court on behalf of her children:

...filiis pred William Barham viz Thome Barham William Barham
Rico Barham Anthonie Barham et Roberto Barham et duabus fillias
pred Willm Barham patris viz Johanne Barham et Marie Barham

This, despite troublesome Latin (which I may not have transcribed completely accurately) and difficult paleography, makes it clear that William and Barbara had (in addition to the heir John, who is named earlier in the document) children named Thomas, William, Richard, Anthony, Robert, Joan and Mary.

Given the order in which the children are named in the Court Book, it seems reasonable to assume that Robert was one of the younger children of the family, maybe born just before the Wadhurst register began in 1604. However, this would make him a very mature groom, marrying, as he did in 1639, and would imply that he was nearly 80 when he died. If he was a younger son, with a father who had died before his time, though, it would be feasible that he would have needed time to establish himself in the world before taking a wife. As FitzGerald-Uniacke puts it:

as the youngest surviving son of a large family, it is not surprising that he decided to seek his fortunes further afield. Hawkhurst is the adjoining parish to Ticehurst, and Robert Barham may have found employment in

²⁵ ESRO, A14 235-6, Will of William Barham, Ticehurst, 1614

²⁶ ESRO, ACC 1745/7/15

²⁷ ESRO ACC 1745/7/15 Court Book of Robertsbridge 1603-18

the Southfrith Ironworks I think it more probable, however, that he was engaged in the Cloth-weaving trade, as were many of the younger sons of the gentry in the 16th, and 17th centuries, and this opinion is strengthened by his marriage with Anne Gibbon as the Gibbons of Rolvenden and Hawkhurst were celebrated "Clothiers"...

His second speculation is, of course, confirmed by the probate inventory, and as he further says, Hawkhurst at the time was at the centre of woollen manufacture in Kent. He also suggests that the young Robert Barham may well have had kin in Hawkhurst who helped to set him up in his trade, but I think he jumps to some slightly erroneous conclusions about the Gibbon family which will be followed later.

It is not possible to be 100% certain that the Robert Barham who married Ann Gibbon and fathered Arthur the blacksmith at Hawkhurst was the Robert Barham named as son of William and Barbara Barham of Ticehurst and Wadhurst, but in a homogenous area like the Weald, county boundaries meant little, and the progression of a family along the road from Wadhurst to Ticehurst to Hawkhurst would be a natural one. The weight of evidence is strongly suggestive of them being the same person, especially as there seems to be no further reference to Robert in Sussex. Both families were of similar status, although following different occupations, and until evidence to the contrary comes to light I accept the link, especially as Arthur's daughter Sarah eventually settled back over the border in Ticehurst, and her uncle Francis, Robert's son, settled in Etchingham in Sussex, just east of Ticehurst.



St. Mary Ticehurst interior

Once into 16th century Sussex, baptism registers cease to be of any use, and there are only a few marriage and burial records which shed light on this family. Instead, manorial records, wills and other land records are the main sources available, and these show William³ Barham of Ticehurst to be part of a large kinship web which included John Barham 'iron maker', a noted iron master who ran Brookland and Ferrege forges near Frant and Bartley Mill, and Nicholas Barham 'the Queen's Sergeant', a noted 16th century lawyer. However, exact relationships are

hard to prove: FitzGerald-Uniacke believes both of these to have been cousins to William of Ticehurst's father, but Mark Lower²⁸ believes the relationship to have been more tenuous:

John Barham of Butts, in Wadhurst, second son of a younger son of
Henry Barham, Esq., lord of Barham, &c., co. Kent

Whatever the exact relationship, all these branches do seem to have been related, sharing similar naming patterns and witnessing documents for each other. What is even harder to believe, let alone prove, is the assertion apparently made by John Philipot, Rouge Dragon of the College of Arms, and author of the 1619-21 *Visitation of Kent*, that the Barhams changed their name in antiquity from Fitz-Urse (son of bear) and were descended from the Sir Reginald Fitz-Urse who was one of the murderers of Thomas à Becket. I can give this little credence as it seems to me far more likely that the Barhams took their name from the village of the same name in Kent, south-east of Canterbury. The derivation²⁹ for this is 'Beora's homestead'. This, though, didn't stop numerous generations of Barhams putting bears on their coats of arms.

To return to William⁴ Barham of Ticehurst, and what is known for sure about him and his immediate family: he was buried on 1st June 1614 at his ancestral parish of Wadhurst. However, his nuncupative will³⁰, which seems to have been formally dictated on 7th June to:

Thomas Cogger Anthony Barnes and Edward Hodely ... tenants of the Right
Honourable Vicount Lyle of this manor of Robertsbridge

clearly states him to be:

late of Tisehurst in the county of Sussex yeoman

He surrendered to those named above:

All that his tenements and land of copyhold holden of the manor
aforesaid called Skynes in Tisehurst aforesaid to the use of John Barham
his eldest son and his heirs for ever

with the proviso that he should:

pay or cause to be paid unto Thomas Barham William Barham and
Richard Barham three of the other sons of the said William and to their
heirs to each of them twenty pounds apiece when they shall accomplish
their several ages of five and twenty years

²⁸ <http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk/BullSer1/1-10.PDF>, *Historical and Archaeological Notices of the Ironworks of the County of Sussex* by Mark Antony Lower

²⁹ *Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-names*, ed. Victor Watts, CUP, Cambridge, 2004

³⁰ ESRO, A14, 235-6, Will of William Barham of Ticehurst, 1614

and pay £20 apiece to each of his sisters, Joane and Mary when they reached the age of 23. No reference is made to his other two sons, Anthony and Robert, although he remembers to bequeath Thomas a bed and bedding, a joined chest and a cauldron after his mother's death.

He manages to name his wife as well:

The residue off all his moveable goods and chattels he did give unto the said Barbara his wife whom he did make his executrix to pay his debts and bring up his children

and clearly his other children haven't been ignored entirely as, apart from the goods left to Thomas:

the other household stuff to be equally divided between all of his children likewise after her decease

However, it does seem as if Anthony and Robert were short-changed in comparison to their siblings. Maybe if William had had more time to reflect, they would have received more.

The will was signed by Thomas Cogger, Anthony Barnes, Robert Beale and William Nayshe – the scribe. Presumably these were the names intended to be understood by the phrase:

made and declared the day and year abovesaid as himself in his lifetime did utter and make known unto us whose names are hereunder written

His wishes were presumably carried out, in particular the one which gave:

Barbara his wife ... the use and occupation of his said tenements and lands called Skynes for and during the full term of ten years next ensuing after his decease towards the education and bringing up of his said children during the said term

and it was this clause, no doubt which brought Barbara Barham to the Robertsbridge Manor Court ³¹ on 13th April 1615. The entry is in Latin, but translates roughly as:

To this court came Barbara Barham widow and petitioned to be admitted to the tenement called Skynes and all appurtenances containing by estimation thirty acres lying in Hothlie for the term of ten years after the death of her husband William Barham and then to his son John Barham...

John Barham seems to have only held on to Skynes for a short time, surrendering it to William Emmott, gent at a Court Baron on 2nd October 1615. The Latin and palaeography defeated me here, although the names of all the children are clearly recorded and it looks as if a sum of £160 is to be shared between all William and

³¹ ESRO ACC 1745/7/15 Court Book of Robertsbridge 1603-18

Barbara's children. Maybe John felt that if he sold the land, he could make good the wrong apparently done to Anthony and Robert by their father. If so, it was a telling lesson, as Robert's estate was also divided equally between all his children, male and female, although his eldest son took slightly less money. One of two admons³² for a John Barham at Ticehurst may refer to William's eldest son, one dated 1635 and one 1637. The first is to his relict Agnes, but it's not possible to determine if this is the relevant one.

FitzGerald-Uniacke suggests a marriage for Thomas Barham to Jane Winder at Ticehurst in 1623; the IGI places this at Wadhurst. He also suggests that William junior may have married Constance Bryant at Brightling and Richard Mary Skuller at Ticehurst – both in 1623, with William, then apparently making a living in Wadhurst as a shoemaker, standing surety for Richard's marriage licence³³. Anthony married Joan Jarvis at Burwash in 1630. Only Robert seems to have headed into Kent. Of the girls, there is no further sign.

William³ Barham of Ticehurst does leave further traces, though. He appears first in the Manor of Robertsbridge Court Book³⁴ on 8th October 1603 when he first acquired Skynes. To paraphrase the Latin:

Thomas Busse came to the court and surrendered the tenement and land called Skynes lying in the borough of Hothley to the use and behoof of William Barham



The Seven Stars - Wealden Hall House Robertsbridge

He seems to have been one of the jurors for the court in 1604, is mentioned in the record in some context in 1607, is a juror at least twice in 1609 and again in 1612, when he was also made Headborough (constable) for Hoathley, so he was clearly active within the manor and took on duties associated with it. The impression given

³² ESRO, B7 p.57 & A 28 p.158

³³ *Sussex Record Society Marriage Licences*, vol 1, Farncombe and co., Lewes, 1902

³⁴ ESRO, ACC 1745/7/15

in these years is of a man in the prime of his life, so his sudden demise in 1614 must have been something of a shock for the family.

Skynges itself also leaves an interesting record. A survey³⁵ carried out in 1567 describes the property and notes the names of later owners, including William Barham:

215 Thomas Beale holdeth by Copie dated [blank] One messuage one barne one kitchen and certain lands wood and pasture called Skynges in the parish of Ticehurst late Robert Cowper ut p3 [blank] lying at Skings between the highway leading from Wadhurst to Tysehurst on the Northeast and the lands of the said Jo.. Wybarne on the Sowth and abut unto the lands of Thomas Kene in parte and the lands of Randoll in parte & the lands of the said Thomas Beale in parte on ye Est and Sowthest and the lands of Thomas Cogger in parte and the said Thomas Beale in parte on the West and Northwest and contain by measure xxj acres xv dayworkes. Whereof in Woodland on the Sowth side five acres and in the West corner next Youngs ij acres. Also iij parcels of land there lying together between the highway leading from Wadhurst to Tycehurst on the Northeast and the lands of Tho: Cogger in parte and the lands of the said Jo: Wybarne and Nicholas Ovynden on the North and the lands of the said Thomas Beale devided with the waye leading from Skings gate to bardowne on the Sowth and Southest and conteyne by measure xiiij acres di' Whereof in yonge wood growing together in the Myddest of the same ground half an acre and in great Okes in the hedgerows xxvij and payeth by the year viid ob. And for a heryott his best beaste &c. *Xxvij acres iij yards v day of pasture ex vij^d ob. Wood vij acr di' Okes greate xxvij^{ty}.*
William Barham 1609 Now Sylvester Peckham's 1676.....

A map of 1734³⁶ shows a rectangle of land around Bugsy's Farm south of the Wadhurst -Ticehurst road, which would seem to match the description of Skynges. This description and the rent of 7 ½ d seems to place the land described above at this point on this later rental map, although there is another portion of land with a rental of 7d (which would be more accurate) but it is over towards Burwash town, which doesn't fit the description.

As well as holding land in the Manor of Robertsbridge, William³ Barham was also a tenant of the Manor of Hammerden³⁷, although he doesn't seem to have been particularly active there. He is listed as a defaulter in the Court Book on 1st October 1613, and again on 29th April 1614. On 13th September that year, Barbara Barham came to the court to explain by what title she claimed the bondhold land held by her late husband William Barham and pay the 20/- heriot still owed to the lord. On 24th May 1616 she appeared again, apparently paying her outstanding heriot. An entry

³⁵ ESRO, Sussex Record Society vol 57 Survey of Robertsbridge, *Surveys of the Manors of Robertsbridge, Sussex, and Michelmarsh, Hampshire, and of the Desmesne Lands of Halden in Rolvenden, Kent 1567-1570*, Ed R H D'Elboux, SRS 1944, p.100.

³⁶ ESRO, A 4728/3

³⁷ ESRO, SAS-CO 3/45

dated 25th July 1615 names John Barham – Barbara’s eldest son - as tenant of land called Skyenes or Siftland. This property was also mentioned in a separate surrender³⁸ in the Manor of Hammerden dated 9th January 1611:

Memorandum that Alexander Thomas gent doth surrender into the hands of the lord of the said manor of Hammerden by the acceptance of Anthony Mills deputy beadle in the of George Hyland and John Balden tenants two parcels of copyhold land containing by estimation ten acres more or less called or known by the name Shyft land als Skynes or by whatever name or names soever the same is or have been called or known to be and to the only use and behoof of William Barham and Barbara his wife and to the heirs of the said William Barham for ever at the will of the lord according to the customs of the said manor

and a further entry in the court roll³⁹ shows William and Barbara Barham being admitted to the property on 26th March – presumably the following court.

There are also earlier documents, including an assignment of lease⁴⁰ dated 1597 which makes reference to William³ Barham at Wadhurst, and a subsequent document dated 1602 which refers to:

William Barham of Wadhurst's land (30a) near the watercourse

It is not clear whether this is the same William, but no alternative candidate has come to light, and William’s father, who died in 1587, had lived in Wadhurst, so no doubt his son was based there at some time. A list of enfranchisements⁴¹ shows a William Barham to have been living in Wadhurst in 1596, but the information here is too fragmentary to allow of concrete conclusions.

Most of what is known of Barbara Barham’s adult life has been outlined above; the only later trace of her being her subsequent marriage at Ticehurst on 21st July 1618, by licence⁴² as detailed below:

John Waker of Heathfyeld, yeoman and Barbara Barham of Tisehurst widow; sureties, said J W and Timothy Grover of Lewes, mercer

She was born as Barbara Gouldsmyth, a fact which came to light through FitzGerald-Uniacke’s research. Her brother was Anthony Goldsmith of Framfield, whom FitzGerald-Uniacke describes as a noted ironmaster. Anthony’s will⁴³ of 1611 leaves most of his considerable wealth in trust to his grandson Goldsmith Hodgson, and his

³⁸ ESRO, SAS-CO 3/221/7, Original Surrender, Manor of Hammerden.

³⁹ ESRO, SAS-CO 3/27, Hammerden Court Roll

⁴⁰ ESRO, KIR 3/11

⁴¹ ESRO, Tenement Analysis Mayfield Town, *A Targeted Historical and Architectural Study into the Village Centre at Mayfield Sussex* Commissioned by Wealden District Council by David Martin and Barbara Martin. Archival Research by Christopher H. C. Whittick 2005

⁴² *Sussex Record Society Marriage Licences*, vol 1, Farncombe and co., Lewes, 1902

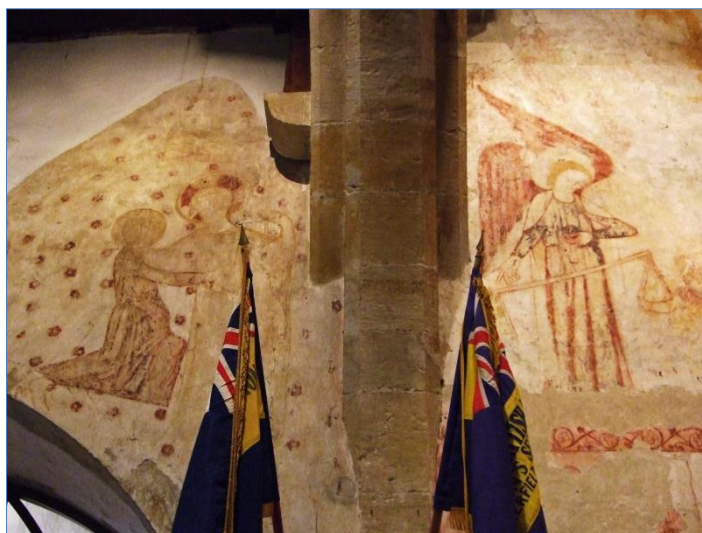
⁴³ TNA, Prob 11/118, Will of Anthony Gouldsmith, Framfield, 1611

daughter's other children. However, he fortuitously also names a brother John – who is to inherit his copyhold land in the parish of Rotherfield - his sister Barbara Barham and her son Anthony:

I will to my sister Barbara Barham's children twentie shillings apiece.
.... I give to Anthony Barham my godson five pounds.

A trio of John, Anthony, and Barbara, baptised at Rotherfield, triangulates nicely with Framfield, two parishes to the south-west and Wadhurst and Ticehurst, one and two parishes to the east. This would suggest that they were the children of John Gouldsmyth, with John baptised on 26th April 1546, Anthony on 17th April 1553 and Barbara almost 13 years later, and maybe the child of a second wife, on 11th February 1566. There was another daughter, Margaret, baptised on 17th April 1547, who presumably died before Anthony, but had maybe married and produced a child.

The available evidence is messy. There is an extant will⁴⁴ for a John Gouldsmyth, weaver of Rotherfield, which at first glance looks to belong to the right family. It does contain a bequest to a son named Anthony, but there is no reference to a daughter named Barbara. Family details are sparse. Initially this seemed not to be the will of a wealthy man, as his monetary bequests - to his wife Thomasin and son Anthony - are in shillings and pence, not pounds. However, he leaves money for the poor and 20^d for the bell of Rotherfield church, so it may be that his estate was mainly in his moveable goods and his house – income from which is willed to his wife, along with the said house and moveable goods. The only other beneficiary is his granddaughter Joan, daughter of John Phillips, who is to receive sheets and a bed-hanging when she is eighteen.



St. Denys Rotherfield – wall painting

Initially I dismissed this will as belonging to the wrong family. However, if my assumption is correct that Barbara was the child of a second marriage - to

⁴⁴ ESRO, A10 6-277 or PBT/1/1/10/6B, Will of John Gouldsmyth, Rotherfield, 1596

Thomasin - then it is possible to make a reasoned case for her absence. On a second reading, given that his son John witnessed the will so was presumably acquiescent to it, it seems more likely that John junior and Anthony had probably already had their portions, and that the bequest to granddaughter Joan was a token for the child of his dead daughter Margaret. If the rest of the estate went to Thomasin, then presumably she could have been relied upon to pass everything on to her own offspring when the time came. Obviously, though, this is hypothesis and can't be proved although it does seem to present the most likely scenario.

Another John Gouldsmith made a will⁴⁵ at Rotherfield in 1614. There is no bequest to an Anthony, but he mentions his father John and calls himself John junior, so the most likely scenario is that this is Barbara Barham's nephew, dying as a young man of around 24. He names a bevy of sisters: Elizabeth, Joan, Mary, Frances, Jane and Barbara, all of whom can be identified with certainty in the Rotherfield register. Given that the John who died in 1695 couldn't be John senior to this man's 'junior', it seems probable that John 'junior' was grandson to the earlier testator.

There are also Goldsmith wills at Framfield, where Anthony lived in later life. These may be related and may be why Anthony migrated from Rotherfield but none of the testators seem to link obviously to Anthony and Barbara's family. In addition, Anthony married and baptised a number of children at Rotherfield of whom only his daughter Elizabeth, married to Barnaby Hodgson, is named in Anthony's will. It seems likely that most of them died young. The various links to Rotherfield through marriage, baptism and land tenure all tend to confirm that the Barbara baptised at Rotherfield was probably Anthony's sister.

William³ Barham of Ticehurst's father was, inevitably, also called William² Barham, but helpfully, he spent his whole life at Wadhurst, which helps to differentiate them. Most of his life predates the era of parish registers, so the only thing that can be said for sure regarding life events is that he died sometime between 10th September 1589 when he wrote his will and 16th September when it was proved. In the will⁴⁶ he names a wife Ann, and three sons, Nicholas - his executor - William and John. There was apparently also a sister, named by Nicholas in his own will⁴⁷ as Elizabeth, wife of Robert Moone. Presumably by the time her father died she was married and had already received her portion.

The will begins with a bequest to the poor of Wadhurst and a directive to bury William in the churchyard there, and then continues:

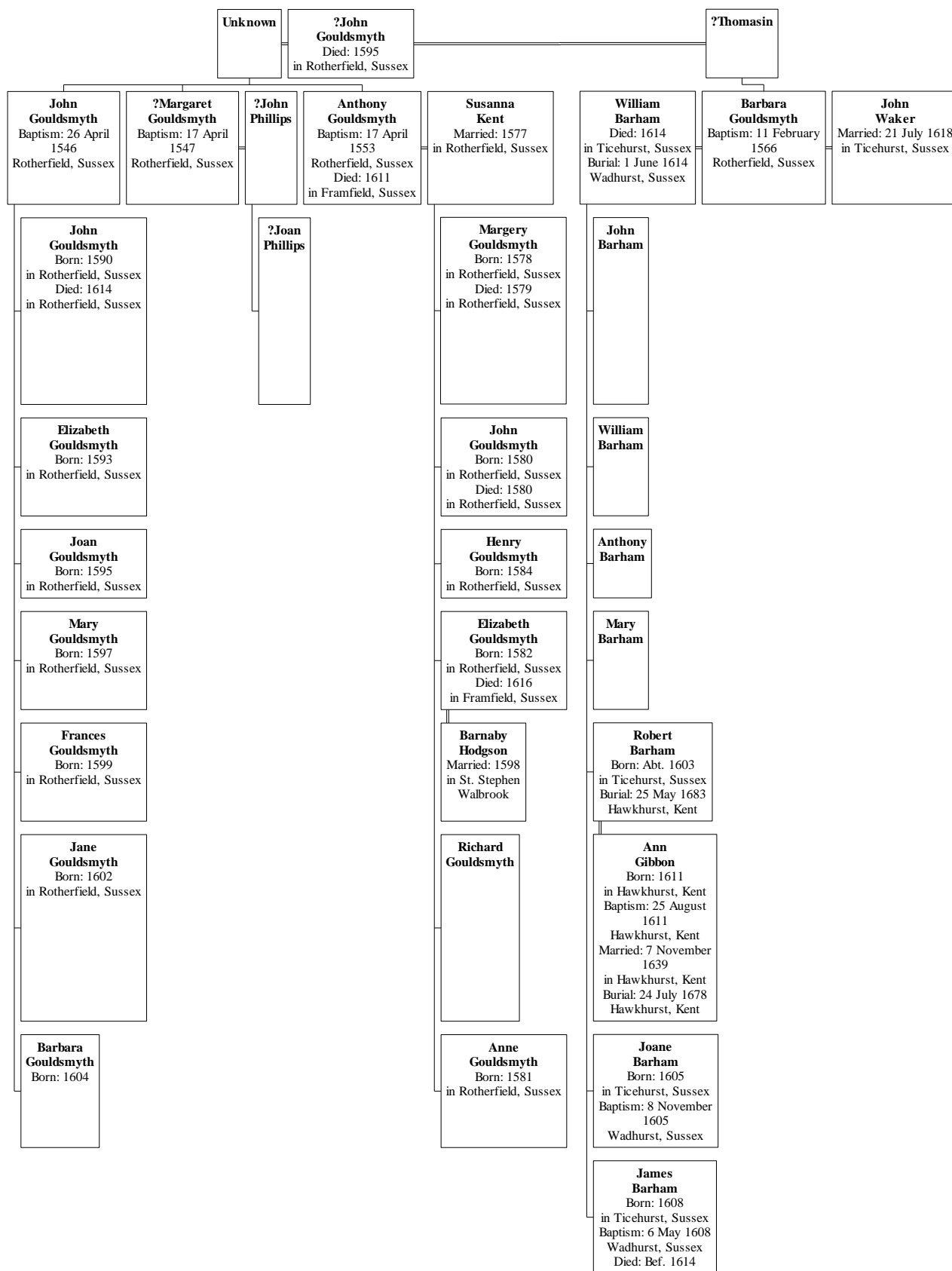
I will and bequeath unto Ann my wife my best bedstead and bed with all that belongeth to the same and a new joined cupboard to be for her to use during her life and after her decease my will is that the same shall remain unto my son William and his assigns.

⁴⁵ ESRO, A14 260-56, Will of John Goldsmith junior, Rotherfield, 1614

⁴⁶ ESRO, A16 f 260, Will of William Barham, Wadhurst, 1589

⁴⁷ TNA, Prob 11/94, Will of Nicholas Barham, Wadhurst, 1594

Tree 29 - Descendants of ?John Gouldsmyth



She is also to choose the best cow for herself and receives four bushels of wheat and malt along with the second best iron pot, various pewter items, a brass kettle, a joined chair and cushion, and a third of the household linen. In addition, she is given:

a chest which she commonly hath used ... a flitch of bacon and also a pail and a stone pot.

The rest of the linen was willed to Nicholas.

Among William's bequests were a spit, his father's best coat and £5. William's land, both free and copyhold, was to be held by Nicholas for a year, and then son John was to inherit:

one messuage and one acre of new assart with the appurtenances in Wadhurst upon condition that he pay or cause to be paid unto my son William his executors or assigns twenty pounds of lawful money of England in the church porch of Wadhurst aforesaid within nine years next after my decease

If he failed to do so, the land devolved to William³. It is interesting to note the use of the word assart, which comes from a French word meaning to grub up. An assart was a piece of forested land which had been cleared to bring it into cultivation. It was often common land, but once cleared could be held by an individual. Such a practice was fairly common in the High Weald, and had been going on since the Middle Ages. As he also makes reference to the customs of the manor of Mayfield, this land was presumably part of that manor. All other copyhold land also went to John along with a 11 acres of freehold land called Speynes, provided he pay his brother Nicholas £25 within two years. Further parcels of land (Fernreed and Spenyes Grove) also went to John with the proviso that he pay his brother William £30 within four years. Clearly William² was keen to keep his landholdings consolidated, and presumably the monetary payment William³ received from his brother John helped in the acquiring of Skynes and facilitated – or necessitated the move to Ticehurst.

The will was witnessed by a number of people, including John Lorkyn, William Durrant, Thomas Markwik, John Barham and Thomas Ballard, but the list ends by adding 'with others'. Clearly William² wanted no misunderstandings later.

The Mayfield Court Rolls⁴⁸, though hard to read, do give a glimpse of William's earlier life. On 20th February 1547/8 he was admitted to land called Barnehaws on the death of his father. The document is very faded, but according to the catalogue abstract details:

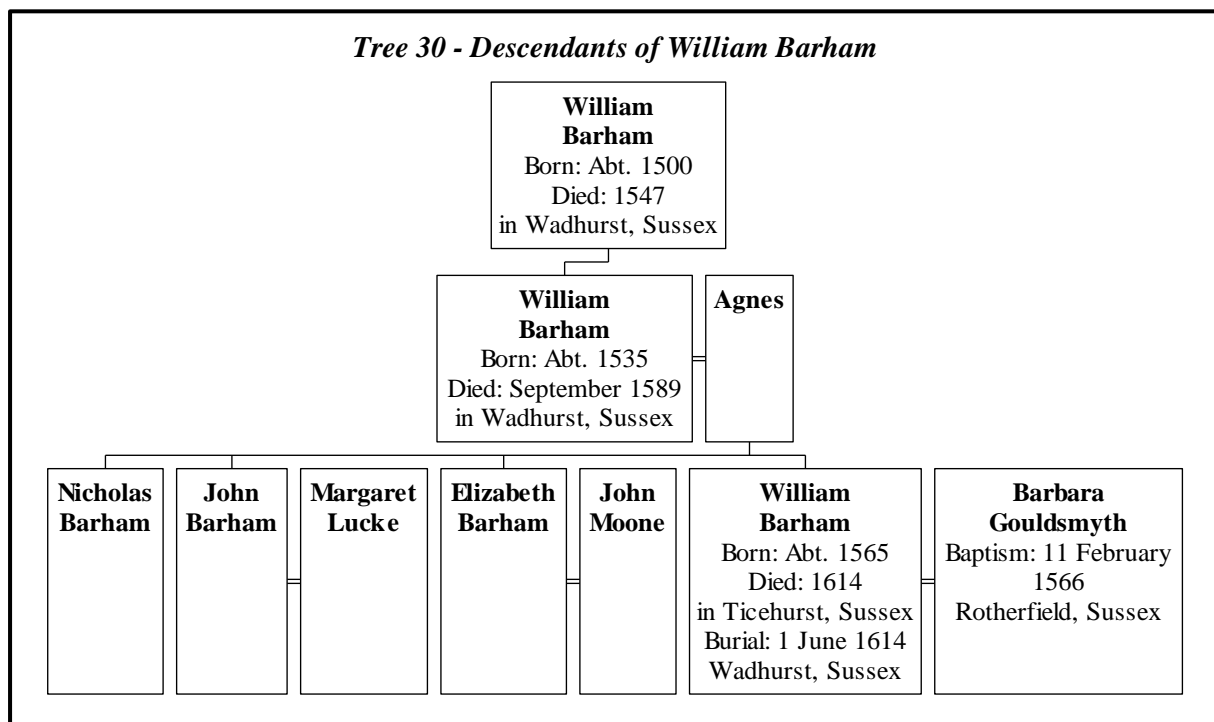
Death of William Barham; eldest son William Barham admitted. Messuage and land ... of the yard of Staldrege; 8d

⁴⁸ TNA, SC 2/206/13, Courts of John Gresham: Mayfield... Wadhurst 37 Henry VIII – 5 Edward VI

In 1548⁴⁹ John à James and his wife Marian surrendered lands:

called Bromefeld and Betton 1 ferling of copyhold land of the virgate of Mousehale in Mayfield

to William² Barham, William Penkherst, and John Wykersham. It initially looks like a kind of mortgage arrangement, as the premises was to revert to John à James if he paid William Barham £40 within 7 years. However, William later made a release to John à James of 16 acres, so more likely it was a lease and release. Later in the same year, according to the Court Roll, on the surrender of Stephen Bromley, William and two other men – Thomas Baker and Robert Whitfield - acquired several more parcels of land, totalling 25 acres in Frontes Ferling, the Virgate of Berege and the Virgate of Wyke in Wadhurst. Again, though, it is not entirely clear to me who finally ended up with the land. Obviously, unless involved in a transaction, William wasn't too involved in manorial affairs, as a final entry on 3rd April 1549 fines John and William² Barham 2d each for default of suit.



William senior's son Nicholas Barham didn't live long to enjoy his inheritance. He made his own will⁵⁰ on 20th July 1594, and it was proved by his brother William³ on 19th September the same year. In it, he left his mother, whom he calls Agnes rather than Ann Barham (the names were interchangeable) £10 and his brother John £5. He named John's children as Margaret and William – each received £10 - and his godson Robert Moone, son of his sister Elizabeth, who received £5, but simply says:

⁴⁹ ESRO, DYK/715, Copy of Mayfield Court Roll, 1548, & SC 2/206/13 Mayfield Court Roll

⁵⁰ TNA, Prob 11/94, Will of Nicholas Barham, Wadhurst, 1594

to every one of my brother William's children ten pounds

After a number of other small bequests, he willed the residue of the estate to his brother William³, who was named as executor.

The Lorkyn Myth

The two references in the wills of her husband and son are the only concrete details we have on William senior's wife. One calls her Ann, the other Agnes. FitzGerald-Uniacke believed her to have been Ann Lorkyn, a member of a wealthy family with family links to the Courthopes, an even more prestigious family who owned Whiligh in Ticehurst and were variously baronets, MPS, and major land-owners in the area. However, I am now convinced that this is not the case. It is true that John Lorkyn was one of the witnesses to William Barham senior's will, but it was not unusual for yeomen to ask members of the local gentry to take on this role.

In his account⁵¹ FitzGerald-Uniacke offers the following 'fact'.

William Barham married Anne (or Agnes) a sister of William Lorkyn of Hawkwell in Pepinbury, and the Aunt of John Lorkyn of Brenchley, afterwards of Ticehurst, whose only daur. Elizabeth Lorkyn was married in 1583 to John Courthope of Whiligh, Gent, the brother-in-law of John Barham of Bivelham. John Lorkyn, in his will dated 3 June 36 Eliz. (1594), pr. at Rochester 10 April 1595, leaves an annuity "to my Aunt Agnes Barrham, widowe, of Wadherst"

I haven't managed to find the documentary evidence which links John Lorkyn to William Lorkyn of Pepinbury, or Pembury, though I have read all the wills extant for this family. The will of William Lorkyn of Brenchley⁵² – who also held land in Pembury, so is almost certainly the man referred to by FitzGerald-Uniacke – is still catalogued at the East Sussex Record Office as the will of William Lockyn – a misspelling which appears on all their Lorkyn documents and which shows that even archive staff can sometimes get it wrong. This will is comprehensive, with references to Brenchley, Pepinbury and Capel and a large number of family members named, including his sister Ann, who if FitzGerald-Uniacke is correct, should be named as Ann or Agnes Barham, but she is not. Instead there is a bequest to his:

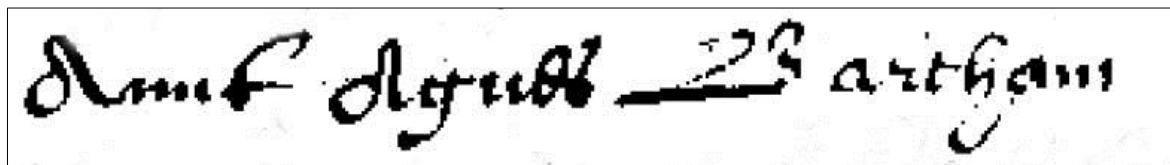
sister Anne Perkins

Admittedly the script is difficult, and I did wonder if the name could be Jenkins. The one thing it clearly wasn't was Barham.

⁵¹ <http://www.barhamhistory.com/pdf/Barham%20Descent.pdf>

⁵² ESRO – SAS-CO/1/91, Will of William Lockyn [Lorkin] of Brenchley, 1575

I then wondered whether this woman could have remarried, or whether FitzGerald-Uniacke's Victorian outlook could have ignored the possibility that John Lorkyn might leave a bequest to a maternal rather than paternal aunt. Then I looked at John Lorkyn's will⁵³ again, more closely and realised that the surname of his aunt was not Barham or even Barrham, but either Barcham or Bartham. Having checked against other words in the same will, there is no way the name could be read as having a double 'r' in the middle. It is possible that the scribe wrote what he thought the name was, or that this was a variant spelling, but for FitzGerald-Uniacke to be right, two separate clerks would have had to make a mistake on a name in two separate wills. In addition, while an unusual name, genealogical websites do show a few Barcham entries in the Ticehurst area in the right sort of timeframe. So all in all, I think the idea of a Lorkyn connection to the Barhams of Wadhurst and Ticehurst is a fallacy, and one which, unfortunately, is now proliferated on numerous internet sites.

A photograph of a handwritten entry from a will. The text is written in a cursive script and reads "Aunt Agnes Barcham". The word "Barcham" is written in a slightly larger, more formal hand than the preceding words.

Reference to Aunt Agnes Barcham in John Lorkyn's will

The earliest Barhams – Wadhurst: doubtful territory

When I first came across FitzGerald-Uniacke's account of the Barham family, I admit I was extremely sceptical, especially as he was writing for Sir George Barham of Snape, who, although he had received a baronetcy partly for his business achievements (he founded *Express Dairies* and served on London committees dedicated to raising levels of hygiene in London), was nevertheless the grandson of a dairy farmer. Self-made Victorians often delighted in acquiring extensive genealogies which involved substantial personages, and I suspect in this they were sometimes pandered to by the genealogists they employed. This is not to say that FitzGerald-Uniacke created a fictitious pedigree, but I do sometimes feel he made assumptions that a good genealogist should not. It may just be my own limitations in reading the relevant documents which leads me to say this, but I do like a nice will which makes everything cut and dried.

With the first William¹ Barham, this is unfortunately missing. The earliest reference to a William Berham, who may be William¹, that I have traced appeared in the Lay Subsidy Rolls⁵⁴ of 1524/5, where he, along with Thomas Berham and his servant Herry Berham, John Berham miller (presumably a mill for iron rather than

⁵³ TNA, Prob 11/85, Will of John Lorkyn of Ticehurst, 1595

⁵⁴ Sussex Record Society volume 56 - Lay Subsidy Rolls 1524-5, Published by the society, Lewes

corn) and Richard Berham all pay tax in the Hundred of Lokkesfeld and Borough of Wadherst. William pays £8, John £4 and Richard a sizeable £15. John and Richard were probably William's brothers, and FitzGerald-Uniacke suggests that Thomas was their uncle and Herry his son. Four years later, on 23rd November 1529, there are references to a Richard and William Barham in a Mayfield Court Roll⁵⁵ when Richard pays 4d for four pigs and William pays 1d for one pig. The context is unclear.

Two months earlier, at Uckfield on 30th August, a jury was summoned to hear a dispute about land between William¹ Barham and one William Lamkyn. The matter presumably was not resolved, as at Mayfield on 20th September, one Robert a Boke refused to be part of a jury in this case, and on 11th October, also at Mayfield, one Robert Relf also refused to help complete the jury. It is hard to know at this distance who had right on their side here, but it seems to have been more than just William¹ Barham involved in the dispute with William Lampkin. At somewhere in this time frame, his supposed brother Richard put his name to a complaint sent to Star Chamber⁵⁶, the court which sat in Westminster Hall and was designed to offer recourse to ordinary people against the rich and powerful. There is no date on the document, although it includes a reference to an earlier misdemeanour by the said Lamkyn:

To the King.

Complaint of Robert Whittfylde, Thomas Maye, Richard Barham, Nicholas Turke, and John Levesede, who state that one William Lampkyn of Wadhurst... being a person living suspiciously and a great inquierer of your subjects, bearing deadly malice and evil will, not only against your orators but also against divers others in Wadhurst, has caused the Complainants and others their neighbours to be arrested.. and useth himself that complainants cannot go abroad about their business for fear of arresting.

The document continues that some of the complainants have had to hire watchmen at night for fear of their houses being set on fire. They also accuse Lamkyn of having occupied Bayham Abbey by force for eight days in 1527 and:

there used himself as a person disobedient to the law.

No record of the outcome seems to have survived, unfortunately, although there are several references to a dispute over land between Whytfield and Lamkyn in the Court Roll earlier quoted.

⁵⁵ ESRO, ACC 1244/*, Abstract of Mayfield Court Roll, 1529-30

⁵⁶ <http://www.sussexrecordsociety.org/bookk.asp?bookid=srs016911> *Abstracts of Star Chamber Proceedings relating to the County of Sussex: Henry VII to Philip and Mary*, ed. Percy D. Mundy, Sussex Record Society, 1913

It is likely that this earliest William¹ Barham was the son of one Nicholas Barham. A very faded document dating from 1546 held in the National Archives⁵⁷ shows the connection:

It is presented that Thomas Baker, feoffee to the last will of Nicholas Barham at a court held at Mayfield Henry VIII 37 surrendered into the hands of the lord 5 acres of bondhold land acres bondhold in the Virgate of Stalerege to the use of William Barham ?virgate heirs and assigns.....

Presumably William had come into this inheritance some years before, although as his father's date of death is unknown, and his will is no longer extant, it is hard to be sure. However, William himself died sometime shortly before a court held on 20th February 1547. If he was old and infirm, this may explain why the same document records him as in default of suit at a court on 30th September 1546.

If the information above is correct, then it must be his son, the second William, who is referred to in the following, from a court held on 2nd March the same year:

To this (court?) came Nicholas Barham and surrendered into the hands of the lord .. field called Barnfield.... croft? Lying? in north.... field called Barnhaws ?in parish of Wadhurst containing by estimation in total vi acres bondhold in the virgate of Stalerege to the use of William Barham and John Barham who were admitted tenants ?with their heirs and assigns to the use of the said William and his heirs to the will of the lord ?according to the customs of the manor. [Ref to] iid?... and gave to the lord a fine of vid faithful... ??and gave nothing to the lord .. heriot and remains tenant.

Once again, the combination of faded ink, Latin and Tudor handwriting make it difficult to be sure about the exact wording, but I think the gist is right.

FitzGerald-Uniacke takes this line three further generations back, although, using mainly manorial records the link between named persons is not always proven in my view. In 1493, Nicholas' name appears on a Feet of Fines⁵⁸:

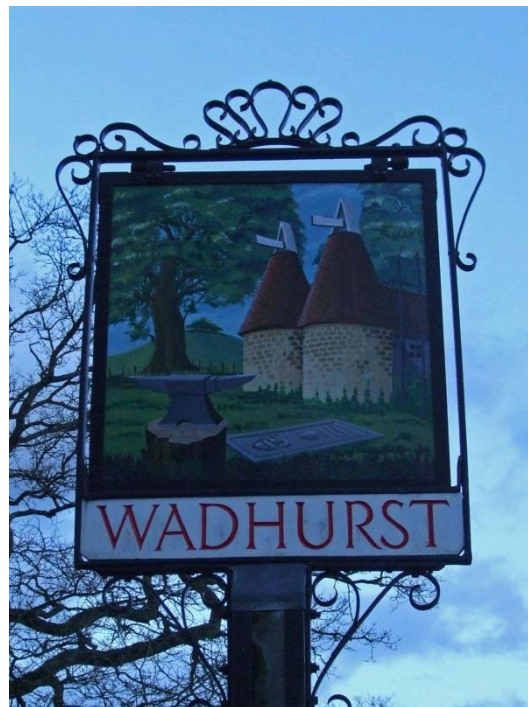
Thomas May, William Patynden, Nicholas Berham and Thomas Baker v. Richard Godyng and Margaret his wife; a toft, 60 acres of land, 4 acres of meadow, 4 acres of wood in Wadeherst; to Thomas May, etc

In around 1474, Nicholas Barham, father of the first William, was churchwarden at Wadhurst. His name appears in a chancery proceeding⁵⁹ along with that of Nicholas

⁵⁷ TNA, SC 2/206/13, Courts of John Gresham: Mayfield, Lamberhurst, Netherhoke, Wadhurst 37 Henry VIII – 5 Edward VI

⁵⁸ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=65835&strquery=Berham>

Turke making a complaint about the vicar John Browne for favouring his cousin William Browne by appointing him parish clerk.



Wadhurst village sign

In 1491 and 1492 Nicholas Barham, along with Richard Godying, released their rights to five pieces of land called Stumblett, Eastbyrne, Mottesfield, Jakkscroft & Ramgates to Thomas May and Thomas Baker of Faircrouche⁶⁰. William¹ Barham apparently witnessed the first of the two documents. A conveyance⁶¹ in 1513 between members of the Crothole family makes reference to a piece of land called Nicholasberehamsmedewe, so presumably a meadow which had, at one time, been owned by Nicholas.

According to Fitzgerald-Uniacke, there is another reference to Nicholas at a court of the Manor of Mayfield held on 28th November 1499, though I haven't seen it personally:

William Kingewoode, Nicholas Berham, and others, were appointed to hold an Inquest concerning payments for the right of pannage in the Lord's woods. At the same Court "Nicholas Berham and Thomas Baker surrendered certain lands called Cookeham in the Ward of Corocle to the use of (a portion of the roll has been torn off) who paid a fine and did fealty."

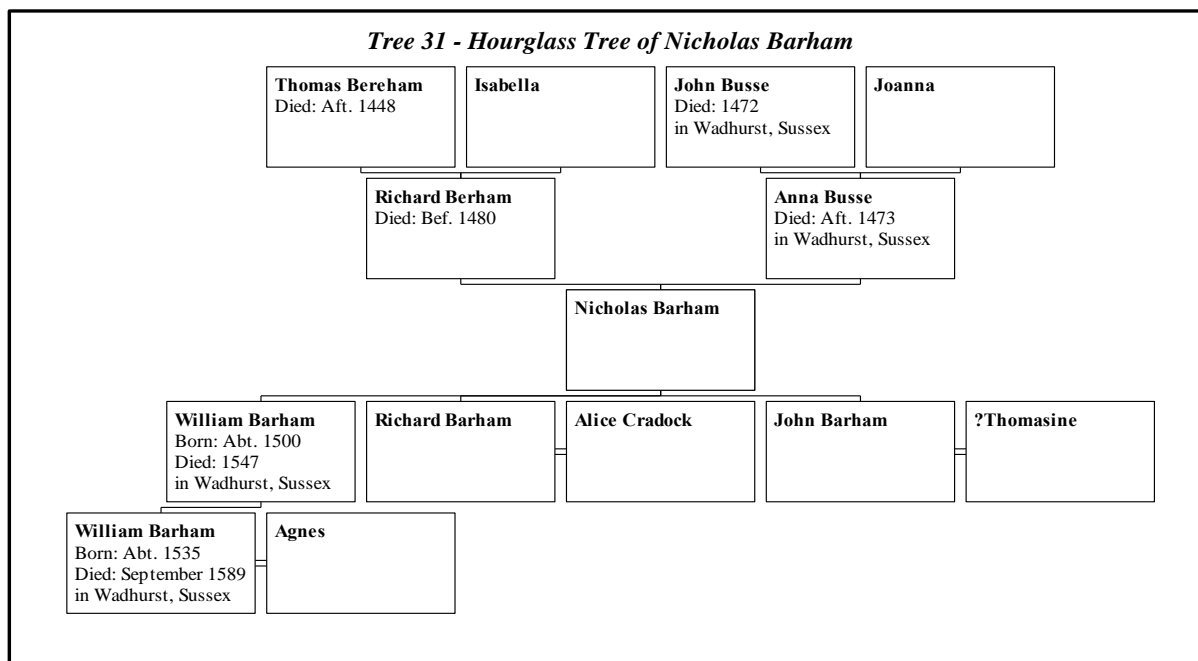
He also suggests that:

⁵⁹ TNA, C1 /78/126

⁶⁰ ESRO, SAS/CO/1/64, SAS/CO/1/70

⁶¹ ESRO, AMS/6430

In the Rental of the Manor of Mayfield..... we have several references to this Nicholas Berham, & to the lands he held in this Manor. Some of these lands were inherited by William Berham (of Stalerege) under his will in 1545



In addition to the first William, Nicholas seems to have been the father of Richard and John Barham.

With a son named Richard, it is not surprising that Fitzgerald-Uniacke ascribes to Nicholas a father named Richard Barham or Bereham. His account of this man starts as follows:

The earliest mention we have of Richard Berham is at a Court held 20 Feb. 1452-3, when John Baker and Juliana his wife surrendered certain lands in the Wiste of Cumden, containing 40 acres, which formerly belonged to William Cumden, to Richard Barham & Anna his wife, and the heirs of Richard. From a subsequent entry we learn that Anna was the daug. of John Busse whose name occurs frequently on the Rolls from 1436, when he held the important Office of Steward (Prepositus) of the Manor, until his death in 1472. Richard Berham was present at a Court 26 June 1453, and the following year he was appointed Steward of the Manor of Bivelham.

Documents from this era are largely beyond my competency, but I have tried to follow the trail, even if only from the catalogue entry. The records of the manor of Bivellham show Richard presenting accounts⁶² at Michaelmas 1455 and on 18th September 1464 surrendering land⁶³ in the Wiste of Comden in Wadhurst with his wife Anna:

⁶² BL, Additional Charters 31,193

⁶³ BL, Additional Charters 31,134

Ad hanc curia venit Richard Berham et Anna uxor eius... et
sursurrendit Willo Comden ...in Wiste de Comden

His next appearance is on 9th May 1472, when his father-in-law, John Busse, apparently close to death, passes on a piece of land named Snorehill⁶⁴ to his daughter and son-in-law:

..... John Busse extremm qua terre ille voc Snorehill et....
Anna uxor Richard Barham filia predictus John est

Two months later, on 16th July, the same document shows John's widow Joanna making a further surrender of land in the Wiste of Comden... reding, Smythfield, Little Comden to Richard and Anne:

Ad hanc curia venit Johanna que fut uxor Johes Busse

Three years later, on 27th April 1475, a final transaction is recorded⁶⁵, with Richard as feoffee to John Crothole facilitating the passing on of a piece of land and a house in the Wiste of Wadhurst

The next time Richard's name appears, though, it is to record his death. On 17th May 1480 it was:

Presented by John Westburn that on xxvii January 1479 came John Barham son and heir Richard Barham deceased in the presence of the aforesaid ... surrendered and was admitted into 60 acres of land in Upper Comden.

The only part of his father's land he didn't acquire at this point was 4 acres in Water Comden which were apparently his mother's until her death.

FitzGerald-Uniacke also noted several occasions where Richard Bereham was absent from the court and was represented by someone else, often in the 1460s by his father-in-law. He surmises that this implies either property elsewhere – if so, no record seems to have survived to have been catalogued on A2A – or involvement in the Wars of the Roses, and indeed, some of his absences, but not all, tally with the year of a major battle.

The man at the top of this tree – if it is correct – is Thomas Bereham, who must have been born somewhere around the turn of the fifteenth century, in other words in the reign of either Richard II or Henry IV. The last reference to him is around 1449-50. Burke's *Landed Gentry* gives:

Thomas Barham held lands at Wadhurst, Sussex in the Manor of Bivelham in 1441 as he appears in the court roll of that manor, married Isabella, living 1446⁶⁶

⁶⁴ BL, Additional Charters 31,138, Court Roll, Bivelham

⁶⁵ BL, Additional Charters 31,139, Court Roll, Bivelham

He and his co-father-in-law John Busse appear in a Bivelham court roll of 17th June 1440 in the Essones section. On 13th December 1441 he and his wife were admitted to property surrendered by Richard atte Melle in the Wiste of Comden and Edwardswiste:

Thomas Bereham and Isabella his wife and their heirs were admitted to the land and tenement/holding and did fealty and gave for a fee xx^s

A number of further transactions⁶⁷ in the court records, often also involving John Busse, rather suggests the two men consolidating their own positions, possibly with a view to a future marriage between their respective offspring. Or perhaps they were just neighbours with similar needs regarding land tenure. The same documents also list Thomas under Essones from time to time, so like his son, he presumably didn't always turn up on Court days.

I have assumed John Busse to be slightly younger than Thomas Bereham, maybe born between 1400 and 1410, purely because he lived until 1472. He was an important man in the Manor of Bivelham, holding the role of steward. In 1441⁶⁸ he was elected to the position of receptor in the manor. In 1462 ⁶⁹he presented his Compotus as prepositor of the manor. I'm not sure what this role entailed – something to do with accounts I believe, but he was clearly someone who was trusted by the lord of the manor. His name appears numerous times in the court records, but I haven't always been able to fathom out the context.

Barham Distaff lines: Gibbon and Orglasse

The final branch in what has become an extremely unwieldy tree belongs to the family of Ann Gibbon, who married Robert Barham at Hawkhurst in July 1639. There were two Ann Gibbons baptised in Hawkhurst within the right period. Fortunately, they were the daughters of two brothers, so the male line is beyond dispute. One was baptised on 25th August 1611 as the daughter of Peter Gibbon; the other on 23rd July 1615, daughter of Edward Gibbon. From the baptism entries it would not be possible to tell which went on to be Robert Barham's bride. Fitzgerald-Uniacke makes the obvious choice, by going for the younger of the two; the older Ann would have been nearly 45 at the time of the birth of her last child. This is not impossible, and given that Robert Barham was probably in his 30s when he married, he may have chosen a similarly mature wife. However, Edward's wife was Deborah Norman (they married at Salehurst in Sussex in 1605). Her brother Francis Norman,

⁶⁶ BL, Additional Charters 31,116, Court Roll, Bivelham

⁶⁷ BL, Additional Charters 31,331,2,and 3, Court Rolls, Bivelham

⁶⁸ BL, Additional Charters 31,116, Court Roll of Bivelham

⁶⁹ BL, Additional Charters 31,201, Court Roll of Bivelham

gentleman of Salehurst, wrote a will⁷⁰ dated 15th June 1644 in which he named his sister Deborah's children as Jane and Ann Gibbons:



St. Lawrence Hawkhurst interior

to Anne Gibbons daughter of my sister Deborah Gibbons deceased 20 nobles

By this time Deborah Gibbons née Norman had become Deborah Holden, and the next bequest is to:

Francis Holden son of my said sister Deborah

showing that his sister, widowed by Edward Gibbon in 1617, had remarried (to John Holden in Hawkhurst in 1623) and so Francis should have referred to his sister Deborah Holden, but calling her Gibbon seems a much more likely slip of the pen given that the clause is referring to her Gibbon offspring, than referring to a young woman married with two children, and therefore defined in society by her husband's name of Barham, as Ann Gibbon. Elsewhere in the same will he is careful to distinguish between married and unmarried nieces. To précis:

to Alice Thetcher daughter of my sister Priscilla Thetcher £10
to Priscilla Dawes daughter of sister Priscilla Thetcher £20
to Martha Dale daughter of sister Priscilla Thetcher £5

The only time he deliberately gives a maiden name for a married woman is when he is unsure of the husband's first name, so obviously does this to avoid confusion:

to Martha wife of Richard Sloman, wife of one of Cicely's daughters £5

⁷⁰ TNA, Prob 11/193, Will of Francis Norman of Salehurst, 1644

to Mary Gibbons now wife of ... Bathurst one of Cicely's daughters £20

In addition, the will is witnessed by:

Gibbons my sister's daughter

It is most unfortunate that the scribe seems to have missed the line with the first name, but given that there were only two – Jane and Ann – there is a 50/50 chance of this being an unmarried Ann Gibbon. So all in all, I think it far more likely that the Ann Gibbon who married Robert Barham in 1639 was the daughter of Peter rather than Edward Gibbon.

Before leaving the Norman family, though, it is worth pointing out that there were close family ties between them and the Gibbons, as another of Francis' sisters, Cicely, was married to Edward and Peter's cousin George, whose will in 1649 was witnessed by Robert Barham, although by then George had a second wife named Frances. Francis, Cicely and Deborah all seem to have been the children (among others) of Anthony Norman, and were baptised at St. James Westminster. Debora Gibbon née Norman married John Holden by licence⁷¹, issued at Canterbury on 11th September 1623. He calls himself a bachelor of Hawkhurst, clothier, aged 32. Like many women under similar circumstances, Debora was a little economical with the truth regarding her age, calling herself:

Debora Gibbons aged 34 wid. of Edward Gibbons of the same, clothier

Her baptism probably took place in 1585!

I have included a tree showing Deborah Norman's family, and its links to the Gibbon clan, just in case I am wrong regarding Ann Barham née Gibbon's parentage. However, I can find no evidence of any of Edward and Debora's children marrying or being buried in Hawkhurst – unless it is indeed their daughter Ann who married Robert Barham!

One more, tiny clue suggests that Edward's daughter Ann may have remained unmarried. Probate accounts quoted by Anthony Poole⁷² show Anthony Gibbon, who would have been first cousin to Edward and Deborah's daughter Ann through his mother Cicely, and her second cousin through his father George (Edward's first cousin) acting for his brother Thomas:

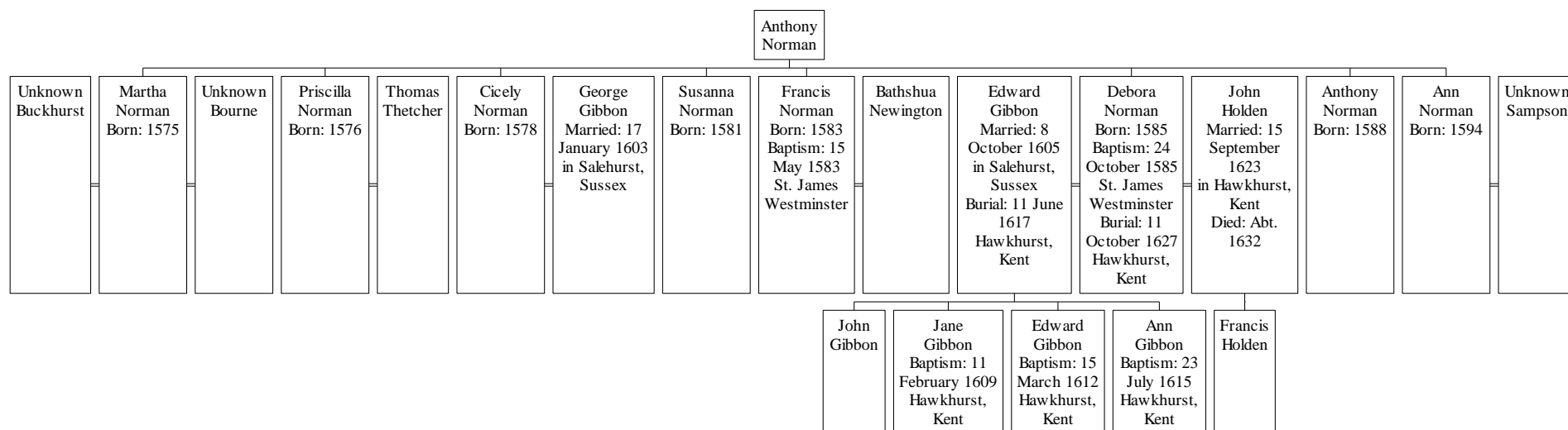
Sums owed on bond by Thomas Gibbon, clothier of Hawkhurst, 1663

⁷¹

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=zNxsv5UL_9wC&pg=PA216&lpg=PA216&dq=Gibbon+Hawkhurst+clothier&source=bl&ots=0iXCTXLYqq&sig=6OmPUi79YKKXzd0Ain86mWCN2VM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=H82aVK7IHbB7AbGhYGYDg&ved=0CDAQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=Gibbon%20Hawkhurst%20clothier&f=false *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol 51, 1897

⁷² *A Market Town and its Surrounding Villages – Cranbrook, Kent in the Later Seventeenth Century* Anthony Poole, Philimore & Co. Ltd., Chichester, 2005

Tree 32 - Descendants of Anthony Norman



Anthony Norman's children were baptised at St James Westminster. George Gibbon was cousin to Peter and Edward, and son of John Gibbon's brother Robert. Cicely, Martha, Priscilla, Ann and Francis Norman all had children.

Creditor	sum owed	link	via
To [brother] Bathurst	£51 10s	brother-in-law	by Mary Gibbon
To [sister] Slowman	£50 0s	brother-in-law	by Ann Gibbon
To Elizabeth Gibbon	£40 0s	wife of	
To Thomas Domincike	£33 1s	kinship	by Anne Gibbon

Two Ann Gibbons had been born in the next generation, but one would have been 23 and the other 24 at this time, ages commonly used in wills as the time girls could inherit. I'm not sure of the significance of the 'via' column, but it seems unlikely that such young women would be involved in financial transactions, so again, the inference is that this is Edward and Debora's daughter, still unmarried, especially as two other names in the list - Sloman and Bathurst - also appear in Francis Norman's will, suggesting these records belong to the branch linked to the Normans.

The Ann Gibbon who married Robert Barham, then, is probably the one baptised at Hawkhurst in August 1611:

Baptised the xxvth day Ann the daughter of Peter Gibbon

She may well have owed her name to her maternal grandmother, Agnes Standen, and it was by this name that she was referred to in the will⁷³ of her uncle Richard Gibbon in 1638. This mentions both Jane and Ann, daughters of brother Edward Gibbon and Agnes and Mary, daughters of brother Peter Gibbon. These last two share £13 5/8 between them.

Having borne her husband eight children (Ann, Mary, John, Sarah, Robert, Arthur, Richard and Francis), all of whom apart from John and Richard reached adulthood, and the last arriving when she was 44, Ann nevertheless lived on until she was 66 years old. She was buried at Hawkhurst on 24th July 1678, with the register recording:

Ann Barham wife of Robert, died 26th April

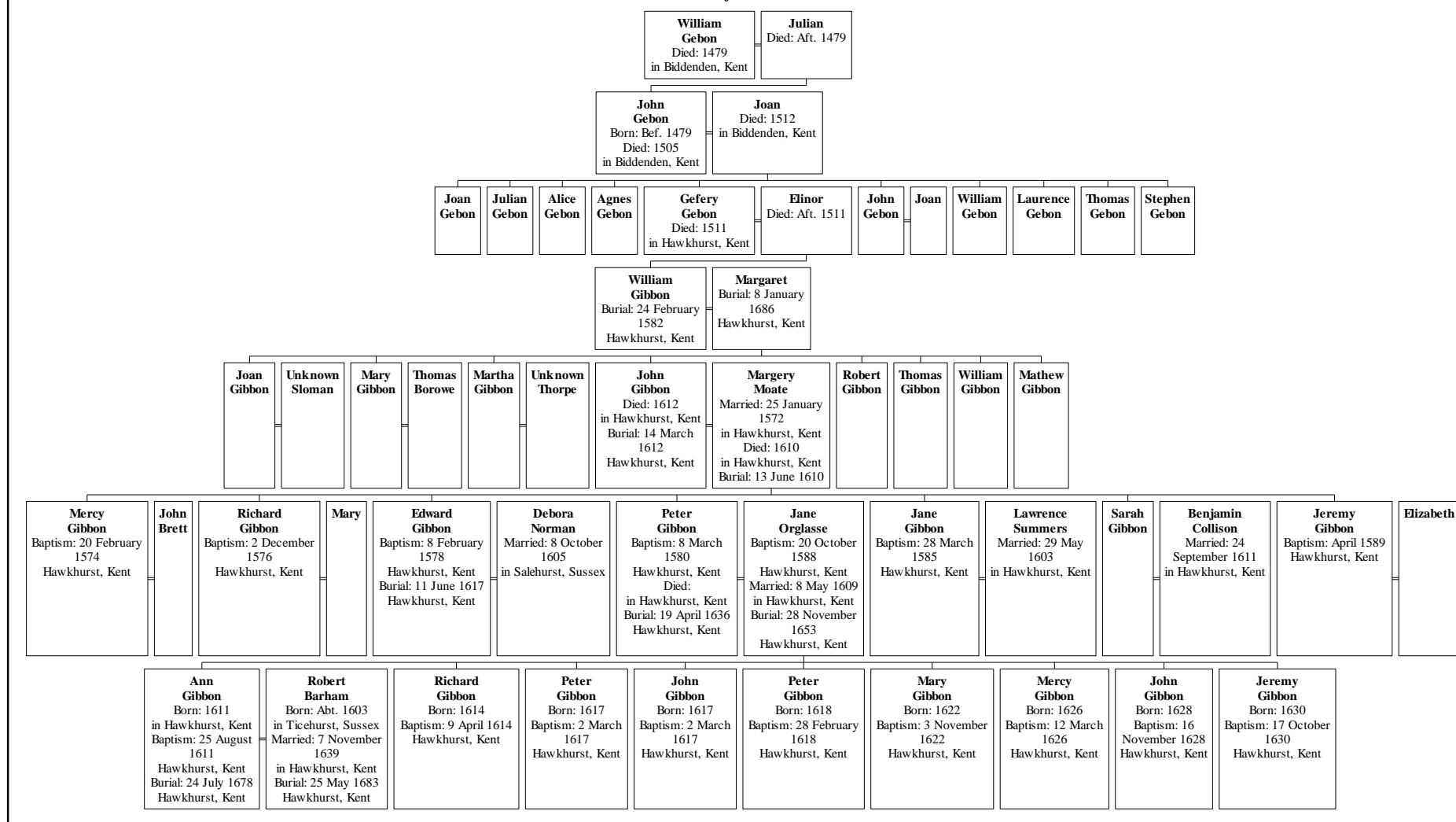
Even if I am wrong in surmising that Ann was Peter's daughter not Edward's, they were both the sons of John Gibbon, and part of an extensive clan all living in Hawkhurst. Peter was born in 1580. The register reads:

March the xviiiith was baptised Peter Gibbins the son of John

Peter was two years younger than his brother Edward. On 8th May 1609 he married Jane Orglasse at Hawkhurst, and the couple baptised eight children in the parish. Ann, Anne or Agnes was the eldest, born in 1611. Richard came next, baptised on 9th October 1614. Then came twins, Peter and John baptised on 2nd March 1617; another Peter - 28th February 1618, Mary - 3rd November 1622, Mercy - 12th March 1626. Another John was baptised on 16th November 1628 and finally Jeremy - 17th October 1630.

⁷³ CKS, PRC 17/70/590, Will of Richard Gibbon of Hawkhurst, 1638

Tree 33 - Descendants of William and Julian Gibbon



Peter's occupation is not known, but given that there were clothiers in the family, including his son-in-law Robert Barham, his brother Edward and his father John Gibbon, it seems likely that he was involved, in some way, in the cloth trade. Little else is known about Peter Gibbon. Even the date of his death is not known for sure. There are two possible burials. The first is on 16th June 1631, which might explain why his last child was born in 1630, but his wife would have been 42, so it might have been a natural end to her child-bearing. The second burial was on 19th April 1637, and the letters 'pl' after the entry suggest that this Peter – whether father or son – was a plague victim.

Much more is known about Peter's father, John Gibbon, although no baptism has been found for him. It is likely that he was born before 1550, the date of the commencement of the Hawkhurst register. His marriage to Margery Moate there on 25th January 1572 is recorded however, as are the baptisms of all but one of their children. The first child, Mercy, later married to clothier John Brett, was baptised on 20th February 1574. Richard, whose will was quoted earlier, was the first son, baptised 2nd December 1576. Then came Edward, who was baptised 8th February 1578, married Debora Norman on 8th October 1605 at Salehurst, and was buried twelve years later at Hawkhurst on 11th June 1617. Peter was the next child, baptised 8th March 1580. He was followed by Jane, baptised on 28th March 1585; she married Lawrence Summers in the same church on 29th May 1603. Her sister Sarah's baptism is missing, but she grew up to marry Benjamin Colleson at Hawkhurst on 24th September 1611 and was buried thirteen years later on 17th November 1624. The last child, Jeremy, baptised in April 1589 (probably 10th) married a woman named Elizabeth, surname unknown.

Unlike his son, John Gibbon leaves a considerable paper trail, mainly from the latter end of his life. Almost all these documents refer to him as John Gibbon clothier, although in his will he calls himself a tailor. Maybe by this time he had given up actively running a business, but 'kept his hand in' as it were, by tailoring. More likely the two occupations went hand in hand. His first appearance in public records was in 1582, when he witnessed a bargain and sale⁷⁴ by William Baseden of Hawkhurst, miller, to his brother William Gibbon the younger, mercer. This involved:

One third part of one messuage, one barn, one garden and 5 parcels of land,
divided into three, (9a) in Hawkhurst, on the Denn of Delmonden

Seven years later he witnessed another document for his brother, a feoffment⁷⁵ made by William Basden of Bexley, shoemaker, to William Gibbon the younger of Hawkhurst, mercer. Despite the different spellings of Bas(e)den and his changing occupation, this involved another third of the property above. He next appeared in the Quarter Sessions⁷⁶ held at Ashford in 1595, when he, along with Thomas Gibbons, carrier of

⁷⁴ ESRO, FRE/7048, 10 May 1582

⁷⁵ ESRO, FRE/7054, 14 Feb 1589

⁷⁶ CKS, QM/SRc/1595/13, 5 April 1595

Hawkhurst, stood surety for £10 in support of one Margaret Gibbons of Ashford regarding her bastard child. There is no suggestion that John is the father; perhaps he was distant kin or maybe the 's' on the surname implies a different family altogether.

Like his brother William, John Gibbon also owned land, and when this brother died around 1603, his widow Susan made a quitclaim⁷⁷ on behalf of herself and her heirs to John disclaiming any interest in:

one messuage, barn, garden and iv pieces of land containing 7 acres of land occupied by John Sanders of Hawkhurst and two other tenements and three acres of land in the occupation of Robert Potten of Hawkhurst situated lying and being in Hawkhurst aforesaid on the Denn of Delmanden

which John had inherited from his father William. It is probably this land, inherited from his father, and in the Manor of Delmonden⁷⁸ which was bargained and sold for £160 by John Gibbon of Hawkhurst, Kent, clothier, to Thomas Scott of Northiam, gent, and which then became part of the Delmonden Manor estate. It involved:

Three messuages, one barn and 5 parcels of land (9a) in Hawkhurst on the Denn of Delmonden

The original document, as opposed to the abstract above, recites:

This indenture made the three and twentieth day of May ... between John Gibbon of Hawkhurst in the co. of Kent clothier on the one part and Thomas Scott of Northiam in the county of Sussex gent on the other part Witnesseth that the same John Gibbon for and in consideration of the sum of one hundred three score and three pounds of good and lawful money of England to him in hand paid by the said Thomas Scott before the ensembling of these present (Whereof and wherewith the said John Gibbon acknowledges himself fully satisfied contented and paid and thereof acquitteth the said Thomas Scott his heirs executors and assigns clearly and absolutely give grant assign bargain and sell unto the said Thomas Scott his heirs and assigns all those his three messuages and tenements one barn and all other edifices and buildings to the said three messuages or tenement or to any of them belonging or appertaining one garden and five pieces of parcels of land withal and singular their appurtenances contained within the whole by estimation nine acres of land more or less situate lying and being in the parish of Hawkhurst aforesaid upon the Denn of Delmanden all which the premises the said John Gibbon hath to me and my heirs by the will of the last will and testament of William Gibbon my father late while he lived of Hawkhurst yeoman

⁷⁷ ESRO, FRE/7058, 10 Dec 1603

⁷⁸ ESRO, FRE/7059 23 May 1607

The document is signed by John Gibbon. Three days later he completed the transaction with a quitclaim⁷⁹. Interestingly, he signed his name on this on as John Gibon, rather than Gibbon. A map⁸⁰ was drawn up in 1615 from a survey by Henry Allen of Tonbridge. Entitled:

The Tenements and Lands called the Denn

It is uncoloured, and makes no reference to land held by John Gibbon, but does show a cluster of buildings in the middle labelled the Denn To the left of this area, beyond Kitchen Field, it says:

The lands of Peter Clark

although above this, in a different hand, is written:

Now belongs to y^e Denn

Several field names can be read, such as: Marle pen, the five acres, River field, Uplands Mead, Barne Field and Chapmans Gardens, although there is no way of telling which of these, if any, was part of John Gibbon's land. There were though several dens in Hawkhurst, and the map could refer to one of the others. There is, however, still a Delmonden Manor in Hawkhurst, and a Delmonden Lane which runs from the main road between Hawkhurst and Flimwell back to the A229 a short distance beyond the part of Hawkhurst known as The Moor.



Delmonden Lane Hawkhurst

In 1607 John was also involved in a local dispute⁸¹:

There was a suit between Sir John Wildegos, lessee of the parsonage, and John Gibbon, parishioner here, in the ecclesiastical court, touching the

⁷⁹ ESRO, FRE/7061, 26 May 1607

⁸⁰ CKS, U420/12/6, Hawkhurst: the Tenement and Lands called the Denn, map, 1615

⁸¹ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=63402&strquery=Gibbon>

manner of tithing; and Gibbon, in Michaelmas term, anno 5 Jacobi regis, obtained a prohibition thereon out of the king's bench, which was tried at Lent assizes at Rochester that year, and a verdict was found for Gibbon

One of the other men involved in this action – and there were several – was Edmund Orglasse, the father of the Jane who married John's son Peter. The costs⁸² of this action were recorded as follows:

Expenses in the Spirituall Court upon the citation ----	vii li xv s iiiid
Payd to John Gibbons ---	xxxv s iiiid
Summa totalis of the firste Prohibition	38 ^{li} 1 s 5 ^d

On a third sheet, also headed Wildgosse v Gibbons, further accounts are itemised, and at the bottom is written:

The totall of this suite is –	ix ^{li} xviii ^s iiiid
The totall some expended in both the suites about the custome is	xlvi ^{li} xix ^s ix ^d

The case had presumably run on for some time, as the complete document is headed:

no date. temp Elizabeth Bill of costs in cause of Gibbon vs. Wildgosse in prohibition.

suggesting it had at least been going on before the death of Elizabeth I in 1603.

John Gibbon died in 1613, and was buried at Hawkhurst on 14th March. He had written his will⁸³ almost a year earlier, on 22nd June 1612, and may have been ill at that time, as he made his mark rather than signing the document. After the usual pious openings, he named his three daughters:

Mercy the wife of John Brett, Jane the wife of Lawrence Summers and Sarah the wife of Benjamin Collison

These were to divide equally between them:

one table in the parlour and a frame and the forms to the said table and the table in the parlour chamber and one chest and two beds in the parlour chamber that is to say the high bed and the trundle bed ... furnished viz to every of the said beds two pairs of sheets one bolster and one blanket and coverlet with the formerly made under my hand

and then Sarah was to have all other moveable goods.

⁸² CKS, Hawkhurst Misc docs, p178/28/32

⁸³ CKS, PRC 17/57/323, Will of John Gibbon of Hawkhurst, 1613.

His son Peter presumably owed him money, as his bequest was the wiping of the slate regarding these. I imagine the amount owing probably matched the £15 his brother Edward was willed. The residue of the estate was bequeathed to sons Richard and Jeremy, who were also to be executors, while son-in-law Lawrence Summers and cousin John Sloman were appointed overseers.

His sons Richard and Jeremy Gibbon inherited:

equally between them to be divided all that my mansion or dwelling house wherein I now dwell situate at Highgate in Hawkhurst aforesaid and all other messuages tenements barns stables workhouse edifices and buildings to the said mansion or dwelling house

as well as eight acres of orchards, gardens, closes, meadows, pastures [etc] which went with it and which were on:

the denne of Stone denne

provided that Richard and Jeremy paid the £15 bequest to their brother Edward and made provision for Edward's son John when he reached the age of 21. Should he die as a minor, his share was to go to his brother and sister – Edward and Jane. The will was witnessed by John Boys, John Sherwood and John Brett. It was proved on 18th June 1613.

Stoneden or Standen was land in Hawkhurst parish. It is interesting to hear John Gibbon refer to his house as a mansion, suggesting something slightly grander than a run-of-the-mill dwelling-house. He places it in Highgate. A webpage which used to be part of the *Visit Hawkhurst*⁸⁴ site, but is regrettably no longer available, gives the following description:

Northwards from the Moor and at the crossroads of the village is Highgate, Hawkhurst's main commercial and shopping centre. Named for the 'high gate' to the enclosed commons belonging to the church which stood here several centuries ago, this part of the village is instantly recognisable for its weatherboarded, canopied Colonnade of shops. Highgate is on a ridge once used as an ancient hackway used by the Romans and Jutish drovers. This eventually became the main highway from London to the important Cinque Port of Rye.

The cloth and beer industries, once the staple of the Weald, were closely connected. In the 14th Century, Edward III wanted to break the Flemish (Dutch) monopoly on weaving. He therefore encouraged Flemish weavers to come to England. Many chose to settle in the Weald,

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<http://www.visithawkhurst.org.uk/visitors.aspx?section=3&secmenu=3&m=4&ci=14&did=0&pn=Hawkhurst%20in%20the%20past>

because it had all the elements needed for weaving - oak to make mills, streams to drive them and Fullers Earth to treat the cloth. It was also close to the English Channel. Considerable fortunes were made in cloth, weaving and tailoring in the area, and many of the beautiful houses in the area were built by wealthy cloth merchants.



The Moor Hawkhurst – open space from medieval times

This account now moves far enough beyond the start of Hawkhurst parish register in 1550 that the only certain date for William Gibbon the elder, John's father, is that of his burial on 24th February 1582. However, he must have been born before 1511 as he is named in his own father's will. He appears in the Churchwardens' Accounts, where he and his fellow churchwarden wrote up the accounts for three years as one entry:

Account rendered by John Andrew and William Gybbon churchwardens and ?keepers of the church goods of Hawkhurst there by the space of three years that is to say from the feast of Pentecost which was in the year of our Lord 1551 unto the same feast in the year of our Lord 1554 of all the remainder that apptayned to the church aforesaid which was xlix^{li} xix^s x^d.

The following pages from 1548 include further references:

Item paid to Willam Gybbon for my C lathe	xx ^d
Item paid to William Gybon for St. Nicholas Chappell	viii ^s iiiii ^d
Item paid to William Gybon ?ffonys	x ^d
Item paid to William Gybon the olde organ frame	ii ^s

There is no explanation as to what a C lathe might be.

Everything else known about William Gibbon comes from his will⁸⁵ written on 1st February 1582. Given that he was buried on 24th February, he must have been

⁸⁵ CKS, PRC17/44/122, Will of William Gibbon of Hawkhurst, 1583

very close to death at the time. Nevertheless, it is a detailed document, starting with a request for burial in Hawkhurst churchyard and a gift to the poor of the parish of 12d. He then bequeathed a cow to his son Thomas and the residue of his moveable estate to his wife Margaret. She also received all his land and tenements in Hawkhurst except:

the land which I bought of Richard Atkin during her widowhood

the wording of which suggests that maybe Margaret was a second wife who had been married before. There are conditions attached to this bequest, namely that Margaret pays William's three daughters, listed as Joan Slowman, Mary [?]Barowe and Martha Thorpe 8/4 a year until they have each received four marks. Margaret was also enjoined to keep his house in good repair.

He then dealt with his five sons: Robert, Thomas, John, William and Mathew. Robert was willed land bought from Thomas Posse provided he protect Margaret and his siblings from:

one obligation in which I stand to John Eastland of Cranbrook in xxl

and pay his brother Thomas £8 out of his land inheritance. John, presumably his third son, was willed land in fee simple bought from Richard, provided he fulfil a bond made by William to a man named Hales from Tenterden. William received the house his father lived in provided he pay his brother Mathew 24 in two instalments after Margaret's death. The witnesses to this will were Mathew Eryer, Robert Laicocke and Peter Aforde, whose names appear in place of the executrix Margaret on the probate which was granted in March 1583.

William Gibbon seems to have been the only son of Gefery and Elinor Gibbon or Gebon. Given the fact that Gefery wrote his will⁸⁶ in 1511, a full 71 years before his son wrote his, and the reference to a possible unborn child, it seems likely that Gefery was a young man when he died. This will, now over 500 years old, is hard to read, but interesting as it predates the Reformation and is therefore worded in a quite different way:

In the name of God amen the 22nd day of the month of March in the year of our Lord God 1511 I Gefery Gebon of Hawkhurst whole of mind and of good memory being make my testament in this wise. First I bequeath my soul to God Almighty our Blessed Lady St. Mary to all the saints of heaven. My body to be buried in the churchyard of Hawkhurst aforesaid. Also I bequeath to the high altar for my tithes and oblations negligently forgotten vid. Item I bequeath to the herse light in the said church vid. Also I ordain a taper of of wax for to burn before the image of our lady in the parish church of Ebbeney the Sundays and Fridays at high mass time while so to be kept..... after my decease. Also I ordain to my ... berying iiis and to my months day iiis

⁸⁶ CKS, PRC 17/12/116, Will of Gefery Gebon of Hawkhurst, 1511

References to the Virgin Mary, the saints, the high altar, along with hearse lights, wax tapers and months days – when the deceased would be remembered a month on from the funeral – all show this to be a pre-Reformation, Catholic will.

Given the scarcity of other records at this time, it is a stroke of incredible luck that Gefery, in decreeing that profit from lands enfeoffed by his father John Gebon, be granted to his wife Elinor until his son William comes of age, establishes the next generation back. This land was at Biddenden, about 17 miles north-east of Hawkhurst, and it is probably in this parish that Gefery was born. William was clearly his only child, though there is provision in the will in case his wife is pregnant, as he also adds a clause stating that his land will go to his next of kin if both Elinor and William die before he reaches the age of 20 and without an heir. In this case, this 'kin' is directed to pay 40/- each to Hawkhurst and Biddenden churches. Elinor was named as executrix and William Tolhurst as overseer. He, Edmund [?]Coneyhurst and William Baseden were witnesses and the will was proved on 23rd May 1612.



All Saints Biddenden

It is not possible to ascertain when Gefery Gebon made the move from Biddenden to Hawkhurst, but there is a brief reference to him in the will⁸⁷ of John Hills the elder of Biddenden in 1508:

.... I will that Geoffrey Gebon make a state to my executrice of two pecs. of lond lying vpon the Denne of Brekynden the which I lately purchased of him for eight marcs.

So he was still dealing in land in Biddenden three years before his death.

Gefery's father, John Gebon, only died six years before his son, between 24th April 1505 when he wrote his will and July when the will⁸⁸ was proved. He

⁸⁷ <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Libr/Wills/Bk55/page%2002.htm> , Will of John Hills of Biddenden, 1508

requested that his body be buried in the churchyard of Allhallows at Biddenden. Like his son, he made bequests to the church, including

a taper of wax of a li or more to be found by my executors and I will it stand before alhallows in the church of Biddenden

to be lit every Sunday for ten years after his death. He also bequeathed a taper to the image of Our Lady in the church at Ebony to be burnt every Sunday and Friday at high mass for ten years following his death, and small sums of money, presumably as bequests to the poor to be paid out at his month's and year's mind. The fact that both father and son made bequests to Ebony suggests some family links to this parish.

Family bequests included all his household stuff to his wife Johane, along with his messuage and two fields of land possibly called Lakefede, a croft of land called Sidlowe and another croft of land; a cow to his daughter Johane, a cow and six marks to his daughter Julian and five marks each to daughters Alice and Agnes. After Johane's death or remarriage:

the said messuage tenements lands and crofts with all the appurtenances in fee simple to Laurence John the younger and Thomas my sons to be divided among them be equal portions.

Another son, Stephen, was willed four pieces of land and a shaw of wood; these were possibly named Petmede, the Gele, Kentichfolde, Bordenshoke and Kentishaw, although the writing is difficult to decipher. There was also a monetary bequest, payable to him by his father's feoffees. William, Stephen's brother, received 12 pieces of land in fee simple. These were possibly collectively called Stanedard – again, the word is not clear. Some land had been bound to his elder son John's wife, and provision was made for this to revert to John junior if his wife predeceased him, with the option for brothers Lawrence, John and Thomas to do some kind of a deal, I think, with two of them buying John out. Another parcel of land, five acres in size, named something like Margenffelde or Margenstrofe was to be sold or to be bequeathed to another brother William if funds allowed, and William could give his brothers £6. William was under 22 years old at this time. The residue of the estate was to be divided between his wife and sons Laurence and Geffery, who were nominated executors. The will was witnessed by John Stace, John Hollinden, William French, Stephen French and William Standen the parish priest.

John's wife Johane lived on until 1512, when she wrote her own will⁸⁹ on 20th June. William, her grandson, identified as her son Geffrey's son, was given 12^d. A bequest to Joan the wife of Thomas Stace is probably her daughter and therefore the:

Robert Stace at the singing of his first mass xxd

⁸⁸ PRC 17/10/5, Will of John Gebon of Biddenden, 1505

⁸⁹ CKS, PRC 17/12/124, Will of Johan Gebon of Biddenden, 1612

is probably her grandson.

This will is particularly faded and difficult to read, but there are bequests to her daughters Alice and Agnes (possibly married to a man named Entbush). Small sums of money are mentioned, but the daughters mainly received household goods and clothing. Son Thomas was given a harrow, and then there is a list of small bequests:

I bequeath to Agnes Sybil iiiiid. Item I bequeath to Robert Stace iiiid. Item I bequeath to William Syre my godson xxs? And to Thomas Stace my godson my best and my bushel. And I bequeath to Thomas Syre..... Item I bequeath to John At....

Her son Thomas and Thomas Syre of Tenterden were appointed executors and Thomas Stace overseer. Thomas was also bequeathed a piece of land called something like Denning, and he and his brother John were to share a piece of land on the den of Wachingden. Other land was to be sold. Probate was granted on 25th June 1512.



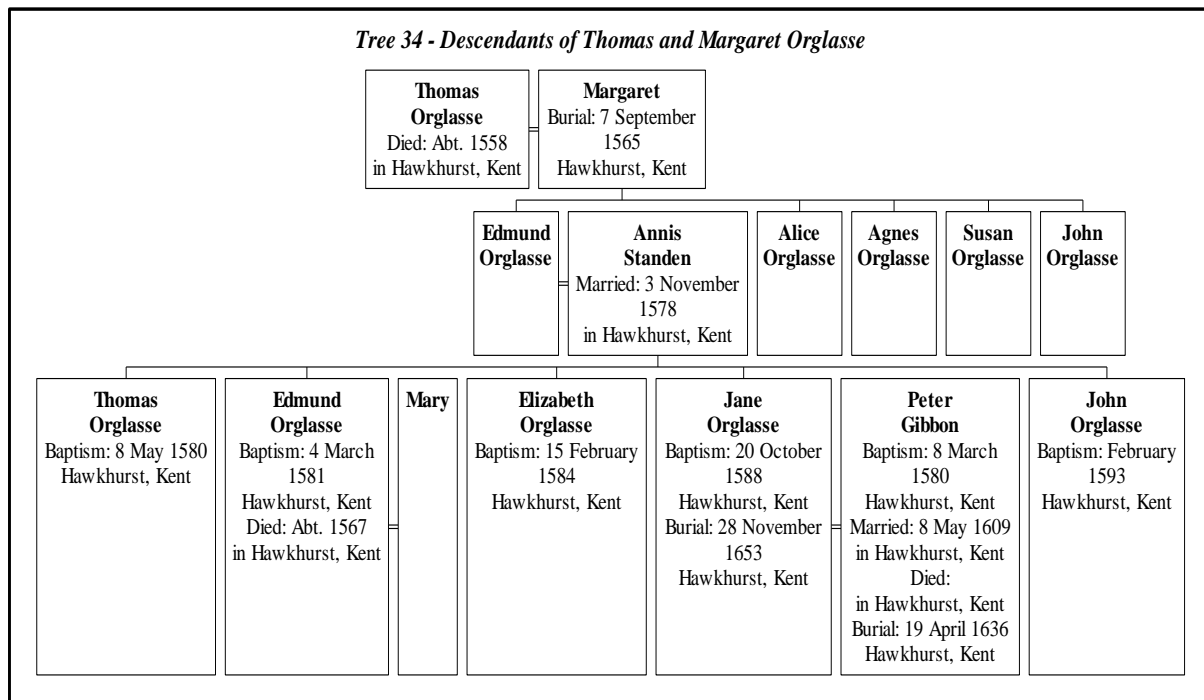
Biddenden

The Gibbon or Gebon line can be taken back one further generation through the will⁹⁰ of William Gebon written in April 1479 and proved on 8th November the same year. It is written in Latin, and very hard to read, but there is mention of a wife named Juliana, or Julian, and a son named John. William requested burial in the churchyard at Biddenden and offered 20^d to the church for the salvation of his soul. Julian, his wife, and John Stace seem to have been appointed executors or overseers. It is hard to ascertain how old William Gebon might have been when he died, but he must at least have been born at the latest by 1455 during the reign of Henry VI, and as such must be the earliest-born certain ancestor I have yet traced.

The last section of this story, if my interpretation of Ann Gibbon's parentage is right, lies with the Orglasse family. Jane Orglasse, who married Peter Gibbon in

⁹⁰ CKS, PRC 17/3/231, Will of William Gebon of Biddenden, 1479

1609, was the daughter of Edmund Orglasse and his wife Annis Standen, whom he had married on 19th November 1578 at Hawkhurst. The couple's first child, Thomas, was baptised on 8th May 1580 at Hawkhurst, but was buried there on 12th February 1598. Edmund came next, was baptised on 4th March 1581, married Mary Lucke on 16th January 1626 and was buried on 1st October 1657 – all at Hawkhurst. Daughter Elizabeth was baptised on 15th February 1584; Jane followed - 20th October 1588, and a final son, John, was baptised sometime in February 1593, probably 14th.



Edmund must have held land in the area, as he is twice named in documents identifying the location of other men's holdings, once in 1577⁹¹ and once in 1606⁹². On both occasions, the land under discussion was in the Denn of Delmondon. In these documents, his surname is spelled Orglas as it was in his will. When his son Edmund came to write his own will⁹³, the name appeared as Argles.

There is no sign of a burial for Edmund senior, but he must have died sometime between 20th September 1620 when he wrote his will⁹⁴, and 6th October 1624 when Edmund junior proved it. At the outset he describes himself as a yeoman and then goes on to bequeath £60 to his son John, along with one of the bedsteads from the chamber over the hall. His daughter Elizabeth, now married to John [?] Dupleyge, received £20, while her sister Jane:

the wife of Peter Gibbons

⁹¹ ESRO, FRE/7037

⁹² ESRO, FRE/7047

⁹³ TNA, Prob 11/271, Will of Edmund Argles of Hawkhurst, 1657

⁹⁴ CKS, PRC17/66/51b, will of Edmund Orglas of Hawkhurst, 1624

only received 12^d. Hopefully she had already received her share. His wife, referred to as Agnes in this document, was to:

hold and enjoy to her and her assigns the chamber over the buttry and the use of all the household and household stuff therein together with free egress and ingress and regress unto the same and to the usual fire kept in my house at all times and at her will and pleasure

and to have an annuity of £4 drawn on Edmund's messuage and lands in Hawkhurst. The residue of the estate, including the house and lands in Hawkhurst and anywhere else in Kent, went to his son Edmund Orglas. The will was witnessed by John Pope.

Edmund's parentage is proved by the will of Thomas Orglass, who died sometime between 1558 and 1560. He was presumably quite elderly when he made his will, unless the:

Thomas Arglas de Hawkhurst

who was present at a feoffment⁹⁵ made in 1519 belongs to an earlier generation. He also makes an appearance in the Hawkhurst Churchwardens' Accounts between 1551 and 1554, when an entry records:

Paid to Thomas Orglass for ii vestments

In his will⁹⁶, dated 25th October 1558, Thomas asked for burial in the Hawkhurst churchyard and requested that his executors to perform charitable deeds at their discretion. To his unmarried daughters Agnes and Susan and to his married daughter Alice, wife of John Samon, he left £6 13/4. The rest of his goods were to be divided between his wife Margaret and son John, who were named executors. Regarding his land, Thomas bequeathed:

to Margaret my wife the house I late purchased of John Wateman the which Burges widow now dwelleth in and the piece of land thereto belonging with a garden containing by estimation 3 acres of ground

To his son John he gave:

the house that I now dwell in and 13 acres of land thereto belonging and all ... orchards with the appurtenances to him and his heirs for ever paying the said John to his mother every year of her natural life 8s 4d quarterly

His son Edmund was willed:

⁹⁵ ESRO, DUN 22/2

⁹⁶ TNA, Prob/11/45

the house that Jackson now dwelleth in two orchards and ... piece of land with the appurtenances to him and his heirs for ever paying the said Edmund to Margaret my wife every year during the natural life of the said Margaret 40 s quarterly

The will was witnessed by Peter Wodgate, Edward Wagehorne, John Samon and John Andrew. Probate was granted in January 1560.

Thus ends the trail which began when my patient daughter, bored while I was helping my son with his homework in a local record office, idly looked at an IGI fiche and said:

Mum, I've just found a John Kettle baptising children in Croydon.

In that moment, the brick wall I'd hit with Daniel Kettle's baptism in Lewisham came tumbling down, opening up a whole new and very fruitful avenue of research.

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