

# OUR FAMILY HISTORY



*An Investigation into our Family Histories  
by  
Phil and Sheila Rippon (née Knowles)*

*Upton, Oxfordshire, July 2005*



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# PREFACE

This account relates to both “Rippon” and “Knowles” families since our objective is to provide a record for our descendants whose interest, naturally, covers both sides of their family. We hope that it will also be of interest to anyone related to any of the families included.

However, the account is divided into sections so that the parts relevant to any particular surname can easily be separated.

The idea of compiling our family history arose from two small incidents - the first the sighting by Brian of a clock inscribed “Rippon” in Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park and the second an entry in a book I bought listing one Richard Rippon, a maker of watch mechanisms in London in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. My family had a clockmaking business in Sheffield until 1929 but I also discovered a clockmaking family named Rippon in Essex and it seemed much more likely that the clock in Cumberland Lodge had been made by the Essex family.

However, in my case I set out to uncover an “obvious” connection between the clockmaking Rippons of London and Sheffield. I reasoned that both the surname and the craft of clockmaking are so uncommon that there must be some connection. However, none has materialised so far and at present I conclude that it does not exist.

The story, on both sides of the family, is one of static families living in the same village, county or town for perhaps 150 years or more. Then, finally, some individuals moving to a surprising extent during the nineteenth century, with the progressively complete

geographic dispersion of families during the twentieth century.

The case of Sheila and I demonstrates this change in social mobility very well. How did it happen that Sheila, born in Middlesbrough and I, born in Cheshire, found ourselves living in the remotest part of Kent?

We met in Manchester University, where Sheila was reading Modern Languages. Not that I was at Manchester - I was at Oxford reading Physics at that time but naturally I had many friends at Manchester and, Oxford having shorter terms, I spent some time hanging round the Manchester Union.

Once graduated, however, Sheila’s work in the Foreign Office took her first to Bletchley and then to London while I joined the Navy and after a journey round the world followed with jobs in Birmingham, London and, finally, Broadstairs.

The first edition of this History was written in Broadstairs, since when we have moved once more, this time to Oxfordshire to be nearer our sons.

Our thanks go to the correspondents and friends we have made in the course of our researches, our relatives, the patient staff in the many record offices we have haunted, and especially to our son Brian who started it all, persisted in researching the Cumberland Lodge clock which has taught us so much about Edwin the Clockmaker, and, recently, has found valuable sources on the “Web”. He also advised on the layout and typeset the frequent drafts and final manuscript.

Without all this help the History would not have been

possible.

*Sheila and Phil Rippon  
Upton, Oxfordshire  
July 2005*



*Phil & Sheila’s wedding, 1946*

## Sources

The following are the main sources we have used together with the usual abbreviations where we have used these in the text. In the ten years since we started most of the public sources have been made more widely available particularly in local Record Offices and the Internet and the original collections relocated. There is little point therefore in quoting current addresses which are all subject to change.

However the Society of Genealogists publishes a useful leaflet listing the addresses of all the main sources of family history data (website - [www.sog.org.uk](http://www.sog.org.uk))

## Books - mostly out of print!

“Iron and Steel” by W.K.V.Gale

“Sheffield Steel” by K.C.Barraclough

“Ford and the Ford Valley” by Amos Bright

“Ridgeway Village and its Industries” by Willis Fox

“People and Places of the Eckington District” by G.W.Shaw

“A Brief History of Eckington” ed. G.W.Shaw

“Reminiscences of Mosborough” by George Foster

“Silent Valley” by Vic Hallam

Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet museum handbook.

GRO	The General Record Office which houses the records of nearly all births, marriages and deaths since 1837. It is located in the Family Records Centre at the Public Record Office of the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in Myddleton Street, London but the records are also available on microfiche and some County Record Offices have copies.
Census	Microfilm copies of the Censuses for 1841 to 1891 are also held in the Family Records Centre. Indexes to the local sections of the censuses for some years have been prepared by some Family History Societies, notably Sheffield. Also the Mormon Church (see below) has transcribed and indexed the 1881 census. The census for 1901 will be published in 2002.
PRO	The Public Record Office in Kew where all Government Records open to the public may be viewed. Documents of particular value were the Hearth Tax Rolls 1664-4, the Free and Voluntary Present of 1661, Seamen’s Ticket Register and the record of Passport Issues.
Principal Probate Registry	All wills and grants of letters of administration since 1858 are held in this office. Prior to 1858 Wills were proved by the church and copies will be found in the Diocesan Records which are often held with the County Records. Particularly useful to us have been those in Lichfield, York and Wakefield.
IGI	The “International Genealogical Index” of, mostly, christenings and marriages, compiled by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) - the Mormon Church. Most County Record Offices have a copy of this on microfiche but more recently this data has been published in a different order on the LDS website <a href="http://www.familysearch.com">www.familysearch.com</a> .
PR	The records of births, baptisms, marriages and burials kept by parish churches, now mostly transferred to County Record Offices.
BT	The Bishops Transcripts, copies of the Parish Registers sent to the Diocesan Offices which form a useful check and alternative to the PRs particularly where these are in poor condition.
FHS	Various family history societies, notably Derbyshire, and Northumberland & Durham and Sheffield.



# PHIL'S FAMILY





# PHIL'S 'RIPPON' ANCESTORS

## The Origins of the “Rippon” Surname

There are a number of comprehensive lists of surname origins of which a typical account is that given by the Historical Research Center (HRC).

All agree that the name is “toponymic” i.e. derives from a place name, though I find this a superficial view.

The name is ascribed both to an Old English tribe called the “Hrypæ” and to the town of Ripon in Yorkshire, which itself took its name from the same tribe. The question is whether the “Rippon” surname derived exclusively from the town, or whether several families took their names independently from their tribal name. Clearly “William de Ripon”, whose arms these are, mentioned by the HRC drew his name from his home town, but a look at the distribution of the “Rippon” surname between 1580 and 1874 shows that it is not centred on Yorkshire, as one might expect if the town of Ripon were the only source, but that the maximum concentrations are in two or three separated areas, none of which includes the town of Ripon.

Other writers associate the name with the town of Repton in Derbyshire but again this is only on the fringe of an area of high surname density.

The densest concentration is found in Durham and Northumberland, another high concentration is found in Rutland, Northampton and their neighbouring counties and a third enclave is found in Devon and Cornwall.

By contrast, Yorkshire itself has a fairly low average density of the surname.

The existence of three, geographically separated, areas of high concentration, remote from the town of Ripon, seems to me to indicate that a significant number of the families bearing the surname must have drawn it directly from their tribal origin, and not from the town name.



## Starting Points

The first step in assembling a family history is to review the information one already has, which, in my case, was very little.

I knew my parents' history of course and my mother's maiden name. I also knew that my paternal grandfather Reuben and great-grandfather Edwin were clockmakers who had a shop in the Wicker in Sheffield.

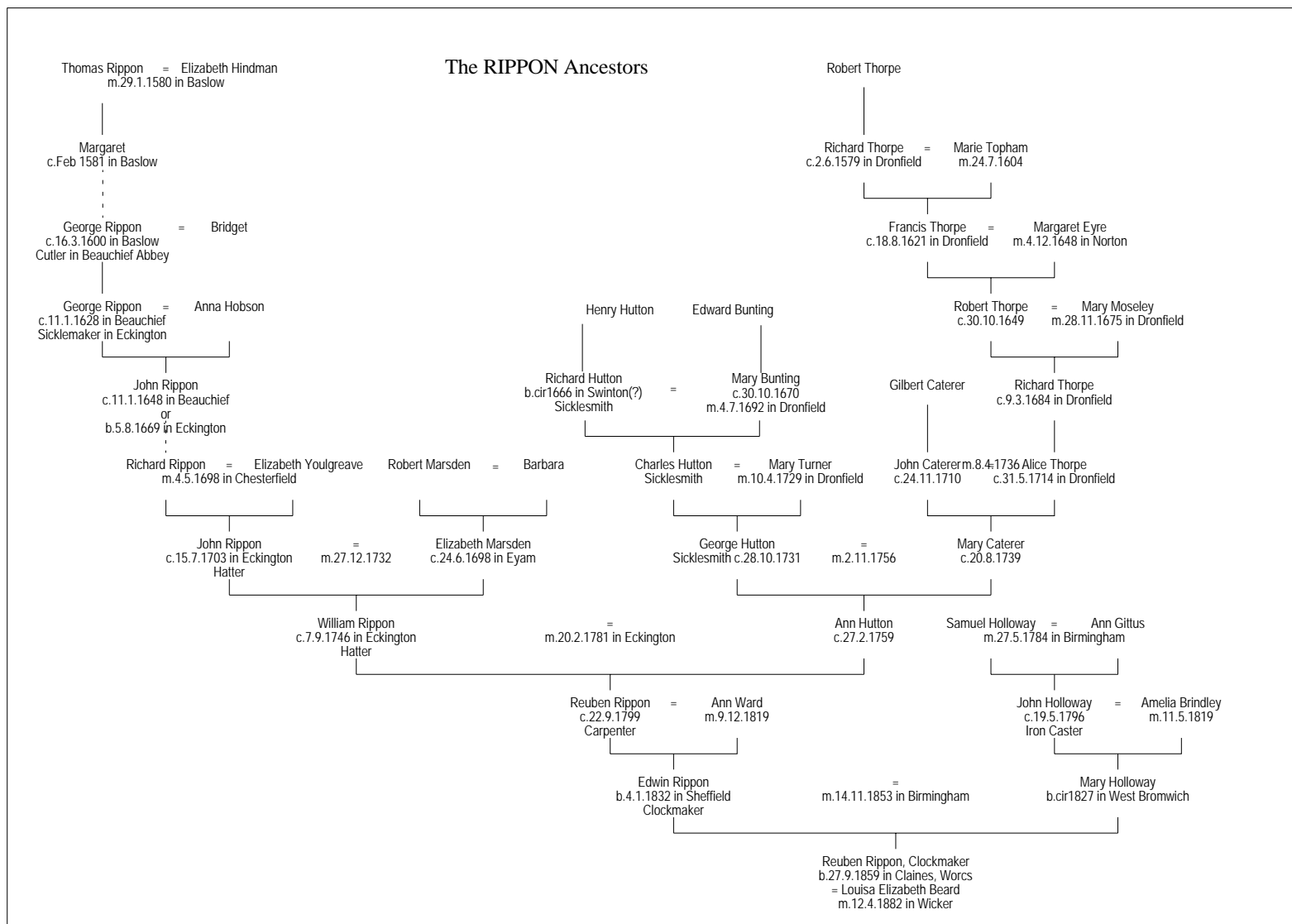
I had been told that “the family originated in Worcestershire” but there was another rumour that it was a Lincolnshire family.

My brother Roy was able to give me copies of birth and marriage certificates for our parents and, particularly important, grandfather Reuben's marriage certificate. These, however, were all I had of the formal record.

Reuben's marriage certificate gave his approximate date of birth which enabled me to find his birth in the GRO and confirmed that he had indeed been born in Worcester. It also provided his mother's maiden name, Mary Holloway.

This first encounter with the records at the GRO was daunting - at that time the records had not been copied on to microfiche and the labour of searching through heavy volumes covering only three months at a time was unexpectedly heavy and tedious work and I was not yet searching systematically.

However a further, brief, search located Edwin and Mary's marriage in Birmingham which gave Edwin's father as another (“Old”) Reuben and, equally



important, their address in Birmingham at the time of the wedding. It was this address, Carver Street, which enabled me to find the Holloway family in the 1851 census and this domestic record of my great-great-grandfather's family brought a sense of reality into the search which was a considerable thrill.

Edwin had clearly been born before general registration started in 1837 but now the IGI came to my aid since it recorded his baptism in Sheffield in 1832. Moreover it also recorded the baptisms of his older brothers and sisters, three of them, surprisingly, in Leeds. Of "Old" Reuben's origin, however, there was no record and the trail seemed to have gone cold.

However, while searching for Edwin's family in the 1871 census of the Brightside district of Sheffield I came across Reuben and his wife Isabel by accident which showed that Reuben had been born in Eckington, then in the county of Derbyshire. The IGI records at that time were only arranged by county which explained why I had not been able to find Reuben in the Yorkshire IGI file. This discovery opened the history of the Rippon family at least back to the seventeenth century and possibly to the sixteenth century, the earliest records which exist.

I now realised that I needed to examine the Derbyshire IGI file which covers the period from 1580 until 1874. The earliest entries under "Rippon" appear in 1580 in Baslow, but the first Eckington entry does not appear until 1700 and is the first of four children born to Richard Rippon between 1700 and 1705 who were almost certainly the children of Richard Rippon and Elizabeth Youlgreave who were married in neighbouring Chesterfield in 1698.

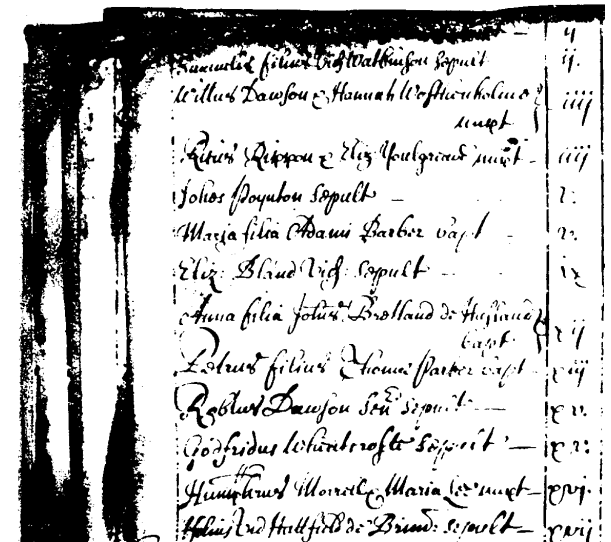
## The Earliest Rippon Records

The marriage of Richard Rippon and Elizabeth Youlgreave is the earliest event in the history for which we have traceable written records. However, the Parish Records and other data for Eckington and neighbouring parishes provide strong indications of Richard's ancestry and, indeed, of Elizabeth's parentage and origin. These entries link with items of information from other sources to construct a possible Rippon family tree as far back as 1580.

The earliest Rippon entries in the Derbyshire section of the IGI relate to a family in Baslow, starting in 1580 and continuing until 1611. After this date there are no further entries so the name must have died out in Baslow. During this period there were several marriages of Rippon girls but the one male Rippon mentioned, George, born to Margaret Rippon in 1600, must have left Baslow.

However from this time the IGI records a series of Rippon events in Norton, starting in 1620 and continuing until 1648 after which there are no further entries, suggesting that the name died out in Norton. Also I found an excellent transcription of the Norton Parish Register (Strutt) which covers the period from 1569 until 1650 and includes a number of entries relating to the Rippon family.

At that time the parish of Norton included Beauchief and the Apprentice Register of the Cutlers' Company shows that during this period a George Rippon was active as a cutler in Beauchief, as also was a Thomas Rippon in Bolehill in Norton, George having established his Mark at least by 1625. Since Beauchief lies on the main road between Baslow and Sheffield it seems possible that this George (senior) had moved from Baslow to be apprenticed as a cutler perhaps about 1612. There were some Rippon events in Norton at the time but these were marriages of Rippon girls.

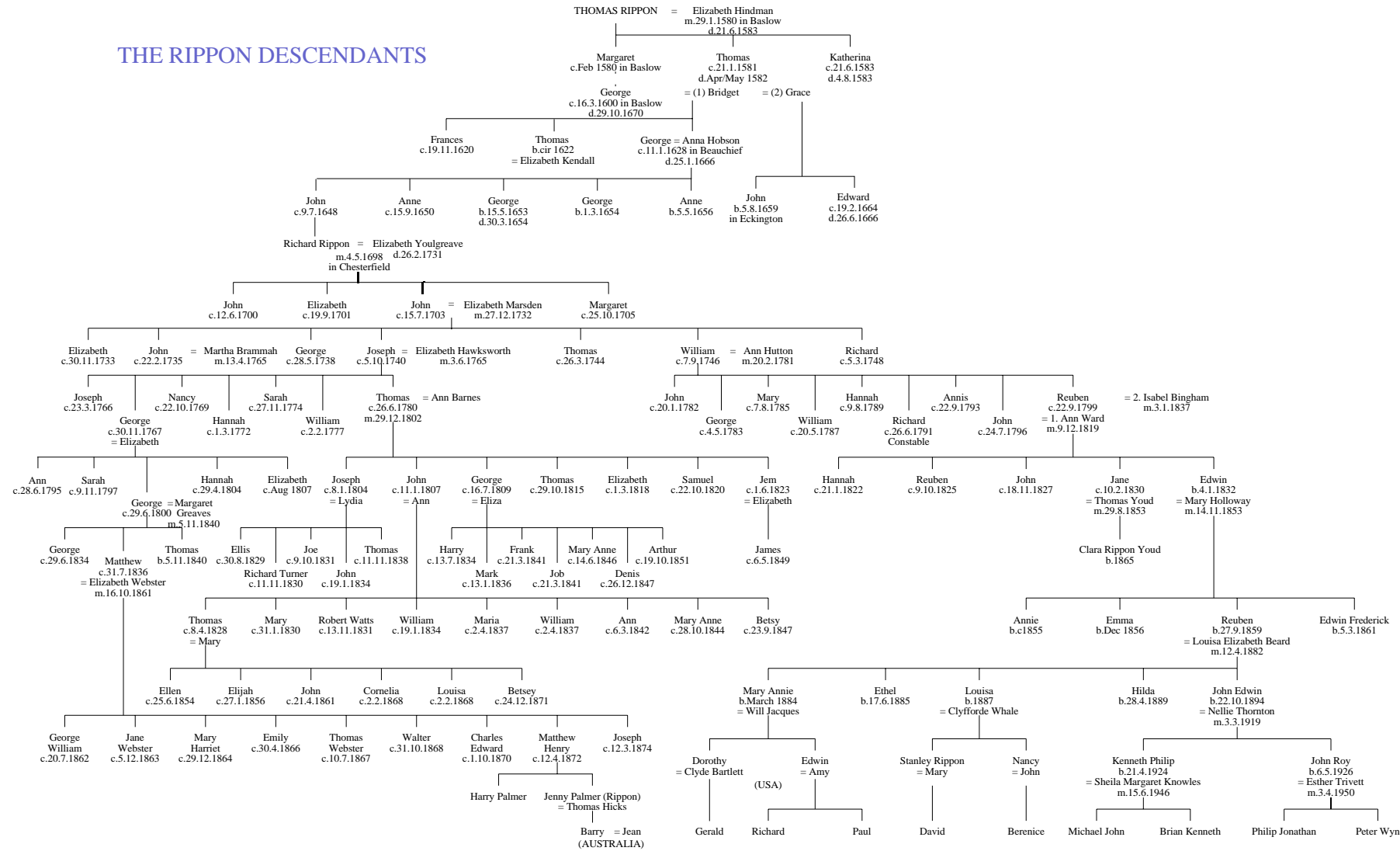


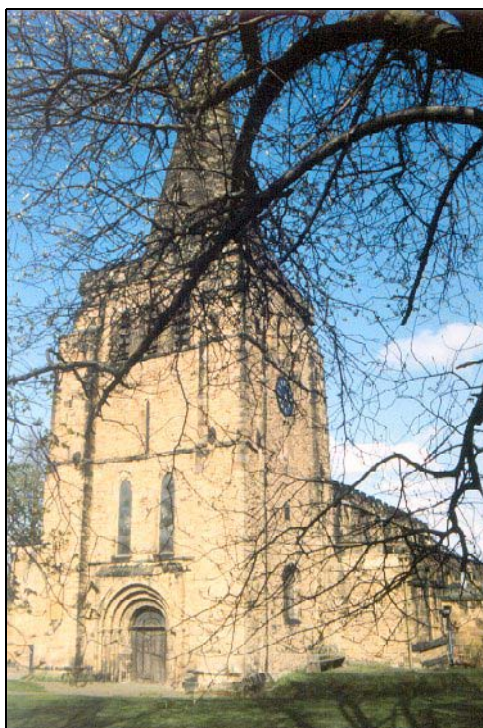
*The Marriage of  
Richard Rippon and  
Elizabeth Youlgreave in 1698*

George senior took as apprentices his own sons, Thomas, born about 1622, George (junior) born in 1628, and then, in 1655, another George, the son of "Thomas Rippon of Bolehill, deceased". George senior's son Thomas had married Elizabeth Kendall in 1641 and a son George was born to them in 1643 so I assume that it was he who was apprenticed to his grandfather. This apprenticeship was, however, transferred to John Sheirtcliffe in 1657. A George Rippon, cutler, appears in the Sheffield Hearth Tax return in 1672 who may very well have been this grandson since he would have completed his apprenticeship in about 1664.

Norton, like Ridgeway, was a significant centre of cutlery manufacture, particularly of scythes and sickles. The River Moss and the Abbey Brook both rise in the parish only a few hundred yards apart. The

## THE RIPPON DESCENDANTS





*Eckington Church*

Moss flows eastwards through Ford and the Ford Valley, across Ridgeway to Eckington and on to join the River Rother. The Abbey Brook flows westwards into the River Sheaf at Beauchief. Both rivers were active cutlery-making areas and indeed an exhibit of a cutler's dam, hammer and forge is preserved in the Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet at Beauchief. The dam at Abbeydale was established about 1685, rather later than George senior, but it is known that the monks of Beauchief Abbey had established a forge on the opposite side of the river by the thirteenth century so perhaps George plied his trade at this forge.

George junior married Anna Hobson in about 1647 and the last "Rippon" event in the Norton Parish Register is the birth of a son, John, to George and Anna in 1648. After this there are no further entries under "Rippon" in Norton either in the IGI or the Parish Register.

By contrast there are no Rippon entries in the Eckington Parish register before 1650, when Anne, daughter of George was baptised followed by five more children. From this time on there was a Rippon family in Eckington which continued until the end of the twentieth century. The Eckington Hearth Tax rolls for 1664 list two "Rippons", George and Thomas, both having "one extra" hearth which was the way cutlers hearths were described in that census and it seems very likely that this is the George who was apprenticed as a cutler to his father George in Beauchief. George took his freedom in 1651 and it seems probable that he moved from Norton to Eckington after doing so. The river Moss was a natural migration path for cutlers and the distance from Norton to Ridgeway is only about three miles.

Further support for this hypothesis has been given by the publication of the Eckington Court Rolls Volumes 4 and 5 which cover the years 1633 to 1804. From 1655 onwards there are several cases involving

"George Rippon, cutler, and Anne his wife". Since the name of the mother is not given in the Eckington baptismal records I had not been able to substantiate the hypothesis that George and Anna had moved from Norton to Eckington. However, the Court Rolls lend strong support to the idea.

Also from 1664 onward a distinction is made in the Rolls between George Rippon junior, cutler, husband of Anne, and George Rippon senior, also a cutler, who appears with his wife Grace. One assumes that the two were father and son but in the Norton PR George junior's mother is called Bridget. Possibly George senior's first wife Bridget died and he moved to Norton to be close to his son, marrying for the second time to Grace. Possibly the "Thomas" listed in the Hearth Tax rolls was George senior's second grandson, son of the deceased Thomas, who would have been 12 in 1657 and might have moved with his grandfather to learn the cutlery trade with the two Georges in Eckington. This would also account for the fact that the apprenticeship of grandson George was transferred in 1657 from George senior to another cutler, John Sheirtcliffe.

There are two burials of "George Rippons" listed in the Eckington records at about this time, one in the BT in 1666 and one in the PR in 1670. Since George

Rippon	Frederick, son of Elizabeth, Mosbro', spinster ; to Staniforth Elijah Naboth, Mosbro' mr., si. ; 7, 1814.
"	George, son of George, Bowcheife ; to Father, c. ; F. 1651. [c., 8, 1657, F. 1665.
"	" s. of Thos., Bolehill, Nrtn., c., dec. ; to (1) Rippon Geo., Beauchiffe Abb., c., 9, 1655 ; (2) Sheirtcliffe John.
"	" s. of John, Mosbro' mr. sd., hatter ; to Gill John, Cuckold haven, si. ; 8, 1751, F. 1791.
"	" s. of Joseph, Ridgway, si. ; to Hutton Joseph, Ridgwy., si. ; 7, 1783, F. 1792.
"	Joseph, son of John, Mosbro', hatter ; to Turner John, Slode lane, si. ; 8, 1753.
"	" son of John, Eckington, hatter, dec. ; to Cadman Benjamin, jr., fi. ; 7, 1790.
"	" son of John ; to Staniforth Robert, Sload lane, si. ; 1792.
"	Joshua, p.b. ; to (1) Cartwright John, c., till 24, 1676 ; (2) Barlow Obadiah, c., 1681.
"	Thomas, son of George, Bewcheife ; to Father, c. ; F. 1645.
"	" p.c., s. of Thos., Mosbro' mr., hatmkr. ; to Turner Robert, Ridgway, si. ; 7, 1791.
"	" son of Joseph, Ridgway, si. ; to Hutton Joseph, Ridgway, si. ; 7, 1794.

*John Rippon (Hatter) apprenticed his sons as sicklesmiths*

Rippon senior appears in the Court Roll of 1669 I presume the burial in 1670 was that of George senior and that in 1666 of George junior. Certainly Anne, wife of George junior, is described as a widow in the Court Roll of 1674. The seven children born in Norton and Eckington at this time to “George Rippon” are still puzzling. Three of the baptismal names, John, George and Anne are repeated, but I have not found burials for all the first-born having these names. There is a record of the baptism on the 9th February 1669 of a John, son of John Roppon who can only have been the John born in Norton in 1648 to George and Anna in which case the John born in 1659 could have been the son of George senior and his second wife Grace. Richard Rippon might have been another son of “John Roppon”. The repeated use of the same christian names, the condition of the records and the poor record keeping at the time of the Protectorate makes it very difficult to sort out the relationships at this time.

The Court Rolls also provide information about the probable parentage of Richard’s wife Elizabeth Youlgreave. This is a very rare surname and I had not previously found any examples which might be connected with Elizabeth. However, “Richard Youlgreave of Staveley, wood collier, (i.e. a charcoal burner) and Margaret his wife” surrendered land in Eckington in 1679, and Margaret, on her own, occupied land in October 1679. The uncommon surname and the fact that Richard and Elizabeth named their second daughter “Margaret” makes it almost certain that they were Elizabeth’s parents.

The fact that Richard Youlgreave came from Staveley may explain why Richard and Elizabeth were married in Chesterfield since Staveley lies midway between Eckington and Chesterfield and the Chesterfield parish church may have been nearer or more accessible.

Although the condition of the registers and the geographical moves make it impossible to be certain it seems very probable that our Rippon line

originated in Baslow about 1580 and entered the cutlery trade, specialising in sickle and scythe making in which they were continuously occupied until about 1965. I was to discover, however, that my own branch had left this trade by 1700. Further examination of the PRs and BTs may well elicit more information on this period and hopefully a record of Richard’s baptism.



*Dam in Beauchief Abbey grounds.  
George Rippon of “Beauchiffe Abbey” apprenticed his sons Thomas  
and George, and his nephew George, as cutlers*

## **The “Metalworking” Rippons - the beginning**



*Old Tilt Hammer beam at Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet*



*Tilt Hammer at Abbeydale*



# This is the last Will and Testament

of me William Rippon of Mordungham in the parish of Bockington in County of Derby Master whereby I give devise and bequeath unto my two Brothers in Law George Hutton and Thomas Hutton both of Mordungham in the said County of Derby, Heirs Executors Administrators and Assigns and whom I appoint Executors of this my Will all my Freehold and Copyhold Estates lying and being in the said Parish of Bockington which said Copyhold Estate I have Surrendered to the use of this my Will upon the Trusts and to and for the use and intents and purposes hereinafter declared of and concerning the same and all other my Estate and Effects whatsoever and wheresoever of what nature kind or quality soever the same may be except such as is hereafter excepted upon Trust that the said George Hutton and Thomas Hutton and the Survivors of them and the Executors and Administrators of such Survivor do and shall pay all my just Debts which I shall owe at my decease together with my Funeral Expenses and the Expenses of proving this my Will and in order to enable my said Executors to make the said Payments I will order and direct that they shall sell and dispose of such of my Freehold or Copyhold House or Houses as my beloved Wife shall think most meet Then upon further Trust that they the said George Hutton and Thomas Hutton and the Survivors of them and the Heirs Executors Administrators and Assigns of such Survivor do and shall let all such Freehold and Copyhold Acres and premises from time to time as shall not be sold and the profits arising from such letting or letting shall be paid to my said Wife when she shall become due and such of my Freehold and Copyhold Houses as shall have been sold and the money not wholly expended shall be paid to my said Wife in such proportion as she shall think proper and if there shall not have been sufficient sold to maintain my said Wife and such younger Children till she become of age or twenty one years Then my said Executors shall sell such other House as my said Wife shall think proper and so as my said Wife shall not want during her natural life from and after the death of my said Wife upon further Trust that the said George Hutton and Thomas Hutton or the Survivors of them their Heirs Executors or Administrators shall sell and dispose of all and every my personal Estate and Effects except the shop tools which I give and devise to my son Richard Rippon and also all my Freehold and Copyhold House and premises which shall not have been sold if any and the money thence arising shall be divided amongst my Children namely William Richard Annis and Reuben share and share alike but if any of my said Children should happen to die before such share can be divided then his or their share or shares shall be divided amongst the Survivors of them share and share alike and for the facilitating of the sale of all or any of my Freehold or Copyhold Estate I do hereby declare that the Receipt of the

Said

George Hutton and Thomas Hutton or the Survivors of them shall be good and sufficient discharge to the Purchaser of my Freehold or Copyhold Estate and his or their respective Heirs Executors or Administrators for such Freehold or Copyhold Estate as shall be therein acknowledged to be received and such purchaser or purchasers for or their respective Heirs Executors and Administrators or any them shall not be liable or answerable or accountable for any loss of such purchase money or any part thereof and I do hereby revoke all former and all other Wills heretofore by me made I do William Rippon the Testator have wrote my name and set my Seal this Twelfth day of May in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Ten

Witness

Sealed Published and declared for the last Will and Testament of me William Rippon in the Presence of us and in the Presence of

George Hutton  
William Cavell

William Wyke

Black Doctor of Laws Vicar General of the Honourable and Right Reverend Father in God James by Divine Permission Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry by their precept made known to me that the original last Will and Testament of William Rippon late of the Parish of Bockington in the County of Derby and Diocese of Lichfield and Coventry, lately deceased (a copy of which said original Will is hereto annexed) was proved before Blaise Brucheridge Black Doctor in Trinity his surrogate at Chesterfield the Second day of May in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eleven and administration of it and singular the Goods Chattels and Credits of the said deceased was legally granted to George Hutton and Thomas Hutton the Executors named in the said Will being first sworn and sworn of Law

William Wyke  
Sworn under £100

Wm. Mott D. Reg.



# THE ECKINGTON RIPPONS

## The Sicklemakers

The discovery that great-great-grandfather Reuben had been born in Eckington suggested that an examination of the 1841 Eckington census would be worthwhile.

This disclosed that several families of “Rippons” were still living there, all of whom, with one exception, were occupied as sicklemakers. The sole exception was the village constable, Richard Rippon, who later turned out to be Reuben’s older brother.

Fortunately the IGI Derbyshire file from 1700 is very complete, particularly for Eckington, and from this it was possible to construct the tree of a single family living continuously in Eckington until at least 1874. Also, the entries in the 1841 census could all be identified in the IGI file.

My great-great-grandfather, “old” Reuben, was a member of this family, his father, William, being a grandson of Richard and Elizabeth.

The sicklemaking occupation went back at least to George Rippon, William’s brother, who was born in 1767 but I had not yet found out whether William was also a sicklemaker.

Consequently Sheila and I planned to spend some time in Derbyshire carrying out a search of the Parish Registers, particularly since we had discovered that both of our paternal ancestors originated in the county!

Before we could make our visit, however, I had a stroke of great good fortune. We had joined the Derbyshire Family History Society and in their list of

members’ interests I found a Mrs. Jean Hicks living in Australia who was also researching the Rippon name in Eckington and so I wrote to her.

Her reply not only explained the sicklemaking connection but opened the investigation into a branch of the family which, without her information, I probably would never have uncovered.

Jean’s husband, Barry, is the son of Jenny Palmer Rippon who is also descended from John, Richard’s second son, which makes us fifth cousins, and Jean had already been studying the Rippon family history for many years.

The first information which Jean sent me included a number of press cuttings from twentieth century Sheffield newspapers which reported on the old established sicklemaking firm of Hutton & Co of High Lane in Eckington. These cuttings show not only that the Hutton company had been in business continuously for about 260 years but that the Rippon family had worked for it for over 200 years. Indeed the works manager in 1959 was still a Mr. Joseph E. Rippon. I already knew from the IGI that my great-great-great-grandfather William had married an Ann Hutton so it seemed probable that, in a small village, this would be the same family and that the Huttons were my ancestors.

The press reports had said that the Hutton firm traced its roots back to a Richard Hutton about 1700 and the IGI did record the marriage of a Richard Hutton to Mary Bunting in 1692 in nearby Dronfield so it seemed probable that this was the founder of the Hutton family. What relationship Ann was or where Richard himself had originated I could not tell.

When finally we managed to visit the Derbyshire Record Office in Matlock the family history in 18th century Eckington became a lot clearer and the Matlock information was supplemented by some manuscripts I found in the Sheffield City Archives.

The parish register clarified the Hutton family and confirmed that six children were born to Richard Hutton. I was able to construct a family tree down to Ann Hutton who married William Rippon, though even this was ambiguous at one time.

There were actually two Ann Huttons in the register born eleven years apart, both daughters of George Hutton, but only one marriage of a George Hutton. Moreover there seemed to be two distinct sets of children born to George. I was not able to resolve this until we were able to make a second visit to Matlock when I found a later marriage of a George Hutton to Mary Caterer which I had previously overlooked due to the fact that it took place in 1756 just after the Hardwick marriage act with the result that subsequent marriages were recorded in a separate book with a special format.

Clearly the earlier marriage was of Richard Hutton’s fourth son George but “our” Ann was the daughter of Richard’s grandson, George, son of Charles Hutton and Mary Turner. This can be deduced from the age of William and Ann’s youngest child, Reuben, who was born in 1799, too late for his mother to have been the elder of the two Anns. Also Ann’s brothers George and Thomas were beneficiaries in William’s will. There were sons of both these names in the family of the later George. Clearly Ann was Richard’s great-granddaughter therefore.

## The Hutton Family

Several different versions of Richard Hutton's origin are given. A descendant of his, Joseph Hutton, constructed a pedigree of the Hutton family in 1853 and wrote that Richard was "a poor weaver from North Yorkshire or Durham" and there were certainly a number of Huttons in that area at the time.

I found another clue when I discovered Richard's apprenticeship in the Cutler's Company records. This shows that Richard was apprenticed to Thomas Staniforth for eight years and nine months in 1678 and gives his father's name as Henry Hutton, a husbandman (i.e. a tenant farmer) from Swinton. I presume that this must be the Swinton near Rotherham although this is still some distance from Eckington. However, Henry Hutton cannot have been living for very long in Swinton since there is no

record of Richard's birth in the parish register there. Indeed there are no Huttons at all, and Henry is not listed in any of the local Hearth Tax rolls. This tax was levied between 1664 and 1672 and from the date of his apprenticeship Richard must have been born about 1666.

However, the IGI does have records of the births of a number of "Henry Huttons" of which the most likely are the son of Gilbert Hutton born in Allerton Maulevever near Ripley, North Yorks, in 1627 or the son of Henry Hutton born in 1644 in Witton Gilbert, Durham. Either of these would satisfy the description given in the pedigree of the Huttons.

It is also possible to reconcile the descriptions of Richard as a "poor weaver" and as a "farmer". Apparently at that time farming was a much more seasonal occupation than it is now and it was common for farmers to occupy the winter in the

weaving trade. It also seems that farming was a more peripatetic occupation at that time, labourers being in the habit of travelling the country hiring their services wherever needed. So Henry Hutton may have only been temporarily resident in Swinton when he apprenticed Richard and could easily have come from farther afield.

It was also the custom for the sicklemaking trade to stop work from August 12th and for the sicklemakers to go into the fields to help gather in the harvest.

The Huttons built a new sicklemaking forge, Phoenix Works, on the corner of High Lane and Ridgeway in 1822 which only closed in 1988 and have now been converted into a row of cottages and courtyard where the original forge stood. On driving down Ridgeway, though, I noticed an obvious ruined mill race by the roadside and went back the following day to trace the stream which led me to the Ford Dam behind the Bridge Inn. This observation encouraged me to read the history of Eckington and particularly Ridgeway which I found quite fascinating.

The history of iron working and particularly sicklemaking in Ridgeway is very ancient. The area was rich in ironstone and the Ford Valley at the bottom of the Ridgeway has a number of dams which later provided water power in exactly the same way as did the Rivelin Valley for the early cutlers.

Gerard Coteler had a grindstone by the river in Ford in 1350 though it is known that there were smithies operating in the area before that. The Abbott of Wisbech was smelting iron there in 1386 and the craft of sicklemaking was certainly well established by the sixteenth century. In those days the fuel used for smelting and refining was wood and the forests round the Ford valley were felled to supply this need. Later on coal, both opencast and deep-mined, was found in Eckington which must have enhanced the area's natural advantages and help to maintain its pre-eminence in this field. At one time a tenth of all

Hutton Benjamin, s. of Andrew, Fullwood, pedlar ; to (1) Ward Stephen, c., 8, 1740 ; (2) Allen Stephen, Coalpit lane, c.  
 ,, Charles, son of Richard, Ridgway, si. ; to Booth Joseph, Ridgway, si. ; 11, 1712, F. 1724.  
 ,, ,, s. of Joseph, Ridgway, si. ; to (1) Cooper Steph., fi., 7, 1778 ; (2) s. of Chas., to Geo., Mosbro', si., F. 1780  
 ,, ,, son of Charles, Ridgway, edge tool mkr. ; to Haslam Joseph, Ridgway, sickles ; 7, 1813.  
 ,, Ezra, (1) s. of Joseph, Ridgway, si., dec., to Joseph, si., 7, 1789. (2) s. of Joseph ; Purchase, F. 1792.  
 ,, ,, son of Charles, Mosbro', si. ; to Rother Robert, gr. of files ; 7, 1801.  
 ,, George, (1) s. of Richard, to Joseph, Ridgway, si., 2-5, 1727. (2) sh., F. 1761.  
 ,, ,, s. of George, button maker ; to Rowbottom James, k. ; 7, 1799.  
 ,, ,, (1) s. of George, Mosbro', sh., F. 1786. (2) s. of Charles, Mosbro', si., F. 1800.  
 ,, Gilbert, (1) s. of George, Mosbro', si., F. 1791. (2) Henry, F. 1760. (3) Herbert, k., Purchase, F. 1881.  
 ,, James, son of Andrew, Fulwood, pedlar, dec. ; to Smith W., Coalpit lane, c. ; 8, 1737.  
 ,, ,, son of Thomas, Coalpit lane, c. ; to Smith William, Coalpit lane, c. ; 8, 1758.  
 ,, John, son of Andrew, Fullwood, dec. ; to Woodcock William, c. ; 9, 1734, F. 1750.  
 ,, ,, son of James, c. ; to Butterworth John, shearsmith ; 7, 1774.  
 ,, ,, (1) s. of Thomas, c., F. 1766. (2) s. of Charles, Mosbro', si., F. 1792.  
 ,, Joseph, son of Richard, Ridgway, si. ; to Booth Jonathan, Ridgway, si. ; 9-7, 1712, F. 1722.  
 ,, ,, (1) F. 1751. (2) s. of Joseph, Ridgway, si., F. 1780. (3) s. of Chas., High lane, si., F. 1788.  
 ,, ,, son of William, Marsh lane, edge tool maker, dec. ; to Joseph, Ridgway, si. ; 7, 1803, F. 1810.  
 ,, Joe, son of Gilbert, Mosbro', si. ; to Hutton Gilbert ; 7, 1807.  
 ,, Mark, son of Thomas, Mosbro', si. ; to Hinchliffe Samuel, k. ; 7-7, 1799, F. 1813.  
 ,, Michael, son of John ; to John, k. ; F. 1791. Nicholas, son of Andrew ; to Allen Stephen, 9, 1731.  
 ,, Richard, son of Henry, Swinton, h. ; to Staniforth Thomas, Slode lane, scy. ; 8-9, 1678, F. 1704.  
 ,, Robert, son of Charles, Mosbro', si., dec. ; to (1) Father, 1793 ; (2) George, Eckington, si. ; 3-7, 1803.  
 ,, Thomas, (1) s. of Thos., to Kent Rich., Coalpit lane, c., F. 1730. (2) s. of Joseph, Ridgway, dec., si., 7, 1781.  
 ,, ,, (1) s. of Henry, k., F. 1791. (2) s. of Geo., Mosbro', si., F. 1792. (3) s. of John, k., F. 1802.

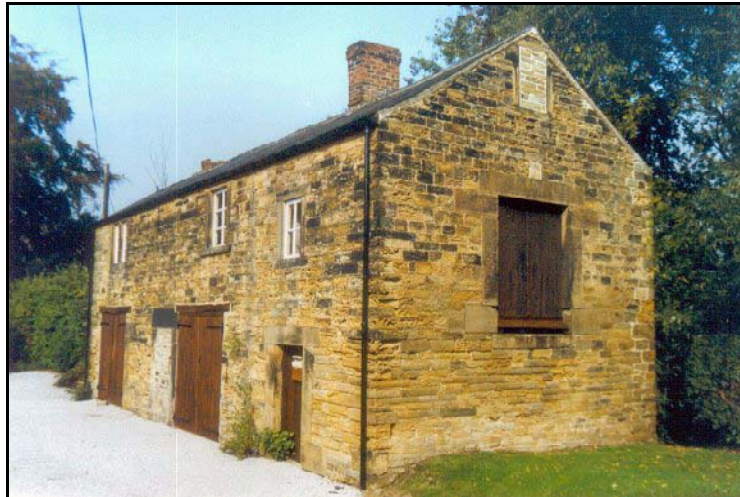
*Richard Hutton apprenticed as a sicklesmith*



*Birley Hey Dam*



*Mosborough*



*Birley Hey Forge*



*Ridgeway*

the iron smelted in England was worked in Eckington. Ironstone can still be found in the valley.

Today there remain neither coal mining nor ironworking. Ridgeway today is a quiet hamlet, much more attractive no doubt than in the days when the road was lined with forges from the junction with High Lane at the top, where there was an open cast coal mine, to the Ford wheel at the bottom. Several of the dams remain, Ford, Birley Hay, Neverfear and the two Mill dams, quiet lakes now dedicated to birdlife, anglers and walkers. The forges have been converted into cottages, instantly recognizable from the alignment perpendicular to the road and still showing the scars of the loading doors opening over the road. Even the Queens Head Inn was once a scythe and sicklemaking forge, known then as “Palais Royal” and owned by Joseph Hutton.

## The Hat Makers

The Eckington Parish Registers confirm almost exactly the IGI record of the Rippon family, with a few changes of dates and, more importantly, burials which are very rarely recorded in the IGI.

The baptisms of the four children of Richard Rippon are listed but now I found that three of them died as children or unmarried so that only the second son, John, survived to marry and raise a family. With only a few “strays” the entire, large, Rippon family in Eckington was descended from Richard and his one surviving son John. Three hundred years later there was only one Rippon left living in Eckington.

The Parish Register also recorded the burial of “Elizabeth, wife of Richard Rippon” in 1731 which I think confirms that the parents of this family were indeed the Richard and Elizabeth who married in Chesterfield in 1698.

Of Richard’s birth I have found no trace despite searching the Eckington register and also those of all

the neighbouring parishes. However, the Eckington register at the relevant date, about 1680, is in poor condition and is illegible in parts so it is possible that Richard’s birth has simply been obliterated. I have also searched the Bishops Transcripts without success although these are in better condition than the Parish Registers. These have not yet been copied however and examining the rolled and fragmented documents is not easy. When time permits I intend to make a much more thorough examination of the Transcripts for Eckington and the surrounding parishes.

One possibility is that Richard was the son of “John Roppon” who may have been the John born in Norton in 1648. This is suggested by Richard having named his two sons “John”, both by his persistence in using the name and the custom at that time of naming the first son after his paternal grandfather.

In the Sheffield City Archives there is a useful surname index to manuscripts held in the archives and I found that this included a number of documents relating to the Rippon family in Eckington, in particular the wills of William Rippon and George Rippon and a conveyance by Ann Rippon to Joseph and George Carnall.

William’s will was a great surprise. He described himself as a “Hatter” having a shop in the Eckington village of Mosborough, left his shop and hatmaking tools to his son Richard and directed that his widow, Ann, should ensure the proper upbringing of their younger children.

The will mentions four children William, Annis, Richard and Reuben, and I later discovered from the parish registers that Annis died in 1812, so that of nine children born to William and Ann, only three, William, Richard and Reuben survived to adulthood.

Among the other documents that I was able to examine in Sheffield was a complete list of apprentices to the cutlery trade registered with the Cutlers Company. “Cutlery” includes all hand cutting

tools such as sickles and scythes. Among this list I found George and Joseph Rippon, sons of John, a hatmaker of Mosborough Moor Side, who were apprenticed as sicklemakers in 1751 and 1753. William had two brothers called George and Joseph born in 1738 and 1740 respectively so I am sure that these were the apprentice sicklemakers and that William’s father John was the hatmaker.

William was not the only son whom John put to the hatmaking business - the cutler’s list shows that certainly one other son, Thomas, and possibly his first son, also John, became hatters. I later discovered from another correspondent, Mrs. Jennie Dixon, that John’s last son Richard, William’s younger brother, also became a hatter and moved to Lincoln, where he became a Freeman of the city.

It seems strange to me that a tiny village like Mosborough could support a family of hatmakers even accepting that, unlike nowadays, men always wore hats outdoors and often at work indoors. I remember that my father would always put his “bowler” on to go down from his office to the melting floor or machine shops of the steelworks! Still, it seems probable that the hats were not only sold in the shop but at the markets in the surrounding towns and villages.

It also seemed unlikely that John would have come to the hatmaking trade and opened his own shop in one generation. He would need to learn the trade, accumulate the necessary blocks and tools and invest in materials. In John’s will he describes himself as a ‘feltmaker’ so it appears that hatmaking may have developed from the basic wool processing trade. I thought it more probable that John’s father Richard and possibly earlier generations were already involved in related trades and this has been confirmed by the recently published Court Rolls of Eckington in which Richard is described in entries in 1709 and 1716 as part tenant of land in Mosborough.

Ultimately the hatmaking business was carried on by William's son Richard who combined it with his job as the local constable. Starting from John, the trade must have been carried on in Mosborough by the Rippon family for at least 150 years.

## **“Old” Reuben Rippon, 1799-1878**

Old Reuben was my great-great-grandfather and, for a boy born in a rural district, he led an unusually varied life and it is apparent that he was an early example of a country boy who moved to the big city and became, in the current idiom, “street wise”.

A list of his occupations is sufficient to show his versatility. He started as a joiner and became, in turn, a coal merchant, later expanding to dealing in lime and coal, a brickmaker, then a salesman in a timber yard, a timber merchant, a commission agent and, finally, in his Will, left several copyhold and leasehold properties.

He apprenticed his son, Edwin, into the skilled craft of clockmaking and probably encouraged him to found his own clockmaking business.

By contrast, his country cousins were born into the sickle making trade and remained in it throughout their lives.

Reuben was first identified from his son Edwin's marriage certificate which gives Reuben's trade as a carpenter but, of course, no other information. As a result I had to start a search for his death which turned out to be very long and confusing. Had I known it a search for his will would have been much quicker but this was early in our family history investigation.

Reuben himself was the youngest of nine children all born in Eckington to William and Ann Rippon. Of these nine however, only William, Richard and Reuben survived to adulthood. William died when Richard and Reuben were still young - Reuben was

only 12 - and William provided in his will for their upbringing.

Richard was to inherit William's business in Mosborough and became the village constable, ultimately the Steward. He did not marry until the age of 60 and when he did so it was to Mary Hutton who “had built a fine house just before her marriage”. He died aged 81 in 1871.

Reuben must have been apprenticed to a carpenter in about 1812, possibly closer to the centre of Sheffield since he married Ann Ward in the cathedral church of St. Peter in 1819 and their first child, a daughter named Hannah, was born in Sheffield in 1821.

By 1822 he was announcing himself as a “joiner” in White's Sheffield and West Riding directories, giving his address as 8 Tudor Street. Hannah, indeed, was baptized in Norfolk Street Chapel, just round the corner from Tudor Street.

However, the family moved quite soon to Leeds where three more children, Reuben (1825), John (1827) and Jane (1829) were born. Their next child, Edwin, was however born in Sheffield in January 1832.

This illustrates some of the pitfalls for the genealogist. One tends to consult the IGI first simply because of its convenient layout and easy accessibility compared with Parish Registers. There are however many errors and omissions. In this case the IGI gives the name of Edwin's mother as “Mabel”. In the censuses for 1861 and 1871 Reuben's wife is named as “Isabel” and an Isabel Rippon died in 1875 so it seemed probable that Edwin's mother “Mabel” was actually a misreading of “Isabel” and that Reuben had married a second time in about 1830.

This deduction however was far from accurate. When I finally found the relevant entries in the Parish Registers I discovered that Edwin had in fact been born to Reuben's first wife, Ann, in 1832, but that Reuben had married again in January 1837,

describing himself as a widower. Clearly Ann had died sometime between Edwin's birth and Reuben's second marriage.

So far, however, I have not been able to find a record of Ann's burial. Possibly she died when Edwin was born and was buried in a remote parish. Another, possibly fanciful, hypothesis is that Ann died in the cholera epidemic which swept Sheffield in the summer of 1832 and was buried in an unmarked grave. Cholera victims were buried in a separate cemetery but not all of the names were recorded. Even the officiating priests gave false names, such were the taboos operating at that time!

Whatever the cause Reuben married Isabel Bingham by Licence in Sheffield in January 1837. Isabel was nine years older than Reuben and came from Norton, the neighbouring parish to Eckington. I deduce that after the death of his wife Ann, Reuben went home to Eckington and possibly that Isabel looked after the infants Jane and Edwin.

The family was soon back in Sheffield, however, where in 1834 and 1837 in White's West Riding directory Reuben again announced himself as a “joiner” of Field street in Broomhall.

Reuben and his family next turn up in Birmingham in the 1841 census where he is described as a carpenter. The family at this time comprised Reuben and his wife Isabel together with Reuben's three children, Reuben now aged 15, Jane and Edwin. Of Hannah and John I have found no trace and assume that they both died young.

Son Reuben is described as an “auctioneer's clerk” which argues a fairly numerate upbringing despite all the changes in domicile. Reuben himself is subsequently listed in Wrightson & Webb's 1846 directory as a coal dealer in Icknield Square and again in White's directories of Birmingham in 1849 and Warwickshire in 1850 as a “lime & coal merchant” on Eyre Street (canal) wharf and a brickmaker in Handsworth.

This explains why both his children, Jane and Edwin, were married in Birmingham, where, clearly, Edwin had been apprenticed as a clockmaker.

In 1850 Reuben had a house in Monument Lane but in the 1851 census the family was living in Graham Street though Jane is not recorded in that census and son Reuben had died in 1849.

However, both Jane and Edwin married in Birmingham in 1853 and moved away and Reuben soon returned to Sheffield where he again announced himself in White's 1856 Sheffield directory as a "joiner" of 200, Saville Street. The family was now to remain in Burngreave until 1929.

Later Reuben and Isabel moved to 50, Normanton Street where Isabel died in 1875 aged 84. Reuben himself died in March 1878 leaving his estate, which included copyhold property in Mosborough Green and fourteen leasehold houses in Burngreave, to his two surviving children.

It is interesting to note that Jane's only child, Clara Rippon Youd, was, in 1881, a "School Pupil Teacher" aged 16, probably the first of the family in recorded generations to follow an "intellectual" career.

# THE CLOCKMAKERS

## Edwin Rippon, 1832-1890

My great-grandfather, Edwin, was born in Sheffield in 1832, the youngest child of “old” Reuben and his first wife, Ann. However, his mother died very soon after he was born and Edwin and his elder sister, Jane, were brought up by Reuben’s second wife, Isabel.

The family moved to Birmingham while Edwin was still a boy where his father initially followed his craft as a carpenter although he subsequently started a number of business ventures.

In the 1851 census Edwin is described as a “clockmaker” i.e. time-served and so he must have been apprenticed as a clockmaker, presumably in Birmingham, between the ages of about 12 and 19, i.e. 1844-1851. He might have served his time with any of a number of clockmakers working in Birmingham at that time.

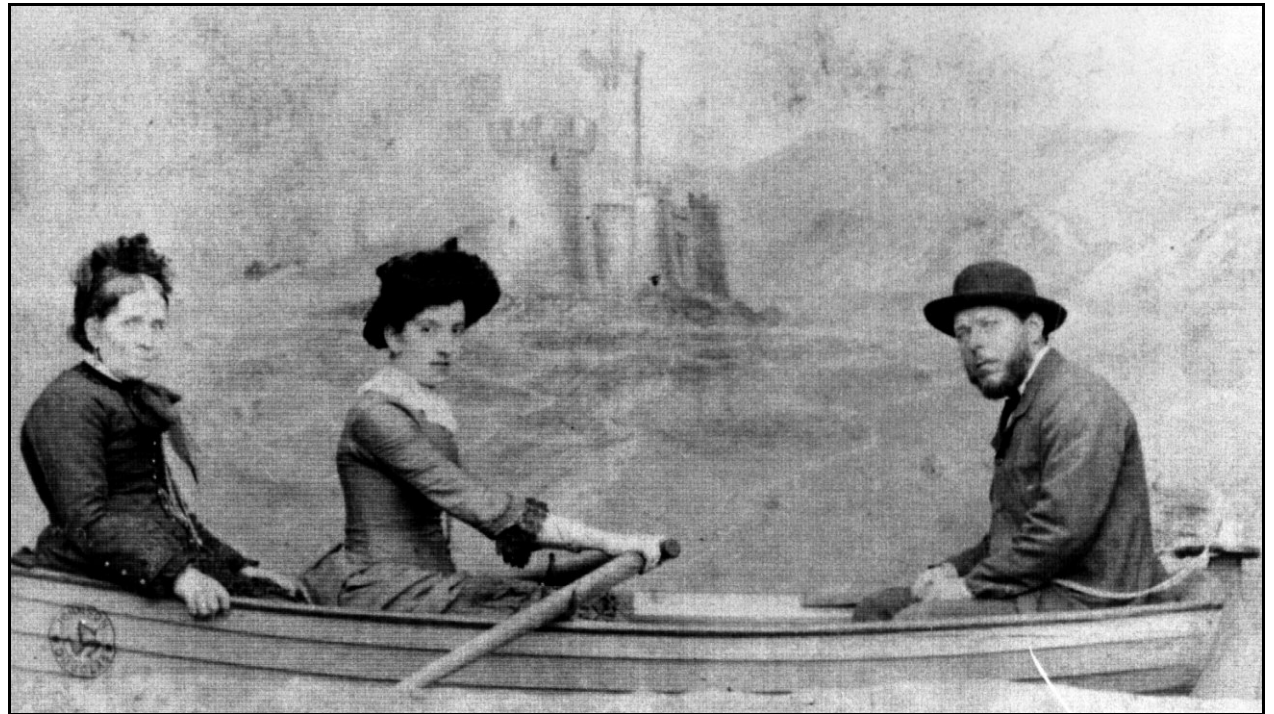
It is still a mystery how Edwin came to be apprenticed as a clockmaker. Despite the fact that a “Richard Rippon” was making watch movements in London at the start of the century, and that a son of his completed the Westminster Clock, I can find no connection between our family and the London family and no other connection with the clockmaking industry.

Perhaps Reuben, in his trade as a joiner, worked in Birmingham for a clock case maker, of which there were several, and through this trade came to know a clockmaker who took on young Edwin as an apprentice.

In 1853 Edwin married Mary Holloway, the eldest of the four children of John Holloway and Amelia Brindley. John was an Iron Caster from Shropshire but the first three girls were all employed in the forerunners of the Birmingham light engineering

industry - Mary and her younger sister in the “steel pen trade” and the youngest daughter as a pearl button maker. The youngest child, John, was an errand boy when he was only 11.

On his marriage certificate Edwin describes himself



*Mary (Holloway), Emma and Edwin Rippon  
Photographed on the Isle of Man*

Parish or Township of		Ecclesiastical District of		City or Borough of		Town of		Village of	
Birmingham		of Saint Paul		Birmingham		Birmingham			
House No.	Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb
					Males	Females			
57	Griffiths Court								
	Carver St.	Mary Ann Dacey	Head	Widow	38		Furnisher	Birmingham	
58	Griffiths Court	Samuel Mabley	Head	Man	25		Iron Worker	Shropshire	
	Carver St.	Jane Do	Wife	Man	25		Wife	Do King's Langley	
		Jane Do	Serv	W	5		Servant	Do Radborough	
		Mary Cook	Widow	W	25		Widow	Do Radborough	
59	Griffiths Court	John Holloway	Head	Man	35		Iron Castor	Shropshire Clabury	
	Carver St.	Anneline Do	Wife	Man	32			Staffordshire	
		Mary Do	Serv	W	25		Steel Pipe Trade	Do West Bromwich	
		Sophia Do	Serv	W	20		Do	Worcestershire	
		Charles Do	Serv	W	15		St Button Trade	Worcestershire	
		John Do	Serv	W	11		Carved Boy	Do	
60	No 14	George Gigg	Head	Man	25		Paul Button Maker	Birmingham	
	Carver St.	Elizabeth Do	Wife	Man	30		Wife	Do	
61	Griffiths Court								
	Carver St.	John Bell	Head	Man	24		Jeweller's Assistant	Worcestershire	
		Eliza Do	Wife	Man	31		Wife	Worcestershire	
		Eliza Do	Serv	W	2			Worcestershire	
Total		Total of Persons		5		11		16	

D—Eng.

The Holloway Family in the 1851 Census of Birmingham



*Edwin Rippon*  
1832 - 1890

as a “journeyman clockmaker” i.e. working for an employer and paid daily. Edwin and Mary’s first child, Annie was born in Birmingham in 1855 but the next three, Emma, Reuben and Edwin Frederick were born in the village of Claines on the outskirts of Worcester where Edwin was working as a “clock and watch repairer”.

It is not clear why the family had moved to Worcester. In correspondence with Wm Potts, the company which later bought the Rippon



*Mary Holloway*  
1827 - 1904

clockmaking business, I learnt that at about this time Edwin was working for the old established clockmaking firm J B Joyce of Whitchurch in Shropshire. There is no gap in his addresses when he could have been living in Whitchurch so he must have been working in Worcester on behalf of Joyce.

Joyce had established a branch making “turret” or tower clocks in 1834 and so Edwin must have learnt about this type of movement while working for Joyce in Worcester.. In fact Joyce’s work on turret clocks

was particularly advanced as in 1849 they had built a model of the “Double three legged gravity escapement” which had been invented by Lord Grimthorpe specifically for this type of clock and which he was developing at the time to be used first in the new clock for “Big Ben”.

Edwin and family were still in Worcester in the 1861 census but a document I found recently shows that they must have moved to Sheffield very shortly after this. On March 11th 1864 Sheffield was inundated by the flood from a burst dam and Edwin was one of the claimants for damage caused by the flood to his, clearly well established, clock and watchmaking business in the Wicker. His father Reuben made a similar claim for damage at his home round the corner in Saville Street.

However I also know from Potts that Edwin installed the new Sheffield Cathedral clock on behalf of Joyce in 1867 so he must have done so as a sub-contractor. I was able to see the Sheffield Cathedral clock in the tower and although it was converted to electric drive some time ago the drive and chime trains are intact. Another correspondent was able to confirm that originally it had had a gravity escapement.

Edwin, according to one expert, set up his business “using the skills (and many of the designs) he obtained with J B Joyce.” Certainly the Rippon business in its early years combined the building of turret clocks with domestic ones and a number of churches and large buildings in Sheffield and South Yorkshire have clocks inscribed “E.Rippon Sheffield”. The same writer says that “The similarities (with Joyce clocks) are very evident”.

However building a large tower clock requires a fair amount of heavy engineering by clockmaking standards. The frames, wheels and gears could not possibly have been made by Edwin’s firm, and probably not by Joyce. There would have been standard sources of supply for all the large components and this knowledge would be in the

public domain.

This raises an interesting question. In the Rippon family there is still a long case clock which legend



*Edwin's Clock*

claims to have been the prototype for the cathedral clock. It is a timepiece, has a gravity escapement, three separate hands and is reputed to have "kept time for Sheffield for many years". However, there would have been no need for Joyce to build a prototype of the new clock, having built a model over ten years earlier they would have understood it well. In fact it must have been the regulator which Edwin built for the shop using it as a prototype to learn about the gravity escapement he would subsequently employ in his own turret designs. This escapement however is not best suited to a floor standing clock. Since it was removed from the shop over seventy years ago it has always proved very difficult to keep going, needing critical adjustment of its uprightness.

Edwin's business was founded at 96 The Wicker and must have prospered, since in 1871 Edwin was employing "3 men and a boy" and in 1881 "4 men".

Later the business moved to 122 and finally to 47 The Wicker where it was run by the Rippon family until 1929.

I have found no trace in later censuses of Edwin's eldest child, Annie, so she must have died young. Both of Edwin's sons were apprenticed as clockmakers and jointly inherited the business when Edwin died in 1890. In 1880 Emma married a George Edward Taylor whose brother worked in the shop at one time as did her son.

Emma's son and daughter later emigrated to America and, after a long search, I found their grandson Ronald Bellamy who has also been researching the Rippon family for many years and who has sent me photographs and much valuable information.

### 'RIPPON' TOWER CLOCKS

All Saints Church, Sheffield	1868	Ting Tang to a Joyce pattern.
Firth Park Clock Tower, Sheffield	1876	Strike, now Timepiece. Converted by Charles Potts.
Fir Vale House Sheffield - Northern General Hospital	1880	Hour strike to a Joyce pattern. 4 x 7' solid.
Repton Parish Church	1881	Ting Tang quarter strike. 10'6".
St. Mary's Church, Walkley	1887	Hour strike in cage.
Bolsterstone Church	1892	to a Joyce pattern. 2 x 5' copper conv.
Darfield Church	1898	Hour strike. 1 x 6'6" sheet iron.
Royston Church	1898	Cambridge chime. 3 dials.
Midland Bank, Sharrow Lane, Sheffield	1899	Timepiece. 1 x 2'7" illuminated.
Savings Bank, Heeley	1901	Timepiece. 1 x 3' illuminated.
St. Phillips Church, Sheffield		Hour strike. 4 x 7'3" illuminated dials. Demolished 1957.
Brierley Church		Hour strike. 1 x 3'6" cast iron.
Eckington Church, Derbyshire (See plate)		1 x 5' octagonal strike, Gillett & Johnson also involved.
Mosborough Church, Eckington		Strike with added chiming by S.o.D. 2 x 5'6" illuminated dials.
Christ Church, Pitsmoor, Sheffield		Half hour strike. 1 x 5' illuminated dial.
St. Pauls's, Pinstone Street, Sheffield		Hour strike 2 x 6' illuminated dials. Demolished.
Newton Chambers, The Moorhead, Sheffield		Strike in quarter frame, Joyce pattern. 1 x 5'4" illuminated.
Rawby Church nr Brigg, Lincs.		Strike.

From information supplied by J. Malcolm Wild and Michael Potts.



**Edwin Rippon's Clock in  
Cumberland Lodge,  
Windsor Great Park**



*The single gravity arm striking the pendulum*

## The Clock in Cumberland Lodge

I had not seriously considered that the clock Brian saw in Cumberland Lodge could have been made by our family. However, some ten years after we had started writing the family history, he was still curious about it and arranged with the Director of Studies there, Dr Geoffrey Williams, for us to visit the Lodge to inspect the clock.

Astonishingly the clock did turn out to have been made by Edwin Rippon of Sheffield. How, exactly, the clock moved from Sheffield to Windsor is not known but the link is probably Lord FitzAlan who once owned Derwent Hall near Sheffield. In about 1940 the Hall was sold to be demolished to make way for the new Ladybower Dam and Lord FitzAlan moved to Cumberland Lodge taking with him his furniture from the Hall. He was the last individual tenant of the Lodge and when he died his furniture was sold. Somehow the clock must have escaped the sale however, possibly being a wall clock it was thought to be a fixture.

We were allowed to inspect the clock closely and found it to have a gravity escapement, and to be housed in a very simple wooden case. It is now mounted on the wall in the bar and still keeps good time. Great-grandfather Edwin would not approve - he was a teetotaller!

I wondered why Edwin had used a gravity escapement and thought that possibly this was something he had learned with Joyce, which made me read about this type of mechanism.

What I found was intriguing. The gravity escapement was invented by E. B. Denison, later Lord Grimthorpe, an amateur clock expert, in about 1840. In 1852 when a clock was required for the tower of the rebuilt Houses of Parliament, the clockmaker E. J. Dent was awarded the contract to build a clock to Denison's design. The clock was actually finished in 1854, being the first to use the "double three-legged

gravity escapement" which protects the pendulum from external influences like wind pressure and which "has since become a standard feature in good public clocks".

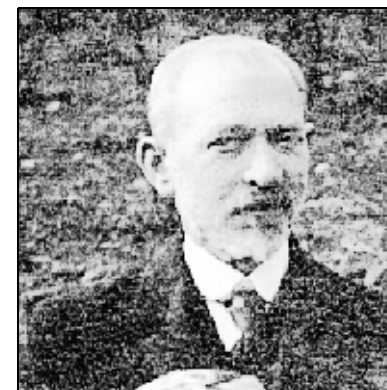
However, the clock could not be installed immediately since the bell, "Big Ben", was not ready and it remained in Dent's workshops for another five years. By this time, however, Dent himself was dead and the clock was actually installed in 1859 by his stepson, Frederick Dent, formerly Rippon, son of Richard Rippon, the watch movement maker.

I then wondered whether the Sheffield Cathedral clock had a gravity escapement and was lucky enough to be able to see it but it had been converted to electrical drive some years before. It now has separate motors to drive the hands and the chime, but the frame, the final reduction gearing and the complete chime mechanism are the originals. The clock carries a plate inscribed **JOYCE WHITCHURCH 1867**.

However, another correspondent, Michael Potts, was able to tell me that in fact the Cathedral clock did originally have a gravity escapement and since Joyce must have started construction soon after the Westminster Clock was installed it was certainly one of the earliest, if not the first, Joyce clock of this type. As such it is not surprising that a prototype of, at least, the escapement would need to be constructed to determine the design requirements.

Dials and hands would not have been needed and one can surmise that Edwin made this prototype for Joyce and when its purpose was finished he was able to take it over and build it into a complete clock.

Edwin's second son was born in 1860 and baptised "Edwin Frederick". I wonder whether this was a coincidence or whether he was named after Frederick (Rippon) Dent whose work Edwin was to copy in the next few years?



*"Young" Reuben Rippon*

## "Young" Reuben Rippon, 1859-1929

"Young" Reuben, my grandfather, was born in Claines on the outskirts of Worcester where Edwin was now working as a clockmaker and watch repairer. His younger brother, Edwin Frederick, was also born there a year or so later.

However, the family had moved to Sheffield at least by the time Reuben was seven years old and Edwin had founded his clockmaking business in the Wicker.

It is clear that both Reuben and his brother were apprenticed to the business, which seems to have prospered.

Reuben was still living at home in 1881 but in 1882 he married Louisa Elizabeth Beard and some time during the next few years the couple moved first to 33 Burngreave Bank where four girls were born and then in 1891 or 1892 into 19 Burngreave Street where the youngest child, my father John Edwin, was



*19 Burngreave Street*

#### **FATAL LADDER SLIP.**

##### **Sheffield Clockmaker's Fall at Firvale Hospital.**

A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned at an inquest in Sheffield yesterday on Reuben Rippon (69), of 19, Burngreave Street, Pitmoor, Sheffield, a well-known master watch and clock-maker. Mr. Rippon, who carried on business in the Wicker, died at the Firvale Hospital on Monday morning, following a fall from a ladder when attending to a clock at the Firvale Hospital on Thursday.

An apprentice to Mr. Rippon stated that Mr. Rippon's ladder, unlike that used by witness, did not possess rubber feet.

A nurse at the hospital said she heard a crash, and on rushing to the corridor found Mr. Rippon lying on the floor with the ladder underneath him. He was unconscious.

Medical evidence showed that death was due to a fractured skull, concussion of the brain, and pneumonia.

## **The Beard Family**

My grandfather, "young" Reuben, married Louisa Elizabeth Beard on the 12th April 1882. The marriage certificate records that Louisa was 24 and that her father was deceased.

One of the witnesses to the marriage was a "Henry Fitter" who, presumably, gave Louisa away in the place of her father. Triv reminded me that there was an "Auntie Fitter" who might possibly have been Henry's widow and Mary Rippon confirms this and remembers the Fitters well.

However, Louisa and her family proved difficult to trace. Normally, tracing a family in the GRO involves finding a birth certificate which records the father's name and the mother's maiden name, from this searching for the parents' marriage and repeating the process for the parents' birth certificates. If any certificate in the chain cannot be found the interruption in the process can make it very difficult

to identify the family. In the case of Louisa I knew from her marriage certificate that she would have been born in 1857 or 1858 but despite repeated searches I could find no record of her birth at the GRO.

However, Triv and Roy told me that they remember being told that Louisa was born in France, but the French consulate records of that time had no record of her birth either. It remained to try to trace John Beard, Louisa's father, knowing only that he died between her birth in 1857-1858 and her marriage in 1882.

Working backwards, the first John Beard I found was a railway signalman who had died in 1881. However, in his Will he left all his property to a widow with whom, the census showed, he had been lodging for at least ten years and so he seemed to be an unlikely candidate. No other wills by "John Beard" in Sheffield are recorded in Somerset House so the only possible course was to search all the GRO records for the deaths of other "John Beard"s in Sheffield and to order certificates in the hope that some detail would identify the right individual.

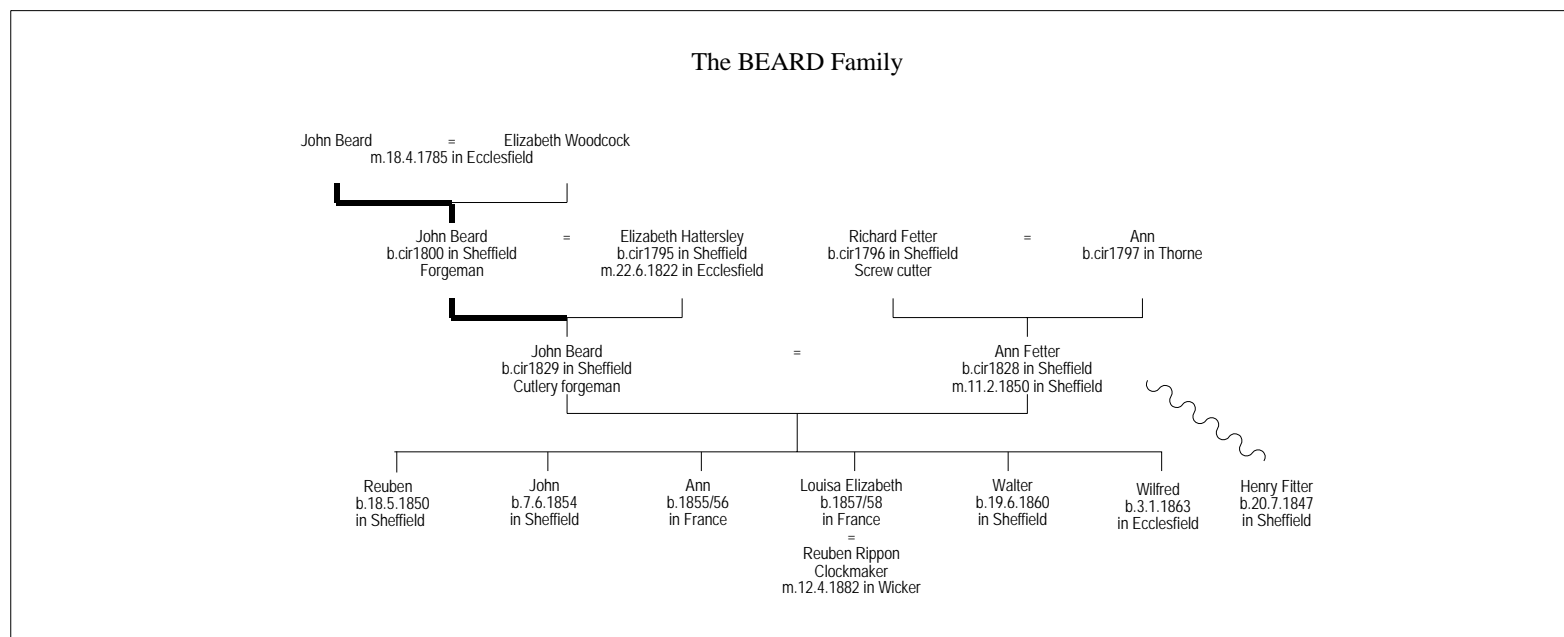
With the next record I was lucky. A "John Beard" had died in Nottingham Street, Brightside in 1873, aged 43, and the death had been reported by a "Reuben" Beard, probably his son, prompting the wild thought that perhaps John Beard had married a "Rippon" which would mean simply that "young" Reuben had married his cousin, Louisa.

However, although tracing a family history involves successfully making many tenuous connections, some apparent connections do turn out to be simply coincidence and, as far as I can tell, John's naming his first son "Reuben" had no connection with the same unusual name which occurs repeatedly in the Rippon family.

Reuben Beard's birth was easily traced in the GRO, but it then became apparent that both "John Beards" had married in Sheffield at almost the same time and



*Louisa Beard*



so Reuben's birth certificate had to be obtained to identify which "John" was his father. This showed that Reuben's parents were John Beard, a cutlery forgeman, and Ann Fetter who were married in Sheffield in 1850. Fortunately, in 1851 they were living with Ann's parents in Nursery Street, Brightside and the census for that year shows that at the time of her marriage, Ann already had a son, now aged 3, whose name at birth was registered as Henry "Fitter".

This, then, established the connection with Louisa. The Henry Fitter who witnessed her marriage was her elder brother or half-brother, as one might expect in the absence of her father.

I still had no record of Louisa's birth and had not found the family in any later census so it remained a mystery where she was born.

However, the 1891 census was published in January 1992 and I knew that Reuben and Louisa were living

at 19 Burngreave Street, Pitsmoor, shortly after that census. In fact I found them just round the corner at 33 Burngreave Bank, Number 19 not being built until later that year, and Louisa's birth place is recorded as "France - British Subject" which confirms Roy's story. Where in France she was born or why the family went there is still a mystery however.

I later found John Beard and his family in the 1861 and 1871 censuses which shows that not only Louisa but an elder sister, Ann, was also born in France.

I have spent much time trying to find out why John Beard went to France but quite unsuccessfully. Roy's hypothesis is that John went there to work in Saint Etienne near Lyon which Roy knows from personal observation to have been a cutlery making centre very similar to Sheffield and still possessing old Davy forges which could date from then.

The dates of the family's stay in France can be deduced fairly reliably from the 1861 and 1871

censuses although there are a number of strange inconsistencies between them. Unfortunately calculations of Louisa's age from four independent sources, marriage and death certificates and the three censuses, give results varying by three years.

My grandmother described herself as "Louisa Elizabeth". The 1871 census lists four of the Beard's eight children who were born in consecutive years, John, Ann, Louisa and Elizabeth, aged 16, 15, 14 and 13 respectively, the first and last born in Sheffield and the middle two, Ann and Louisa, in France. However, the 1861 census lists only John, Ann and "Elizabeth", but the Elizabeth referred to was born in France and is clearly Louisa. Moreover I have not been able to find any record at the GRO of an Elizabeth Beard born in Sheffield between 1854 and 1860, when the next child, Walter, was born. One even wonders whether the youngest daughter ever existed or was simply a confusion on the part of the

census taker - we must remember that both John and his wife Ann were illiterate and would not be able to check the census entry.

The most probable dates for Ann and Louisa's births in France are 1855-6 and 1857-8 respectively, the latter being consistent with Louisa's age on her marriage certificate. Hence the family must have lived in France from 1855 until about 1858. Unfortunately the embarkation record in Boulogne comes to an end in 1858 and there is no record of the family's return to England.

A John Beard was issued with a passport in July 1856 and the disembarkation records in Boulogne show that John landed in France on August 11th 1857. This is clearly too late for my John's first visit though it is possible that he made more than one visit.

I have searched the Sheffield newspaper files for any news items recording John's departure for France but without success though I now realise I was probably looking at the wrong date.

What I did find however were lengthy reports of the publication in 1855 of the new steel-making process invented by Henry Bessemer and of the battle for patent rights between Bessemer and Martien, a Frenchman. The same patent agent, a Mr. Carpmael, had filed both applications but had failed to warn Martien of a conflict of interest since he had already filed the Bessemer application. I was amused to recall that Messrs. Carpmael and Ransford were the agents who, a century later, handled Hilger & Watts patent work including some applications of mine!

From August 1856 onwards many reports appeared in Sheffield newspapers about the new process and particularly on tests of the forging properties of steel made by them. The Liverpool Steel Company reported that it was very unsatisfactory!

I noticed in the records in Boulogne that a "Henry Bessemer" was visiting France at the same time as John. Is it possible that John Beard's visit to France

was to help demonstrate or to test the forgeability of these "new" steels? We shall probably never know.

Both John and Ann came from families having strong traditions in the metalworking industries. John's father, also John, was a forgerman making shear steel and Ann's father, Richard Fetter, a screw maker.



# THE TWENTIETH CENTURY RIPPONS

My parents, John Edwin Rippon and Nellie Thornton, were married in Sheffield in 1919. Both had been born in the Pitsmoor district of Sheffield in 1894 and attended the Sheffield Central School which must have provided a good secondary education for that time. My father could help me with my science homework, and my mother the English, and even a smattering of French. Both had music lessons as children, my father on the violin and my mother the piano although I only remember hearing them play together once or twice.

My mother's piano teaching must have been thorough however. When, in about 1940, I was picking out on the piano the music of a popular swing tune of that time – "In the Mood" – she commented that my rendition, copied from the recording, did not look remotely like the music. She then sat down and played the sheet music at sight

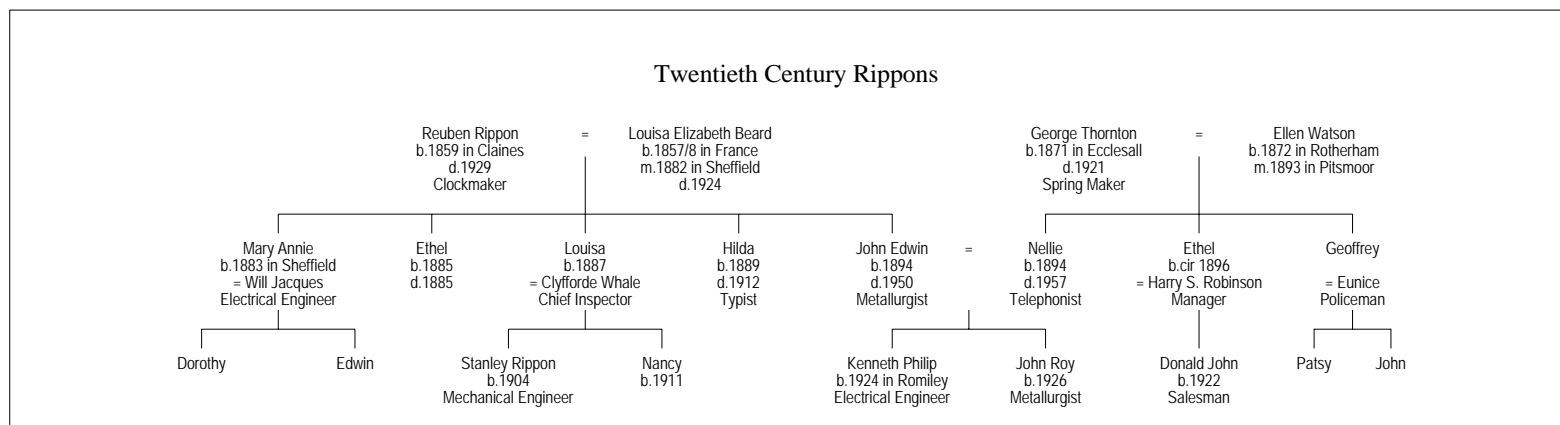
although it was probably over twenty years since she had played seriously, at which I was astonished. Her playing was accurate, but to my ears not remotely like the piece. The difference of course was her lack of syncopation and phrasing – she was ascribing the written note values strictly.

After school she became a telephonist – many years later one of my Sheffield steelworks customers told me that his mother and mine had worked together on the switchboard nearly sixty years earlier. During the Second War she worked in Manchester as a censor on the mail to Ireland and was horrified to discover the amount of sensitive information which letter writers were trying to pass on.

## John Edwin Rippon, 1894-1950

My father, John Edwin, was the youngest of the five children of "young" Reuben and the only boy. Of the four girls one, Ethel, died as a baby but he was apt from time to time to make some wry comment on the experience of being brought up with three big sisters.

When the time came for him to choose a career the clock making business in the Wicker had been established for over forty years but I remember him explaining to me that imported German and American clock movements had already displaced the craftsman clockmaker in Britain. Indeed I now know that this process had started over seventy years earlier and that many "clockmakers" had in fact been assembling movements from stock parts bought from catalogues. Also the hand manufacture of "long case" clocks virtually ceased after 1870.





Edwin Rippon, founder of the business, had made a speciality of “turret” clock manufacture, i.e. clocks for church and other towers and this was probably a very good business in the later half of the nineteenth century.

In studying ancestral records it is clear that a great many new churches, established and non-conformist were built in the nineteenth century and it also seems that many existing church towers were fitted with clocks for the first time.

However, the peak of church building and clock fitting had probably passed by the end of the century and it does not appear that Reuben and his brother maintained this aspect of the business.

Thus while my father certainly learnt the elements of clockmaking it is not surprising that he did not choose to go into the family business. His father Reuben told him that he “would keep him until he was twenty one”, an arrangement analogous to an apprenticeship but without the benefit to the business so it was considerable encouragement to find his own career in those days.

He was educated, as was my mother, at the Sheffield Central School and from there went to the Technical Department of Sheffield University where he gained a B.Sc. in Metallurgy in 1915, taking the class prize, the Mappin Medal.



*John Edwin Rippon*



*The Rippon family on holiday in Bridlington, c.1928  
(clockwise from left: Ethel, Nellie, “young” Reuben, Phil and Roy)*

Undoubtedly his choice of subject would have been influenced by Sheffield's steel industry and it is a salutary thought that he had hardly started on his professional career in the 1920s when the British steel industry fell into something approaching chaos with closures, Government driven rationalisation, repeated nationalisation and denationalisation which continued without interruption for over fifty years and reduced it to a very small industry by international standards.

The boom years of the nineteenth century with huge demand for the new railways, shipbuilding and construction followed by the weapon needs of the 1914-1918 war vanished almost overnight and even the rise of the motor car industry did not compensate for the loss of the heavy industrial requirements. By this time, in any case, foreign capacity was starting to become a serious competitor, often at lower cost due to lower wages and easy access to higher grade ore.

The trade protectionism of those days made matters worse rather than better and it is a sobering thought that even today, within the European Economic Community, our, at last, successful British Steel Corporation is still limited in its activities by EEC "quotas" and restrictions.

However all this was still in the future.

At school and university my father was a fine sportsman. He captained the university soccer team at full back although possessing neither the height nor weight usually required in this position, and, I believe, turned out for Sheffield Wednesday during the war. He also played cricket for the university and was a strong swimmer.

His first job on leaving university was with the Cammell Laird company in their Grimesthorpe works in Brightside Lane, Sheffield. However in 1917 he moved to the Armstrong Whitworth works in Openshaw near Manchester where he was to spend the rest of his working life.

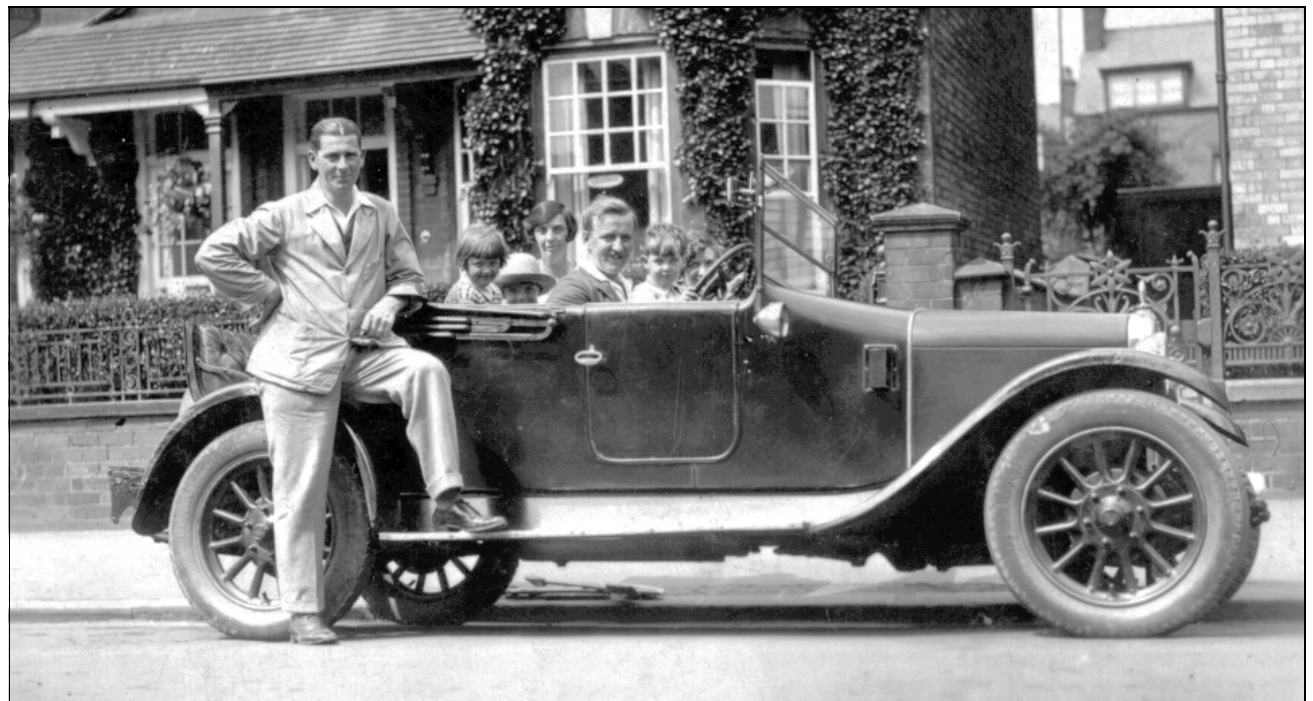
His responsibilities there included the inspection of wide bore gun barrels some of which he was slender enough to get his shoulders into! More practically, however, I still have a pair of German Zeiss binoculars which he bought in 1917 for this inspection task.

I remember him telling me of some torpedo tubes he was making for the Japanese Navy which had particularly wide bores and were reputed to be wide enough to accommodate a man to steer the torpedo. Unlikely as it seemed I remembered this story when the Japanese started using "kamikaze" or suicide aircraft pilots in the Pacific in 1945 towards the end of the 1939-1945 war.

As I have said the steel industry started to go through its convulsions in the late 1920s and much of the

Armstrong Whitworth factory in Openshaw was closed. Ultimately, in 1929 the Armstrong Whitworth steel making capacity in Manchester was combined with the Cammell Laird operations in Sheffield to form the English Steel Corporation, a subsidiary of Vickers Armstrong.

In this process my father had already lost his job when we went on holiday in 1929 but was lucky enough to be re-engaged on his return. Many of his colleagues were not so lucky and I remember some who never worked again. Unemployment among the working people living in the area around the Openshaw factory became very high and hardship severe and was to remain so until the demands for re-armament in preparation for the Second World War started to create employment in about 1938.



*The family in the first car (1931)*

My parents were married in 1919 and their first house was a cottage in Sale, near Manchester where, I was told, they had fruit trees and a greenhouse. However, between then and 1924 when I was born my father bought a house in Beechwood Avenue in Romiley, I imagine because this was a much easier rail journey to Openshaw.

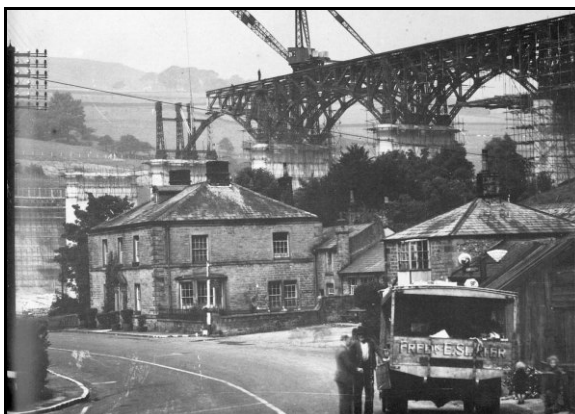
Both Roy and I were born in Beechwood Avenue and started our schooling at the village school, Romiley Council School, just at the top of the avenue.

In about 1930 my father bought for £25 the first family car from a less fortunate colleague. This was a royal blue Austin 4/6 which would now be called a convertible. Behind the driver and front passenger seats there were two small, collapsible, stools about large enough for two small boys to sit in shelter, but no small discomfort. However, the “boot” also opened to provide two additional “dickie” or “rumble” seats for use only when the weather could be absolutely relied on which, in Manchester and Sheffield, was almost never.

The car was garaged at “Verity’s” garage at the end of the road – street parking being out of the question at that time because lights had to be shown at all times after dark, and my father now drove to work instead of catching the train.

At week-ends we often visited the family in Sheffield, sometimes crossing the “Shivering Mountain”, Mam Tor (which was subject to regular landslides and finally collapsed altogether about thirty years later), Woodhead or the Snake Pass, depending which relatives we were to visit first. The weather on these journeys was often poor – foggy or in deep snow and I now marvel at the temerity of such journeys in such an elementary motor car lacking even windscreen wipers!

Returning from one such visit we were involved in our first traffic accident when a drunk blundered into the side of the car at Gee Cross. Fortunately he was not seriously hurt and I believe his claim for cuts and



*Ashopton before and after the building of the dam*

a new bowler hat collapsed when it was shown that he had been crossing the road to pester a lady on the opposite side!

Our route over the Snake Pass took us through the village of Ashopton and I remember the appearance of surveyors’ level boards by the side of the road and my father explaining that the village was to be drowned by the water of a new dam which seemed outrageous to me. Eventually the Ladybower dam was built and the water engulfed Ashopton which now reappears occasionally in times of severe drought. On one such journey we stopped for a snack in the village inn and while waiting for the sandwiches to arrive the landlord found Roy and me sitting in the bar on our own. We were ordered out very sternly. When the sandwiches did arrive they had mustard on which was not at all to my taste.

My father was also an early “wireless” enthusiast – he had built “crystal” and “valve” wireless sets from the start of public broadcasting and we had a four valve set in Beechwood Avenue which would drive two sets of headphones. These were nearly lethal pieces of equipment. The valve filaments were lit by accumulators – kept charged at Verity’s garage – and the anodes by a 120 volt dry battery to which the bare



*The Ashopton Inn in the 1880s*



*"Whirlow", Birch Vale Drive*

terminals of the headphones were connected. It followed that if one tried to remove the headphones without, cautiously, removing the "HT" plug from the battery one could receive a considerable shock.

As small boys we were not allowed to listen very often!

In 1932 my father bought a new house, one of a pair being built in Birch Vale Drive, which had been a private road leading to a large house, long since demolished though the basement and perimeter wall were still there, obviously a considerable temptation to small boys. The farm was still working and boasted a large pond which was another temptation.

He settled down to cultivate the, sizeable, garden which he did on his own starting from what the builders had left, a rough building site on clay farmland. He grew potatoes in the first year which, I remember him explaining, would break up the ground, the first time I had heard this euphemism. Whether the effort of working the garden reduced his stamina I don't know but in the winter of 1933 he became very seriously ill with septicaemia, the immediate cause of which was an untended injury to a finger while mending my bicycle one Sunday. There were no antibiotics then as we know them and the only treatment was a daily injection by our doctor who made it plain that he did not expect my father to live.

He did pull through, however, in which respect he, and we, were luckier than two families among our young friends, both of which lost their fathers within the next year or two. One of these was the father of Barbara and "Mick", later to become Sir Brian, Kellett, Chairman of Tube Investments, who had been close neighbours of ours in Beechwood Avenue.

After convalescence in Torquay he went back to work, and the garden which next year had lawns, a rockery, roses on a trellis and raspberries for tea. He also built an aviary and installed a pair of, apparently sterile, rabbits.

At the beginning of 1934 I sat the round of County Grammar School entrance and scholarship examinations which included the private, then called direct grant, Stockport and Manchester Grammar Schools and won a foundation scholarship to Sale High, a preparatory for Manchester Grammar where I started in September 1934. This meant a long daily journey requiring two trains, one into Manchester and a second out to Sale with a lengthy walk at each end.

Three years later I was to transfer to the main school and Roy won a foundation scholarship there at the



*John Edwin Rippon*

same time so we started together at MGS in September 1937. The journey to the main school was not quite so far but my father decided that the family would move to Withington, a suburb of Manchester, for us to be close to the school. He also made the point that MGS held much more for us than strict school hours and we needed to be close to take full advantage of it.

By now preparations for war were gathering pace and he had been sent by his company to learn what were called "Air Raid Precautions" at a Home Office establishment at Easingwold in Yorkshire. He found this two week course, on an unpleasant subject, very



*On trek in the French Alps 1938*

taxing particularly after twenty five years away from formal study but completed the course, unlike a number of his colleagues.

From then on he spent many evenings training his workpeople in these techniques. Also by now his factory was busy with re-armament and he became manager of the Small Tools department, a large machine shop making drills, dies, taps, milling cutters and so on.

He was a wonderful enthusiast for MGS and Roy and I were encouraged to become involved in as many activities as we could and we were active in camping, trekking, scouts, games – I even helped backstage in one theatrical production!

On the outbreak of war in 1939 Roy and I were evacuated, briefly, to Blackpool where we stayed, first in bell tents, later in boarding houses and finally in private houses. However, the Manchester school had large underground changing rooms and cellars which were quickly reinforced to act as air-raid shelters so we were able to return to Manchester after only a few months. However the return had a tragic outcome almost immediately. Sporadic air raids on Britain started in the middle of 1940 after the fall of France and in one small raid several small bombs were dropped on Withington where we were still living. One was a direct hit on an air raid shelter which killed nine people. Another fell fairly harmlessly in the main road but two air raid wardens standing at the door of their post were killed. One was one of our most popular schoolmasters, Harry Lob, who was dedicated to the school in every way and worked tirelessly for all of us, but particularly for the many poorer boys we had. I myself had trekked with him in the French Alps and in Scotland.

Later that year my father moved the family again, this time to Old Hall Lane, facing the school and its playing fields.

During the latter half of 1940 the air raids on Britain became much heavier and at the end of December Manchester was hit heavily on two consecutive nights during the first of which our house in Old Hall Lane was badly damaged by a land-mine which fell in the school playing field immediately opposite. Fortunately the level of the field is several feet below that of the Lane and the mine fell at the root of the embankment which shielded the houses opposite, and so there were no serious casualties though all the houses for several hundred yards were virtually demolished. Roy, my mother and I were under the stairs and well sheltered but my father had an incredibly lucky escape. In the lull after the last aircraft, while the parachute mine was drifting down no doubt, he had gone into the kitchen to make a cup of tea and was in front of the window when the bomb

exploded. He was quite unhurt although we later found glass embedded in the front of a radio which stood just on his other side away from the window. We also found many large fragments of shrapnel just outside the window.

Some of the most serious damage was suffered by Edwin's clock which caught the full blast as it stood just inside the front door. The house was quite uninhabitable and we moved back to Romiley first to stay with the Kellets and then into furnished rooms.

The house was owned by the proprietor of one of Manchester's largest bakeries and, no doubt through his own facilities, it was rebuilt fairly quickly, and though we did not go back to it immediately we did so in 1942. In the meantime I had taken my "Higher School Certificate" ("A-Levels") and did sufficiently well to obtain a Manchester City University Grant despite the fact that we were now, perforce, living in Cheshire, which had a much poorer grant scheme! In fact, my father had taken the precaution of paying the local authority rates on the ruined house in Manchester in order to qualify me for a Manchester grant.

At about this time my father started to suffer a number of symptoms which the works doctor diagnosed as "High blood pressure", a condition not as well known then as it is today. Nor was there any treatment for it – not even the advice to take things more easily and to stop smoking were offered. As a result he lived with this condition, no doubt worsening continuously, until at the end of 1947 he suffered a major heart attack and died from the consequences in April 1950.

## The Thornton and Watson Families

My mother's family proved more difficult to trace back further than the nineteenth century partly due to the fact that most of the family were working class townspeople having fairly common surnames and also that the one rural family were agricultural labourers again having common surnames. There is in any case a tendency in rural areas for a particular name to become extremely common for a period and it is then very difficult to sort out families.

However the drift towards the towns during that century and particularly to the booming steel industry in Sheffield is very evident in this side of the family.

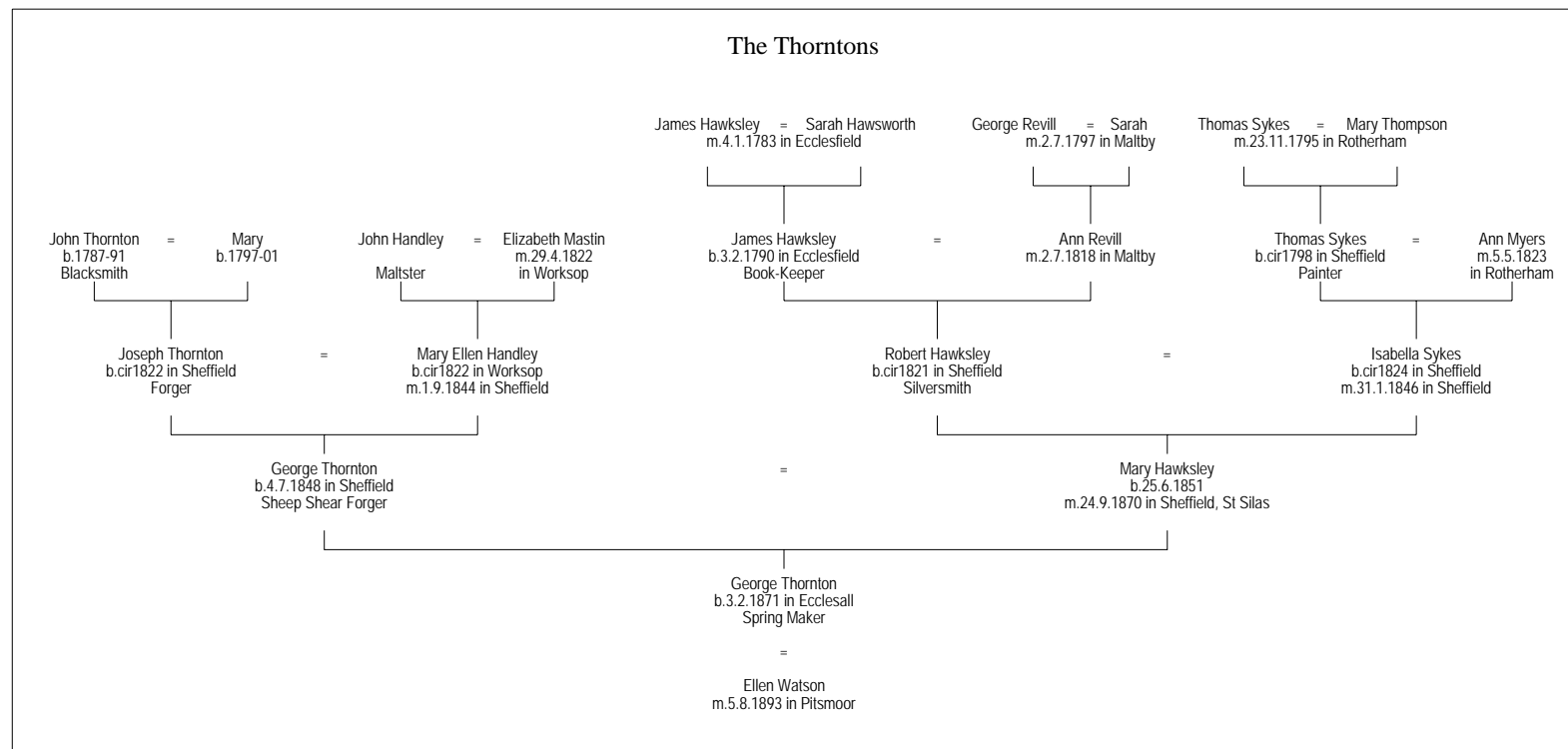
## The Thorntons

My mother's parents were George Thornton and Ellen Watson who were married in Pitsmoor, Sheffield in 1893. All the men I have traced in the Thornton family – four generations – were ironworkers in the Sheffield and Rotherham area.

George himself was a railway spring setter in the Grimesthorpe works of Cammell Laird where, later, my father was to start work. George died young, from a disease reputed to be common amongst the workers in this particular, very heavy, trade.

George's father, also George, was a sheep shear forger who married Mary Hawksley in Sheffield in 1870. Mary's father, Robert, was a "powder flask

maker" which I take to be the manufacture of containers for riflemen's gunpowder. Later he was described as a "brass turner" and twenty years later still, at the wedding of his daughter, as a silversmith. Robert's older brother, George, was so described in the census of 1841 when he was only 20-25 and so he must have been apprenticed into this highly skilled craft. Their father, James, was a book-keeper who had died young and one wonders whether James had apprenticed his older son to this skilled manual craft in preference to the "white-collar" job of book-keeping and whether Robert was prevented from serving a similar apprenticeship by his father's premature death. Robert married Isabella Sykes whose father was Thomas Sykes, a painter whose wife died early.



George Thornton senior was the son of Joseph Thornton who was also a forgerman. In 1844 Joseph married Mary Ellen Handley, the daughter of John Handley, a maltster in Worksop, and Elizabeth Mastin. Mary Ellen was born in Worksop but the rest of the children were born in Sheffield so the family must have moved there about 1825.

Joseph Thornton's father, John, was a blacksmith and the four Thornton men between them must have spent the whole of the nineteenth century – and well into the twentieth – as ironworkers.

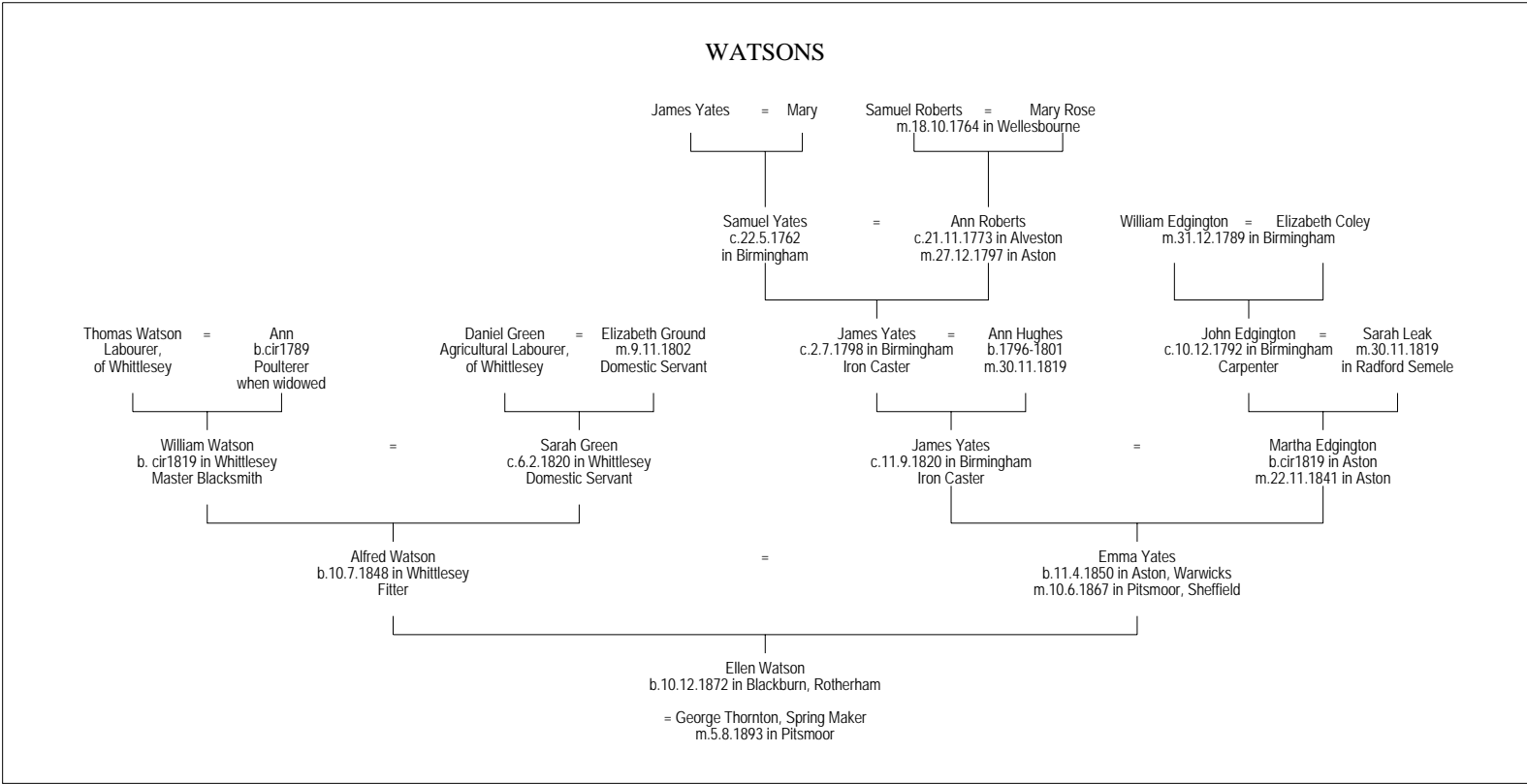
### The Watsons

By contrast none of my grandmother's ancestors was born in Sheffield – she herself being a first generation "Sheffielder" though she was actually born in Rotherham. Both of her grandfathers were ironworkers who had migrated to Sheffield, presumably to take advantage of a large demand for skilled ironworkers, however this skill was acquired.

Grandma's father was Alfred Watson who was born in the Cambridgeshire town of Whittlesea to William Watson and Sarah Green. Both William and Sarah were the children of agricultural labourers, William of Thomas and Ann Watson and Sarah of Daniel

Green and Elizabeth Ground. William, however, had become a blacksmith and indeed by 1851 a master blacksmith in Whittlesea which must have been a considerable achievement for the son of a labourer. Nevertheless after four children had been born there he moved the family to Sheffield where, presumably, he exchanged the independence of working for himself for the life of a wage earner. Possibly the introduction of the railways was already having its effect on the use of horses and the rural demand for blacksmith's work.

Emma Yates, Ellen's mother, was born in Aston near Birmingham, the daughter of James Yates and Martha (or Mary – the records vary) Edgington – again several different spellings are used which made



this marriage difficult to find. James was an Iron Founder and the son of another James who was also an Iron Founder. Once again the family moved from Birmingham to Sheffield after the children were born and we can only conclude that this was another example of iron working skills being in great demand in the Sheffield area at that time.





# SHEILA'S FAMILY





# SHEILA'S 'KNOWLES' ANCESTORS

## The Knowles Family in Derbyshire

My father, William Stanley Knowles, was born in Sheffield but his father, Harold Edwin, in Masborough (Rotherham) where it was possible to trace the Knowles family as far back as John and Joseph, sons of Adam and Frances. However I could not find Adam's birth or marriage so, as Phil had found his Sheffield family in Derbyshire, I too decided to look in Derbyshire and found the marriage there in 1780.

In the IGI the records of Knowles in Derbyshire go back to 1595 but before 1655 they were sporadic and led nowhere. Knowles were to be found in many parts of Derbyshire but Adams only in Matlock and Wirksworth where the main concentrations were. Selecting the right Adam and tracing further back is mainly conjecture, particularly as all the families seem to have the same Christian names and were probably related. However I obtained a copy of the marriage of Adam and Frances and the two witnesses were Henry Knowles and George Knowles junior. The family I have chosen is the only one containing both these names.

Having decided that "my" Adam was the son of George, the only likely George with a brother Henry was the son of George and Sarah (née Towndro). Through the Derbyshire Family History Society I got in touch with Sheila Baggaley in Canada who also is descended from George and Sarah and she was able to give me much valuable information.

Tracing further back was quite difficult. This George was born in 1693, the son of John. There was only

Banns of Marriage *between Adam Knowles & Frances Selam both of the Parish of Darley were legally published on Sunday June 4<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 1780*

N<sup>o</sup> 961 *Adam Knowles* of *Darley* Parish and *Frances Selam* of *Darley* Parish were Married in this *Church* by *James* this *nineteenth* Day of *June* in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and *eighty* by me *Will<sup>m</sup> H. Gray Rector*

This Marriage was solemnized between Us *Adam & Frances*

In the Presence of *Henry Knowles*  
*Geo. Knowles Jun<sup>r</sup>*

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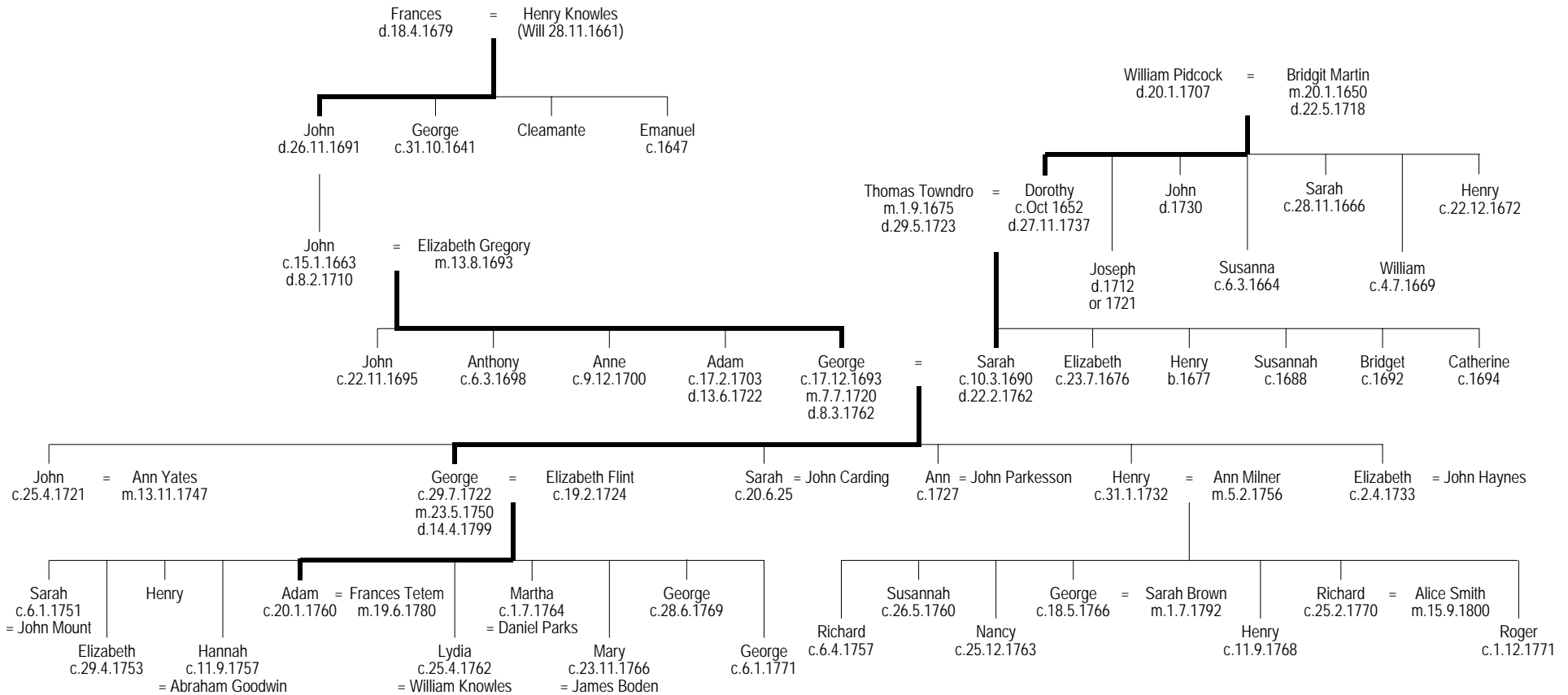
Banns of Marriage *between Francis Flint and Ann Allen both of the Parish of Darley were legally published on Sunday June 11<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 1785*

N<sup>o</sup> 962 *Francis Flint* of *Darley* Parish and *Ann Allen* of *Darley* Parish were Married in this *Church* by *James* this *twenty fifth* Day of *June* in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and *eighty* by me *Will<sup>m</sup> H. Gray Rector*

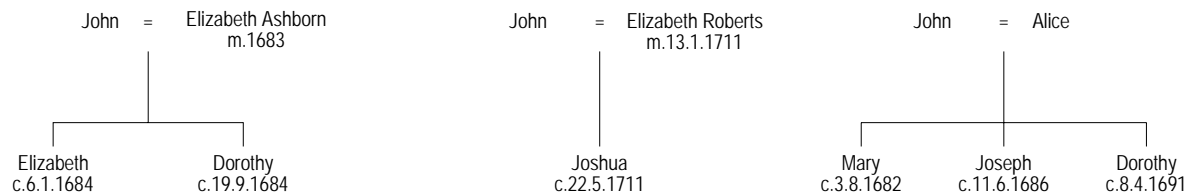
This Marriage was solemnized between Us *Francis Flint*  
*Ann & Allen*

Marriage Record of Adam Knowles and Frances

## KNOWLES in Matlock

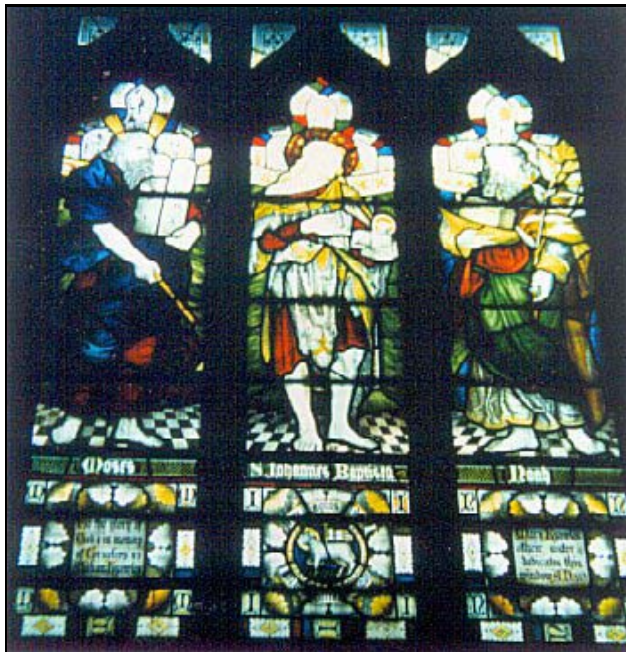


### NOTE





*Matlock Church*



*Window in Youghal Church*

one John of the right age recorded but either he was married more than once (see family tree) or there was really more than one John. Possibly Alice was the wife of the first John. John was born in 1663, the son of John. As the older John was probably born in the times of the Civil War and Commonwealth (1640-1660) when records were either not kept or else disappeared, we have no record of his baptism or marriage. There were certainly two Johns in the Matlock Hearth Tax in 1670 as well as a Henry and a Thomas. However, Sheila Baggaley has found a will (28 November 1661) of Henry Knowles of Matlock mentioning his wife Frances and sons John, George and Emmanuel and daughter Cleamante. Henry could be the father of John senior. As well as being mentioned in the Hearth Tax Henry gave 2/- to the 1661 Free and Voluntary Present to Charles II.

I haven't found anything of interest about the Flint family (Elizabeth was married to George Knowles in 1750). There were too many of them with the same names. However I do know more about the Towndrows (Sarah married George Knowles senior in 1720) and the Pidcocks (mother and grandparents of Sarah).

The Towndrows came from Ashover to Matlock between 1677 and 1688. I can't be certain about Thomas's father but it may have been a Henry mentioned in the 1670 Ashover Hearth Tax as having 2 hearths. His father was probably Thomas who died in 1639. The Towndrows were yeoman farmers.

Sarah Towndrow's mother was Dorothy, one of the seven children born to William Pidcock and his wife Bridget. In the 1670 Matlock Hearth Tax there are two Williams mentioned – senior and junior – and William also contributed to the Free and Voluntary Present in 1661. He was a farmer and had quite a lot of land in Matlock, mentioned both in the Manorial Rolls and his will. Again, finding the father is difficult in the early 17th century but it may have been Henry Pidcock who gave William land in 1653.

When you get back to the 17th century you have to do a lot of guesswork. The tree I have sketched is the closest we can get to the truth from Parish Records. Unfortunately I don't know what any of these ancestors did for a living, except for the first Henry, who was a "sherman", and the two Georges who were lead miners.

Being a lead miner in Matlock was obviously different from being a coal miner in the North East. When George Knowles senior died in 1762 he left land to his sons John, George and Henry and small amounts of money to his married daughters. He also left Henry his house, barn, garden and other goods. When George junior died in 1799 he had obviously acquired some more land leaving everything to his wife for her lifetime but on her death or remarriage he left to his eldest son Henry house, bakehouse, barn and land, plus about five other parcels of land and two seats in Matlock church. To his second son Adam he left two pieces of land and two seats in the church. To George he left his house etc. in Matlock Bank, a considerable amount of land and one seat in the church. He also left his mines, parts and shares of mines, mineral interests and tools and implements to be shared between Adam and George. The daughters were to receive money paid by their brothers.

Legend has it that one of my ancestors dedicated two stained glass windows in Youghal church. However they were in fact dedicated by Mary Knowles to her parents John and Hannah in 1878 and to her brothers Cornelius and William in 1883. This was about 100 years after Adam left Derbyshire and Mary was only a distant relation.

And and published during the term of ten full years of life and of after her decease I give  
and devise the same as followeth  
I give and devise unto my son John Knowles all that piece or parcel of land called by the  
name of Redding Close to him and his heirs for ever paying unto my daughter Elizabeth  
Wife of John Haynes the summe of fifteen pounds within one whole year of after my decease  
Also  
I give and devise to my son George Knowles all that piece or parcel of land called by the  
name of the other Close to him and his heirs for ever paying unto my daughter Elizabeth  
Wife of John Haynes the summe of five pounds and also paying to my daughter Anne Wife of  
John Parkington the summe of five pounds both which summe to be paid within one whole year of  
my decease and I further order that a bond and Charge through the said Close of all times  
unto the upper Close Close  
I give and devise to my son Henry Knowles all that dwelling house with, in, and about the same  
and under the same with the garden Room and all other the appurtenances thereunto belonging  
and likewise all my household goods and all other my goods and chattels whatsoever and all  
one piece or parcel of land called by the name of the upper Close Close to him and his heirs  
for ever paying unto my daughter Sarah Wife of John Criden the summe of twenty pounds  
within one whole year of after my decease  
And I further order and it is my Will and Will that if ~~it should~~ happen to live longer than my said  
loving Wife that then the aforesaid summe to be paid as before mentioned at the decease  
of the said then living within one whole year of after  
And I fully Nominate and Appoint my wife Sarah Knowles and my son Henry Knowles Legally  
Executors and Executors of this my last Will and do hereby revoke all other Wills by  
me made and do Declare this to be my last Will and I do intend In the last  
words I have set my Hand and Seal the day and year above written  
Signed sealed published and declared to be my  
last Will and Testament in the presence of us  
whose Names are hereunto subscribed as Witnesses  
Witness  
Test: Thomas Knowles  
John Garratt  
James Robinson



## Lead Mining

Lead mining and smelting has been carried on in North Derbyshire at least since Roman times as evinced by several ingots found in the district carrying Latin inscriptions cast in the mould identifying the foundry or owner.

At its peak the volume of production reached very large quantities. One mine alone, the Gregory Mine, produced 1511 tons of smelted lead per year from 1758 until 1783 and when the peak of production was reached in the mid nineteenth century the total production of ore raised in the area was over 10,000 tons per annum.

When one considers that all this was manhandled, in the case of smelted metal several times there must have been a very large labour force working over the area covered by lead mining.

No doubt the industry expanded both by demand and the accessibility in law to the mining sites. It was the custom for anyone wishing to prospect for lead, unlike other minerals, to have free access to the ore bearing sites and to work any seams they discovered. This custom was confirmed by Edward I in 1287 after an Inquiry into miner's grievances and there developed a set, ultimately of 59 articles, governing the mining which was only established in Law by Acts in 1851 and 1852.

Despite the 59 articles "the mineral laws and customs were very uncertain and in many respects inapplicable to the more advanced mode of mining". Clearly the earliest forms of mining were simply working the seams opening to the surface and the shallow "drift" mines which could be worked from them. These would usually be worked by single miners with one or two helpers. However as the easy ores to reach were worked out it became necessary to dig shafts and raise the ore vertically which demands much greater investment of effort and money and the questions of ownership become

important.

By 1609 authorities known as "Barmasters" were being appointed to control Claims and record Sales and Purchases.

With a few exceptions a miner could dig anywhere. When a searcher found a possible vein it was marked temporarily with a cross on the ground. After "freeing" the vein with a dish of ore to the Barmaster, the miner's name is entered in the Barmaster's book as the owner.

Miners often had shares in mines and mines, or parts, were bought and sold, the legal transfer being simply the Barmaster's entry in his books.

From this book I copied sales of mines by George Knowles and his partner from 1767 until 1775. George's son Henry was also mentioned. There were also records of mines and weighing and sales of ore belonging to George and Henry Knowles; and "freeings" at Crichman Pipe and Masson Mine by George Knowles & Co. between 1783 and 1799.

A list of Matlock mines at the end of the 18th century included Crichman Pipe and Knowles (large caverns) on Masson Hill.

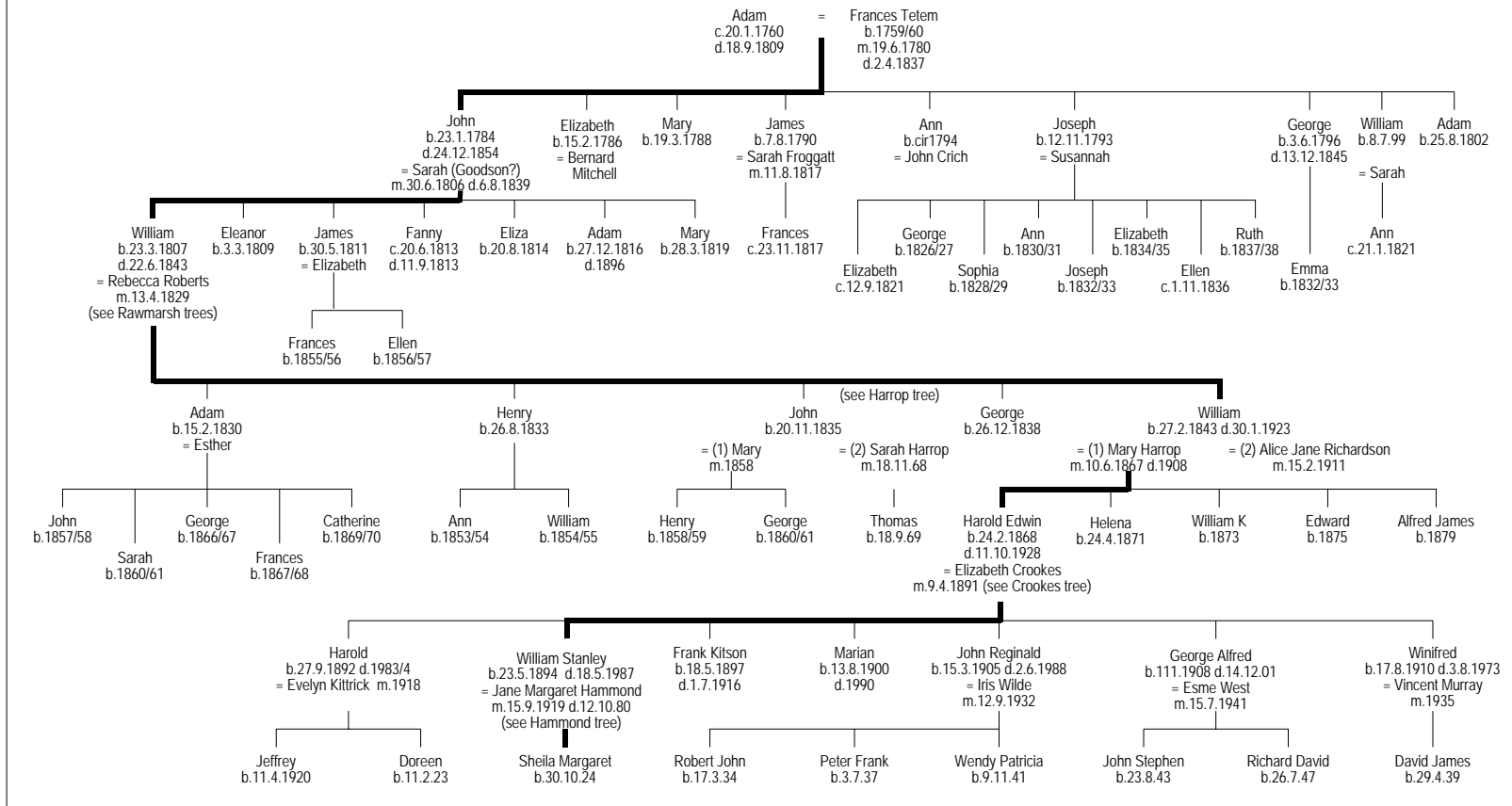
## The Knowles Family in Yorkshire

Adam and Frances came to Kimberworth, Rotherham, from Matlock sometime between their marriage of 1780, when Adam was 20, and the birth of their first child in 1784. Perhaps Adam didn't want to become a lead miner like his father and discovered that there were jobs going in the Yorkshire steelworks. His father died in 1799 and left him two pieces of land in Matlock, together with two seats in the church and a half share in lead mines, shares of mines and mineral interests. By this time Adam was 39 with six children. I imagine he must have sold his inherited property and assets in Matlock and used the proceeds to invest in a property in Kimberworth. Certainly when he died in 1809 the burial was of Adam Knowles of Cattle Croft, presumably his property in Kimberworth.

Adam's eldest son was John (my ancestor), who was a moulder whom I first found in the 1841 Census with his family. Also in the 1841 Census were his brothers Joseph (a moulder) and George (an Ironmaster) with their families. George died in 1845, having remarried. He left £4000 in trust for his wife and administered by his stepson and partners. He bequeathed £200 apiece to his brothers John, Joseph, William, Adam and sister Ann Crich and a like sum to be shared by the children of his deceased sister Elizabeth Mitchell and the children of his deceased brother James. At that time John had four children at home unmarried. His eldest son, William, was married with four children as I found in a further search of the 1841 Census. All the boys were in the iron and steel trade – moulders, fender fitters, steel rollers etc. However by 1871 my great-grandfather William was a fendersmith and had moved to Rotherham.

John's son Adam, who was unmarried, also left his estate to his brothers and sisters and nephew Adam, so it is not surprising that my great-grandfather was able to own his own house. However by 1871 Adam

## KNOWLES in Yorkshire



had become a coal merchant and hosier and John a brewer's clerk. Henry was an iron roller but registered blind and William was a fendersmith and had moved to Rotherham. George had died in childhood.

### **William Knowles Senior**

Great-great-grandfather William, born in 1807, was married in 1829 to Rebecca Roberts. He was a moulder like his father. He died on June 22nd 1843 aged 36. Cause of death – decline. Young William was a baby not quite 4 months old.

### **William Knowles Junior**

Great-grandfather William was born in 1843 according to Census returns and Marriage



*William Knowles 1843-1923*

Certificate. He was the youngest child of William and Rebecca. Although he was born after 1837 when all births were supposed to be registered, there is no record of his birth but in the Sheffield Archives Department I finally discovered that he was born on February 27th and christened on July 2nd shortly after his father's death. Presumably his mother, nursing a dying husband, did not get round to registering his birth.

I first found him in 1851 as a "scholar" living with his widowed mother and 3 brothers – Adam, Henry and John – in 59 Square Yard, Kimberworth. In 1861 he was a fender-fitter aged 18 living in 1 Yales Yard with mother, Henry and Henry's two children. In June 1867 aged 24 he married Mary Harrop in Doncaster. (In November 1868 his widowed brother John married Mary's "sister" Sarah in Balby). In February 1868 his eldest child, Harold Edwin (grandpa) was born in Masbrough Street but by 1871 they were living in 17 Gilberthorpe Street, Rotherham, where Helena was born. The other three children were born in Sheffield. I don't know exactly when they moved to Sheffield but it must have been between 1871 and 1873. By 1891 they were living in



*98 Heavy Gate Road*

98 Heavy Gate Road, Sheffield, a house which he owned. William is still described as a fender-fitter. In October 1908 his wife Mary died of angina and on the death certificate he is described as Secretary to Co-operative Society. In February 1911 he married Alice Jane Richardson and is now described as Secretary to Co-operative Cutlery Society. William died in 1923 aged 79 leaving quite a fortune for those days and describing himself as "gentleman". I also understand from my cousin Richard's information that he was at one time Secretary of the Brass Founders & Stove Grate Manufacturers Union, Rotherham and a Director of the Hearts of Oak Friendly Society. He seems to have been an interesting character and I remember my mother describing him as "a lovely old gentleman".

My grandfather Harold Edwin moved to Sheffield from Rotherham when he was 4 or 5 years old and lived there all his life. He was a clothier's assistant in a large Sheffield store. He married Elizabeth Crookes



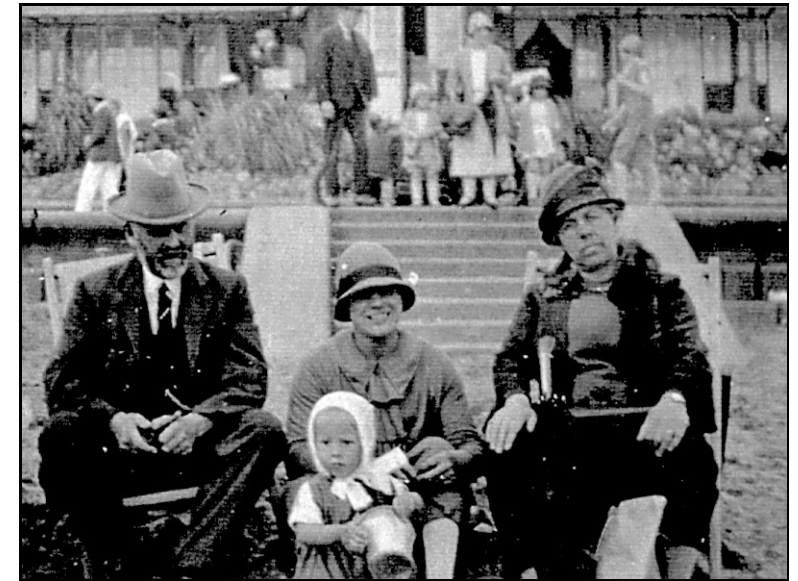
*William Stanley Knowles 1912*

in 1891 and they had 7 children. He died in 1928 at the age of 60.

I was born in Middlesbrough, Yorkshire on October 30th 1924, the only child of my parents and Middlesbrough was my home until I was 20. My father William Stanley Knowles was born in Sheffield in 1894. He left school at 14 but studied structural engineering at evening classes held by Sheffield University. Early in the 1914-1918 war he left home to work in London as a draughtsman for Dorman Long, the company which designed and built the Sydney Bridge. In 1918 he was transferred to the main steelworks in Middlesbrough and on a visit to Sunderland with an army officer friend he met my mother. They were married in 1919. At Dorman Long's he eventually became Chief Draughtsman and in 1945 was moved to London to

become General Manager of the London works. They lived in Carshalton, Surrey and I was married there in 1946. When Phil and I moved to Broadstairs my parents, who were in their late seventies, soon followed and they both died in Thanet.

*The Knowles Family in 1925  
(standing: Jack, Marian,  
George;  
seated: Stan, Jeanne with  
Sheila, Harold Edwin,  
Elizabeth, Harold with  
Doreen;  
kneeling: Winnie and  
Geoffrey)*



*Harold Edwin, Jane Margaret Knowles holding Sheila,  
and Elizabeth Knowles, at Scarborough, 1926*

# The Harrops of Balby

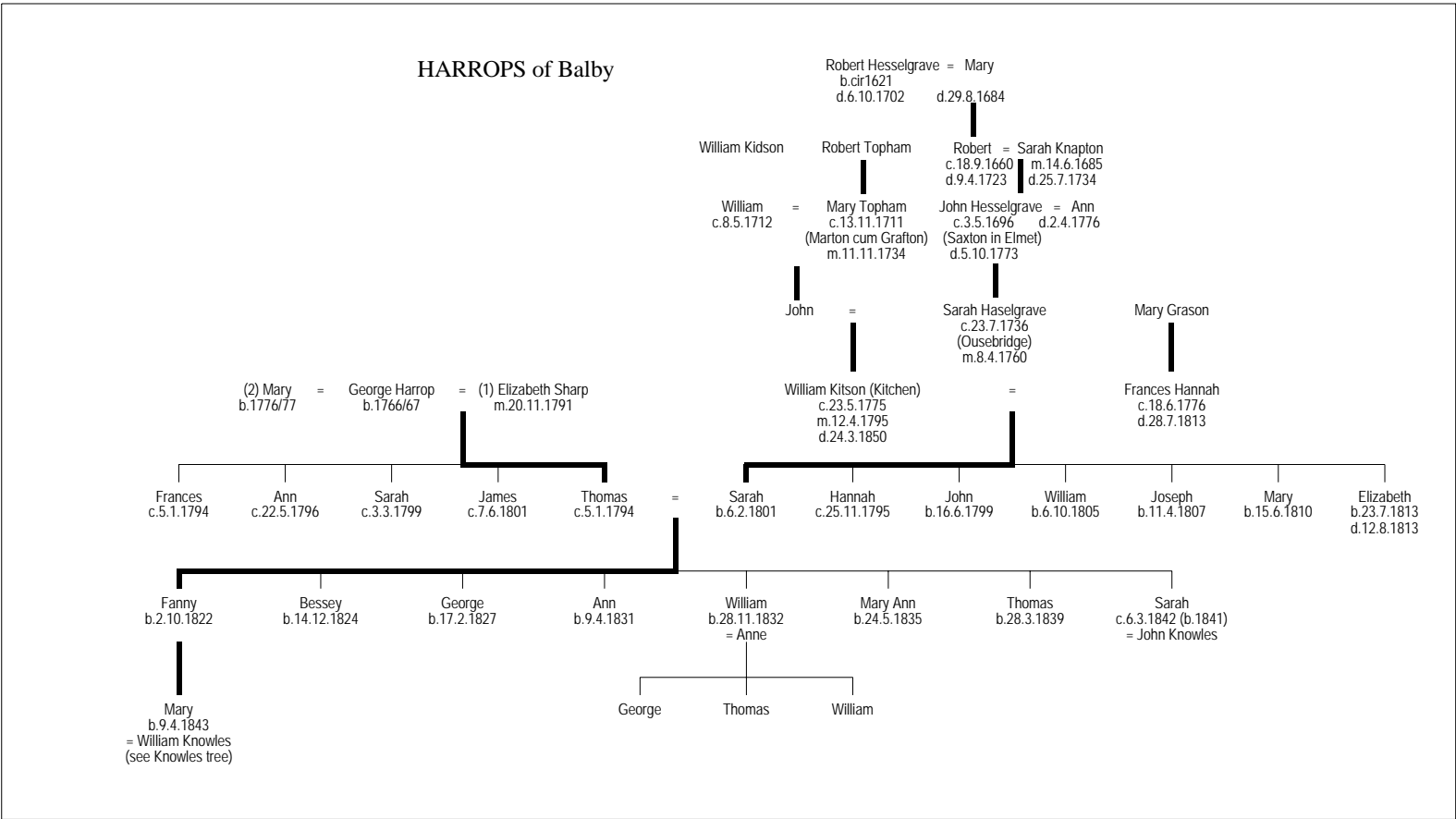
My grandfather’s mother was Mary Harrop. The Harrops lived in Balby, which is now part of Doncaster, but was in the 19th century a country district. Thomas Harrop, born in 1794, was an agricultural labourer, though occasionally he was described as a farmer. He and his wife Sarah had eight children ending with young Sarah born in 1841,

though in the 1851 Census Mary is entered as his youngest daughter aged 8.

Mary was born in Balby in 1843 and was brought up as the daughter of Thomas and Sarah Harrop. However her birth certificate gives her mother as Fanny Harrop who was the 20 year old daughter of Thomas and Sarah. At this time Sarah was 47 and already had a daughter called Mary. Mary married William Knowles in Doncaster on June 10th 1867

and died in Sheffield in 1908 aged 65. Her “sister” Sarah married Mary’s widowed brother-in-law John in November 1868.

Thomas Harrop’s wife Sarah (née Kitson) was born in Marr, which is still a village, about ten miles from Balby. She was a daughter of William Kitson or Kitchen and Frances Grayson (the “base-born” daughter of Mary Grason). I can find no record of the marriage between Thomas and Sarah though there is



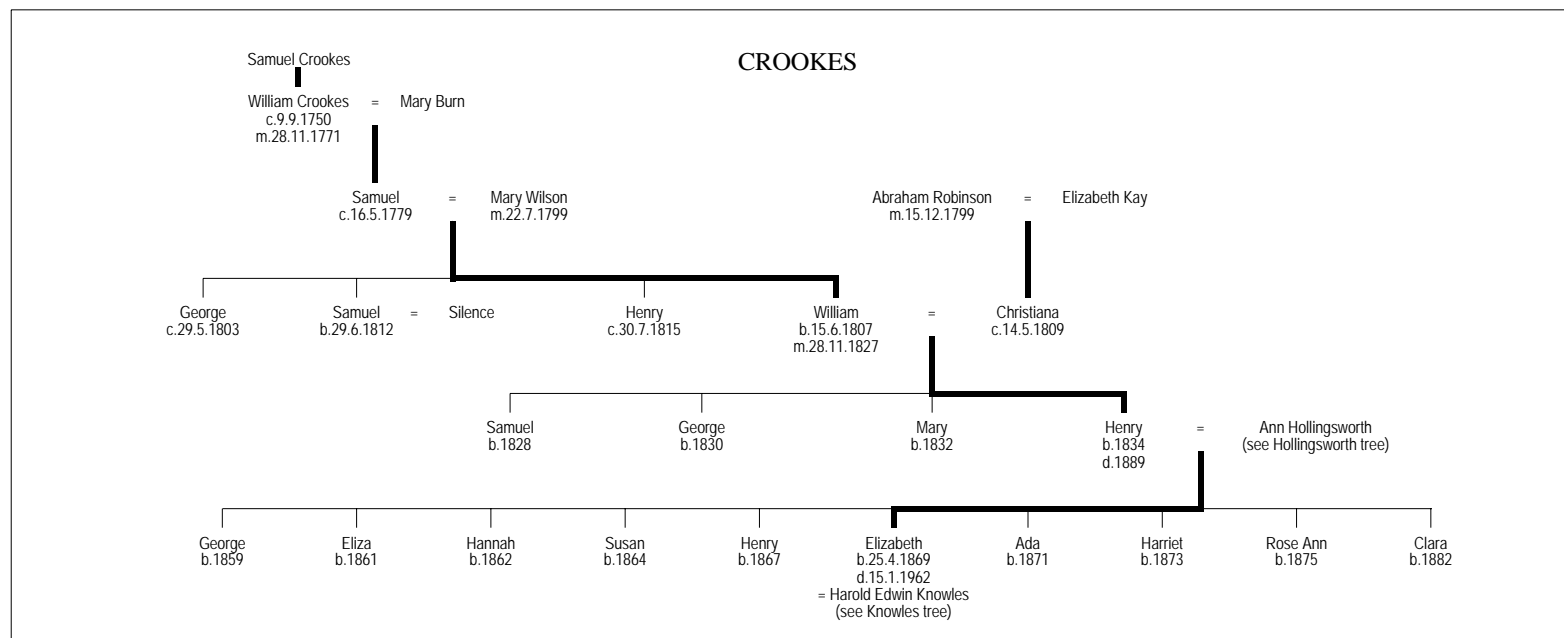
a marriage record in Doncaster (November 27th 1821) of Thomas Harrop and Sally Kitchen, both of that parish. We know that Sarah's father was sometimes known as Kitchen and that Sarahs are sometimes called Sally. However there was a Sally Kitchen, daughter of John Kitchen, born in South Kirkby in December 1800 and South Kirkby is not too far from Doncaster. So the mystery of the marriage remains. We are certain, however, that Thomas's wife Sarah was born in Marr (Census) and that her maiden name was Kitson (young Thomas's birth certificate).

I had always been interested in the Kitsons as my father told me that we were related to the Kitsons and one of his brothers and an uncle had the name Kitson

incorporated. However, having traced Sarah and her parents in Marr I could get no further. William Kitson and his brother Robert appeared in Marr for their marriages but there were no previous Kitsons there. Nor could I find William's baptism in the IGI. There I would have stopped but I recently received information from a fellow member of the Derbyshire FHS. She tells me that William and Robert came from St. John's Ousebridge in Yorkshire and she has traced the family back to their great-grandfather. The family lived in a district between Harrogate and York.

There is another mystery. In the Doncaster Parish Records as well as the baptism of Mary, daughter of Frances Harrop (spinster) of Balby in 1843 there is

also the baptism of Mary, daughter of Thomas Harrop (labourer) and Fanny Harrop (formerly Ledger) of Balby. The latter Mary was born on May 28th 1847 and baptised on July 8th. I can find no record of this birth at the General Record Office nor are any of these people to be found in the whole of Doncaster 1851 Census. The birth date of 1843 bears out Mary's given age in the 1851 Census, her marriage and death certificates.



## The Crookes

My grandmother was Elizabeth Crookes, but apart from her father Henry and the name of his father William I couldn't find out anything about the Crookes family. I also knew the name of Grandma's mother Ann, née Hollingsworth, two brothers and four sisters, but could find no further information till I went to the Sheffield Archives Department in April 1992. There I discovered three more sisters (Hannah, Susan and Rose Ann), Henry's parents, siblings and his Uncle Samuel and family thanks to the Census Surname Index. The Crookes were almost all bone scale cutters. Up to 1851 they lived in the centre of Sheffield, not the Park district, so I had been looking in the wrong area.

I also found the marriage of Henry's parents William Crookes and Christiana Robinson. Through the IGI I found what I think is Christiana's baptism and

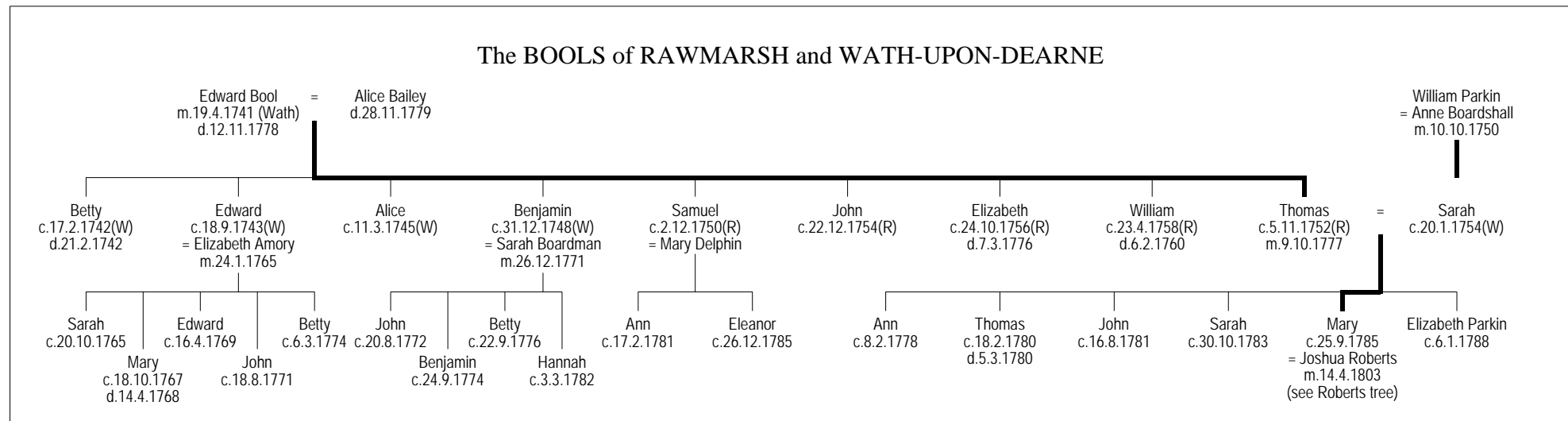
parents though I can't be certain of this as there were two other Christianas, one in Kirkby Overblow and one in Armley. The Crookes were more difficult, this being a common surname in Sheffield and most of the men had the same Christian names. However I found the baptism of brothers William and Samuel at about the right time and also brothers Henry and George. They were the sons of Samuel Crookes (cutler) and Mary. Also a Samuel Crookes married Mary Wilson in 1799. These seem very likely candidates but I can't be certain. This Samuel was probably the son of William Crookes and Mary Burn.

The other mystery is the date of Eliza's birth. I assumed she came either immediately before or after Grandma. However she was not at home in the 1871 Census although George, Hannah, Susan, Henry and Elizabeth were. As she was married to James Bussey in 1886 she could hardly have been born after 1871. I eventually found her birth in 1861 so she was the second child.

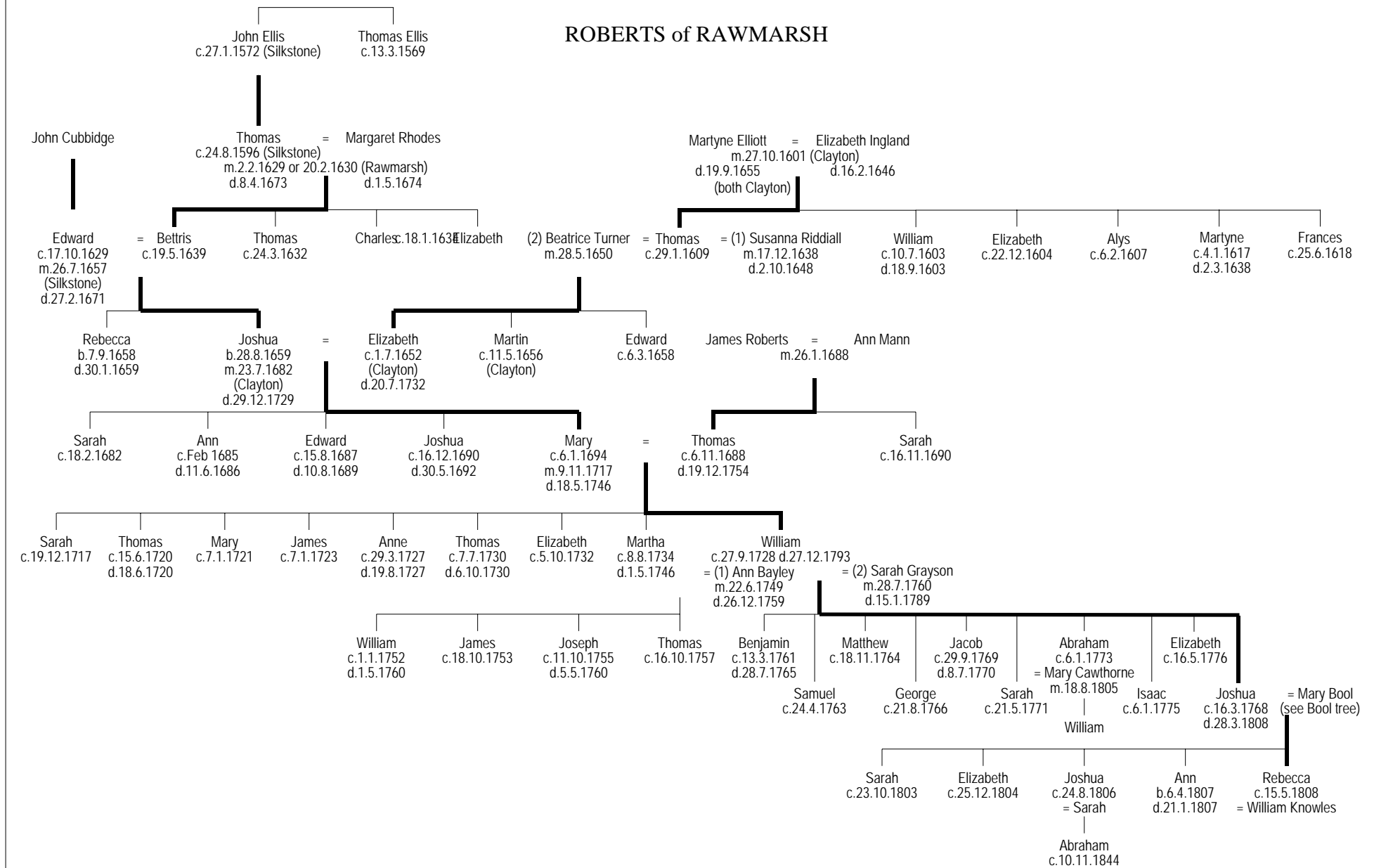
## The Rawmarsh Families

Rawmarsh is now part of Rotherham but up to the Industrial Revolution it was a rural area. Rebecca Roberts, who married William Knowles in 1829, was the posthumous daughter of Joshua Roberts and Mary Bool. The Boos were masons who came to Rawmarsh from the neighbouring village of Wath-upon-Deane about 1750. Although Mary and her father were born in Rawmarsh her mother Sarah came from Wath. The Roberts were farmers as far back as I can go, as were the Graysons and the Shaws. The Cubbidges appear in the Rawmarsh records in 1658 but, having failed to find the marriages of Edward and Joshua, I looked elsewhere and found them in Silkstone and Frickley-with-Clayton which were nearby villages.

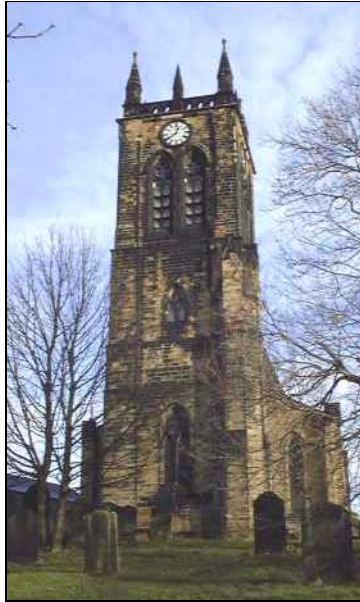
On the family tree you will notice in the Grayson family Dinah born in 1804, the illegitimate daughter



## ROBERTS of RAWMARSH



*St.Mary's  
Church,  
Rawmarsh*



of Grace Grayson (Joshua Roberts the reputed father!).

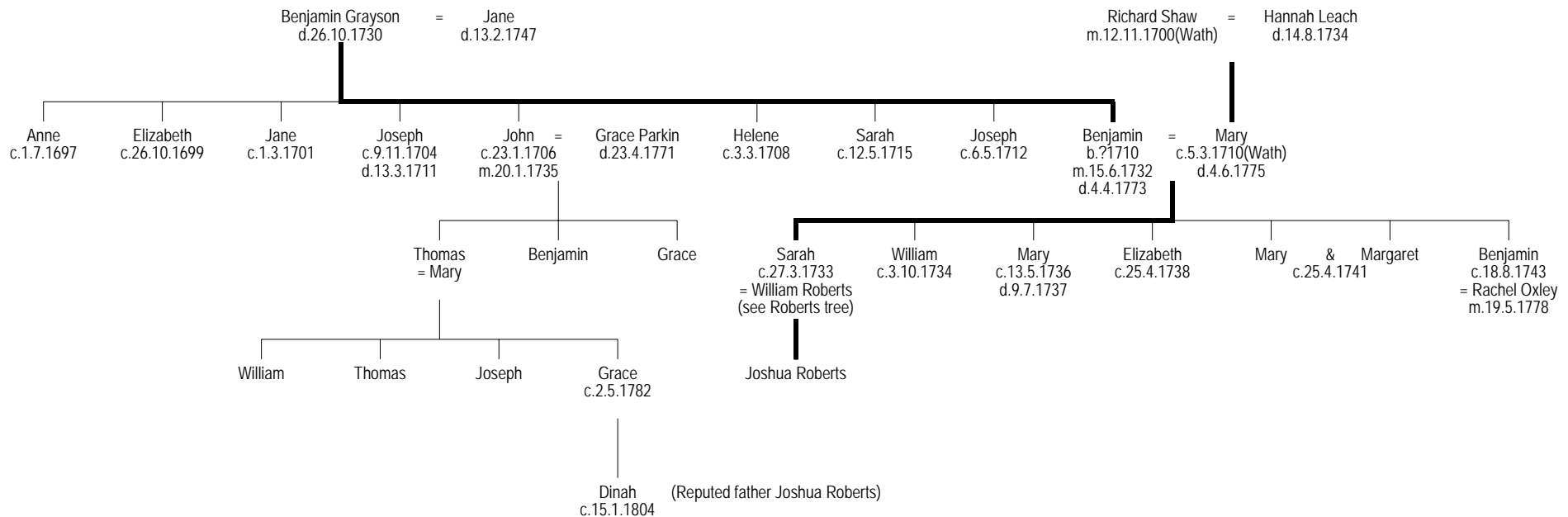
At the marriage of Benjamin Grayson and Rachel Oxley the witnesses were William and James Roberts, presumably the bridegroom's sister's husband and her brother-in-law. Obviously all these families were very close. Joshua's marriage to Mary Bool was witnessed by Elizabeth Parkin Bool (bride's sister) and James Roberts (bridegroom's half-brother).

On visiting Rawmarsh church I noticed the gravestone of Abraham and Mary Roberts and their son William. Abraham was one of Joshua's brothers. I didn't have time to look for further graves but some day I might go back.

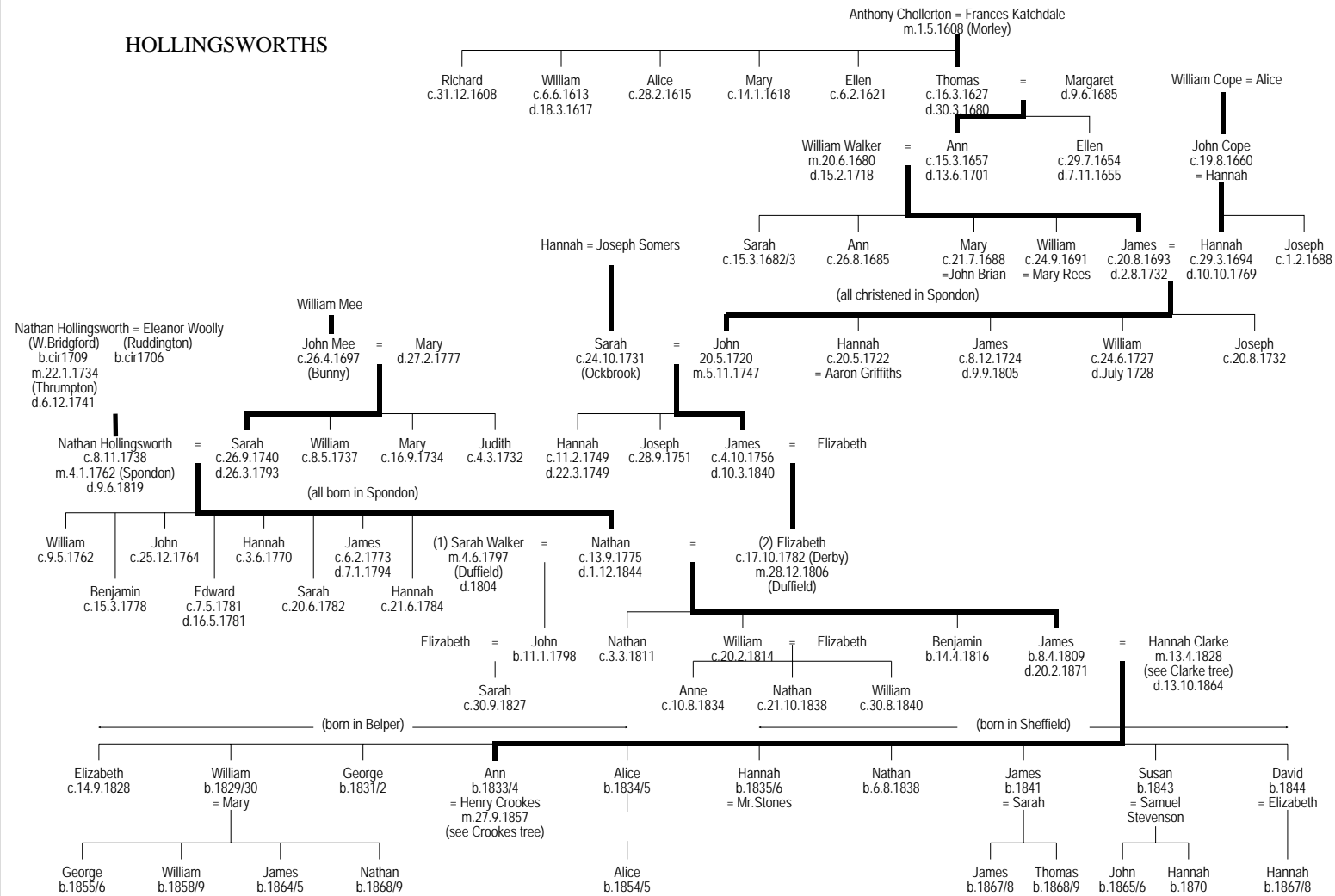
## The Hollingsworths and their ancestors in Derbyshire

I didn't know where the Hollingsworths lived but, remembering the name Nathan as a witness at Ann's marriage, I looked up his birth and found an address. This gave me the family on the Census return, where I found that James and his older children had been born in Belper. Through the IGI I was able to trace the family in Derbyshire back to a marriage in 1762. Grandma's mother was Ann Crookes née Hollingsworth, born in Belper in 1833 or 34. Her father James was a tailor who moved from Belper to Sheffield in about 1835 with his wife Hannah (née Clarke) and family (see the Clarkes and Normans). The first five children were born in Belper and the last five in Sheffield. James's father Nathan married twice in Duffield, both brides being called Walker

### GRAYSONS of RAWMARSH



# HOLLINGSWORTHS



and probably related as Elizabeth was a witness at the marriage of Nathan and Sarah. The children were all born in Belper. Nathan himself was born in Spondon where his father Nathan had married Sarah Mee in 1762. I can find no trace of Nathan senior prior to his marriage, nor of Sarah's parents except for their names. Were they Derbyshire families or did they come from a neighbouring county? There were Mees and Hollingsworths in Nottinghamshire and I subsequently found Nathan there. There was a marriage by licence between Nathan Hollingsworth of West Bridgeford and Eleanor Woolley of Ruddington, aged about 27, on the 22nd January 1734 at Thrumpton. Their son John was baptised on April 7th 1735 and son Nathaniel (Nathan) on November 8th 1738, both at West Bridgeford. Nathan Senior was buried on the 6th December 1741. His widow remarried.

The Walkers also came from Spondon as did Ann Chollerton. Ann's father was baptised in Morley, the next parish, but as Spondon Parish Registers didn't start till 1653 and Morley goes back to the 16th century it is likely that the Chollertons were always in the same district. Sarah Somers came from Ockbrook, another neighbouring parish. I cannot find the baptism of William Walker senior but there were two Walkers in the 1670 Hearth Tax in Spondon, James and William, either of which could be William's father.

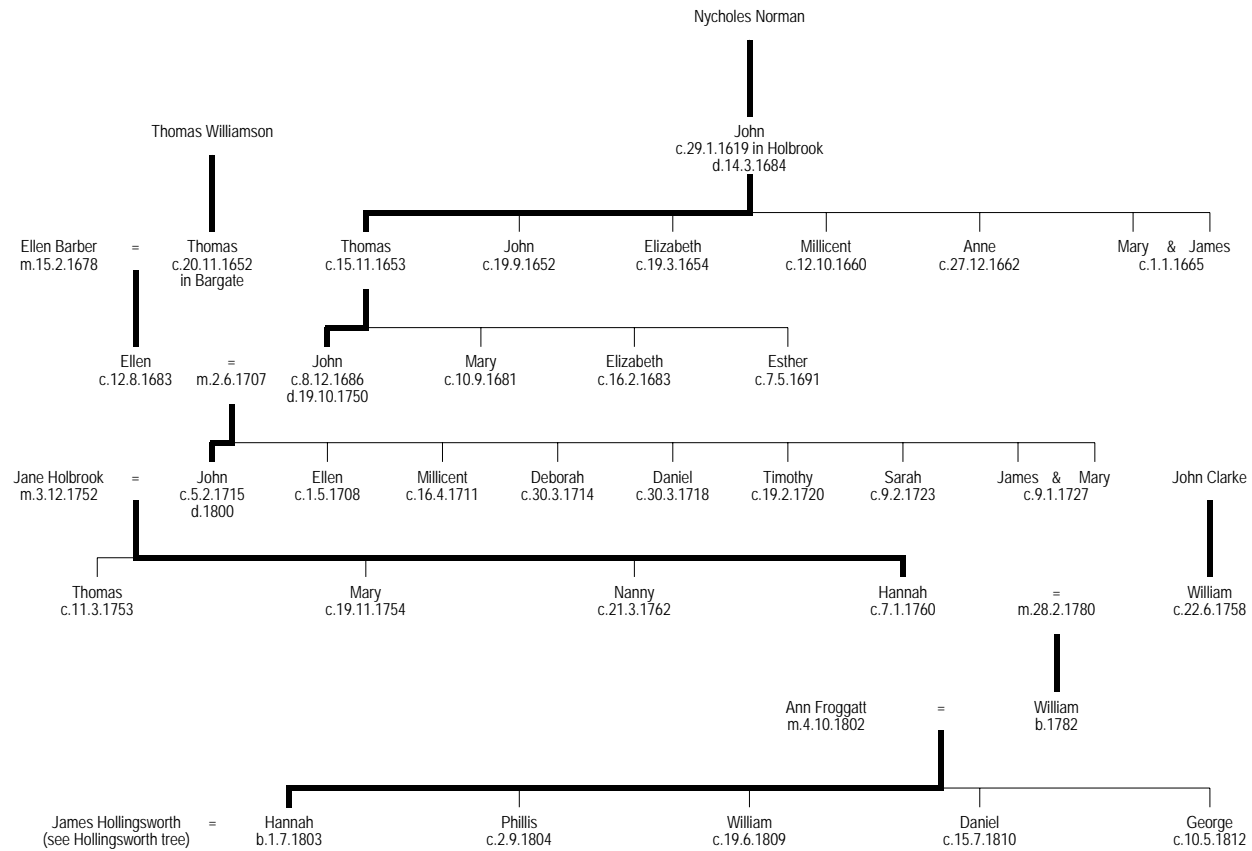
William Walker, who died in 1718, was a blacksmith and Parish Clerk, a position which went to his elder son William on his father's death. William senior left most of his property to son William but James had the use of the malthouse for ten years. Servant Hannah Cope was left five shillings. She later married James but outlived him by 32 years. When she died she left money and property, partly bequeathed to her by her brother. Her son John was dead by this time but she left ten pounds apiece to his sons Joseph and James as soon as they reached the age of 21.

## The Clarkes and Normans

Great-great-grandfather James Hollingsworth married Hannah Clarke, the daughter of William and Ann Clarke. I know from the Census that William was born around 1782 but I can find no record of his baptism. I suspect that he was the son of William Clarke and Hannah Norman, married in Duffield in 1780. However in August and October 1782 a Hannah Clarke and a William Clarke were buried in Duffield. If these were William junior's parents it might explain why he wasn't baptised. The records of the Norman family in Duffield go a long way back but as Duffield records go no further back than 1598 I have not been able to find the baptism of Nycholes Norman.

Postscript: Looking for the death of Hannah Hollingsworth (née Clarke) I found a death in Belper and a burial in Sheffield in 1864. These both turned out to be my Hannah. She died in Belper (cause of death given as "visitation by God"!) and was taken to Sheffield for burial.

## CLARKES





# THE SUNDERLAND ANCESTORS

My maternal grandmother was Jane Margaret Scott, one of the 13 children of William and Maria. I started off knowing quite a lot about this family and learnt more from the Family Bible and Census.

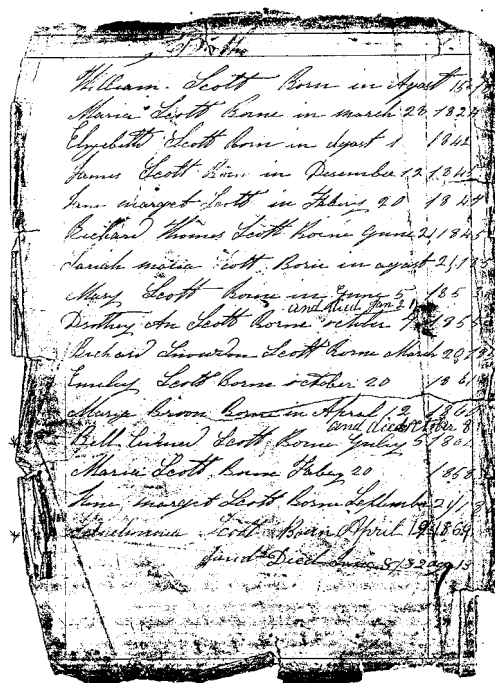
## Children of William and Maria Scott

(married 17th April 1842 when he was 21 & she 18)

1. August 1st 1842 - Elizabeth. In January/March 1861 she married John Brown, a butcher from Middlesbrough, and in the 1861 Census they are shown as married and living with her parents. However on April 12th 1860 she had a daughter Mary Brown who died on October 8th the same year. I don't know what happened to John Brown but in April/June 1864 she married Robert Lynn, calling herself Elizabeth Scott. At the moment I have no record of children but I remember someone called Annie Lynn who was older than my grandmother but reputed to be her niece. I think Annie married an Emerson. There were also Lizzie and Ivy Emerson who I think were both daughters of Annie. Ivy was born when her mother was rising 50.

2. December 12th 1845 - James. He married Jane Carney in 1865 and they had 8 children that I know of. In 1861, aged 16, he was an iron factory labourer, in 1881 a bricklayer and iron ship cementer and in 1886 a mason. In 1881 they were living in 6 Ethel Street with children Jane Margaret (15), Maria (13), Wilhelmina (3), James (2) and Walter (1). Three other children died very young:- Thomas Johnson Scott aged 7 months (Dec 1882), Annie Ethel aged 10 months (April 1885) and James William Nichol

aged 15 months (Aug 1889). It was James who in 1883 bought four plots in Bishopwearmouth Cemetery. Three of his infant children were buried there, as were Fred and Sarah Laming and their daughter Ann. In 1933 his son James, who lived in Scotland, handed over the plots to my grandparents and they were buried there as were Aunt Emily and Uncle Albert.



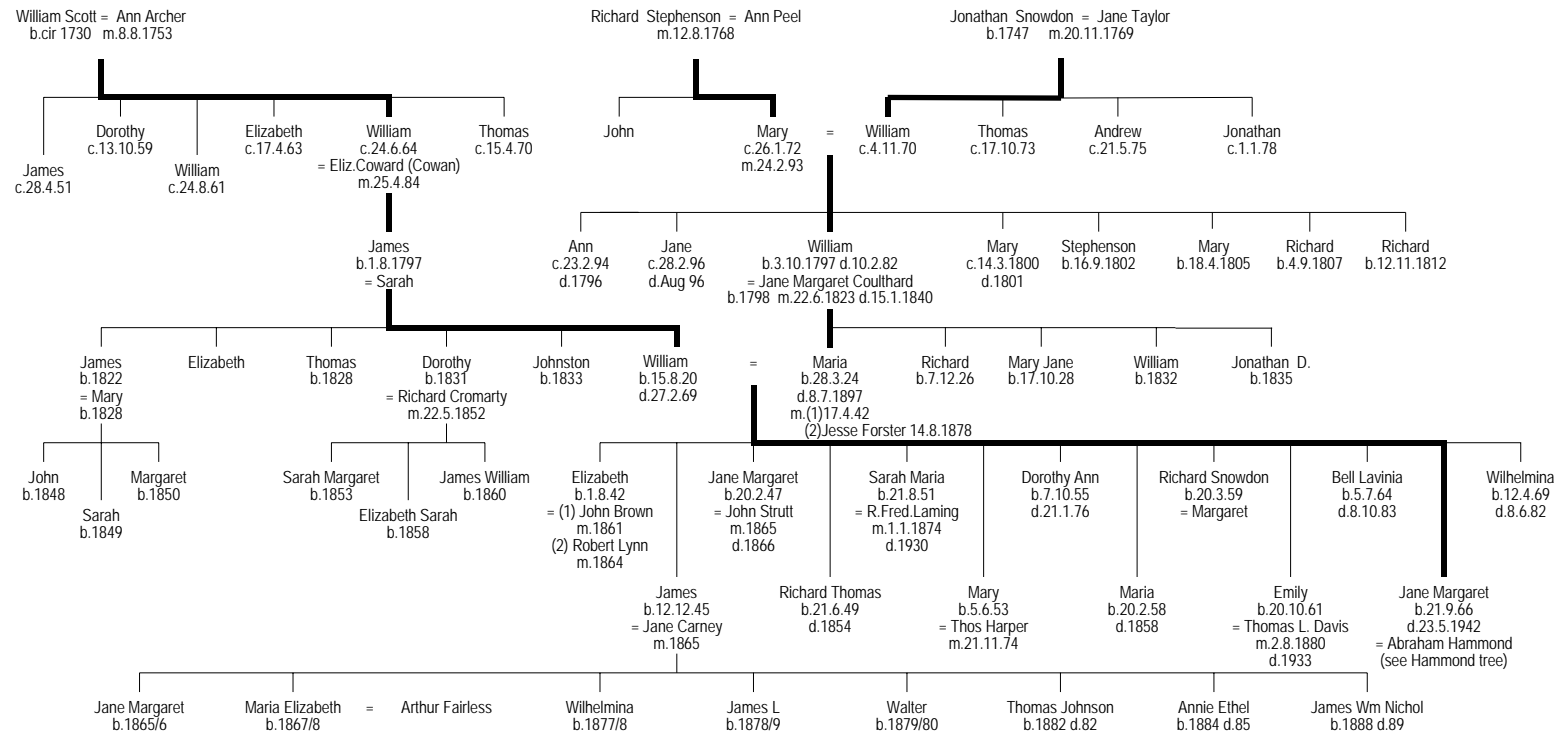
Page from Maria Scott's Family Bible



Jane Margaret Hammond nee Scott

3. February 20th 1847 - Jane Margaret. I had difficulty in finding her because she was not living at home during the 1851 and 1861 Census when she would be 4 and 14 years of age, though I later found her in the 1851 Census staying with her grandfather James Scott. However I found her marriage in July/September 1865 to John Strutt. She died in January/

## SNOWDONS and SCOTTS



March 1866 and so did her new baby James. Presumably she and baby died in childbirth.

4. June 21st 1849 - Richard Thomas. He died in July/September 1854 aged 5.

5. August 21st 1851 - Sarah Maria. On January 1st 1874 she married Frederick Laming, who died in 1925 aged 72. From my childhood I remember a Fred Laming who must have been their son, and he had a daughter Polly. Sarah died in July 1930 aged 78. They also had a daughter Ann who died unmarried in 1909 aged 30. I know nothing about any other children.

6. June 5th 1853 - Mary. This was "Aunt Polly" - who on November 21st 1874 married Thomas Harper. I can just remember her but she died when I was very young.

7. October 7th 1855 - Dorothy Ann. She died on January 21st 1876, aged 20.

8. February 20th 1858 - Maria. She died April/June 1858.

9. March 20th 1859 - Richard Snowdon. I know nothing else about him but he must have survived into the 20th century because I have heard my mother talk about "Uncle Dick".

10. October 20th 1861 - Emily. She married an artist named Davis who left her and she became a housekeeper in Bradford. She died in May 1933, aged 71, at my grandmother's home.

11. July 5th 1864 - Bell Lavinia. She died on October 8th 1883, aged 19.

12. September 21st 1866 - Jane Margaret. This is my grandmother who on June 3rd 1888 married Abraham Hammond. She died on May 23rd 1942.

13. April 12th 1869 - Wilhelmina. She died on June 8th 1882 aged 13.

We had always wondered who Ria Fairless was and I determined to find out. She appeared to be from the Scott side of the family and the only likely candidate



*Wedding of Mary (Polly) Scott (aged 21) and Thomas Harper in 1874. The others pictured are, from left: probably her brother James (aged 29) who would have given her away as their father was dead; her sister Jane Margaret (aged 8); her sisters Elizabeth Lynn (aged 32) and Dorothy Ann (aged 19) – who was to die a little over a year later; probably the best man, either a friend of the bridegroom or Fred Laming, Sarah Maria's husband; and her sister Sarah Maria Laming (aged 23).*



was Maria E. Scott, the daughter of grandma's brother James (See para.2). I looked for her marriage and eventually found it. On the 30th August 1886 Maria Elizabeth Scott married Arthur William Fairless, a glass cutter. Five or six months later a son James Scott Fairless was born!!

Great-grandfather William Scott was a stonemason who died before he was 50. Apparently he was working at Diamond Hall when a young assistant had an epileptic fit and fell in a pond. William jumped in to save him but drowned doing so. This left Maria 7 months pregnant with seven children still at home, five of them under 10 years. However she became a grocer and brought them up. She herself died during a church service according to what I have been told. I was unable to trace the baptism of either William or Maria but their birth dates were recorded in the Family Bible.

William's father was James Scott, a mariner. I found his record in the Seamen's Register for 1845-54. Through two members of the NDFHS I also found him in the 1851 and 1861 Census with his wife Sarah, three grown-up children and the "missing" grand-daughter Jane Margaret. I think that the mariner James Scott born in 1822 was also his son and there was probably a daughter, Elizabeth. Unfortunately I have not yet found his marriage or baptisms of any of the children. Perhaps they were Non-Conformists. James himself was probably the son of William Scott, ship's carpenter, and Elizabeth Cowan (or Coward) but I have not yet managed to confirm this. This William was probably the son of William and Ann Scott, baptised on 24th June 1764. William and Ann had several other children with significant Christian names.

## Maria Scott and her family

1. Elizabeth (Lynn) 1881 Census aged 37. Stokers wife, six children, William 16 apprentice mason,

Thomas J. 14 apprentice blacksmith, Elizabeth J. 11, Sarah J. 8, Dorothy A. 4 and Robert J. 10 months. Also Ann Lynn, 17, was a servant with the Emerson family - the head John was a licensed victualler.

3. Jane Margaret - in 1861 census her grandfather James had four grandchildren with him, three were children of his daughter Dorothy but the fourth was a Sarah Margaret Scott aged 14. Could this have been Jane Margaret again? (name mixed up with Dorothy's daughter Sarah Margaret). I know of no other Scott grandchildren aged 14 in 1861.

4. Sarah Maria (Laming) - in 1881 census aged 29 with husband Richard F. and three children, Emily C. 4, Richard F. 2 and James W.S. aged 1.

6. Mary (Harper) in 1881 census aged 27 with upholsterer husband Thomas.

9. Richard - in 1881 census aged 22 is a mason like his father. Wife Margaret and two children, Maria 2, and James 10 months.

10. Emily (Davis) in 1881 census aged 19 living in Ethel Street near brother James with husband Thomas L. aged 28, a carver and gilder.

11. Belle Lavinia - in 1881 aged 16 a servant but living with Emily.

12. Jane Margaret - couldn't find her in the 1881 census but there was a Jane Margaret Scott of the right age employed as a servant by Christopher Hazard, Butcher, although I had always been told that she was delicate and never went out to work!

13. Wilhelmina died of TB.

For several years I had looked for Maria Scott's death but was unable to find it. However, looking at the 1881 census I was surprised to find no reference to Maria or her daughter Wilhelmina. As they must have been somewhere I got Wilhelmina's death certificate to find an address. To my surprise the death had been notified not by her mother but by her stepfather Jesse Forster! I never knew that Maria had remarried. Armed with this information I found them



*Zion Street and Holy Trinity Church,  
remaining fragments of Sunderland Old Town*

I was then able to find Maria's death at the age of 73 and she was a widow again. She did die of heart failure in church (a chapel in Southwick Road) The story of Auntie Mina having been with her sounds quite plausible. Though she was only eight her grandmother might well have taken her to church as her mother had just given birth 12 days previously to Jane Margaret (my mother).

Maria's father was Wm Snowdon, shipwright. He married Jane Margaret Coulthard in 1823 and they had 5 children of whom Maria was the eldest. I can find no antecedents for Jane Margaret. She died of consumption in 1840 when her youngest son was 5. In December 1841 William married again. He died on 10th February 1882 in the Workhouse, Hylton Road.

Thanks to a Snowdon descendant I have William's lineage as far as his grandfather Jonathan, born in 1747 but there are so many Snowdons in Sunderland and Newcastle, many of them named William, that to trace further back is mainly guesswork (see family tree).

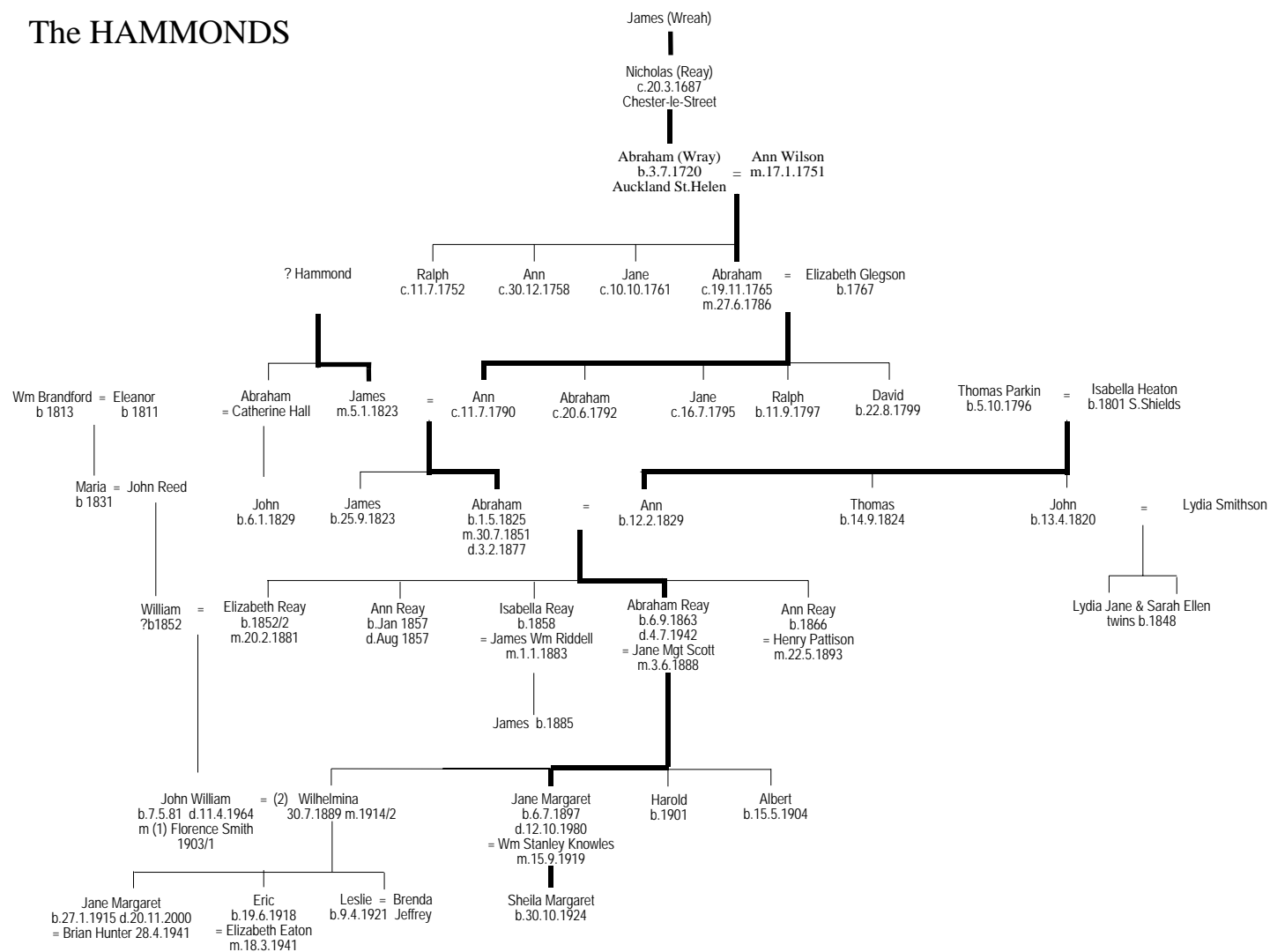
My grandfather was Abraham Hammond, a joiner, only son of Abraham Hammond, tailor, and Ann Parkin. It was comparatively easy to trace the Hammonds back to James who married Ann Reay. He was a mariner but was not to be found in the Seamen's Records at Kew. Nor can I find his baptism or that of what I think is his brother Abraham. Perhaps they did not come from Sunderland. In fact I could find very few Hammonds in the 1841 and 1851 Census. The only ones I found were both master mariners, John, born 1829, and William, born 1821. Although born in Sunderland they were both married to girls from Kent - John's wife from Dover and William's from Queensborough. I don't even know if this Abraham was James's brother. All I know is that in 1829 was born John, son of Abraham Hammond (mariner) and Catherine Hall in Sunderland. This seemed too great a coincidence to be ignored. However I have now discovered a baptism in Rochester, Kent in 1793 of an Abraham Hammond, son of John Hammond and Elizabeth. Great-grandfather Abraham was not only a tailor and general dealer working from home in Low Street and Ford Street but in 1871 he was also advertising himself as a clothes dealer at 207 New Market. He died of nephritis in 1877.

1. Elizabeth born in 1852, married William Reed, riveter, in 1881 and had one child, John William, who married his cousin Wilhelmina Hammond (Auntie Mina).
2. Ann born in January 1857 and died in August aged 7 months.
3. Isabella born in 1858, married James William Riddell, checker, in 1883 and had a son who married

Elizabeth's eldest granddaughter Florrie can remember all these ladies. Elizabeth was her grandmother who looked after Uncle Willie's children after his wife died and before he married Auntie Mina. Elizabeth and Bella both lived in Addison Street. Annie lived in Noble Street. She



## The HAMMONDS





*Jane Margaret Knowles née Hammond c.1910*

used to wear a long black skirt, black button-up boots, a black hat with violets at the front and black gloves. Ann Reay's father was a seaman and his father was, I think, the Abraham born in Auckland St. Helen.

The Parkins were much harder to trace. I know nothing of Isabella (née Heaton or Aton) except that she was born in South Shields and in 1861 was a widow aged 60. Thomas was a mariner as was his son John. I found them in the Seamen's Registers but there are so many Thomas Parkins in Sunderland, most of them mariners, that I can only hope I have the right one and can certainly not trace any further back.



# POSTSCRIPT

This is as far as we have been able to trace the histories of the two families.

So far we have covered the “Officially” recorded history and included some information obtained from Trade Directories, Local Historical Accounts and some personal correspondence. The record covers some three hundred years, into the sixteenth century, but at this point the task of tracing one’s ancestors becomes very difficult indeed.

The formal recording of births, baptisms, marriages and burials did not start until 1565 at the earliest, but in many cases until 1580. Not all of the records from those days have survived, those that have are often in poor condition or have infuriating gaps in them and at the time of the Protectorate they become very fragmentary indeed.

Also, the use of surnames was by no means universal until this time which makes it even more difficult to trace an unequivocal line.

While we shall continue to search, further progress, if any, is bound to be very slow. However, existing material is still being made more accessible and new material does become available from time to time.

Sheila and Phil Rippon  
Upton, Oxfordshire  
July 2005



## Known occupations of our Ancestors

Year of birth	Place of birth	Name	Occupation	S or P	Relationship
1596	Silkstone	Thomas Ellis	Smith	S	Great x 8 grandfather
c1600	Matlock	Henry Knowles	Sherman	S	Great x 9 grandfather
c1625	Matlock	William Pidcock	Yeoman	S	Great x 8 grandfather
c1640		Henry Hutton	Husbandman	P	Great x 7 grandfather
c1650	Ashover	Thomas Towndrow	Yeoman	S	Great x 7 grandfather
1659	Rawmarsh	Joshua Cubbidge	Yeoman	S	Great x 6 grandfather
c1660	Saxton in Elmet	Robert Hesselgrave	Linen weaver and church sexton	S	Great x 8 grandfather
c1660	Spondon?	William Walker	Blacksmith	S	Great x 7 grandfather
c1666	Swinton?	Richard Hutton	Sicklesmith	P	Great x 6 grandfather
c1677	Rawmarsh?	Benjamin Grayson	Farmer	S	Great x 6 grandfather
c1680	Wath	Richard Shaw	Farmer	S	Great x 6 grandfather
c1680	Eckington?	Richard Rippon	Husbandman	P	Great x 5 grandfather
1688	Rawmarsh	Thomas Roberts	Yeoman farmer	S	Great x 5 grandfather
1693	Matlock	George Knowles	Lead miner	S	Great x 6 grandfather
1703	Eckington	John Rippon	Hatter	P	Great x 4 grandfather
1703	Dronfield	Charles Hutton	Sicklesmith	P	Great x 5 grandfather
c1710	Rawmarsh	Benjamin Grayson	Farmer	S	Great x 5 grandfather
c1720	Wath	Edward Bool	Mason	S	Great x 5 grandfather
1722	Matlock	George Knowles	Lead miner	S	Great x 5 grandfather
1728	Rawmarsh	William Roberts	Farmer	S	Great x 4 grandfather
c1730		William Parkin	Hatter	S	Great x 5 grandfather
1731	Eckington	George Hutton	Sicklesmith	P	Great x 4 grandfather
1746	Eckington	William Rippon	Hatter	P	Great x 3 grandfather
c1747	Sheffield	William Crookes	Cutler	S	Great x 4 grandfather
1752	Rawmarsh	Thomas Bool	Mason	S	Great x 4 grandfather
1764	Sunderland	William Scott	Ship's carpenter	S	Great x 3 grandfather
1765	Sunderland	Abraham Reay	Seaman	S	Great x 3 grandfather

Year of birth	Place of birth	Name	Occupation	S or P	Relationship
c1767	Balby	George Harrop	Ag.labourer	S	Great x 4 grandfather
1768	Rawmarsh	Joshua Roberts	Farmer, Corn jobber	S	Great x 3 grandfather
1769	Sunderland	William Snowdon	Mariner	S	Great x 3 grandfather
1775	St. John's Ousebridge	William Kitson	Labourer	S	Great x 4 grandfather
1775	Spondon	Nathan Hollingsworth	Labourer	S	Great x 3 grandfather
1779	Sheffield	Samuel Crookes	Cutler	S	Great x 3 grandfather
c1780	Whittlesey	Daniel Green	Ag.labourer	P	Great x 3 grandfather
1782	Heage	William Clarke	Cotton weaver	S	Great x 3 grandfather
1784	Kimberworth	John Knowles	Moulder	S	Great x 3 grandfather
c1789	Whittlesey	Thomas Watson	Labourer	P	Great x 3 grandfather
c1789	Sheffield	John Thornton	Blacksmith	P	Great x 3 grandfather
c1790	Ecclesfield	James Hawksley	Book-keeper	P	Great x 3 grandfather
c1790		James Hammond	Mariner	S	Great x 2 grandfather
1794	Balby	Thomas Harrop	Ag. labourer	S	Great x 3 grandfather
c1796	Sheffield	Richard Fetter	Screw maker	P	Great x 2 grandfather
1796	Sunderland	Thomas Parkin	Mariner	S	Great x 2 grandfather
1796	Oldbury	John Holloway	Iron founder	P	Great x 2 grandfather
1797	Sunderland	James Scott	Mariner	S	Great x 2 grandfather
1797	Sunderland	William Snowdon	Shipwright	S	Great x 2 grandfather
1798	Birmingham	James Yates	Iron caster	P	Great x 3 grandfather
1798	Birmingham	John Edginton	Carpenter	P	Great x 3 grandfather
1798	Sheffield	Thomas Sykes	Painter	P	Great x 3 grandfather
1799	Eckington	Reuben Rippon	Carpenter, Coal merchant	P	Great x 2 grandfather
c1800	Worksop	John Handley	Maltster	P	Great x 3 grandfather
1800	Ecclesfield	John Beard	Forgeman	P	Great x 2 grandfather
1807	Kimberworth	William Knowles	Moulder	S	Great x 2 grandfather
1807	Sheffield	William Crookes	Bone scale cutter	S	Great x 2 grandfather
1809	Belper	James Hollingsworth	Tailor	S	Great x 2 grandfather
c1819	Whittlesey	William Watson	Blacksmith	P	Great x 2 grandfather
c1819	Birmingham	James Yates	Iron caster	P	Great x 2 grandfather
1820	Sunderland	William Scott	Mason	S	Great grandfather

Year of birth	Place of birth	Name	Occupation	S or P	Relationship
1821	Sheffield	Robert Hawksley	Silversmith	P	Great x 2 grandfather
1822	Sheffield	Joseph Thornton	Forger	P	Great x 2 grandfather
1825	Sunderland	Abraham Hammond	Tailor	S	Great grandfather
1829	Sheffield	John Beard	Cutlery forgerman	P	Great grandfather
1832	Sheffield	Edwin Rippon	Clockmaker	P	Great grandfather
1834	Sheffield	Henry Crookes	Bone scale cutter	S	Great grandfather
1843	Kimberworth	William Knowles	Fendersmith, Sec. Co-op. Soc.	S	Great grandfather
1848	Sheffield	George Thornton	Sheep Shear Forger	P	Great grandfather
1848	Whittlesey	Alfred Watson	Fitter	P	Great grandfather
1859	Worcester	Reuben Rippon	Clockmaker	P	Grandfather
1863	Sunderland	Abraham Hammond	Joiner	S	Grandfather
1868	Kimberworth	Harold E. Knowles	Clothier's assistant	S	Grandfather
1871	Sheffield	George Thornton	Spring maker	P	Grandfather
1894	Sheffield	John Edwin Rippon	Metallurgist	P	Father
1894	Sheffield	Wm Stanley Knowles	Structural Engineer	S	Father