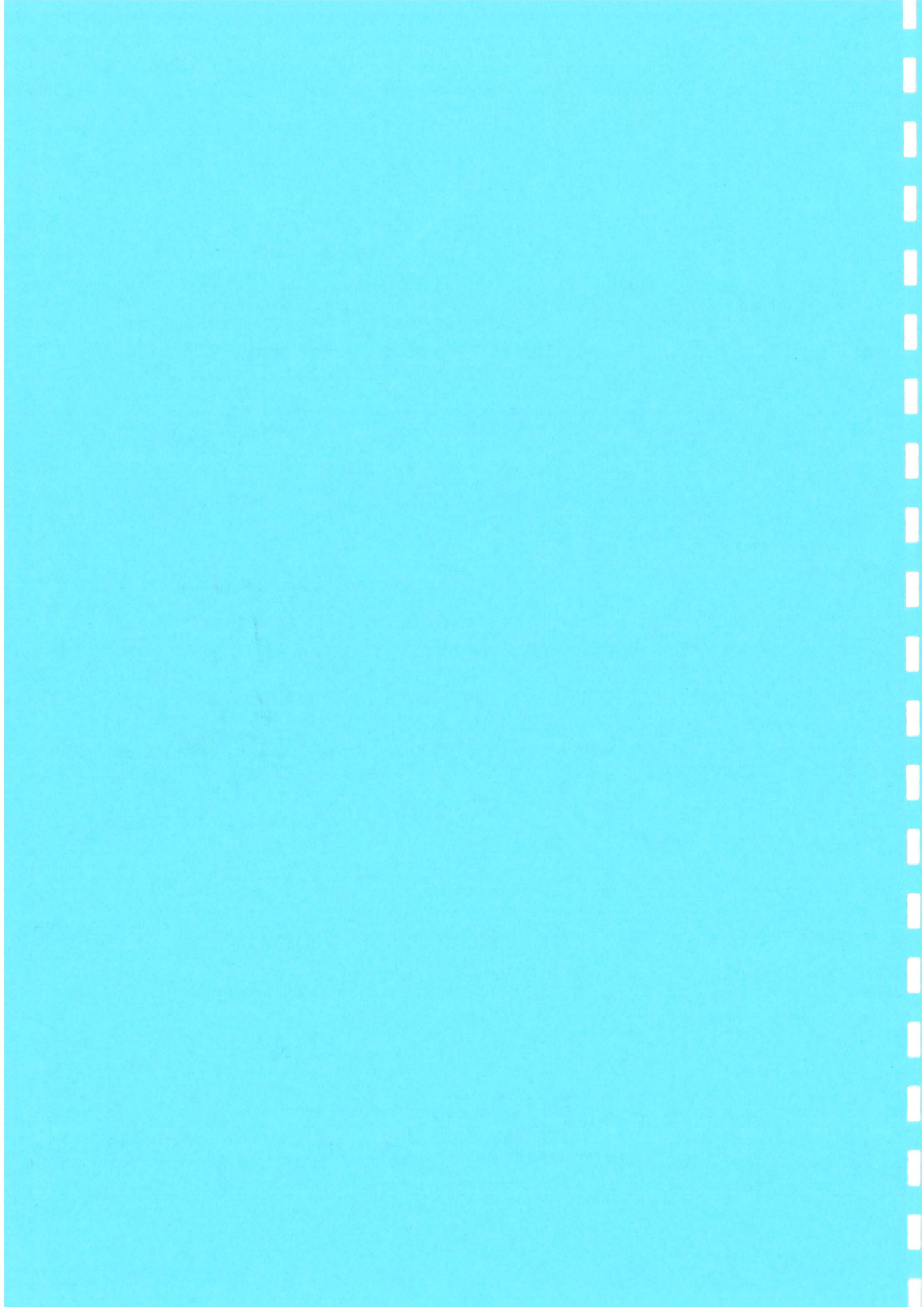


L. WHITE, A.S.

The History of
The Honour Family
Part 1. 1607 - 1916



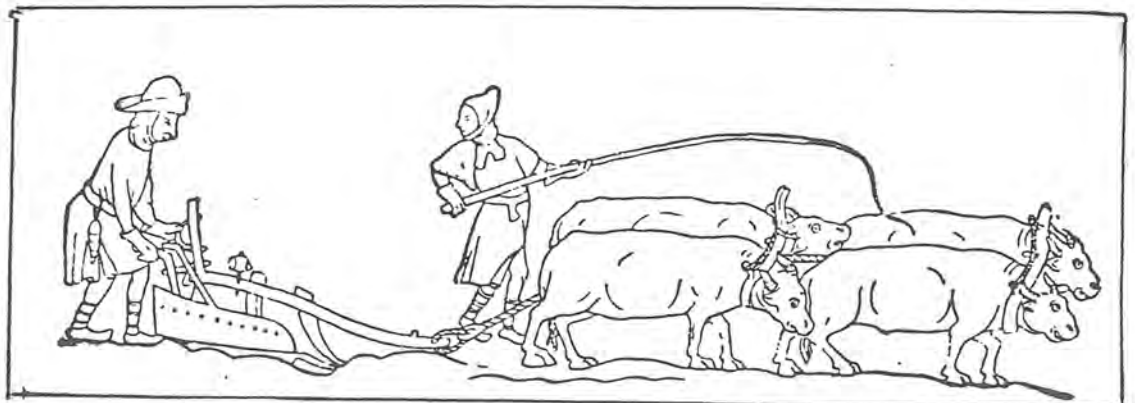
HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER

D. P. LINDEGAARD, B. A.

God speed the Plough
The Plough & the Ploughman
The Farm & the Farmer
Machine & Beast & Man

God speed the Plough
In fair weather & foul
In success & disappointment
In rain & wind & frost & sunshine
God speed the Plough

Anon.





EMILY HONOUR
(1895-1979)
about 1917

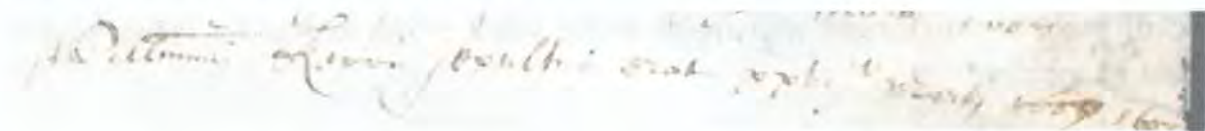
PREQUEL IN LOCKDOWN

In the beginning.....

The Bulk of Mrs Family History
was done in the 1980S-1990S
The Prequel & addenda
date from the 2020
PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN
PROB. APRIL/MAY
Shelby

I had not looked at the Honour story for many years, believing that the seam of information had been exhausted. However during the Coronavirus pandemic when we were locked down, a series of events changed my mind. First, my friend Rose, “with an interest in lunatic asylums” brought up the subject and I discussed “poor Alice” Sarah Honour’s (my grandmother’s) half-sister with her. With which I read the account again, and thought “this ain’t half bad.” In truth there were items I should have added long ago. The mystery of great-grandmother Susan’s whereabouts before her middle-aged marriage to John Honour - solved - and the revelations concerning Pem and Uncle Tom’s lengthy courtship. Then, a recent article in the B&AFHS Summer Journal drew my attention to the fact that “Ancestry” had placed much new material on-line, and that in some cases, thrillingly, one could access facsimiles of original parish registers, especially the very early ones. But.....I didn’t go there first. I turned a key on to the wonderful collection of on-line wills, transcribed by the Oxfordshire Family History Society. It would only take me a little while, I thought, to check my own transcriptions – of 40 years plus ago – of the wills of our earliest direct ancestors, Gabriel Honour, and his father-in-law William Kerry. I found that my versions, with a few minor differences, stood the comparison remarkably well. How I had grappled long and hard with the unfamiliar script, the bits of abbreviated Latin, and so on, armed only with a booklet which demonstrated the forms of antique handwriting and Latin abbreviations! Now with the click of mouse, hey presto!

William Kerry made his will on the 25th Day of February, 1606 and was buried in the small parish of Spelsbury, Oxfordshire on 27 March 1607.¹



I repeat the transcription of the will below as it is rendered by the noble transcriber, who has retained the spelling, repetition, lack of punctuation and paragraphs, though for easier reading, I have put it into paragraphs. Read it aloud and you can hear William’s rolling Oxfordshire burr across the ages:

“ In the name of God Amen The five and twentieth daie of February And in the yeere of our lord god a thowsand sixe Hundred and sixe, I William [Kerry] of Deane in the p’ishe of Spelsbury beinge sicke in bodie but of good and perfecte remembraunce laude and praise be given to allmightie god doe make my [last] Will and Testament in manner and forme followinge ffirst I commend my sowle to allmightie god my maker and redeemer and my bodie to be buried in Christian bur[ial]

Item all former wills and all legacies at any time heeretofore by me made and bequeathed I

¹ At that time in history the year started on Lady Day, March 25th, so he died a month after he made his will.

revoke annihilate and utterlie disanull by these presents

Item I ---- to ^{my} eldest sonne William Kerry one Tenement w'th the lands and app'ten'ces thereto belonginge scituate lieinge and being in the towne and fields of Chipping nor[ton now] in the tenure and occupac'on of Thomas Austen, To have and to hould the said Tenem't and lands w'th thapp'ten'ces to him and his heires for ever.

Item I ----- to my said sonne William Kerry another tenem't w'th the lands and app'ten'ces scituate and lieinge in the towne and fieldes of Chipping norton aforesaid [nowe?] [*the next line is interlined at the caret below it*] And my will is that my wief shall receive to her use the yeerelie rente of the said Tenements untill my sonne accomlishe the age of one and twentie if she soe longe [shall live] the tenure of William Banister? To have and to houlde the said Tenem't and Lands w'th thappurten'ces to him and his heires for ever.

Item I give to [my] sonne John Kerry one Tenement and lands with the app'ten'ces and Commodities thereunto belonginge scituate lieinge and being in the towne and fields of C[hipping] norton aforesaid nowe in the tenure of William Colman To have and to houlde the tenem't and lands w'th thappten'ces aforesaid to him and his heires for ever provided allwaies that if either of my said sonnes dye w'thout yssue of his bodie lawfullie begotten then my will is that the lands remaine to the other that surviveth ^{and his heirs for ever}

Item I give my sonne William tenne shepe and my best yeerelinge Coulte

Item I give him a Cowe and five quarter of Corne to be paid and delivered him at the feast of [Saint] Michaell tharchangell w'ch shalbe in the yeere of our lord god a thowsand sixe hundred and nine

Item I give to my sonne John one shepe and one yeere[linge] Coulte

Item I give to my eldest daughter Anne Kerry twentie? sheepe and a Cowe called the blacke blowed Cowe to be paid her at the ffeast of St Michaell nexte [after] my decease

Item I give her one aker of wheate to be paid her at St Michaell aforesaid

Item I give my daughter Jane tenne Ewes, a yeerelinge Calfe, [and?] a litle Red heifer to be paid her at the feast of St Michaell nexte after my decease

Item I give my daughter Elizabeth tenne tegs to be paid her at St [Michaell] nexte after my deceasse as aforesaid.

Item I give to my said daughter Elizabeth twentie shillings yeerelie to be paid her out of the rent of William Collmans h[___ in?] Chippingnorton aforesaid for and duringe the space of eighte yeeres together beginninge the paiement thereof at the ffeast of St Michaell nexte after my deceasse [and] to contynue the same at the said ffeast yeerelie untill the full expirac'on of the said eighte yeeres ffrom w'ch time immediatlie I will that the said somme

twentie if she soe longe [shall live] the tenure of William Banister? To have and to houlde the said Tenem't and Lands w'th thappurten'ces to him and his heires for ever.

Item I give to [my] sonne John Kerry one Tenement and lands with the app'ten'ces and

of [twentie] shillings yssuinge fro' the lands aforesaid be yeerelie paid at the feast of St Michaell aforesaid to my sonne John Kerry untill he be full one and twentie [years of] *[the next line is interlined at the caret below it]* And my will is that my Wife shall receive to her owne use the residue of the rent of the said tenement untill my said sonne John accomlishe the age of one & twentie if she soe longe [live]

Item I give to ev'ie one of my children a Chest

Item I will that the legacies above men'o'ed be delivered to my overseers at the time appointed to be by [them] disposed to the best use of my Children

Item I will that the somme of thirtie seven shillings eighte pence be yeerelie paid (as hath bin accustomed) to my ffather [____] Kerry duringe his naturall lief ***Provided that if my ffather shall trouble and molest my wief Grace Kerry in suyng her at the lawe to put h[____] her Coppie houlde then my will is that the said somme of money be paid him noe more.***

Item I doe appointe William Margets John Sansome Richard [____]and Edmond ffletcher to be overseers of this my last will and Testament and I doe give to everie of them a stricke of wheate to be paid at the ffeast [of] All Saints nexte after my deceasse.

All the rest of my goodes and Cattells mooveable and unmooveable not formerlie given and bequeathed (my debts paid [and] my ffunerall rites p'formed) I give and bequeathe to my welbeloved wief Grace Kerry whome I doe ordaine constitute and appointe to be my whole and sole Exequutor by these p'sents In witnes whereof I have heereunto put my hand and seale the daie and yeere first above written.

Memorand' that these words viz: (And my will is that my wief shall receive to her use the yeerelie Rent of the said Tenements, untill my sonne accomlishe the age of one and twentie if she soe longe shall live) are interlined w'th the Consent of the Testator before the ensealinge hereof

Witnesses hereunto
William Margets X his marke

John Strong

Henry Roblins

Probatu' cora' nobis
[.....]
viz't xviii'o Aprilis 1607 in p'sona Executricis no'i'at ...

Invent' sum'a Cx^{li} x^s"
The abstract reads as follows:

I, William Kerry of Dean ... in the parish of Spelsbury ... sick in body ...

- I revoke all former wills.
- I give my eldest son William Kerry and his heirs forever two tenements with their lands etc in Chipping Norton, now occupied by Thomas Austen and William Banister (?)
My wife is to receive the yearly rent of the tenements for her use until William reaches age 21, if she lives so long.
- I give my son John Kerry and his heirs forever a tenement and its lands etc in Chipping Norton, now occupied by William Colman.
- If either of my sons dies without lawful issue of his body, [that property] goes to the survivor.
- I give my son William ten sheep and my best yearling colt.
- I give him a cove and five quarters of corn, to be delivered at Michaelmas 1609.
- I give my son John one sheep and one yearling colt.
- I give my eldest daughter Anne Kerry 20[?] sheep, the cow called the black blowed cow and one acre of wheat, to be paid at the Michaelmas after my decease.
- I give my daughter Jane ten ewes, a yearling calf and a little red heifer, to be paid at the Michaelmas after my decease.
- I give my daughter Elizabeth ten tegs,² to be paid as above.
- I also give Elizabeth 20s p.a. to be paid out of the rent of William Collman's house in Chipping Norton, for eight years beginning from the Michaelmas after my decease. After the eight years are expired, I give the 20s p.a. (paid at Michaelmas) to my son John Kerry until he reaches age 21.
- My wife is to receive the residue of the rent of that tenement for her own use until John reaches 21, if she lives so long.
- I give each of my children a chest.
- The above legacies are to be delivered to my overseers at the above times, to be disposed by them for the best benefit of my children.
- The sum of 37s 8d is to be paid yearly (as hitherto) to my father [____] Kerry duringe his _____ life. But if my father troubles my wife Grace Kerry by suing her to put [____] in her copyhold, then the money is to be paid no more.
- I appoint William Margets, John Sansome, Richard [____] and Edmond Fletcher as overseers, and I give them each a stricke of wheat, to be paid at All Saints (1 Nov) after my decease.
- I give all the rest of my goods and cattells (my debts and funeral paid) to my well beloved wife Grace Kerry whom I appoint sole Executor.

- Witnesses William Margets X his mark; John Strong; Henry Roblins

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	
William KERRY		Dean (Spelsbury)
Grace KERRY	Wife (Exec)	

² A teg is a sheep in its second year

_____ KERRY	Father	
William KERRY	Eldest Son	[under 21]
John KERRY	Son	[under 21]
Ann KERRY	Eldest Daughter	
Jane KERRY	Daughter	[no surname given]
Elizabeth KERRY	Daughter	[no surname given]
Thomas AUSTEN	Tenant	Chipping Norton
William BANISTER?	Tenant	Chipping Norton
William COLMAN	Tenant	Chipping Norton
William MARGETS	Overseer Witness	
John SANSOME	Overseer	
Richard _____	Overseer	
Edmond FLETCHER	Overseer	
John STRONG	Witness	
Henry ROBLINS	Witness	

Probate was granted on 18 Apr 1607 to the Executrix, his wife Grace Honour, with an inventory amounting to £110 10s.

Taking account of inflation, this would have been the equivalent of about £35,000, so William Kerry was not amongst the poor of the parish. It is possible to find traces of his tenants in the registers of Chipping Norton:

“Thomas son of Thomas Austen, baptised February 1595

“William Banist (sic) son of Guellimi Banist , baptised 30 June 1605

“ William Cowleman, sonne of Wm Cowleman baptised 17 Feb. 1610/11.....

..... as well as traces of other people called Kerry, Kerrie, Kery at Chipping Norton, though not in any great numbers:

Joan Kerrie daughter of Thomas baptised 8 Feb. 1595/6

Susanes Kerrie buried 15 April 1603

Isabel Kery daughter of Thomas baptised Chipping Norton 27 September 1607:

Handwritten church register entry for Isabel Kery, daughter of Thomas, baptised 27 September 1607. The text is written in cursive and includes the name 'Isabel Kery' and 'Thomas'.

Richard Kerrye sonne of Tho: Kerrie baptised Chipping Norton 2 May 1621

Maye: 2: Richard Kerrey (one of Tho: Kerrey)

The transcription did not immediately reveal the identity of the “Troublesome Aged Parent” as I have called him previously. Perhaps William could not bear to say his name. (section highlighted above). It had not occurred to me at the time I wrote Chapter One of the Honour saga that someone whose father was still alive in 1607 must have been, if not young, then in early middle age: our William Kerry, the testator, had young children, the eldest, William, being only sixteen, and Anne, our ancestor, who would marry Gabriel Honour, two years younger. The baby of the family of five was only six years old. Say William had been in his early twenties when he was married, then he was probably in his late thirties when he died in 1607. It likewise never occurred to me that Grace, his widow, was equally young – or that she might marry again. But she did! And she did not take long about it. Grace was a catch. Through the will transcripts I discovered the name of her bridegroom, Thomas Tennant. For their wedding I needed the Spelsbury parish register. The handwriting on the original is so poor that I can forgive “Ancestry’s” transcriber for indexing it as “Gracia Bid and Tho. Dunant”.

Gracia Bid and Tho. Tennant nupt. 20 July 1607

Gracia is the Latin version of Grace; she was the only one by that first name in the village. I suspect the scribe of the parish register was so distracted by this, with its sensitive religious nuance in this age of Puritan possibilities³ that he omitted her surname altogether; “Bid” is his version of “widow”. The rest, “nupt. 20 July 1607” is obvious. Nor would I have even suspected that this was our pair of newly-weds were it not for the fact that both Grace and Tom Tennant made wills, each naming the other’s children, from which I believe we can surmise that the marriage was a happy one.



All Saints, Spelsbury

³ such descriptive names, ‘Faith, Hope and Charity’ for instance were rapidly gaining in popularity

The Kerrys of Spelsbury

As I delved deeper, I could not help comparing our contemporary situation with the enormous upheaval of the years of my ancestors' time, between Henry VIII's repudiation of the Pope in Rome, establishing himself as head of the English Church, the ascent of his son, the 9 year old Edward VI, a fanatical Protestant, followed by the Marian counter-Reformation, and finally the ascent and long reign of Elizabeth.

During the whole of this 'unprecedented period' (to borrow a favourite phrase of the current crisis) our Kerry family carried on their lives in Spelsbury or in one of its neighbouring hamlets, Dean, Ditchley, Fulwell, and Taston, with occasional sorties to neighbouring villages, Enstone and Chipping Norton.

The first recorded Kerry entry in the parish register at All Saints church Spelsbury is for the baptism of Magdalena on 23 July 1542, followed by two more children, Johannes on 17 February 1546 and Humphridus on 31 May 1547, otherwise Magdalen, John and Humphrey. Sadly, baby Humphrey died at exactly three months old. Though no parentage is stated, they are the children of Humphrey Kerry, then a young man in his early twenties, and his unnamed wife, probably called Agnes.

These were the years of the madness brought about King Henry's obsession to beget a son and the pandemonium and terror which that frenzy unleashed. As the Kerrys were still resident by the end of the reign of Henry's third child, Elizabeth, and the ascent of her Scottish cousin James, it is not unlikely that they shared my daughter Caroline's present day opinion regarding our own crazy times: "what matters is that we all survive". Hopefully, our ordeal will not last as long.

In Mediaeval times there were no parish registers, though for some years prior to the Reformation, parish priests had noted the births and deaths of members of the leading local families in the margins of the service books. The vast majority of such jottings were destroyed in the period 1536-41 when Henry VIII "dissolved" the monasteries, appropriated their funds and declared himself head of the English Church.

Although Henry had severed the link between England and Rome, he never permitted the renunciation of Catholic doctrine or ceremony and indeed Catholics could be – and were – executed for treason during his reign. In 1538, through the efforts of Thomas Cromwell, the king's Vicar-General, a layman, sympathetic to the Protestant cause, (who was himself executed for heresy in 1540) Henry issued a mandate that every church in England should maintain a register to record the weddings, christenings and burials which took place in every parish, (presumably to keep a tally on what everyone was up to, and if possible tax them for it!) The parish was to provide a stout coffer with two locks in which the book should be kept, ready for inspection by religious officials, the priest having the custody of

one key, the two churchwardens the others. The entries were to be made each Sunday after the service by the priest in the presence of one of the wardens. The mandate was enforced under a penalty of '3 sols, 4 deniers' – the old terms died hard – otherwise 3 shillings and fourpence, or half a groat⁴ and came under the expenses for the repair of the church. Some parishes had too little income to purchase a book and kept the record on loose paper sheets. The bishops in their visitations were to check that the names of sponsors were duly entered in the registers of baptism. (Sponsors: i.e. Godparents – you'll be lucky: I've never seen such an entry in 50 years. I believe that the practice was quickly discontinued as smacking of "Popery".) Unfortunately though blessed for what it contains, entries were often haphazard, especially in these early years, and the doings of many people were missed. Marriages are difficult to find – as a general rule a girl married in her own parish whereas a man sought a partner from elsewhere. In the earliest register neither parent is named at baptism, later simply the father's name only. It was take several hundred years for the wife's part in the proceedings to be deemed worthy of note, though there were exceptions – for instance Margerie the wife of Thomas Kerry in whose children were born in 1566 and 1569.

Edicts from on high took some time to filter down to an insignificant place like Spelsbury, therefore its first register entry is for 1540 written in Latin, badly stained and the initial pages impossible to read.⁵ (For me at least.) Legibility improves later though details remain very sparse and contain only the minimum of information, the name, date and the office carried out. Nevertheless Spelsbury is fortunate - as is the lunatic researcher who avidly looks for such things – that the registers have survived back to this early date at all, an unusual occurrence.

Occasionally the outside world intervened, for example in 1526 when the parish priest Robert Charde petitioned Thomas Wolsey, then Archbishop of York (and Papal Legate) concerning a dispute between Spelsbury and the Dean & Chapter of Warwick. The matter, Charde v Osbaldeston, concerned funds – presumably withheld – regarding an income for the vicarage and the provision of a parish clerk.⁶ At this time, in common with all parish priests Charde would have been invested with the courtesy title: 'Sir Robert Charde.' A few years later, Wolsey himself, having failed to negotiate the annulment of the king's marriage to Catherine of Aragon fell out of favour, and summoned to London to face treason charges, fortuitously died en route to the Tower in 1540.

The Spelsbury priest may have been in semi-retirement by 1535 when he is named as 'Mr Robert Chard' in the will of John Osbaldeston [the same] of Chadlington. Other priests mentioned in the same will were Sir Richard Meyre and Sir William Pachet. The latter is

⁴ 20 sols = 1 livre (old French) ! A denier was a penny, of course – of which there were 240 to the livre = pound. Which is where our old £sd came from. A groat was 6s 8d, or one third of a pound.

⁵ The present survivor replaced a previous 'owld book'.

⁶ National Archives C/1480/35 & *Wychwood Forest & its Border Places* by John Kibble

especially noteworthy as Osbaldeston left him 2s 4d to sing a trentall (a three part Requiem Mass) for the souls of Thomas Bardyse and his wife, a couple, otherwise unknown, though obviously beloved of the testator.

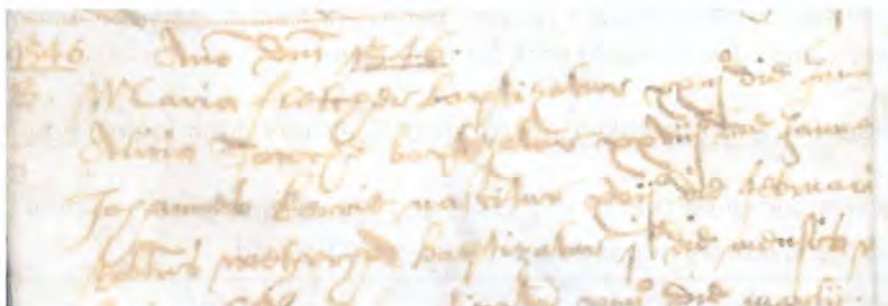
Such are the tiny glimpses of the settled religious life which had already started to unravel: by this time Henry VIII had broken with the Pope, he and Ann Boleyn were newly-weds, their daughter Elizabeth was in the cradle and named as heir to the throne; Catholic Mary, the king's elder daughter had been declared illegitimate, England's monasteries were closed and in most cases sold off to add to Henry's wealth, much of it wasted in the pursuit of foreign wars.

In 1542, the first Kerrie, (Kerry, Kyrrye) made an appearance in the still new register of baptisms, marriages and burials two years after it commenced.



Magdalena Kerrie baptised 23 July 1542

She was followed by



John (Johannes) Kerrie) who was baptised on 17 February 1546

The two hands are markedly different. The parish had a new curate, Sir James Thomkynson.

When John Wynter of 'Spellisbury' made his will on 2 April 1546, the priest was a witness:

- My body is to be buried in the churchyard of Spelsbury.
- The Church and the Lord are to have their rights.
- I give my daughter Elizabeth a cow.
- To Water Damerye two bullocks.
- I give the rest of my goods to my wife Margaret whom I make my executrix.
- Witnesses Sir James Thomkynson, curate of Spelsbury; Richarde Francklyn; Wyllyam Webb; Wyllyam Frenche. John Wynter was buried on 30th April and probate was granted on 5 June 1546.

In 1542, the first Kerrie, (Kerry, Kyrrye) made an appearance in the still new register of baptisms, marriages and burials two years after it commenced.



If the arrivals and departures of the various queens were discussed in Spelsbury, Henry the king himself remained in situ and presumably local matters continued much as before.

Humphrey Kerry, the father of Magdalen and John, was already of sufficient maturity, standing, respectability within the small community to be called upon to witness the will of a neighbour, 'Wyllyam Persye' on the 27 June 1546.

Though not among the most affluent members of the congregation, William left two pence to the high altar of Spelsbury Church and the same sum to the mother church at Oxford with other legacies:

- I give my land in Fifield to my wife for life, and after her to my son William and his heirs.
If he dies without issue it goes to my daughter Alyce, if she dies without issue to my daughter Agnes, if she dies to my daughter Clement.
- I give my daughter Clement two sheep of the middle sort, a pair of sheets, a stall of bees, a pot and a pan.
- I give my daughter Agnes two sheep and a pot.
- I give my daughter Alyce two sheep and a pot.
- My debts being paid, I give the rest of my goods to my wife Agnes Persye and my son William Persye equally divided, and I make them my Executors.
- If my wife remarries, my son is to have his portion delivered to him 15 days before the marriage by the oversight of John James and Humfrey Kyrrye whom I make my overseers, and I give them 8d each for their pains.
- Witnesses Sir James Thomkynson, curate of Spelsbury; John James; Humfrey Kyrrye

William Percy was buried on the 16 July 1546, and the will was probated on 4th September the same year, the inventory of goods amounting to £12 19s 8d.

Henry VIII died on the following 28 January 1547. His son, nine year old Edward VI ascended the throne, at first under the Protectorate of his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, and afterwards the Duke of Northumberland. Edward was said to be precociously intellectual and a convinced Protestant.

John Bumpasse of 'Spellisbury', sick in body, made his will on 4 December 1547. It was short and to the point. He had even less to distribute than William Percy.

- I give 2d to the poor men's hutch or coffer.
- I give eight sheep to my son John, and he is to have his cupboard and his chafing-dish.
- I give four sheep to my son Richard, and he is to have my second best pot and a wor[s]t pan.
- I give 8d to Sir James Thomkynson, cleric and make him my overseer.
- I give the rest of my goods to my wife Maude whom I make sole Executrix.

- Witnesses John Butler; Thomas Guye [?]

Probate 5 May 1548 ...Maude, the widow and executrix was represented by Thomas Shaw of Chadlington. The inventory amounted to £7 12d [sic]

Another will followed 22 February 1548/9

I, Robert Ryman of Fullwell ... Spellisburye ... sick in body ...

- My body is to be buried in the churchyard of Spelsbury.
 - I give to the poor-box 12d.
 - To my wife's son Richard Meedys 10 sheep running, to be to be delivered next Martlemas⁷.
 - To my son Edward 10 sheep running, to be delivered at Martlemas a year after my burial.
 - To my son George 10 sheep running, to be delivered with Edward's.
 - To my sons Leonard and Anthony 12 sheep each, 6 each to be delivered next Martlemas and the other 6 at Martlemas 2 years later.
 - To my son Thomas 6 sheep to be delivered at age 12.
 - To Richard Hunte a sheep, another to his wife and another to their son Humfrey.
 - Also to Richard Hunte a quarter of seed barley this year and half a quarter of seed barley a year for the following three years; also half a quarter of seed wheat at the next sowing.
 - To my son Leonard a pot bought from Leonard Carpynder.
 - To Elizabeth Ryman a ewe sheep, to be delivered next Martlemas.
 - To my goddaughter Ann Joyner one ewe sheep at next Martlemas.
 - To Richard Prentise, son of Thomas Prentise, a chilver sheep.
 - To all my godchildren 4d each.
 - To my brother William Ryman 24s to be good to my wife.
 - To John Joyner 6s 8d.
 - To Thomas Prentise 6s 8d.
 - The last three legacies are to be delivered soon after next sheep-shearing time.
 - I give Anne Ryman, daughter of my brother Richard Ryman, 20s and a sheep.
 - To Sir James Thomkynson 20d.
 - To my brother Richard 2 strykes of wheat and 2 strykes of malt, one stryke of each to be delivered immediately after my burial and the other at the following Michaelmas.
 - Also to my brother Richard a frieze coat and a shirt (the best or second-best).
 - The rest of my goods, my debts and legacies paid, I give to my wife Alice whom I make my sole executrix.
 - My overseers William Ryman, Thomas Prentise and John Joyner.
 - To my son Edward a pan bought from Mr Charde, Vicar of Spelsbury.
 - To my son Anthony a pan bought from Edward Collyns.
- Witnesses James Thomkynson, curate of Spelsbury; Richard Suche and Richard Huckwell

⁷ Martlemas = Martinmas, St Martin's Day, 11th November.

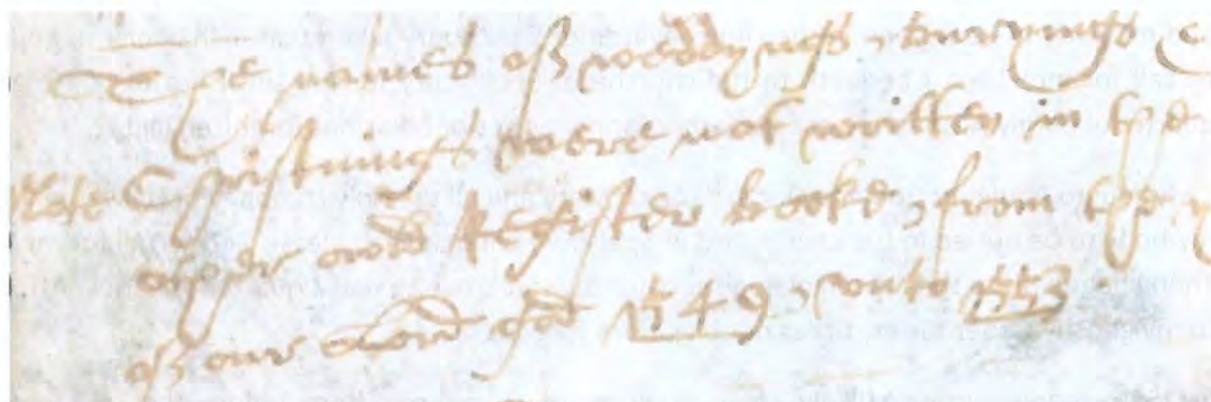
Probate 31 May 1549reign of Edward VI ... the executrix named, represented, by Thomas Shawe of Chadlington (again) The inventory came to £30 7s 4d.

Edward's reign accelerated the religious reform which had begun under his father. The liturgy of the Anglican Communion, the Book of Common Prayer, was to replace the Roman Catholic Missal. It was prepared under the guidance of Thomas Cranmer, who had been Archbishop of Canterbury since 1533 and was enacted by the first Act of Uniformity in 1549. It is quite rightly held to be a jewel of the English language. It was controversial to say the least.

The same year, two popular uprisings took place - in Devon against the religious reforms and in Norfolk, Robert Kett's rebellion against social injustice. The latter was ferociously put down by the Duke of Northumberland, who was able to exploit his success in order to accelerate the removal of his rival, Somerset, who was then executed for treason. Protestant reform was stepped up. Donations to the altar at Spelsbury such as William Persye's twopence would no longer be permitted - in any case the altar would soon be gone, sawn up and replaced by a communion table. The objects of worship in the niches - such as the locally popular female Saint Fridesweed - would likewise be taken down and destroyed, though in a tiny minority of cases some parish furniture may have been secretly hidden by a parishioner. The walls of All Saints, in common with all English churches would have been highly decorated with scenes of the Garden of Eden, Noah's Flood, or the Harrowing of Hell. For eons they had provided a modicum of diversion for the congregation during the boredom of long sermons, through which everyone stood, with only the extremely aged or crippled allowed to sit on a stone bench. The murals would be whitewashed over. There would be no more chanting of *trentalls* for the souls of the long dead. All this was now dismissed as Superstition. An Act of Uniformity enforced stringent obedience to such matters. In our secular age it is impossible to exaggerate the effect all this would have had. The zeal of the iconoclasts could be compared to ISIS.

Along with stream of edicts and evocations which went out to all the parish churches in the land an order was reissued that the registers should be kept up. There had been some backsliding among the clergy, whether enthusiastic reformers or fearfully complicit. Some did not see the point of it. God knew who everyone was. Besides, with all the additional bureaucracy now heaped upon them, it was too much extra work.

Spelsbury apparently defied the direct order. The records were not kept up. This note appears in the register book.



“The names of weddings, buryings and late Christenings above were not written in the other owld Register booke from the year of our Lord for 1549 unto 1553.”

If you unpick the note you will see it is ambiguous. Firstly, the register we are looking at is not the original. It is, annoyingly, a copy of “the other old register book”. What happened to “the old book”? Why was nothing recorded for these years? Was something incriminating written in the old book during the Edwardian regime which made its destruction necessary? Was the Protestantism contained therein too strong? It is impossible to say. Robert Shurley was the last baby to be christened in February 1549. Then silence. Four years of Edward were blanked out in Spelsbury. James Thomkynson had witness Robert Ryman’s will on 22 February 1549. Was he still there when it was probated on 31st May? It seems unlikely. Perhaps he went on the run?

In 1553, the young King, who was always sickly, died. After a brief nine days during which the tragic dupe Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed Queen, Edward’s half-sister, the formerly belittled Mary Tudor claimed her right to the throne. Mary was crowned Queen on 1 October 1553. Spelsbury without ado resumed its recordings of the congregation with another Shurley baby, Agnes, baptised the same month. For them, this obviously (?) meant that things were “getting back to normal”. What they got was a counter-reformation, even more ruthless than the one it had succeeded. Though Christians had been executed by Edward VI and his father, they were far fewer in number than the three hundred plus persons burnt to death by Mary Tudor. The most infamous of these executions was the burning of the Bishops, Ridley and Latimer in October 1555 followed the next March by Archbishop Cranmer, the father of the Prayer Book, which was now pronounced anathema.

By 8 June 1555 there was a new vicar, Henry Sadleyer, who witnessed the will of William Webb, husbandman of Spelsbury. In a break with tradition, he is not named as “Sir”, in the will which is Catholic, though not overly florid. William bequeathes

“my sowle to allmightie god and our ladie saynte Marie and all the holly c’mpany of heaven and my body to be buryed in the churchyarde of Spellisbury when that it shall please god to call for me: Then I bequeth to the churche of Spellisbury for my sowll health halffe a quarter of barley Allso to my goastly father for my tythes or oblacions forgotten iiijd.”

“My soul to Almighty God and Our Lady Saint Mary and all the holy company of Heaven and my body to be buried in the churchyard of Spelsbury when it shall please God to call for me. Then I bequeath to the church of Spelsbury for my soul’s health half a quarter of barley. Also to my ghostly father for my tithes or obligations forgotten, 4d.”

In 1559, Joane Kyrrie, a likely elder daughter of Humphrey, born before the registers commenced in 1540, married Robert Harris at Spelsbury. The couple subsequently disappear, probably to the groom’s parish. Disappointingly, theirs is the only Kerry wedding reported until 1594 when Joane Kerry married Jerome Shurley and Ann Kerry married James Trepas the next year. These two girls may be more daughters of Humphrey Kerry’s son Thomas who was married to Margerie. Humphrey himself had seemingly been a widower since 1555 when his supposed wife Agnes died. They had also buried a daughter, Anna, in 1549.

Though the parish register gives every impression of being complete, this is obviously far from the case. Apart from the Edwardian period noted above, the years 1563-65 are also missing. Many people slipped the net; they did not register the two main religious events in their lives, and their relatives or the priest/vicar forgot to record the last.

Other wills listed for Spelsbury still await transcription, and the next for which I have access is for 1562, by which time the last of the three royal siblings, Elizabeth, occupied the throne. Fortunately for this account, Humphrey Kerry, in his middle-aged pomp, was again a witness:

I, Annys James of Taston ... Spellisburye ... sick of body ... 15 December 1562

- My body is to be buried in the churchyard of Spelsbury
- I give the mother church of Oxford 2d
- I give the poor of the parish 13s 4d, half to be paid at my burial and the other half during the same month at the discretion of my overseers.
- I give £12 to my eldest son Christofere Langford, half to be paid at the next feast of All Saints [1 Nov], the other £6 on that day 12 months later.
 - To each of his children a sheep and a pair of sheets
 - To each of his daughters a platter
 - To Besse and Anne two table-cloths
 - To Gryffyne Langforde the best pan
- I give £8 to my daughter Isbell Woollen, wife of William Woollen, £4 to be paid at Holyrood Day [3 May] in twelve months’ time, the other £4 on that day twelve months later
 - To each of William's children a sheep and a pair of sheets

- To his three daughters each a platter.
- To Julyane and Ann each a towel
- To Raffe Woollen the little coffer
- To Fyllys the middlest brooch
- I give to Anne Hore a sheep, a pair of sheets, a table cloth, a towel and the little pan
- I give to Anfylde Hore a sheep and a pair of sheets
- I give all the residue of my goods to my son Robert Langforde whom I make my executor
- My overseers shall be John Harte and Henry Paxforde, and I give them for their pains 20d apiece

Witnesses: Humphrey Kyrry; Thomas Guy with others

Probate was granted on 2 January 1562/3 with the named executor represented by William Busbie. The Inventory amounted to £37. Now that most of us have houses overflowing with “stuff”, so much that many people are obliged to hire storage in warehouses to cope with the overflow, it comes as a small shock to see how little ordinary men and women in earlier times owned in the way of goods – and these, who made wills, were the comparatively well-to-do. In 1571, Humphrey was again in evidence, this time in the more important role as one of the overseers.

The will of Joane Suche of Fulwell ... 10 January 1570/1

- My body is to be buried in the churchyard of Spelsbury
- I give my eldest daughter Dorethe Tenande one acre of wheat in Adamsdon, one half? acre of barley in Scothedge Furlong, and 4 sheep.
- I give Anne Tenand my daughter's daughter one sheep and my black kirtle?
- Chroser Tenand my daughter's child one sheep.
- Willm Tenande one sheep.
- George Tenande one sheep.
- The above sheep are to be delivered at the next [feast of] St Michael the Archangel after my decease.
- I give my second daughter Elizabeth two acres of wheat in Adamsdon and one acre of barley in Scotte hedge Furlong, one land of barley in Hanging Lands and a but? of barley at Koardsbishe, also a wort pan and two tubs standing in the mill house under the wall next to the garden, one barrel and one store pig.
- I give my daughter Mary (my youngest child) all my barley in the barley quarter unbequeathed, all my wheat, all my ___styne between John Taylor's bush and the Townsend, one cow and three sheep (she to have the choice herself) and one store pig.
- I give her a flock bed, a bolster, two pairs of sheets, a pair of blankets, one hillinge? (the best) and a curtain.
- I give her my second brass pot, one pan that stands in the furnace, 2 platters, 2 pottingers, 2 saucers, my best cauldron, one upstand and yelding tub, a powdering trough, my second tablecloth, my 2 best towels, one of the kivers, a coffer and half my hemp.
- I give my son's son Richard Fletcher one sheep.

- I make Humfreye Kyrre and Leonard Ryman overseers ... for their pains I give them 12d apiece.
- My son Robert shall give my daughter Mary 6s 8d towards the wintering of 20 sheep at Michaelmas after my decease.
- All my goods are to be divided at the discretion of my overseers.
- All my other goods I give to my son Robert whom I make executor.
- I will that Robert sow all the above land at his own cost with good grain
- Witnesses Humfrey ____; Leonard Ryman Henry Kirrin

Maybe he could just manage to write his first name? Is Kirrin a mis-spelling for another Kerry, otherwise unknown? Probate was in 1571, though not included.

Some baptisms of the children of John and Dorothy Tennant (variously spelled) appear in Spelsbury's register. They include Anne, William and George, but unfortunately not "Chroser" otherwise Christopher [?] However, if the children are mentioned in birth order (as they appear to be), he fell into the missing years 1563-65 when once again there was no recorded activity, though this is not commented on in the register. Probably the parish was temporarily without a parson.

Robert Fletcher is the product of Joane's first marriage as is Dorothy Tenande (Tennant) who was previously Dorothy Fletcher. These people would un-knowingly become connections when our widowed Grace Kerry took Thomas Tennant as her second husband.

From then on Humphrey avoided the limelight – or his name is in those wills not yet transcribed, and the next time he appears is for his own will in 1593.



I, Humfry Kyrre of Taston ... Spelsbury ... husbandman

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>[Comments] or Major Bequests</u>
Humfrey KERRY		Taston (Spelsbury)
Frydsweed CROSSE	Legatee Servant	
unnamed	Godchildren	
unnamed	Grandchildren	
Thomas KERRY	Son (Exec)	
William KERRY	Grandson	[s Thomas]
Michael KYRRY	Mention	[with unnamed ch legatees]
Thomas KYRRY	Legatee	[s Michael]
John DEANES	Grandson	[son of a daughter]
Richard BELCHER	Legatee Servant	
Robert LANGFORD	Overseer Witness	
Leonard RYMAN	Overseer Witness	
John DURBRIDGE	Overseer Witness	
Robert BACHE	Witness	scribe

Probate 25? Oct 1593 Oxford ... executor named ...

Inventory £32 15s 4d Transcriber's and Editor's Notes Translated and paragraphed.
with some of the standard preamble and "legalese" removed.

I Hum]fry Kyrrye of Taston ... Spelsbury ... husbandman ...

- My body is to be buried in the church or churchyard of Spelsbury.
- I give the poor people of Chipping Norton 20s.
- I give the poor of Enstone 20s.
- I give the poor of Stonesfield 20s.
- I give the poor of Charlbury 20s.
- I give the poor of Chadlington 20s.
- The above is to be distributed by the relevant churchwardens to the poor according to their need within one month after my decease.
- I give my now servant Frydsweed Crosse forty sheep or £10, at her choice, to be paid at midsummer after my decease.
- I also give her all my indoor household stuff such as brass, pewter, linen, woollen etc in the hall, chamber and kitchen, both the upper and lower rooms, immediately after my decease.
- I give all my godchildren one sheep or 5s, at the discretion of my overseers.
- I give all my grandchildren one sheep or 5s, and to my daughter's son John Deanes another sheep or 5s more.
- I give to Wylliam Kyrry, son of my son Thomas Kyrry, a yoke of oxen or £4.
- I give to Thomas Kyrry, son of Michell Kerry, ten sheep or 50s.
- I give every other child of Michaell Kyrry two sheep or 10s.
- I give my servant Rich Belcher 4 sheep or 20s.
- I give all the rest of my goods, lands, cattles and chattels to my son Thomas Kyrry whom I make sole executor.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>[Comments] or Major Bequests</u>
Humfrey KERRY		Taston (Spelsbury)
Frydsweed CROSSE	Legatee Servant	
unnamed	Godchildren	

- I make my overseers Robert Langford, Leonard Ryman and John Durbridge.
- Witnesses Robert Bache scribe; Leonard X Ryman; Rob'te X Langford; John X Durbridge

Probate 25? Oct 1593 Oxford ... executor as named ...
Inventory £32 15s 4d.

The transcription, punctuation, spelling etc, as in the original, though the paragraphs are mine:

In the name of God Amen the third day of March in the ffyve and Thirtieth Year of the raigne [*damage*] Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God Quene of England, ffrance, and Ireland deffendrer of the faith [*damage*] ----fry Kyrrye of Tastone in the parishe of Spelsbery in the county of Oxon husbandman and being in good [*damage*] p'fect remembrance prayse be geven to almighty god, doe make and ordayne this my last will & T[*damage*] & forme following:

ffirst I com'end my soule unto almightie God my creator hoping of a most ioyful [*damage*] into everlasting life onely by the meritts of the most precious death and passion of Jesus Christ my [*damage*]r & redemer And my body to be buried at the pleasure of almighty god in the churche or churchyard of Spelsbery abovesayd

Item I geve to the poore people of Chipping Norton xxs

Item I geve to the poore of the parishe of Estone xxs

Item I geve to the poore of Stonsfeyld xxs Item I geve unto the poore of the parishe of Charlebery xxs

Item I geve to the poore of Chadlington xxs

To be distributed by the Churchwardens of every the saide parishes unto the poore there according to their need & chardge w'thin one moneth next after my decease

Item I geve and bequeath unto ffrydsweed Crosse nowe my s'vant fourty shepe, or els ten pounds of lawfull money of england at the choyce of the sayd ffrydsweed or of her assignes: To be payd & delyvered unto the sayd ffrydsweed or her assignes at midsomer next after my deceasse. Item I geve unto the sayd ffrydsweed more all myne Inward houshold stuffe as brasse pewter Lynnen Woollen and other Implem'ts of housholdstuffe whatsoev'r in the hall, chamber & kytchin, both in the upper and lower roomes. by what manner soever they or any of them may be called Imediatly after my deceasse.

Item I geve unto every godchild I shall have at my deceasse one shepe or els fyve shillings in money by the discretion of myne overseers

Item I geve unto every my childrens children one shepe or else fyve shillings in money and to John Deanes my daughters sonne one other shepe or else vs more in money.

Item I geve unto Wylliam Kyrry sonne of Thomas Kyrry my sonne a yoke of Oxen or els foure pounds in money.

Item I geve unto Thomas Kyrry sonne of Michell Kerry ten shepe or else ffifty shillings in money And to ev'ry other child of the said Michaell Kyrry two shepe or els ten shillings in money.

Item I geve unto Rich Belcher my servant iiij shepe or els twenty shillings in money.

All the rest of my goods moveable & unmoveable Lands cattles & chattles I ~~geve unto~~ unbequeathed I geve & bequeath unto Thomas Kyrry my sonne whom I make my sole executor to p'fourme this my said Last wyll & Testam't in mann' & forme above specified according to the true meaning hereof Item I make overseers hereof Robte Langford Leonard Ryman & John Durbridge

In Witnesse whereof I the said Humfry Kyrry have hereunto set my hand & seale the day & yeare first above sayd

Theis p'sent & Witnesses at thensealing & delyvery hereof vid' me

Rob'tum Bache Script'r. (the will's scribe). Leonard X Ryman the X m'ke. Rob'te X Langford his m'k. of Humfry Kyrry his m'k. John X Durbridge his m'k

"Probat' Cora'

.....

..... Apud Oxon viz: xxv? octob' 1593 in p'sona execut' in eade' no'i'at in forma iuris &c"

So there we have it. Humphrey's will makes up for the deficiencies of the parish register. Only one of his children, Thomas, was still alive by 1593, and his baptism is not recorded. It seems likely that he was born during the missing years, 1549-53. The other child named, a daughter, is certainly Magdalena who married John Deanes. Their son John, who was baptised at Chalgrave in 1557, received five shillings and a sheep, which must show he was the eldest of the next generation, and the only one named amongst the rest of the grandchildren who were left money only. The godchildren (also un-named) like the generous donations to the neighbourhood poor perhaps suggest that Humphrey still adhered to the old religion. In the absence of information to the contrary, I have assumed Michael, and therefore 'the other Thomas' was Humphrey's nephew. Once again, Humphrey was remiss when it came to naming his nephews and nieces, which has made identification difficult.

Now to Humphrey's son Thomas, the residual legatee. I believe I need look no further for 'the Troublesome Aged Parent' with whom I began the Honour saga. We know from the will that Thomas had a son, William. If Thomas was born as I believe c1549-53, married Margery when he was about twenty, and following the birth of Agnes in 1566, (named after his mother) he went on to have William, who himself was married young, and had his first child in 1592, 'our' Ann, who would go on marry Gabriel Honour.

By the time William died in 1607, relations had soured between him and his father, who evidently didn't much approve of his wife Grace.



Humphrey Kerry buried 30 August 1547.

As to the servants, Richard Belcher by a remote chance may be the man of this name 'of Enstone' who made good with his legacy of four sheep, and died in 1613 leaving goods to the value of £38 8s 4d attached to a long inventory.

It is Frydesweed Crosse who fascinates me. She was clearly highly favoured, and at a guess, I believe that she may have moved in with Humphrey shortly after he was widowed to look after his children, stayed on as housekeeper and probable bed warmer. She was to have all his household goods immediately after his demise, but was she kicked out of the house itself, the stuff piled up in a cart? Moreover where did she go? Her name is not as rare as one might think, and I have examined dozens of possibles but there is neither hide nor hair of her anywhere.

Did she exchange the sheep for cash the following midsummer or is she still wandering the country roads with her flock even to this day?



Frydestweed Crosse (?)

In Part One where the Honour saga previously began, Grace Kerry was known only as the wife of William and the mother of their children, with a blank for the details of her own birth, marriage and death. This can now be rectified. She left a will which names her four surviving children, Ann Honour, ('Honer'), Jane Ladyman, William Kerry and John Kerry. Grace's name was by then not Kerry, but Tenant.

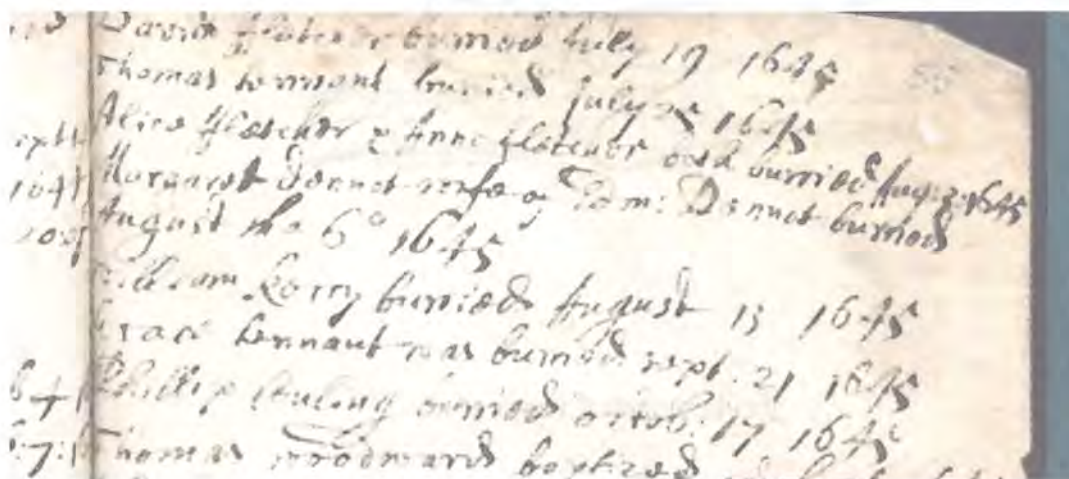
William Kerry died on 27 March 1607. On 20 July 1607 Grace, the widow, married Thomas Tenant, a widower with two sons, John and Thomas. One can only imagine her father-in-law spluttering over his beer.

I am quite sure the happy couple went to live at Grace's house in Dean with Grace's children and Thomas' sons John and Thomas.

They do not appear to have had children of their own, and nothing is known of them until 31 October 1628, when Thomas who was not feeling very well ("weak in body") made his will.

I, Thomas Tenant of Deane ... Spelsbury ... husbandman ... weak in body names his wife Grace, his sons John and Thomas Tenant, his brother Christopher, and his nephews and nieces, (Christopher's children) Thomas, Joseph, one un-named, Elizabeth and Joan. Plus Grace's children, his stepsons William and John Kerry and stepdaughters Ann Ho[n]ar and Jsane Ladyman. His son John and wife Grace were to be executors with William Kerry and Robert Braine as overseers. The witness was the latest vicar of Spelsbury, William Negose.

.....but whatever ailed Thomas Tennant, he recovered. He lived 1645, when he was buried on 25th July. He was followed to the grave by William Kerry on 23rd August and Grace, his widow on 21st September.



Grace Tenant made her will on 16 September, a few days before she died.

In the name of god Amen I Grace Tenant of Deane in ye p'ish of Spellsbery in ye County of Ox'on widow being sicke in body but of soundand p'fect remembrance ye lord be prayed I doe make this my last will and Testament: first I bequeath my soulle to Almighty god my

Creator whoe made me and all mankind trusting and hoping of mercy from him throug the merits death and passion of my saviour Christ and my body to be buried in the Church yeard of Spelsbery and as for these worldly goods which it pleased god to indowe me with I give and bequeath in maner and fforme following

It'. I give and bequeath to An Honer my daughter ye sum of fourty shillings

It' I give and bequeath to my daughter Jane Ladyman the sum of ~~forty~~²⁰ shillings

It' I give to Margrett Kery my daughter in law ye sum of 2s 6d

It' I give to Dorothy Tenant ye sum of five shillings It' I give to Elizabeth Tenant ye sum of five shillings

It' I give to Thomas Kery the son of William Kery the some of 2s 6d

All the rest of my goods unbequeathed I give to my sone John Kery whome I make my full and whole

Executor ^{of this my last will and testament} of all my goods moveable and unmoveable my debts and leggacies being payed and hereunto I put to my hand

this 16: day of September 1645.

I apoint George Coulinge and Edmond Hopkins to see this my will p'formed

The m'k of X Grace Tenant

Geo: Coulinge

Edmond X Hopkins

The will was proved by her remaining son John on 18th October.

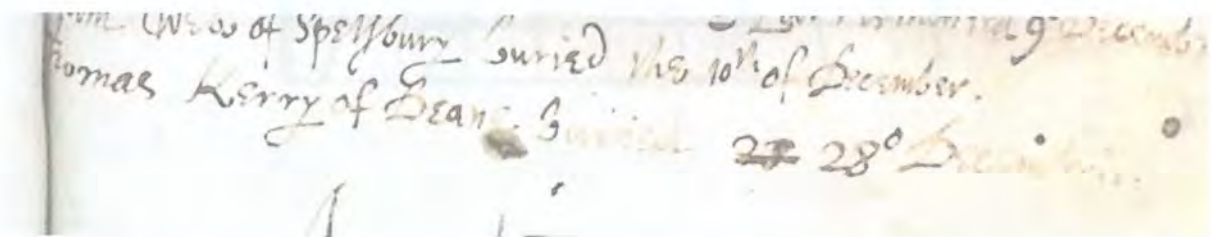
"Probat &c apud Oxon decimo

octavo die mens's Octobr' Anno d'ni

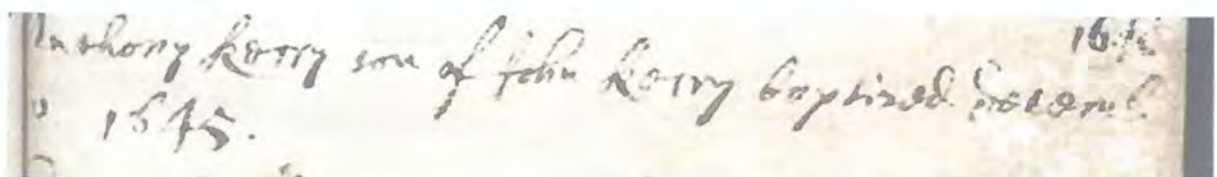
1645 cora'

..... jur'to

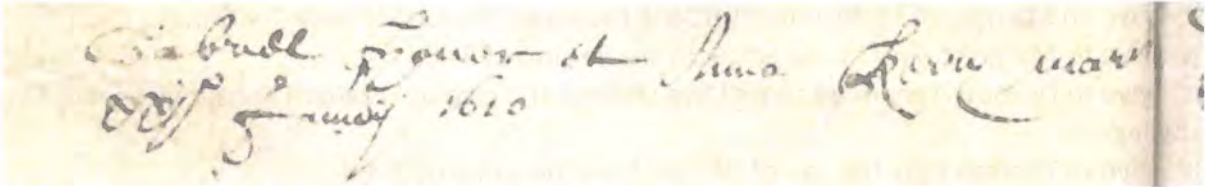
Joh'is Kerry filij et Ex'ris &c"



The death of Thomas Kerry occurred at Christmas 1617, though could equally be one of the other Thomas Kerrys. Equally, I cannot say what happened next to John Kerry, Grace's son and executor, though this is likely to have been his son, baptised in December 1645.



From now on we go back to the Honour family proper. Gabriel Honour married Ann Kerry at Spelsbury on 22 January 1610.....



..... and the action moves from Spelsbury to Wendlebury..... 17.1. miles away

PROLOGUE

"Miss not the discourse of the elders"
Ecclesiasticus 8:9

"Possessions," said Pem, "are a nuisance. You think you own them, when in fact they own you." She believed in travelling light through life and accordingly began giving away most of her chattels as soon as Uncle Tom died, to give her more time with that work she really loved, the cultivation of her garden. "What was bred in the blood comes out in the bone," she would say. The fingers which dug, planted, thinned and harvested bore witness to those generations of "good yeomen whose limbs were made in England", who Shakespeare urged to "show us here the mettle of your pasture" of whom she believed herself descended, and of whom she was fiercely proud.

Never did I leave her empty handed, for she gave most of her produce away, together with those moveables she no longer had any use for - but as she abhorred waste, it was always, "You can have that, if you can find a use for it." This distribution of largesse held equally good for my brother and all our cousins when any of us visited the red brick cottage with the green gate. Each and every one found the same generosity of spirit, the wise counsel and respect of confidence in the sure and certain knowledge that any secret confided would never go any further.

Pem, married late in life and childless, was nevertheless the matriarch of the Honour family, following a lineal tradition of petticoat rule which the Honour women, she insisted, had had thrust upon them, for the menfolk, (and certainly her own father), were perennial boys, often feckless and given to wild schemes, whose sometimes melodramatic conduct had to be excused and condoned whilst the women who loved them rolled up their sleeves and got on with it.

She was born Emily Honour on Bastille Day, 1895, but her nickname came from my brother when he was an infant. He was her "Burma Boy" after a colourful picture of "The paddy fields of Burma" in one of Stamp's geographies, which he carried round with him, showing all who would look. To him, she was "Pem", and this name which she preferred to her own was gradually adopted by most of the remainder of the family. "Auntie?" she would say raising quizzical eyebrows if ever I slipped one in by mistake.

She invented a persona of "our maiden aunt", and whilst relatively young dressed in clothes which she made herself from patterns with the legend "for the Matron". In wintertime she affected a layer of pink thermogene wadding across her chest below a knitted vest to keep out the cold. I have never met another person who wore woollen knee-caps in the usually temperate climate of the British Isles: one such pair was painstakingly knitted by my eight year old self and accepted by her gratefully as a Christmas present. These eccentricities we found fascinating and her bi-annual visits from the Post Office where, known as "Honi", she ruled in majesty at the Shepherd's Bush or Acton Branch Offices were the highlights of our childhood. In the three days of her February "winter leave" there was always a box at the Pantomime. (She and I were acutely stage struck.)

In October, if the weather was mild, there were bus trips to Blaise Castle, Glastonbury or Bath. At Longleat, in my presence, she was once mistaken for the dowager Marchioness of Bath. Her outfit then consisted of a sensible tweed skirt with a matching short coat; a pill box hat with veiling from which peeped her small round tortoiseshell glasses, and across her shoulders, a dead fox. It had a great red brush, terrible yellow glass eyes and gaping fangs, made pathetic by its thin dangling legs which twisted and shivered as she progressed. The ethics of so grotesque a garment were not then questioned and indeed were quite the thing.

She was the epitome of the Empire on which the sun never set in the days when the British Government would send in a gunboat. She was used to command. "Your grandfather told us we need never doff our caps to anybody," she said grandly, steering us into Carwardine's amongst the potted palms for toasted teacakes, though she was just as likely to descend on a four ale bar and call for a glass of stout. She would make me sit inside when under-18s were not allowed in pubs, which embarrassed me tremendously, and I was terrified of "getting caught". On one occasion, unable to find a "ladies", she marched into the "gents", though she did shout out first to make sure it was unoccupied. Cheeks burning, I was ordered to "keep ki" outside. I hoped I would die before I was put in prison. The World was full of people she had "torn off a strip". As my brother said, ruefully rubbing his backside which had recently received a smack, "If Pem promises you something, you'll certainly get it."

When looking for the words of the Churching Service in the book of Common Prayer when writing the story of our ancestor, Margaret Honour, it fell open at the hymn, "Jesu lover of my soul" which was her favourite, and which we sang thinly at her funeral. The solemnity of this occasion was marred when the incumbent mounted the pulpit and my mother leaned over to me and said, horrified, "She couldn't stand that vicar!"

"Tell us a story, Pem," we would say, and she would light up a Players' Navy Cut or Senior Service and settle us one each side of her. For a maiden aunt, she was a risqué companion. She was an emancipated woman long before womens' lib was ever heard of; her socialism sat oddly with her sense that we were a cut above the rest, for she professed that Jack was every bit as good as his master; she saw no reason to discriminate against colour, class, creed, sex and youth and the only superiority she acknowledged was that of the intellect. She could be mad, as when she suddenly lopped off my daughter Caroline's plaits without ado. Her influence on me was immeasurable, and I miss her still. She adjured me to go on learning all my life - just as she was still learning at the age of eighty four. She would have been delighted with my elderly BA. And even more so with my brother's adventures in Outer Space. "Tell us a story, Pem....."

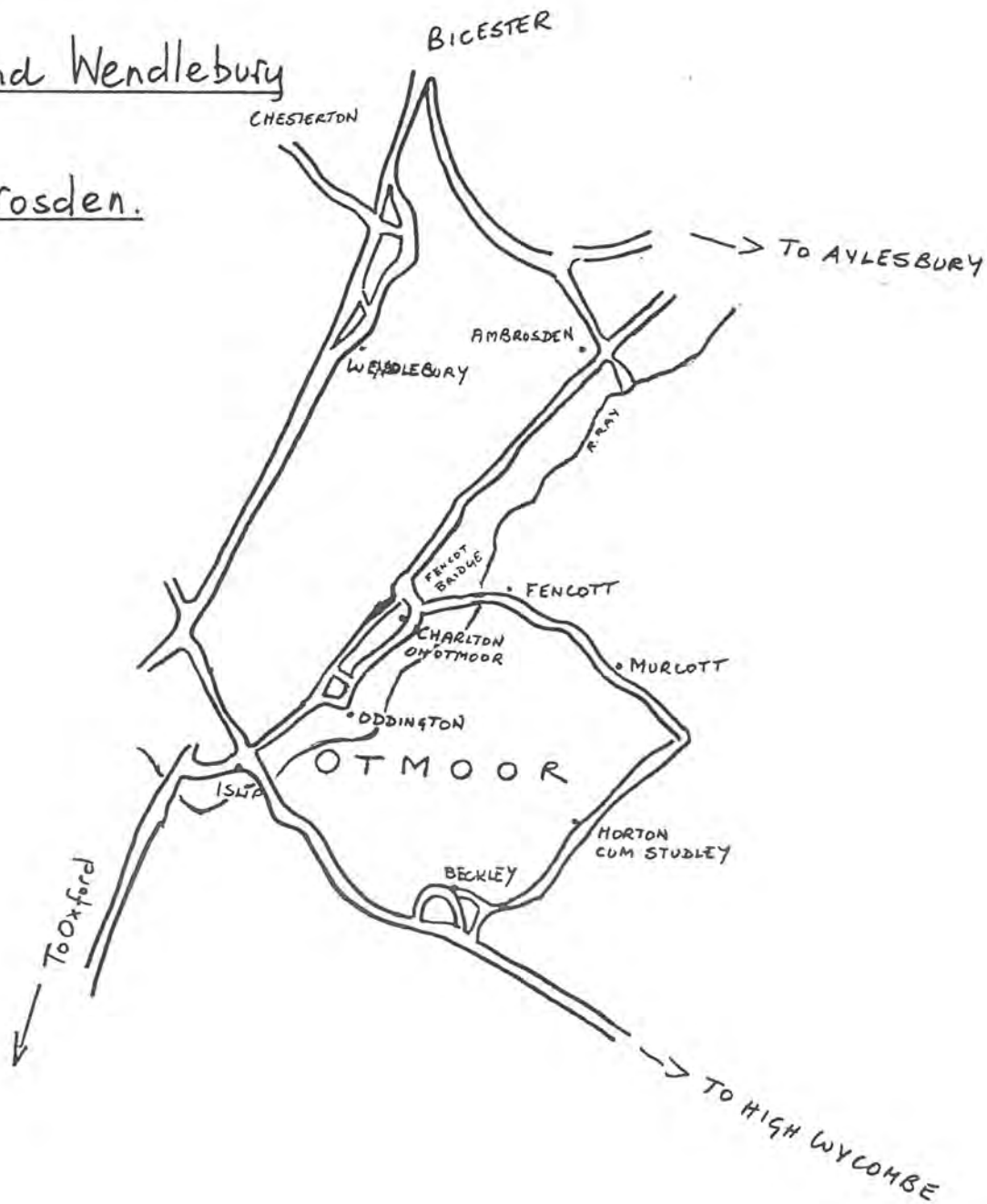
And she would begin. "One day, when I was a little girl, not much bigger than a penn'orth of coppers, smaller than you are now....."

These stories prompted in me not only an interest in history in general but also inspired an odyssey in search of the history of our own family. This is where that journey led. One day, long ago, long before Pem was a little girl.....

Otmoor with the Seven

Towns and Wendlebury

and Ambrosden.



Chapter 1.

SPELSBURY: A Troublesome Aged Parent

1607

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge."

Ezekiel 18:2

There is no one beginning to our story. Those of our blood dwelt in caves,* learned to communicate, survived Ice Ages, built Stonehenge, forged iron, knew successive invasions of Roman, English, Viking and Norman, lived through the Black Death, the Wars of the Roses and the Reformation. But though there, we are not documented. Our history is the one we share with every other family in the land. William the Conqueror carved up the realm of England between his followers into sections called "Honours" but whether this is the origin of the name, "One who came from the Honour" or derives from a lone woman, so that we are all "Honour's children", it is not possible to say. In any case, the family tree, as far as written proof goes starts not with an Honour, but with a Kerry.

The year is 1607, to be precise, 20 February 1607, just a couple of years after the Gunpowder Plot, when William Kerry, a comfortable farmer of Deane in the parish of Spelsbury in the County of Oxfordshire, being "sicke in bodie but of good and perfecte remembrance" sat down to make his will. The preamble which commended his soul to Almighty God and asked Christian burial for his body was brief for the times, suggesting that William wanted to get on with it. His eldest son and namesake William Kerry was to have the tenements and lands in Chipping Norton that were presently occupied by tenants, Thomas Austen and William Bristow, the income from which was to go to his mother, William's wife Grace, until he reached his majority of twenty one years. In fact William junior was only sixteen, baptised at Spelsbury on 28 February 1590/1.

The second son, John Kerry, baptised 18 December 1602, was to receive a lesser holding in Chipping Norton where dwelt William Colman, plus items of farm stock, likewise with the income to his mother. With the bulk of his property carved up between his sons, William saw to the business of his daughters:

Item. I give to my eldest daughter Anne Kerry twentie sheep and a cowe called the black cowe and one aker of wheate. (Anne was baptised 5 October 1592.)

Item. I give to my daughter Jane tenne coves, a yearling calfe and a little red heifer. (Jane was baptised 15 October 1596.)

Item. I give to my daughter Elizabeth tenne ^{tegs} coves and twentie shillings yearlie to be paid for out of the rent of William Collmans.....

Perhaps it was expected that Elizabeth, baptised 15 July 1599, who alone was to receive a monetary bequest would stay at home with her mother, the lot that befell many a younger daughter.

* Some in pre-history even travelled from Asia! - see Appendix 2.

* It should be BANISTER.

There is nothing so far in this will to arouse any comment. It is a fairly ordinary testament with a reasonable distribution as William saw it between his two sons and three daughters with his "well beloved wife, Grace Kerry" as executrix, and to have the use of the lot during her life - but wait - later, comes undeniable information that all was not well down on the farm at Deane, for there was an additional bequest, with a threat:

Item. I will that the summe of thirty seven shillings and eightpence be yearlie paid (as hath been accustomed) to my father Kerry duringe his naturall life provided that if my father shall trouble or molest my wife Grace Kerry in seeing her at the law to put her (out of her?) copy hold then my will is that the said sum of money be paid to him no more.

What had the aged parent been up to? Clearly there was a family disagreement. Had Kerry senior been wont to prowl round the copy hold, interfering, giving unwanted advice and causing general nuisance so that he had to be bought off to the tune of £1.17s 8d a year? Had the old man fallen out with his son over the property or did he dislike his daughter in law? Had he been threatening "to have the law on them"? Was he hard done by? Whatever the truth of the matter, William evidently felt that Grace would have her work cut out without having to cope with his irritating father as well, so paid the Dane-geld accordingly.

William appointed four overseers, to see fair play, possibly to keep old Kerry in line: William Margetts, John Sansome, Richard..... (whose name has disappeared in the never land beyond the torn edge of the parchment) and Edmond Fletcher. Three men witnessed the shaky cross that was William's mark, William Margetts again, John Strange and Henry Robbins.

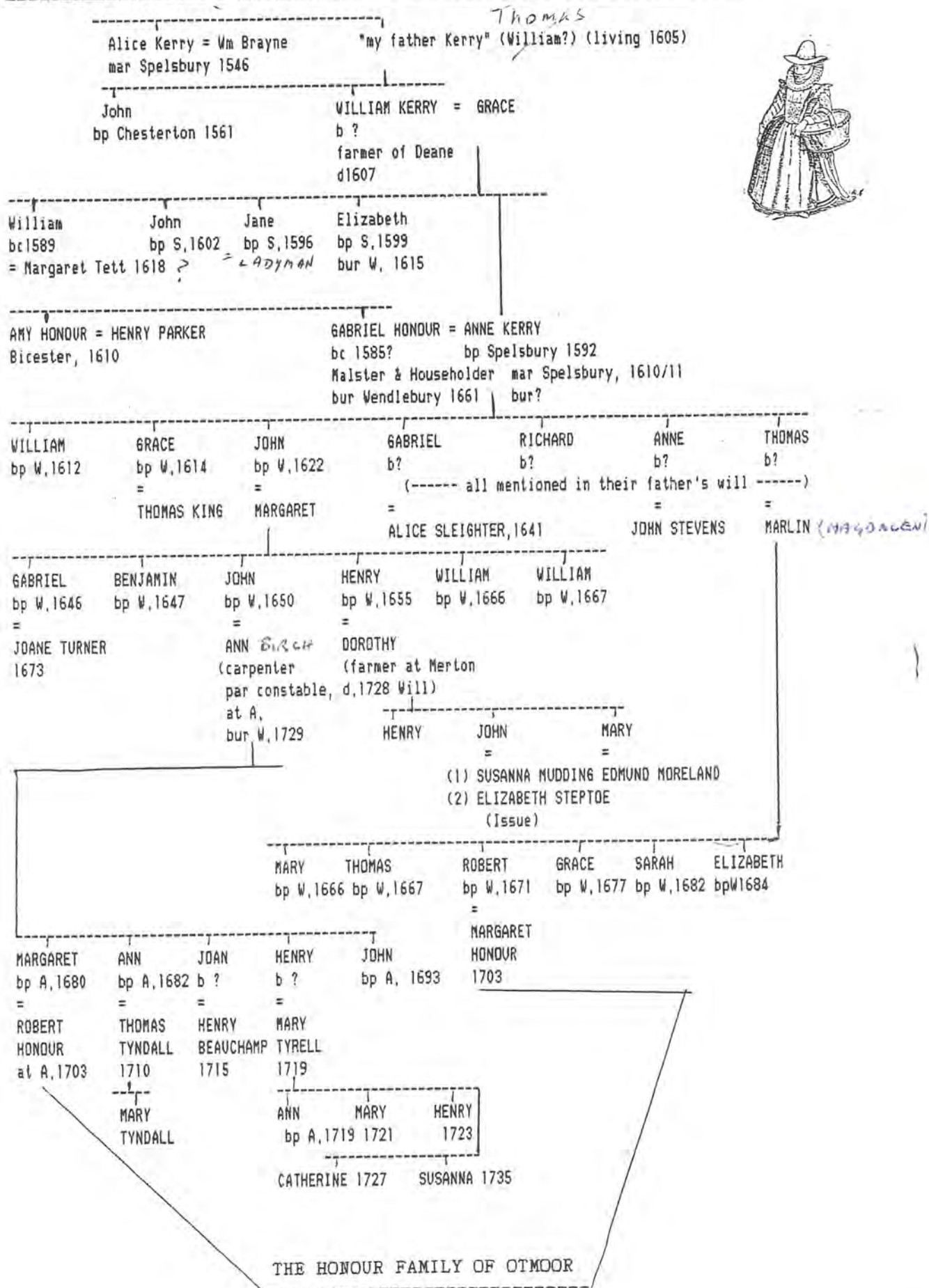
William Kerry knew he was dying and duly died. His will was proved less than two months later on 18 April 1607.

Anne Kerry, the eldest daughter, aged nearly fifteen, may already have met the man who would become her husband. Though there is no evidence that William Kerry ever knew his son in law to be, marriages in the 17th century were often arranged as business transactions and it is sensible to speculate that William may have had some influence in the settling of his daughter. There is no reason otherwise for a certain young Gabriel Honour, who had no apparent connection with the district, to be wandering about Deane, Spelsbury or Chipping Norton for he was not local. The Honours at the time were not even Oxfordshire people of any long standing and do not appear in the county before 1596, when Ambrose Honour, whose kinship, if any, to our family is currently unknown, married Joane Hollyer at Charlton on Otmoor, a fair distance from Spelsbury, but a place we shall hear a great deal of anon.

It seems likely that our Gabriel, born during a time of international turmoil when the Spanish Armada was set to invade, travelled into Oxford westward from Bedfordshire. This county teems with Honour names from those who lorded it in the Manors of Kimptons in Stansbridge and Holman to others whipped for being common beggars. There is too, the mystery of a "twin", another Gabriel Honour, from Hockcliffe, who is an exact contemporary of "our" Gabriel. A baptism for neither Gabriel has been found, but both were responsible for the popularity and continuance of a Christian name which

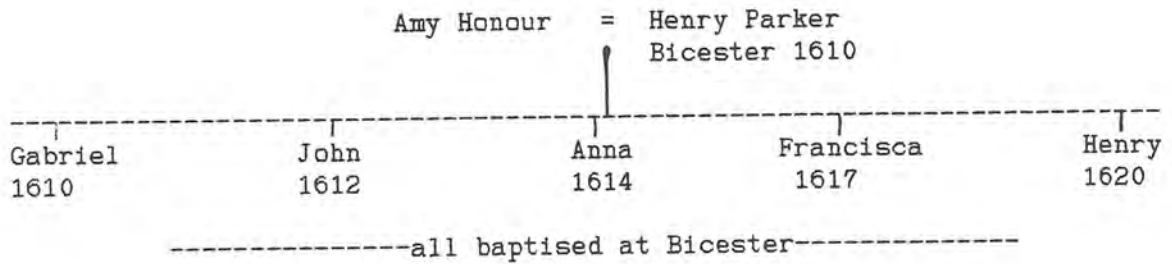
FAMILY TREE 1.

THE KERRY AND HONOUR FAMILIES OF SPELSBURY, WENDLEBURY & AMBROSDEN

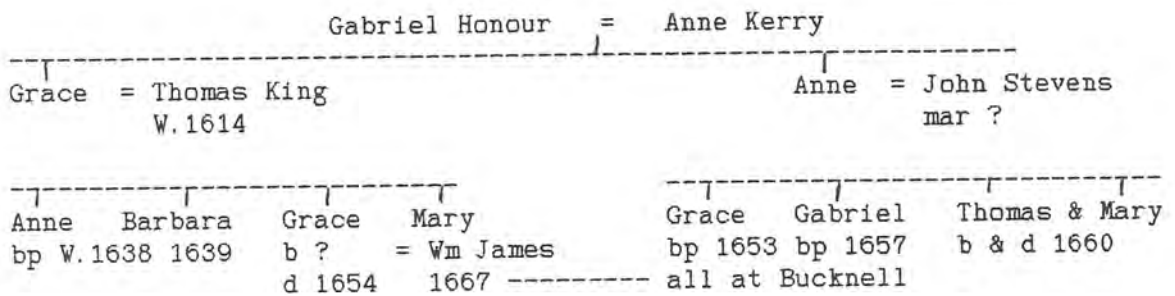


FAMILY TREE 2.

Circumstantial evidence that Amy Honour who married at Bicester was "our" Gabriel's sister, or that (maybe) another Gabriel was father of both:



FEMALE DESCENT SHOWING CONTINUED USAGE OF NAMES GABRIEL & GRACE



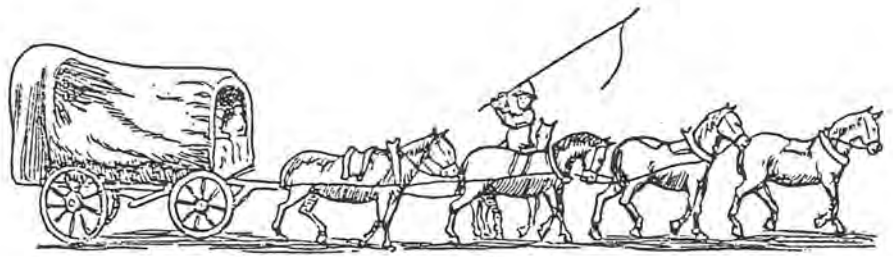
remained firmly entrenched within the family for generations of Honours up to the latter 19th century.

But to return. At present we have no knowledge of how or why Gabriel came to marry Anne Kerry at Spelsbury on 21 January 1611. Just before, on 8 July 1610, Henry Parker married Amy Honour at Bicester, and their first child was baptised Gabriel Parker on 5 December the same year. The name speaks for itself and it seems more than likely that Amy was "our" Gabriel's sister, and that an earlier Gabriel was father of both.

The acre of wheat which Ann inherited was probably disposed of for cash, whilst the twenty sheep and the cow might have been herded over land, and it is somehow pleasing to imagine Gabriel moving the sheep with the aid of a dog, and Ann leading the cow in a halter. Perhaps this is the way they spent their honeymoon? The next time we hear of the couple they have settled in Wendlebury, where their firstborn was baptised in 1612.

We have seen the likelihood that Gabriel had relatives at Bicester, and perhaps he had been born there, a son of that Gabriel, son of William Honour, who had been baptised at Stansbridge in Bedfordshire in 1566, the village where Henry Honour was Lord of the Manor of Kimptons. Our young Gabriel might well have been a landless scion of the "manor" family; after all, my grandfather Levi Honour always asserted that "we were descended from Lords of the Manor" and thus as good as any in the land and a great deal better than some. There are several instances which connect the Stansbridge area to Bicester. In the time of Queen Elizabeth I, Henry Honour, along with Thomas Ellingham and Robert Searle had brought a suit against one Gabriel (that name again!) Fowler who was squatting in the "Town House" in Stansbridge which had been "used by the inhabitants beyond memory of man for the use by the Minister by the appointment of the Vicar of Leighton Buzzard to say divine service in." The defendant's illegal occupation of the premises led "to the exclusion of the inhabitants and unless the situation was relieved they will have to bear the cost of building a new house of worship." Whether Gabriel Fowler was removed or not, he later turns up with Bicester connections: the site of Bicester Priory which had been occupied by Roger Moore and his wife Agnes, both of whom were dead by 1583, was to be divided between Agnes's daughters, Mary, the wife of Sir Michael Blount of Maple Durham, and Elizabeth, wife of Gabriel Fowler of Tilsworth, Bedfordshire. Tilsworth is a mile or two west of Stansbridge and it seems that Gabriel had repaired there after his spot of bother.





Chapter 2

WENDLEBURY

1611

"His Christian name was Gabriel, and on working days he was a young man of sound judgement, easy motions, proper dress and general good character."

Thomas Hardy: Far from the Madding Crowd.

Among other things that Anne brought with her to Wendlebury was her "Great Box" the equivalent of a "bottom drawer" which contained bedding and household linen. How was it transported over land? Perhaps it was in a cart harnessed to the poor cow. Oxen were used as draft animals at this time rather than heavy horses. As to the box itself, Ralph Edwards tells of linen and clothes laid down and the chests used for this purpose carved with the bride's name and the year of her marriage. It commonly formed part of her dowry. As an example, of one house in 1600, he writes of a "littell room" set apart to contain the "lynnen" which was stored "in a longe plaine chest with two partitions haveing a lydd with a spring locke and key." This chest along with everything that Anne owned became the property of her husband and was his to dispose of as he willed, as we shall later see.

Wendlebury lies a few miles south west of Bicester on the road towards Oxford. It is a tiny place, even today. In 1978 when we visited, the houses looked newish and opulent, with nothing to suggest the parish where Gabriel and Anne set up home. The pub, from the outside, looks to be a Georgian building and the little church with its worn lichen covered gravestones was rebuilt in 1721. In 1610 or thereabouts, there were 100 adult inhabitants living in two little streets which contained in all 32 houses. The arable land was divided between three open fields called North, South and West Fields, described as "towards Bicester", "towards Charlton", and "towards Weston". A three course rotation was followed in Gabriel's time: each year one field would be sown with wheat and barley, another with pulse, whilst the third lay fallow. In 1615 an acre of corn was worth 10 shillings in an average year: evidently Anne was not a great heiress when she inherited a similar field a few years before. Pulse fetched sixpence a cock. Each acre of meadow produced ten cocks of hay at sixpence a cock.

On 11 October 1612, William, the son of Gabriel and Anne was baptised at Wendlebury church, the first child in the register with the name Honour. Though a burial has not been found, neither has anything else about this baby, named after his grandfather William Kerry and it seems likely he died an infant. In October 1614, a daughter, named Grace after her maternal grandmother was christened.

Despite the difficulty of travel and roads existing only as rutted cart tracks, often impassable, especially in winter, it is amazing that people still set out on quite hazardous journeys. It seems that some time in 1615, Elizabeth Kerry who I felt had been pre-ordained by her father to be an old maid, put aside her filial duties and came on a

HE
WASNT
SEE
PREQUEL
2020

visit to her sister and brother in law at Wendlebury. Whilst there, sadly, she fell ill and died. She was buried in Wendlebury churchyard on 27 October 1615. A month later, at Spelsbury on 22 November 1615, a Henry Kerry, who may have been "my father Kerry" of William's will, was buried. There is no record there of a burial of Grace Kerry, unless the Grace Kerry listed as a baptism, 13 February 1613/4 should have been a burial. William Kerry married Margaret Tett on 16 January 1617/8, and was buried in August 1645. John may be the Mr John Cary (sic, who had gone up in the world) and who had a daughter Grace born in 1646.

At Wendlebury, in the ensuing years, more children were born to Gabriel and Anne. John is recorded on 5 May 1622, and his sister Elizabeth on 14 February 1624. (Like William before her, Elizabeth would die a child.) William, Grace, John and Elizabeth are the only children of Gabriel and Anne to be registered at Wendlebury, but we know from Gabriel's will there were at least four more, Gabriel, junior, Richard, Thomas and Anne. These children are likely to have been born during the long gap between 1615 and 1621 or later than 1624. (Anne could have been bearing children at least until 1635).

Gabriel was a maltster, that is he made malt for a living. The only previous knowledge I had of the substance was that as a child I enjoyed "Cod Liver Oil of Malt" or "Malt" on its own; delicious, I love it still. The fact it is also supposed to do you good is a side effect and a pleasant one as far as I am concerned. Gabriel's malt was barley or other grain steeped in water, allowed to sprout, then dried in a kiln and used for brewing ale. The demand for beer was great, it was drunk by everyone, including young children, for tea and coffee were unknown. Other branches of the Kerry and Honour families contained maltsters in their number, and they are another thread in the possible pre-marriage connection between Gabriel and Anne. Such threads and patches are the clues with which the family historian works when there is very little to go on apart from names in a parish register, or the places where the family caravan has rested. For instance, we may ask are Wendlebury and Bedfordshire joined together by the name Hitch? The Hitch family held the manor of Wendlebury, but they came from Kempston in Bedfordshire where there are a few Honours recorded. Did Gabriel come to Oxford in the train of a member of the Hitch family? If so, they did not leave him money for services rendered, though he does appear in an inventory of one of them, "John Hitch's property; 21 March 1633.

"six quarters of barley and fower bushels. One peck and a half at Gabriel Honour's.....£67.17s 1½d"

By now the children were growing up, and Grace Honour was the first to marry. Although the Wendlebury register is silent on the event, her husband was called Thomas King. Their daughter Anne was baptised at Wendlebury on 21 July 1638, and on 7 January 1640 (January 1639 by the old calendar), another daughter Barbara was baptised.

By now, rumblings of great discontent soured the land and soon England was a country at odds with itself, about to divide for Parliament and King, Charles I. Civil War broke out almost by accident in 1642 and Oxford was at the heart of it. By 1643, Royalist forces were quartered

at Bicester, just a few miles from Gabriel and his family. A skirmish took place in the town on 6th May and on 21st June, the King himself spent the night there. On the 27th, four thousand of the King's forces held the town and Prince Rupert, the King's nephew, with a thousand additional cavalry were scouring the neighbouring villages for victuals, forcing the villagers to bring in supplies daily. Gabriel would have had to supply malt from whence came his livelihood and his neighbour Fennimore the salt by which he made his. In August, Prince Maurice with horse and foot soldiers added a further burden to the town, and the country around must have trembled at the arrival of yet more licentious soldiery, bleeding the country of its commons and rampaging over crops and livestock. Probably some of the country boys, in search of adventure, joined up with the Royalist rabble and left their farms and fields never to come home again. The rival Armies at this time lived on their quarters and their presence, whoever they represented, cannot have been popular anywhere. The next year, Parliament was in control of the neighbourhood and Sir William Waller made Bicester his headquarters. A Captain Abercrombie was alleged to have said that he would make Oxfordshire so poor that the very children would curse him. Hardly an endearing remark, and the county cannot have wept unduly when he was defeated and killed near Stratton Audley, (where dwelt some possible Honour relations), in 1645.

It is said that England divided with the towns, ports and trades people for Parliament with the gentry and countrymen for the King's cause. We have nothing to tell us whether Gabriel, who as countryman and tradesman had a foot in both camps, preferred either.

The King was executed in 1649 and despite all that had gone before, the news of the regicide which came to Wendlebury from Bicester would have caused profound shock. Gabriel must have wondered, as he talked over the tidings with his friends Fennimore the salter, and William Bourne, where it was all going to end. The war dragged on for another two years until 1651 when Cromwell's victory at Worcester made him master of all England.



Life went on, dawn to dusk, day after day, with animals to be fed, watered, milked, fattened and killed, fields to be ploughed, sowed and harvested.

In the year 1652, Gabriel, now a grandfather in his sixties was ill. He felt it prudent to make a will, a marvellous document which gives us a feast of information. From it, we know he felt himself sufficiently superior to style himself "Mr", though this was afterwards deleted. One of the items that was his to dispose of was "The Great Box" which his wife Anne had brought with her from Spelsbury, and which now formed part of his goods and chattels. Anne, who strictly speaking had no property of her own must have concurred that it should go to their daughter Grace. Clearly Gabriel could not get used to his elder daughter as a married woman, for he first gave her name as Grace Honour, and then Honour was crossed out and King substituted.

The full text reads: *In the name of God Amen, I Mr [deleted] Gabrill Honnor of Wendlebury in the county of Oxon. malster doo here make my*

Last Will and testament, beinge in fitt sense and memory, praise bee to God. First I bequeath my bod [deleted] spirritt to you, thus gard it. And my Body to be buryed in the Churchyard of Wendlebury. Item I give unto my sonn John the [sef...? kill?], the malteing Lofte flower and the hovell over the beasts and the [scaffentre?] over the horse. Item I give & bequeath unto my sonn Gabrill Honnor the Cobbard in the hall. Item I give and bequeath unto my sonn Rychard Honnor my bedsted in the lower chamber and my joyned chaire. Item I give and bequeath unto my sonn Thomas Honnor my table and frame and the grate cheste in the lower chamber. Item I give and bequeath unto my daughter Ann Stevens my Feather bed and bolster lying thereon. Item I give and bequeath unto my daughter Grace Honnor [deleted] Kinge her mothers greate box. Item I give and bequeath unto my godchildren twelve pence apiece and my wife is to have the use of all the saide goods above mentioned during her naturall Lyfe And I make my wife Ann Honnor my whole executrix of this my Laste will and testament for to paye all my debts and my funerall discharges and all the rest of my goods and cattell and chattells unto her disposing during her life. In WITNES thereof I have sett my hande and seale this twentieth and sixth daye of Marrche in the yeare of our Lord god one thousand sixe hundred fyfthe and tooe // 1652

Sealed and sig [deleted] in the presents of us
 John Fenymore: Salter
 William Bourne

The  marke
 of  Gabrill
 Honnor

There is a poignancy in the imagining of his horny hand struggling with that scrawl in the form of a crude "H" for Honour, the only letter he could master. And we need not have worried that he was disposing of Anne's belonging's over her head, for they were to remain hers until she herself died and moreover, he made her his sole executrix. From this we can deduce they had enjoyed a happy marriage, and that he believed she had a head on her shoulders which would not be turned by responsibility. As it happened, it was a task she would not have to take on for some while, for worries about his health were mercifully unfounded and Gabriel recovered.

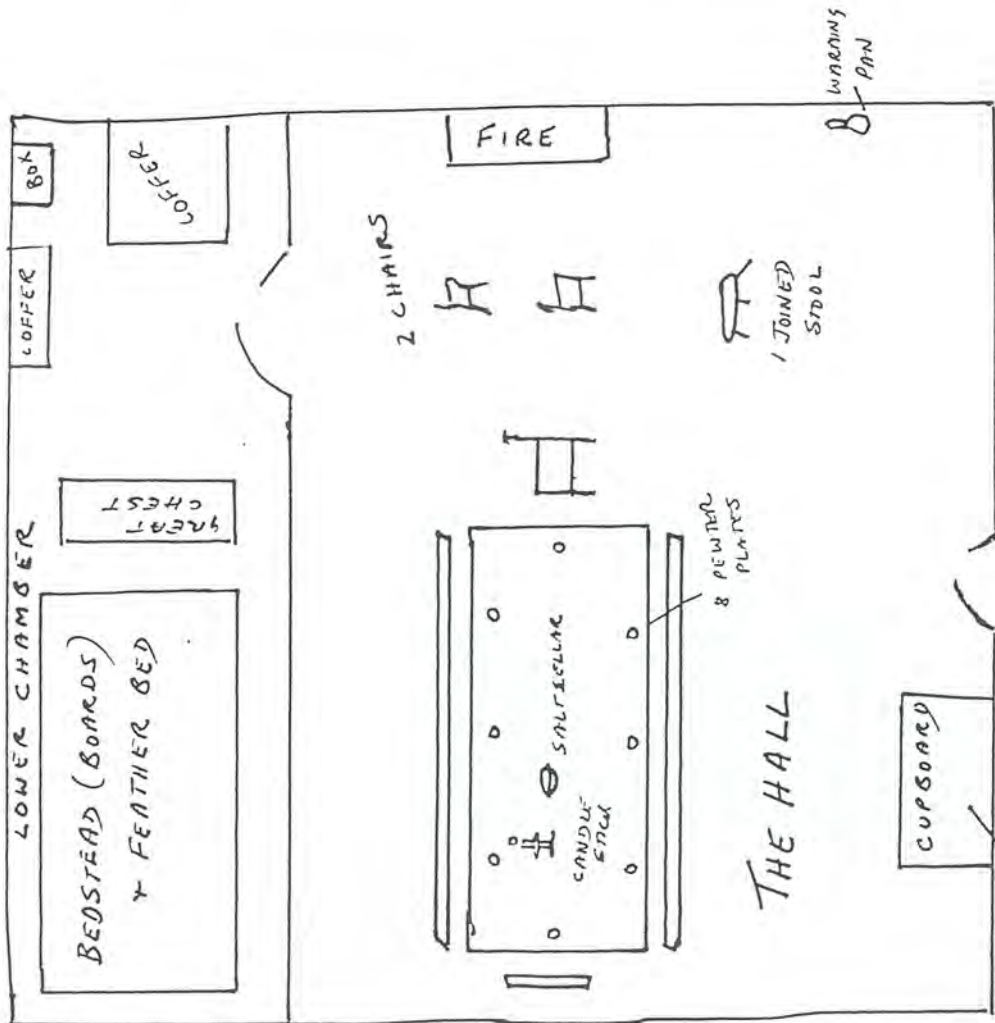
As noted already, the will tells us the names of the children omitted from the parish register, but Gabriel failed us in that he did not name his grandchildren who were to receive a shilling each. Some of them are known from other sources. In 1652, Grace King was living with her husband Thomas at Bucknell, and they were the parents of two little girls, young Grace, who would die in 1657 and Mary who would marry William James at Bucknell in 1667. Anne and her husband John Stephens also lived near Grace and Thomas at Bucknell, and in 1653, their daughter, yet another Grace was baptised. At Christmas 1657, their son Gabriel Stephens was born. This was not a time for jollification. The feast days of the Church had been replaced by regular FAST days by the strict Commonwealth regime. (What a difference the omission of one letter makes!). Puritan fanatics who believed any form of enjoyment to smack of sin, were particularly roused by Christmas, and found the devil lurking even in the kitchen. In London at least, soldiers were sent about the streets on Christmas Day to peer into ovens and seize any meats they found roasting therein.

If the Stephens' family planned any sort of dual celebration both for the birth of Christ and its son and heir, it was done surreptitiously.

In 1660, again nearing Christmastide twins were born, Thomas and Mary Stephens, who sadly lived only nine days and were buried together just as they had been born. Twins are said to run in families and I have already conjectured the possibility that old Gabriel himself was a twin. I have referred briefly to a contemporary Gabriel Honour whose life and career ran almost exactly parallel with our Gabriel of Wendlebury. For a moment let us return to Bedfordshire and the manor village of Stanbridge. Here William Honour, who was probably a relative of Henry who was Lord of the Manor, was busily siring children: Alice in 1564, John and Jebyn, twins, in 1565, Gabriel in 1566 and Agnes in 1567. The mother of this virtually instant family is nowhere named, poor soul: she must have had her hands full producing five babies in four years. Gabriel, born in 1566 was surely too early to be either of the "twin" Gabriels of Hockcliffe and Wendlebury.* The name of course shouts a relationship though nothing else is known about this particular Gabriel, but the knowledge that his brothers were twins is a factor. The two later Gabriels were born about (if not exactly) the same time towards the last decade of the 16th century. In those days of high infant mortality, those wishing to perpetuate a certain Christian name, could and sometimes did, baptise consecutive living children with the same name to try to make certain that name survived. Unfortunately, thus far, neither of the two Gabriels have been found in christening records, and neither appears in anyone's will as far as my research can establish. In the case of Gabriel of Wendlebury, the first time he is heard of is at his wedding in 1610. Gabriel of Hockcliffe appears slightly earlier in 1606 at the christening of his daughter Elizabeth. (She would later marry William Howe of Boughton.) Although no more christenings are recorded, Gabriel of Hockcliffe's will names his son Richard. A Dorothy Honour who married Henry Osborne at Hockcliffe in 1631 is possibly his daughter. In 1627, Gabriel appears in the Lay Subsidy Roll for Bedfordshire, having land at Hockcliffe. On 29 October 1640 in a conveyance or feoffment in the sum of £28 at Chalgrave, the parties are named (1) Gabriel Honner of Hockcliffe, innholder and (2) Chris Perrye of Watling Street, Chalgrave and his wife Mary, the subject of the transaction being a house near Watling Street where dwelt John Jenkins, and Helen Jenkins, a widow, presumably John's mother. In 1650 Gabriel leased two acres of land at Stanbridge from Robert Peirson of the same place for (optimistically) nine hundred years. Gabriel died four years later on 17 August 1654 and was buried at Hockcliffe. In his will he expressly forbade his wife Frances to remarry on pain of forfeiture of the estate he left her. Frances cared not a fig and remarried anyway despite automatic disinheritance. As church marriages were suspended during the Commonwealth, the banns were posted in the public market at Ampthill on 13 August 1657 between Ralph Phipps, of Hockley Street in Chalgrave, yeoman, and Frances Honner, widow, of the same parish. Who would blame Frances for preferring a warm bed to cold comfort and serve Gabriel right for being such a killjoy. Gabriel's son Richard Honour,

*He could of course have been 44 with a 19 year old bride, but this means he would have been about 95 when he died, and such a feat would surely have been remarked upon, instead of his simply being a householder.

INTERIOR OF GABRIEL'S HOUSE
 BASED ON WILL & INVENTORY



JOINED CHAIR (GABRIEL'S) AT
 HEAD OF TABLE
 (TAKEN BY RICHARD BEFORE
 INVENTORY)

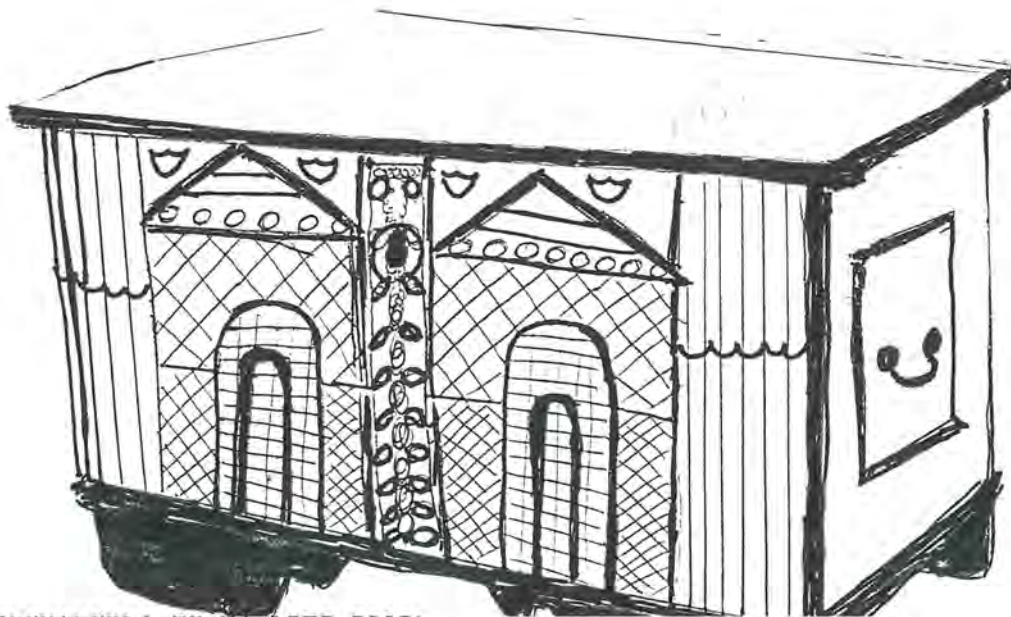
(TAKEN BY GABRIEL
 BY YOUNGER BEFORE
 INVENTORY)

who inherited his father's property had a son Gabriel born at Toddington in 1632 and a son Edward who had a son Gabriel born 1657 and so on, ad infinitum.

Our Gabriel of Wendlebury outlived his namesake by three years and lived to see the Restoration when the King, Charles II, returned to general rejoicing. Described as a "householder", Gabriel was buried at Wendlebury on 24 June 1661.

A life which had begun when England was threatened by the might of Spain when Elizabeth Tudor occupied the throne, continued through the reigns of James I and his son Charles I, survived Civil War, Regicide and Commonwealth and had come full circle with the Restoration was finally over. It was the end of an era.

Now had the will to be found and dusted off and an inventory made of the old man's goods and chattles, and who better to do it than his sons in law, King and Stephens, but I expect their wives played an equal part in the great turn out. "Take an inventory of all I have to the last penny" urged Shakespeare in Henry VIII and there seems every indication they took these instructions to heart, performing the task diligently even down to the one dock iron which lay among the tubs and barrells of Gabriel's trade. Both were literate and well set up with hearths of their own: Thomas King at least was a fairly big pebble in the small mill pond at Bucknell, for he was amongst the great and good of the village who nominated William Abbutt "to bee parish register" in 1653, a task to be undertaken in the enforced absence of a parish priest during the Commonwealth years.



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Chapter 3

CHEESES, DOCK IRONS & DUNG CARTS: Wills and Inventories at Wendlebury.
Wing and Sonning.

1661

"Adieu, farewell, earth's bliss
This world uncertain is."

Thomas Nashe 1567-1601

Probably in deference to the widow, several months went by before the inventory was made:

"A True Inventory of the Goods and Chattles of Gabrill Honnor of Wendlebury in the County of Oxon made the eighteenth day of November in the yeare of our Lord 1661 by those whose names are here under written.

Imprimis his spurs and girdle	£2.	0.	0d
Item one brasse pott one skilet three kettles	2.	0.	0d
Item in the halle one table and irame to chaires and one joyned school	1.	10.	0d
Item in the lower chamber one bedsted and fetherbed and all thereto belonging and one cheste and to koifers and one boxe	5.	0.	0d
Item eight paire of sheetes three table cloths three pillow cases and one dozen of napkins	3.	0.	0d
Item eight pewter platters one saltsillar one kandlestick and one warming panne	1.	0.	0d
Item in the upper chamber one bedsted and one flockebed and thereto belonging	1.	0.	0d
Item three barrelles three tubbes for knieves one cheesepress and one Dokiron	1.	0.	0d
Item one paire of pothookes one paire of andirons and one spit handell		4.	0d
Item five Cows to hayfors	16.	0.	0d
Item three maires one colte and three pair of harniss	13.	0.	0d
Item to Rickes of Corne	10.	0.	0d
Item three Rickes of Haye	10.	0.	0d
Item four wheete and barley	10.	0.	0d
Item to lownge cartes and to doung cartes and to pare of wheeles and four harrows	6.	0.	0d
Item one hogge	1.	10.	0d
Item his apparell	1.	0.	0d

The somme is	£84.	4.	0d

William Fenymour
John Koren
Thomas Kinge
John Stevenes

The sons of Gabriel Honour were, like their father and their grandfather, William Kerry, born of that substantial lower middle class yeomanry which two centuries before had supplied long bowmen for

Agincourt and who still formed the back bone of England. In 1661, John Honour aged 41 came into his inheritance. It seems that in the latter years of his father's life he had taken over the malt houses, oasts and the rest of the paraphernalia of the trade. Perhaps he had done so after the scare of Gabriel's illness in 1652. John had been married sometime about 1645, to Margaret and they produced the inevitable Gabriel in 1646. Benjamin followed in 1647, John in May 1650 and Henry in March 1655. No more children are recorded until the arrival of William on 1 November 1666. This gap can probably be explained by the often haphazard record keeping during the interregnum. Little William did not survive and another, of the same name appeared in 1667.

The Hearth Tax for Wendlebury taken in 1662 shows that John was taxed two shillings [10p] for one fireplace, the only one of the family named, or the only one who had a hearth. From this we can perhaps deduce that John and his family were living in the old family house, and the rest either lived under the same roof, were occupying premises worth less than £1 per annum, or had left. Perhaps Anne, his mother, now nearing eighty, had moved to Bucknell to be with one of her daughters. Brother Richard no doubt collected his bedstead from the lower chamber and his joined chair, and departed for Wing in Buckinghamshire where he may have already settled.

The Honours of Wing fall into two distinct parts: those born and baptised up to 1557 and those born and baptised from 1656.

From the Wing family tree it will be seen that Rauf Honor makes an appearance in a law suit of 1538. It is probable that his forename connects him to Rauf Honor of Stanbrigge [Stansbridgel], in Bedfordshire, named in a declaration of common rights in 1475. More research is obviously necessary here.

The last christening in the first series is that of Ralphe son of Ralphe in 1557; the main block of burials ends in 1554 and thereafter there is only one isolated burial - that of Agnes Honor, "servant of goodwife Steevens" in 1575. It appears therefore that these Honours died out in Wing in Tudor times.

Almost 60 years later, an Honour family shows up again with the marriage of Richard Honour to Amis Woodman 1632. Then nothing is recorded until the marriage of Gabriel Honour and Ann Bates in 1654, followed by the baptism of Ann their daughter in 1656. Five more children were born to the couple, Gabriel, 1658, Richard, 1660, Thomas, 1660, Marie, 1667, and Grace [surely, SURELY in remembrance still of Grace Kerry?] in 1671. It will be remembered that we have no birthdates for the children of Gabriel and Anne of Wendlebury between 1614 and 1622, and though it might seem logical that their father in his will should have referred to them in order of age, this is not set in stone, and indeed, he mentioned Grace King after Anne Stevens. It is just possible then that Richard, about whom we know nothing at Wendlebury other than his legacy of a bedstead and chair, made a very young marriage at Wing, when, say, he was 17 years of age, and begat a son Gabriel, who could have been 21 or 22 when he married Anne Bates. This would account for the naming pattern

of Gabriel's children which clings so closely to that of the Wendlebury family.

Richard of Wing died sometime in 1664, leaving an incredibly unequal will, in which he bequeathed

to loving wife Mary.....20 shillings
to Gabriel, eldest son.....£5
Richard, son.....all messuages, cottages, lands, rents,
hereditements whatsoever, situated at Wing. And to
be sole executor and residual legatee
Thomas, son.....£300, when he reaches full age of 21
Henry, son.....£300, when he reaches full age of 21
Elizabeth, daughter.....£7 per annum
Mary, daughter.....five shillings
his grandchildren.....£5 each when they reach 21

It seems logical to me that what we have here are the offspring of two wives, Amis and Mary. Gabriel and Mary, Amis's children, born in the early 1630's and the rest, Mary's children, in the 1640's, in the case of Richard and Henry, later than 1643. Though Mary was his "loving wife" it was only to the tune of 20 shillings. He thought even less of his daughter Mary, and not much more of his son Gabriel. One wonders if he was all there. Ructions presumably ensued at the reading of the will.

In 1666, Richard junior, who had received the bulk of his father's estate, married Anna Sophia Whitton, and by this marriage had Richard in 1667 and Anna Sophia in 1670 [she married James Hardey, by licence at Wing in 1687]. He married secondly, Elizabeth Saunders, and had offspring Elizabeth, in 1674, George, whose date of birth or baptism is unrecorded, and Gabriel, in 1680.

Richard made his will on 30 September, 1680, in far more equitable terms than his father's, describing himself, yeoman of Wing, "sicke in body but of pfect mind and memorie", leaving to loving wife Elizabeth, son and daughter Richard and Anna Sophia, daughter Elizabeth, son George, and "that child my said wife is now big with", [which would be Gabriel, born between October and December 1680], "all my personal estate goods and chattels equally amongst them, share and share alike to be paid out to my several sonnes and daughters when they shall severally attain the ages of 21 years". If any failed to reach their majority, then their share was to be divided between the rest by Elizabeth at her discretion. Also, there was an additional £20 to buy young Richard an apprenticeship. Richard made his wife and his father in law Thomas Saunders joint executors, and signed in a shaky hand, witnessed by his brother, (or half brother?) Gabriel, Jacob Penington and the mark of Mark Row.

This will was later challenged in Chancery Proceedings by Richard and Anna Sophia, but presently I have no details of the case.

That still leaves Thomas.....and a Thomas married Mary Whitton at Wing in 1665, a sister, or at least a relative of Anna Sophia who married Richard in 1666. We shall see later that Honour brothers made something of a habit of marrying sisters. If he is Richard's brother, then nothing

else is known of them....but could Thomas possibly have been "our Thomas", uncle to young Richard, and did Mary become Mary Magdalene?

Before leaving the Wing family, it is worth recording that it contains an Honour graduate. Thomas, born 1662, the fourth child of Gabriel who became "BA, Oxon.", in 1684.

So much for the Wing family complications and the host of Gabriels.

But there are more.



At Sonning in Berkshire lived Gabriel Honour, a yeoman, possibly the son of "our" Gabriel. He was married to Anne, and had children, Anne baptised in December 1656 and William in November 1663, though his eldest son was another Gabriel, date of birth unknown. Anne, wife of Gabriel senior was buried on 13 April 1665, and he himself died intestate in January 1684. His son Gabriel applied to administer the estate in June of that year. The inventory is of interest:

	£	s	d
Imprimis his wearing apparel	2.	0.	0
In the cheese house eight flitches of bacon	2.	0.	0
And fiftie two cheeses	1.	10.	0
milk vessell and other lumber		5.	3
In the cheese presse house one cheese presse one cheese tubb one brewing tubb three kilderkins with other lumber		10.	4
In the chamber over the hall one feather bed one pillow one boulster one cover lead one blankett one bedsted	1.	6.	8
In the mane chamber one bedsted one flocke bed two Blanketts		10.	0
And three paire of sheets with other linen		10.	0
In the hall one cupboard one table one frame fower chaires two cettells one pott one skillet seaven pewter dishes one farke two spitts two cottrills a paire of andirons five shovle and tonges	1.	5.	8
In the stable six mares	18.	0.	0
Cart harnes and plow harnesses	1.	10.	0
And nine cow beastes two bull one calfe	23.	0.	0
And one hogg five piggs	3.	10.	0
One stone of sheepe	3.	0.	0
Winter corne in the straw	30.	0.	0
Barly in the straw	34.	0.	0
Oates in the straw	10.	0.	0
Hay and wethes and pease	6.	6.	8
Corne in the grounds	17.	6.	8
Sarts bussells and cires and windsann ??	1.	0.	0
two doung carts and one long cart and two paire of wheels	3.	6.	8
Two plows and their tackell		13.	4
Three paire of harrowes		10.	0
Two cart lines one bill one hatchette one spade one shovle		5.	0
Geese and ducks hens		6.	8
	162.	17.	11

For those of you who can still do £sd, the addition is spot on.

On 13 January 1685/6 Gabriel junior married Winifred Smith, and their family consisted of Gabriel born in 1686, Mary, 1688, Winifred, 1689/90, Katheryne, 1691/2 and John, 1694/5. Sister Anne was married to John Parker on 13 October 1681 and brother William died, apparently unmarried, in November 1695. Gabriel was buried on 5 November 1711. Winifred lived on until January 1749. Thereafter, the Honours disappear

from Sonning until the family name makes a brief appearance in the middle 1800s, probably coincidentally, as they appear to have nothing to join them to the previous Honours apart from their name.

There is yet another Gabriel, who married Alice Sleighter on 5 December 1641 at Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, and whose son and daughter Henry and Frances, were christened there in 1642 and 1643 respectively.

Thomas Honour who married Marlin/(Mary?)Magdalen was certainly the Thomas who appeared in Gabriel of Wendlebury's will. If he had missed the Hearth Tax, then he was definitely back at Wendlebury before 1666. He and Marlin [who, as we have noted could have been Mary Whitton of Wing], christened children at Wendlebury: Mary on 22 April 1666, Thomas on 2 February 1667/8, Robert, 16 October 1671 and Grace, 12 November 1677. (As we know there is a Grace at Wing too!) By 1682 Thomas and Marlin had moved from Wendlebury to Ambrosden.

Meanwhile, John Honour's family had grown up. Gabriel III, grandson of old Gabriel of Wendlebury married in 1673, a widow, Joane Turner, from Boarstall, Buckinghamshire. In 1681/2 squatters settled in their house, and Gabriel was obliged to resort to law at the Christmas sessions to obtain "an order for the removal of Robert Miles with his wife and two children to Thame in the county of Oxford from the house of Gabriel Honor where he hath an inmate lately endeavoured to settle himself."

There is no further trace of John's brothers Benjamin or William. Henry married Dorothy and became a farmer at Merton where he died in 1728, leaving three children, Henry, John and Mary.

But it was John who became his father's heir. John senior, the Wendlebury tax payer who had inherited from old Gabriel left no will. Arrangements had already been made in a document transferring his Wendlebury holding to his son John junior, which is signed by the Lord of the Manor, the Earl of Abingdon. This is dated 1702, which may have been the year he died.

John junior was married about 1679 when he was 29, to Ann, though the marriage has not been traced. By 1680 they were living at Ambrosden though he also kept up his ties with Wendlebury, which was only a few miles distant. Their daughter Margaret, named after her paternal grandmother was christened at Ambrosden on 23 October 1680, and a second daughter, Ann on 24 March 1682/3.

Later children of the family were Joan, Henry and John, the last being christened at Ambrosden on 10 June 1693. John apparently was not interested in the maltings: he made his living as a carpenter. He also became active in parish affairs. The Ambrosden churchwardens' accounts show him elected for Blackthorn (where his uncle and aunt, Thomas and Marlin Honour also lived at this time) in 1689. He served from 1690 up to 1697. In 1691 his name appears with John Simonds endorsing the petition of John Ally who had served a year as constable and wished to be released. He also signed the accounts with others in 1699 and 1704 and was present at a churchwarden's nomination in 1705. Uncle Thomas meanwhile stayed in the background, raising his family at Blackthorn,

Charlton-on-Otmoor

Charlton meaning tun of the ceorls or Freemen

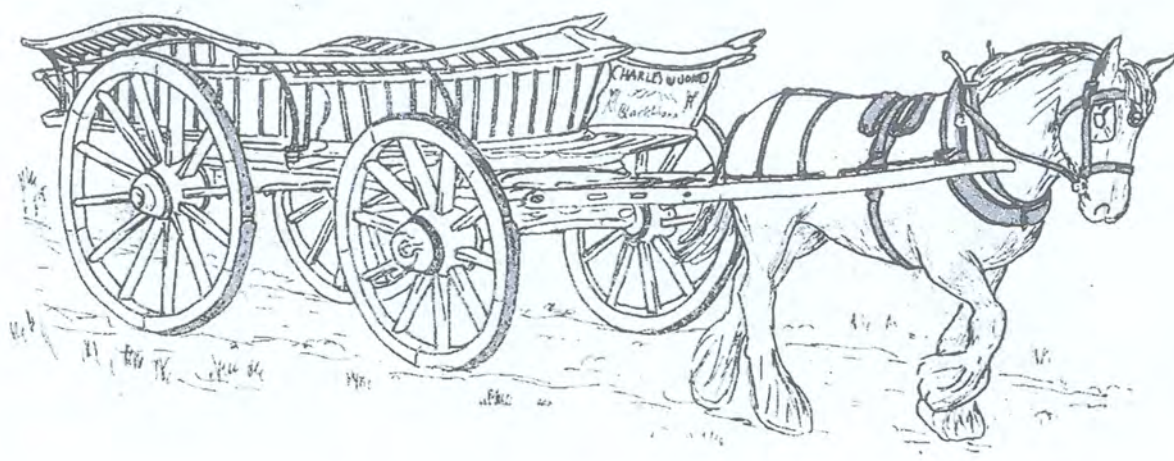
Land of the Free Peasants – the village has prided itself on never having owed allegiance to a lord of the manor. Charlton never had a resident squire or large land owner. Charlton-on-Otmoor is the largest of the Seven Towns and the last to be enclosed.

The domestic buildings are mainly of stone dating from the 17th century onwards. Most of the open field remained intact until 1858 and the farms remained in the village nucleus. There have been no outlying farms.

The centre of the village is dominated by the large 13th century Church of St. Mary the Virgin with its tall tower built on the site of an older structure. Substantial alterations were carried out to the church in the 14th century and there has been some further restoration since. The 15th Century rood screen has finely decorated carved panels.

Several industries were carried out in Charlton. Oxfordshire Waggon (yes, there are two g's in waggon!) were made here (but repaired in other villages, notably Beckley.). The waggons were assembled where the current bus garage is, and the wood yard was across the street. The waggons lasted a lifetime – and even longer. There was a quarry at the western end of the village built on an outcrop of rock, and brickworks using local clay were established toward the end of the 18th century, possibly in the field known as Brickhill or Clayhill on the Fencott side.

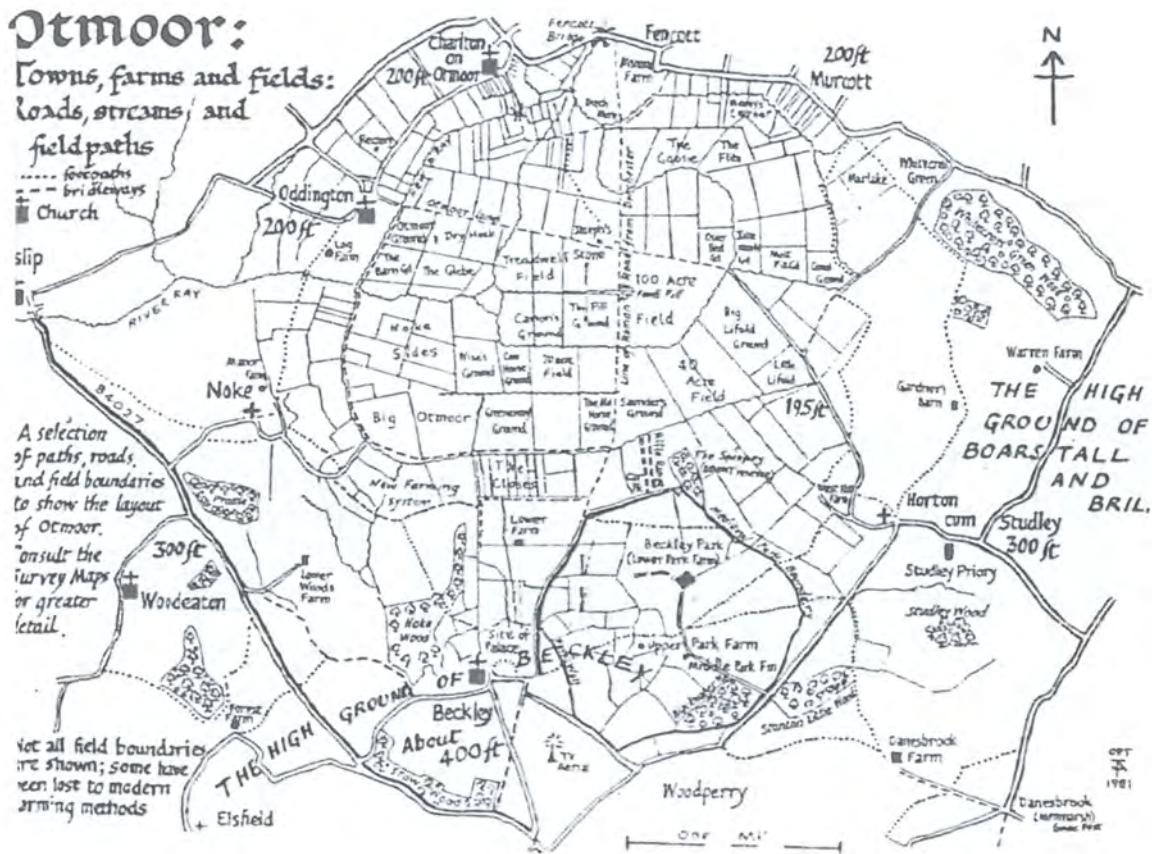
Blackwater, or peat water wells were found on the eastern side of the village, its source probably being the fields between Merton and Fencott. Legend has it that a horse and cart were swallowed up in this boggy field along with their driver. (Please be very careful at this end of the village!) This black water was prized for curing Moor-evil, caught by livestock grazing on the moor, and for treating people's eczema and sore eyes, but apparently it was of no use for making tea "as it frothed up when boiled."

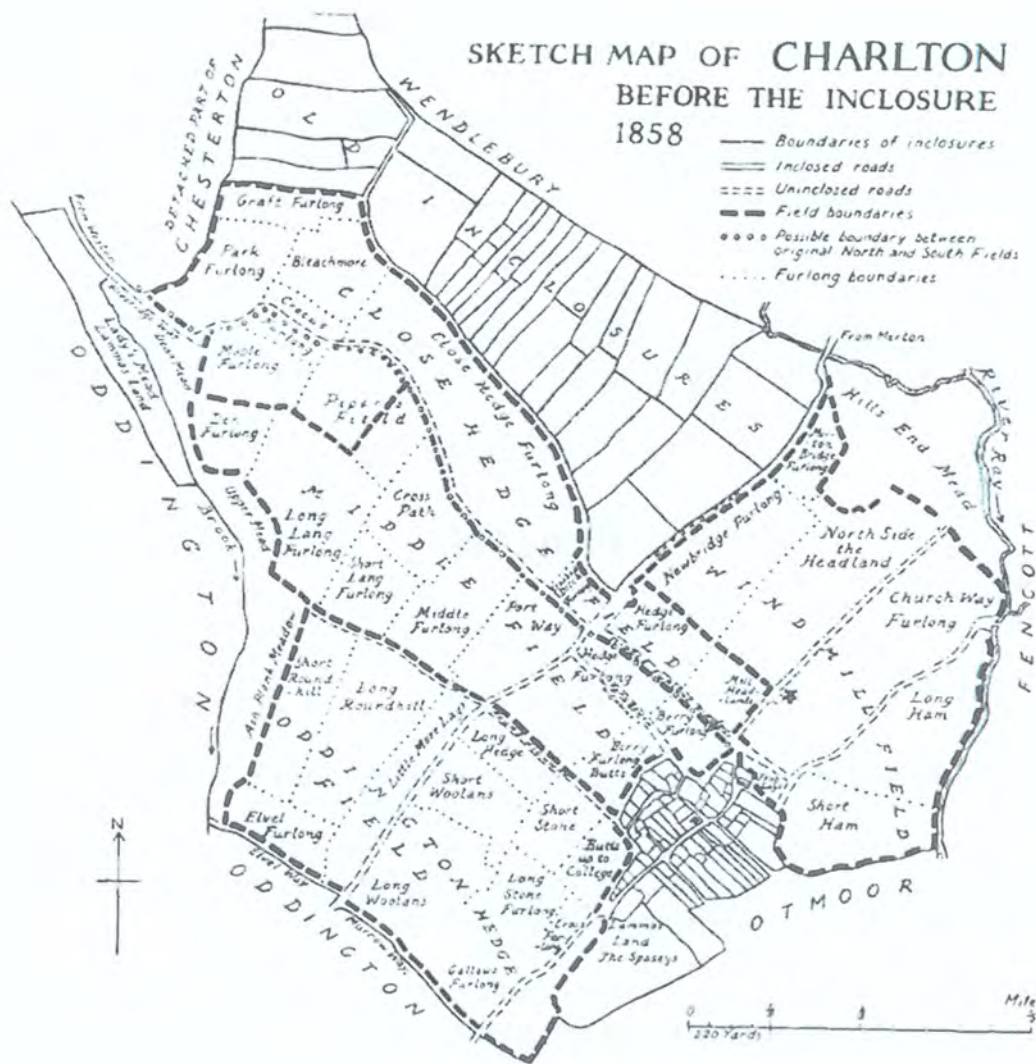


An Oxfordshire Waggon

An Oxfordshire waggon like this one, was built by Pullin in 1889, a wheel-wright of Charlton-on-Otmoor, for Mr. V.W. Tompkins who used it at New Inn Farm, Stanton St. John. It was acquired by

Oxfordshire Museums from Mr Tompkins' grandson. The Tompkins waggon is long boarded with elm planks which run the full length of the bed. It has spindled and boarded sides and the out raves are also spindled. Unlike the Jones waggon the Tompkins waggon has iron axle arms these were introduced in the latter part of the nine-teenth century as they were harder wearing than wooden ones. The Tompkins waggon also has iron tyres and is a half lock waggon. The wheels are also dished, this adds to their strength. The wheels have strakes, sections of tyre, nailed into place around the rim of the wheel, rather than having a continuous iron tyre. Strakes enable the wheel to be re-shod without recourse to a wheel-wright. Waggons have large wheels in order to pass over soft and uneven ground. Large wheels, however, give a restricted turning circle. To improve this, an inset is built into the side of waggons to allow greater wheel movement. Local waggons were typically painted with a yellow body and wheel-wright's red for the undercarriage, wheels, shafts and body interior which are the less showy, harder wearing parts. At the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century a lighter vehicle, the trolley, began to replace the large and grand farm waggons. These were smaller and had a flat bed un-like the high sided traditional waggons.





Murcott

Mur (mere or moor) marshy area, cott = cottages

Church Way, the track from Murcott to Fencott and on to Charlton-on-Otmoor was first mentioned in 1469. The church rolls of this low-lying village frequently mentioned overflowing ditches and flooded roadways. Not much has changed. Most of the land here was held by Westminster Abbey as part of Islip Manor.

Local By-laws (Translation from the original Latin), 26 April 1502:

"It is commanded that each tenant of Murcot having land in the place called *Heycote Furlong* and in another place called *Mabyldon Stubble* cultivate it sufficiently at the proper season. Pain 3s 4d on each them defaulting.

Of the old field names, a few are particularly interesting: Struttle Mead (reminiscent of *Street Hill*, the local name for the Roman Road) and Sweetingal Furlong (Sweetingal is a species of bog-myrtle which grew in local bogs). The piece of land opposite Poplar Farm in Fencott was known as "Splash" (self-explanatory).

The Nut Tree Inn, which received a Michelin Star in 2009, is a thatched building dating back to the 15th century. The Murcott Mission Room was built in 1895 to a plain 'Early English' design by local Gothic Revival architect A. Mardon Mowbray.

Otmoor, a very low-lying fen, with several treacherous marshy spots, is imbued with folk tales, including ghosts of drowned men trapped in a bog when crossing the moor at night, nocturnal beasts snatching livestock, and strange ailments waiting to be caught by travellers.

If Otmoor does contain bottomless mires from which walkers who fall in never escape, no one has survived to say where they're located...

You'd best beware!

Fencott

Fen – long narrow boggy area (probably the Roman Road)

cott – cottages

Local By-laws (Translation from the original Latin), 1 April 1421:

It is agreed here be the court that the tenants of Murcott and Fencot meet to determine the boundaries and metes in the fields there before the feast of St Philip and St James the apostles next. Pain of 12d on each defaulter and for each default.

There were several public houses in Fencott which no longer exist: The Black Bull at the entrance to the village (near Black Bull Lane...), and The Ramping Cat by the pond.

It is said that the stone drain-pipes still used for draining the fields are of Roman origin, as are many of the stones in the stone walls. The remains of a Roman timber bridge were found under water in the village in 1979.

Scuttle – an Eel Basket

to Kype – to wade in the stream and catch fish.

There are still fish and otters in the River Ray.

But please

No Kyping!

The remains of a Roman Timber bridge was found at Ivy Farm in Fencott.

where two little girls were added to the family and christened at Ambrosden, Sarah on 30 April 1682 and Elizabeth on 6 January 1684/5.

The children of John and Thomas certainly knew each other, and to John's young Margaret, Thomas's Robert, at nine years her senior must have seen impossibly glamorous and unattainable. Perhaps their parents also sought to nip any possible romance in the bud, for they seem to have packed Robert off to London, perhaps to drive cattle to market, perhaps to serve an apprenticeship. There for the time being he stayed, and in the capital married Ann Brondum in 1699. What became of Ann or any children they may have had is not known, but Robert was presumably widowed. By early 1702, his father Thomas, having now moved to Hampton Poyle was taken ill, and Robert was sent for. He returned home to the family. Thomas, described "householder" was buried at Hampton Poyle on 26 April 1702. On 27 February 1703, Robert Honour, aged 32, married Margaret Honour aged 23 at Ambrosden. For the first but not the only time the Commandment "Honour thy father and thy mother" would belong not only to its biblical context but would have a special meaning within the family.

Chapter 4

CHARLTON ON OTMOOR: Robert and Margaret

1703

*the Mark of
Robert Honour*

Love and harmony combine
And around our souls intwine
While thy branches mix with mine
And our roots together join.

William Blake: Song

Like his father in law, Robert was a carpenter and if they were on good terms, he may have helped John in his workshop. Robert and Margaret were still living at Ambrosden when their first child, named Thomas, after his maternal grandfather was christened there on 25 March 1705. At Hampton Poyle on 20 June that year, the baby's grandmother Marlin ["Magdalen Honour"] was buried.

There could hardly have been sufficient work in Ambrosden to support two carpenters and after the birth of their second son, called Robert after his father, in 1708, Robert and Margaret moved to Oddington, one of the "seven towns" of Otmoor. The moor is a primeval fenland, bleak and forbidding, and even in recent times, as in the 1970's when I made my second visit, it struck me as other-worldly and peculiar. In the heavy rain of that day, a black pall hung over the flat wastes and water poured out of the grass verges. In Robert and Margaret's time the little tracks must often have been impassable. Perhaps an unwary traveller might be drowned in autumn, frozen in winter and not found until the thaw the following spring. At the very least he might have been "ock-eyed in mud", a saying of my mother's which I have never heard anyone else use, which may well have travelled from Otmoor, and is presumably either "ox-high" or "hock-high"[?] Did Margaret view this sullen

the capital married Ann Brondum in 1699. What became of Ann or any children they may have had is not known, but Robert was presumably widowed. By early 1702, his father Thomas, having now moved to Hampton Poyle was taken ill, and Robert was sent for. He returned home to the family. Thomas, described "householder" was buried at Hampton Poyle on

landscape with despair as her husband, all optimism and good cheer set himself up as his own master? And were, even then, her two little boys ock-eyed in mud as they played excitedly in the yard of their new home?

Meanwhile, back at Ambrosden, another suitor had appeared in the person of Thomas Tyndall, paying court to Margaret's sister Anne. If John had not been altogether thrilled with his cousin Robert as a son in law, for some reason Thomas Tyndall failed totally to pass muster. It seems more than possible that Tom and Anne had to meet in secret at Margaret's in Oddington, before matters came to a head in 1710. The pair eloped to London, where Anne, now 28, and Thomas were married at St Michael's Cornhill.

Next came Henry Beauchamp of Wootton under Wood in Buckinghamshire, to ask for the hand of John's third daughter, Joan. He too was a carpenter, and ten years after Robert had vacated the spot, with John getting on a bit in years, his help may have been more appreciated. A thorough going decent sort of chap, thought John, after his two previous disappointments, or perhaps time had mellowed him. He gave unqualified approval, standing as bondsman to the marriage licence in 1715 and no doubt attending the wedding at St Aldates, Oxford.

Henry, Margaret's brother, married Mary Tyrell by licence in 1719, and they brought up a family in Ambrosden, Ann born 1720, Mary in 1722, Henry, 1723, Catherine, 1727 and Susanna born in 1735. Henry's wife Mary died in September 1742 and Henry in December 1746. Thirty year old Henry III married Susan[nah] Trayman on 5 August 1753. They appear to have been childless, and "Susannah, the wife of Henry", seems to have been the last of the family in Ambrosden when she was buried in 1771.

At Oddington, Margaret had given birth to John on 8 April 1713, [baptised 3 May], Mary, born 10 June 1715, [baptised 18 December] William, born 29 March 1719, [baptised almost a year later, 1 March], Anne born 9 January 1723, [baptised 12 May] and Gabriel, date of birth not given, but baptised 23 January 1726. Little Gabriel formed a link with old Gabriel of Wendlebury, who neither Margaret or Robert could have known personally, yet the baby was living proof that his memory still waxed strong in the family remembrance.

Margaret was now 46 and Gabriel would be her last child. It was perhaps the happiest time of their lives. They had produced seven children who, unusually for the times, had all survived, and Margaret herself had overcome the perils of childbirth: not for nothing is the Churching of Women couched in such terrifying terms -

"The snares of death compassed me round about: and
the pains of hell got hold of me"

and she could look forward to freedom from pregnancy. The three elder sons were old enough to assist their father and Mary aged 10 likewise could help her mother with the little ones. It was the way of the world, a dawn to dusk toil of baking, preserving, smoking, salting, brewing, dressmaking, mending. Wiping a child's runny nose with one hand whilst turning a spit or churning butter with the other. Medicines and

poultices, perfumes and pomanders were all in her province. Outdoors she would attend to twice daily milking or be out clucking her geese on the common, whilst Robert worked and whistled in the carpenter's shop, repairing wheels and carts and making the prized joined furniture that was such a status symbol of the times. She had much to be thankful for. Robert was a loving man, and they enjoyed a moderate prosperity: they had been able to buy a second house where their two eldest sons took up residence. As she suckled baby Gabriel, she looked forward to the end of the long Otmoor winter with its drifting snow which turned to unending rain and flood before early summer when everybody celebrated.

There was no election of a May Queen of Otmoor, for the moor had "She", a goddess whose name was now forgotten but must once have been Aphrodite or Astarte or Frig, and worshipped in the Old Time as the giver of life and fertility. The church not surprisingly now represented her as "Our Lady" and she was fashioned in cruciform, though still keeping a well rounded female form. The villagers talked of "giving her a good waist" as they wove the green boxwood of her garments in and out. ["A Mrs Honour, who until recently decorated the cross, said that wild flowers were used, and that they were *noculated*, i.e. all mixed up.*] "She" would be carried at the head of a procession of Morris Dancers with bells and rattles, a clown with an inflated pig's bladder which he would bounce on the heads of those who refused his collecting box, and a man who played a pipe. These performers were followed by the villagers strung out in a long train, encircling the periphery of the whole moor. Religious ceremonies which lent a certain respectability to the proceedings soon gave way to dancing, jollity, frivolity, hullabaloo and general mayhem. Amongst the young, the sap rose when the young buds popped in the hedgerows. There would be many a sore head in the morning and many a young person who would rue ever attending the festival at all. Margaret, like all the middle aged had not forgotten her youth - as the young in each succeeding generation believe - but remembered it only too well. She perhaps warned her sons against too much licence: Thomas was twenty one and Robert, eighteen - knowing they would take no notice at all. Life was hard in the country and in all truth no-one would begrudge them any little bit of pleasure which came their way.

About this time, Anne Tyndall, John Honour's prodigal daughter and Margaret's sister must have returned. Anne now had a daughter called Mary and it may be that she was brought up by her grandparents, for she became the apple of their eye. When John came to write his will in 1728 Mary Tyndall was a witness as well as a beneficiary.

[Until 1751 when the Gregorian calendar replaced the Julian calendar, the year commenced, (quite sensibly, in the Spring), on 24 March and therefore when John dated his will 24 February 1727, the year by our modern reckoning was 1728.]

In the name of God, I John Honnar of Wendlebury in the County of Oxon do make my last will and testament in form as followeth. First I give and bequeath to my son Henry one feather bed and bedstead. I give and bequeath to my son John one house and bankside and all pertaining therto

* Quoted from "Otmoor and its seven Towns", M.G. Hobson and K.L.H. Price, 1961]

belonging being in Amsdon [sic = Ambrosden] and he shall pay to my daughter Margaret Honnor one shilling, I give and bequeath to my daughter Beecham one feather bed after my wife's decease and I give to my daughter Beecham five pounds. I give and bequeath to my granddaughter Mary Tyndall the best bedsteads and the round table which is in the house at Amsdon. Of this my last will and testament I make my wife the sole executrix. My will is that my son John shall let my wife have the best room in the house which I give him.

John Honnor his mark (seal)

sealed and delivered in the presence of us
Thomas Fenimore senior
Thomas Fenimore junior
Mary Tendel

Once again the Fenimore family were on hand to deal with Honour's business, just as their kin had similarly dealt with the affairs of John's grandfather Gabriel. We see that Mary Tyndall chose her own spelling but could write her name well. Did John, whose hands were skilled with lathe and plane see wonder and magic in a little girl with "book larning" who could hold a pen and write her name?

It is said that to be cut off with a shilling does not necessarily mean that the recipient has fallen out with the testator. Often it means that their portion has already been delivered as a marriage dowry. It is possible that this had in fact happened in the case of Margaret and Anne. We shall never know whether this was so, yet their sister Joan too was equally married and if money had been given to the other girls when they wed, then why not Joan? John certainly took to his grand-daughter Mary, but mentioned none of his other grandchildren. There is something not quite right, some hint of a rankling which comes not with a loud bang but with a whisper through the ages. Margaret, Anne and their father quarrelled. That is what I believe.

Like Gabriel before him, John recovered. He did not die in 1728, but neither did he stay in Ambrosden. He returned to Wendlebury, his birthplace.

The comfortable old age to which Margaret had looked forward did not materialise. On 9 December 1729, Robert Honour, aged 58 lay dying. A scribe was summoned, pen and paper were fetched, and witnesses assembled to enable Robert to complete the last business duty of his life. His will, couched in loving terms to his family is reproduced below. It is particularly endearing that after the legacies to his adult sons, it is share and share alike all round.

The last will and testament of me, Robert Honour of Charlton in the County of Oxon, carpenter made this ninth day of December Anno Dom. One Thousand seven hundred and twenty nine and first and principally I commend my soul in the hands of Almighty God my maker hoping through the merits death and passion of Jesus Christ my saviour to be made partaker of everlasting life and my body I commit to the earth to be decently buried at the discretion of my exec. hereinafter named. And as for such temporal estate as hath pleased almighty God to bestow upon me

I give devise and bequeath as followeth. Imprimis I give and devise and bequeath unto my loving wife Margrat Honour all my Land and Estate in Oddington in the county afors. and my house or cottage which I lately purchased of William Watts during her Natural Life. Item I give devise and bequeath unto my loving son Thomas Honour my house or cottage I now dwell in and the cottage I lately purchased of the above Wm Watts after his mother's decease and to pay my loving children five pounds apiece of good and lawful money of Great Britain when they come to the age of one and twenty years (that is to say) John William Gabriel Mary and Ann Honour and likewise I give devise to my son Thomas all my working tools and timber. Item I give to my loving son Robert Honour whom I do likewise constitute make and ordain my sole executor of this my last Will and Testament all my crop and stock of husbandry and all Cattle chattle and implements thereto belonging paying thereout unto my loving children John William Gabriel Mary and Ann Honour five pounds apiece of good and lawful money of Great Brit. when they come to the age of seventeen years. and I do hereby disallow, revoke and disannul all other and former Wills and testaments legacies bequests and exects. by me in any will before this time willed and bequeathed ratifying & confirming this and no other to be my last will and testament. In witness thereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year first above written.

The Mark of
Robert Honour

signed sealed and published
pronounced and declared by the said Robert
Honour as his last will and testament in
the presence of the subscribers
Hugh Thurston, the mark of John Gateman, John Bishop

Robert did not recover and four days later, on 13 December, was laid to rest in the churchyard of Charlton on Otmoor. Over at Wendlebury, his father in law John Honour also lay dying. By 17 December he too was under the ground. He had not altered his will and it remained as he had dictated it two and a half years before. It is not beyond belief that rancour still stirred in both and that these two supposed enemies, cousins and father in law and son in law in whom the same Honour blood flowed, met by chance, perhaps at Bicester market, renewed their quarrel with the result that both were brought to bed of an appoplexy. And that in this weakened state they fell prey to other illness which carried them off. (An upsurge of funerals in 1729 suggests that an epidemic of some sort raged in the district.)

Did Margaret, heart broken and in mourning for her husband travel to Wendlebury immediately after Robert's funeral? Did she and her mother comfort each other in their shared loss? Nothing is known of Margaret's mother except her name - Ann; she is one of those wisps of history, the shadow of a shade who has substance only in the trace she leaves in us, her descendants, who still carry her genes. Now she would sit in the best room of the house at Ambrosden. Then silence.

Beside John's name in the burial register of Wendlebury, the vicar wrote a short note:

"John Honnor, by trade a carpenter, died at the age of fourscore years remembered the building of the parsonage barn at Wendlebury when he was a little boy upon which occasion a mortar pit was dug by the Roadside which is now become a common watering place for cattle and is known by the name of New Pool".

John Wellborne, the vicar was an antiquary. What was the reason for this odd epitaph? The words "common watering place" must surely be the clue. People were as always jealous of their rights. Here had passed one of great age who could remember when the common watering place belonged to the parsonage. The parsonage might one day wish to repossess the same. John Wellborne was no fool. Poor John Honour. After all those years with the churchwardens and petty constabulary, heavily engaged in local politics was this the best they could do?

Chapter 5

CHARLTON ON OTMOOR: Margaret and her descendants

"The atrocious crime of being a young man".
William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.

In what had been a dismally hectic week, John and Ralph Kirby came to take the inventory of Robert's property. John Kirby was a first class penman and his script is beautifully clear. Unfortunately he lumped all the household goods together apart from the beds and bedding and thus tells nothing of the living arrangements in Robert and Margaret's two houses. The farming implements were evidently of most interest to Robert junior for these were his inheritance. The working tools of the carpenter's shop were for Thomas and these were not included in the personal goods, valued at £49.14.0d.

1729

Robert Rings the Bells!



"A true and faithful Inventory of all and singular the goods Chattles and credits of Robert Honour of Charlton upon Otmoor in the County of Oxon, carpenter deceased praised at the dwelling house of the said Robert Honour in Charlton afors. the 19th day of December 1729 by the under written as followeth.

	£	s	d
Imprimis his purse and Apparel	2	0	0
Item Beads and Beading	5	0	0
Item all other household goods &c	5	0	0
Item 4 Horses or Mares	18	0	0
Item all geares therunto belonging	1	10	0
Item 2 Cows	4	0	0
Item one Cart	4	5	0
Item one Waggon	2	10	0
Item one saddle	0	14	0
Item 4 harrowes & wheeltraces	1	12	0
Item one Rowl and a plough	0	13	0
Item a fan 4 sieves & 3 sacks		10	0
Item a Hay Cock	4	0	0
Item debts owing him none	0	0	0

The total Amount	49	14	0

Apraised by us

John Kirby Ralph Kirby

The will was proved on 21 April 1730, by which time Margaret had probably moved to the house which Robert had bought from William Watts and Thomas stayed on at the previous family home with the carpenter's shop attached. Thomas would continue the trade in order to keep his mother and sisters, the youngest of whom were still children of ten, six and three. Thomas may well have wished to marry, but his responsibility was clear and he probably accepted his lot. In the event, his life was to be a short one, and he died a bachelor on 16 April 1731, aged 27. His will was dated just three weeks before on (the then) New Year's Day, 26 March 1731. To his mother Margaret he left "my house where John Harris dwells", which may have been either of the two houses, and seems to suggest that Thomas had found it difficult to make ends meet without letting out one for rent. All his other goods were also left to Margaret. He mentions only one of his siblings "To my brother Robert one shilling". Why was this? Why not say "All to mother" and leave it at that? Had there been a little resentment about Robert's executorship, so that Thomas bore the brunt and Robert was doing quite nicely thank you? The will was witnessed by John Bishop (who had performed the same duty for Robert senior), John Harris, Thomas's tenant, who will figure again in the story, and Elizabeth Heritage. Margaret was to be sole executrix but for some unknown reason, the will was not proved until 28 April 1739.

Around the time of Thomas's death, Margaret's third son, John, barely nineteen years old had met and married a girl called Elizabeth, who gave birth to their daughter, also called Elizabeth, who was christened on 12 February 1732. There is no record of the marriage at Charlton, and it is

probable that Elizabeth came from outside. I suppose the baby was conceived at the May Day revel the previous year. John was the first of the brothers to marry and Elizabeth was Margaret's first grandchild.

I suspect Margaret did not attend the christening, for her youngest child, Gabriel, aged six, had taken ill. Of what childish complaint did he sicken? Measles, mumps, chicken pox? Did he have a cough aggravated into consumption by the damp foggy pall over the moor? Recovery from most childhood ailments is almost taken for granted nowadays with modern medicine and antibiotics; for Margaret's son there was no such help. Despite, I am sure, devoted nursing, the little boy died on 19 February 1732 and was buried four days later.

On 28 August 1733, there was another wedding when Robert junior married Mary Hale. Their first child, Robert, was born shortly afterwards, followed by Thomas in March 1735. Marlin, baptised 16 January 1736/7 was named after her great-grandmother, again a person whose recorded existence is shadowy, left a mark still felt within the family circle. After Marlin came Elizabeth, in 1739, John, in 1743, Mary in 1745 and Ann in 1748.

John & Elizabeth's second child Henry was born in January 1734. Their third, Gabriel, after John's little brother, was born in September 1735. He was followed by Benjamin in December 1737, Burgess in July 1739 and Richard in August 1742.

In 1735, Robert and Margaret's daughter Mary had been married to Henry Knibbs at the nearby town of Bicester. She would maintain close links with the family at Otmoor.

It is clear that the family was doing its best to increase the population of Otmoor. In 1738, Charlton and the hamlets of Oddington, Fencott and Murcott, four of the "seven towns of Otmoor" had 99 houses with 450 persons including children "which are very numerous". It is safe to say that even scattered as the people were, everybody knew everybody else.

At the beginning of 1743, John's wife Elizabeth fell seriously ill. She had given birth to six children in ten years, the last of whom, Richard, was born the previous August. Whether her death was from the complications of childbirth, or if she was simply worn out, we cannot know. She was buried on 10 March 1743. John aged 30, and a widower with a family ranging from eleven years down to an infant in arms, and not well off, might not have seemed much of a catch, but Mary Harris, the daughter of his late brother's tenant, was available and fairly rushed into his arms. On 2 April 1745, their son Job was christened, and the biblical pattern was maintained by Moses, on 4 April 1746, and Aaron, on 28 December 1749.

In 1750, William married Mary Harden, the third of Margaret's daughters in law named Mary. In October 1753 they had their first child, another little Gabriel. In February 1756 they had a daughter, Ann, and in the same year, in November, John and Mary also had a daughter, Mary.

In 1757, Robert Honour's father in law, John Hale of Oddington died. He left

to my wife the house Robert Honor lives in then to my grandson, Robert Honor at her decease.

"to my daughter Mary Honor my other house and then to my grandson Thomas Honor at her decease.

"to my grandson John one quarter share.

"to my granddaughter Mary Jesset of Horton two shillings and sixpence.

"to Martha and Gabriel Honor one shilling each.

Gabriel Honour was not John Hale's grandson, for he was the son of John Honour, though he must have been close to the Hale family to have received this small gift. John Hale may have wished him to be more than a friend, but he upped and married a girl called Ann and produced two daughters. Later on, in 1761, widowed, he married Mary Jesset which is probably what John Hale hoped for in the first place. I cannot fathom who Martha was: every family tree has these wind blown leaves.

John Hale named John Harris of Charlton and John Lock of Oddington as trustees and executors. Everybody knew John Harris - Thomas Honour's tenant, John Honour's father in law. The will was witnessed by Ann Sparrow, Edmund Rice and Mary Lock.

Coming into property went straight to young Robert Honour's head. It may be that his grandmother Hale had died suddenly and his father became his tenant. It can be no co-incidence that on 4 January 1758, Robert celebrated in the only way which seemed fitting. He rang the bells!

The misdemeanour was serious enough to get into the record books:

The jurors of our Lord the King upon their oath present that James Knibbs late of the parish of Charlton on Otmore in the county of Oxford, collar maker and Robert Honour late of the same place, carpenter with several other persons near twelve of the clock in the night of the fourth day of January in the 31st year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Second, King of Great Britain and so forth with force of arms at the Parish of Charlton on Otmore aforesaid and riotously and tumultuously did aforce themselves and tumultuously and unlawfully did enter and the Beles then and there being in the said church then and there did ring to the Great Disturbance and terror of the inhabitants of the parish of Charlton on Otmore aforesaid and all other of his Majesties liege subjects then and there being. To the will.....[words illegible]...be like case offending. And against the Peace of our said Lord the King his Crown and Dignity.

James Knibbs was probably his cousin, the son of Mary Honour and Henry Knibbs. Why had they done it? Was it to celebrate Christmas? - the date was well within the Twelve Days. Or was it to celebrate Robert's inheritance? Were they drunk as they pushed past the protesting figure

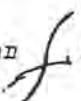
of the Reverend John Lowry? Why did they apply "force of arms" - or was this an exaggeration? The authorities were sensitive to the threat of invasion and the ringing of the church bells was an accepted signal that an incursion had actually taken place, hence "the terror" of the inhabitants. Quiet Charlton had never seen anything like it before. What it eventually boiled down to was the fact that the King's Peace had been disturbed, only a nine day wonder, and when the fuss had died down, not even all that serious. From the fact that the indictment is crossed out in the Act Book, it seems that the charges were dropped. However, young Robert Honour left Charlton - in disgrace? - and subsequently founded a branch of the family in Hertfordshire. For several years, prior to her untimely death, I corresponded with his descendant, Hazel Honour.


On 25 March 1758, John Honour aged 45, made his will:

my wife Mary Honner to get everything as long as she remain a widow.

"my brothers in law John Harris and William Harris as trustees.

"my wife to have £50 at remarriage and half the goods. The rest for my children, share and share alike at the age of twenty one.

John  Honour

witnessed by Elizabeth  Harris

Henry Smith.

John clearly expected that Mary, who was probably still quite young, would have no difficulty in remarrying and in this case her goods would automatically become the property of her husband. In this way he provided both for his children, all nine of them, and for his wife, so that she would definitely have "prospects" as a widow. John was a thoughtful man.

He was buried 8 April 1758, and in the event, Mary did not remarry. She lived on until October 1783 and died a widow.

Margaret had now outlived three of her sons. On Christmas Day, 1759, her son William had a daughter who he called Marlin. Margaret, by then "old Granny Honour" was buried 11 December 1760, aged eighty. In October 1767, her latest grandchild, a daughter of William, was given her name. William had already showed his liking for the family names: his branch of the family would have a Gabriel still alive at the time of the census of 1861, bridging a span of nearly three hundred years since the christening of the first Gabriel in 1566. William's son Gabriel, born in 1753, would marry a girl called Mary Margetts, probably kin to one of the four just men who had stood as guarantors for William Kerry in 1609.

By the time of Margaret's death, education, however rudimentary, had come to Otmoor. Mary Jesset, the grand daughter of John Hale of Oddington, who was married to Gabriel Honour in 1761, signed her name to her marriage entry in the Charlton register, though Gabriel made only his mark. John Honour's son Job who married Phyllis Wyatt in 1761 could

also write his name which he signed Job Honner. At about this time, Burgess Honour, the brother of Gabriel and the half brother of Job moved to London to try his luck. On 5 February 1767 at Holborn Lying-in Hospital, Endelle Street, Mary Ann, the daughter of Burgess and Sarah Honour was baptised. People only went to hospital in the last possible extremity, for a patient was probably more likely to expire in hospital than out of it due to disease, dirt and ignorance. To go there at all struck terror into the heart of even the most intrepid, and we can be sure that Sarah was in a very poor way indeed. Evidently the London adventure resulted in illness and destitution, and probably death. Perhaps Sarah's end was speeded by child bed fever, which was largely transmitted in hospitals by the surgeons themselves, who turned from dissection of cadavers to examination of living patients without pausing to wash their hands in between. Burgess, Sarah and the baby Mary Ann are never heard of again.

Burgess's brother Gabriel died in March 1781, leaving no surviving issue. He was the last in our branch of the family to bear the name of the patriarch, though as previously stated, Gabriels continued in William's line for many more years.

Job Honour was elected a jurymen in 1772, representing Fencott and Murcott during the Michaelmas term. He had five children, John, Job, Elizabeth, Ann and Moses. He was apparently in a fair way of trade and felt confident enough to borrow money to expand his business. This proved an unwise move. Far back in 1691, Archbishop Lamplugh had endowed the parish with £5 which by 1786 produced £55 per annum. This money was invested in Job Honour and Richard Cooper, but was lost owing to their bankruptcy, a fact gleefully pointed out to my brother and myself in 1973 by the Vicar, Reverend A.W. Crusha, who tried to tap us for repayment at compound interest!

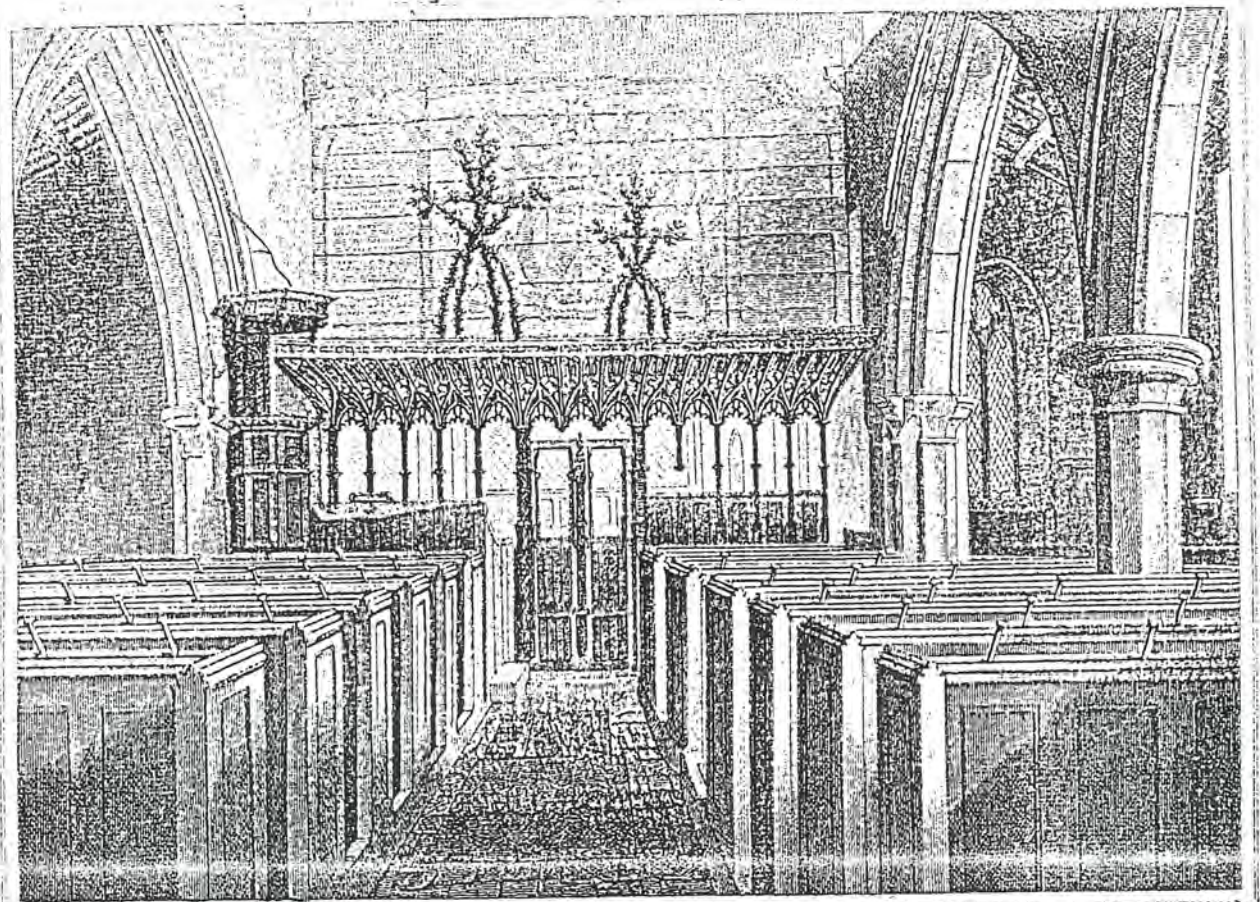
For Job's family it was now downhill all the way: there was no safety net, and after their brief rise sank back to labouring, a slide which half a century later would lead to poverty and death in Bicester Workhouse for some of their number.

In 1789, Gabriel Honour, the son of William, also applied to become a juror, and signed a Certificate swearing he was a Communicant of the Church of England as required by law. In a "true bill" of 3 October that year, John Burgess of Oddington was sent for trial for the theft of "five oaken rafters from John Sawyer, esquire", as witnessed by Gabriel Honour and Ric Williams. [Perhaps this Burgess was a relation by marriage - why else did John Honour and his first wife Elizabeth have a son called Burgess when John was not apparently not an elector? Perhaps it was Elizabeth's maiden name.]

A third Juror was Moses, the brother of Job. At the age of 32, he married Ann Preston on 4 January 1779. He was unable to write his name. Moses and Ann were prolific parents but sheer numbers were no guarantee of the children's survival. The burial registers are a grim reminder of infant and child mortality of the times. Of Moses and Ann's nine children:

Ann, was buried 14 December 1783, infant
 William, buried 31 March 1786, aged one
 Thomas, buried 30 December 1789, aged one
 Ann, buried 22 December 1793, infant
 John, buried 8 April 1793 aged twelve
 James, buried 10 March 1801 aged two
 Moses, buried 30 January 1802 aged twenty
 Mary, buried 1803 aged sixteen.

Ann was unable to bear the loss of the last two who she had supposed spared and she herself died in September 1804, probably worn out by grief. Only one child, Elizabeth, survived to marry William Cooper in July 1809. Moses lived on, seemingly indestructible, until 1824 when he was buried on 16 February, aged 78.



Drawn & Engraved by J. P. S. G. 1840

Interior of Charlton Church

As by J. Burdon, Director, Drawing Room, No. 21, 1840

Two Cruciform representations of "She" (19th Century) Less rounded than in Robert and Margaret's time but still bearing some semblance of a human figure.

Another (better) version

"They hang the man & flog the woman
Who steals the goose from off the Common
Yet let the greater Villain loose
Who steals the Common from the Goose."

Chapter 6

OTMOOR: Enclosure!

1777

Tis bad enough, in man or woman
To steal a goose from off a common
But surely, he's without excuse
Who steals the common from the goose?
Anon.

Our descent is through Aaron, the brother of Job and Moses, the third son of John and Mary. He is amongst the most elusive of our forefathers. He was illiterate, he was no juror and he left no will. He married twice, first Mary Blake from Boarstall - their banns were called at Charlton in June 1777, but they were not married there. They had a son, James baptised at Charlton on 27 April 1781, but neither the child nor Mary appear again. Both were presumably dead by the time Aaron married secondly Susanna Allom on 31 March 1783. Susanna was not born in Charlton, but was probably a daughter of the John and Susanna Allom whose son John was baptised at Charlton in 1777. Aaron and Susanna's first child was John, born in March 1784, but he seems not to have survived infancy. Their second was Job, who was baptised at Charlton church on 24 July 1785. The little family lived at Fencot where in all probability Aaron farmed at subsistence level.

As we have seen, arrangements for the remote fenland of Otmoor had remained the same for centuries and by tradition this had been very carefully laid out. Each of the hamlets appointed a "Moorman" whose job was to see that the rules were observed. The inhabitants were mainly small farmers and cottagers: all depended on the rough grazing for their sheep, cattle and geese. The number of livestock was limited. No-one was allowed to dig for peat on the highways and only the very poor were let gather cow dung for fuel. By this system everyone had a fair claim on the common land of the moor. Soon all this would change. When Job Honour was a baby, one of the local big shots, Alexander Croke of Studley Priory, started a campaign for enclosure of the open fields. He was one of the moor's major landowners and his argument went thus: unless the moor was properly drained then it could never be good agricultural land and unless it were enclosed it could not be drained. His motive was not philanthropy but profit. For some years the proposal was at stalemate, mainly because Croke, the Earl of Abingdon and several local vicars, who represented the church, and who between them would get the lion's share of the land, could not agree amongst themselves how the spoils should be divided. The idea aroused strong feelings amongst the rank and file who saw from the outset that their common rights would be eroded and their livelihood in ruins. The days of the little smallholder farming his strip were numbered. When finally agreement was reached amongst the nobs, an angry mob prevented the petition being nailed to the church door and it had to be thrown into the graveyard amongst the rowdy but impotent protesters.

In these difficult and uncertain times, Job Honour grew up.

His mother Susanna died at Fencot and was buried on 10 June 1810. His father Aaron died just over two years later and was buried on 3 July 1812. About this time Job hired himself out to a farmer at Chesterton, and found a prospective wife in Sarah Hoare, (unfortunate name!) at Waterperry, though she had been born at Tackley.

Sarah was the daughter of William Hoare and Sarah Coalbourne who married at Tackley on 22 October 1769, by banns read some months previously on the 11, 18 and 25 June and before witnesses Richard Coney and Mary Eveness. Their other children were Susannah, baptised 23 March 1770, John, 5 July 1773, Rachel, 27 December 1775, William, 22 February 1778, Thomas, 9 April 1780, and Robert, 5 January 1783. Sarah was the youngest child, baptised 28 August 1785.

People called Hoare had lived at Tackley at least from 1653 when Robert Hoare married Christian Bathe. William Hoare, Sarah's father, was born in 1746, and baptised 20 April 1747, the son of John Hoare(s) and Mary his wife. He died aged 83 and was buried at Tackley on 20 May 1829. John and Mary had another son, Thomas, baptised 12 January 1746. I have yet to find their marriage, but John witnessed the wedding of Robert Hoare, a carpenter, possibly his brother, to Mary Cox in 1755. One of the Hoares, John, probably Sarah's brother, was "a soldier who had served in Egypt" in the war against Napoleon, and came back to Tackley to die in 1808.

Job Honour, bachelor of Chesterton" and his bride "Sarah Hoar, spinster of this parish" were married by banns at Waterperry on 12 October 1814, before witnesses, Charles Crowdy and Mary Smith. Job signed the register, though Sarah could only make her mark. They were both twenty nine.

Job and Sarah Honour's first child was Henry, born in 1815, and at his baptismal entry Job is shown as a labourer. Until now, all the Honour men had been farmers or tradesmen, and for the reason of their deterioration we must look to the results of the Act of Enclosure.

When the Act was passed in 1815, landholders were invited to apply for a land grant by a certain date and in due course allocations were made proportionate to the right which the claimant had established. All well and good for the larger claimants who were awarded blocks of land. These could be fenced and divided into substantial farms for the owners use and into smaller properties which could be let out. For the small farmer the system often meant economic catastrophe. His small holdings were here, there and everywhere, often in tiny allotments: a few strips of ploughland, some mowing grass in the common meadows, and the right to graze a few sheep after corn and hay harvests in the open fields. These little holdings scarcely provided subsistence, and he might frequently have had to supplement his income by paid work for another farmer, but what he formerly did have was the opportunity, if good luck prevailed, to better himself by obtaining more strips until he became a full time farmer. Under Enclosure, he might get a few extra acres, but he would have to fence his tiny plots before the land could be used and even then, they would very likely be too small for him to grow a rotation of crops and then provide for his dozen or so sheep which had cropped in

the open fields. And what of his cow which had grazed on the Common? A greater part of the village community lost their stake in the land altogether. Many of the little allotments were sold to greater landholders and their former owners moved away from the country. Those who stayed on worked as full time labourers for wages which were all that a scattered unorganized body of workers could secure.*

On Otmoor specifically, nearly all the land went to the rich landowners. Only 73 people got any award at all and 48 of these received less than 10 acres. This was out of a population which had now grown to more than 1500. Job Honour makes no appearance on the Enclosure award document and indeed the only Honour to benefit was the latest Gabriel, a descendant of Robert's son William, and by now a fairly distant relative.

So it was in the lowly circumstances of a farm labourer's cottage that Sarah gave birth to their many children. After Henry, baptised 16 July 1815, came James, 20 December 1816, John, 1 November 1818, Job, 20 June 1820, Susanna, their first daughter, 24 December 1821, named after her - grandmother Susanna Allom, Sarah, 25 May 1823, after her mother and grandmother Hoare, Robert, 27 June 1824, Thomas, 27 January 1828 and William, baptised 6 January 1830, but born at the end of 1829.

1829 was a momentous year for Otmoor.

A drainage scheme had been put forward by the gentry, as part of the Enclosure and the river Ray was diverted from its course, causing the flooding of the land around Charlton, Murcot and Fencot. Those remaining small farmers whose land was affected were understandably upset. In fact it was seen as the last straw. This time indignation was not merely vocal. The farmers went out and hacked away the banks of the new channel, gleefully returning the unwanted water to the fields of their large neighbours who had so wantonly interfered with nature. Twenty nine were arrested, brought to trial - and acquitted! Judgement was given in their favour on the grounds that the enclosure commissioners had exceeded their powers.

The people of Otmoor were ecstatic, and mistakenly interpreted the acquittal to mean that the whole of the enclosure was null and void. For the next few weeks they roamed the moor at night, faces blackened, armed with billhooks and axes, breaking down the hated fences. One man was caught red handed and carried off to prison, but the fence breaking went on until one night, Wentworth Croke, the son of Alexander Croke, brandished a pistol at "the rioters" but before he could fire he was knocked down senseless by an axe. The gentry, ever mindful of the uncomfortable memory of the French Revolution, called out the militia. The militias, most of whose members were randomly selected by ballot in their various villages, formed an irregular national guard. A company of Lord Churchill's Yeomanry were sent to Islip on the edge of the moor, ready to deal with any contingency. The people of Otmoor were not to be easily cowed, and on 30 September 1830, men women and children, 1000 strong surged out on to the moor and began systematically to destroy what remained of the fences.

* from "A History of English Farming, by C.S. Orwin, MA

The Riot Act was read. And ignored.

The soldiers were ordered to move in and arrested forty four men, who were bundled into carts to be taken under guard to Oxford.

As they passed through Summertown, a village to the north of the City, a farcical situation developed. The procession was met by crowds coming from the other direction who had been celebrating at St Giles's Fair. The exuberant people in festive mood began cat calling and lobbing missiles at the soldiers. The militia, who were guarding their own kind, and probably not unsympathetic to their cause, put up a token resistance and then legged it. After that, the prisoners were freed by the mob, amidst much cheering and carrying on.

It must have seemed to some that the Revolution had begun, but this was not France and the crowd having had their fun and achieved a temporary victory, gradually dispersed. The forty four Otmoor men drifted back home to their homes and families. Though some seem to have made off, the majority were re-arrested and sent again for trial. Amazingly their sentences were light, even lenient, not more than four months in gaol, at a time when agricultural protesters throughout England were being harshly dealt with, death for some and transportation for many more. In Oxfordshire at least, public opinion won the day.

At Otmoor, fences continued to be broken down, but spasmodically. The moor men would not collectively rise again. The drainage idea never did do all its supporters had claimed and Otmoor remained as dank and waterlogged as it had ever been.

But back to Job Honour. However he managed it, in these turbulent years, he was able to save a little money. He purchased a cart. Labouring for a master must have lain heavily upon him. At the christening of his last child, Mark, in October 1832, he was described as a carrier. He was his own man again.

The carrier not only delivered people and goods from village to town and back, but in a world without radio and TV, and where few could read the weekly newspapers, he kept the lines of communication open. Apart from the latest items of national news, he might relay interesting gossip for which the village hungered or carry a message from an anxious mother to her daughter in service and return with a hopefully reassuring reply. Most girls were obliged to seek employment elsewhere and perhaps Job drove his own daughters into service with a heavy heart. (We know they were not married at Charlton, and up to now they have disappeared from our story.)

Job Honour died in 1836. The Charlton parish register says he was 47. This is incorrect for he was 51. Clearly despite all tribulation he had looked younger than his age and the family had made a guess at it. People rarely knew how old they were: lives without newspapers, diaries and calendars were governed by the seasons and a year here or there made very little difference. Why should it? People rarely needed to fill out a form and were scarcely recorded - unless they got into trouble - except by the vicar of their parish church when they hatched, matched

REWARDS.

MALICIOUS INJURIES.

Otmoor and the neighbourhood.

IT having been recommended by the Magistrates of the County of Oxford, present at a Meeting held at Islip on the 10th day of August instant, that with the view of preventing a recurrence of the illegal and riotous proceedings which of late have taken place at OTMOOR, Rewards should be offered for the discovery and conviction of all Offenders; that the utmost vigilance and activity should be used in detecting all Persons who wilfully or maliciously injure Fences or Property of any description in Otmoor or any of the adjacent Parishes, Townships, or Places; and that neither pains or expence should be spared in prosecuting and bringing Offenders to justice: Therefore the Trustees appointed under the Otmoor drainage Act, in compliance with such recommendation of the Magistrates,

DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE,

That the several Rewards hereinafter mentioned for the several Offences hereinafter expressed will be paid to the Person or Persons entitled thereto, under the following heads: that isto say,

To any Person or Persons who within twelve months from this time shall discover and give evidence of any malicious injury or damage to any bridge or embankment or other property of a public nature within Otmoor, or to property of any kind, whether public or private, where the Offence by law shall amount to Felony, in every case

FIFTY POUNDS.

To any Person or Persons who within the like period shall discover and give evidence of unlawful assemblies at Otmoor or the neighbourhood for the purpose of injuring or destroying Bridges, Embankments, or Fences, or other property either of a public or private nature, or who shall give evidence of a conspiracy to destroy or injure property of the description above mentioned, or any other such like misdemeanor, in every case

THIRTY POUNDS.

To any Person or Persons who shall discover and give evidence of any wilful or malicious damage, injury, or spoil, to or upon any Fences, Gates, or other property, within Otmoor, either of a public or private nature, the Offence not being Felony,

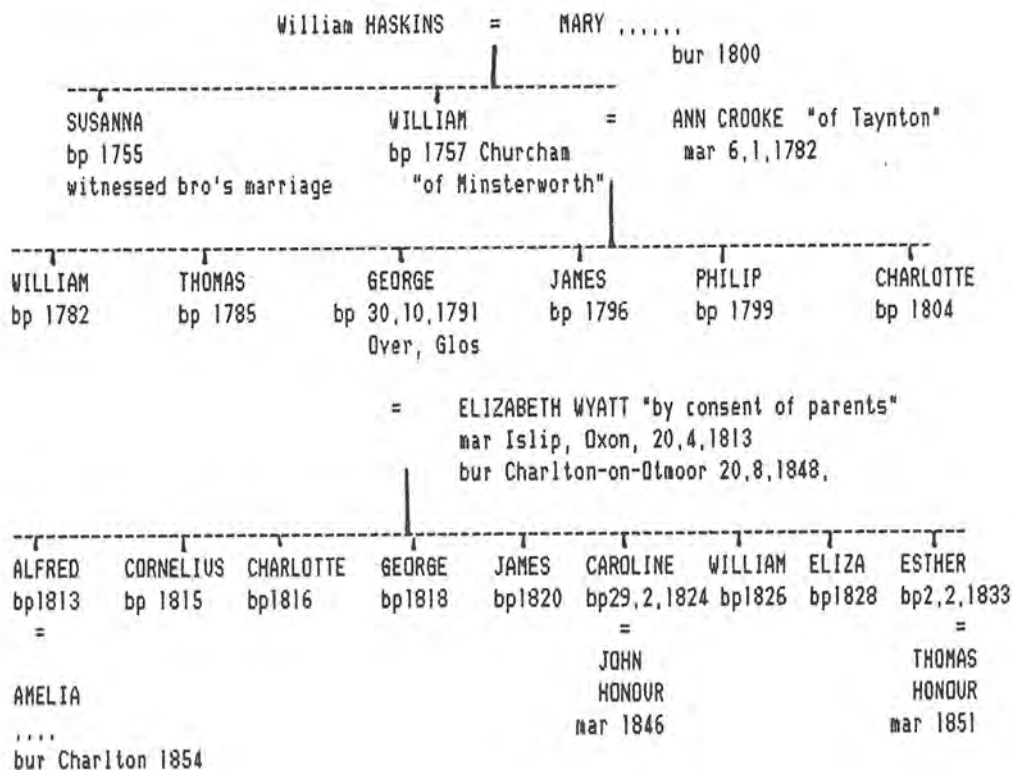
TWO POUNDS.

And similar Rewards will be given in each case for the discovery and conviction of any Person or Persons who shall previously meet together and concert measures, or in any other manner aid, abet, counsel, or procure the commission of any offences above enumerated; and that such rewards shall extend as well to offences which have been already committed as to offences to be hereafter committed; but it is to be understood, that one Reward only will be paid in respect of one and the same offence; and when more than one Person is entitled, the Reward to be apportioned, and in all cases to be paid on the Conviction of the Offender or Offenders, in addition to the Rewards (if any) allowed by Act of Parliament: and in cases of Felony, where Accomplices give evidence, every endeavour will be made to obtain a free pardon.

AND NOTICE IS HEREBY ALSO GIVEN,

That a Reward of FIFTY POUNDS is hereby offered for the discovery and conviction of any of the Persons who assaulted and wounded JOHN SAUNDERS, whilst watching the Fences on Otmoor in the month of April last.

THE HASKINS FAMILY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE & ISLIP



(c) 1841 CAROLINE WAS IN SERVICE aged 15
with Richard Coggins, Corn dealer at Lower Heyford
No 1

and were despatched. Of Sarah's children, only Robert failed to survive infancy. Of the ten who were left at Job's death, Henry alone had reached his majority of twenty one; the baby Mark was still a toddler of four. Now Sarah had to take up the reins and she took them in a considerable fist. She would become our second Honour matriarch, using the small sum left to her by Job, and with the help of her sons, taking on the land. Sarah was not the stuff of farm labourers.

Chapter 7

FENCOT AND MURCOT: Sarah, a farmer in her own right.

1836

Remark of Sarah Honor

"There are only two families in the World my old grandmother used to say - the Haves and the Have-nots."

Miguel Cervantes. Don Quixote II 20

Job died on 7 February 1836, intestate, and it was not until Christmas 1838 that his affairs were wound up. Sarah appeared personally before Henry Cox Morrell, the Bishop's surrogate at the ecclesiastical court and stated on oath that the goods and chattels of her late husband amounted to less than £300, the inventory, [which is unfortunately not detailed], having been made by herself "Sarah Honor" - she had still not learned to write, and made her mark - "of Mercot in the county of Oxford, widow" and her son who signed "Henry Honor of Mercot aforesaid, farmer."

I get a little wry amusement from this spelling. Both ~~and~~ Pem and my mother were proud of being called "Honour", and therefore sniffily superior, as they thought, and "definitely no relation" to a Bristol family they knew of called "Honor". There was in fact no standard spelling until Victorian times, and the Latin version "Honor" is the older version.

The third signatory to the inventory was John Clack, gentleman, who was Sarah's landlord. Oxford directories show that he was a gardener. The late Job is described "farmer" so obviously he had combined carrying with a little parcel of land he had managed to rent. *Nil Desperandum* might well have been his motto.

Henry Honour was married, though not at Charlton, around 1840, to a woman whose name was probably Edith Gee: their daughter was christened Emma Gee Honour on 29 August 1841. After this, they seem to have moved away. There were plenty more brothers to take Henry's place. His brother Job married Eliza Preston in 1841, and about the same time, James Honour married his wife Elizabeth.

Sarah stuck in doggedly to make herself self sufficient, a subsistence farmer, supporting her family and perhaps employing the odd casual labourer. In the 1844 tithe, her holding is as follows:

Landlord

John Clack	Sarah Honor	(27) Close Pasture	1. 2. 4	9s 3d
		(111) " "	2. 1. 7	13s 9d
		(138) allotment	25. 2.11	£8. 0s 0d
		arable	-----	-----
			29. 1.22	£9. 3s 0d

with a cottage and garden at number 109.

The numbers correspond to the districts on the tithe map. Sarah's land was scattered all over the place, a direct result of Enclosure, and perhaps mopped up from those previous copyholders who had now gone for good. She must have been an astute businesswoman, for her holding now amounted to more than 29 acres, valued at £91.10s.0d a year, not bad for a lone woman of fifty nine. Moreover, she also appeared in Oxfordshire Directories, with "farmer" after her name, the only woman to do so, and a fair feat in those days before either full franchise or womens' suffrage. I believe she was convinced she could do anything a man could do, and refused to hide behind her sons for business dealings. Sarah had come into her own.

Two of her sons also branched out: John, in partnership with Richard Neeld had a cottage and garden for which they paid a tithe of 1s 10d and his married brother Job, with William Busby, (who would later become a member of the family), rented a little over half an acre from William Badger, tithed at 9s 6d.

John Honour had meanwhile married Caroline Haskins in Oxford, and their daughter Caroline, was born on 27 March 1847. On 4 April, John's unmarried sister Mary had a daughter she called Ruth, a relatively unusual name and perhaps after Ruth Clack, John Clack's wife. Maybe Mrs Clack had been kind to the young girl in her "trouble".

It is appropriate now to recall that previous Job Honour, born in 1744, and the brother of our ancestor Aaron, who had gone bankrupt after a promising start. His son Moses, a Murcot labourer married Mary Woodley at Yarnton in 1808. Among their children were Jane born in 1813 and Elizabeth in 1818. As an agricultural labourer, Moses would have earned 8 shillings a week and sometimes less. Food for the poor labouring family was very meagre, consisting of not much more than dry bread, potatoes, greens and herbs. Tea was merely coloured water, the leaves collected and re-used time and again. Housing was wretched. Two room cottages were very common with damp floors below road level and thatched roofs which let in the wet. The "picturesque" dwellings of the poor far from being the scene of pastoral idyll often hid squalid horror. When Moses the breadwinner died in 1835, matters went from bad to worse. In December 1837, Jane gave birth to an illegitimate son, Henry. For a time, she tried to keep her child as best she could. A woman could find work in the fields for about 7d a day, and a child could earn 4d. We can be sure that Henry joined in this labour from an early age. In 1845, even worse happened, when still unmarried, she had another baby. This time it was too much, and she was committed to Bicester Union Workhouse, with little Henry and the baby she called William. In 1847, aged 34, she died. The two little brothers who had come into the world unwanted by anyone, and only had each other to cling to, remained in the confines of

1838

Mary Wheeler
of
Oxford
Sworn under
£300

+ Bond dated
29 Decr.

On the 26th day of December 1838
Letters of Administration of all and singular
the goods Chattels and Credits of Mary Wheeler
late of the City of Oxford Widow deceased
were granted to Thomas Winterbourne
of the City of Oxford Builder one of the next
of kin of the deceased having been first duly
sworn to administer

G

C

Job Honor
of
Mercot
Sworn under
£300

H V V

On the 29th day of December 1838 Letters
of Administration of all and singular
the Goods Chattels and Credits of Job
Honor late of Mercot in the County of
Oxford were granted to Sarah Honor the
Widow of the deceased having been first
sworn duly to administer.

J

e

Mary Duclch
of
Oxford
Sworn under
£100

V

On the 31st day of January 1839 Letters
of Administration of all and singular
the goods Chattels and Credits of Mary
Duclch late of the City of Oxford Widow
was granted to John Duclch Son and
next of kin of the deceased having been
first sworn duly to administer

Ch

C

Martha Bond
of
Watney

(Circled signature)

Sworn under
£100

On the 23rd day of February 1839 Letters
of Adminon of all and singular the goods
Chattels and Credits of Martha Bond late
of Watney in the County of Oxford Spinster
dec^d were granted to Elizabetha Cripps the
Sister and next of kin of the Deceased, -
having been first sworn duly to administer

Lu

Sam

S

the Workhouse. In February 1850, William aged 4½ died on Union premises, and on 11 April that year Henry, aged 11 followed. Life had given them nothing but misery and they were brought back to Charlton for burial in paupers' graves. In 1852, Jane's mother Mary and her sister Elizabeth died in mysterious circumstances within a short time of each other. An inquest was called and noted in the Charlton burial register. Unfortunately the coroner's report has not survived and we shall never know for certain the cause of the two women's deaths.

"I could tell you of mothers", wrote Richard Cobden, of this time of agricultural depression, "dividing a farthing salt herring and a halfpenny worth of potatoes among a family of seven..." Mary and Elizabeth had resisted the Workhouse with all their waning strength. I suspect they died of starvation.

From this we may see that Sarah's daughter Mary might even be considered relatively lucky after the birth of Ruth. She remained with her family, as did her little daughter. Sarah strikes me as well able to weather that particular storm, and probably told noseyparkers to mind their own business. She took to the child, and at the 1851 census, grandmother and granddaughter are together. Mary meanwhile, had married William Busby Job Honour's partner, in 1850, and their son James Busby was christened in 1851. Perhaps William took Mary without Ruth, but he would eventually come round.

By the time of the census of 1851, Sarah's holding had very considerably increased, and the entry reads:

Sarah Honour	Head of House	Widow 66	Farmer of 66 acres	born Tackley
Thomas "	son	unmar 23		" Murcott
William "	"	" 21		" "
Mark "	"	" 18		" "
Ruth "	granddaughter	4		" "

Nearby lived Sarah's son John, with his young family:

John Honour	Head of House	married 32	farmer	born Murcott
Caroline "	wife	" 27		" Islip
Caroline "	daughter	4		" Murcott
Thomas "	son	2		" "

In 1851, John's brother James was an innkeeper and (interesting sideline) a beekeeper, aged 33, living with his wife Eliza aged 29, and children aged 7, 6, and 5, called John, Joseph and Sarah, all of whom were scholars. The name of James's inn was the Marlake House. This was one of three public houses in the hamlets and was just inside the manor of Studley. The other two were the Black Bull and the Nut Tree. All three survived into the 20th century, but only the Nut Tree, with a thatched roof and gabled attics is now in business. Here on one bright Saturday in the autumn of 1973, I had lunch with my brother and sister in law, Colin and Judith Pillinger. Another of Sarah's sons, William, also became a publican, but at which pub I am unable to say.

Job Honour also seems to have "got on". In 1851 we find him:

Job Honour	Head of House	Married	30	farmer of 45 acres	born Murcott
Eliza	" wife	"	27		born Bucks, Studley
Caleb	" son		7		" Murcott
Job	" "		5		" "
Emma	" daughter		3		" "

They also had two lodgers - Charles Dodd, 40, and Richard Whitlock, 19, both from Leafield, Gloucestershire. A sign of the times - the two men were railway labourers.

Another John Honour, aged 52, a descendant of Robert and Margaret's son William was, in 1851, still carrying on the old family trade as a carpenter and joiner. Perhaps he was still using the tools which had come down through the family, so that he could say, "I be still a-using my grandfather's knife. My father gave 'un a new 'andle and I gave 'un a new blade." This John had a son called Gabriel, aged 20, the latest in the long line of Gabriels going back to the old maltster of Wendlebury and beyond.

Also listed at the census in 1851 were Mary Honour, aged 70, a widow, described "a pauper" who still worked occasionally for a few coppers as an agricultural labourer, and her daughter Elizabeth, aged 32. We already know the subsequent fate of these two unfortunates.

On 6, 13, and 20 July, 1851, the banns of marriage were called for Thomas Honour and Esther Haskins, both "of this parish" of Charlton. We have seen already that the Honours liked to keep things in the family. Thomas was no exception: Esther was the sister of his brother John's wife Caroline. In July 1851, Caroline Honour gave birth to a daughter called Esther Haskins Honour after her sister. Like another Esther Honour who was yet to come, this was a little girl born to tragedy.

Thomas and Esther's son Mark was born at Murcot in May 1852 and in October 1854, twins, George and Elizabeth were born. They were not strong, and clung to life for a few weeks and then died.

On 5 June 1854, there was a bit of furore when Job Honour was summonsed for assaulting another farmer called John Pinfold. It is likely the dispute was over boundaries of some sort, and proved to be a storm in a teacup. The case was dismissed by Bicester magistrates. John Pinfold was buried aged 58 in 1855. I hope his death was not down to Job. Also in April that year, Thomas and Esther's son Henry was born.

The early summer of 1857 was happy. In May, two baby girls were born to the brothers John and Thomas Honour, and the two Mrs Honours, the sisters, formerly Caroline and Esther Haskins and on 31st May they were christened. The register reads:

"Eliza, daughter of John & Caroline Honour, of Fencot Bridge, farmer & Charlotte, daughter of Thomas & Esther Honour of Otmoor, farmer."

I am sure that one family entertained the other to celebrate this joyful event and that the assorted children played together on what was hopefully a sunny day. Among them must have been Esther, John and Caroline's daughter, aged six. Less than three months later, the family would foregather again for a funeral, for little Esther was dead, drowned by falling into Fencot Brook, only yards from the family farmhouse. Many years later, on my second visit to Otmoor, this time with my husband and children, and buffeted by furious wind and lashing rain, we stopped at Fencot Bridge where the little river Ray was in full flood. Amid the torrent a bruised cluster of water lilies, held on to an under water anchorage. So alluring, so inviting to a child. I visualised the little girl enchanted by the flowers, leaning over the parapet to try to pick them, losing her footing in the soft mud and being swept away. Pem, had previously recalled that her aunt Eliza, the child christened just before Esther died, was "a bit funny". She would say "Don't put that salt cellar near that water glass or he'll fall in and drown." Pem said, "She used to give us the creeps; of course, Ettie", (Pem's sister), "was frightened to death of her. We used to be glad when she'd gone back to wherever it was she came from." Although no apochryphal story of the drowned child ever came down to us, it did become clear that Eliza had it drummed into her from an early age not to go near the water. The incessant propaganda seems to have "turned her brain". She eventually, according to Pem, spent some time in a lunatic asylum, and Pem said, "I believe our Mum or Gran had ^{to} send money away to pay for it."

When I attempted to find out about Eliza, I discovered that she married Alfred Taylor, a blacksmith, ten years her senior in March 1878, an event noted in the Charlton register and in our Family Bible. Eliza aged 62 died 12 June 1919 and was buried in the small cemetery, a hundred yards from the church on the Murcot road. Eliza and Alfred had a daughter, Daisy Caroline who married Herbert John Markham. It seemed unlikely to me that Alfred Taylor would have married someone who was obviously dotty. Secondly, any payment which had to be done would surely have been down to him or Daisy Markham. Therefore I feel that it must have been another child who was affected by the water. Perhaps Alice, Caroline's last child. I can find no marriage for Alice and I am inclined to believe that it was she, and not Eliza, who suffered the delusions Pem described. Alfred Taylor died on 27 August 1935 aged 85 and Daisy Markham on 21 June 1943 aged 48. They were buried in the same grave with Eliza, with the legend

"There is a link death cannot sever
Love and remembrance last forever."

But back to 1857....

In this year, Sarah Honour lost her friend Ruth Clack, aged 81, the lady after whom Mary had named her child.

A census is taken every ten years and it is interesting to see the changes which have occurred in the intervening decade. In 1861, the census for Charlton on Otmoor gives the following details:

15 appears that

* George's death was registered
Bicester Sep 1861 as George Askins !

John Honour	Head of Household	married 42	farmer of 60 acres	born	Murcott
Caroline	" wife	" 37		"	Islip
Caroline	" daughter	14		"	Fencott
Thomas	" son	12		"	"
Eliza	" daughter	4		"	"

Thomas Honour	Head of Household	married 33	farmer of 15 acres	"	Murcott
Ester	" wife	" 29		"	Islip
Mark	" son	8	scholar	"	Murcott
Henry	" "	6	"	"	"
Charlotte	" daughter	4	"	"	"
James	" son	2		"	"
George Haskins	lodger		widower 70 wheelwright	"	Glos, Churcham

George Haskins was the father of Caroline and Esther Honour, and the father in law of Thomas and John. It is strange that this relationship was not stated on the census form, yet thinking about it, I feel the explanation is less than sinister. I suspect that only George was at home when the census man came around and answered his questions faithfully until it came to himself, when he replied grumpily, "Me? I'm only the lodger!"

So George was born at Churcham, in Gloucestershire. I had no problem finding his baptism in the register for 30 October 1791:

"George, son of William and Ann Haskins of Over"

As I had never heard of Churcham before, and certainly not Over, I looked at the map, and in doing so found the answer to a niggling question. When I was married, Pem gave me some things which had been in the Honour family "for years". Some nasty 'sporting' examples of badger hunting, which have long been consigned to a dark drawer, and a delicately coloured print dated 1784 showing the ruins of the lesser Llanthony Priory, (the one in Gloucestershire), with three fashionably dressed early tourists, two men and a lady, in the foreground. I wondered vaguely why the Honours, who, as we have seen, had lived in Oxfordshire for generations, and presumably did not go on holiday to places far and strange, had treasured this view.

But there it was, Over, almost on top of Llanthony Priory! What more natural than George should have kept a picture of it. Perhaps it was the only thing he retained when he went to live with his son in law as a lodger.

George's grandparents were William & Mary Haskins, whose known children were Susanna, born 1755 and William born 1757. William, "of Minsterworth", married Ann Croke of Taynton by licence on 6 January 1782. Their signatures were witnessed by Susanna, William's sister and Thomas Underwood, both of whom also signed. William and Ann had William, born in 1782, Thomas, in 1785, our George in 1791, James, 1796, Philip in 1799, and the only girl, Charlotte in 1804.

George must have moved from Gloucestershire to Islip to find work as a wheelwright, but it is not known how long he had lived there when he met

HENRY took one of the "Zulu" VC's to buried in the churchyard at Churcham

A Wheelwright at work

"Book of English Trades &
Useful Arts" 1827

He is nailing a ^{SHAKE} shake on to
a wheel. A shake is a
section of iron rim from a
cart-wheel.

(see loc. Historian, Nov 1986
Vol 17, No 4)



Our

GEORGE HASKINS,

Wheelwright.

father of Candace &

Esther who married

the Honora brothers

John & Thomas.

He was my great,

great-grandfather &

step great great

grandfather!

Elizabeth Wyatt. She was young, not "of age" and they required her parent's consent before they could get married. This consent may have been given with annoyance tempered with relief for Elizabeth was five months pregnant on their wedding day, 20 April 1813. The marriage took place at Islip before witnesses Abraham Chapman and Rebecca Castell. Their son Alfred was christened on 24 August 1813, and over the next twenty years they went on to have eight more children. Cornelius, 1 January 1815, Charlotte, 23 June 1816, George, 4 October 1818, (christened as "Askins"!), James, 13 August 1820, Caroline, (who married John Honour), on 29 February 1824, William, 26 February 1826, Eliza, 19 October 1828, and the youngest, Esther, (who married Thomas Honour) on 2 February 1833. All these children were christened at Islip, and apart from 1818 and 1820 when he is described "labourer", George's trade is given throughout as "wheelwright".

I have not yet discovered their whereabouts in 1841, but certainly by 1848 they were at Charlton on Otmoor, where Elizabeth Haskins was buried on 20 August 1848 aged 59 years.

George's entry on the 1851 Census for Charlton on Otmoor is

George Haskins, Head, widower, 59 farmer, 28 acres, born Glos, Over
Hester " daughter unmar 19 " Islip

Hester is of course our "Esther", soon to be Mrs Thomas Honour, and it looks as though Tom Honour got the father as well as the daughter. Alternatively, if George had lost his little farm and been obliged to move to an even smaller one with his daughter and son in law, then it goes some way to explain why he was so narked.

George is one of those ancestors who shout "Me! me! me!". Not only did the Llanthony print come down to me by chance, but as recently as 1997, when my husband and I took my mother to Yateley, to see the widow of her cousin, Tommy Dodd, out of the woodwork came a number of photographs. "You must have all these", said Doreen Dodd, and sure enough we did, except...for the most prominent of all, a huge, unfaded portrait of an old man, seated, smoking a pipe. Somebody had even obligingly written his name on the back. George Haskins! About the age he must have been when he answered the census taker's questions. I photographed the photograph, and such was its clarity that it turned into quite a decent sepia print.

George's son Alfred was also living in Charlton on Otmoor in 1851, aged 37, a carpenter, born Islip, with his wife Amelia, 45, born Weston in the Green. She was buried at Charlton aged 50 on 31 August 1854.

On 16 May 1857, a son, Henry was baptised to "George Haskins, carpenter and Matilda Jessup", with the additional and now irrelevant remark "doubtful whether this is Murcot or Boarstall". There is no reference to hanky panky. The child's father is presumably George's son George, born at Islip in 1818. He and his family appear in the Charlton census of 1871, and a sorry tale it is too. George seems to have remained defiantly unmarried, like the notorious bachelor of the Foggy Foggy Dew.

George Haskins	Head Unmar	51	reduced carpenter	born Islip
James	" son "	23	jobbing carpenter	" Murcott
Eliza	" dau "	19	housekeeper	" "
George	" son "	15	ag lab.	" "
Edward	" grandson	4		" "
James Grace	lodger "	40	ag lab.	" Fencott

The family is smaller by 1881, and of the elder George there is no sign:

George Haskins	Head unmar	24	carpenter	born Murcott
Edward	" nephew	12		" "
James Grace	lodger	49	ag lab	" Fencott

Ann Haskins of Murcot, aged 14, was buried at Charlton on 1 April 1869. And apart from Thomas Honour and Esther, the only other Haskins marriage so far found there is that of Eliza Haskins and George Collett in May 1852.

I have found no trace so far of a burial of our George Haskins I. I hope Thomas and Esther took him when they later moved to nearby Beckley, but his continued absence concerns me. I hope he did not land up in the Workhouse.

On 6 March 1859, James Haskins, son of Thomas and Esther was baptised and he was followed on 24 June 1861, by their daughter Jane. This was after the census and their address was now given as Beckley. Also born after the census was John, son of John and Caroline, privately baptised on 30 August 1861. This little baby died aged 10 months early the following July.

By 1861, Job Honour, the brother of John and Thomas had upped his holding from 45 to 80 acres and increased his family to five children. He had however lost his wife Eliza and married Ann, who was 11 years his junior. James was still an innkeeper, but now had 80 acres as well. He also had a new child. Mark Honour was now a married man of 28, with a wife, Elizabeth, a four year old daughter, Sarah, and 25 acres. Following what was almost a family tradition, Mark and his brother William married sisters, Elizabeth and Phillis Collett. I can only believe the Honour boys did their courting in pairs. The Colletts were friends as well as relations by marriage. Mark and Elizabeth had Sarah Charlotte in 1857, Albert John in 1858, and Walter George, see below, in 1862. William and Phillis had William Henry, 1857, Annie, 1858, Lucy, 1860, and Thomas, 1862.

John Clack, Sarah's former landlord was also in the census of 1861. He had now reached the grand old age of 92 years and would live another two. The whereabouts of Sarah herself in 1861 is currently unknown.

At a time pre universal suffrage, I had supposed John Honour to have been eligible on account of his land, but I failed to find him on the Electoral Roll. I can only think he was insufficiently interested in politics to bother himself. In the 1862 register of electors for the Bicester polling district, Job Honour had voted Dashwood and Mark Honour, Fane. [Lieut Col. John William Fane, born 1804, was the

The Family of THOMAS & ESTHER HONOUR

THOMAS HONOUR = (1) ESTHER HASKINS
 b1828 mar 1851
 d1910 d 1890

(2) ELIZABETH SPICER 1898

MARK b1852 d1919	GEORGE & ELIZABETH twins b&d1853	CHARLOTTE b1857 d1940	JAMES HASKINS b1859 d1938	ELLEN b1863 d1915	JANE b1864 d1955 (N.I.)	HENRY b1865 d	LEVI b1868 d1937	AMELIA FRANCES b1871 (N.I.)	THOMAS b1872 d1953 (N.I.)	ESTHER b1877 d1956
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= JANE BENNETT	= FRED HARRIS	= EDITH CHANDLER m1884	= JOSEPH CARTER m1883	= SABINA HILL m1883	= SARAH HONOUR m1892 see FT 8	= WILLIAM DODD m1908
----------------	---------------	---------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------

① = JANE BENNETT
 ② FLORENCE YESSEY

EMILY KATE 1879	ELLEN 1882	ALBERT SIDNEY 1884	ESTHER HARRIS d1965	EDITH 1885 -1887	ESTHER JANE b1887 (Rainbow)	THOMAS	WILLIAM JAMES b1897	EMILY (Horne)
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ESTHER ELLEN 1902	CHARLOTTE	ALICE 1890	LILIAN 1881
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= HARRY RUDDKE
 ? 1910

WILLIAM HENRY	JOSEPH
------------------	--------

* I STAYED WITH ESTER HARRIS IN 1954

NELLIE b1884 (Wooff)	EMMA b1886	ALICE b&d1888	ELIZABETH b1890 (Mitchell)	MARIA b1893	HARRY b1896	ALICE b1896	LOUISA 1905 ---twins---(Palmer)
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(Maria, Elizabeth & Harry Palmer went to Australia)

SIDNEY	DOROTHY	LILIAN	GLADYS b1918	CHARLES	SHEILA
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PATRICIA BENNETT	MARY
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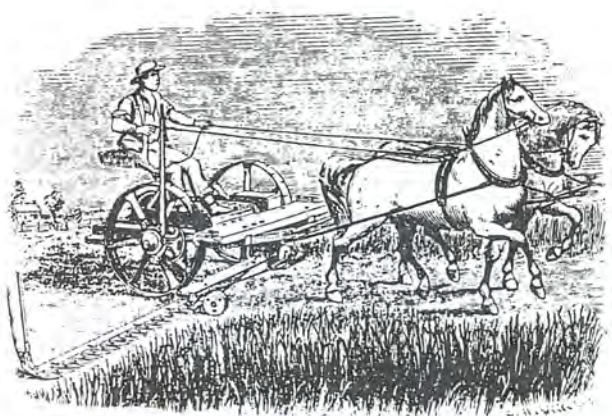
HENRY THOMAS 1909-94 (TOMMY AND ESSIE DADD)	ESTHER JANE b1911 = IVOR EVANS	CHARLOTTE 1915-97 = REGINALD HEPWORTH
--	---	---

RICHARD JOHN b 1954

NICHOLAS b1950

GILLIAN = VICTOR SCARPA	PETER = MARIANNE
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LAURA b1982	SIMON b1985	MATTHEW b1982
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* FLO & HARRY STAYED WITH ESTER & WILLIAM DODD AFTER THE WAR

Conservative. Dashwood was presumably the Liberal, and it is interesting the brothers did not share political views.]

On 2 November 1862, John and Caroline and Mark and Elizabeth had their new babies christened together: Alice and Walter George.

Alice was to be Caroline's last child. By the turn of the new year 1864, she was gravely ill. She was buried on 31 January aged 39. Once again a bereaved widower was left with a number of young children and no wife to care for them. The woman he found to fill the gap was an old maid of forty three. Her name was Susannah Waddup.

Chapter 8: THE WADDUP FAMILY

'What I miss most is the old Oxford dialect. I no longer hear such expressions with Germanic overtones, as "Wurr bist thee a-gooing, you?" answered by "I bent a-gooing nowurr - I be a-coming back."'

W.D. Campbell, 1993, *The Guardian*

Waddup, this strange name, is a corruption of Wardrop, otherwise "wardrobe". Perhaps our ancient ancestor was an important official who kept the king's wardrobe as he went gadding about the country with his clatter of men at arms, advisers, favourites, secretaries, cooks and the rest. Perhaps. But you may also ponder on the fact that the wardrobe was also the *garderobe* or privy.

In any case, by the time we meet them, the Waddups had left their wardrobing days far behind. They enter our story as small farmers or agricultural labourers in Oxfordshire.

From the early 18th century there were Waddups living at Lower Heyford where a transaction between William Wadop [sic], his wife Ann and Thomas Adams, survives, binding the Waddups to Adams in the sum of £22 with dire warnings for default. In 1753, William Waddup, the elder, of Calcutt in Lower Heyford, devised to his son William "a message in Calcutt, with a barn, an orchard and a strip of land called The Little Yard adjoining arable fields, shooting into Parson's Piece, abutting the orchard next to Green Way, and part of Church Furlong next to William Howse..." etc etc. A later deed refers to "Thomas Adams, lately deceased" and Thomas Waddup, banging on about £9.12.0d now owing to him by Adams, "which sum I shall expect to be paid by his executors". It seems the Waddups and Adams's earned a precarious living taking in each other's washing.

William Waddup, the elder, died in 1796 and his will leaves:

To son Thomas a house & garden

To son John, a close and land in the field and common belonging

To grandson Thomas, [son of the testator's son William] two frocks, two waistcoats, two shirts, two dishes and two pewter plates

To granddaughter Hannah, a brewing kettle, a feather bed and a trunk with a gown in it.

Sons Thomas and John were made residual legatees and also executors.

The "frocks" were not "gowns" as left to Hannah. They were the smock frocks worn by labourers in the fields, fashioned of very hard linen, a full width gathered into folds held together by embroidered "smocking" on the chest and back. They could last for years and withstand both wet and cold, though must have been heavy and uncomfortable.

These are not our ancestors, though undoubtedly related. Thomas of "the frocks" is not our Thomas, who, coincidentally, was also a son of William.

Before moving from the Lower Heyford family, it is worth recording the whereabouts of one of their number, Sarah Waddup, aged 34. In the census of 1851 at Cottisford, Sarah was a nurse in the grand establishment of the Honourable Percy Barrington, of London, who was in residence there with his wife Louisa, aged 26 and children, Alice, 4, Walter, 2 and Edith, 10 months. On the night of the census they had visitors, the Earl and Countess of Strathmore, aged 28 and 24 respectively. The Earl and Countess would beget a Royal granddaughter, the present Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

Looking after these young and presumably able bodied people, apart from Sarah, were a housekeeper, a governess, a lady's maid, a lady's maid to Lady Strathmore, a needlewoman, a housemaid, a stillroom maid, a kitchen maid, a butler, a footman, Lord Strathmore's valet, a groom, a coachman, a nursemaid [Emily Adams, aged 27, Sarah's assistant] and last, and very much the least of all these, William Wadden, [who may even have been another Waddup, misspelled], an errand boy. How the top two per cent lived!

Lower Heyford lies a few miles west of Bicester between Middleton Stoney and Steeple Aston. Our Waddups appear a little more than six miles away, north of Bicester in Caversfield, with another Waddup family in the next parish of Stratton Audley. It is reasonable to assume that given this proximity, there is a familial link between all three lines.

A Thomas Waddup, whose banns were called in Caversfield in 1763, moved to Stratton Audley, where he and his wife Esther had John in 1765, Mary, 1768, Thomas, 1770, William, 1772, Mary, 1774 and James in 1779. Thomas seems to have had a brother John, and there is a possibility, in the absence of any other candidate, that William, baptised at Stratton Audley in 1760, the son of John and Ann is ours, though ideally, he should have been born in 1763.

The Caversfield Waddups appear to have been very shy of turning up for christenings. A Thomas Wodup (sic) and Frances Mansell who married there after banns on 2 November 1760 are the more likely parents of our

William, born 1763, (if the age given at his death is correct). For some reason this Thomas was "legally settled" at Mixbury, and when he fell foul of the cruel settlement laws, he was despatched there by the churchwardens and overseers of the poor of Caversfield on 6 January 1766. There he appears to be stranded without kith or kin as no other Waddups appear in the records. His lonely burial took place on 12 February 1804.

On 22 January 1787, William Waddup and Martha Elstone, both aged twenty four, were married at Bicester. William said he came from Caversfield, which was then in Buckinghamshire and Martha was a local girl from Bicester. Neither could write their names. A Humphrey Elstone, perhaps her brother, witnessed her marriage.

Martha was baptised at Bicester on 11 March 1764, the daughter of John Elson, the names Elson and Elstone being interchangeable.

William and Martha's first child, a daughter called Ann was baptised at Bicester on 14 October 1787. After Ann came John in December 1788, and Martha in September 1790. Martha must have died as an infant for another girl of that name was born in 1792. Our ancestor, Thomas, was baptised at Bicester on 6 April 1794. Then came Mary, in 1795 and Joseph in 1799. Joseph was buried at Caversfield on 3 December 1802. William and Martha's last child, another Ann was baptised there on 6 October 1805. They seem to have moved frequently between Caversfield and Bicester: it is from the will of John Thonger, a saddler, dated 1808 that we know they occupied premises he owned in Bicester.

When aged barely twenty, Thomas, the son of William and Martha, married Elizabeth Harris, also a minor, by parents' consent, at Elsfield on 4 April 1813. The witnesses were Jonathon Harris, the brother of the bride, and Mary Bridges. Both Thomas and Elizabeth marked with an "x".

Elizabeth was born at Elsfield and baptised there on 8 June 1794, the daughter of Joseph and Ann, who was otherwise called Susan, Susannah or Hannah! Joseph "x" Harris married Susan "x" Freestone at Elsfield on 11 July 1785 and in addition to Elizabeth they had Jane, in August 1786, Mary, in 1788, Jonathon, (the witness) who was baptised 10 May 1792, and Anne in 1798. Anne died an infant on 19 June 1799. The first Harris to be born at Elsfield was William, the son of Joyce in 1764. A Richard Harris with his wife Mary was baptising children there, [including a Joseph], between 1775 and 1793, and it is probable he was our Joseph's brother. Richard was buried at Elsfield 30 June 1825 aged 80 and Mary on 24 March 1840 aged 91. Our Harris's seem to have left the parish, for none of them were buried or married there.

Thomas and Elizabeth's daughter Prudence was baptised at Bicester on 26 September 1813, and sadly buried "aged ten weeks" at Caversfield the following January. A son David was born on 13 April 1815, and was apparently so sickly that he was not expected to live either, and was baptised at Bicester the next day. He confounded expectations, lived to marry and produced an enormous family of his own of at least fourteen children. Thomas and Elizabeth's next child was Martha, baptised at Caversfield on 10 December 1816. Another son, Thomas was born about

1819, in Bampton according to the census. Joseph came next, baptised Caversfield on 19 November 1820, then Susannah, our ancestor, baptised Caversfield 29 September 1822. Elizabeth continued to bring forth children, Jane in August, 1824, Mary Ann in March 1827 - the family was now "of Bainton" a nearby hamlet, Sarah in November 1828 and Harriet in January 1831.

It is fortunate for the family that they were now in Caversfield not Bicester, for the great cholera epidemic which hit most populous towns and cities in the years 1832-3, raged there. William Waddup, now 69, became ill with this appalling and degrading sickness of which he died. He was buried on 9 July 1832. His widow Martha, also 69, who had no doubt tended him, caught the illness, and within two weeks she herself was dead. She was buried on 24 July, "with the cholera".

Elizabeth's production of girls continued with Eliza in January 1833 and Fanny in March 1835. Fanny's baptism was rapidly followed by the burial of Thomas Waddup aged 84, on 20 March, though it is impossible to say what relation he was. A birthday of 1751 makes him too young to be William Waddup's father. Perhaps he was an elder brother. Nor can he be the Thomas "Wodupe" who married Frances Mansell in November 1760. Nevertheless he and they knew who he was, and no doubt he was welcome at the christening. It is tempting to wonder whether he had been wetting the baby's head, and slightly overdone it.

Our Thomas's occupation throughout is given as "labourer", one of that rustic army of "ag labs" found at the hiring fairs so vividly described by Hardy. Those wanting employment would stand in a row, with some mark of their speciality about them so that everyone could tell at a glance what their line of work was: shepherds with crooks, carters with whips, dairymaids with milking stools and so on. An engagement would be made for a year and once a bargain had been struck between prospective employer and employee, the worker would receive a "fasten penny", a pledge of good faith, and with the business over, the parties were free to enjoy themselves, to flirt, to take a jar amongst the horse traders, cattle dealers, gypsies and sideshows, perhaps even to have a tooth pulled by a quack doctor.

I have inherited a "fairing", a small china ornament depicting a scene from married life - "twelve months after marriage", (ha ha). In a bed is a new mother and her infant. Sitting on the counterpane is the husband in night attire, including night cap, wearing an expression of paternal concern. Such fairings were frequently given away as prizes on hoop la stalls at the old fairs. It is a pretty trinket, and I like to think that Tom Waddup won it after he had been successful in finding work.

In 1819, the Oxford Epiphany Sessions of 24 December, record that Thomas Waddup, of Caversfield, keeper, and Thomas Gibbs of Cotmore were witnesses against William Gardner, of Stoke Lyne, labourer, for snaring hares. William was fined £5. As our Thomas was a labourer, the gamekeeper may have been the other Thomas of Caversfield who died in 1835.

The Waddup children must have gone to school: no letters have survived, but Susannah certainly wrote well, as evidenced by the Family Bible, and more of that later.

The elder family had moved to Launton by 1851, where on census day Thomas, aged 57 was living with his wife Elizabeth, also 57, and the only two of their children still at home, Fanny, aged 16 and Vincent aged 12.

In 1854, there was something of a to do. On 12 September the vicar christened, "John son of Fanny Waddup, single woman", and then added a stern note in the margin, "John Freeman is the father of this child". Pressure may have been brought to bear, and on 25 October, John Freeman, 26, son of Richard Freeman, butcher and Frances Waddup, 20, daughter of Thomas Waddup, farmer, were married. Sighs of relief all round. The marriage was witnessed by Fanny's sister and brother, Sarah and Joseph Waddup. Did brother Joe stand *in loco parentis* because father Thomas, who had nothing to shout about, was too annoyed to turn up? Were shotguns loaded and threatening under the smock frocks should John Freeman try to make a bolt for it? Whatever happened, as Pem remarked, she hoped the poor little kid, John Freeman junior, was not made to suffer for it. If Joe did stand up for his little sister, then good luck to him. He was now a married man himself, his wife being Ann Kimber who he married at Caversfield in May 1853. Kindly Joe would live to a ripe old age, buried at the age of 92 in 1913.

Fanny and John added to the Freeman tribe in no small measure, having a further seven children after their marriage: Ann Marisa, born 1856, Elizabeth, in 1858, Richard, 1860, Mary Ann, 1862, Sarah, 1866, Thomas, 1869 and finally Ellen, in 1874. John, a butcher at the time of his marriage was then a labourer for about ten years before becoming a gardener. He may have been the gardener to John Ashby of Launton House, who left a bequest to a John Freeman in his will. John died in November 1891 aged 68 and has a tombstone in Launton churchyard. Fanny, who described herself as a dressmaker in 1871, reached the age of 81, dying in 1915, and is buried next to her husband.

David and Thomas, the two elder sons also lived at Launton.

In 1851, David aged 35 was shown as "ag lab" born Bicester, with Julia, née Asthall, his wife, aged 26, and their children James aged 4, Sarah aged 2, and Martha, one month. As already stated, David and Julia went on to have eleven more children. David died on 6 March 1893 aged 77, and was survived by Julia survived who died in October 1898 aged 71. Both were buried at Caversfield.

Thomas junior, who married Amelia Blencowe at Caversfield on 5 August 1841 was also at Launton in 1851, an "ag lab", aged 35, with Amelia, 30, and their children Charles, 8, Mary Ann, 7, Sarah, 5 and Joseph, 2. Amelia died in April 1852, aged 31, and Thomas then married Martha, whose surname is as yet unknown. She died on 23 December 1878, and the Launton register states this was "after nine years of continual suffering". Thomas was buried at Launton, aged 80, two days before Christmas, 1898.

We know that by 1854, our Thomas Waddup senior, had come into his own at last. The 1861 census of Launton shows him aged 67, a farmer of 20 acres of land, living with his wife Elizabeth aged 66, born at Elsfield, and their son Vincent, aged 22.

Vincent was a bit of a lad. Described as an innkeeper in 1867 when his daughter Sarah was born, he made regular appearances in court, 1866-68: 7 September 1866, he was fined for moving pigs through an infected area; 2 November 1866, sued for repayment of a debt; 30 November 1866, Harriett, his wife, injured, could not attend court in an assault case; 21 December 1866, Harriett & Vincent successfully sued two men for assault; 19 July 1867, successfully sued for repayment of debt; 30 October 1868, sued for assault, case dismissed.

Now there is a mystery. Where did our Susannah go? Certainly girls went into service, leaving home at an early age, and this seems her likely fate, and also that of most of her sisters. For instance in 1851, Eliza, "aged 17, born Bainton" was a house servant at Swan Street, Bicester, for Mr Phillips, a farmer. Susannah was not "at home" in 1851 - and indeed was not in the county of Oxford. Likewise she has not been found in 1861. Nothing at all is known of her from her christening in 1822, though the family story is that she "was a housekeeper to someone who left her a bit of money as she was quite well off."

She reappears in 1865, presumably visiting her parents. A propitious journey as it turned out. The widowed John Honour from nearby Otmoor was looking for a wife, a stepmother for his orphaned children. His eye chanced not upon some skittish young girl, but on this sensible, spinster body, the daughter of Thomas Waddup. They may have fallen madly in love, but somehow I doubt that. To Susannah, the whole thing must have come as a shock. At 43, she cannot have expected to marry, much less have a family other than the ready made one her suitor intended to present her with. She was wrong on both counts. Life is full of surprises. The survival of our branch of the Honour family would lay with the middle aged Susannah.

Vincent Waddup
Married
Harriet
Hargreaves
1866



On Page 52, there was a mystery. Where did Susan Waddup go? She was last detected in 1841 with her parents, Thomas and Elizabeth, and siblings at Bainton Hamlet.

I asked, "where did she go?" In 1851, she was in London at a posh house, 38 Le beck Street, St George, Hannover Square. Not as a visitor, (of course) but one of seven servants working for W. Merrick Fowler, esquire, his wife Sarah Jane, and their two spinster daughters, Frances and Elizabeth. Her fellow employees are listed as James Herbert, 29, Lucie Wingham, 38, Henry Simmons, 23, Eliza Fairbanks, 40, Ann Hope, 22 and Ann Major, 44.

(I managed to find Susan after a long and tedious trawl through the censuses; not only are the Fowlers indexed – appropriately - as 'Howler', with Susan's name shown as 'Widdop', her birthplace, given correctly as 'Caversfield' – but in the county of Essex!)

Susan was then aged twenty eight, number five in the hierarchy with no indication as to their different duties. The Fowlers however, aroused my interest, not only as to how the other half lived, but especially the birthplace of the three women. Mr Fowler was a sixty-eight year old 'Fundholder', born at Peterborough, Northampton shire, but the birthplace of his wife, a year younger, was 'East Indies' and that of the two 'girls' aged 42 and 40, 'Ceylon'. These people were of 'the Raj'.

William Merrick Fowler was a younger brother of Read Admiral Robert Merrick Fowler (1778-1860) second-in-command to Matthew Flinders on HM Sloop *Investigator* in Australia. He was presented with a sword by the Lloyd's Patriotic Fund for voluntary and zealous services on 15 February 1804 when the fleet of the Honourable East India Company's Merchant ships in their passage from China pursued and defeated a squadron of French Men of War commanded by Admiral Linois in the *Marengo*, 84 guns.



The sword is now in the Maritime Museum

William Merrick's wife, Jane Sarah, rather than the other way round was born at Cuddalore, Nadu, India, baptised in 1792. She was the second of two infants quaintly described as 'natural children' of Robert Dashwood, 1756-1824, whose family came from Bicknoller, Somerset. ¹

By 1861, William Merrick Fowler was dead, and the family had decamped to Brighton. If they had been difficult to find before then my success at locating them this time was Herculean.

I tore out my hair looking for the family in 1861, and found them at last in Bristol. William Merrick Fowler was dead by this time; his widow Sarah Jane was 78, a fund holder, born in India; her

¹ The name Dashwood immediately sends the mind racing into Jane Austen territory, as well as 'The Hell-Fire Club' but that will be for some other person to research. I received a ream of info from a family member called Robin Askew, but it was difficult to decipher, and life is very short.

daughters, Frances Eleanor and Elizabeth Rachel now 52 and 50 were born in Ceylon. As expected. There was a young great-niece, another Frances, aged 7, living with them. I scanned the usual contingent of servants for Susan. She was not among them.

I would not bother to record the entry at all except to record the ineptitude of Find My Past, the on-line family history site. The index was wrong on almost every count. It reads:

Sarah Jane FONDER, widow, 73 (b.1788) Fundholder, born IRELAND

ELLENOR CLEMAN PORTER, daughter, unmar. 52 (b.1809), Fundholder, LEYTON, Essex

Elizabeth ROCHEL Fowler, daughter, unmar. 50, (b.1811, Fundholder, born (blank)

Frances Fowler, (blank) (blank), female, 7, born Hampshire.

This is what the intrepid genealogist has to contend with. The indexers generally have little idea and care less. It is alleged that they are long-term prisoners given something to do to pass the time. After 'Howler', 'Widdop' and 'Essex' I should have been prepared! But I needn't have bothered, though I wondered how Susan had got the job in the first place.....?

More digging though I have not found the marriage between William Merrick Fowler and Sarah Jane Dashwood, (whichever way round) William's brother Robert married Caroline Dashwood at St Marylebone on 16 June 1813. I suspect the two brides were sisters, or otherwise close family. Two sisters who married two brothers? Not that unusual. The Honours did it quite often!

In 1841, Caroline Dashwood, aged 45, was living in Walliscote House, Whitchurch, Oxfordshire. Is it too much to suppose that Susan worked for her first? And heard through the servants' grapevine that a more interesting post was available in London – or was even head-hunted?

In any case, by 1861, the adventure was over. Susan was back in her home county, and on census night was at Cowley Road, Oxford. The head of the household was a sixty six year old widower William Rogers, a butler at one of the colleges (un-named). It was a full house with his two sons, Alfred, no occupation, 19, and Henry, 17, a grocer. Their married sister Sara aged 29 was also resident, with her husband Henry Sidney Cook, B.A., a tutor, with their baby son Henry junior, aged six months. Susanna Waddup, aged 36, unmarried, 'farmer's daughter', was a visitor, her relationship to William Rogers stated as 'niece'. There was also a fifteen year old skivvy, a maid of all work, Sarah Tinner, just embarking on her own career of drudgery.

The uncle and niece relationship is a step too far. I have not been unable to decode it. The family legend (Pem again) that she was "housekeeper to someone who left her a bit of money as she was quite well off" is far from proved. The Fowlers were not her benefactors, and I cannot see William Rogers with his dependant family in that role either. Four years later Susan was married to another widower, John Honour, a farmer, with a batch of growing children.

WADDUP in Oxfordshire.

LOWER HEYFORD. Earliest Waddup entry is 1714. Register starts 1539
CAVERSFIELD. Earliest Waddup entry 1760. [No Waddup baptisms until 1805
when our William & Martha arrived there].

BICESTER

LAUNTON

STRATTON AUDLEY. Earliest Waddup entry is 1720/1. Register starts
much earlier.

Baptisms

Alfred Ernest s.o. David & Julia, b 1872, bp 1873 Caversfield
Alice Mary d.o. James & Elizabeth 1886 Caversfield
Ann d.o. John & Ann, 2 Jan 1744/5 at Stratton Audley
Ann d.o. Thomas & Elizabeth 10 Apr 1785 at Lower Heyfd
Ann d.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 14 Oct 1787 Bicester
Ann d.o. John & Elizabeth 12 May 1788 at Stratton Audley
Ann d.o. Thomas Wadrobe & Sarah, wife of Thomas Harrison
10 Jan 1796 at Lower Heyfd
Ann d.o. William & Martha, 6 Oct 1805, Caversfield
Ann d.o. William & Mary, 1833 Bicester
Ann Elizabeth d.o. David & Julia, lab, 1863 Caversfield
Benjamin s.o. John & Mary, mason, 23 Jul 1837 at Lower Heyfd
Charles s.o. John & Elizabeth 17 Jan 1796 at Stratton Audley
Charles s.o. Thomas & Amelia, lab, 29 May 1842 Caversfield
David s.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH 14 Apr 1815 Bicester
David Ernest s.o. James & Elizabeth 1882 Caversfield
Elisabeth d.o. Thomas & Elizabeth 10 Feb 1788 at Lower Heyfd
Eliza d.o. Elizabeth 26 Apr 1818, Bicester
Eliza d.o. William & Mary 1826 Bicester
Eliza d.o THOMAS & ELIZABETH, 13 Jan 1833 Caversfield
Elizabeth s.o. John & Ann 18 Sep 1741 at Stratton Audley
Elizabeth d.o. John & Elizabeth 19 Dec 1790 at Stratton Audley
Elizabeth d.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA Feb 1804 Bicester
Emma d.o. John & Mary, mason, of Calcot, 29 Aug 1830 at Lower Heyfd
Emma Jane d.o. David & Julia, lab, 1865, Caversfield
Esther Ellen d.o. David & Julia, lab, 21 Oct 1866 Caversfield
twin. see Lucy Ann
Fanny d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH 15 Mar 1835 Caversfield
Florence Mary d.o. James & Elizabeth, 1888, Caversfield
Frances d.o. John & Elizabeth 27 Sep 1789 at Stratton Audley
Frank James s.o. James & Elizabeth 1890 Caversfield
George s.o. John & Mary, lab, 19 Mar 1820 at Lower Heyfd
Hannah d.o. John & Elizabeth 5 Apr 1798 at Stratton Audley
Harriet d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH, Baynton 16 Jan 1831 Caversfield
Harriet d.o. David & Julia, lab, 1853, Caversfield
Henry s.o. John & Ann 3 Apr 1763 at Stratton Audley
Henry s.o. Thomas Wadrobe & Sarah, wife of Thomas Harrison
14 Jul 1805 at Lower Heyfd
Henry James s.o. David & Julia 1867 Caversfield
Hester d.o. John & Elizabeth 25 May 1794 at Stratton Audley

Isaac & James twins of John & Mary, mason, Calcot, 30 Aug 1840
at Lower Heyfd

["NB. Isaac born 10 minutes before 10 am at Calcott. Mother's maiden name Mary Fathers. John Waddup, a stone mason].

James s.o. John & Ann 4 May 1766 at Stratton Audley

James s.o. Thos & Esther 1 Aug 1779 at Stratton Audley

Jane d.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA Nov 1808 Bicester

Jane d.o. Wm & Mary, 22 Jun 1823 Bicester

Jane d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH 1 Aug 1824 Caversfield

John s.o. Thomas & Elizabeth, 8 Jan 1720/1 at Stratton Audley

John s.o. Wm & Susanna 26 Jun 1721 at Lower Heyfd

John s.o. William & Ann 27 Aug 1758 at Lower Heyfd

John s.o. Thos & Esther 29 Jan 1765 at Stratton Audley

John s.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 14 Dec 1788 Bicester

John s.o. Thomas Wadrope & Sarah, wife of Thomas Harrison
28 Jan 1798 at Lower Heyfd

John s.o. John & Mary, lab, of Calcot, 13 May 1827, Lr Heyfd.

John, s.o. David & Julia, lab, 1856, Caversfield

Jonas s.o. David & Julia, lab, 1860 Caversfield

Joseph s.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 1799 Bicester

Joseph s.o THOMAS & ELIZABETH 19 Nov 1820 Caversfield

Joseph Harris s.o. David & Julia, lab, 1853, Caversfield

Joseph s.o. John & Mary, mason, Calcot, 14 Dec 1834 at Lower Heyfd

Joseph s.o. Thomas & Amelia, lab, 1849 Caversfield

Julia Elizabeth d.o. James & Elizabeth, 1882 Caversfield

Liddy d.o. John & Ann 15 Jan 1758 at Stratton Audley

Lucy Ann d.o. James & Elizabeth 1884 Caversfield

Lucy Ann d.o. David & Julia, lab, 21 Oct 1866

twin see Esther Ellen

Martha d.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 1790 Bicester

Martha d.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 9 Sep 1792 Bicester

Martha d.o. John & Elizabeth 2 May 1792 at Stratton Audley

Martha d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH, 10 Dec 1816 Caversfield

Mary d.o. John & Ann 22 Nov 1747 at Stratton Audley

Mary d.o. William & Ann 27 Sep 1761 at Lower Heyfd

Mary d.o. Thos & Esther 17 Apr 1768 at Stratton Audley

Mary d.o. Thos & Esther 1 Apr 1774 at Stratton Audley

Mary, lab of Calcot, 13 May 1827, at Lower Heyfd

Mary d.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA, 1795, Bicester

Mary d.o. Thomas Wadrope & Sarah, wife of Thomas Harrison
19 Dec 1802, at Lower Heyfd

Mary Ann d.o. William & Sarah of Calcot, 20 Nov 1815
at Lower Heyfd

Mary Ann d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH of Baynton, 11 Mar 1827 Caversfield

Mary Ann d.o. Thomas & Amelia, lab, 21 Jan 1844 Caversfield

Prudence d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH, 26 Sep 1813 Bicester

Samuel s.o. David & Julia, lab, 1859 Caversfield

Sarah d.o. John & Elizabeth 6 Jan 1800 at Stratton Audley

Sarah d.o. John & Mary, lab, 4 Aug 1822 at Lower Heyfd

Sarah d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH 30 Nov 1828 Caversfield

Sarah d.o. William & Mary 1829 Bicester

Sarah d.o. Thomas & Amelia, groom, 1849 Caversfield

Sarah Ann d.o. Vincent & Harriet, innkeeper, Launton,
28 April 1867 Caversfield

Isaac & James twins of John & Mary, mason, Calcot, 30 Aug 1840
at Lower Heyfd

["NB. Isaac born 10 minutes before 10 am at Calcott. Mother's maiden name Mary Fathers. John Waddup, a stone mason].

James s.o. John & Ann 4 May 1766 at Stratton Audley

SUSANNAH d.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH, 29 Sep 1822 Caversfield
 Thomas s.o. Wm & Susanna 14 May 1724 at Lower Heyfd
 Thomas s.o. John & Ann 28 Oct 1750 at Stratton Audley
 Thomas s.o. Thos & Esther 15 Apr 1770 at Stratton Audley
 Thomas s.o. William & Mary 17 Feb 1782 at Lower Heyfd
 Thomas s.o. Thomas & Elizabeth 15 Aug 1790 at Lower Heyfd
 THOMAS s.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 6 April 1794 Bicester
 Thomas s.o. Thomas Wadrobe & Sarah, wife of Thomas Harrison,
 22 Dec 1799 at Lower Heyfd
 Thomas s.o. John & Mary, lab, 27 Jun 1824 at Lower Heyfd
 Thomas Harry s.o. David & Julia 1870 Caversfield
 Vincent s.o. THOMAS & ELIZABETH, Baynton, 26 Aug 1838 Caversfield *
 William s.o. William & Ann 10 Oct 1756 at Lower Heyfd
 William s.o. John & Ann, 5 Oct 1760 at Stratton Audley
 William s.o. Thos & Esther 3 May 1772 at Stratton Audley
 William s.o. Thomas & Elizabeth 13 Jul 1783 at Lower Heyfd
 William s.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 12 Sep 1790 Bicester
 William s.o. John & Mary, mason, Calcot, 10 Mar 1833 at Lower Heyfd

Marriages.

Aaron Waddup & Ann Wornill, 1855
 Ann Elizabeth Waddup full sp fa: David & John Walter Richardson,
 Bainton, fa: Robt, Caversfield 17 Oct 1887f
 Eliza Waddup & Richard Scraggs, 24 Jan 1826, St Mary Magd. Oxford
 Elizabeth Waddup of Stratton Audley & Thomas Mason of same, 1734
 (Oxford & Berks. Marriage Bonds)
 Emma Jane Waddup sp dom servt fa: David, farm bailiff &
 Chas Fennemore, full, bach, groom, Westebury, fa: James, lab
 Caversfield, 6 Jun 1885
 Esther Ellen Waddup, full sp fa: David, & Tom Fennemore, lab,
 Westbury. 14 Jun 1890, Caversfield. wit: David Waddup & Martha Webb
 Hannah Waddup of Caversfield & George Orchard of Winslow, Bucks,
 [witnessed James Waddup] 22 Oct 1815 at Caversfield
 James Waddon of Bicester & Ann Lever 31 Oct 1701
 James Waddup, full bach lab fa: David, lab &
 Eliza x Brown full, sp, Bicester fa: John, lab, 29 Nov 1870 at
 Caversfield. NB Eliza was wit. to Martha W./Geo Leech, 1870.
 John x Wadrobe, lab & Mary x Moss botp 13 Nov 1781 Lr Heyfd
 John Wadrobe & Mary Fathers pre 1820 [see bp of Isaac, 1840,
 at Lower Heyfd
 Joseph Waddup, 33, bach, lab fa: THOMAS lab &
 Ann Kimber, 34, sp, fa: Joseph, gardener, 8 May 1853, Caversfield
 Lucy Agnes Waddup, 23, sp, fa: David, & Francis Powell, 22, lab,
 Bucknell, 24 Oct 1889, Caversfield. wit: David & Esther Ellen Waddup
 Martha Waddup, 19, fa: David, lab, & George Leech, 23, 11 Oct 1870,
 Caversfield.
 Mary Waddup & William Pritchett, 24 Jan 1769, at Stratton Audley
 Mary Wadrobe [signed Waddup] otp sp. & Wm Hitchcock of Middleton Stoney,
 bach, at Lower Heyford 24 Dec 1823
 Sarah Waddup & James x Hutton [wit: Thos Waddup] 28 Jul 1828
 at Stratton Audley
 Thomas Wadrop of Stratton Audley & Elizabeth Cary of same, 1719.
 Oxford & Berks. Marriage Bonds.

VINCENT, 60, BICESTER 3a 485 Dec 1898 (Death Indexes)

Thomas Wodupe & Frances Mansell, by banns, 2 Nov 1760 at Caversfield
 Thomas Waddup otp & Hester Saul of Padbury, Bucks, by lic. 13 Nov 1763
 at Caversfield
 Thomas Waddup otp & Elizabeth Ashbee banns only at Charlton, 1783
 THOMAS WADDUP & ELIZABETH HARRIS, otp, minor with consent of parents
 at Elsfield, 4 Apr 1813 [wit: Jonathon Harris & Mary Bridges]
 Thomas Waddup of Caversfield bach & Elizabeth Baughan otp sp, at
 Lower Heyford, 1 Dec 1823
 Thomas Wardrope otp & Elizabeth Deeley of Arncot, Ambrosden, banns
 called at Lower Heyford 17 Nov - 1 Dec 1833
 Thomas x Waddup full bach, lab, Stoke Lynes fa: THOMAS lab &
 Amelia Blencowe full sp lace maker fa: Thos lab
 wit: John Blencowe & Mary Ann Waddup 5 Aug 1841 Caversfield
 William Wadhope of Charlton on Otmoor & Susannah Herbert of Kirtlington
 3 Jan 1714/5 at Bicester [Oxf Dioc Bonds]
 William Waddup & Ann Castle, botp, 24 April 1753 at Lower Heyford
 William Wadup of Ambrosden, lab, 22, & Mary Arnold of Hampton Poyle, 21
 2 Nov 1781 at Bicester [Oxf Dioc Bonds]
 WILLIAM WADDUP of Caversfield, & MARTHA ELSTONE otp mar Bicester 22 Jan
 1787, wit: Humphrey Ellstone.
 William Waddup & Sarah Morris, 24 August 1815, St Peter Bailey, Oxford

Burials

Aaron s.o. John & Eliz 4 Mar 1788 at Stratton Audley
 Aaron, 65, 20 Oct 1874, of drink, at Stratton Audley
 Amelia, 31, of Launton, 29 Apr 1852 Caversfield
 Ann d.o. John & Eliz 21 Aug 1788 at Stratton Audley
 Ann wife of William 12 Jun 1792 at Lower Heyfd
 Ann infant, 24 Mar 1795 at Lower Heyfd
 Ann d.o. Thos Wadrope & Sarah wife of Thos. Hamilton 4 Oct
 1801 at Lower Heyfd
 Anne wife of John, 23 Apr 1803 at Stratton Audley
 Ann 5 Ap 1807 inf Caversfield
 Anne, 52, 12 Mar 1859, consumption, at Stratton Audley
 Ann, 71, Bicester, 27 Mar 1888 Caversfield
 Charles, 19, 1856 at Stratton Audley
 Charles, 72, rupture, dropsy, 28 Mar 1867 at Stratton Audley
 David, 77, 6 Mar 1893 Caversfield
 Elizabeth, wid, 13 Jul 1740 at Stratton Audley
 Elisabeth wife of Thomas 14 Oct 1793 at Lower Heyfd
 Elizabeth wife of John 18 Sep 1794 at Stratton Audley
 Elizabeth, 73, 16 May 1843 at Stratton Audley
 ELIZABETH, 79, buried 29 Oct 1868 at Launton
 Elizabeth, 80, 1 Mar 1885, at Stratton Audley
 Frances d.o. John & Eliz 9 May 1790 at Stratton Audley
 Henry s.o. John & Ann 11 Jun 1764 at Stratton Audley
 Henry s.o. T.W. & S.H. as above 13 Feb 1809 at Lower Heyfd
 James s.o. John & Ann 28 Dec 1766 at Stratton Audley
 Jane of Bicester, 20, 21 May 1829 Caversfield
 John 16 March 1804 at Stratton Audley
 John, 75, died 6 Mar bur 9 Mar 1840, "42 years clerk of
 this Parish" at Stratton Audley
 Joseph s.o. WILLIAM & MARTHA 3 Dec 1802 Caversfield

Joseph, 18, Launton, 16 Jun 1867, Caversfield
Joseph, 24, of Bicester, 13 Aug 1879 Caversfield
Joseph, 92, 108 North St, Bicester, 1913, Caversfield
Julia, 71, Bicester, 10 Oct 1898 Caversfield
Martha d.o. John & Eliz 19 May 1793 at Stratton Audley
MARTHA, 69, 24 July 1832, "died with cholera" Bicester
Martha, 63, d 23 Dec 1878 "after much suffering" Launton
Mary d.o. Thos & Esther 30 May 1767 at Stratton Audley
Mary d.o. Thos & Esther 8 Feb 1773 at Stratton Audley
Mary 28 Jul 1794 at Lower Heyfd
Mary, 77, Bicester Union Workhouse, 8 Jan 1874 Caversfield
Prudence of Bicester aged 18 weeks, 22 Jan 1814, Caversfield
Rachel, aged 3, 3 Dec 1833 at Stratton Audley
Samuel, 10 mths 1859 Caversfield
Sarah wid of William, of Calcot, aged 59, 19 Aug 1821
 at Lower Heyfd
Sarah, 11, 1856 at Stratton Audley
Selina, 63, 25 May 1860, consumption, at Stratton Audley
Susannah Wadrup 19 Aug 1735 at Lower Heyfd
Thomas son of Wm & Susanna 18 May 1724, Lower Heyfd
Thomas 12 Apr 1737 at Stratton Audley
Thomas & William ss.o. Thos & Esther 30 Apr 1773 at Stratton Audley
Thomas 24 Jun 1798 at Lower Heyfd
Thomas 12 Feb 1804 at Mixbury
Thomas aged 84, 20 Mar 1835, Caversfield *
Thomas of Calcut Lower Heyford, aged 84, 4 Nov 1839 at Lower Heyfd
THOMAS, 79, 25 Feb 1868 at Launton
Thomas, 85, 22 Feb 1889, of Bicester, at Stratton Audley
William 24 Mar 1754 at Lower Heyfd
William & Thomas ss.o. Thos & Esther 30 Apr 1773 at Stratton Audley
William 11 Jan 1797 at Lower Heyfd
WILLIAM, 69, 9 July 1832, "died with cholera" Bicester
William of Bicester, aged 38, Caversfield, 19 Feb 1837

Misc.

David Waddup, witness to marriage of Geo Brockless & Sarah Boyles,
Caversfield, 19 Aug 1842

Elizabeth Waddup, singlewoman of Caversfield declares on oath she is
with child & doth charge William Pitts of Bicester, lab, with having
begotten her with child. 23 Mar 1822.

Sarah Waddup, witness tp marriage of Wm Hutton & Sarah Collett at
Charlton, 1822.

Thomas Waddup. "To churchwardens & Overseers of the Poor etc. at
Caversfield....declare that Thomas Waddup is legally settled at
Mixbury" 6 Jan 1766

* WILL of Thos Waddup of Caversfield
22/4/1835 - PRO INDEXES

CENSUS ENTRIES

1851

341, Launton

David 35 ag lab born Bicester

Julia 26 wife Asthall

James 4 son Launton

Sarah 2 dau Astall

Martha 1 mth dau Launton

352 Bicester

Eliza 17 house servt born Bainton [Phillips family, living Swan Street, Bicester]

353 London Rd, Bicester

Thomas Head mar 35 ag lab born Bampton

Amelia wife 30 Bicester

Charles son 8 Bainton

Mary Ann dau 7 "

Sarah " 5 "

Joseph son 2 Bicester



The "Waddup" Fairing

1865

I chose my wife...not for a fine
glossy surface, but such qualities
that would wear well.

Oliver Goldsmith, The Vicar of Wakefield

Throughout my childhood the Family Bible stood on the tallboy in my parents' bedroom. It is bound in thick cowhide, and rimmed in brass with two large decorative clasps of the same metal, impressive, though now alas, very delapidated. When we were young, my brother and I delighted in taking it down, looking at the Victorian pictures, each covered in a sheet of tissue paper. Of flowers and trees of the Holy Land, and engravings of Biblical scenes, Daniel in the Lions' Den, Joseph in the Coat of Many Colours, and that gruesome illustration of child abuse, Isaac about to be sacrificed by his father Abraham on divine instructions. I was very dubious about this, and though I was told it ended happily, I could see no cause for celebration on account of the hapless ovine substitute. It occurred to me even then that both God and Abraham were several rams short of a thicket. For the first, though definitely not the only time, the rhetorical question was posed to me, "How come you know better than anybody else?"

Of even greater interest were the centre pages, which contained the written records of the Honour family. How grand the patriarchs sounded, straight down from the Mountain, and definitely with long white beards:

"Job Honour of Murcott"

"Thomas Waddup of Launton"

The Bible was given as a wedding present on 13 February 1865 when John Honour married Susannah Waddup. John was a widower of 47, and as we have seen, Susannah, who he called Susan, was also past the first bloom of youth. We can only wonder who was the jolly optimist who presented this gift to the bridal pair, but we can rejoice that they did, not only for the treasure of information written there, but also for the encouraging thought that hope springs eternal within the human heart.

The wedding itself appears to have been an all Waddup affair, with as witnesses the bride's younger sister, the ubiquitous Sarah, and her brother Vincent. I wonder if the wedding party went back to the farmhouse at Launton to partake of cakes and ale with the whole family in attendance? If they did then we can easily imagine them. Very likely the best man was John Collett, the bridegroom's best friend who was also practically a brother in law, for as we have seen two of John's brothers had married Collett wives, and John was probably their brother. Did Thomas Honour also attend with his wife Esther carefully looking over her sister Caroline's successor? And what about Fanny Freeman, now a respectable matron, with the previous rumpus now forgotten? Did Sarah, the bridegroom's mother also attend along with William and Mary Busby?

For Susan's sake, I hope that there was feasting and gaiety, fiddlers and fun.

She settled down to married life with a ready made family, and cannot have believed she would have her own child, but evidently she determined to be the best of stepmothers, and kindly entered in retrospect the births of Caroline's children, into her new Bible:

Caroline Honour born 1847, March 27
Thomas Honour born 1849, January 12
Eliza Honour born 1857, March 13
Alice Honour born 1862, August 31.

The first crisis (as far as we know) of her married life came in the spring of 1866, when young Caroline, aged 19, and husbandless, had a baby, perhaps conceived on a hot night after the last year's harvest. His name was John, but Susan did not record the boy in the Bible. His existence is only known from the parish register of Charlton on Otmoor where he was christened on 20 April 1866. Thereafter, silence, but later Caroline married Esau Whybird, for the marriage though not the date has been written in the Bible. Whether Esau, of the Hardy-esque name was the father of the child is not known. Pem was able to recall Caroline coming to visit when she herself was young, in full corseted respectability. Caroline Whybird died on 6 November 1924, aged 77, and her gravestone is at the end of, though slightly apart from, a line of Honour headstones in the cemetery at Charlton on Otmoor. Hers is the only name on the stone.

At Launton, Thomas and Elizabeth Waddup, now in the twilight of their years, heard some startling news. Susan discovered with great joy and probably no little apprehension that she was pregnant. Her only child, Sarah, was born on 23 June 1867 when Susan was in her forty sixth year. She entered her daughter's birth in the Bible, but typically made no difference in the text between her own child and the children of her predecessor whom she had recorded before.

Sadness followed and in 1868 Susan was bereaved of both parents. They lay side by side in the churchyard at Launton.

"Sacred to the memory of Thomas Waddup
who departed this life on the
21st day of February 1868 aged 79 years.
His end was peace.

"Sacred to the memory of Elizabeth wife of Thomas Waddup
who departed this life on the
24th day of October 1868 aged 79 years
She is not dead but sleepeth."

Once more the year of the census came round, and we move on to 1871. A certain amount of fiscal progress had been made with a further annexation of land by the Honour brothers:

John Honour	Head	Married	52	Farmer of 100 acres employing 2 men	born Murcott
Susannah	"	wife	"	48	" Bainton
Thomas	"	son	unmar	22	Farmer's son " Fencot
Eliza	"	dau	"	14	scholar " "
Alice	"	"	"	8	" "
Sarah	"	"	"	3	" "
Ann Luff	visitor	"	"	21	chemist's daughter " Oxford

It is fascinating to think of three year old Sarah trotting off to school with her elder sisters. We shall never know why Ann Luff was there on census night. Maybe she was the girl friend of Thomas Honour. If so, the relationship did not flourish for on 10 July 1879 he married Kate who was called Hayward in the Bible, but "Cathrin Heywood" in the marriage entry in the church register. Young Kate's death is the first to be recorded in the Bible, in a different hand from the rest, a beautiful copperplate. But all that glisters is not gold, for the date given, "22 June 1884" is incorrect, Kate indeed died on 22 June but in 1882. The church register records her burial on 26 June 1882, aged 25 years. Thomas, the widower, married Sarah Ann King on 5 February 1883, a date confirmed both by Bible and church.

Job Honour was now 50 years old, and though his holding was smaller than John's, 74 acres, he employed three men and two boys. His wife Ann (his second wife?) was 39. His daughter Emma, 23, lived at home, and his son Mark aged 18 worked as a farm labourer. Other children were Edward, 10, Eliza, 8, Ernest, 6, and Ada, 4. All these were scholars. Bringing up the rear was a baby girl, Thirza, aged 1.

Mark Honour was 38, had 90 acres to his name, and employed two men and a boy. His wife, formerly Elizabeth Collett was 36, and they had three children, John, 12, Walter, 8, and Bessie, 6, who were all at school. I could not find William the innkeeper on the census, and presume he had travelled elsewhere. Thomas Honour, the brother of John, Job, Mark and William certainly had, though not far. They were at nearby Beckley:

Beckley by Otmoor

Thomas Honour	Head	Married	44	farmer 70 acres	born Murcot
Esther	"	wife	"	39	" Islip
Mark	"	son	unmar	18	ag lab " Beckley
Henry	"	"	"	16	ag lab " "
James	"	"	"	12	scholar " "
Jane	"	dau	"	10	" " "
Elin	"	"	"	8	" " "
Emily	"	"	"	6	" " "
Levi	"	son	"	3	" " "
Amelia Frances	dau	"	"	1	" " "

Though all the children are said to be born at Beckley, as we know, the four eldest are recorded at Charlton. The baptisms of the later children, Eilen, (Elin), Emily, Levi and Fanny, (Amelia Frances) are not to be found at either place. We notice an absentee, a vacant chair, for George Haskins is not with them.

We visited Beckley on 22 August 1998. The church is notable for ancient stained glass and wall paintings which amazingly survived both Puritan iconoclasts and Victorian vandals. On the west wall I was astonished to see to my delight a mediaeval rendition of the Ace of Hearts. I am sure Levi thought so too! An ironic icon in view of what would come later. It was really supposed to be the Sacred Heart, but how on earth was it saved from the miseries with their buckets of whitelime who blanked out such "Popish" decorations? Levi, as we shall see, is very important to this story. Much later, his birthday would be added to the Bible's list, April 30th 1865.

By 1871, Sarah, the mother of John, Thomas and the rest had retired, and not before time, for she was eighty six, and we find her living with William Busby, who had married Mary Honour in 1851.

William Busby	Head married	48	agricultural labourer	born	Murcott
Mary	" wife	" 46		"	"
Ruth Honour	dau unmar	23		"	"
James Busby	son "	20		"	"
Matthew Honour	grandson	3		"	"
Sarah Honour	mother widow	86	annuitant	"	Tackley

Now here's a strange thing. Ruth Honour, like her mother before her had given birth to a "love child", Matthew Honour, baptised 15 November 1868. William Busby, whose circumstances had deteriorated since the days when he had been in partnership with Job Honour was once more left holding the baby, and had taken in his aged mother in law as well. The money Sarah had scraped up to buy herself a pension may have helped the Busby's less than opulent ménage and William probably showed good grace, even if Sarah, having had so much experience herself was not averse to giving advice. She finally died in 1876 and is listed in the burial register "Sarah Honour of Fencott, 22 February 1876 aged 94." I am glad to say that my mother Florence, her great granddaughter has inherited her longevity.

In 1871, another Sarah Honour, aged 13, a scholar, is described as the granddaughter of John and Sarah Collett, both aged 66. John had 90 acres and three employees. Young Sarah was Mark and Elizabeth's daughter. The last of the Gabriels is also listed in 1871, aged 40, a builder, living with his wife Louisa and son Herbert, aged six months. He would have other children, but none would be called Gabriel.

We now move on to 1881 where we find the family as follows:

Thomas Honour	Head	Mar	32	Ag lab	born	Murcott
Kate	" wife	" 25		"	"	

We know already that young Kate will die in 1882. Next door lived Tom's sister Eliza and her husband Alfred:

Alfred Taylor	Head	Mar	38	blacksmith	born	Charlton
Eliza	" wife	" 24		"	"	Fencott
William	" son	1		"	"	Charlton

Not far away were

John Honour	Head	Mar	65	farmer	150 acres with 2 men & 1 boy	born	Murcott
Susannah	"	wife	"	59		"	Bainton
Alice	"	dau	18			"	Fencott
Sarah	"	"	13			"	"

and

William Busby	Head	mar	59	Ag lab	born	Murcott
Mary	"	wife	"	45 [sic!]	"	"
Matthew Honour	grandson		12	scholar	"	"

Ruth, Matthew's mother, was not with them on the night of the census and a year later she would be dead, aged 34. She was buried on 28 June 1882.

On 25 June, 1887, John Honour, feeling old, and probably not very well seized the opportunity whilst on a trip to Oxford to make his will.

This is the last Will and Testament of me, John Honour of Charlton in the County of Oxford, Farmer. First I desire that all my just debts funeral and testamentary expenses may be paid and satisfied as soon as conveniently may be after my decease. I give devise and bequeath all my estate and effects whatsoever and of what kind soever the same may be that I may be possessed of at the time of my decease to my Brother Mark Honour of Woodeaton in the County of Oxford Farmer and my Friend John Collett of Oddington in the county of Oxford Farmer upon trust to sell dispose of and realize and then to invest the same in Freehold or Leasehold properties or in Government securities to pay unto my dear wife Susannah during her life the income of the same trust monies. After her decease I give to my son Thomas Honour the sum of Forty pounds, to my daughter Alice Honour the sum of Thirty pounds and to my daughter Sarah Honour the sum of Thirty pounds. After the payment of the above legacies I give and devise the remainder of my estate and effects to the use of all my children share and share alike. And I appoint my Brother Mark Honour of Woodeaton aforesaid Farmer and my Friend John Collett of Oddington aforesaid Farmer Executors and Trustees of this my Will. In witness thereof I the said John Honour the Testator have to this my last Will and Testament set my hand this twenty fifth day of June One thousand eight hundred and eighty seven.

The will was signed by John and witnessed by John Lindsey, Butcher, 61 & 62, Market, Oxford, and James Hedges, Butcher, 27 Market, Oxford.

It seems unfair that neither Caroline Whybird nor Eliza Taylor were named and only figured in the share out of anything that might be left after Susan's death. In view of her long life and also the demands on her annuity which would later be made by Sarah and her family, I suspect that would be very little if anything at all. But at this moment, that is all in the future.

John Honour died 24 January 1888, leaving personal estate valued at £582 (£482.8s.8d net), [proved on 16 April by Mark Honour and John Collett, the executors.]

Ruth, Matthew's mother, was not with them on the night of the census and a year later she would be dead, aged 34. She was buried on 28 June 1882.

On 25 June 1887 John Honour feeling old, and probably not very well

His grave is in a line of family monuments at the little cemetery down the road from the church, next to his brother Thomas, who would join him later, and which includes John Collett, Elizabeth, the wife of Mark Honour, died at Swyncombe, 13 July 1881 aged 46, Mark Honour died 26 May 1897 aged 67, and the previously mentioned Caroline Whybird.

Susan and Sarah took a cottage in the main street at Charlton where we find them in 1891:

13 The Cottage

Susan Honour 67 Head widow living on own means, born Caversfield
farmer's widow

Sarah " 23 daughter unmar " Fencott

We have lost Alice. Whether it is true or not that she was the one sent off to a lunatic asylum, I don't know, but Alice has disappeared without trace.

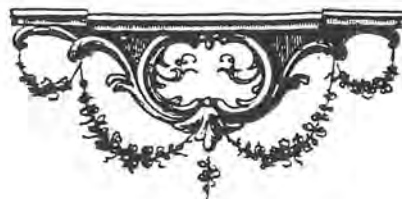
Nearby lived the Taylors at number 16 and at number 18, the Thomas Honours:

Thomas Honour	Head	mar	42	Farmer	born	Fencott
Sarah Ann	"	wife	"	34	"	Bucks, Marsh Gibbon
Thomas	"	son	7	imbecile	"	Fencott
Ada	"	dau	4	"	"	"
John	"	son	3	"	"	"
Edith	"	dau	1	"	"	"

The enumerator, who did not mince words when describing Tom's little boy was distant kin, John Shaw Honour. The boy, who probably had Down's Syndrome, lived to the age of 45, and was buried on 23 November 1928.

I was in contact briefly with Ada Honour in the 1970's, when she was very elderly and in a nursing home. She told me she knew nothing of the family history and had no photographs. At that time I was not quite sure who she was, otherwise I might have persisted. In my later experience those who "know nothing" can be a wealth of information and often turn up photographs as well as other bits and pieces. It is source of regret that I have no photographs of this side of the family.

John Shaw Honour, was a baker by trade, and enumerator by inclination. Discovering his local importance, I was reminded of the words of the Reverend Crusha in 1977 who said there "are two branches of the Honour family still living here, each of whom deny they are anything to do with the other lot, but of course they are." John Shaw, "27 years churchwarden of this parish", died 10 March 1925 aged 68 and is buried in the small Charlton cemetery with his wife Ellen.





CHARLTON-on-OTMOOR VILLAGE (about 1881)



WICKHAM VILLAGE

WICKHAM VILLAGE (about 1920)

The sad tale of Alice Honour.

In 1881 John & Susan Honour were living at their farm in Charlton-on-Otmoor, Oxfordshire. With them were two young girls, Alice Honour aged 18, John's daughter from his previous marriage to Caroline Haskins, and Sarah Honour, aged 13, my grandmother, from his marriage to Susan Waddup.

In childhood Alice had had the horrifying experience of witnessing the accidental drowning in the local river of another sister which obviously had profound effects, exhibiting the strange behaviour already indicated. I cannot diagnose from afar but I somehow imagine her oddness may have been attributed to PTSD which was not thought of in those days, or even autism, of which I have some experience.

Ten years later, Susan, by then widowed, and her daughter Sarah were still at Charlton-on-Otmoor with no sign of Alice.

According to Pem, Alice was "not quite the thing". She knew that Alice had been "put away". She told me

"Our Gran and our Mum sent money away to pay for it."

From this information, Alice's likely destination appeared to have been the Warneford Asylum, a philanthropic institution dating from 1826. It charged fees for the treatment of middle class patients, with a fund to pay for those of the lower orders. Men and women were segregated into different wings of the hospital, a practice which continued well into the 1950s.

Alice is not among those inmates who were buried at the parish church nearby, nor does she appear in the 1891 census for Warneford. I cannot find the hospital entry at all for 1901.

For years I found nothing else about Alice but recently with information now on-line I feel I may have found her at Littlemore County Lunatic Asylum near Headington, Oxfordshire.

She is identified only by her initials "A.H." a device then common, designed to 'protect' relatives from the stigma of having a 'mad' person in the family.

In 1891, 'A.H.' is '29' born Oxford, described as an 'imbecile' born in Oxford.

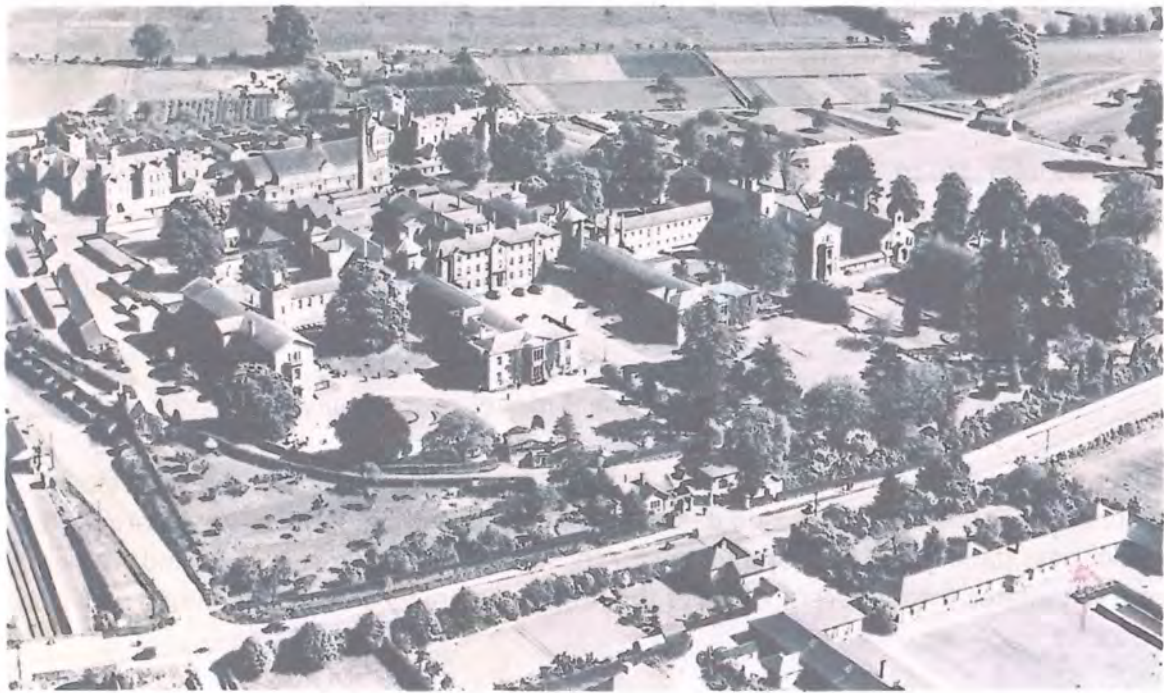
In 1901, I cannot locate the institution in the census.

In 1911, "A.H." is "aged 46", a former servant, but still incarcerated.

There is no other record of Alice. Not even a death certificate. Regrettably she is not the near contemporary Alice Honour who in 1939 was a retired servant at our local stately

home, Tyntesfield: this Alice has a different date of birth. According to the website the Littlemore records are closed until 2047, by which time I shall be long gone.

Maybe they did start making payments for Alice, even if just for her creature comforts, but after Susan died, the Honour's descent into poverty, and Sarah's death in 1916, any donations must have stopped. Alice is unknown, apart from her birth, 31 August, 1862, her name written in retrospect by Susan (as she recorded all her step-children), two census appearances, and then silence apart from her initials in 1891 and 1911, if indeed this is she. No death certificate. It's not much, but it is all I have.



LITTLEMORE HOSPITAL. NR OXFORD.

16266.

There is a surprise entry in the Charlton census of 1891:

Mark Honour	Head	Mar	39	farmer	born	Murcott	
Jane	"	wife	"	35	"	Hampshire,	Shirewold Parminton
Emily	"	dau	9	"	"	"	Eversley
Ellen	"	dau	8	"	"	Murcott	
Sidney	"	son	7	"	"	"	
Esther	"	dau	5	"	"	"	
Lilly	"	dau	5	"	"	"	
Alice	"	dau	7 months	"	"	"	
Ellen Neville	unmar		25	domestic	servant		

And who is Mark? Well, we last saw him at Beckley in 1871, and he is the son of Thomas and Esther Honour. To find out more about these Honours, we shall have to follow them to Hampshire, to the village of Eversley.

Chapter 10

EVERSLEY

1877

"This Booke contains the names of Mortall Men
But there's a Booke with characters of golde
Not writ with inke with pencil or with pen
Where God's elect for ever are inolde
The Booke of Life: where labor thou to bee
Before this Booke hath once registered thee."

from the parish register of Eversley. (Written in cod
"ye olde Englishe". By the Reverend Charles Kingsley?)

I was recently informed that their landlords at Otmoor were the Coke family of Studley Priory, who we last met during the riotous times of the enclosure. That the Coke holdings crossed into Hampshire was no surprise, and it appears that when Church Farm at Eversley fell vacant, Thomas applied for the tenancy and was accepted.

I would like to think that their arrival was in time for the family to meet the famous rector of the parish, Charles Kingsley, the author of *The Water Babies*, and *Westward Ho!* who died in January 1875.

However, the first official record of the Honour arrival is the christening, on 25 March 1877, of Thomas and Esther's daughter, who was also called Esther.

In 1881 when the census was taken, several children are missing. Not only Mark because he was married and in his own house, but also Henry, Jane and Emily, who was aged 6 in 1871. I would later be told that Emily had died aged 28, but I have not so far found a record of her death.

This is the family as listed:

Thomas Honour	Head Mar	51 farmer	247 acres, employing 3 men	born Oxon.	Murcott
Esther	" wife "	44		" "	Islip
Charlotte	" dau unmar	24 milkmaid		" "	Murcott
James	" son "	22 ploughman		" "	"
Levi	" " "	12 scholar		" "	"
Amelia	" dau	10 "		" "	"
Thomas	" son	9 "		" "	"
Esther	" dau	4 "		"	Hants. Eversley
Alfred Collett	nephew unmar	18 ag lab		"	Oxon. Murcott

Just as some were at other addresses when the enumerator called, there were also absentees when a group photograph was taken outside the farmhouse at about the same time: perhaps Emily and either James or Mark.

This family group was suddenly produced by my uncle Harry Honour, who, I had been told burnt all his father's papers on the eve of World War II, but in fact he had saved several photographs which had lain unsuspected since that sad bonfire. Pem identified all the family members present. In the back row, the grown up children, she said, were Charlotte, Harry, Mark and Nellie. (However, I believe it is more probable that "Mark" is in fact "James" for as we know Mark was married with his own farm. It is equally possible that one of the young women is Emily.) In the middle, seated, is "Granny Honour" - Pem had not known her name was Esther, - who fidgeted when waiting for the photographer's flash, and whose features are therefore blurred. Beside Esther, standing, is her four year old namesake. Then "Grampy" Thomas, also seated, holding the leash of a small black and white dog, name unknown, who like Esther had become bored and has turned away from the camera; then Fanny (Amelia Frances) standing, and Jennie (Jane) seated. At the front, the two small boys, posed reclining left, are Levi and Tom.

In 1881, Mark and family were living at Yaldons Farm, Eversley:

Mark Honour	Head Mar	27 farm lab.	born Murcott
Jane	" wife "	25 farm lab.'s wife	" Berks. Kintbury
Emily Kate	dau	1 infant	" Hants. Sherfield

Emily Kate, the daughter of Mark & Jane Honour, labourer of Eversley, was baptised there on 30 May 1880.

Mark and his family must have moved back to Otmoor shortly after the census, for his second daughter Ellen was baptised there on 24 September 1882. Mark was then described "a farmer of Murcott". I had already suspected estrangement from his father, as I had been told by my mother's cousin Tommy Dodd and his wife Doreen that Mark had incurred parental wrath by courting "the beautiful daughter of one of his father's itinerant labourers who came for the harvest". Thomas forbade the match, but Mark married the girl anyway! Perhaps Jane was never accepted at all. It is perhaps worth noting that a sizeable number of "travellers" or "gypsies" christened children at Eversley during the period of my research. Jane was certainly unsure where she was born, even to the county.



The Honour Family at Eversley (for identification, see text)



The boys are Levi (left) & Tom.
The girls (from top) are Jennie, Nellie & Fanny

The first of the Honour children to marry at Eversley was Ellen on 17 July 1883. The entry reads:

Joseph Carter 28 bachelor farmer Eversley father Joseph general trader
Ellen Honour 20 spinster " " Thomas farmer

Thomas evidently approved of this match, for he was one of the witnesses, along with Edith Chandler.

The Carters brought their children, as follows, to be christened at Eversley, though they lived at nearby Finchampstead.

Nelly d.o. Joseph & Ellen Carter farmer Finchampstead bp 18.9.1884
Emma d.o. " " " " " 13.2.1886 bp 23.5.1886
Alice s.o. " " " " The Lea, Finch'd b 14.11.1888 bp
18.11.1888

[Alice died 22 November, aged 8 days]

Eliza d.o. Joseph & Ellen Carter, farmer Finch'd b 4.8.1890 bp 28.9.1890
Maria d.o. " " " " " b 20.9.1893 bp 24.9.1893
Alice Itwin
Henry Joseph lchildren of above " The Lea, Finch'd b 2.7.1896 bp
8.7.1896
Louisa d.o. " " " " The Lea, Finch'd bp 9.4.1905.

and we shall meet them again anon.

Next to marry was Henry on 22 November 1883:

Henry Honour full age bachelor farmer Eversley father Thomas farmer
Sabina Hill " " spinster " " Joseph carpenter
before witnesses, Alice Fox and Elizabeth Hill.

Then it was the turn of James on 23 October 1884:

James Haskins Honour 25 bachelor farmer Eversley father Thomas farmer
Edith Chandler 21 spinster " " James bailiff
with witnesses George Chandler and Maria Ellis.

Edith, daughter of James Haskins Honour, labourer of Eversley and Edith his wife was born 30 February 1885 and baptised the following 5 April. Sadly, the little girl died aged 2 years and was buried on 25 February 1887, only five days after the birth of her sister, Esther Jane who was baptised on Easter Day, 10 April 1887, from Yaldins Farm, Eversley. A son was baptised at Eversley after a ten year gap, when James and his family had evidently returned for a visit:

William James son of James Haskins and Edith Honour, farmer, Lea Farm, Hazeley Heath born 1 August 1897 and baptised 26 August 1897.

William was still alive in 1957, as were James's daughter, Jane (Mrs Rainbow) and son, Thomas. Another daughter, Emily Horne, mother of seven children was deceased. These people figured, as did we, in a family share out after an intestacy, of which more later. James Haskins Honour passed away 21 December 1938 aged 79 and was buried at Tidmington

Church. His memorial card, kindly given to me by Louisa "Louie" Carter, has the legend "He will not return to us but we shall go to him."

On the 7 May 1890, Esther Honour was buried aged 57. Though I was able to find her gravestone from instructions given me by Doreen Dodd, unfortunately the inscription has been lost from the elements.

At about this time, though whether it was before or after his mother's death is not known, Levi left home and joined the army. There were always recruiting sergeants at the country fairs ready to entice likely looking lads with a life of unlimited adventure, theirs for the taking and Levi excitedly took the Queen's shilling. A splendid picture of him in uniform has come down to us, standing proudly, hair pomaded close to his head, with a pill box hat set at a precarious angle, the chin strap uncomfortably around, not under his chin. He wears a boot neck tunic with eight brass buttons down the front, and he is holding a swagger stick in his left hand against a large sheepskin muff. A horizontal scar is noticeable about an inch and half long just under his left eye. The uniform has always been said to be that of the Enniskilling Dragoon Guards, an odd choice, I would have thought for a Hampshire country boy. But that is not the only mystery, for here's the rub, this photograph is all that does survive of Levi's military career. I have failed to find hide or hair of him in army records (which I have also had independently checked) and I now believe he must have joined up under an assumed name. Whatever the truth the whole affair seems to have ended ignominiously. Thomas, it is said, was furious when he found out what had happened. He went after his son and managed to "buy him out" at great expense. For Levi, it was but the first instance in a long line of personal disaster.

By the time of the 1891 census, he had returned home, where the household at Church Farm Eversley consists of:

Thomas Honour	Head	widower	62	farmer	born Oxon.	Murcott
Levi	"	son	unmar	22	"	"
Thomas	"	"	"	19	"	"
Jane	"	dau	"	28	"	"
Esther	"	"	"	14		Eversley
Mary Busby	sister	widow	64		"	Murcott
Henry Gibbard	farm	servant	21	ag lab	"	"
Sidney Fulher	"	"	14	" "		Eversley

It is interesting to see that Mary Busby, herself widowed, (William died aged 62 in January 1885), had been sent for in order to keep house for her brother after his wife died. Charlotte in the meantime had married Fred Harris, and as Fanny was absent, she was probably visiting elsewhere. Levi too remained restless, and I believe that around this time, when the railway had brought travel within everybody's grasp, time and expense permitting, he went, or was perhaps sent, on a trip to Otmoor, to stay with his brother Mark. And there, he met again his cousin Sarah, the daughter of his father's brother John Honour. Levi, even if still sulking with discontented rage would have had a certain charm. (This charisma is undimmed even to this day. "Everybody loved Levi" was a phrase often repeated to me by those who remembered him.) For Sarah it was like running into a tree.



LEVI HONOUR in Army Uniform



We shall never know what Thomas had to say when Levi returned to Eversley and announced he was about to get married to his cousin. He was not particularly pleased, I would suspect, but irritation was perhaps tempered by the expectation that marriage might settle his son down.

The banns were called on 14, 21 and 28 August, and on 20 September 1892, at Charlton church, Levi Honour, aged 24, bachelor, farmer of Eversley, Hampshire, son of Thomas Honour, farmer, & Sarah Honour, spinster of Charlton on Otmoor, daughter of John Honour, farmer, were married. The marriage was witnessed by Thomas Honour, Sarah's half brother and Esther Collett, one of the many cousins Sarah and Levi shared.

"For richer for poorer, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health till death us do part." As she repeated the hallowed words, as she looked at her young bridegroom, so proud, so ambitious, so full of himself, did Sarah know, I wonder, that this was not the first time a daughter of John Honour had taken a son of Thomas Honour to be her lawful wedded husband? Sarah's trials would be many, but her love would never falter.

Nearly 106 years later, on a windy Saturday, 22 August 1998, their daughter Florence, and their granddaughter, me, sat like wedding guests in the church at Charlton. The sun was streaming through the stained glass windows, and "She", now respectable, and known as the Rood Cross, stared sightlessly down at us from the 16th century carved screen. Whatever goes around comes around. We, one ancient, the other verging on the elderly, in our here and now, the bride and groom young and lively, their whole lives ahead of them, in theirs.

I said to my mother, "What do you think your mother and father would think if they saw you here now?"

Florence is 92. "They'd feel pity, probably," she replied.

"Of course they wouldn't," I said crossly. "They'd be pleased."

"I expect so," she said again. "Their last little girl."

Chapter 11

HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER: Levi and Sarah



Below the Salt.

"But unto the tribe of Levi, Moses gave not any inheritance
the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them."

1893

Joshua XIII. 33.

In the beginning it was for richer and better. Levi took his bride to live at Foley Lodge, Stockcross, Berkshire. After a while they were joined by their mother, mother in law and aunt, who was of course, one person. Susan

brought with her the annuity to which John Honour's property had been converted, and the Family Bible. Sarah gave birth to a son, John, in 1893, but he lived only for one day.* A daughter, Esther ("Ettie"), was born on 10 August 1894 and another, Emily ("Emmie" who would become "Pem"), on 14 July 1895. A Foley Lodge is there to this day, but it is not Levi's house, that, we were told by a passing ancient, (in 1974), was demolished about 1908. Remarkably, he remembered the family, and recalled "Something about cousins marrying, wasn't it?". By 1904, they had moved on, the first of many times they would move house, to Townsend Farm, Hampstead Norris.

"Hampstead Norris", said Pem, "was our Home." The capital H is intentional. They were happy there. Levi clearly thought he had arrived and they had their photograph taken on the lawn outside the house, himself sporting a newly acquired moustache, and his thumb tucked into his waistcoat lapel in a favourite stance as if saying "I am the Lord of all I survey", with Sarah to his left and the two babies on the grass in between.

On 10 November 1974, I went with my husband Norman and children to see the house at Hampstead Norris where they had lived, almost eighty years before. As it had been Levi's heyday, so it was mine.

I observed at the time, "On the whole it remains the same as it appears in the photograph, although the porch has been altered. The drive and front garden are identical. It was called Townsend Farm in those days, but the present owner, Mrs Mann, informed me that she had reverted to the original name which was Lower Farm House, which for some reason she preferred. She invited me in: Norman was hiding in the car - he cannot bear it when, unannounced, I knock on doors. As it was only 9.45 a.m. on a Sunday morning and they were having breakfast, some of the family were indeed still in bed, I was only invited to see the two downstairs front rooms. These open left and right of the entrance hall, to the left what is now the sitting room, to the right, the dining room. These rooms are spacious and the sitting room has the original fireplace. The dining room is long, and at the end a window has been permanently closed with old fashioned wooden shutters because of something unsafe outside. I was pleased to see that the furniture was antique, particularly the dining room which had some fine oak pieces. The house, said Mrs Mann, dates from about 1840, and the estate formerly belonged to Pilkington's Glass. I took several photographs of the outside of the house with the children in what I thought were roughly the same positions their great grandparents had taken."

It was easy to imagine the idyllic childhood that Esther and Emily spent at Hampstead Norris. Soon the time came for Ettie to start school, but she refused to go unless her three year old sister accompanied her. (A pattern which would be repeated by my daughters, Caroline and Celia, who also had less than a year between them). Emmie had been a premature baby, a seven months child, and always small of stature, but Sarah, probably mindful that she had been a scholar at three, decided it made sense to let the little one go too. Emmie's lack of inches were well compensated for by an enormity of spirit and she would protect her sister then as she would do throughout her life, excepting one final tragic failure. There was however no doubt from the outset as to which of the two was in charge. Commanders in the field often have to adopt ruthless methods, and once when Ettie rebelled, Emmie held her down on the ice until she wet herself. In the picture which

- The death certificate for little John Honour shows that, in fact, he lived for three days, and died of convulsions on 18 February 1893 at Foley Lodge Farm, Speen, Berkshire. From this, we may deduce that Sarah was four months pregnant on her wedding day, which throws new light on Thomas' s fury. The reason he had to buy Levi out of the army now seems clear. ✕
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- ** The Family at Hampstead Norris in listed in the census of 1901

Levi Honour	Head, married	32	Born Murcott, Oxon	farmer
Sarah Honour	Wife	33	Born Fencott	
Esther Honour	Daughter	6	Born Speen, Berks	
Emily Honour	Daughter	5	Born Speen, Berks	
Annie Honour	Daughter	1	Born Hampstead Norris	
Susannah Honour	Mother in law	78	Born Caversfield, Oxon	Living on own means

* But the ^{newspaper} marriage announcement shows that appearances were kept up!

survives from their time at Hampstead Norris Church School, the sisters are separated, probably not without reason, by another child. The headmistress was Miss Flowers, assisted by a pupil teacher, Miss Bessie Bath. A pupil teacher was merely an older girl who had reached the final grade and without any further training was let loose to pass on whatever little learning she herself had accumulated.

In 1979, Emmie wrote down her recollections which appeared in the Christmas edition of the Journal of the Bristol & Avon Family History Society as "Memories of a Victorian Christmas, Townsend Farm, Hampstead Norris, 1899-1900, by Emily Unsworth, aged 84." I am sorry to say she died before she saw the article in print.

"I remember Christmas from when I was about three or four. It did not start in August as now, but began very properly on Christmas Eve when our Dad used to come in from the fields - he was a farmer - and he and the men would get busy with ladders decorating all the picture frames with greenery: holly, ivy, mistletoe, olive, armfuls of it, brought in through the back door.

"In the kitchen was our Gran", (this was Susan Waddup Honour), "who was both Levi's mother in law and aunt, as my parents were cousins. She would be busy making mince pies and getting the bird clean and dressed. If we made a nuisance of ourselves she would threaten to do the same to us - take our innards out, scrub them and put them back! Not willing to take a chance on the seriousness of this threat, we would run away and worry 'old Humphrey' an eccentric who was given shelter and food for the winter, though he was quite a toff in his own right.

"After all had been prepared we were allowed to sit up late and wait for the mummers with their hand bells, playing all the carols round the table in the kitchen. The mummers were filled with ale and mince pies and by the time they got round they were well nigh drunk. Afterwards my sister and I went reluctantly to bed, watched over by Gran, whilst Mum and Dad went to church for midnight service. There always seemed to be a frost and snowbound scene - we had real winters then, not one day cold, the next warm - and I always heard the bells ringing out at midnight before I snuggled down to sleep. Early on Christmas Day we reached for our stockings, each of which held a new penny, an orange, an apple, a few nuts, figs, dates and sweets. After breakfast we all walked to church in the crunchy cold. At three p.m. we sat down to a groaning table. Before dinner Gran said Grace:

'Be present at our table, Lord
Be here and everywhere adored
Thy creatures blessed and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee.'

"Dinner was the bird with all the trimmings and a whole roast pig served on an enormous grey and white dish which had indented channels leading to a bowl at the end to catch the juices. Where would you get a joint to fit it today? The dish still survives, owned by my sister Florence, who ironically never ate from it, the money having run out before she was born in 1906.

"Afterwards we had our presents, one such was a cricket bat and hard ball from Aunt Patti* with which my sister Ettie later broke my nose. There were oohs and aahs as our Mum tried on her new dress, Gran her new shawl and us the cashmere coats and dresses, usually grey with red trims that Gran always gave us.

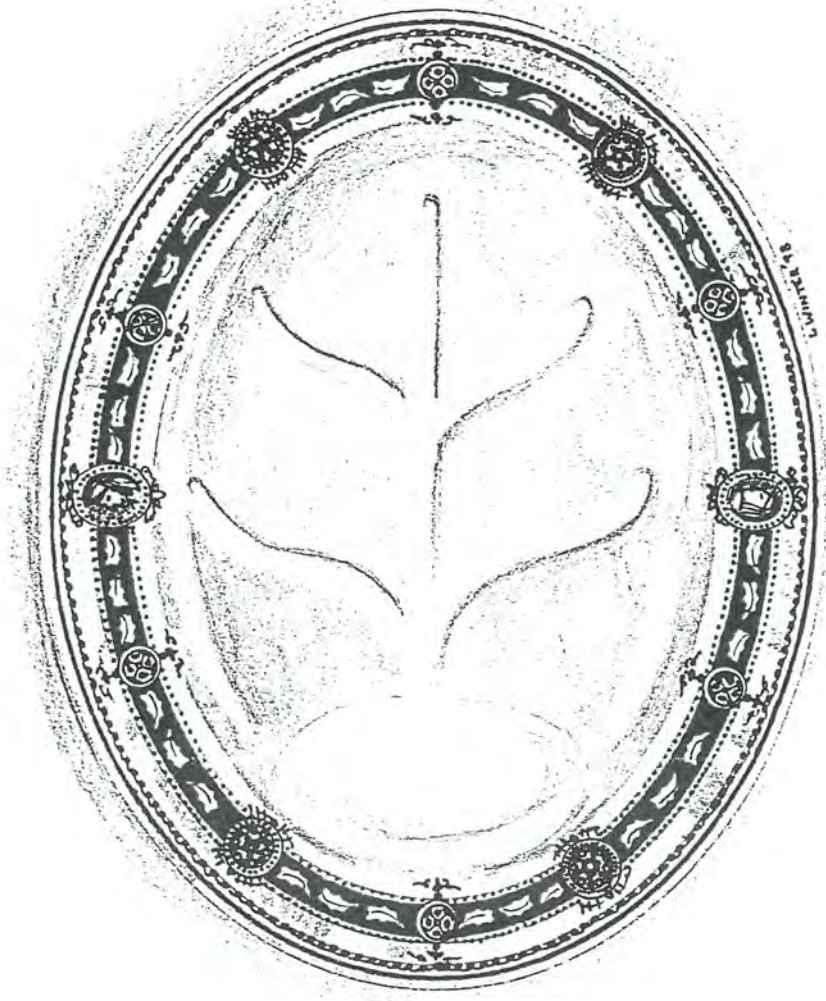
"We gave our workers pork, ham, coal and blankets. Nobody went without. One of these was Mrs Larkin, the washerwoman who came in twice a week to do the heavy laundry. I remember she was paid 2s 6d (12½p) and her meals plus beer each day. There were also young girls who came in from the village 'to do' and to look after us. None were forgotten at Christmas.

"After presents we had games; an orange hung in the doorway and we had to take bites out of it and 'Snapdragon' being lovely juicy muscatels in a dish with brandy poured over it and lit, and we had to pick them out; likewise with the pudding which came in with the dark, curtains drawn, a stick of holly in the top and lit with all the brandy flames jumping around. Then more games and Mum playing the piano and Dad singing 'The Mistletoe Bough' and 'The Holly and the Ivy'. Then bed. It was not commercialised at all. We remembered that Christmas was meant to be the celebration of the birth of a baby, born to be our Saviour."

Levi was now about thirty, in the pride of his young manhood, renting a piece of land, with labourers who called him "Mister", who ate with the family but whose place was firmly 'below the salt'. He enjoyed a drink and was probably too convivial. Emmie used to carry cider out to the fields whilst they made hay in high summer. He would return tired, sunburned and also drunk. Ettie was afraid of him drunk, but Emmie said proudly, "I was never afraid of our Dad" and would assist the other two females in his household in getting him upstairs to bed.

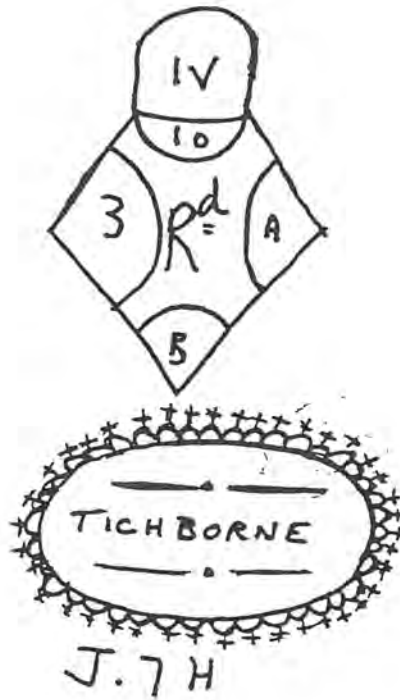
Two more daughters were born at Townsend Farm, Annie on 9 January 1900 and Jane, on 17 June 1901. Only one thing marred Levi's otherwise unclouded horizon, his apparent inability to beget himself a son. He saw this as an inept failure, and it became an obsession. Even Susan's telling him the old country saw "Any boy can get a boy, but it takes a man to father a girl" did nothing to ease his disappointment. Sarah's problem was more practical. With each child she gained, she lost a tooth. No-one understood nutrition then, and the loss of one's teeth was an accepted - and minor - inconvenience of childbirth. As long as you didn't die of it, it was considered one of those things.

* Pen remembered Aunt Patti as being "one of our Gran's sisters". It will be recalled from the chapter on the Waddups that no Patti or Patricia appears, Patti remained a mystery until a query was answered in the Family Tree Magazine of October 1997, and stated that Patti was a diminutive of Martha! Susannah of course had an elder sister called Martha. As for the broken nose, the result of Patti's gift, it would remain with her the rest of her life. Another possible reminder of Patti has survived, I have two silver spoons monogrammed M.W., with the Exeter silvermark of the silversmith Sobey, dated 1846, one in mint condition; Pen's; one battered; my mother's! These were always known as "grandmother's spoons", and presumably left to Susan by her sister Martha, or by "the other Martha", her sister in law, Thomas's wife, the only owners of these initials.



THE "HONOUR" PLATE

With Many Thanks to her Winter.



Elaborate Potter's Mark on the back of the "HONOUR" plate

(The Tichbornes were Hampshire landowners. Litigation (1871-2) over the "Tichborne Claimant", an Australian butcher, who claimed to be the lost heir almost ruined the family. Did Thomas buy some of their chattels at a farm sale?)

Meanwhile, England was plunged into the Boer War, and after the news of the Relief of Mafeking, the country went wild with joy. Levi celebrated in an excess of patriotic fervour, and enjoying himself hugely, played host to the whole village with a great feast. The grounds were groomed to perfection and lights were hung in festoons through the trees.

It seems obvious with benefit of hindsight that he was living greatly beyond his means. The family were obliged to leave Hampstead Norris and in 1901, Levi took a lease at a place called Hambridge Farm. It was the first foot fall on the a slippery slope, but if there had been financial difficulty, this was soon forgotten when on 26 June 1902, Levi's longed for son was born. He was given the grand name Edward John Thomas, after his two Honour grandfathers and the new King, Edward VII, whose raciness must have appealed to Levi, who shared his monarch's interests in the turf, though "he was a poor judge of horseflesh" said Pem, and cards. Emily recalled visiting a great house in Speenhamland, Berkshire where Levi 'cut in' at the card table. Years later she visited the same house with her then suitor (Thomas Unsworth, who became our much loved Uncle Tom), and discovered that his uncle, by coincidence, had been a gamekeeper on the estate. "I think," she said, "he was a little bit peeved that my previous entrance had been through the front door, whereas his own had been through the back!"

At this time, Levi lived in a permanent euphoria of celebration. Gambling with fast friends and drinking at their tables, Mr Honour was as good as anybody in the land and Mr Honour had a son and he lost no opportunity to wet the baby's head. Farming is by its very nature, a hard working, patient, placid activity, and Levi was now a young man in a hurry, racing for improvement, striving for change. They moved to Three Mile Cross in 1904 and Hook Will Farm in 1905. Sarah was aware that each place was a little worse than the last while Susan kept her own counsel, but it was becoming increasingly obvious that her quarterly annuity cheques were becoming not a bonus, but a necessity. Uncle John Collett visited to discuss Susan's financial affairs, and cousin Albert John, Mark Honour's son also arrived with his son Aubrey in tow. The girls made fun of Aubrey, saying he had a girl's name, and calling him Audrey. Aunt Caroline Whybird came, stiffly corseted, the epitome of smartness and respectability. All these people had to be entertained royally, with no inkling that Levi himself was in decline.

At Hook Will Farm in 1904, tragedy struck. Annie died on the 8 May, aged 4 years and 4 months old. She was buried at Shinfield, where the burial register bears the entry, Annie Honour, buried 10 May 1904. Annie and Edward John Thomas, known to all as Johnny, had been inseparable companions. The little boy appeared languid and out of sorts. They put it down to the fact that he was pining for his sister. They did what they always did. They moved. Johnny who they still said was pining became no better. In fact, he was much worse. By the time the Doctor was called in, he diagnosed appendicitis in an advanced stage. Appendicitis is now a matter of a simple operation with recovery virtually guaranteed. This was not so in Levi's time. He called for a second opinion, who confirmed the first doctor's diagnosis and informed the distraught parents that the boy's chances of survival were slim and that even if there should be success, it might only be partial, condemning him to a life in a wheel chair.

Emily, who was hiding below the sitting room table, completely hidden by the drapes which swept the floor, heard every word of the consultation. Her heart thudding in terror, she felt her father's fist come down on the table with a shattering force, causing the legs to judder as it was almost swept aside. In a terrible voice, he said "Gentlemen, there shall be no operation!"

He must surely have known he had pronounced sentence of death and that there would be no reprieve. There was no operation. I have to say I find this decision as incredible as it was wicked. Levi as a gambler should have known than even an outside chance is better than not turning up for the race. He loved this son to distraction and yet could not bear for him to be less than perfect. The idea that perhaps he would never run beside his father on strong legs, or sit astride a horse or shoot, or hunt or fish or do any of those things that were the heritage of the country bred was too much for Levi. Johnny died on 19 March 1905. Somewhere in the Basingstoke district there is a lonely forgotten grave which bears the legend

Asleep in Jesus. Far from thee
Thy kindred and their graves may be
But thine is still a blessed sleep
From which none ever woke to weep **

The words were prophetic. Johnny's kindred would be forever on the move, and would indeed be far from him.

If I, with the advantage of time, find it hard to forgive Levi, then he found it impossible to forgive himself. He went wild with grief, racing across the country, whipping up his horses, so that only Emily remained unafraid to ride with him. On one occasion he dressed up as a clown, in a terrible parody of that happy clown who bonked revellers on the head with his bladder on May Day at Otmoor. There was a dreadful row, and it was the only time Emily remembered her father and her grandmother, Susan, quarrelling. It was an appalling time.

They moved, this time to Southwood Road, Cove, in Hampshire. Sarah was pregnant again, and on 25 February 1906, gave birth to my mother, Florence. It is said that heavy snow made it impossible for Levi to get to Farnborough to register the birth within the designated time, and he arrived on the 3 April with a fabricated date. Florence therefore like the Queen has two birthdays, the actual, and the official, 18 March 1906. On the certificate, Levi's occupation is given as hay binder whereas at her christening at Cove church, on 29 April, he is described as a haulier.

In 1907, there were two more moves, to Wrecclesham and to Boundstone, where on 14 April, a son, Henry (Harry) was born, but he could not replace Johnny. There had been too much hurt. Whilst Levi's passion and rage seems by this time to have spent itself, he was still questing for that change in luck which would make his fortune. They moved to Woodmancote. Here, on 5 July 1908, grandmother Susan died, aged 84. She had lived with them for so many years, through so much, it was no wonder she had relieved herself from time to time by going to stay with her sisters in Oxfordshire. The latter part of her life must have been sorely troubled, filled with daily apprehension and anxiety for her only child, the frail Sarah. for whom she

* Annie died 8 May 1904 aged 4 years, cause of death given as bronchitis. They were then living at Spencer's Wood, Shinfield, and the death was registered in the sub district of Wokingham. The death was registered by Levi, the father, occupation "general labourer".

** Edward John Thomas died 19 March 1905, aged 2 years. They were now living at Newnham in Basingstoke. The boy's suffering was even worse than I had imagined. Cause of death was Tubercular Peritonitis, 10 weeks, Asthenia. Levi, the father, "present at the death, registered it. His occupation, "farmer".

had dearly wanted joy. Obviously family finances did not stretch to her being moved to lie beside her husband at Otmoor, but her name was inscribed on John Honour's tombstone, where the inscription, "died at Woodmancote" was clearly visible in 1977, but had been entirely obliterated by my latest visit in 1998.

The loss of Susan was a double blow for Sarah and Levi, for she had taken care of most of the domestic arrangements whilst Sarah eked out the declining fortunes by giving piano lessons, and financially, the loss of the quarterly cheque could hardly have come at a worse time when Sarah had babies aged two and one to care for, in addition to the older girls. They moved again, within Hampshire to Totton, a short lived affair, for whilst there, Levi spied a not to be missed business opportunity. He took a pork butcher's shop at Eastleigh, where Emily said "he made his last stand." It was a complete disaster and the family made a moonlight flit, one jump ahead of the bailiffs. After the flight from Eastleigh, they found themselves in West Clandon where in 1909, they lived in two different houses. By 1910 they were at Newark Lane, Ripley, in Surrey. Though these cottages were then newly built [and positively gentrified in 1997, when we took Florence to Ripley to see where she had spent her childhood], each move had represented a deterioration in circumstances instead of improvement. Each time some treasured article was lost, never to be replaced. The only time Emily ever saw her mother cry was when her beloved piano had to be sold to pay debts. Esther on one occasion noticing her mother seemed more than usually down asked why she allowed "our Dad" to carry on in this wayward fashion without complaint or censure. Sarah answered "Ettie, Ettie... if ever you love a man as I love your father then you will not need me to answer that question." None of them ever heard her complain about him or talk of him with words other than love. When he worked away from home she would wait anxiously for his return, for his footfalls on the gravel path, excited as a teenager.

At Ripley, they heard news of the death of Levi's father Thomas. After Esther's death he had returned to Otmoor where he lived at Bridge House, Fencott, with his second wife Elizabeth.

In the family photograph of circa 1881, Thomas had sat in the bosom of his family wearing a genial expression. Ten years later, in another photograph believed to be him and the much younger Elizabeth, he looks dyspeptic and positively disagreeable. If Levi had harboured expectations from his father's estate then he was disappointed. The will leaves everything lock, stock and barrel to Elizabeth. None of his children are mentioned at all. Maybe all of them in their various ways had displeased him. It is said that Elizabeth remarked that she had married Mr Honour and not the entire Honour family; perhaps the children found her equally unattractive and the second marriage had brought about mutual dislike causing a rift of some sort.

The will reads:

This is the last will and Testament of me Thomas Honour of Bridge House Fencott in the County of Oxfordshire made this 31st day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eight. I appoint my wife Elizabeth Honour of Bridge House Fencott to be my executrix and direct that at my decease that all my debts shall be paid as conveniently may be. I

give and bequeath unto my wife Elizabeth Honour absolutely all my Estate and Effects real and personal which I may die possessed of or entitled to.

(signed) Thomas Honour

in the presence of

Ernest William Cartwright, School House, Charlton on Otmoor, schoolmaster and Mary Cartwright, School House, Charlton on Otmoor, schoolmistress.

Thomas Honour, farmer of Bridge House, Fencott, died on 13 May 1910, leaving £322.2s.3d. He was buried, aged 82, next to his brother John. The inscription on his headstone reads "And so he gave his loved one sleep".

After the birth of Harry in 1907, Sarah was never really well again. Always delicate, she now suffered from heart trouble. She had lost most of her teeth and her sight was poor. Florence would have to come home from school at lunch time (she and Harry were both at Ripley School, and a very faint photograph of them survives) and thread all her mother's needles so that she could sew during the afternoons. Because of their mother's illness the younger children were now and then sent to stay with various relatives.

Flo recalled: "We went to Aunt Jennie and Uncle Tom's for a holiday. Our Harry enjoyed it - he went round the outhouses with Uncle Tom. I had to stay behind and scrub the lavatory out." Lavatories were contained in little houses of their own, earth toilets covered by a deal seat with a hole cut in it. This seat had to be kept scrupulously white with a scrubbing brush and carbolic soap. Women, even little girls of Flo's age, which was nine years, were left in no doubt as to their position in the pecking order, which was a great deal below that of a brother, even one younger than themselves.

Flo said, "Aunt Fanny was there as well. She wasn't quite the thing. Mind you, if she didn't want to do something, she wouldn't. She would lock her door and wouldn't come out. She wasn't allowed to address an envelope, but occasionally she would get one through and send it to our Dad and tell him the tale of woe that they were ill-treating her. You couldn't turn her though, stubborn as a mule."

[In 1954, when I was seventeen, already interested in trying to trace the family, but having no real idea how to go about it, I went to stay for a weekend with Esther Harris, the daughter of Charlotte Honour who farmed at Yateley, near Camberley in Surrey. Esther said "I would have known you at once. You are the spitting image of Aunt Fanny." On being told this, Pem hooted with unseemly mirth.]

Aunt Jennie and Uncle Tom were ofcourse Levi's brother and sister. They were unmarried as was Fanny, and farmed at Wickham, Berkshire, at Rectory Farm. Later on, Alice Carter, poor soul, also lived there as a sort of maid of all work, and it was generally agreed she was a saint.

I asked Flo how they travelled to Wickham from Ripley.

"How did we get there? Well our Dad used to take us to the station in a pony and trap and put us in charge of the guard on the train. In 1916 our

Harry had gone to Wickham on his own - and we - our Mum and myself and Emmie were going over to see him. We missed the bus from Ripley to Clandon and she would walk. She wouldn't disappoint him. Harry was very attached to our Mum, well, they were devoted to one other like you and Kevin. Well, she did walk. We got as far as Guildford station where she collapsed. Our Em had to go into a chemist's shop and the man there gave her a sediment of some sort. We sent a telegram to our Dad. He was away on Government Work. He came as soon as he could. She waited to see our Dad but couldn't wait until our Harry came. Aunt Jennie brought him home.

"He said 'My Mummy dead and I wasn't here!' and he rushed up the stairs to see her as he wouldn't believe it. They used to put pennies on their eyes in those days.

"Then we sat on the bottom of the stairs, him and I, and just cried and cried."

Harry was eight years old. The shock blotted out the death of his mother so that not only did he forget the day she died. He had no remembrance of her at all.

Sarah, completely worn out, was only forty nine years old.



To be continued in Part 2

The Changing Fortunes of Levi Honour

The child, aged 3 (Fencot. 1871)

HOUSE	NAME	SEX	AGE	RELATION	DATE, PROMOTION, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN
	James Honour	Head	44	h	Farmer of 70 Acres	Murcott
	John	Wife	39	w		
	Mark	Son	15	m		Beckton
	Henry	Son	12	m		
	James	Son	10	m		
	John	Son	7	m		
	Elizabeth	Daughter	5	f		
	George	Son	3	m		
	Thomas	Son	1	m		

Aged 12 at Church Farm, (Eversley, 1881)

70	Church Farm	1	John	Head	54	Farmer 2 1/2 Acres employed	Murcott Oxon
			Elizabeth	Wife	46		
			Thomas Honour	Son	22		
			Charlotte	Daughter	18		
			James	Son	12		
			John	Son	10		
			Thomas	Son	9		
			Elizabeth	Daughter	4		
			Alfred Collett	Nephew	12	Apprentice	Murcott Oxon



Church Farm, Eversley

This space to be left blank for the Choice Number.

60

Proceedings on Discharge.

(When forwarded for confirmation these proceedings should be accompanied by the documents specified on the 4th page.)

No.	2958	
Army Rank	Private	
Name	Savi Honour	
<small>Note.—The name must agree strictly with that on enlistment, unless changed subsequently by authority.</small>		
Corps (Regiment, Battalion or Battery)	6 th Dragoon	
Date of Discharge	1 st July 1889.	
Place of Discharge	Canterbury	
1. Description at the time of Discharge.		
Age	21 years 0 months	Descriptive Marks. None Back
*Height	5 feet 7 1/2 inches	
*Complexion	Flesh	
*Eyes	Brown	
*Hair	Brown	
*Trade	Team Saver.	
Intended place of Residence (To be given as fully as practicable)	Church Farm Eversley Kent	
<small>In the case of men sent home from abroad for discharge, the age and intended place of residence should be left blank to be filled in by the Officer who confirms the discharge at home.</small>		
2. The above named man is discharged (or if a Warrant Officer "retired") in consequence of his own request on payment of £18 (eighteen pounds) under Art 609. Royal Warrant 1884!		
<small>N.B.—The cause of discharge must be worded as proscribed in the Queen's Regulations and be identical with that on the character certificate. If discharged by superior authority, the No. and date of the letter to be quoted.</small>		
3. Conduct and character while in the service have been, according to the records, etc.		
Good		
<small>N.B.—This will be assessed, when practicable, by the Commanding Officer, in the presence of the soldier and the Officer Commanding his troop or company.</small>		
*4. Special qualifications for employment in civil life. (Vide Sect. xix., Q.R.)		
A Good Troop		
<small>N.B.—See section XXII. Queen's Regulations, regarding the Register for Civil Employment.</small>		

*Not required to be filled in in the case of men discharged from the Army Reserve.

To be in the handwriting of the Commanding Officer who will himself make his own character certificate and initial them.

STATEMENT of the RECEIPTS of No. 2155 *Sam'l Ten Honour*

Charge in which received	Month or Date	Particulars, Explanations, or Description, etc.	Debit	Credit	Balance	Amount of Other unexpended balances of Receipts
		For the arrears of the last year's wages for the year 1889		10 10		
		Discharged on payment of July 1891				

...and in 1891 he was back at Church Farm in the bosom of the family. Aged 22, Eversley 1891:

Name	Age	Sex	Profession	Other
<i>Thomas Honour</i>	22	Male	Farmer	
<i>Levi Honour</i>	22	Male	Son	
<i>Thomas Honour</i>	19	Male	Son	
<i>John Honour</i>	28	Male	Son	
<i>Esther Honour</i>	14	Female	Scholar	
<i>Mary Honour</i>	6 1/2	Female	Skivvy	
<i>Emily Honour</i>	7 1/2	Female	Skivvy	
<i>Susannah Honour</i>	14	Female	Skivvy	

20 September 1892. Married to Sarah

1892. Marriage solemnized in the Parish Church in the Parish of *Charlton* in the County of *Oxford*

Sex	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence in the Time of Marriage	Residence of Parents	Rank or Profession of Father
166	20 Sept	<i>Levi Honour</i>	24	Bachelor	Farmer	<i>Eversley</i>	<i>Thomas Honour</i>	Farmer
		<i>Sarah Honour</i>	25	Spinster		<i>Charlton</i>	<i>John Honour</i>	Farmer

Married in the *Parish Church* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Church of England* by me, *Francis H Hobbs* after named

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Levi Honour* and *Sarah Honour* in the Presence of us, *Thomas Honour* and *Arthur Collett*

MARRIAGES.

September 20, at Charlton-on-Otmoor Church, by the Rev. F. H. Hobbs, curate, Levi, fourth son of Mr. **Thomas Honour**, of Church Farm, Eversley, to Sarah, youngest daughter of the late Mr. John **Honour**, farmer, Charlton-on-Otmoor.

(Oxford Telegraph 19.10.1892)

LEVI and SARAH at Townsend Farm, Hampstead Norris, 1901 with their three daughters, Esther, Emily and Annie. Susannah, Sarah's mother is with them, and they have a 13 year-old-skivvy.

1	Julia	do	Daughter	5	25	do	
	Levi Honour		Head	32		Farmer	Employer
	Sarah	do	Wife	33			
	Esther	do	Daughter	6			
	Emily	do	do	5			
	Bessie	do	do	1			
	Sarah	do	Daughter	70		Living on own means	
	Hattie May	do	Servant	13		General Servant	Domestic

MONDAY, APRIL 26.

(Before Stephen Matthews, Esq.)

THEFT OF A FOWL.—A young labourer, named William George Burnett, was charged with stealing a fowl, the property of Mr. Levi Honour, farmer, of Hampstead Norris, on the 22nd inst.

Prosecutor stated that his fowl-house had been tampered with, and the staple twisted. He missed a fowl, and suspecting the prisoner, who had worked for him, he sent for the police. Witness found the fowl with its head off on a tree near the hen-house on Sunday afternoon.

Frederick Bartholomew, aged nine years, residing with his father at Hampstead Norris, said he knew the prisoner, and while he was with him on Friday night, he took a fowl from Mr. Honour's fowl house. He put it on a block, chopped its head off, and lodged it in a tree behind the granary. Prisoner told him he was not to say anything about it, or he would hit him.

P.C. Collins said he apprehended the prisoner at Mr. Honour's farm.

Prisoner at first denied the charge, but afterwards admitted it. He was remanded until Thursday.

(Reading Mercury 30.4.1898). Hampstead Norris was Levi's heyday.

HAMPSTEAD NORRIS.

FOUND DEAD BY THE ROADSIDE.—On Wednesday morning Mr. J. C. Pinniger, coroner for West Berks, held an inquest at the New Inn on the body of an old man, named James Lewendon, who was found dead on Monday morning by the roadside. The deceased had been in the employ temporarily of Mr. **Levi Honour**, of Townsend Farm, and was about 60 years of age. He slept in the shepherd's house. Three weeks since he sprained his ankle, which crippled him so that he had to go on crutches. The deceased left the previous Wednesday of his own will. He was advised to go into the Union, but he would not go. The body was discovered by a little girl of Marlestone Farm.—Dr. J. H. Breach said the man had been dead some days when found. He should say the cause of death was from an epileptic fit. — The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony.

(Berkshire Chronicle 3.5.1902.) This was surely not 'Old Humphrey', the charity case fondly recalled by Pem? It has occurred to me more than once that she was an unreliable witness.

HONOUR.—June 26 (Coronation Day), at Townsend Farm, Hampstead Norris, the wife of **Levi Honour of a son.**

(Newbury Weekly News. 3.7.1902.) Like Henry VIII, Levi was desperate for a son. The rejoicing can still be heard from here, a century later. This was Edward John Thomas. The darkness of later events make this announcement even more tragic.

A financial disaster had occurred. They had to move from Hampstead Norris. They next appear at Ham Bridge Farm in 1903.

NO LIGHT.
A young man named John Cox pleaded guilty to driving a pair-horse oil-van in the Broadway, on the evening of the 30th ult., without a light. P.c. Taylor proved the case, and the Bench imposed a penalty of 10s., including costs.
Levi Honour, of Ham Bridge Farm, was summoned for a similar offence, on the 5th inst., and P.c. Harris having given evidence, defendant was ordered to pay 2s. 6d. and the costs, 9s.

(Reading Mercury 14.11.1903)

Worse was to come in 1904. Bankruptcy.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS.

The Diseases of Animals Acts Committee reported: During the quarter 16 suspected outbreaks of swine fever have been reported to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and of these three have been confirmed as genuine cases. The one at Bradfield, declared infected on 31st March, still remains under restrictions. No notification has yet been received from the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries in regard to the six other suspected cases, one of which is at Broadmoor and another at Warfield. Wheatlands Farm, Finchampstead, has not yet been declared free. The mare suspected of suffering from glanders at Ham Bridge Farm, Thatcham, was slaughtered, and £7 10s paid to the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy (in whose hands the estate of Mr Levi Honour, of Ham Bridge Farm, was held), such amount being one-fourth the value (£30). The committee submitted a return prepared by the Chief Inspector showing the number of outbreaks of disease under the Diseases of Animals Act for the year ended 31st December, 1903, together with the corresponding number of outbreaks during the previous five years. This return shows that the county has been comparatively free from disease, with the exception of swine fever and anthrax, and that in the case of swine fever the number of cases certified shows a satisfactory decrease, and in the case of anthrax the number of animals affected is very small. The committee are pleased to report that this is one of the very few counties in England which has been entirely free from sheep scab during the past year.

On the proposition of Mr M. H. Best, the chairman, the report was passed.

(Berkshire Chronicle 3.5.1904)

1911, Houghton Cottages, West Clandon: Levi is now a hay trusser, working for a thatcher. He and Sarah have been married eighteen, and have lost three of their eight children, John, the infant who died in their first year of their marriage, then the little girl, Annie, and Edward John Thomas whose birth had been announced so joyously in 1902. My mother, Florence is there, aged five, and her brother Harry, a year younger.

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Profession	Address	Remarks
1	Levi Honour	47	Male	Hay trusser	Houghton Cottages, West Clandon, Guildford	
2	Sarah Honour	43	Female	Wife	Houghton Cottages, West Clandon, Guildford	
3	Emily Honour	18	Female	Daughter	Houghton Cottages, West Clandon, Guildford	
4	Levi Honour	18	Male	Son	Houghton Cottages, West Clandon, Guildford	
5	Florence Honour	5	Female	Daughter	Houghton Cottages, West Clandon, Guildford	
6	Harry Honour	4	Male	Son	Houghton Cottages, West Clandon, Guildford	

this is correctly lined up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

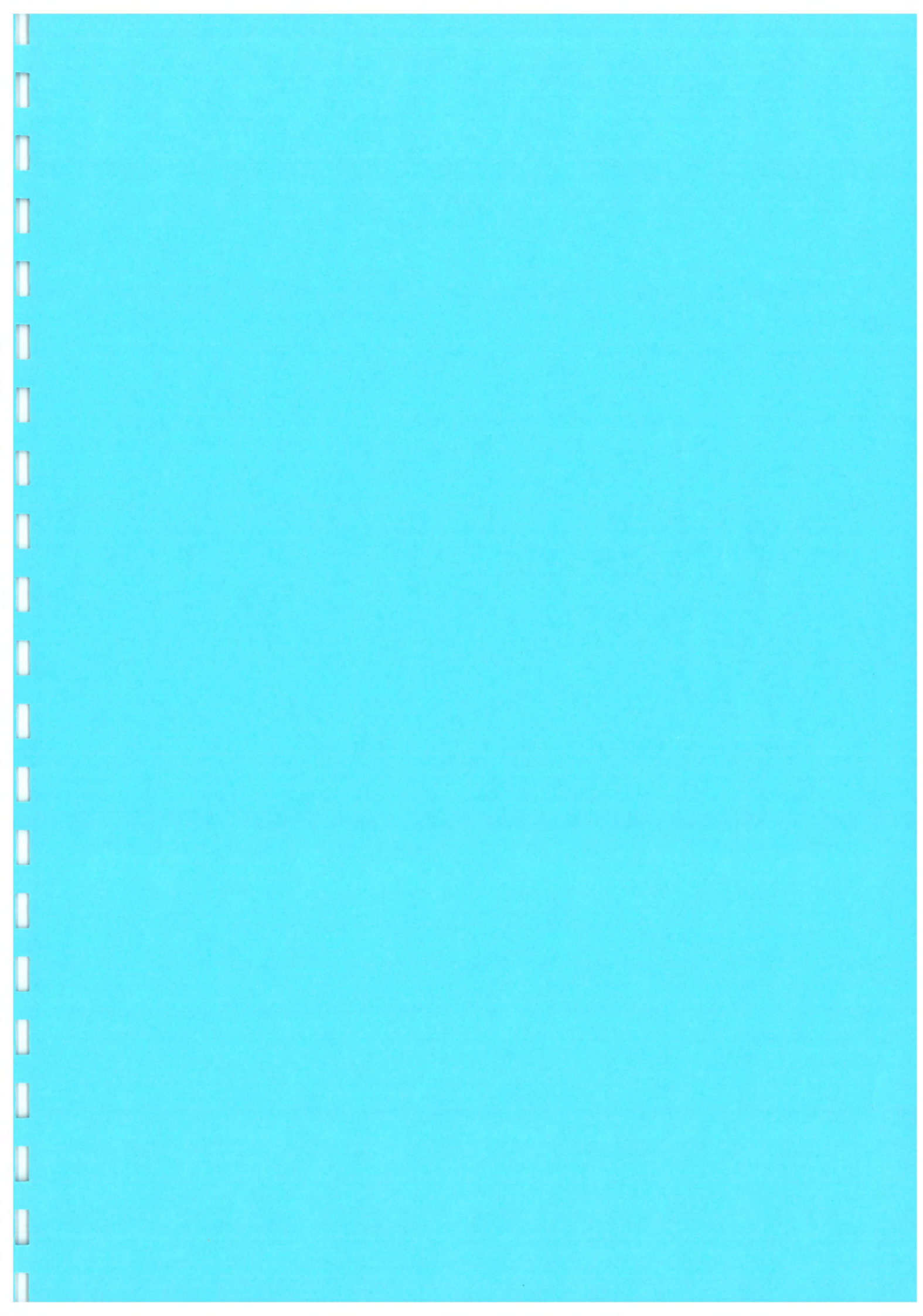
Levi Honour
 Address Houghton Cottages West Clandon
 Guildford

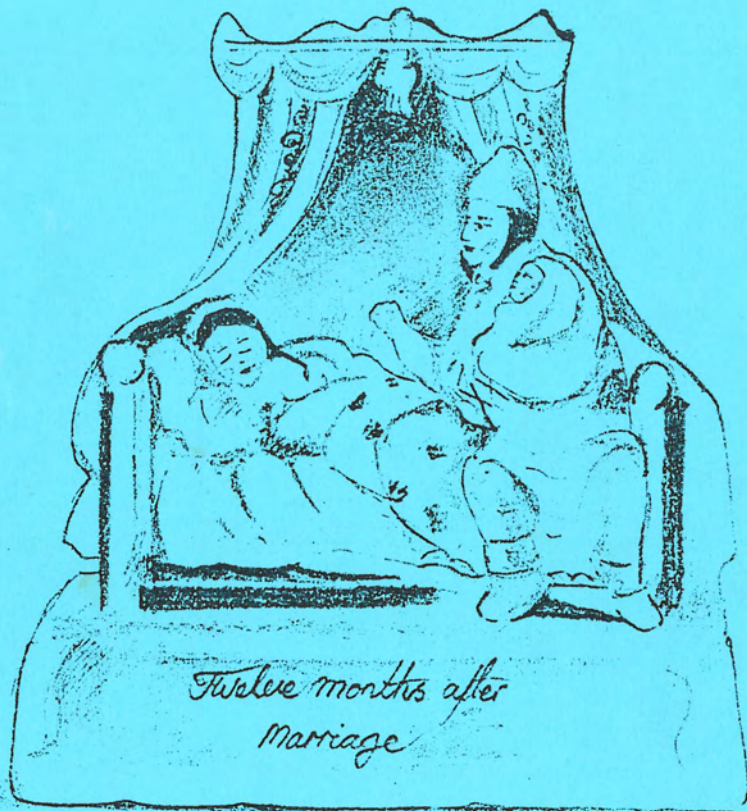
No 374					
Sarah Honan	West End Clays Ripley	Sept 11 th 1916	49 years	Wanborough	
No 373					

Sarah, aged 49, died at West Clandon and was buried at St Mary's Ripley, Surrey on 11 September 1916.

After their mother died, Flo and Harry lived for several months with various aunts until coming to Bristol, with their father who was engaged on some sort of mysterious mission, which has never been properly explained, always referred to as : 'war work; getting fodder for the army'.

The story continues in Part Two.





Twelve months after
Marriage