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. . being whole and sound of body and of good memory . .

I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, to his blessed mother, our lady Saint Mary and to all the holy company in heaven, my body to be buried in the church of Wilmington nigh unto my brother **Sir William Brodibent**.

. . .
I bequeath to the **vicar of Sutton**¹ my best gown and my best worsted jacket, my best cap and my best hat. **Item:** I bequeath to the **parson of Cranford** all my books and to pray for my soul . . to **Johane Sh...**, my servant, the bed that she lieth on with th'appurtenances thereunto belonging . . my worst gown.

1

the parish to the south of Wilmington

The Bakers of the Sevenoaks/Tonbridge Area

There are a large number of Bakers throughout the area with some large families in a number of areas. But Baker is a common name and we would not expect all the Baker wills to come from related families. The wills from the villages investigated are listed here in date order:

Nicholas Baker	Shipbourne	7 Sep 1468	CKS: Drb/Pwr 3.11	page b.57 ²
William Baker	Seal	1476	CKS: Drb/Pwr 4.229	page b.57
Richard Baker	West Peckham	17 Feb 1540/1 ³	CKS: Drb/Pwr 9.376	page b.17
John Baker	Brenchley	12 Sep 1552	CKS: Drb/Pw 4; Drb/Pwr 11.233	page b.41
Richard Baker	West Peckham	17 Jan 1559/60	CKS: Drb/Pwr 12.383	page b.20
John Baker	West Peckham	12 Mar 1567	CKS: Drb/Pw 9; Drb/Pwr 13.320	page b.24
Arthur Baker	Seal	12 Jan 1581	CKS: Drb/Pw 13; Drb/Pwr 16.128	page b.59
William Baker	Pembury	22 Feb 1581/2 ⁴	CKS: Drb/Pwr 16.229	page b.51
George Baker	West Peckham	29 Jul 1589	CKS: Drb/Pw 16; Drb/Pwr 18.184	page b.28

² the only will surviving for Shipbourne; he left 12d to the altar of Shipbourne church; his witnesses were **William Watts, William Collyns and Thomas Smith of Seal**.

³ buried 7th February 1542

⁴ proved 1583

Elizabeth Baker	West Peckham	28 Sep 1589 ⁵	CKS: Drb/Pw 16; Drb/Pwr 18.181	page b.30
Robert Baker	Seal	2 Mar 1599	CKS: Drb/Pw 18; Drb/Pwr 19I.69	page b.64
Robert Baker	West Malling	1 Jun 1600	CKS: Drb/Pw 19; Drb/Pwr 19I.133	page b.55
John Baker	East Peckham	proved 1603	PCC: Bolein 37	page b.46
William Baker	East Peckham	10 Apr 1619 ⁶	PCC: Parker 74	page b.46
John Baker	Speldhurst	proved 1638	PCC: Lee 130	
Dorothy Baker	East Peckham	1 Dec 1623	CKS: PRS/w/1/173	page b.47
Thomas Baker	West Peckham	10 Mar 1633	CKS: Drb/Pw 29; Drb/Pwr 22.66	page b.34
John Baker	Shoreham	17 Feb 1634/5 ⁷	CKS: PRS/w/1/206	page b.36
Alice Baker	Seal	31 Jan 1644	CKS: PRS/w/1/244	page b.78

None of the three PCC wills have been investigated in detail.

The will of Richard Baker dated 17th January 1559/60, was written by John Hooper, the earliest member of the Hooper family who wrote wills in the area from at least 1558 until the end of the period studied (1650).

See More Families & Transcripts for other Bakers.

⁵ both George's and Elizabeth's wills were proved in 1592

⁶ proved 1619

⁷ proved March 1635

The will of John Baker, written in 1567, and those of George and Elizabeth Baker were written by Thomas Tuttesham, senior, who was George's brother-in-law. Both Thomas, senior, and his son wrote a number of other wills.

So many of the first names are the same that deciding on connections between the various families is practically impossible. For example, "George", although not generally a very common name, occurs a number of times. The wife of the George who wrote his will in 1589 was Alice. Alice of Seal who died in 1644 was the widow of George who died in 1632. In 1560, one of Richard Baker's overseers was George Baker and, since the sons of the George who wrote his will in 1589 (e32⁸) were of age when he died and they were mentioned in their grandfather's will of 1567, p32 could possibly have been Richard's overseer.

Thomas of West Peckham, in his will of 1633, mentions a son George who was at least in his twenties at that time and in February 1635, John Baker mentions his "kinsman, Mr. George Baker, of Hackney near London, gentleman".

This is just one example of the difficulties encountered. Generally, the relationships given are only the obvious ones.

Although the will of Nicholas is the only one to survive from Shipbourne, it is known that there were connections between the Seal and Shipbourne families from the parish registers and the son of the Alice Baker who died in 1644 was John Baker of Shipbourne. There were Bakers in Ightham but no wills have survived..

The testators John of Brenchley, William of Pembury and Robert of West Malling do not seem to have any connection with the other Bakers.

The Richard Bakers of West Peckham

The 1541 will of Richard Baker of West Peckham has an interesting introduction describing Henry VIII as "[majesty supreme next immediately under Christ, supreme head of the church of England](#)".

One of Richard's witnesses was **George Clarke, gent., of Wrotham** who, during Wyatt's rebellion of 1554, was one of the local gentry who supported the sheriff against the rebels. When Lord Abergavenny, who was at Malling on his way to intercept Wyatt, heard that men of the Weald were about to march to Wrotham to destroy the house of George Clarke, he decided to make a detour to save Clarke's house Clarke being "[a painstaking and Serviceable Gentleman](#)". This detour resulted in the battle of Blacksole Field near Wrotham⁹.

The Richard Baker of West Peckham who died in 1560 had inherited land at Oxenhoath jointly with his brother William which he, in turn, left to his eldest son Thomas. The wife of this Richard died before him and, besides Thomas, he had eight children living in 1560 six of which were definitely under age. Allowing two years between each child and no deaths of young children, stillbirths or

miscarriages, the youngest child (either John or Elizabeth) would have been only ten.

Katherine appears to have been his eldest daughter and she did not have to wait for her inheritance whilst Bennet, the next daughter, was to receive £1 more than her younger sisters. Robert was to receive 40s from his father's estate only if both his two younger brothers died before reaching twenty but he and Thomas were to "have, hold and enjoy jointly together" all the leases of their father's farm where he was living when he wrote his will. "And to occupy brotherly together the same during the term of the years to come of the said lease". The table below shows the bequests to Richard's children and Tree Baker.¹ the relationships ("e" indicates a reference in the database for East, West and Great Peckham)

Money etc. left to his children by Richard Baker in 1560

Thomas, eldest son e199	the residue all his lands in West Peckham and Oxenhoath jointly with Robert, lease of farm where Richard lived	
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Robert e200	jointly with Thomas, lease of farm where Richard lived 40s to be paid by Thomas if William and John both die before reaching 20	on death of longest liver of William and John
Katherine e201	£4 6s 8d	
William e203	£8 paid by Thomas: £4 £4	at age 20 one year later
Bennet e202	£4 6s 8d cow or cow bullock one pair good hempen sheets	at age 21 or marriage
Johane e204	£3 6s 8d cow or cow bullock one pair good hempen sheets	at age 21 or marriage

John e205	£8 paid by Thomas: £4 £4	at age 20 one year later
Mary e206	£3 6s 8d cow or cow bullock one pair good hempen sheets	at age 21 or marriage
Elizabeth e207	£3 6s 8d cow or cow bullock one pair good hempen sheets	at age 21 or marriage

Tree Baker.1: The Families of the Richard Bakers of West Peckham

e1 Richard - Joane e2									
1541									

e3	e4	e5	e6	e7	#3216				
William	Richard -	Robert	Thomas	Johane - John Porter of Seal					
1560									

e199 ¹⁰	e200	e201	e202	e203	e204	e205	e206	e207	
Thomas	Robert	Katherine	Bennet	William	Johane	John	Mary	Elizabeth	

1 In the name of god Amen. I, Richard Baker of West Peckham
2 in the county of Kent, **tanner**, sick in body, do make
3 this my last testament the 17th day of February in the
4 year of our lord god 1540. And in the 32nd year
5 of the reign of our sovereign lord king Henry the 8th
6 by the grace? of god, king of England and of
7 France, defender of the faith, king of Ireland and majesty
8 supreme next immediately under Christ, supreme head
9 of the church of England. **First:** I bequeath my
10 soul to Almighty god and my body to be buried
11 in the churchyard of West Peckham aforesaid. **Item:** I
12 bequeath to the high altar there 12d. **Item:** I
13 bequeath to the ?? of the same church 40d.
14 **Item:** I bequeath to the poor people of the same parish
15 as shalbe thought most needful by mine executrix and her
16 assigns 40d. **Item:** I bequeath to **Richard Spight, my**
17 **godson**, one mother sheep and her lamb. **Item:** I bequeath to
18 **Thomas Dabey?, my godson**, one mother sheep and her lamb.
19 **Item:** I bequeath to **William, my son**, half my corn and

half my cattle to be praised and assigned by **Robert Monkhuse**? of the same parish, gent, and **John Spight** of **East Peckham**. The other half thereof, and all my other goods and instuff, I bequeath to **Joane, my wife**, which Joane I ordain and make my sole executrix of this my testament and last will.

This is the last will of me, the forsaid Richard Baker, made and declared the day and year aforesaid, of and upon the disposition of all my lands, rents and th'appurtenances standing, lying and being in the borough? of **Oxenhoath** in the said parish of West Peckham in the foresaid county of Kent. **First:** I will that the foresaid Joane, my wife shall hold them all for the time of her natural life. And after the decease of the said Joane, I will all the said land and th'appurtenances to **Richard and William, my sons**, and to their heirs forever more.

Item: I will to **Robert, my son**, and to his heirs forever, one annual rent or annuity of 6s of good and lawful money of England going out of the land and ?? of **John Webster** of West Peckham aforesaid as, by a deed of annuity by the said John to me, the said Richard thereof made plainly doth appear ?? ?? that my will is that the foresaid Richard

43 and William, my sons, shall pay to **Thomas, my son,**
44 immediately at the decease of Joane, my wife aforesaid,
45 £4 of good and lawful money of England. These
46 being witnesses of this my testament and last will:
47 **George Clarke of Wrotham** in the said county, gent.,
48 **John Spight**, aforesaid, **Richard Baker**¹¹ and others

11 probably the testator's son

1 In the name of god Amen. The 17th
3 lord god 1559, I, Richard Baker
5 being sick of body but yet of whole and
7 be god, therefore do ordain and make
9 **First:** I bequeath my soul into the
11 and redeemer and my body to be buried
13 aforesaid. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
15 there 4d. **Item:** I give and bequeath
17 the sum of £4 6s 8d good and
19 give and bequeath unto **my daughter,**
21 6s 8d of lawful money of England
23 of her marriage or at the age of 21
25 I give and bequeath unto **my daughter,**
27 of lawful money to be paid unto
29 at her lawful age of 21 years if
31 bequeath unto **my daughter, Mary**
33 manner to be paid unto her at her marriage
35 not married before. **Item:** I give and
37 **Baker,** in like manner, £3 6s 8d to be
39 marriage or else at her age of 21 years
41 **Item:** I give and bequeath to 4 of my said
43 or times of the due of the said money
45 said Bennet, Johane, Mary and Elizabeth,

day of January, in the year of our
of West Peckham in the diocese of Rochester,
perfect mind and remembrance, thanked
this my last will and testament.
the hands of Almighty god, my saviour
in the churchyard of West Peckham
the box or common chest of the poor
unto **my daughter, Katherine Baker,**
lawful money of England. **Item:** I
Bennet Baker, the like sum of £4
to be paid unto her at or on the day
years if she be not married before. **Item:**
Johane Baker, the sum of £3 6s 8d
her on the day of her marriage or
she be not married before. **Item:** I give and
Baker, the sum of £3 6s 8d in like
or at the age of 21 years if she be
bequeath to **my daughter, Elizabeth**
paid unto her at the day of her
if she be happen not to be married before.
daughters to be delivered at the time
or legacy to be paid ?? unto the
to each or every of them, or their assigns,

<p>47 one cow or cow bullock and one pair 49 of all my goods and cattell not 51 unto Thomas Baker, my son, there 53 my said legacies before bequeathed 55 and decently brought to the ground¹³ 57 the poor according to his discretion. 59 young children unto such time as 61 I do constitute, ordain and make my whole 63 will and testament. Item: I do constitute 65 Basset and George Baker to be assistants 67 last will, to see the same performed to 69 for their pains and diligence therein taken, 71 above their expenses, to either of them, 73 of England. 74 This is the last will and testament of 76 and declared the day and year above 78 tenement withall and singular th'appurtenances</p> <p>80 First: I give and bequeath unto Thomas 82 lands withall and singular th'appurtenances 84 borough of Oxenhoath. To have and</p>	<p>of good hempen sheets¹². The residue before bequeathed, I give and bequeath to satisfy my creditors and to pay all and therewith to see my body honestly earth. And to distribute in alms to And to bring up and nourish my they may be able to ?? which said Thomas and sole executor of this my last my wellbeloved friend Nicholas and overseers of my said testament and the behoof above mentioned, to whom or to be used, I give and bequeath over and the sum of 3s 4d good and lawful money</p> <p>the above said Richard Baker made written as concerning all my land and lying and being in West Peckham aforesaid.</p> <p>Baker, mine eldest son, all the said lying in West Peckham aforesaid and in the to hold unto the said Thomas, his heirs</p>
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12 Katherine must have been over 21 but not married (since her name was still Baker) and she was to receive £1 more than her sisters. Was this in recompense for the cow and sheets or had she already had these when she reached 21?

13 "ground" crossed out and replaced with "earth" on the next line (this is the probate copy)

86 and assigns forevermore upon condition
 88 executors and assigns shall truly
 90 paid out of my said lands unto **William**
 92 to either of them, their lawful age attained, or assigns, the sum of eight pounds
 94 of good and lawful money of England. That is to say, to each of them, the sum of
 96 £4 at their age or ages of 20 years. And other £4 at th'end of term of one whole year
 98 next and immediately following after their said age or ages of 20 years provided
 100 always that, if it happen any of my said sons, William and John, do decease
 102 before the time or times of the payment of the said £8 to either of them
 104 in manner and form afore mentioned, that then I will the survivor to be th'other's
 106 heir and to have and receive the portion of him that shall decease. But, if it happen
 108 both the said William and John to decease before the time or times of the said payment
 110 above limited, that then I will my son Thomas, his heirs, executors or assigns,
 112 shall pay, or cause to be paid, unto **my son Robert**, the sum of 40s of lawful
 114 money of England within one whole year next after the said decease of the latter
 116 decessor. **Item:** I will that the said Robert and Thomas, my sons, shall have, hold and
 118 enjoy jointly together all my said leases of my farm wherein I now dwell. And
 120 to occupy brotherly together the same during the term of the years to
 122 come of the said lease according. In witness whereof I, the said Richard Baker, to these
 124 present as to my last will and testament have
 125 set my seal yeven¹⁴ the day and year above
 126 written. In the presence of the said **Nicholas Basset, George Baker, John Hooper, s?¹⁵**
 128 to whom I give and bequeath 4d.

14 given; "yeven" appears in most of the wills written by the Hoopers

15 senior or scrivener? Were all three witnesses to receive 4d or just John Hooper?

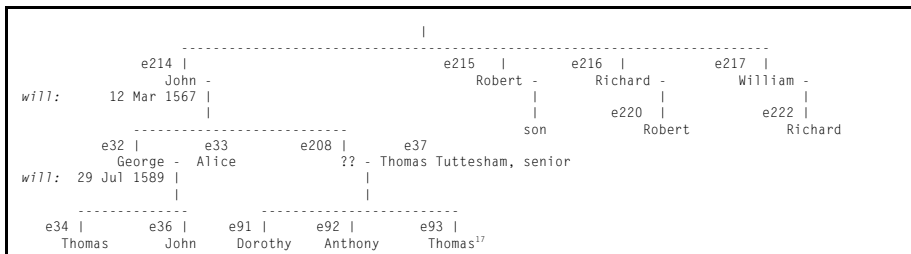
John and George Baker of West Peckham

The John Baker whose will of 1567 has survived was probably of the same generation as the Richard whose bequests were given above. He had a son George whose two children were each to receive £5 and Dorothy and Anthony Tuttesham¹⁶, who received the same legacy as George's children, were likely to have also been his grandchildren. In this case, the coffer left to Dorothy would have belonged to John's mother.

George's will, although written in 1589 was not proved until 1592. All the residue of George's "goods, cattle, debts and chattels" was to be "equally divided and shifted immediately after" his death into "three equal parts by four indifferent men" with Alice having first choice of one third and the other two going to his sons, Thomas and John.

¹⁶ there were Tutteshams in West Peckham; the will of Anthony Tuttesham of Shorne, proved 1572/3 has survived: CKS: Drb/Pwr 14.141, Drb/Pw 10; this was obviously not the Anthony to whom John left £5.

Tree Baker.2: John and George Baker of West Peckham



some of the “e” numbers in the above tree have been updated

Will of John Baker of West Peckham 1567

written 12th March 1566/7
transcript from probate copy

- 1 In the name of god Amen.
- 2 The 12th day of March in the ninth year
- 3 of the reign of our sovereign lady, queen
- 4 Elizabeth. And in the year of our lord god

¹⁷ probably born after 1567 since he was not mentioned by his grandfather, John Baker, in his will of 1567. Known because Thomas Tuttesham, junior, wrote the will of Richard Bennett of West Peckham in 1595.

1566. I, John Baker, of West Peckham in the
county of Kent and in the diocese of Rochester,
being of good and perfect mind and good
remembrance, lauded be god, do make this present
testament and last will in manner and form
following: **First** and principally I bequeath my
soul to Almighty god, my saviour and redeemer,
whom I desire, for the merits of Christs passion,
that I will be the child of salvation, and my
body to be buried in the churchyard of
West Peckham aforesaid. **Item:** I give to the
poor men's box of West Peckham aforesaid 4d.
Item: I will and give to **Dorothy Tuttesham** and
Anthony Tuttesham, the children of Thomas
Tuttesham, to every one of them £5. **Item:** I will and
give to **Thomas Baker and John Baker, the**
children of George Baker, to every of them £5.
I will to the said Dorothy a chest
bound with iron and all such things as
are therein and also a little coffer that was
her great granddame's. **Item:** I will that within
one whole year after my decease the said £20 above
bequeathed to the said four children shalbe put

28 forth and employed to the most advantage for the
29 said four children by the discretion of the
30 Thomas Tuttesham and George Baker and to be
31 paid to every of them at th'age of 21 years
32 from their several births or at the day of
33 their several marriages which shall first happen.
34 I will that if the said Dorothy or
35 Anthony happen to die before they come to
36 th'age of 21 years or the day of their several
37 marriages as is abovesaid, then I will that
38 the survivor of them two shall have both their
39 parts. And likewise Thomas Baker and
40 John Baker, if any of them die before they
41 attain to th'age of 21 years or the day of
42 their marriage as is above specified, the
43 survivor of the two to have both their parts.
44 **Item:** I will to **my brother, Robert,** 6s 8d and to
45 his son that is my godson 6s 8d, to **Robert**
46 **Baker, my brother Richard's son** 6s 8d and
47 to **Richard Baker, my brother William's son**
48 6s 8d. **Item:** I will to every of my godchildren
49 that are my brothers' children 12d a piece. **Item:**
50 I will to all my other godchildren 4d a piece.

51 **Item:** my will being thoroughly performed and
52 fulfilled in all things, the residue of all my
53 goods and cattells I give and bequeath to the said
54 **George Baker, my son**, whom I ordain
55 to be my sole executor of this my last will.
56 Witnesses present at the making hereof **Thomas**
57 **Tuttesham, Anthony Steven, John Turke?, Robert**
58 **Routhy** and others.

1 In the name of god Amen.
2 The 29th of July in the year of our
3 Lord god 1589 and in the 31st year of
4 the reign of our sovereign Lady Queen
5 Elizabeth, etc. I, George Baker of
6 West Peckham in the county of Kent, **yeo**
7 **man**, being of perfect mind and good re
8 membrance, lauded be god, do make this
9 my present testament and last will in
10 manner and form following: **First:** I bequeath my soul to Almighty god,
11 heavenly father whom I desire for the
12 merits of Christ's passion that I may be
13 the child of salvation. And by body to be
14 buried in christian burial. **Item:** I will to
15 the poor men's box of West Peckham
16 aforesaid 10s. I will to the poor men's box
17 of East Peckham 3s 4d. First I will that
18 **my son, Thomas Baker**, whom I make
19 my sole executor, shall content and pay

20 all my debts and bequests and then I will
21 that all the residue of my goods, cattalls
22 debts and chattells shalbe equally divided
23 and shifted immediately after my death into
24 three equal parts by four indifferent
25 men and that **Alice, my wife**, shall have
26 the first choice thereof to her own use,
27 **my son Thomas Baker** the second part
28 thereof to his use and to **my son John**
29 **Baker** the third part thereof to his use.
30 I constitute **Thomas Tuttesham, senior,**
31 **gent., my brother-in-law**, to be my over
32 seer of this my last will and testament
33 and he to have for his pains 5s over and
34 his expenses and charges when he
35 shall travel in and about this my said
36 will and testament. **Thomas Polhill** by
37 me, **Thomas Tuttesham, senior**.

Elizabeth Baker, widow, of West Peckham

Elizabeth Baker was comparatively exceptional in that she had a "messuage or tenement, kitchen, barn, close, orchard and one parcel of land next thereto adjoining" and also other land which she could bequeath as she wished. This land was in Oxenhoth; Richard, in 1560, left his land in Oxenhoth to his son Thomas (e9) who could have been born about 1530. It is thus possible that Elizabeth was the widow of this Thomas.

Will of Elizabeth Baker of West Peckham

written 28th September 1589; proved 1592

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The 28th day of September in the 31st year of the
reign of our sovereign
- 2 lady Queen Elizabeth, etc. I, Elizabeth Baker of West Peckham in the county
of Kent, **widow**,
- 3 being of perfect mind and good remembrance, lauded be god therefore, do
make this my present testament and last
- 4 will in manner and form following: **First:** I bequeath my soul to Almighty
god, my only saviour and redeemer, by

5 whose merits I hope to be saved. And by body to be buried in christian burial
where my executor shall
6 think most meetest. **Item:** I give to the poor men's box of West Peckham
aforesaid ¹⁸ . The residue of all my
7 goods and cattles not afore given nor bequeathed, my debts paid, I give and
bequeath to **William Baker, my son,**
8 whom I make my sole and only executor.
9 This is the last will of me, the said Elizabeth Baker, made the day and year
abovesaid concerning the disposition
10 of my message and lands thereto belonging situate, lying and being in the
borough of **Oxenhoth** in the parish
11 of West Peckham aforesaid. **First:** I will and give to William Baker, my son,
all that my message
12 or tenement, kitchen, barn, close, orchard and one parcel of land next thereto
adjoining and having at this ??
13 on it a lodge containing in all, by estimation, three acres more or less, to
have and to hold the said message,
14 kitchen, barn, close, orchard and one parcel of land aforesaid withall their
appurtenances, to the said William

18 no amount specified; Elizabeth's will so far is nearly the same as that of George Baker. Perhaps Thomas Tuttesham, the scriptor of both, had a standard introduction leaving blanks, such as that for this amount, to be filled in when the will was finalised. Another place where they are the same is the naming of the executor early on in the will instead of the reference "my executor hereafter named".

15 Baker, to his heirs and assigns forever upon condition, in manner and form
following: that is to wit, that
16 he, the said William Baker, his executors or assigns, shall content, pay and
discharge¹⁹, as well
17 all my debts and legacies as also one annuity of twelve shillings by the year
issuing out of the same.
18 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **John Baker, my son**, one little parcel of land
lying in the borough of Oxenhoth
19 to the land of **George Baker** north to the highway leading from the corn mill
to goverhill west and to land
20 there called ²⁰ south and east, containing, by estimation, one acre, more or
less, to have and to hold the
21 said parcel of land with th'appurtenances, to the said John Baker, to his heirs
and assigns forever, freely to
22 be discharged of the said annuity. Present at the reading, declaring and
pronouncing of this my
23 last will and testament, **Thomas Tuttesham, senior**, writer hereof
John Standley, Robert Hood

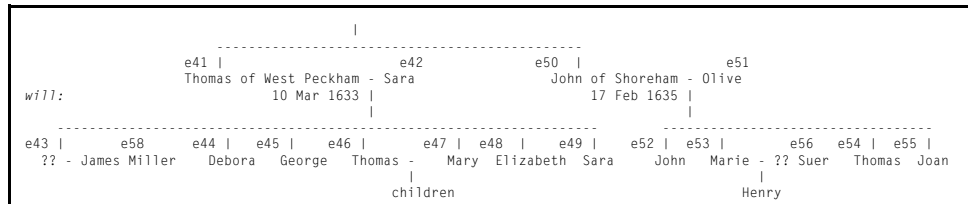
19 "discharge"

20 space left for name which was never inserted

Thomas of West Peckham and John of Shoreham

The Thomas Baker of West Peckham whose will is dated March 1633 had a brother John whom he appointed his executor. John Baker of Shoreham owned land in West Peckham and had a brother Thomas who had died when John wrote his will. Thus it is likely that these wills belong to the two brothers. No connection, however, can be made to the earlier West Peckham Bakers.

Tree Baker.3: The Brothers Thomas and John



1 In the name of god Amen. I, Thomas Baker, of West Peckham
2 in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being sick of body
3 but of perfect memory, thanks be given unto Almighty
4 God, I do ordain and make this my present testament
5 and last will in manner and form following: That is
6 to say, **First:** of all I give unto **my well beloved Sara**
7 **Baker, my wife**, my best bed with all the things thereunto
8 belonging, three pairs of my best sheets. **Item:** I give
9 unto her more four bushels of wheat and four
10 bushels of malt. **Item:** for **my daughters Mary Baker**
11 **and Elizabeth Baker**, for their portions heretofore willed
12 by me Thomas Baker, senior, my true meaning is **my said**
13 **son, Thomas**, shall pay them their portions²¹ **Item: my said**
14 **daughter Debora**, I give unto her forty shillings. **Item:** I
15 give unto **my son George Baker** the sum of forty
16 shillings for to buy him a ring. **Item:** I give unto **my daughter**
17 **Miller**, and unto her children, 12d a piece and for **my son**

21 where were these portions "heretofore willed"; also Thomas had not been mentioned earlier in the will

18 **Thomas's children**, I will them 12d a piece. **Item:** I will and mean
19 **my said daughter Mary and Sara Baker**²² for to be my executors
20 wholly in this my said last will and testament and for the poor
21 of West Peckham, I will them six shillings eight pence to be paid at my
22 burial by my executors and by **William Faireman** to be given aforesaid.
23 **Item:** I make and choose for my overseers **my brother John Baker** and
24 my son George Baker and for their pains to have five shillings
25 a piece paid them. This is the last will of me the said Thomas where
26 unto I have set my hand and seal the 10th of March aforesaid²³.
Read, sealed and delivered
in the presence of
James Miller²⁴
Thomas Baker the mark of **Thomas Baker**

22 definitely Mary here and Martha above; Sara presumably his wife

23 no date is given above, the year 1633 was when the will was proved; this does not seem to be a complete will since, in addition to this and the above inconsistency, there is no mention of any residue or land etc.

24 probably Thomas's son-in-law

1 In the name of god Amen. The seventeenth
2 day of February in the year of our Lord God
3 one thousand, six hundred and thirty four, I,
4 John Baker of Shoreham in the county of Kent, **yeoman**,
5 being weak in body but yet in good and perfect remembrance,
6 praised be god, therefore do make and ordain this my
7 last will and testament in manner and form following:
8 **First:** I bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty
9 god, my maker and redeemer, in sure and certain hope of
10 resurrection to eternal life by the only merits and
11 ?? of my lord and saviour Jesus Christ and my
12 body to be buried in the church or churchyard of
13 Shoreham aforesaid at the discretion of mine executor
14 hereafter named. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto the poor
15 people of the parish of Shoreham aforesaid ten shillings
16 of lawful money of England to be distributed amongst
17 them on the day of my burial at the discretion of mine
18 executor. **Item:** concerning my lands which god hath given
19 me, I do dispose of them as followeth. I do give and

20 bequeath unto **Thomas Baker, my youngest son**, all those
21 my two houses or tenements, withall and singular their
22 appurtenances, situated, lying and being in West Peckham in
23 the said county of Kent, together also with one annuity
24 of five pounds three shillings and four pence of
25 lawful money of England payable yearly out of the
26 lands and tenements of **Thomas Baker, my brother**,
27 late of West Peckham aforesaid, deceased, to have and
28 to hold to him, the said Thomas and his heirs for
29 ever. Also I will, give and bequeath unto **John Baker, my**
30 **eldest son**, all that messuage or tenement in Shoreham
31 aforesaid wherein I now dwell or inhabit, together
32 with all barns, stables, malt houses or other edifices,
33 yards, gardens, orchard and all and singular other
34 appurtenances, profits and commodities thereto belonging,
35 to have and to hold to him, the said John Baker,
36 and to his heirs, forever. **Item:** I do give and
37 bequeath unto **Olive Baker, my beloved wife**, twenty
38 shillings of lawful money of England, yearly during the
39 whole time and so long as she shall keep herself a
40 widow, by quarterly payments to be paid unto her by the
41 said Thomas Baker, my youngest son; but if she shall, after
42 my decease, be married to another man, then my will is that

43 immediately after such her marriage, the said annuity shall
44 cease and be no longer paid unto her. **Item:** I will give and
45 bequeath unto **Marie Suer, my eldest daughter**, one flockbed,
46 one flock bolster and coverlet, two blankets, two pairs
47 of course sheets. **Item:** I will and bequeath unto **Henry Suer,**
48 **son of my said daughter**, one joined chest standing at my
49 bedhead on that side towards the window. **Item:** I give,
50 will and bequeath unto **Joan Baker, my youngest**
51 **daughter**, fifty pounds of lawful money of England,
52 to be paid unto her, by mine executor, when she shall
53 have attained the age of four and twenty years
54 or at the birth of her first child which shall first
55 happen²⁵. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto my daughter,
56 Marie Suer, two brass pots and two brass
57 kettles to be chosen and appointed by the two overseers
58 of this will. **Item:** my will is, and I do hereby order,
59 appoint and bequeath all the rest of my household stuff
60 unbequeathed, to be equally divided between my
61 three children, viz. John Baker, Thomas Baker

62 and Joan Baker²⁶, at the discretion of my
63 overseers hereafter named. All the residue of my goods
64 unbequeathed, my debts paid and my funeral rights
65 discharged and legacies performed, I do wholly give
66 and bequeath unto John Baker, my eldest son, whom
67 I do make, ordain and constitute my full, whole and
68 sole executor of this my last will and testament. And
69 if my said son John Baker²⁷ shall refuse to take
70 upon his the executorship and proof of this my
71 last will and testament, then my will and desire is that
72 my son, Thomas Baker shalbe my full, whole and
73 sole executor of this my last will and testament. And
74 my desire is, and I do hereby intreat my loving
75 **kinsman, Mr. George Baker, of Hackney near London,**
76 **gentleman, and my loving brother-in-law, John**
77 **Bridger of West Peckham, yeoman,** to be the
78 overseers of this my last will and testament. And
79 for their pains herein to be employed, I will and
80 bequeath unto each of them twenty shillings of

26 but not his eldest daughter, Marie; presumably she had already had a marriage portion

27 John was appointed executor when the will was proved in March 1634/5, two to six weeks after it was written

80 lawful money of England. And in witness that
82 this is my last will and testament, I have hereunto
83 set my hand and seal the day and year first above
84 written in the presence of **John Baker²⁸, John**
85 **Emerson, Edward Everest**

28 was this witness the testator's son?

John Baker of Brenchley

There are no obvious connections between John of Brenchley and the other Bakers in the area.

When John wrote his will he had three under age sons and his wife was possibly with child. John left his tenement and land in Great Peckham to the oldest child which survived to the age of 21 (sometimes 22 is specified). Whoever inherited was to pay his younger brothers (and "the other", whether it was a son or a daughter, if his wife was pregnant and the child survived) £4 each, £2 when they came of age and the other £2 a year later.

As in the wills of George and Elizabeth Baker of West Peckham, written thirty-five years later, the executors are named at the beginning of the will instead of, as is more usual, being referred to as "hereafter named".

1 In the name of god Amen. I, John Baker, of the
2 parish of Brenchley, being sick in body but whole in
3 mind and memory, do ordain this last will and
4 testament the 6 year of the reign of our sovereign
5 lord king, Edward the sixth. And the 12th day of September.
6 **First:** I bequeath my soul to Almighty god and my body
7 to be buried in the churchyard of Brenchley. Also I will
8 that **Isabell, my wife, and my brother, Henry Baker**, shalbe
9 mine executors and **Richard Reyne** to be mine overseer.
10 Also I will that mine executrix, Isabell my wife,
11 shall have all my corn and cattell²⁹ to pay my debts and
12 keep my children. Also I will that **my son Edward**, after
13 his mother's decease, shall have my cupboard and
14 if Edward die, then I will **my son Paul** shall have
15 it. Also I will that my son Paul, after his mother's
16 decease, shall have my greatest cauldron. Also I will that
17 **my son Richard** shall have my great brass pot at 21

29 probably refers to livestock rather than chattels

18 years of age. Also I will that Edward my son shall
19 have, at 22 years of age, my chest with the knot
20 in the lid. Also I will that my son Paul shall have
21 a new flockbed and a bolster, a pair of sheets, a
22 blanket and a coverlet at the age of 22 years. And to
23 Richard a pair of sheets and Edward a pair of
24 sheets at the time of marriage, they to have it³⁰. Also
25 I will that **Thomas Baker, the eldest son of Robert Baker,**
26 shall have a pair of sheets. Also I will that the
27 residue of all my moveable unnamed? that my wife
28 Isabel shall have. And she shall pay to Henry, my
29 brother, mine executor, 3s 4d and to Richard
30 Reyne, mine overseer, 3s 4d.

31 This my present will I ordain in manner and form following:
32 **First:** I give my son Richard all my whole tenement
33 and lands within the parish of Great Peckham at 21³¹
34 years of age. Also Richard shall pay to Paul and Edward,
35 his brothers, £4 a piece. Also I will that if my wife

30 unusual for sons to inherit gifts on marriage rather than when they came of age

31 why this variation between 21 and 22 years of age?

36 be with child, that Richard, my son, shall pay to it,
37 whether it be son or daughter, £4. Richard shall
38 pay to Paul, at 22 years of age, 40s the year till
39 the £4 be paid. And to Edward at 22 years
40 of age, 40s the year till £4 be paid. And so
41 in like manner, to the other at the age of 22 years, 40s
42 and so from year to year till they be fully paid. Also
43 I will if Richard die ere³² he come to the age of 21 years, then Paul
44 to inherit at 21 years and pay to Edward £8 at 22
45 years of age. Also I will if Paul die ere his coming to the age of
46 21 years, then Edward to inherit at 21 years and to pay
47 to the other, whether it be son or daughter, at the age of 22
48 years, £8 in like manner as to the other. And if Edward die
49 ere he come to the age of 21 years, then the youngest to inherit
50 at 21 years, wheher it be son or daughter. Also I will
51 that Isabel my wife shall have it till my son Richard
52 come of age, keeping the repair and paying the rent
53 and she to have, during her life, 10s a year. Also I will and
54 ??, if all my children decease ere they come to age, that then the
55 children of **Robert Baker and William Baker** to inherit it and

32 here, and throughout the next few few lines, "or" is written where "before" would be expected. Was this a contraction for "ere"?

56 they to pay to Isabel, my wife, £10. Witnesses hereof **Richard**
57 **Reyne, John Downer, Thomas Baker, Henry Page** and
58 **?? Chepstile.**

The Bakers of East Peckham

Three wills have survived for East Peckham, two proved at the PCC and one at the Deanery of Shoreham:

John Baker		proved 1603	PCC: Bolein 37	
William Baker	dated 10 Apr 1619	proved 1619	PCC: Parker 74	
Dorothy Baker	dated 1 Dec 1623		CKS: PRS/w/1/173	page b.47

None of these three wills was written by a Hooper but John bequeathed his "soul into the hands of Almighty god and do hope to be saved by the precious death and blood shedding of our lord Jesus Christ. And my body to the earth from whence it came". This is typical of Hooper wills,

The witnesses to the will of William Baker were **Thomas Ayerst, Stephen Butler, William Dean** and **Thomas Engleston**. Stephen Butler and Thomas Engleston were overseers and witnesses to the will of Dorothy Baker in 1623. Was William her husband? Stephen Butler could have been the brother of John Butler who wrote his will in 1622 - see page b.642

The witnesses of John's will were **William Cutte, John Burbedge** and **John Trendall**.

1 In the name of god Amen. The first day of December in the one and twenty
year
2 of our sovereign lord James, by the grace of God, king of England, France
and Ireland,
3 defender of the faith, etc. and of Scotland the seven and fifty, 1623. I,
Dorothy
4 Baker of East Peckham in the county of Kent, **widow**, being at the time of
the
5 making hereof visited with sickness but of sound and perfect memory,
praised be god,
6 and knowing assuredly that all flesh is subject unto death and mortality, so
my
7 self shall change this my life, therefore, to avoid trouble after death do
make,
8 ordain, publish and declare this my present testament and last will in
manner following,
9 that is to say, **First** and principally I do most willingly submit, surrender
10 and bequeath my soul unto god, my most merciful creator, trusting in the

11 merits and passion of Christ Jesus, my saviour, to have remission and
pardon of all
12 my sins and my body to be buried in the churchyard of East Peckham
aforesaid.

13 **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **my son-in-law, John Miller**, ten shillings
14 and also unto his wife, **my daughter Katherine**, ten shillings to be
15 paid unto them one quarter of a year after my decease.

16 **Item:** I do give unto **Dorothy Miller, my goddaughter**, ten shillings to be
17 paid at the same time aforesaid and also unto **Anne Miller, her sister**,
18 ten shillings to be paid at the same time and also unto **Katherine Miller,**
her
19 **sister**, ten shillings to be paid at the same time aforesaid. And also unto
20 all the rest of **my daughter Katherine's children** ten shillings a piece to be
21 paid at the same time aforesaid. And also the child she goes withall if
22 it do live.

23 **Item:** I do give unto **my son Nicholas Austen** ten shillings and also
24 I do give unto his four children that he had by my daughter³³ ten
25 shillings a piece to be paid unto them at the time aforesaid.

26 **Item:** do give unto **Francis Baker, my son's daughter**, five shillings
27 to be paid at the same time.

28 **Item:** I do give unto **my sister Borne** five shillings and also

33 had this daughter died?

29 unto **her son Thomas and her daughter Mathy** betwixt them five
30 shillings to be paid at the time aforesaid.
31 **Item:** I do give unto the poor of this parish twenty shillings
32 to be paid at the time aforesaid.
33 **Item:** I do give unto **my daughter, Jane Baker**, all the rest of my goods
34 whom I do make my sole executrix and to pay all my legacies.
35 And overseers of this my will I do make **Thomas Ingleston** and
36 **Stephen Butler** for to see this performed.
37 Witnesses to this **Thomas Engleston**³⁴

Stephen Butler, Paul Salmon

Dorothy Baker

her mark

34 Engleton here, Ingleton above

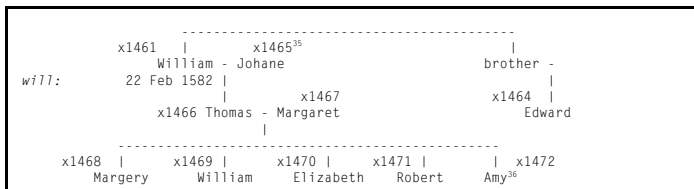
William Baker of Pembury

There are no obvious connections between William of Pembury and the other Bakers in the area.

When William wrote his will in the February of 1582, he expected the vicar of Lamberhurst to come to his burial and preach a sermon. Although the distance is less than four miles, the riding would not have been easy if the weather was wet so that "[his pains in that behalf](#)" for which he was to receive 3s 4d might have been more concerned with the journey than the preaching.

William left £16 13s 4d to his wife which she could have either "[in ready money or else in cattell and household stuff to be reasonably praised by indifferent persons](#)". Presumably "cattell" here meant livestock rather than the more general term "chattels". Another unusual bequest was a "[ewe lamb to be kept until it be weanable](#)"

Johane was to "[have her dwelling in the parlour in the house where I now inhabit with liberty to use the hall and fire](#)" which is usual but she was to live there without paying any rent "[until the feast of St. Michael th'archangel next ensuing the date hereof](#)". Why for such a short time?



William also left a ewe lamb to “William Baker, the son of William Baker” and Jane Blytcher but no details are given as to how these are related to the testator.

Will of William Baker of Pembury

CKS: Drb/Pwr 16.299

written 22nd February 1581/2; proved 1583

transcript from probate copy; original has not survived

1 In the name of god Amen. The 22nd day of
 2 February in the year of our Lord god one thousand, five hundred, fourscore
 3 and one and in the 24th year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen
 4 Elizabeth, etc. I, William Baker, of the parish of Pepingbury in the
 5 county of Kent and in the diocese of Rochester, being sick in body

³⁵ “x” indicates a reference in the miscellaneous database

³⁶ all these children were under twenty-one in 1582

6 but of perfect mind and remembrance (thanks be given to god) do make
7 this my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is
8 to say, **First** and principally I bequeath my soul unto Almighty
9 god, my saviour and redeemer, and my body to be buried within the church
10 yard of Pepingbury aforesaid. **Item:** my will is that **Mr. Frome,**
11 **the vicar of Lamberhurst,** shall make a sermon at my burial unto
12 whom I give for his pains in that behalf 3s 4d. **Item:** I give
13 and bequeath unto **Johane, my wife,** the sum of sixteen pounds
14 thirteen shillings and four pence either in ready money or else in cattell
15 and household stuff to be reasonably praised by indifferent persons and
16 to be paid unto her within one quarter of a year next after my decease.
17 **Item:** I give and bequeath also unto the said Johane, my wife, one
18 mare coloured dun and one flockbed, one bolster, one blanket, one pair
19 of sheets, one cauldron of brass, one brass pot, one pair of wool
20 cards, one spinning wheel, nine pieces of pewter, a side saddle
21 together with all her apparel. And further I will and appoint that
22 the said Johane, my wife, shall have her dwelling in the parlour in
23 the house where I now inhabit with liberty to use the hall and
24 fire, come there at reasonable time and times with free ingress,
25 egress and regress to and from the same until the feast of St.
26 Michael th'archangel next ensuing the date hereof without paying
27 or allowing of any rent or farm for the same. **Item:** I give and
28 bequeath unto **Margaret Baker, the wife of Thomas Baker, my**

son, the sum of three pounds of lawful english money. **Item:**
I give and bequeath unto **William Baker, my godson, the son of**
the said Thomas Baker, the featherbed where upon I now lie,
one bolster, two blankets, the best coverlet and pair of sheets,
my great brass cauldron, one brass pot and a new joined chest.
Item: I give and bequeath also unto the said William Baker the sum of
three pounds of lawful english money to be paid unto him when he shall
accomplish the full age of 21 years. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto
Robert Baker (one of the other sons of the said Thomas Baker) the
sum of five pounds of lawful english money to be paid unto him
at the age abovesaid. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto every of the
daughters of the said Thomas Baker (that is to say, **Margery,**
Elizabeth and Amy), to every of them the sum of three pounds of
lawful english money to be paid unto them at their several
ages of 21 years or at their several days of
marriage which shall happen first. And if it fortune that any
of the sons and daughters of the said Thomas Baker do die
before they shall receive their several portions in manner and for
above declared, that then my will is that his or their parts so
deceasing shall be equally distributed amongst the survivors.
Item: I give and bequeath unto **Edward Baker, my brother's**
son, one ewe lamb to be kept until it be weanable. **Item:**
I give and bequeath unto **William Baker, the son of William**

Baker, and unto **Jane Blytcher**, to either of them one ewe
lamb to be kept as aforesaid. All the rest of my goods and
cattells, movable and unmovable, my debts being paid, my legacies
well and truly performed and my funeral honestly discharged, I
give and bequeath unto the said Thomas Baker, my son,
whom I make my sole executor of this my last will and testament.
These being witness: **Sir Robert Hame, vicar of Pepingbury**
John Rixon, James Rixon, Richard Barham, William Rootes,
and **Richard Johnson** with others.

a saddle tree was the frame of a saddle.

1 In the name of god Amen. The first day of June
2 in the year of our lord god 1600, I, Robert Baker
3 of West Malling in the county of Kent, **saddletree maker**
4 being of good remembrance, praised be Almighty god,
5 do make this my last will and testament in manner
6 and form following: **First:** I give and bequeath
7 my soul into the gracious hands of Almighty god,
8 my heavenly father, hoping to be saved by the only
9 precious death of Jesus Christ, mine only saviour
10 and redeemer. And my body in the ground from
11 whence it came. **Item:** my will is that mine executors
12 shall give, or cause to be given, unto the poor people
13 of West Malling the sum of two shillings six pence
14 in money at my burial. **Item:** I give unto four
15 poor men that shall carry me to the church to be
16 buried four shillings. **Item:** I give unto my

17 daughter **Mary Lipscombe**, to be paid presently after
18 my decease, ten shillings. **Item:** I give unto
19 **my daughter Agnes Baker**, in money to be paid
20 presently after my decease, the sum of ten
21 shillings. And also I give unto my daughter
22 Agnes, two pairs of sheets. Also I give unto
23 my daughter Agnes Baker, one iron pot
24 and one iron chafer. All the rest of my
25 goods and moveables whatsoever I give unto **my**
26 **two sons, James Baker and William Baker**,
27 the which my two sons, James and William,
28 I do ordain and do make my sole executors,
29 they paying my debts and all such legacies
30 as I have given and bequeathed and to see my
31 body comely and decently brought to the earth,
32 discharging the duty of good children. In
33 witness whereof I have set my hand and
34 seal the day and year first above written.
35 witnesses to the sealing hereof **William**
Barrett, George Smith and others more.

*The **Bakers** of Seal, Shipbourne and Ightham*

Four wills have survived for the Bakers of Seal:

	date of:		Ref: CKS:	
	will	burial	Drb/Pw; Pwr	
William Baker	1476		-; 4.229	
Arthur Baker # 747 ³⁶	12 Jan 1581	15 Jan 1581	13; 16.128	page b.59
Robert Baker #1713	2 Mar 1599	11 Mar 1599	18; 19I.69	page b.64
Alice Baker	31 Jan 1644	Feb 1644	Prs/w/1/244	page b.78

Alice Baker's son was John Baker of Shipbourne but the only Shipbourne will of a Baker to have survived is that for Nicholas Baker written on 7th September 1468 (CKS: Drb/Pwr 3.11). He left 12d to the altar of Shipbourne church; his witnesses were **William Watts, William Collyns and Thomas Smith of Seal**.

William Baker's will of 1476 is difficult to read being partly in Latin; it mentions feoffees and **Ketylles** and the witnesses include **Thomas Olyver** and **Anthony Atkins**.

³⁶ # indicates reference in Seal database

William's daughter, Alice, married **John Olyver of Kettles**³⁷ who, when he wrote his will in 1512, refers to Kettles as "**sometimes William Baker's**" and he leaves it to Alice "**for the term of her life so that she marry not. And if she fortune to marry then I would that she have herself the said tenements for the term of her life upon condition that she . . and make no claim to none of my other land.**" It is thus probable that Alice brought Kettles to John Olyver on her marriage.

Arthur Baker and his wife, Ann Olyver

Arthur Baker married Ann Olyver (#746) on 27th July 1578 and their daughter, Dorothy, was baptised on 30th September 1580. But in the following January Arthur died, leaving his wife with a baby a few months old. A Dorothy Baker married **George Hills** (#2040) in October 1612 (when Arthur's daughter would have been thirty-two) and they had three children.

Agnes Baker, widow, married **William Rudland of Meopham** (#2040), in Seal on 26th November 1581. This could have been Arthur's widow with Agnes and Ann often being interchanged. No children were recorded and, whilst there were

37 #3907 - see the olyverw wills which includes details of the wills of John Olyver and his wife Alice

Rudlands in Seal, there is no other mention of William so that they probably lived in Meopham.

There is no apparent connection between Arthur and the other Bakers.

Will of Arthur Baker

written 12th January 1581; buried 15th January 1581

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The 12th day of January, I **Arthur Baker** of the
2 parish of Seal in the County of Kent, being of
3 . . .
4 my last will and testament in manner and form following: **First** I do
5 bequeath my soul unto Almighty god my maker and Redeemer and my
6 body to be buried in the churchyard of Seal aforesaid
7 . . . poorest of Seal and 5lb in bread to be bestowed at the
8 discretion of my executor. **Item** I give and bequeath unto **my daughter**
Dorothy
9 At the age of 23 years or if it happen that my said daughter
10 do depart this profane life before the accomplishment of her age
11 it shall remain unto **Anne, my wife**. **Item** I will and bequeath unto Dorothy

12 my daughter, a cupboard and a (haffle?) and a dozen . .
13 And all the rest of my moveables, goods I give and bequeath unto
14 Anne, my wife whom I do make my sole executrix.

Witnesses: John Olyver, Robert Olyver³⁸

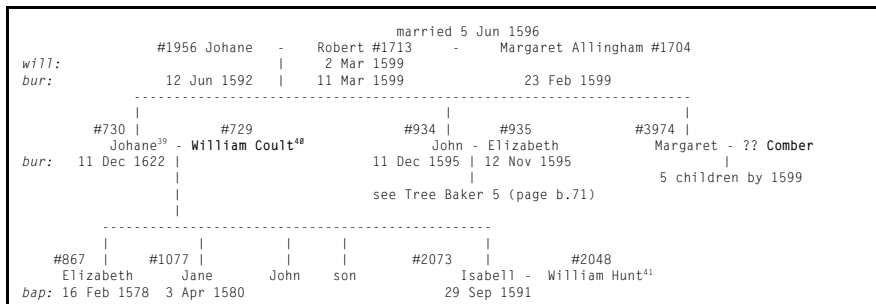
And my lands and tenements unto my daughter Dorothy at her age of 23 years, my wife to have them until my daughter comes of age.

38 likely to have been Anne's father (#70) and uncle (#136)

Robert Baker of Seal

The Robert Baker who died in spring 1599 would have been the Robert Baker who witnessed the will of **William Christopher (#257)** in 1562 and the will of **Thomas Christopher (#794)** in 1577. He is taken as the Robert Baker who married **Margaret Allingham** on 5th June 1596 but "Margery", wife of Robert Baker, died less than three weeks before him. Robert's first wife, and the mother of his children, had died in July 1592. Since Robert's children must have been born in the 1550s, he would have been in his seventies when he died.

Tree Baker.4 - Robert Baker of Seal (died 1599)



- 39 a "widow Coult" died 11 Dec 1622; she could have been Johane
40 married 1st June 1577; the five children shown including two sons, were mentioned in the will of their
grandfather in 1599
41 married 5th June 1615 when she was twenty-three; no children were recorded but Isabell Hunt, widow, married
James Walker (#1792) on 24th January 1620 and they had two children - see [Walker](#)

From Robert's will we know that he had:

- a sister married to **Chowning of Tonbridge**
- a son-in-law, **William Coult**, whom he made his sole executor
- a son John who had had two sons (William and Robert) and two daughters (Amy and Jane); a John Baker was buried in December 1595 and Robert making his son-in-law executor fits in with his son (#934) dying before him.
- another daughter, **Margaret** married to a man called **Comber** with five children in 1599; there is no record of a Comber in Seal but they need not have lived in the parish.

Robert's son, John, and John's wife Elizabeth had died at the end of 1595 when they would have been about forty. Their eldest daughter had died earlier in the year but they left at least four children, the eldest of whom was twelve when she was orphaned and the youngest two-and-a-half. Robert was their eldest surviving son and it was to him that, in 1589, John's father left his tenement with bequests of money to his other three grandchildren.

The pastoral basis of Robert's wealth is shown by his other bequests: a bullock to each of his daughters, four ewes and four lambs to his grandson, John Coult, two ewes and two lambs to his granddaughter Ann Baker, four sheep to each of her two brothers (why was Jane missed out when she was mentioned earlier?) and four sheep to each of Margaret's five children.

Will of Robert Baker

written 2nd March 1598/9; buried 11 March 1599

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The second day of March and
2 in the year of our lord god one thousand, five hundred and
3 ninety eight. And in the reign of our Queen
4 Elizabeth, forty-one. I, **Robert Baker** of the parish
5 of Seal and in the County of Kent, being of perfect
6 remembrance, god be thanked, therefore do make
7 and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and
8 form following: **First** I will and bequeath my soul unto
9 Almighty god my maker and redeemer by whose death

and passion I hope to be saved. And my body to be buried in the churchyard of Seal aforesaid. I will and bequeath my house and lands withall and singular th'appurtenances for the term of seven years for the payment of four portions of money which I shall hereafter appoint unto my **son-in-law William Coult**⁴² whom I do make and ordain my full and sole executor. **First I will my sister Chowning of the parish of Tonbridge** to be paid forty shillings a year . . . be paid the full sum of . . . **Item** I will and bequeath unto **William**⁴³ **Baker, my son's son**, to be paid him the sum of five pounds of good and lawful money of England at the age of one and twenty years. And if the said William do not live to the age of one and twenty years my will is that **my daughter Coult's two sons** share the said five pounds. **Item** I will and bequeath unto my son John Baker's two

42 #729, husband of Johane, married 1st June 1577; the baptisms of three daughters were recorded but, according to the will, Johane and William also had two sons.

43 #1593; baptised 8th March 1590; see page 6 for details of his family.

28 daughters, **Amy and Jane Baker**⁴⁴, three pounds
29 that is to say, thirty shillings apiece at the time
30 of their marriage and to be each other's heir.
31 If they do marry before seven years be expired,
32 then my will is that they shall not be paid until
33 the seven years be expired after my decease.
34 I will and bequeath unto **Robert Baker**⁴⁵, the
35 son of **John Baker**, my tenement and my land
36 lying and being at **Crofts** in the parish of Seal
37 aforesaid after the seven years expired before mentioned
38 And to his heirs forever. And if the said Robert
39 Baker do die without heirs of his body lawfully
40 begotten, my will is that **William Baker** to have
41 all my said lands and tenements aforesaid
42 (and if William Baker die without) heirs, my will is that my daughter Coult's
43 sons John and ?? have the lands and tenements
44 to be equally divided to them and their heirs for
45 ever. **Item** I bequeath unto my two daughters,

44 Agnes/Amy was baptised 17th February 1583 and Jane on 22nd April 1593

45 #1293, baptised 14th March 1585; John's eldest surviving son

46 Coult and **Margaret**⁴⁶ **Comber**, my two ??
47 and my two bullocks to be equally divided between
48 them. **Item** I give and bequeath unto **John Coult**
49 four ewes and four lambs. I bequeath
50 unto **Ann Baker** two ewes and two lambs.
51 Also unto **Jane Baker** two ewes and two lambs.
52 I give and bequeath twenty sheep to be
53 equally divided amongst my children's children
54 that is to five of my son Comber's children⁴⁷.
55 And unto my son John Baker's
56 sons, Robert and William four sheep. **Item**
57 I give and bequeath unto my two daughters,
58 Johane and Margaret, All my household stuff.
59 **Item** I give and bequeath unto my son Coult my lease
60 which I do have of goodman French on two acres? of wood
61 and all the residue of my goods subsequently to my funeral
62 expenses, my will proved and my legacies and debts being
63 paid, I do constitute and appoint my son William Coult
64 my said and sole executor of this my last will and testament

46 known only from this reference in her father's will

47 so that, like John's sons, they would each get four sheep

65 whereunto I have set my hand and seal the day and
66 year above written

Signed: Robert Baker

In witness whereof: **Thomas Olyver**
 John Olyver⁴⁸, scriptor
 Anne Olyver and others

48 Thomas could have been either #423 or #509; John Olyver, the scriptor cannot have been #70 who died in 1596 but he could have been John Olyver of Bitchet, #1200, although there were other John Olyvers in Seal at this time - see *olyverf.fam*

The Descendants of John and Elizabeth

Although both John and Elizabeth died when their children were still young, it was their two sons, Robert and William, who continued the Baker line in Seal. Robert, M.A., clerk, was installed as vicar of Seal on 20th April 1608 on the death of the previous vicar, the patron being Lord Hunsdon⁴⁹. Details of his family are given below.

It is more difficult to decide on the details of William's family since there were at least two William Bakers having children in Seal in the 1620s.

Robert Baker, Vicar of Seal

Gilbert Kipps of Kemsing (k7⁵⁰), in his will written in March 1616, requested that "**Mr. Baker, the vicar of Kemsing and Seal shall make a goodly sermon at my burial to the auditoria then to be assembled, not that myself shalbe thereby embettered but that they may be godly edified to lead their lives as becometh Christians and so in the end to arrive to that place that I am gone before them. To whom I give**

49 Incumbents of Kemsing with Seal, A.C. Vol. 20, p.269

50 k indicates reference in Kemsing database

for his pains (if he be then living) other to him who shall supply the place, ten shillings."

In his will dated July 1619, Steven Theobald (#312) left "Mr. Baker, vicar of Seal" 40s and also he was to have part of Steven's ground "as an easement to the further part of his vicarage chamber and to have it as long as he is vicar of Seal".

In 1630, Robert Baker witnessed the will of **Robert Pelsett** and, in 1646 just before retiring from Seal, he wrote and witnessed the will of **Andrew Porter** but these few surviving references must be just a very small indication of the part Robert Baker played in the village of Seal during his incumbency of 36 years, almost as long as that of Gilbert Jenyns which covered 41 years from 1561.

Tree Baker.5 - The Family of John and Elizabeth

bur:									
#934 John - Elizabeth #935									
11 Dec 1595 12 Nov 1595									

#936	#1140	#1182	#1293	#2120	#1568	#1593	#2069	#1788	
Johane	John	Agnes/Amy	Robert	John	Mary	William ⁵¹	Mary Swaynland	Jane	
bap: 3 Jan 1580	4 Jan 1582	17 Feb 1583	14 Mar 1585	14 Apr 1588	27 Feb 1589	8 Mar 1590		22 Apr 1593	
bur: 15 Aug 1595	5 Jan 1582 ⁵²			<1599	<1599				
aged 15½			??	Mary Garthwaite ⁵³	#2067				

#2124	#2125	#2126	#2127	#2128	#2129	#2130			
James	Susan ⁵⁴	Theobald	Ann	Isabella	Francis	Elizabeth			
bap: 4 Feb 1610	23 Dec 1610	7 Mar 1613	8 Oct 1615	2 Oct 1620	4 Jun 1632	5 Feb 1637			
bur:					May 1633	7 Apr 1637			

- 51 married 4th February 1621 - see page b.74 for their family
- 52 burial partially entered in register but erased but this child probably died since another John was baptised in 1588. Neither the second John (#2120) nor Mary were mentioned by their grandfather in 1599 so that it is likely that, assuming #934 was their father, they died before then. This assumption also fits in with the very short interval between the baptisms of Mary and John and also William and Mary (see also the table on page b.12)
- 53 she was buried on 8th March 1637, one month after the baptism of Elizabeth who was buried a month after her mother
- 54 "daughter of Robert Baker, vicar", less than 11 months after baptism of James who was recorded as "son of Robert Baker". Susan married Richard Smith on 8th September, in Kemsing, when she was twenty; they had five children baptised in Seal - see Smith #2977.

Robert Baker, vicar of Seal, was one of the witnesses of the will of **Arthur Deddicott** (#2509) who was buried on 9 Jun in 1639; Arthur's wife was Martha. Martha Deddicott and a Robert Baker were married in Shipbourne in September 1646 by which time Robert had been succeeded as vicar of Seal by a John Baker. Did Martha marry the retired vicar? Robert was sixty-one and had been married twice before but Martha, Deddicott's widow could have been a similar age.

A John Baker was minister of Seal at the beginning of 1647 but it is not known what relation he was to Robert.

William Baker

In 1599, Robert mentioned his grandson William (#1593) son of John and Elizabeth but were are at least two **William Bakers** having children in the 1620s. Two sons of a William Baker were baptised in 1611 - a reasonable date for #1593, born in 1590, to have his first child. These were:

- "**William Baker of Diggens**" whose son **Stephen** (#2159) was baptised on 31st March 1611. In Shipbourne, on 17th December 1644, Elizabeth Hollands (\$1996) married Stephen Baker. Elizabeth's husband could have been William's son.

- "William Baker of Lower Stonepits" whose son **Richard** (#2162) was baptised on 15th September 1611.

Stephen and Richard could not have been brothers but, unfortunately, this differentiation between the two fathers is not repeated for any of the other sons and daughters "of William Baker". Which of the these children (if any) was the son of #1593? Neither Diggins nor Lower Stonepitts was mentioned in any of the Baker wills.

A **William Baker married Mary Swaynland** on 4th February 1621 - the second marriage of either William of Diggins or William of Lower Stonepitts? The baptisms of ten children are recorded which make a reasonable sequence for the family of William and Mary (these are given below as the children of #1593) but there are two other recorded baptisms:

Sarah Baker (#2163) baptised 16th March 1617

Ann Baker (#2164) baptised 26th August 1621

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M	C	Died
#1593	<u>BAKER, William</u>	8 Mar 1590	4 Feb 1621	Mary Swaynland #2069	1	10	
• #2165	<u>BAKER, Edward</u>	1 Aug 1623			0	0	Aug 1623 < 1m
• #2166	<u>Baker, Elizabeth</u>	19 Dec 1624			0	0	
• #2167	<u>Baker, Rebecca</u>	3 Dec 1626			0	0	
• #2168	<u>BAKER, William</u>	15 Feb 1629			0	0	5 Mar 1629 3 wks
• #2169	<u>Baker, Francis</u>	14 Oct 1632			0	0	? ____ 1633 <1 yr
• #2170	<u>BAKER, Richard</u>	4 May 1634			0	0	
• #2154	<u>Baker, Mary</u>	20 Aug 1637			0	0	
• #2155	<u>Baker, Margaret</u>	15 Mar 1640			0	0	
• #2156	<u>BAKER, William</u>	29 Apr 1642			0	0	8 May 1642 2 wks
• #2157	<u>BAKER, John</u>	4 Jun 1643			0	0	

Alice Baker and a Suggested Family

There is no clear indication as to who was the husband of the Alice who died at the beginning of 1644. George Baker had three children baptised in Seal between 1603 and 1610 and John, the eldest, could have been the John Baker who married Mary Pawley in Shipbourne in 1628. John and Mary had six children, three of

whom - Alice, Sarah and John - were alive in 1644. These names match those of Alice's grandchildren; Tree B.5 gives reconstruction of George Baker's family.

This George Baker could have been the George whose son was a godchild of John Weekes in 1607 (see [Weekes](#)). In January 1625, Richard Rolfe left £5 each to "[George Baker of Fuller Street and his three sons](#)"; at that date George's three sons would have been twenty-one, eighteen and about sixteen. Thus it would seem that #2118 was George Baker of Fuller Street. George Baker was one of the assessors for the subsidy granted to Charles I in 1628 in which he was himself assessed for £3 (land) and 8s (goods).

From her will, Alice had a brother **John Porter** who died before her, leaving a son also called John (whom Alice calls her cousin rather than nephew). Thus Alice was a Porter. She must have married George about 1600 but, although the Porters were a large Seal family, there is no record of an Alice being baptised at anything like the right time. There was a John Porter (#446) having children in Seal in the 1620s among them a son John baptised in August 1623 which would fit in with him not yet being 21 when Alice wrote her will. It would seem that Alice thinks it might be possible for him to pay the amount two months after he was 21 but, since his father was already dead, he was possibly due to inherit property, etc. from his father at that time which would be the August after Alice wrote her will in the January.

	#2118		#2119		#446	
	George -	Alice Porter		John Porter -		
will:		31 Jan 1644				
died/bur:	27 Oct 1632	Feb 1644		22 Mar 1633?	#3277	
				John Porter	(and other children)	
bap:				18 Aug 1623	see Porter	
	\$1465 ⁵⁵	#412 #1508	#2121	#2174	#2175	#2122
Mary Pawley -	John -	George	Thomas -	Ann Kips ³⁶	Margaret	
bap: 27 Feb 1609	18 Sep 1603	22 Jun 1606	<1644	27 Jan 1613	14 Oct 1610	
bur: 16 Dec 1643		17 Apr 1630				
		aged 23				
	see Tree Baker.7 (page 77)					
			#2176	#2177	#2178	#4010 #4011
		George	William	Richard	Thomas	John
bap:		20 Jan 1634	10 Sep 1635	31 Aug 1637		<1644

56 married 12th February 1633 in Kemsing where Ann was baptised

Tree Baker.7 - John of Shipbourne's Family

					\$1465		#1508/\$412 ¹		
					Mary Pawley	-	John	-	Mary Lucke \$1623
bap:					27 Feb 1609		18 Sep 1603		
mar:									18 Apr 1644
bur:					16 Dec 1643				
	\$1466	\$1467	\$1604	\$1602	\$1603	\$1605	\$1606	\$1624	\$2188
	George	Alice	Mary	Sarah	Avi s	John	Thomas	Francis	Eliz abeth
bap:	1 Mar 1629	10 Oct 1630	22 Apr 1633	3 Mar 1636	3 Oct 1638	9 Jul 1643	13 Feb 1645	16 Mar 1648	24 Mar 1650
bur:	12 Jun 1635		5 Apr 1640		10 Feb 1639				28 Jun 1650
	"drowned" aged 7		nearly 7		at 4 months			daughter	at 3 months

See the [Luckes of Shipbourne in More Families & Transcripts](#) for Mary's family.

Alice left fifteen acres of land to be sold for £85 4s (about £5 13s 4d per acre) to pay her legacies mainly £10 to each of her eight grandchildren. She appointed her son John and her daughter-in-law Ann, widow of her other son, to be her executors but if John were to refuse the executorship, then Ann was to give him five pounds out of Alice's goods and chattels "and he not to meddle any further in the business". The will was proved by John and Ann together so that it looks as if John agreed to be a joint executor.

1 Because John's children were baptised in Shipbourne, he is included in both databases. He and Mary married on 19th February 1628 in Shipbourne. See [Jeffrey Pawley of Shipbourne in More Families & Transcripts](#) for Mary's family. Sarah and Avis were recorded as daughters of "John and Mary Baker"

George's wife, Alice, could have been the Alice Baker who witnessed the will of Arthur Deddicott in 1639.

Will of Alice Baker

written 31st January 1643/4

transcript from the probate copy from the Deanery of Shoreham

1 In the name of god Amen. I, Alice Baker, late
2 of Seal in the County of Kent, **widow**, do make this
3 my last will and testament in matter and form as follow
4 =eth⁵⁸. **First:** I bequeath my soul to god that gave it in sure
5 and assured confidence that he will pardon my sins
6 and receive me to glory for his son's sake, my Lord and
7 Saviour. **Item:** my body to be buried at the discretion of
8 my executors. And for these worldly goods which it hath
9 pleased god to bestow upon me, I bequeath them as follow
10 =eth: **First:** I give unto all the children of **my son,**
11 **John Baker, of Shipbourne** in Kent, namely **John Baker,**
12 **Alice Baker and Sarah Baker,** to either of them, ten

pounds to be paid unto the said children when they shall attain or come to their several ages of one and twenty years and, if in case any of the said children do die and depart this life before they attain to the said age of one and twenty years, then the portion of the deceased to go to they survivors to be equally divided between them or the survivor. **Item:** I give to all the children of **my son, Thomas Baker, deceased, namely George Baker, William Baker, Richard Baker⁵⁹, Thomas Baker and John Baker**, to each of them ten pounds to be paid to the said children when they shall likewise attain to the several ages of one and twenty years (and if any die before) then the portion of him or them dying shall go to the survivors by equal portions or to the survivor. **Item:** for the true payment of these aforesaid legacies of good and lawful money of England, my will is that all these my several parcels of lands called **Dines⁶⁰, Londons and little Walters**, containing, by estimation, fifteen acres, lying or situated in the

⁵⁹ George, William and Richard were baptised, in Seal, in January 1634, September 1635 and August 1637 respectively

⁶⁰ usually spelt "Dynes"

parish of **Seal** aforesaid shall be sold by **John Baker**,
my son aforesaid and **Ann Baker**⁶¹, **my daughter**,
late wife of Thomas Baker, my son, deceased⁶² whom
I make joint executors of this my last will and testa
=ment and further my will is, if these my several parcels
of land shalbe sold to **my cousin John Porter, son**
of my brother, John Porter, deceased⁶³, if he will pay then
at the price of four score and five pounds, four shillings
of good and current English money provided that the said
John Porter pay the said money within 2 months next
ensuing after he comes to the age of one and twenty
years. And if he, the said John Porter, shall refuse
to buy the said lands, then my will is that the said my seve
=ral parcels of land shall be sold to the best advantage by
the said executors and, after the said sale, my will is furth
=er that the thirty pounds given to the children of my

61 Ann Kips married, in Kemsing, on 12th February 1633 - see Kips in Kemsing (Ann is k21, i.e. 21 in the Kemsing database)

62 since he and Ann had at least two more sons after Richard baptised August 1637, it was likely that Thomas lived until at least 1640

63 see page 75 for a discussion of this relationship

son John shall remain in the hands of the said son,
my executor, for the payment of his children's legacies
as aforesaid and the fifty pounds to be paid unto the
children of my son Tho. Baker deceased to be put
into the hands of **William Kips of Kemsing**⁶⁴ in the
County aforesaid, **yeoman**, to be employed for the use
of the said children towards their bringing up until
they come to their several ages aforesaid.
Item: I give unto the said William Kips aforesaid,
whom I desire to be overseer of this my last will
and testament, the sum of forty shillings towards
his charges. All the rest of my lands, goods and Ch
=attles not yet disposed of, my debts, legacies and
funeral charges discharged, I give to my executors,
John Baker and Anne Baker, to be equally divided
between them and, in case the said John, my son, shall
refuse the executorship, then my will is the said
John Baker, my son, shall have five pounds given him
by the other executor, Anne Baker, out of my goods and
Chattels aforesaid and he not to meddle any
further in the business. And thus revoking and dis--

68 =ing all former wills and testaments here to fore
69 made by me, or by any other in my name, I do here or
70 =dain this to be my last will and testament. In witness
71 whereof I have here (though weak in body yet in
72 perfect memory and understanding) set my hand and
73 seal the thirty-one of January 1643. The mark
74 of Alice Baker, sealed and approved in the presence
75 of **Thomas Whitford, minister, Francis Dunmoll,**
76 his mark.

Richard Baker of Seal

In Seal, a Richard Baker whose first wife, Thamar, died in 1617, married Agnes King eight months later. There is no Richard in the families already shown who could be this Richard. He is the only known Richard Baker who could have been the tenant of Richard Rolfe in 1624; Rolfe, in his will, excused him one year's rent of £3.

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M	C	Died
#2066	<u>BAKER, Richard</u> -----	<1590			2	7	
	Marriage 1		<1612				
#2143	<u>his wife, Thamar</u> -----				1	2	9 Nov 1617
• #2145	<u>BAKER, Richard</u>	1612?			0	0	1 Jul 1612
	burial recorded as "Richard Baker puer" - taken as first child of #2066						
• #2146	<u>BAKER, William</u>	24 Jan 1613	3 Apr 1648	Helen Draper married at 35	1	0	
				#3622			
	Marriage 2		13 Jun 1618	Agnes King			
#1766	<u>King, Agnes</u> -----	25 Jun 1592			1	5	
			married at 26 years				
• #2147	<u>BAKER, Richard</u>	21 Mar 1619			0	0	< May 1621
	presumably died before #2148, also called Richard, was born						
• #2148	<u>BAKER, Richard</u>	6 May 1621			0	0	
• #2149	<u>BAKER, Michael</u>	25 Dec 1624			0	0	
• #2150	<u>BAKER, Christopher</u>				0	0	19 Nov 1627
• #2151	<u>BAKER, William</u>	22 Feb 1629			0	0	

The Bakers of Ightham

Although Ightham and Seal are neighbouring parishes, the Ightham Bakers below may have been completely separate families from the Seal Bakers since there is no obvious connection.

In 1552 during the reign of Edward VI, when an inventory of the Ightham Parish Goods was taken, various parishioners paid sums of money "unto William Hyde, gent., surveyor to our Sovereign lord the King" in what seems to be payment for certain of the church goods. One of these was **William Baker** from whom William Hyde received 8s "for the paschal light"⁶⁵

"On 16th October 1604, five failures to trim hedges were dealt with, orders being made in each case for the hedge to be cut before 1st March under penalty 3s 4d." One of these was **Thomas Baker** with a hedge between **Ightham and Bewley**⁶⁶. This could have been i1452 below.

⁶⁵ The Story of Ightham, F.J.Bennett, Homeland Association Limited, 1907, p.65

⁶⁶ CRI 1937, p.201

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M	C	Died
i1448	<u>BAKER, John</u>					1	2
• i1450	<u>Baker, Margaret</u>	11 Oct 1584				0	0
• i1451	<u>Baker, Dionice</u>	25 Jan 1590				0	0
	"daughter of -- Baker"						
i1452	<u>BAKER, Thomas</u>					1	1
• i1454	<u>BAKER, Richard</u>	3 May 1601	19 Apr 1624 married at 23	Lydia Ware i1455	1	6	5 May 1637 aged 36
• • i1456	<u>Baker, Susan</u>	27 Feb 1625				0	0
• • i1457	<u>Baker, Joane</u>	17 Dec 1626				0	0
• • i1458	<u>Baker, Alice</u>	25 May 1629				0	0
• • i1459	<u>Baker, Anne</u>	2 Apr 1632				0	0
• • i1460	<u>Baker, Elizabeth</u>	14 Jun 1635				0	0 20 Aug 1635 at 2 mths
• • i1461	<u>BAKER, John</u>	4 Sep 1636				0	0
Elizabeth and John were recorded as the children of "Richard Baker and Lydia"; if it was their father who died in 1637, he left 5 children aged between 12 years and 8 months.							

On 5th October 1593, **William Webb** (i1247, see **Webb**) was immediately fined 10s for receiving a number of strangers including a **Thomas Baker and Samuel Mare** (i1695 in **Meere**) who were themselves to be fined 3s 4d if sureties were not found for them or they did not depart⁶⁷. A year later, on 17th October 1594 **John Usmer** (i1243 in **Usmer**) was brought before the Court for receiving two "strangers" - **Thomas Baker and Samuel Mare** - and was to be fined 10s if they stayed without

sureties being found for them. It looks as if both Thomas and Samuel were able to stay in Ightham; Thomas could have been the father of Richard and the man who failed to trim his hedge in 1604 - see above.

Other Bakers mentioned in the Court Records:

1553-74

Alice Baker, John Baker, Thomas Baker

1586-1618

Arthur Baker, Edward Baker

Other Bakers

The following events are taken from the parish registers:

In Seal

- Paul Baker (#338) married **Isabell Chapman of Marden** (#339) on 26th January 1568.

- Thomas Baker (#1348) married **Susan Perry of Ightham** (#1349) on 19th February 1587 by a certificate from **Henry Selyiard**⁶⁸ parson there, bans three times there proclaimed. Richard, son of Thomas Baker, was baptised in Ightham on 3rd May 1601 but this seems a long time after the marriage of Thomas and Susan to be their son
- Henry Baker (#1535) married **Alice Spilstead, widow of Chipstead**, (#1536) on 3rd September 1590.
- John Baker married **Alice Pennet** (#2068) on 17th December 1629. This could have been John (\$1601), son of Humphrey Baker of Shipbourne (\$410), who was baptised on 23rd April 1598 in which case he would have been thirty when he married. Humphrey also had a daughter, Susan (\$653), baptised 23rd December 1599
- **Frideswith Baker** was buried on 18th March 1618. A man? or a woman?
- **Adam Baker** (#2173), son of Thomas and Josian Baker, was baptised on 24th September 1637 and buried on 19th September.

In Shipbourne:

- Richard Baker was baptised on 23rd June 1588 but no name was given for his father.
- Walter Baker (\$1468) had two daughters, Anne (\$1470) baptised on 30th March 1628 and Mary (\$1471) on 25th October 1629.
- Elizabeth Baker (\$1739) married **Henry Ives** (\$1734) on 16th July 1638.
- Anne Baker (\$1889) married **Edward Hubbard** (\$1876) on 6th August 1643. William's daughter would have been only fifteen in 1643.

In Wrotham:

- Two sons of William Baker were baptised, the first, for whom no name was given, on 26th May 1593 and the second, Nicholas, described as the son of William Baker of **Hertshill** (\$434), on 8th October 1598.

In Leigh:

- On 1st February 1594, Anne, wife of Thomas Baker, gent., was buried; she was "**laid in the Vicar's chancel**" for which 10s was paid. Her husband, Thomas Baker was buried on 17th December 1598. George Baker, "affinis" was appointed his administrator on 17th January 1599 (Duncan, A.C. Vol.18)

See **More Families & Transcripts** for details of Bakers in Speldhurst and Kemsing

The Baldens of West Peckham and Wrotham

Six Balden wills have survived but those for Henry Balden of Brenchley and Hugh Balden of Aylesford have not been investigated.

		written:		
Henry Balden	Brenchley	1563	CKS: Drb/Pwr 13.301	clothier
Hugh Balden	Aylesford	1566/7	CKS: Drb/Pw 8; Pwr 13.276	sailor
Thomas Balden	West Peckham	30 May 1606	CKS: Drb/Pw 20; Pwr 19I.271	page b.93
William Balden	Wrotham	1 Apr 1624	CKS: Prs/w/1/158	page b.104
Arthur Balden	Wrotham	28 Jun 1627	CKS: Prs/w/1/179	page b.110
Thomas Balden	West Peckham	18 Nov 1630	PCC: 11 St. John	page b.117

The relationships between the Baldens featured in these wills are shown in the family tree below; If this agrees with reality, William and Arthur were brothers and the sons of the yeoman from West Peckham with the Thomas whose will was written in 1630 being William's son.

Arthur and his nephew, Thomas, were fullers. Although the Thomas who died in 1606 was described in his will as a yeoman, he was described as a fuller by Roger Knell in 1599 and had the lease of Oxenhoth fulling mill so that fulling, as a family occupation, goes back at least to the very early seventeenth century. By 1630 Thomas specifies that the lease of the "[fulling mill and the lands there with all](#)

Thomas Balden of Oxenhoath, West Peckham

Thomas Balden's will dated 1606 was proved at both Rochester (CKS: Drb/Pwr 13.301) and, on 9th October 1607, at the PCC. (probate copy: Huddleston 77, Prob 11/110) When the will was proved in London, a separate copy of the will was made in addition to the probate copy; this copy has also survived (PCC: Prob 10/251).

This will was written by Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne, who wrote a large number of wills between 1578 and 1618. The original preserved at Rochester (CKS: Drb/Pw 20) has Nicholas Hooper marks at the beginning and end as well as a decorated "I" at the beginning. It was first written on 24th January 1605/6 but was altered, also by Nicholas Hooper, on 30th May 1606. Each page was signed by Thomas Balden with his name which looks like a signature.

Other than the date, the changes made are very minor and there is no sign, on the will, that the usual ending of "read, declared, published" etc. "in presence of ..." was ever written prior to the note stating that amendments had been made. Did Nicholas Hooper come and take instructions for the first draft in January 1606 which he then had ready to bring whenever Thomas Balden seemed to be near to death? When this did not occur until four months later, was it then thought best to alter the date to that on which the witnesses were present?

Roger Knell, in his will of 1599 willed that his wife should sell his house, etc. in Shipbourne for the best price she could get. He suggested that his "very friend, Thomas Balden, of Oxenhoth, the elder, fuller, shall buy the same before any other man if he please and shall have the same something betterchepe⁷³ than any other without fraud or guile.". Thomas Balden does not mention any land in Shipbourne in his will.

Thomas of Oxenhoth specified that his wife, "her executors or assigns" was to make and give to their eldest daughter, Elizabeth, a "gown of russet sufficient and decent for her body and wearing". He leaves twenty pounds to each of his three eldest sons but only ten pounds to George, his youngest son. The daughters all fair differently: the gown to Elizabeth, twenty shillings to Susan and ten shillings to Alice.

William and Arthur were to be his overseers and his wife was "within one month next after my decease, or before the probation of this my will", to enter into a bond of two hundred pounds to them with the condition "thereupon endorsed, that the one half of all my moveable goods whatsoever which shall be set down and priced in an Inventory . . . to be exhibited into the Court of Register after my decease (my lease of Oxenhoth fulling mill excepted) and also excepted out of the said half of my goods such sums and charges" to be paid out "by virtue of this my will or

73 cheaper?

necessarily about the same or other funeral charge" shall remain "after the next marriage of her my said wife or her decease (which shall first happen) and equally divided between my four sons, viz: William, Arthur, Robert and George Balden".

After the decease or next marriage of his wife, the lease of the mill was to pass to William. "And if the said William be then deceased, Then I give the said lease to Robert Balden, my son, during the years then to come of the same" and so on to Arthur and George. Whoever had the lease was to "well and sufficiently uphold, maintain and keep the said mill and all houses, barns and buildings thereto belonging in all sufficient reparations whatsoever".

Will of Thomas Balden of West Peckham 1606

written 30th May 1606
transcript from original

Nicholas Hooper's
mark

1 In⁷⁴ the name of god Amen. the thirtieth day of May in

74 decorated "I"

2 the year of our lord God One thousand Six hundredth and Six. And in the
3 fourth
4 year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord James, by the grace of God, king of
England,
5 France and Ireland, defender of the faith. And of Scotland, the nine and
thirtieth⁷⁵
6 I, Thomas Balden, the elder⁷⁶, of **Oxenhoth in the parish of West Peckham**,
in the county of Kent, **fuller**, being⁷⁷ at the time of making hereof sickly and
7 many times grieved
8 with aches and infirmities, besides old age approaching, All with besides
the many examples of
9 the change and sudden alteration of life, bring me in mind that I shall
change this my life
but the time thereof being altogether uncertain, And willing that these
transitory possessions

75 changing the date from January to May involved changing the regnal year from three to four for England, etc. but not for Scotland

76 he does not mention a son Thomas but the son of his eldest son William was a Thomas; was he old enough at this time to be "Thomas Balden, the younger"? This is possible since the testator says "old age is approaching".

77 "beeing"; "bee" throughout which was usual for Nicholas Hooper

10 and goods which God (of his goodness) hath made me Steward of here in
this life,
11 might be quietly enjoyed after my decease by those whom I have proposed
and meant the
12 same unto. Therefore I do ordain and make this my present Testament and
last will
13 in manner and form following, That is to say: **First** and principally I give,
commend
14 and bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty God who gave it,
Trusting in and by the
15 mercies, merits, precious death and blood shedding of his dear son, Jesus
Christ, my only lord
16 and saviour, that the same shalbe presented pure and without spot before
the Throne
17 of his majesty. And my body to the earth to be buried in sure and certain
hope of a
18 joyful and glorious resurrection. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my eldest
son, William**
19 **Balden**, the sum of Twenty pounds of good and lawful money of England to
be paid to
20 him, his executor, Administrator or assigns, within half a year next after my
decease.

21 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Robert Balden, my second son**, the like sum
of Twenty pounds
22 of lawful money to be paid to him, his executor, Administrators or assigns
within the said space of half
23 a year next after my decease. Also I give and bequeath to my said son,
Robert Balden,
25 my lease of **Sleeichedge?** which I hold of **Mr. Thomas** and **Henry**
Whetenhall, To him and to
26 his heirs, executors and assigns, during the years to come after my decease
of and in the same
27 paying the rent and discharging⁷⁸ the Covenant in the same lease
contained. **Item:** I give and
28 bequeath to **Arthur Balden, my third son**, the like sum of Twenty Pounds of
lawful money
29 to be paid to him, his executors, Administrators or assigns within the said
space of half a year
30 next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **George Balden, my**
fourth and
31 **youngest son**, the sum of Ten pounds of like good and lawful money of
England to be

78 no "d"

32 paid to him within the like space of half a year next after my decease or to
his executors,
33 Administrators or assigns. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my son-in-law,**
John Compar,
34 six shillings and eight pence of lawful money to be paid within one quarter
of a year after my
35 decease. And I will that my wife and executrix hereafter named, her
executors or assigns
36 shall make and give to **my eldest daughter, Elizabeth, now wife of the said**
John Compar, one
37 gown or russet sufficient and decent for her body and wearing within one
quarter of a
38 year next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my son-in-law**
George
39 **Henbury, or my second daughter Susan, his wife,** the sum of twenty
shillings of
40 lawful money to be paid to him or her within one quarter of a year next
after my decease.
41 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my son-in-law Thomas Collyn or unto Alice,**
42 **his wife, my daughter,** the sum of ten shillings of lawful money. To be paid
43 to him or her within one quarter of a year next after my decease. **Item:** I
give and bequeath

44 to **my Godson, Thomas Balden, son of my son William Balden**, One heifer
Bullock, to be delivered
45 within one month next after my decease into the hands of the said William,
his father, willing
46 him to put the same out to some profit for and to the use of the said
Thomas, his son.

47 The⁷⁹ residue of all my goods and Cattels, debts, leases and Chattels and
all other my moveable goods
48 whatsoever, I wholly, fully and with good effect, intent and purpose, give
and bequeath unto **Alice, my**
49 **wellbeloved wife**, which Alice, my wife, I make and ordain my whole and
sole Executrix of this my will
50 to the performance of this my will and of the Conditions and provisions
herein hereafter expressed. And I
51 . . . my sons William and Arthur Balden my Overseers of
52 this my will requiring them to take some pains in and for the easement of
their mother with and . .
53 thereof or otherwise in the performance of the same, whose charges that
may to be laid out, I will shalbe

79 decorated "T" of The

54 borne by their said mother, mine executrix, from time to time. Provided,
and my will and mind
55 is that my said wife and executrix shall, within one month next after my
decease, or before the probation
56 of this my will, enter bond of two hundred pounds to them, my said two
sons and Overseers, or either
57 of them, with condition thereupon endorsed that the one half of all my
moveable goods whatsoever which shalbe
58 set down and priced in an Inventory of all the same to be truly taken, or the
true value of them, indifferently priced and to be
59 exhibited into the Court of Register after my decease (my lease of Oxenhoth
fulling mill excepted) and
60 also excepted out of the said half of my goods such sums and charge as my
said wife shall have paid and
61 discharged by virtue of this my will or necessarily about the same or other
funeral charge, shalbe and perfectly
62 remain after the next marriage of her my said wife or her decease (which
shall first happen) and equally divided
63 between my four sons, viz: William, Arthur, Robert and George Balden.
And all which lease⁸⁰,

64 after the decease or next marriage of her my said wife, I give unto the said
William, my son, if he be then
65 living during the years of the same. And if the said William be then
deceased, Then I give the said
66 lease to Robert Balden, my son, during the years then to come of the same.
67 And if the said Robert happen to decease before the expiration of the said
lease, then I will the
68 same to Arthur Balden, my son, during the residue of the years there to
come of the same if
69 he so long live. And if the said Arthur Balden happen to decease before
the said
70 lease be expired, Then I give the said lease to George Balden, my son,
during the
71 years then to come of the same if he so long live.
72 And I further will that my said wife, during her time therein
73 and all my said sons severally during their several times, shall well and
sufficiently uphold,
74 maintain and keep the said mill and all houses, barns and buildings
thereto belonging in
75 all sufficient reparations whatsoever. And I further appoint that my said
sons, William
76 (to which of them my said lease shall come) shall pay out of the

77 said lease, to every of his brothers then living, yearly during the years then
to come of
78 the same and they or any of them so long live, the sum of forty shillings a
piece of
79 lawful money at every year next after that he (who shall happen to come to
the same) shall
80 have enjoyed a year's profit thereof. And at, or in, the mansion house of the
said mill to be
81 paid. And if it happen that my said sons, or either of them (to whom the
said several
82 sums of forty shillings are to be paid) shalbe unpaid their several portions
after the end
83 of any the said years, contrary to the true meaning of this my will, by the
space of
84 one month next after the said year's ended, That it shall and may be lawful
unto
85 him and them so unpaid to enter in and upon the said mill, or any the
houses and
86 building thereto belonging and there to distrain and the distress or
distresses so
87 had and taken to lead, drive and carry away, impound and keep until they,
and every of them,
88 so unpaid be fully paid according to the true meaning of this my will. And

89 I will further that my said wife, her executors or assigns, shall every
90 Easter day during three years next after my decease give and distribute
after evening
91 . . . amongst the poorest and most needing within the parish
92 of West Peckham, in her or their discretion, the sum of 3s 4d every year, viz
10s in all, the
93 first distribution to be made the next Easter after my decease. In witness
whereof to
94 this my present last will, I the said Thomas Balden, have set my hand and
Seal and I do hereby revoke and renounce
95 all other wills by me heretofore made. And I do publish and declare this
only to be my true
96 and last will yeven⁸¹ the day and year first above written.

Nicholas Hooper's
mark
with initials

81 given

This will was amended and made the
twentieth day of May in the year of our lord 1606
... for the true and last will of the said
Thomas Balden and by him (being then in
perfect mind and memory) pronounced and
declared to be his true and last will in the
presence of me **Nicholas Hooper, writer hereof.**

William Salmon
George Johnson
Davis Willard

William Balden

William's will was written by Robert Hooper, one of Nicholas's sons who also wrote other wills in the neighbourhood. Both William himself and one of the witnesses, William Fasscene, made their marks which were both a large "W".

What is strange about this will is that, although William is described as "of Wrotham" he specifies his messuages, land, etc. to be in Wateringbury with no mention of anywhere in Wrotham.

Will of William Balden of Wrotham

written 1st April 1624; proved May 1624

transcript from original

1 In⁸² the name of God Amen. the first day of April in the two and twenty
2 year of the reign of our sovereign Lord James, by the grace of god king of
3 England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, and of Scotland the
4 seven and fifty, Anno. dm. 1624, I, William Balden of Wrotham
5 in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at the time of making hereof,
although something

6 sickly and yet of sound and perfect memory (praised bee⁸³ god), do make
and ordain
7 this my present testament and last will in manner and form following, that
is
8 to say, **First** and above all things I do most willingly give, yield up and
resign
9 my soul unto Almighty god, my most merciful Creator, trusting by a true
10 lively and confident faith which I have in the merits and precious death
and bloodshedding
11 of his dear son Christ Jesus, my only saviour and redeemer, to have full
12 pardon and remission of all my sins. And my body to the earth in sure and
certain
13 hope of a joyful resurrection unto life eternal. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
14 unto the poor of Wrotham aforesaid ten shillings. **Item:** I give and
bequeath
15 unto **four of my daughters**, that is to say, **Anne, Alice, Susan and Mary**,
16 to each and every of them, twenty pounds a piece of current English money
17 to be paid to them, and every of them, at their several ages of one and
twenty
18 years or days of marriage, which shall first happen. And if either of them

83 "bee" throughout which was usual for Nicholas Hooper and possibly also for Robert Hooper, Nicholas's son and writer of this will

19 happen to decease before their said ages, or days of marriage, I will the
20 survivor or survivors of them shall be heir or heirs to the deceased. **Item:** I
21 give and bequeath unto **my other daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of Edward**
22 **Bassett**, the sum of five pounds of lawful english money to be paid
23 unto her within one whole year next after my decease. **Item:** I give and
24 bequeath to **John Blithe, my wife's son**, the sum of five pounds
25 (besides the five pounds which I owe him). The residue and all other
26 my moveables and moveable goods whatsoever, I fully and wholly give and
27 bequeath unto **Katherine, my wellbeloved wife**⁸⁴, she paying these my
28 legacies and all other my debts and performing and fulfilling this my
29 will according to the true meaning hereof, which said Katherine I
30 make and ordain my whole and sole executrix.

31 This is also the last will and testament of the said William Balden, made
32 and declared the day and year before dated, concerning the order and
33 disposition
34 of all and every my messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments,
situated, lying
and being in within the parish of **Wateringbury**⁸⁵ within the said county

84 Katherine had been married before since she had had a son but was she the mother of all William's children?

85 between five and six miles from Wrotham; since no house is mentioned in Wrotham, where did the family live?

35 of Kent. **Item:** my will and meaning is that the said Katherine, my wife,
shall
36 have, hold, receive and enjoy to her own use all and every the rents, issues
and
37 profits thereof during her natural life. And she not doing any wilful
38 strip or waste in or upon the same (except for reparations) and keeping the
39 reparations thereof in good and decent order. And after the decease of the
40 said Katherine, my wife, I give and bequeath all and every the same lands
and
41 tenements unto **Thomas Balden and William Balden, my sons**, to have
42 and to hold the same, with the appurtenances, unto the said Thomas and
William
43 and to their heirs and assigns, equally forever. Provided always it is
44 my very will and meaning that if either of my said sons happen to decease
45 without heirs or heir of their bodies lawfully begotten, that then the
46 survivor of them shall be heir to the deceased, any thing herein
47 mentioned to the contrary notwithstanding. **Item:** I make and ordain
48 **my loving brother-in-law, Henry Tomson⁸⁶**, and him, the said Thomas, my
son,
49 overseers of this my will, to whom I give as a token of love, five

86 If the testator was the son of the Thomas Balden who wrote his will in 1606, either one of his sisters married, for the second time, after their father's death of Henry was the sister of Katherine, William's wife

50 shillings a piece, besides their necessary charges and expenses any ways
51 about the same. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand
52 and seal, the day and year before dated, revoking all former wills by
53 me made and acknowledging this same to be my very true and last
54 will.

Sealed and commended and declared the mark **W** of me, William
to be the true and last will of the
said William Balden in the presence of Balden

William **W**⁸⁷ Fasseme

Robert Hooper

87 the marks of both are large "W"s

Arthur Balden

George Segars appears as a witness of a number of wills including that of Arthur Balden; his name appears with a particular mark or flourish at the end and Segars was possibly another scribe working in the area.

Arthur Balden left his son William £30 and his mill to his other son, Thomas. In addition to Basted mill in Wrotham, William had the lease of another mill in which he was living in 1624 and this lease was also given to Thomas although his wife was to "have her dwelling" there "during the continuance of the lease if she so long remain a widow". His daughters, Alice and Elizabeth, were also to be allowed to live there until they married or were able to "better provide for themselves".

Arthur also had two "messuages or tenements" in Wrotham which he left to Alice and Elizabeth. The positions of the various buildings and land are given with respect to the "river or water course" and the lands included hopgardens and orchards. Thomas, Alice and Elizabeth were each to pay their mother £2 a year, from the proceeds from their land, as long as she remained unmarried.

Arthur had been building on the land to be given to Elizabeth and within the year following his death, his wife, Anne, his wife was to build and pay for the barn there which was then "in framing" and it was to be "well and sufficiently"

furnished. Also, within the same time, she was to "build and set up there and furnish one new house of the length of twenty and two feet and of the breadth of seventeen feet meet and sufficient for the workhouse for the elderly". If she failed to do this, the Anne was to pay Elizabeth £50 so that she was able herself to build the barn and workhouse.

Will of Arthur Balden of Wrotham

written 28th June 1627

transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. The eight and twentieth day of June Anno Diem
2 1627. And in the third year of the reign of our sovereign lord Charles, by
3 the grace of god, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, king, defender
4 of the faith, etc. I, Arthur Balden of Wrotham in the county of Kent, **fuller**,
5 being of good and perfect memory and understanding, thanks be given to
6 god, do make and ordain this my present last will and testament
7 in manner and form following, that is to say, **First** and principally
8 I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my creator, hoping and steadfastly
9 believing that through the merits of Jesus Christ, my alone saviour,

10 and redeemer, to have everlasting life and my body to the earth from
(which)⁸⁸
11 it came, to be buried at the discretion of my executrix hereafter
12 named. **Item:** I give and bequeath to the poor people of the parish of
13 Wrotham, the sum of ten shillings to be distributed amongst them
14 in the day of my burial and to the poor people of the parish
15 of **Ightham** the sum of five shillings to be distributed amongst them
16 according to the discretion of **Mr Grymes, the minister**⁸⁹ there. And
17 I give to **William Lynford** (over and above such portion as shall happen
18 unto him out of my former legacies) the sum of twelve pence. **Item:**
19 I give and bequeath unto **Mr. Charles Hutchinson, minister of**
20 **Wrotham**, the sum of ten shillings to be paid unto him in the
21 day of my burial. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **my eldest son,**
22 **William Balden**, the sum of thirty pounds to be paid unto him within
23 one whole year next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath
24 unto **my second son, Thomas Balden**, all that my **Basted mill** with
25 all the houses and buildings thereunto belonging, situated and being at

88 "which" omitted

89 The Rev. John Gryme was rector of Ightham from 1616; in 1643 Parliament issued an ordinance requiring all clergy to take an oath of allegiance to it and to impose this upon their parishioners. Mr. Gryme refused to obey and a party of horse was sent from London to arrest him. The villagers tried to rescue him and, in the scuffle, one of them was killed. This sparked off a rising which required Parliamentary troops to quell (Edward V. Bowra, "Ightham", Ightham and District Historical Society, 1978)

26 **Basted in Wrotham**⁹⁰ aforesaid together withall that hopgarden lying
27 next to the same mill on the southwest side of the river or water course
28 running to the same mill. And all the lands lying beneath or on
29 the east side of the same hopgarden. And also all that parcel
30 near adjoining to the aforesaid mill called the fulling mill ?ough.
31 All which said hopgarden and lands before mentioned, constituting of six
32 sendall parcels of land containing, in the whole by estimation, six acres.
33 To have and to hold the same mill, house and buildings thereunto adjacent
34 and sendall parcels of land before mentioned unto my said son Thomas
35 Balden and to his heirs and assigns for ever paying out of the same
36 lands and mill yearly unto **Anne, my wife**, during the time that she
37 shall continue unmarried, the sum of forty shillings quarterly to be paid
38 unto her at the four several feasts of the year, That is to say at
39 the feast of the birth of our lord, the annunciation of the blessed virgin
40 Mary, the nativity of St. John the baptist and St. Michael the
41 Archangel, be even and equal portions. The first payment thereof to
42 begin at such of the said feasts as shall first happen next after my decease.
43 Also I give and bequeath unto my said son Thomas the lease of
44 the house and mill in which I now dwell during the term of
45 years yet to come and unexpired. And likewise I give the said
46 Thomas my bay gelding and one cow. I give and bequeath

47 unto **my eldest daughter, Alice Balden**, all that my messuage or tenement
withal
48 the houses and buildings thereunto belonging in which **William Parkyns**
49 late dwelt lying on the northeast side of the river or water
50 course in Basted aforesaid. And that hopgarden adjacent to the same
51 house or lying near thereunto, containing be estimation two acres and a
half.
52 And also all that orchard lying on the southwest side of the same house
and called the long
53 garden between the two rivers or water courses there.
54 And also all that parcel of land called the ward which I purchased of **John**
?ablett to have and
55 to hold the same messuage or tenement, hopgarden and orchard before
mentioned
56 and parcel of land called the ward
57 with the appurtenances unto the said Alice Balden for and during the term
58 of her natural life; and after her decease to the heirs of the body of
59 the said Alice lawfully begotten. And for want of such issue, to the
60 aforesaid Thomas, my son, and his heirs for ever. And I give unto
61 the said Alice one cow and the sum of ten pounds in money to be
62 paid unto her within one year next after my decease. And my will and
63 meaning is that the said Alice shall likewise pay out of the aforesaid
64 messuage and lands to her given as aforesaid, the sum of forty

shillings yearly unto the said Anne, my wife, during the time that she shall remain a widow, to be paid unto her quarterly at the feasts aforesaid. And the first payment thereof to begin as above is listed.

Item: I give and bequeath unto **my youngest daughter, Elizabeth Balden,** all that messuage or tenement in Basted aforesaid which I purchased of **Richard Brissenden**⁹¹ and have lately now built the same with the orchard thereunto belonging. And also all that parcel of meadow adjoining to the same orchard and lying of the southeast side thereof containing, by estimation, three acres of ground. To have and to hold the same messuage and lands with th'appurtenances unto the said Elizabeth Balden for and during the term of her natural life. And after the decease of the said Elizabeth, to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten. And for want of such issue, to the aforesaid Thomas, my son, and his heirs for ever. And my will and meaning is that the said Elizabeth shall pay out of the said messuage and lands unto the said Anne, my wife, the sum of forty shillings yearly during the time that the said Anne shall remain a widow, to be paid unto her quarterly at the feasts before mentioned.

91 there were Brissendens in Shipbourne

And the first payment thereof to begin as afore is expressed. Also I give unto the said Elizabeth one cow and the sum of ten pounds in money to be paid unto her within one year next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto my said son Thomas the sum of fifteen pounds in money to be paid unto him within one year next after my decease. **Item:** my will and meaning is that the said Anne, my wife shall, within one whole year next after my decease, build and pay on the lands belonging to the house before bequeathed unto my daughter, that barn which is now in framing and shall well and sufficiently furnish the same. And also, within the same time, build and set up there and furnish one new house of the length of twenty and two feet and of the breadth of seventeen feet meet and sufficient for the workhouse for the elderly. And if the said Anne, my wife, shall fail so to build, set up and furnish the said barn and workhouse within one year as aforesaid, then my will and meaning is that the said Anne shall well and truly pay unto the said Elizabeth, my daughter, the sum of fifty pounds in money within one month next after ?? one year next after my decease to the intent that the said Elizabeth may thereby build the same barn and workhouse. And lastly my will and meaning is that the said Anne, my wife shall have her dwelling in the house in which I now dwell during the continuance of the lease if she so long remain a widow. And that my said daughters, Alice and Elizabeth, shall like wise remain and

104 dwell in the same house until they shalbe married or can better provide
105 for themselves. And all the residue of my goods and chattels whatsoever
106 not formerly bequeathed, my debts and legacies being paid and funeral
107 expenses discharged, I wholly give and bequeath unto my wellbeloved
wife
108 Anne, whom I make and ordain whole executrix of this my last will and
109 testament. And I do hereby revoke all former wills. In witness
110 whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal and published
111 the same to be my will, containing five sheets of paper, the day and year
first above written

Sealed, subscribed and published

in the presence of **Arthur Balden**⁹²

Geor: Segars⁹³

Robert Bright, his mark **Thomas Bright**, his⁹⁴

92 a shaky but definite signature

93 underlined and with a small but characteristic mark at the end; probably the writer of the will

94 top and left-hand side of a square

Thomas Balden, 1630

The will of 1630 is nuncupative and Thomas is definitely the son of William of Wrotham since they both mention John Blithe and Elizabeth married to Edward Bassett. Thomas died only six years after his father and he and his wife Susan had no living children although Susan might have been "with child". Thomas, a fuller like his uncle, Arthur Balden, had moved back from Wrotham to West Peckham.

There were Baldens in Ightham in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century but there is no obvious connection between them and the fullers of Wrotham and West Peckham in the seventeenth century.

Will of Thomas Balden of West Peckham

written 18th November 1630; proved 7th February 1631

transcript from probate copy

- 1 Thomas Balden of West Peckham in the
- 2 county of Kent, **fuller**, died the 18th November 1630 who a little before his
- 3 death, being in perfect mind and memory, made his will nuncupative as followeth: ordained

4 that **Susan, his wife**, should have that she brought and half of the residue
of his estate,
5 his debts and legacies being first paid and funeral discharged. That if his
wife be with child, then that child to have the other half of the estate to be
paid, if it be a son at the
6 age of 20 years, if a daughter, at the age of 18 years and that his wife
should have the
7 benefit of such child's portion, during the minority of the same, for and
towards its bringing
8 up. That in case his wife be not with child or, being with child it if it die
before the age
9 aforesaid, then such child's part and portion shall go and remain to the
now children of
10 **his sister Elizabeth, now wife of Edward Bassett**, which shalbe then living,
to be equally
11 divide between them. And that their parents shall have the benefit and
use also
12 coming and arising by the said portions, for and towards their education
during their
13 nonage. And if any the said children shall happen to die before their full
age of 21
14 years, then the part and portion of the child and children so dying shalbe
equally

15 divided amongst such children as shall survive. Gives to the said **Edward**
16 **Bassett**
17 the lease of the fulling mill and the lands there with all leets which he hath
18 from **Thomas Stanley, gent.**, provided always that if the said Edward
19 Bassett shall die within
20 seven years, then the said lease shall go and remain unto **John Blithe, son**
21 **of**
22 **Katherine, late wife of William Balden, the testator's father**⁹⁵, he paying the
23 widow,
24 now wife of the said Edward Bassett, the sum of fifteen pounds. That if his
25 said
26 wife be not with child or, being with child, if it die before she shall marry
27 again, then
28 his said wife shall have the benefit and profit of the testator's whole estate
29 during
30 her widowhood⁹⁶ and, from the time of her marriage again, a moiety thereof
31 to go to

95 Since Thomas describes Katherine as the wife of his late father rather than as his mother, perhaps Katherine was William's second wife

96 this seems to contradict the earlier part of the will if his wife is not with child

24 the children of the said Edward Bassett in manner and form aforesaid
ordained. And makes his
25 **wellbeloved friend and landlord, Thomas Stanley, gent.** his sole executor
and gives him as a
26 token of his love and pains twenty shillings. Gives to the said John Blithe
five pounds, to
27 **Katherine, daughter of Samuel Prior,** one pound. To his servants, viz:
William Harry,
28 **Roger Shimming, Richard Smith, Francis Taylor,** a maid and a boy, five
shillings
29 a piece, one pound five shillings⁹⁷. To **Mr. Draynor,** for a sermon at his
burial, ten
30 shillings. To the poor of the parish of West Peckham, ten shillings.
Published and
31 declared in the presence of: the mark of **Susan**
32 **Balden,** the mark of **James Swinham,**
33 **Henry Tench, John Blithe,** the mark of **William Sony**
34 the mark of **Roger Shimmings**

The Barres of Seal

Two Barre wills have survived for Seal:

	written	buried	
James Barre #506 ⁹⁸	28 Jan 1575	14 Jun 1577	CKS: Drb/Pw 11; Drb/Pwr 15.69 page b.124
Stephen Barre	#350 1 Jul 1626	2 Jul 1626	PCC will: 102 Hele; Prob.11/149 page b.130

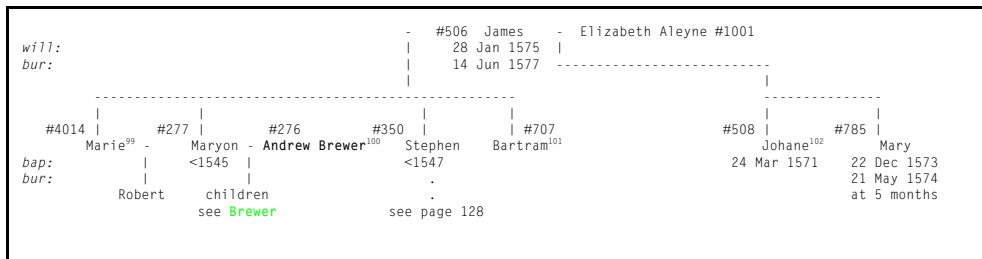
Other surviving Barre wills are for people based in High Halstow and Rochester and unlikely to be connected with the Barres of Seal.

James's will was written by Nicholas Hooper, the curate of Shipbourne, and that of his son, Stephen, by Nicholas's son, John Hooper; the Hoopers wrote many of the wills which have survived for the Tonbridge/Shipbourne/Seal area.

Details of the Seal Barres can be assembled from the parish register and their wills.

98 # indicates reference number in Seal database

James Barre, husbandman



James, with a daughter who married in 1569, must have been born about 1520 and was about fifty when he married his second wife, Elizabeth Aleyne on 10th

99 Marie was not married - see will of James

100 Maryon married Andrew Brewer (#276) on 18th July 1569 (she was his second wife) and was therefore most probably born in the 1540s implying that her father, James, was born about 1520 and was approaching seventy when he died.

101 There is no mention of a Bartram Barre in the parish records; it is just possible that he could have been a child of the second marriage, born between Johane and Mary.

102 a Johane Barry married **John Hills** on 31st October 1585; if Johane Barry was this Johane, she was only 14½ which seems most unlikely; Johane, wife of John Hills, died in 1588.

June 1570 in Ightham¹⁰³. He left his messuage and land for a period of fifteen years to his two unmarried daughters, Marie, a daughter of his first marriage since she had a son in 1574, and Johane, born nine months after his second marriage. When he wrote his will, Johane was nearly three so that he was, in effect, allocating half the rent from this land to the upkeep of his youngest daughter until she was eighteen and thus of an age when she could be expected to be independent. At the end of this period, the messuage and land was to be divided between his two sons, Stephen and Bartram. Bartram is known only from his father's will.

John Morley, a child from London nursed at James Barre's, was buried 15th April 1574, five weeks before James's youngest daughter, Mary. Was Elizabeth feeding John Morley as well as Mary and, if so, did they both die from lack of nourishment? or a shared infection?

James Barre witnessed the will of **John Christopher (#2376)** in August 1574.

103

there were a number of Allen families in Ightham but it has not been possible to identify Elizabeth. Elizabeth Barre, widow, married John Stevens (#1000) on 22nd September 1578 but no children were recorded for her second marriage.

1 In the name of god Amen. The 28th day of January
2 in the year of our lord god a thousand five hundred, seventy and four and in
the seventeenth year
3 of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth, the Queens majesty.
4 I, James Barre of Seal in the County of Kent, **husbandman**,
5 being sick of body but yet of perfect mind and Remembrance, Lauded
6 therefore be given almighty god, do ordain and make this my present
testament
7 and last will in manner and form following. And **First** and principally
8 I give/commend¹⁰⁴ and bequeath my soul to almighty god, my only
9 saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and my body to be
10 buried in the churchyard of Seal aforesaid. **Item:** I bequeath
11 to the box or chest of the poor at the parish church of Seal aforesaid
12 4d. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Robert**, the son of my
13 **Daughter Marie** one lamb. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Henry**¹⁰⁵

104 as written in original

105 Maryan Barre married Andrew Brewer July 1569 and they had a son, Henry, baptised February 1570 and therefore conceived before the marriage.

14 **Brewer**, son of **Brewer my son-in-law** one lamb.
15 **Item:** I give and bequeath to that child of **Stephen Barre**¹⁰⁶ which his wife
16 now goeth with one lamb (if it please god that
17 it lives). **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Stephen Barre**
18 and **Bartram Barre, my sons**, to either of them one
19 whether sheep. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Marion Brewer,**
20 **my daughter, the wife of Andrew Brewer,**
21 one twelve monthling white bullock.

22 The residue of all my goods and chattels not
23 before willed and bequeathed, I wholly and fully give and bequeath
24 to **Elizabeth**¹⁰⁷, **my wife**, during and so long as
25 she shall remain sole and unmarried whom I do
26 confidently ordain and make my whole and sole
27 executor. And if it shall fortune
28 her at any time after my death
29 to marry that then I will the one

106 James wrote his will in January 1574/5; John, son of Stephen Barre, was baptised, in Ightham, on 12th April 1575 and would therefore have been the child expected; unfortunately he lived less than two weeks. By the time James died, in June 1577, Stephen and his wife had had a daughter but she was not mentioned in her father's will in 1626.

107 James Barre married Elizabeth Aleyne, in Ightham, on 10 June 1570; Stephen, Bartram and his daughters, Marie and Maryon, must have been children of a first marriage

30 half of all my said goods and chattels
31 to be equally divided between
32 **my two daughters, Johane Barre and Marie**
33 **Barre**¹⁰⁸ at the discretion of my overseers hereafter named.
35 And, if it fortune any of my said daughters do decease,
36 then I will the same half of my said goods to the outliver of them.

- **Item:** I do confidently ordain and make
- **William Pynden and William Christopher**¹⁰⁹
- overseers of this present testament and last will.

- This is the last will and testament of the said James Barre made and declared the day and year above written, concerning all my land and tenements set, lying and being in Seal aforesaid. **Item:** I will and bequeath all that messuage or tenement, garden and parcel of land or orchard thereto adjourning it, by estimation one acre, with all singular

108 baptised 24 March 1571. Marie did not marry but her father leaves Robert, her son, a lamb; she must have been at least fifteen, probably about twenty, years older than her half-sister Johane.

109 #22 and #251

th'appurtenances now in the tenancy or occupation of **John Hutchen**, Shoreman¹¹⁰, to my said two daughters Johane and Marie . . . during the term and space of fifteen years next ensuing the date hereof. And, after the end and expiration of the said term of fifteen years, I wholly and fully give and bequeath the said land . . . to the said Stephen Barre and Bartram Barre and to their heirs for ever.

In witness whereof, I the said James Barre to this my present testament and last will have set my Seal the day and year aforesaid. In the presence of **William Pynden**, **William Christopher**¹¹¹, **Nicolas Hooper** with others.

110 is this *of Shoreham*? It could be John Hutchen (#435) who had a child baptised in Ightham in 1573 and others in Seal in the 1580s

111 Stephen Barre witnessed the will of William Christopher (#251) in October 1592

Stephen Barre, husbandman

```

mar:          7 Oct 1566          5 Nov 1571
          #280          #281          #4039
        John Fuller - Mary Allingham - Stephen Barre - Alice
will:
bur:         20 Nov 1570       9 Mar 1610       |       1 Jul 1626
                                         |       2 Jul 1626
-----
#3831 | #3832 | #943 | #1156 | #1322 | #1295
      John  The112 Richard - James Margery113 - Robert Gardner
bap: 12 Apr 1575(I) 17 Mar 1577(I) 21 Feb 1580 | 20 May 1582 12 Dec 1585 |
bur: 25 Apr 1575(I) |
-----
#4040 | #3695 | #3696 | #4041 | #2199 |
      Stephen114 Thomas Jacob James Clemence Alice
bap:          11 Mar 1610  1 Mar 1612  2 Oct 1612
bur:          22 Mar 1612  4 Oct 1612

```

Stephen Barre of Great Peckham married **Mary Fuller, widow**, in Seal on 5th November 1571 but their first two children were baptised in Ightham. Mary Allingham had married **John Fuller**, in Seal, on 7th October 1566 but he died in November 1570 without any children being recorded. Presumably James's son

- 112 three months later, also in Ightham, John Swan's daughter was baptised "The"
- 113 Margery married on 5th October 1611 when she was 25. The baptism of Alice was not recorded in Seal; since
"Alice" was not a name which occurred in either the Barre or Gardner families, was she named for her step-
grandmother?
- 114 This Stephen, #350's godson and grandchild, was appointed executor of #350's will in 1626; occasionally
someone underage was appointed executor but, since Richard, his father, was born in 1580, he could have been
born in 1605.

worked in Great Peckham (about 10 miles from Seal) but, on his marriage, set up house in Ightham. Mary died in 1610 and Stephen married again, at over sixty since, when he wrote his will, his wife was Alice. When he died, he was about eighty.

Stephen left his messuage and premises to his grandson, Stephen (#4040), whom he made his executor, with his other two grandsons (Thomas and James) becoming his heirs if Stephen died without any male heirs. But his wife Alice was to have during her widowhood "[his house and the garden and little close only thereto adjoining so far as my said overseers have been shown and know that I have meant it to her and no further](#)" in recompense to "[her right of dower or jointure in or to the premises](#)". Alice could have been much younger than her husband so the young Stephen may have had a long wait before he could enjoy all his inheritance.

A **Richard Barre** was buried, in Seal, on 12th March 1612. This could not have been Stephens's son since Stephen had a grandson James, younger than Thomas who could not have been conceived before the late spring of 1612 since Jacob, son of Richard Barre, was baptised on 1st March 1612 and buried three weeks later. Stephen refers to his son Richard in his will without adding "deceased" although only as the father of his grandchildren.

- 1 In the name of god Amen. I, Stephen Barre of Seal in
2 in the county of Kent, **husbandman**, do ordain and make this my last will
and testament in
3 manner and form following: **First:** recommending my soul to god and my
body to the earth.
4 I will to **Alice Gardner, my grandchild**, my cauldron. To **Alice, my loving**
wife, all those
5 goods and household stuff which she brought with her unto me and are
now left. **Item:** I will
6 to **Thomas Barre and James Barre, my two grandchildren, sons of Richard**
Barre, my
7 **son**, the sum of five pounds a piece to be paid them by my executor at their
several ages
8 of twenty and one years. And if either of them die before, the survivor to
have the whole.
- 9 The residue of the goods and chattels of me the said Stephen Barre, I will
and give

10 unto **Stephen Barre**, my godson, son of the said Richard, my son, which
Stephen I make and
11 ordain the sole executor of this my testament and last will. And I devise
my good friends,
12 **Peter Stevens**¹¹⁵ and **Edward Coates**¹¹⁶ to be overseers that the same may
take effect accor=
13 ding to my mind and true meaning. And I give them for their pains ten
groats¹¹⁷ a
14 piece. This is also my last will touching the disposition of the **house called**
Mulhouse
15 wherein I now dwell and the barn, close, garden and orchard or backside
with thappurtenances
16 thereto belonging, situated, lying and being at **Soane**¹¹⁸ **Street** in Seal
above written

115 there were Stevens in Seal but no Peter was recorded

116 Edward Coates (#3982) was 33 in the summer of 1626 and, at that time, had one son - see *coatesw.will*

117 a groat was a silver coin worth four pence so that each was to get 40d; it is most unusual to find bequests quoted in this form

118 "Stone"?

17 All the which messuage or tenement and premises I will, give and devise
to the said Stephen
18 Barre, my godson, and to heirs male of his body lawfully to be begotten, for
ever. And
19 for want of such issue, to the said Thomas Barre, his brother, and to the
heirs male
20 of his body lawfully to be begotten. And for want of such issue to James
Barre aforesaid,
21 their brother, and to his heirs and assigns for ever. notwithstanding, my
will is that
22 the said Alice, my wife, (for to recompense her right of dower or jointure in
or to the
23 premises) shall or may hold, during her widowhood after my death, my said
house and
24 the garden and little close only thereto adjoining so far as my said
overseers have
25 been shown and know that I have meant it to her and no further. In
witness whereof
26 I have, to this my testament and last will set my hand and seal yeven¹¹⁹ the
said first
27 day of July in the second year of the reign of our sovereign lord, Charles, by

119 "given"

28 the grace of god, king of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender
of the
29 faith. signed **Stephen Barre**. Read, sealed, published and declared in the
presence of

Peter Stevens, Edward Coates and John Hooper, sen.

The Bartons of West Kent

The Bartons of West Kent seem to be concentrated in Hadlow and East Peckham which are adjacent parishes. Transcripts have been made of eleven of the fifteen Barton wills which have survived for these villages. The parish registers for Hadlow and East Peckham have not been investigated. Although there are connections between the Hadlow and East Peckham Bartons these are not obvious and their details are given in two separate sections.

John Barton of Hadlow in 1600 does not state his position or occupation but all the other Hadlow and East Peckham testators were yeomen and comparatively rich from the land and possessions left in their wills.

The will of Richard Barton of Seal, written in 1497, has survived. but Bartons appear in the Seal registers and details of these, together with Richard's will, are given in **Bartons of Seal**. There seems to be no connection between the Seal Bartons and those whose wills are given here but Anthony Barton left twenty shillings to the poor of Seal in 1624..

In 1609 **Mr. Thomas Barton of Hadlow** was left twenty shillings by Richard Barton of Holborn, London. There were a large number of Thomas Bartons in Hadlow so

that it is impossible to identify "Mr. Thomas". Richard Barton's will, which was written in London (PCC: Dorset 58), is very long and only the first few lines have been transcribed. Members of the **Death family** appear to be the main heirs. **Mr. Francis Barton of Canterbury** was also mentioned as were "quit rents due to the manor of **Lamporte** for my lands in **Tonbridge and Bidborough**". Other locations included are the **Isle of Thanet** and premises in **Dartford**.

Will of Richard Barton of Holborn, London

proved 1609

extract from probate copy

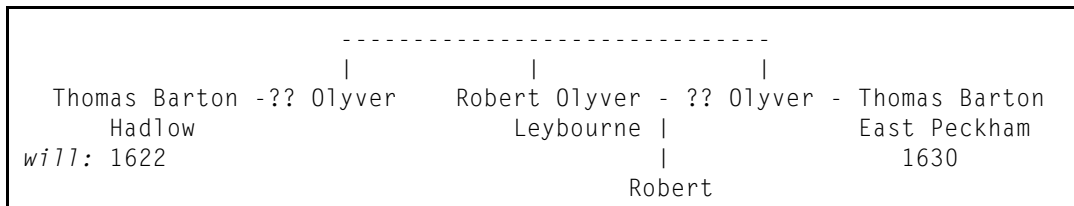
1 In the name of god Amen. I, Richard Barton, of
2 **Staple Inn** in the parish of **St. Andrew in Holborn** in the suburbs of the city
3 of London, gentleman, being both in health of body and in good and
perfect memory (god
4 be dutifully thanked for it) make this my last will and testament in manner
and form
5 following, that is to say, **First:** I most humbly commit soul to Almighty god
6 beseeching him, likewise of his infinite goodness and mercy and for his
only son's sake,

- 7 to pardon and accept the same. And I revoke and make void all and
singular former
8 wills and testaments.

The Brothers Thomas

Thomas Barton of the Steyer (or Street) of Hadlow appointed two overseers. One was Robert Olyver of Leybourne who was referred to as Thomas's brother-in-law. This gives the lefthand portion of the following tree. By 1622 Thomas was married to Margaret Knight but his first wife (and mother of his children) could have been a sister of Robert Olyver.

The second overseer was "[his loving brother Thomas Barton of East Peckham](#)". Were there two brothers, both called Thomas?



In 1632, Thomas Barton of East Peckham appointed as his overseers his “[loving brother Mr. Robert Olyver of Leybourne](#)” and his “[kinsman Mr. Robert Olyver, his son](#)”. Obviously the testators are two separate men; was Thomas of East Peckham married to another sister of Robert Olyver? This Thomas does not mention a wife (she probably died before him) so we do not know even her first name.

The Olyvers of Leybourne (which is about seven miles north-east of Hadlow) for which details are available are much earlier than these Bartons.

Neither Thomas mentions other Bartons by whom they could be placed in a larger family. Since Thomas of Hadlow had married children he was probably born about 1570. Thomas of East Peckham could have been born a little later but not later than 1580. This makes them of the same generation as the Thomas who wrote his will in 1613. Perhaps John, the elder, had a brother with two sons called Thomas.

The Bartons of Hadlow

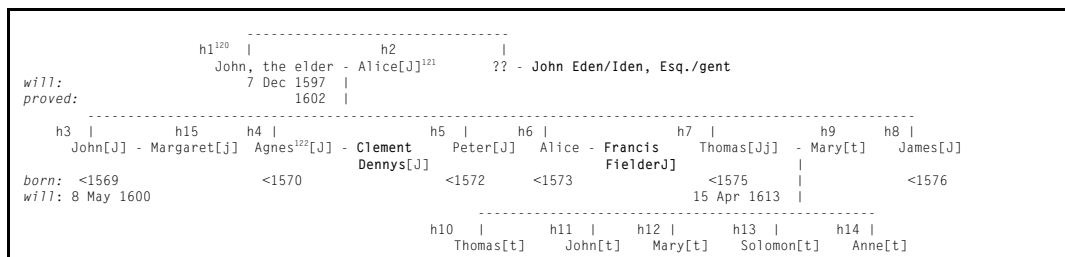
will	dated	proved	
Barton John a		1530	CKS: Drb/Pwr 8.246
Barton John, senior		1559	CKS: Drb/Pwr 12.149(1); Drb/Pw 4
Barton Thomas		1595	CKS: Drb/Pwr 18.394; Drb/Pw 17
for an extract from this will, written by Thomas Tuttesham, see More Families & Transcripts			
John Barton, th' elder	7 Sep 1597	1602	CKS: Drb/Pwr 19I.243; Drb/Pw 19 page b.143
John Barton	8 May 1600	1600	PCC: Wallop 42 page b.155
Thomas Barton	15 Apr 1613		CKS: Drb/Pwr 20.557; Drb/Pw 23 page b.160
Thomas Barton	12 Aug 1622	1622	PCC: Savile 81 page b.170
John Barton	26 Nov 1628	1629	PCC: Ridley 102 page b.187

Only the five from John Barton, the elder, onwards have been transcribed.

Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne who wrote a large number of wills between 1578 and 1616 wrote that of John Barton, the elder whilst Thomas Barton's will of 1613 was written by Robert Hooper. Thomas Barton's will of 1622 was written by John Hooper, Nicholas's son and a notary public.

John, the elder, and his sons, John and Thomas

The John Barton whose will of May 1600 has survived was probably John senior's son; he mentions a brother Thomas and he could have been the Thomas whose will of 1613 has survived. On this assumptions, a family tree can be assembled:



It is possible, from the dates that they were proved, that John, the elder, outlived his son although this is unlikely since if John, the elder, had been alive in 1600 when the younger John wrote his will. he would probably have mentioned his

¹²⁰ "h" indicates a reference in the Hadlow database

¹²¹ [J] indicates mentioned by John in 1597, [j] by John in 1600 and [t] by Thomas in 1613

¹²² It is not known where the daughters "fit in" between the four sons.

father in his will. The testator of 1600 had an uncle, John Iden or Eden so that, either a sister of John the elder married John Iden or his mother was an Iden with a brother John.

The Thomas Barton of Hadlow whose will of 1622 had married children when he wrote his will. It is unlikely that he was the son of John the elder rather than the Thomas who died in 1613.

The Bequests of John, the elder

The testator of 1597, left a large number of items to his wife and children; these are listed in the following table:

<i>John's Bequests</i>	A ¹²³	Jo	P	T	Ja	Ag	Al	Total
bedstead, joined, with painted testor	1							1

bed: featherbed	1	1						2
trundlebed	1							1
flockbed			1		1			2
bolster	1	1	1		1			4
pillow	2							2
blanket	3	1	1		1			6
sheets:								
the better sort		1	1	1	1	1	1	6
of the coarser sort		1	1	1	1			4
pight			1		1			2
coverlet	1							1
long tablecloth						1	1	2
pewter platter/dish		2	2	2	2			8
cauldron	1							1
brass pot	1							1
brass kettle			1					1
brass spit	1							1
stupnett	2	1			1			4
iron dripping pan	1							1

wort tub	1							1
kelars	2							2
milk bowls	6							6
firkins	2							2
gridiron	1							1
cobiron	1							1
frying pan	1							1
cupboard	1							1
grate for bread	1							1
table	1							1
joined					1			1
chest	4		1					5
of walnut tree		1						1
sheep					1			1
chair: turned	1	1			1			3
wicker	1							1
forms	2							2

1 In the name of god Amen. The seventh day of September
2 in the year of our lord God one thousand, five hundredth, four score and
3 seventeen.. And in the nine and thirtieth year of the Reign of our Sovereign
4 Lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France and
Ireland,
5 defender of the faith. I, John Barton, the elder, of Hadlow in the
6 county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at the time of making hereof in good and
perfect health,
7 as well of body as of mind, thanks therefore be given to Almighty God,
notwithstanding
8 aged and full of debilities and infirmities¹²⁴ and thereby, as also by the
example of sudden
9 death happening many times extraordinarily to many, put in mind of my
last end and
10 the brittleness of man's life, Do therefore make this my present testament
and

124 from the date of probate, however, it looks as if he lived for another four years

11 last will and testament¹²⁵ in manner and form following, that is to say,
12 **First**
13 and principally I give, commend and bequeath my soul into the hands of
14 Almighty
15 God, my maker, and to his dear son, Jesus Christ, my alone Saviour and
16 Redeemer
17 by whose merit, precious death and blood shedding I trust only to be
18 saved. And
19 my body to the earth to be buried in the churchyard of Hadlow aforesaid
20 with
21 assurance of the resurrection to eternal life. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
22 twenty
23 of the poorest people within the parish of Hadlow aforesaid, to be
24 distributed and paid to them at the discretion of mine executor hereafter
25 named, within one
26 month next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Alice, my**
27 **wellbeloved**
28 **wife**, my second featherbed, second bolster, two pillows, three blankets,
29 one coverlet,
30 All my linen whatsoever unbequeathed in this my will, all my pewter
31 likewise unbequeathed

22 my little cauldron with one iron wringle?, one brass pot, one brass
stupnett? with an Iron leg, my
23 little spit¹²⁶ and other little Stupnett, my little Iron dripping pan and my
wort tub,
24 two little Keilars?, six milk bowls, two virkins¹²⁷, my cupboard in the
buttery, my best
25 grate for bread, my little table standing in the chimney loft, four chests, my
joined
26 bedstead with the painted testor on him¹²⁸ which standeth in the chimney
loft, one
27 trundlebed, my little turned chair, my close wicker chair, my gridiron, my
little cobiron,
28 a little frying pan and two little forms. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my**
eldest son,
29 **John Barton**, my little featherbed with the bolster unto it, one blanket, one
pair of

126 spelt "Spytt"

127 firkins

128 it?

30 sheets of the better sort, one other pair of the coarser sort, one pewter
platter, one
31 pewter dish, one chest of walnut tree, my best Stupnett saving one and one
turned chair. **Item:**
32 I give and bequeath to **Peter Barton, my second son**, one flock bed with a
bolster,
33 one blanket, one pair of sheets of the best sort, one pair of the coarser sort,
one
34 pewter dish, one Pewter Platter, one little brass kettle, my best chest
standing in
35 the west chamber of my house and one pight? sheet. **Item:** I give and
bequeath to
36 **James Barton, my youngest son**, one flockbed, one Bolster, one Blanket, a
pight sheet,
37 one pair of sheets of the better sort, one pair of the coarser sort, one pewter
platter,
38 one pewter dish, my sheep chest, one turned chair, my best stupnett, my
joined table
39 that standeth in the kitchen and my best Cloak. And all the rest of my
apparel
40 I will shalbe distributed and equally divided between my sons, Peter and
John.

41 **Item:** I will and bequeath to **my third son, Thomas Barton**, one pair of
42 sheets
43 of the better sort, an other pair of the coarser sort, one pewter dish and one
44 pewter platter.
45 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Agnes, my daughter, wife of Clement Dennys**,
46 And to **Alice, my daughter,**
47 **wife of Frances Fielder**, to either of them, one pair of my best sheets and
48 one long tablecloth.

45 The residue of all my goods and Cattells, leases and Chattels and all other
46 my
47 moveable goods whatsoever unbequeathed, my debts paid, legacies and
48 funeral discharged, I
49 wholly, fully and with good effect, intent and purpose, give and bequeath
50 unto the said
51 **Thomas Barton, my son**, which Thomas, my son, I make and ordain my
52 whole and
53 sole executor of this my will, to see the same proven, my debts paid and
54 funeral
55 discharged. Saving, I will that my said son Thomas, his executors,
56 administrators
57 or assigns, shall well and truly pay, or cause to be paid, unto the said Alice,
58 my wife,

52 or her assigns, the sum of twenty shillings a year, quarterly, to be paid out
of
53 Certain parcels of land called **Cylbardes** which I hold of **Thomas Polhill of**
Ightham
54 and his wife for certain years yet enduring if the said Thomas, my son, or
his executors,
55 shall so long quietly enjoy the same. Provided always, that if my said wife
shall refuse
56 to enter bond or else to give her faithful promise unto my said son Thomas,
presently
57 after my decease and before the delivery of the goods aforesaid to her
given, that she
58 will refuse the custom of the country and accept and take the benefit of
this my will,
59 Then I will that she shall have no part of the goods and Annual portion to
her afore
60 willed. And then I will all the said portion and goods to my said son
Thomas

61 This is the last will of me, the said John Barton, the elder, made and
62 declared the day and year first above written Concerning the order and
disposition

63 of my messuage wherein I now dwell and all other my lands and
tenements whatsoever
64 in Hadlow aforesaid. **Item:** I will, give and bequeath unto Thomas Barton,
65 my son, All that my messuage wherein the said Thomas and I together
66 now dwell, situated in **Hadlow trete?** in Hadlow aforesaid, one kitchen, one
barn,
67 one stable and hayhouse, one close, one garden, one orchard and one
parcel of land
68 adjoining called **Milland** thereto adjoining, containing, by estimation, two
acres whether
69 more or less, together situated lying and being in Hadlow aforesaid, One
other parcel
70 of land or meadow called **Callett meade** or by what other name it be called
containing,
71 by estimation, two acres whether more or less, lying and being in Hadlow
aforesaid.
72 Also One parcel of land called **Kytescross** or by what other name or names
it be called, by
73 estimation two acres and two day works, whether more or less, to the said
messuage also belonging,
74 lying and being in Hadlow aforesaid. And also Three other parcels of Land
and meadow

75 called the **Brook** with a little hopgarden adjoining, containing, in the
76 whole, by estimation
77 six acres whether more or less thereof to the said messuage also belonging,
78 together lying and being in Hadlow aforesaid. To have and to hold all the
79 said
80 messuage, kitchen, barn, hayhouse and stable, close, garden, orchard and
81 parcel
82 of land adjoining and the said five other parcels of land and meadow with
83 the said hopgarden
84 and all and every other the premises with all and singular thappurtenances
85 unto the said Thomas
86 Barton, my son, his heirs and assigns, to the only use and behoof of the
87 said Thomas
88 Barton, my son, his heirs and assigns, forever. **Notwithstanding** my
89 very will and mind is that my said wife shall have, and use at her will and
90 pleasure, two upper chambers, parcel of my said mansion house, one
91 called the chimney chamber
92 and the other adjoining, also one lower room called the Buttery with free
93 liberty to
94 come and go to and from the same at her will and pleasure for her own self
95 and also
96 fire room in the house of my said mansion house at all times, at her will
97 and pleasure

88 during the whole term of her natural life if she keep herself so long a
widow. And,
89 if she happen to marry again, then I will she shall loose the benefits of the
90 gifts aforesaid. **Further** I will that my said son Thomas, his heirs or assigns,
91 shall well and truly pay out of my said messuage and lands before to him
willed
92 unto the said Alice, my wife, or her assigns, One Annuity or yearly rent of
three
93 pounds of lawful money issuing and going out of all the said lands and
tenements
94 before to him willed. To have and to hold the said Annuity of £3 out of the
said land
95 and tenements unto the said Alice, my wife, and her assigns, during her
natural life
96 at Michaelmas, Christmas, Annunciation and Midsummer, by equal
portions, the first
97 payment thereof to begin at that feast of the feasts aforesaid which shall
next come and
98 be next after my decease. Also I will and give unto my said three sons,
99 **John Barton, Peter Barton and James Barton**, to every of them, one
100 Annuity or Annual rent of twenty shillings a piece of good and lawful
money

101 issuing and going also of all my said lands and tenements, To have and to
hold all
102 the said Annuity of 20s a piece unto my said three sons, severally, their
heirs
103 and assigns, to the only use and behoof of the said John, Peter and James
Barton,
104 my sons, his and their heirs and assigns forever at the feasts of
Th'annunciation of
105 the blessed virgin mary and Saint Michael Th'archangel to be paid. And
the
106 first payment thereof to begin at that feast of the said two feasts which
shall next come
107 and be next after my decease. And I further will that, if the said Annuity
108 of Three pounds, given to my said wife, Or the said Annuities of 20s or
either of them
109 given to my said sons, or any part or parcel thereof, happen to be behind,
unpaid, after
110 one of the feasts aforesaid (according to the several limitations aforesaid)
by the space of
111 Twenty¹²⁹ days, That then, and at any time after, it shall and may be lawful
unto

129 "fourteen" crossed out and replaced with twenty

112 the said Alice, my wife, and her assigns, and John, Peter and James, my
sons, their
113 heirs and assigns (according to their several limitations aforesaid) into all
the said messuages
114 or Tenements, Barns, kitchen and all and every other the said parcels of
land and meadow
115 and all and every other the premises withall and singular thappurtenances,
to enter and distrain¹³⁰
116 and the distress or distresses there being taken and found, lefullie¹³¹ from
there to
117 bear, lead, drive and carry away and the same to withhold, impound,
detain and
118 keep until the said several Annuities and every of them and every parcel
thereof, be
119 fully satisfied, contented and paid. **Provided** yet further, that if my said
wife
120 shall not accept of this my said will according to the aforesaid, That then
she

130 spelt "distreign"

131 legally/lawfully?

121 shall not take or receive any benefit of the chambers, revenues or
commodities of my
122 said Tenement, or the said Annuity of £3 or any parcel thereof, in such
manner as is to her before willed any thing herein before mentioned
123 to the contrary notwithstanding. **In witness** whereof I, the said John
Barton,
124 the elder, to this my present last will and Testament have set my hand and
seal
125 in the presence of **Henry Barton** and
126 of me, **Nicolas Hooper, writer hereof** Signed ¹³² John
Barton ??¹³³
Henry Barton¹³⁴
Nicolas Hooper

132 mark

133 servis?

134 name written by Nicolas Hooper

John was married but had no surviving children (if he had had any children at all) and he made his brother, Thomas, his executor. His will is interesting because of the details of his wife's jointure.

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The eighth day of
- 2 May in the year of our lord god one thousand and six hundred. I, John
- 3 Barton, late of Hadlow in the county of Kent, being sick in body but of
- 4 good and perfect remembrance, thanks be unto god, do make and ordain
- 5 this my
- 6 last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say, **First:**
- 7 and before anything, I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my creator,
- 8 trusting
- 9 to be saved by the only merits, death and passion of Jesus Christ, my
- redeemer.
- 8 **Item:** I will to the poor men's chest of the said parish of Hadlow, forty
- shillings
- 9 of lawful money of England, to be paid within one month next after my
- decease.

10 **Item:** I will shalbe bestowed on the most needy poor of the parish of
Hartfield¹³⁵ where
11 I now am, forty shillings in money by discretion of mine overseers to be
paid within
12 one month next after my decease. **Item:** I will unto **Margaret, my wife**, two
13 hundred pounds of lawful money of England to be paid unto her, by my
executor,
14 within six months next after my decease. **Item:** I will unto my said wife all
my
15 linen and one featherbed, the best, and all that belongeth to it, and one
?ase
16 covering, two chests and a great standing chafer of brass, two brass pans,
17 a little and a great, and all her wearing apparel, trunks and other
necessaries presently
18 after my decease. **Item:** I will unto **John Eden, gent.**, mine uncle, one
hundred pounds
19 of lawful money of England to be paid unto him within one whole year next
after
20 decease. To the intent that he, and his, be good and beneficially unto my
poor

135 in East Sussex, between nine and ten miles south-west of Tonbridge

21 kindred for my sake¹³⁶. **Item:** my very will is that, whereas I have enfeofed
one,
22 **Walter Quaffe** and his heirs of all thereto my first messuage, gardens,
orchards
23 and backsides to them belonging, in the several occupations of **Walter**
Quaffe
24 **Katherin** , widow, **Peter Wingate, John** ¹³⁷ and **Thomas Chittenden**,
25 situated and being in Hadlow in my lands lying in **Penshurst** in the
26 county of Kent to the use of Margaret, my wife, by the name of **Margaret**
May. And
27 her assigns during her life for land in the name of her jointure without any
use
28 expressed over¹³⁸. Now so it is that I declare by this my last will that there
is not
29 consideration between my said feoffee and me but that the reversion of the
premises

136 it is most unusual for there to be money (or goods, etc.) left to an uncle but it appears here that John was to use this money for the benefit of poor members of the family.

137 blanks left for the surnames of Katherin and John; presumably this is how the original will was when it was proved, space having been left by the scriptor so that the names could be filled in later but this was never done.

138 Perhaps John had married Margaret May relatively recently with her receiving the benefit of the land as her jointure drawn up before the marriage.

30 is to the use of me and mine heirs. And my very will is that my
31 said wife shall enjoy the said messuages and land contained in my
feoffment
32 indented thereof, dated the sixteenth day of January in the two and fortieth
year¹³⁹
33 of the reign of our sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth, the queen's majesty
that
34 now is, during her life, for her jointure, according to my said feoffment
thereof.
35 And after her decease, I will all the said fine messuages and all the lands
with
36 the appurtenances in the said feoffment contained unto **Thomas Barton,**
my
37 **brother,** to his heirs and assigns forever. And to this intent and use shall
38 my said feoffees and his heirs and assigns, after my decease, without issue
of mine
39 own body, shall stand and be seised and to no other. **Item:** I will unto
Margaret,
40 my wife, all that my lease, interest, term of years and my conveyance
thereof
41 late to me made and conveyed **Master George Rivers, esquire,** and **Francis,**

139 16th January 1600 only four months before the will was written

42 **his wife**, of land in the manor of **Perkins place** and of all lands therein
contained,
43 to have and to hold to my said wife, her executors and assigns for ever
during
44 my years thereof. **Item:** I will all the residue of my goods, chattells and
45 debts, after my debts paid and my legacies of this my present testament
fulfilled
46 and performed, unto Thomas Barton, my brother, whom I make and ordain
executor
47 of this my last will and testament. And overseers thereof I appoint **Robert**
48 **Kipping, the elder, of Brenchley** and **John Harman of Tonbridge** in the
county
49 of Kent, to whom I give for their pains ??¹⁴⁰ to be taken, ten shillings a
piece.
50 In witness whereof have I, the said John Barton, to this my present
testament and
51 last will, to every leaf thereof set my hand and seal the day and year first
above
52 written. John Barton. Read, published, sealed and delivered in the
presence of us

140 word inserted but not decipherable

Will of Thomas Barton of Hadlow

written 15th April 1613

transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. The fifteenth day of April in the eleventh
2 year of the reign of our sovereign lord James, by the grace of God, king
3 of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, etc. And of
4 Scotland the five and fortieth. And in the year of our lord God
5 one thousand, six hundred and thirteen, I, Thomas Barton
6 the elder, of Hadlow in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at the time
7 of making hereof impotent, weak and very sickly, and knowing that
8 I shall change this my mortal life and being altogether ignorant of
9 the time thereof, Therefore I ordain and make this my present

testament and last will in manner and form following, that is to say,
First and principally I commend and bequeath my
soul into the hands of Almighty God, my creator, trusting
by a sure and lively faith which I have in the merits, precious
death and bloodshedding of his dear son, Christ Jesus, my
only saviour and redeemer, that the same shalbe¹⁴¹ presented, pure and
blameless, before the throne of his heavenly majesty at the
general day of judgement. And my body to the earth to be
buried in the churchyard of Hadlow aforesaid. **Item:** I give and
bequeath unto **my friend and loving wife, Mary Barton**, all
and every my moveables and household stuff whatsoever, for and
toward the payment of my debts and bringing up of my children
which Mary I make sole executor¹⁴² of this my will.

This is the last will and testament of me, the said Thomas Barton,
the elder, made and declared the day and year which is written,
concerning the order and disposing of all my lands and tenements
whatsoever and wheresoever. **Item:** whereas I have made, bargained
and price of a parcel of meadow called **Callett meade**, lying in Hadlow

141 "bee" throughout; also "mee" and "hee"

142 "executor" rather than "executrix" is used throughout

28 aforesaid to **John Wakelyn** of the same parish, yeoman, my will and mind
29 is that the within named, Mary, my wife, my said executor, and my
overseers
30 hereafter named, or any two of them¹⁴³, shall confirm and sell the same
parcel of land to the
31 said John Wakelyn at the price agreed upon, if the said John
32 shall and will buy the same, the money whereof I will shalbe employed
33 for and towards the payment of my debts and bringing up of my said
34 children. And I will that if the said John Walklyn shall and
35 do refuse tp buy the same as aforesaid, that then the said Mary,
36 my said executor, and overseers hereafter named, or any two of them, shall
and will within
37 convenient time after my decease sell the said parcel of
38 meadow called Callett¹⁴⁴ meade to any other person or persons whatsoever
39 for and at the most and best price that may be (the money whereof
40 I will shall be employed as aforesaid.) And I do hereby warrant
41 the said parcel of meadow called Callett Meade to the said John
42 Walklyn if he shall buy the same as aforesaid. ?? to every other

143 here, and on lines 36 and 46, this phrase has been inserted so that it looks as if it were a general amendment made at the reading of the will before it was signed by the testor

144 originally written "Charrett"; this seems a strane mistake to make when it was written correctly earlier in the will

43 who shall, by the same his and their heirs, for forever, free and
44 discharged from and against all exdoute? **Item:** my will and mind
45 is further that my said executor afore named and overseers
46 hereafter named, or any two of them, shall within as convenient time as
may be after my decease,
47 sell all those my two parcels of land, one called **Kile croft** being in Hadlow
aforesaid
48 containing, by estimation, two acres more or less, and the other called
Blackmans
49 **Brook**, by estimation six acres more or less, being now three sendalls, being
also in Hadlow aforesaid,
50 or so much thereof as they shall think good, for and at the most and best
51 price that they can or may, the money whereof I will shall be employed as
52 aforesaid. And I do hereby likewise warrant the same, or so
53 much thereof as shalbe sold as aforesaid, to him and them so buying
54 the same, his and their heirs for ever. **Item:** I will and mind is
55 further that the said Mary, my said Wife and executor and her assigns
56 shall have, hold and receive and enjoy all that messuage or tenement
wherein
57 I now dwell withall barns, buildings, closes, yards, orchards, lands,
tenements and
58 hereditaments whatsoever in Hadlow aforesaid and elsewhere, not before
bequeathed, during the natural

59 life of her the said Mary, she paying my debts and bringing up my children
60 as aforesaid. And that, if she the said Mary, my wife, decease before my
61 children be brought up as aforesaid, my will and mind is that my said
62 overseers, hereafter named, shall receive all and every the profits of the
63 same lands and tenements before to my said wife given during the
minority
64 of my children, as well daughters as sons, and to have the education and
government of them.
65 And after the decease of my said wife, I give and bequeath all and every
66 my said messuage or tenement, barns, edifices and buildings, closes,
gardens, orchards,
67 and all other my lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever and
68 wheresoever not before herein set down, to be disposed equally among and
unto
69 **my three sons**, that is to say, **Thomas, John and Solomon**¹⁴⁵, to have
70 and to hold the same and every of the same, unto the said Thomas, John
71 Solomon, his and their heirs (equally) for ever. Provided always, and
72 my will and mind is that they, the said Thomas, John and Solomon, my
73 said sons, shall pay unto **my two daughters, Mary and Anne**, to
74 either of them the sum of ten pounds of lawful money at their ages
75 of one and twenty years, if the said Mary, my wife, shalbe then

145 "Sallomon" here and for Solomon Newman, witness, on line 87

deceased, or otherwise within twelve months next after the decease
of my said wife, if she chance to outlive the said age of 21 years
of my said daughters. And if it shall happen my said daughters
to be unpaid the several portions aforesaid, and in manner as set
down, then my will and mind is that my said daughters, and
either of them, unpaid as aforesaid, shall enter into and upon
the said messuage and premises before given to
my said sons and shall receive and take up, of the issues and
profits of the same until she, and they shall and either of them, shalbe
paid their several portions as aforesaid. And I do make and ordain
my loving friends and neighbours, **Thomas**
Barton of Hadlow and **Solomon Newman** of Hadlow
aforesaid, **butcher**, overseers of this my will, earnestly desiring them
take some pains to see the same performed according to the effect and
true meaning of the same. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my
hand
and seal, dated the day and year first within written and do acknowledge
the same
to be my true and last will.

Read, sealed and acknowledged to be
the true and last will of the said

Thomas Barton in the presence of

Thomas Barton¹⁴⁶

Thomas Barton

Solomon Newman

William Pawley, John Walklyn and

Robert Hooper: witness

the mark of ¹⁴⁷ John Walklyn

146 looks like a signature

147 inverted "V"

Thomas Barton, 1622

In 1604, Richard Barton of East Peckham appointed his “[loving kinsman Thomas Barton of Steyne](#)” to be one of the supervisors and overseers of his will.

The will of Thomas Barton of the Steyer (or Street) of Hadlow, written by John Hooper in 1622, is very complicated and raises a number of questions. One of these concerns the possibility of two brothers, both called Thomas which has already been described (page b.136).

The financial settlement for the marriage of his daughter Mary to James Clarke, junior, was in progress when Thomas wrote his will. Thomas was to pay Mary's husband £100 provided that he and his brother-in-law, Robert Olyver of Leybourne, received the next gift and bestowing of the advowson and presentation of the Rectory and Parsonage of Denton, Sussex, after the death of James's father. James Clarke or his father were to “[espy out some convenient land or meet purchase whereon](#)” the £100 which, after Thomas's death, was to be paid by his executor could be spent. If, one year after he died, the £100 had not been invested, Thomas's executor was to pay Mary an annuity of £6 13s 4d until the money was so “[laid out and bestowed](#)”.

But, if the “[said intended marriage should happen not to be consumated](#)”, Mary was to receive £100 when she married or reached the age of 24 years and another £100 within the following year. In addition, she was to be paid yearly “[towards her maintenance](#)” £6 13s 4d until her marriage or age of twenty-four.

Thomas's eldest daughter was already married and, having been “[preferred](#)” earlier, was now to receive only £5 as “[a token of my love and remembrance towards her and her husband](#)” who was Henry Lea, one of the witnesses to the will. His third daughter, Elizabeth, was to receive £200, in the same way as Mary would if she didn't marry James Clarke, with £5 a year until she received the first £100. (see [Robert White in Families & Transcripts](#) for more details of Henry Lea)

Thomas had married, probably fairly shortly before his death, the widow of John Knight and, as a result of this marriage, he had inherited the wardship and marriage of “[Giles Glidd, the son of and next heir of Thomas Glidd, deceased](#)”. Also, it appears (lines 108-9) that Thomas could have inherited other wardships from his wife's first husband.

Thomas gave the wardship, custody and marriage of Giles Glidd, “[together with the said letters patent . . . granted to the said John Knight](#)” which Thomas then owned to Giles. But Margaret, his wife, was to have “[all the rents, revenues, issues and profits of all and every my lands and tenements and hereditaments of the said Giles Glidd](#)” until he was twenty-one using them for the Giles's education

and bringing up. But there were further complications regarding Margaret's acceptance of the Thomas's terms regarding her jointure and dowry. If she did not accept these, the wardship, etc. was to go to Thomas's son, Thomas.

Much later on in the will there is the phrase "[Margaret, my loving wife, with the said Giles Glidd, her son](#)". Was Giles Margaret's son by a first marriage with her second husband, John Knight, obtaining the wardship as a result of his marriage to Margaret. This implies that Margaret's first husband was rich enough for her son to become a ward. It may be, therefore, that at least some of Thomas's wealth came from his second marriage.

Unusual usages in Thomas's will are the words "[in leu of](#)", "[proviso](#)", "[boarded with](#)", "[diet](#)" (used to mean food, or meals, in general) and "[free recourse into](#)". Whilst many testators give their overseers or supervisors a "token of love over and above any charges to be sustained", Thomas also includes travel as a separate expense.

1 In the name of god Amen: The twelfth day of
2 August in the year of our lord god one thousand six hundred twenty and
3 two and in the twentieth year of the reign of our sovereign Lord James, by
4 the grace of god king of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith
5 etc. And of Scotland the six and fiftieth. I, Thomas Barton of **the Steyer**
6 in Hadlow in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being of good memory and
reasonable
7 good strength of body and being desirous to settle and order that temporall
8 estate which god hath blessed me withall, that no contention may arise
there
9 abouts after my decease, do ordain and make this my testament and last
will
10 in manner and form following: **First** and principally yielding my soul into
the
11 merciful hands of Almighty god, my maker, with an assured hope of
salvation through
12 his mercy in the merit and mediation of his dear son Jesus Christ, my
saviour.

13 And my body to the earth in decent manner to be buried at the discretion
of
14 mine executor hereafter named with an assured hope of a joyful
resurrection
15 to eternal life. **Item:** I will and give to the poor of Hadlow five pounds of
lawful
16 english money to be paid and distributed amongst them in the day of my
burial or shortly
17 after at the discretion of my executor. **Item:** I will and give unto **Giles
Gladish, my servant,**
18 twenty shillings and to every one of my servants I now have besides ten
shillings.
19 And to **Robert Hayes, sometimes my servant,** ten shillings. **Item:** whereas
there is a marriage
20 intended and concluded to be had and solemnised between **James Junior
Clarke** and
21 **Mary, my daughter,** and upon conclusion of this said marriage, I, the said
Thomas Barton,
22 have promised that if the father of the said James shall grant and convey to
me
23 and **Robert Olyver of Leybourne** in the county of Kent, gent., **my brother-in-
law,** the

24 advowson and presentation of the Rectory and Parsonage of **Denton**¹⁴⁸ in
the county
25 of Sussex and the next gift and bestowing thereof after the decease of the
26 father of the said James to such person and persons as to me, the said
Thomas Barton,
27 and to the said Robert Olyver, or either of us, should seem fit to present
them
28 unto, that then I, the said Thomas Barton, shall and will give and pay with
my
29 said daughter, to the said James Junior, one hundred pounds of lawful
english
30 money, Now I, the said Thomas Barton, will and appoint that, if the said
31 advowson of the said Rectory and Parsonage shalbe made to my executor
here
32 after named and the said Robert Olyver in such sort as it was promised it
should
33 be made and conveyed to myself and the said Robert Olyver, that then my
34 executor do pay the said hundred pounds at her day of marriage or accor=
35 ding to the time nominated and concluded upon, upon conference late had
36 touching her said marriage with the said James. And further I will that
37 there be one hundred pounds paid and laid out by my executor upon the

148 between one and two miles inland from Newhaven

38 purchase of lands or some other lively hood and estate to be made and
assured
39 to the said Mary during her natural life and, after her decease, to the issue
40 of her body by the said James, her intended husband, within six months
next
41 ensuing after that the said James, or his said father, shall espy out some
42 convenient land or meet purchase whereon the said £100 may accordingly
be
43 bestowed. And I will that after one year after my decease, if such estate
44 be not made her within the said year, that my executor shall allow and
45 pay yearly to the said Mary, six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence
46 of lawful english money until the said last mentioned hundred pounds
shalbe
47 laid out and bestowed as abovesaid. And if the said intended marriage
shall
48 happen not to be consumated between the said James and Mary, then I
will and give unto
49 her two hundred pounds of lawful english money whereof £100 to be paid
her at her
50 day of marriage or age of 24 years which shall first happen, or within three
months
51 then next ensuing and the other £100 thereof within one year next after
marriage or

52 age aforesaid which shall first happen. And further, I will that she shall be
then also
53 paid and allowed towards her maintenance six pounds thirteen shillings
four
54 pence yearly, and every year, until her said marriage or age which shall
first happen
55 by my executor hereafter named. **Item:** I will and give unto **Elizabeth, my**
other daugh=
56 **ter**, the like sum of two hundred pounds where of one hundred pounds to
be paid
57 her at her age of 24 years or day of marriage which shall first happen or
within one
58 quarter of a year then next ensuing. And the other hundred pounds within
one
59 year next after her said age or marriage which shall first happen with five
pounds
60 per annum¹⁴⁹ towards her maintenance every year until her said age or day
of mar=
61 riage which shall first happen. **Item:** whereas heretofore the ward and
marriage of

149 "per annum" here, "yearly" on line 54 above shows inconsistency within one will and suggests that difference in wording need not necessarily show different authorship

62 **Giles Glidd**, the **son of and next heir of Thomas Glidd**, deceased, was and is
63 gran=
64 ted, by the king's majesty, that now is his letters patent unto **John Knight**,
65 deceased, and to the executors and assigns of the said John Knight, And
66 doth now
67 belong unto me, the said Thomas Barton, by reason of my marriage with
68 **Margaret**,
69 **now my wife**, the relict of the said John Knight, my will and mind is that
70 my ex=
71 ecutor, hereafter named, shall not claim the wardship, custody or marriage
72 of
73 the said Giles Glidd. And therefore I do hereby release and grant unto the
74 said Giles Glidd all and every the wardship, custody and marriage of him
75 the
76 said Giles by me, the said Thomas Barton, mine executor or assigns, by any
77 way or means whatsoever, to be had, holden or enjoyed without any
78 accompt or
79 reckoning or any other thing to be therefore yielded, paid or done to my
80 said ex=
81 cutor or his assigns, together with the said letters patent of his said
82 wardship,
83 custody and marriage granted to the said John Knight and now to me
84 belonging.

75 Notwithstanding, my will and mind is that the said Margaret, my wife,
shall have
76 ??, take up and enjoy all the rents, revenues, issues and profits of all and
77 every my lands and tenements and hereditaments of the said Giles Glidd
until he
78 shall accomplish his full age of twenty and one years, towards the
education
79 and bringing up of him, the said Giles. Provided always and upon this
condition
80 that the said Margaret do accept of twenty pounds per annum, to be paid
81 her during her natural life by mine executor, his heirs and assigns, for and
82 in leu and recompense of such jointure and dower or other estate as I, the
said
83 Thomas Barton have already made to the said Margaret or to any other
further use
84 out of, in or to the lands, tenements and hereditaments of me, the said
Thomas or
85 which she, the said Margaret or any other for her, shall or may have,
receive, recover
86 or obtain in or to all or any or any of my own lands, tenements and
heridatments or in
87 or to any part, member or parcel thereof. And if my said wife, upon
sufficient secu=

88 rity to be made to her by my executor for the payment of the said twenty
pounds
89 to her yearly, and in every year during her natural life, quarterly, by equal
90 portions or within twenty days next ensuing every quarter day, either by a
bond
91 of three hundred pounds to be entered in to by my said executor, with the
said
92 Robert Olyver or by any other sufficient securities and to be to her in due
form
93 of law made, sealed and delivered, shall not release up to my said executor,
his
94 heirs and assigns, and to such other person or persons, to whom I shall
give and
95 devise my said lands, tenements and hereditaments and their heirs, All her
96 right dower estate, jointure, widow's right and demand of, in and be all and
97 every my said lands, tenements and hereditaments by sufficient releases to
be
98 tendered to mine executor, his heirs and assigns, to be sealed, subscribed
and
99 delivered effectually according to law by the said Margaret, then I will that
100 the said gift and grant, as well the said ward ship, custody and marriage of
the
101 said Giles Glidd to the said Giles being willed and granted, as also my will

102 and gift of the rents, revenues, issues and profits of his land being app=
103 pointed to be by her had and received until his age of twenty and one
years,
104 shalbe void and of non effect to the said Giles and Margaret and either of
105 them. And then I give the ward, custody and marriage of the said Giles,
106 and all the issues, rents, services and revenues of all and singular those
lands,
107 tenements and hereditaments unto which the said Giles is next heir after
108 the death of the said **Thomas Glidd, his father**¹⁵⁰ and also all other
wardship
109 and marriage which shall or may . . .¹⁵¹ . belong to me, to the said Thomas
110 by my intermarriage with the said Margaret, my wife, or any otherwise
unto my
111 **son, Thomas Barton**, mine executor hereafter named, his executors and
assig=
112 nes, anything in this my will before mentioned to the contrary thereof in
any
113 wise notwithstanding. **Item:** upon the condition and proviso aforesaid, I do

150 Does mean that Giles's father was still alive? But he was referred to as "deceased" earlier in the will and Giles would have become a ward only on his father's death.

151 film unreadable here

114 give unto the said Margaret, my wife, all such household stuff, linen,
woollen,
115 brass and pewter as she brought with her and was hers when I married
her. And also one
116 nag with all her riding furniture and all her apparel, which nag I
117 will shalbe the same which I have said should be hers and whereon she
usually
118 rideth. **Item:** I will and give to **my daughter Lea**¹⁵² whom I have already
pre=
119 ferred, for a token of my love and remembrance towards her and her
husband,
120 five pounds to be paid her within one year next after my decease. **Item:**
121 if my executor, his executors or assigns shall or may hold and enjoy the
lease
122 of the tithes called the **Stanerward** until the end of the said lease, then
123 I will and give to **John Barton, my youngest son**, one hundred pounds and
to
124 **William Barton, my middle son**, fifty pounds of lawful english
125 money to be paid them at their several ages of twenty and two years if

152 Henry Lea was one of the witnesses to the will so that "Lea" is the married name of this daughter, Henry being her husband

126 they live to accomplish their said several ages. But if the said lease be
disanulled?
127 or encumbered so that it may not be enjoyed in such sort as I now hold and
128 enjoy the same until the end thereof, then I will to my said two sons, John
129 and William only one hundred pounds between them, equally to be
paid
130 the one half to the said William at his age aforesaid if he live to accom=
131 plish that age. And the other half to the said John at his said age, if he
132 live there unto. The residue of all and singular my goods, cattles and
chattels
133 I wholly and fully give and bequeath unto Thomas Barton before named,
my
134 loving son, whom I make and ordain the sole and only executor of this
135 my testament and last will, to see the same proved, my debts and legacies
136 paid and my body decently brought to the earth. And I desire and appoint
137 my loving brother-in-law before named, Mr. Robert Olyver, and my loving
138 **brother Thomas Barton of East Peckham**¹⁵³ to be overseers of this my
testament
139 and last will, that the same may take effect according to my true intent
140 and meaning. And I give to either of them for a token of my love over and
141 above any charges or travail to be sustained about this my will by them,

153 it appears that that Thomas, the testator, had a brother also called Thomas

or either of them, ten shillings of lawful english money. This is also the
last will of me, the said Thomas Barton of the Steyer made and declared
the day and year first above written touching the ordering and disposing of
all my lands, tenements and hereditaments. And first I will, give and
devise
unto John Barton, my youngest son, all that messuage or tenement now
in th'occupation of **Thomas Whitside** with the barn, close, garden, orchard
and three little crofts of land thereto adjoining, now also in th'occupation
of the said Thomas Whitside, containing, by estimation, five acres more or
less.
The which messuage and premises, I will and appoint that the said
Thomas
and **Alice, his wife**, shall or may hold in farm at the yearly rent of forty
shillings as they now do until the said John, my son, shall accomplish his
age of
twenty and one years, if the said Thomas or the said Alice his wife, or
either of
them shall so long live. And also I will, give and devise to the said John,
one croft
of land, by estimation three acres, more or less, being also in Hadlow
aforesaid, now
in th'occupation of **Robert Hayes**. And also all those lands with
thappurtenances lying

157 in **Penshurst** in the said county of Kent, containing twelve acres, more or
less, now
158 in th'occupation of **Thomas Ryvers**. And also all those my land called the
Home
159 **woods** containing, by estimation, also twelve acres, more or less, lying in
Hadlow
160 aforesaid between the lands of **John Wells** on th'one side thereof and the
land
161 late of **Henry Carnell, deceased**, on th'other side thereof. To have and to
hold the
162 said messuage, land and premises unto the said John, my son, his heirs
and assigns,
163 to th'only use and behoof of the said John, his heirs and assigns, forever.
164 **Item:** I will, give and devise to William Barton, my middle son, all those my
165 five messuages or tenements in Hadlow Street aforesaid¹⁵⁴ in the several
166 occupations of **Richard Hodge, Peter Wingate, John Gamow, Richard Ste**
167 **venson and John Goodwyn** or their assigns, with the gardens and
appurtenances
168 to them, and every of them, belonging. And also all those my lands with
th'ap

154 this is definitely "Hadlow Street" here which makes more sense than "the Steyer" but the word in the probate copy on lines 4 and 143 is definitely the latter.

169 purtenances commonly called **Gamons land** which I late bought of **Sir**
Henry
170 **Fane, knight**, containing, by estimation, twenty acres, more or less lying
also in Had
171 low aforesaid and now in th'occupation of **William Pawley**, to have and to
hold
172 the said six messuages, gardens and their appurtenances and the said land
called
173 Gamons land with the appurtenances unto the said William Barton, his
heirs and
174 assigns to the only use and behoof of the said William, his heirs and
assigns
175 for ever, notwithstanding I do will and provide that if the said John, my
son, do
176 die without issue of his body lawfully begotten, that the said messuage and
land
177 formerly to his and his heirs devised shalbe and remain wholly unto the
said
178 William, my son, and his heirs forever. And likewise, if the said William
shall
179 decease without issue of his body lawfully begotten, then I do will and
provide

180 that the said messuages and land formerly to him devised, shall be and
remain
181 unto the said John, my son, and his heirs forever. And yet, nevertheless,
my
182 will and mind is that Thomas Barton, my eldest son before named, shall
183 or may have the use and occupation of the houses and land with th'appurte
184 nances to my said two sons John and William formerly devised until their
185 several ages of twenty and one years toward their education and
maintenance
186 by him, the said Thomas to be brought up until their said ages. **Item:** I
give, will
187 and . . . unto the said Thomas Barton, my son, all that mesuage or
tenement
188 wherein I now dwell and all the barns, outhouses, buildings, closes, yards
189 orchards, lands, meadows, woods and underwoods thereto belonging, lying
in
190 Hadlow aforesaid. And also all other my lands, tenements and
hereditaments
191 with their and every of their appurtenances (not formerly willed to the said
192 John and William, my sons), to have and to hold all the said messuage or
tene
193 ment, barns, outhouses, buildings, closes, yards, orchards, lands,
meadows,

194 woods, underwoods and all other my lands, tenements and hereditaments
not
195 formerly willed to my said sons, John and William, unto the said Thomas
196 Barton, my son, his heirs and assigns, to the only use and behoof of the
said
197 Thomas Barton, my son, his heirs and assigns for ever. Notwithstanding
my
198 will is that Margaret, my loving wife, with the said Giles Glidd, her son¹⁵⁵
199 and one maid servant, shall firstly be boarded and have their diet with the
200 said Thomas Barton, my son, at his charges with meet and convenient
house
201 room in my said dwelling house for them to be appointed them by the
discretion¹⁵⁶
202 of my overseers. And with meet fire and fuel for her necessary burning
203 and spending with free recourse into the garden and ?? free ?? on needful
204 occasions. All which diet, houserom and other commodities I will that my
said wife and her

155 was Giles Margaret's son by a first marriage with her second husband, John Knight, obtaining the wardship as a result of his marriage to Margaret?

156 this is the wording, at least, of the probate copy

205 son and servant (if she think fit to keep one) shall or may hold, use and
enjoy
206 during the space of one whole year next ensuing after the decease of me,
the said
207 Thomas Barton if she, the said Margaret shall so long live and keep herself
my
208 widow. And likewise, if my said son Thomas Barton shall so long keep
house.
209 And further I will that the said Thomas Barton, my son, shall keep
sufficiently
210 one nag for the said Margaret, by her to be provided, during the time that
211 she shall diet with the said Thomas, in my said house, as aforesaid. In
witness whereof
212 I have, to this my testament and last will set my hand and seal yeven the
day
213 and year first above written. Thomas Barton. Sealed, published and
declared
214 in the presence of **Robert Olyver, Thomas Barton, Henry Lea** and
John Hooper, not. pub.

Although this will was written by John Hooper, there was no decoration on the original which consists of 8 sheets but pages 3 onwards are widely spaced.

1 In the name of god Amen. The six and
2 twentieth day of November in the year of our lord god one thousand, six
hundred two and
3 eight. And in the fourth year of the reign of our sovereign lord Charles, by
the grace
4 of god, king of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of the faith,
etc. I, John
5 Barton of the Bourne, in the parish of Hadlow in the county of Kent,
yeoman, being at this
6 time in reasonable good health of body and of good and perfect memory
(praised be god therefore)
7 do ordain and make this my testatment and last will in manner and form
following: **First:**
8 therefore, recommending my soul to Almighty god, my maker, with an
assured hope of salvation

9 through his mercy in the merits and mediation of his dear son, Jesus
Christ, my saviour.
10 And my body to the earth in decent manner to be buried. I will and give to
the poor of Hadlow
11 twenty shillings to be distributed amongst them either in the day of my
burial or within short time
12 afterwards by mine executrix hereafter named or the churchwardens and
overseers of the said
13 parish. **Item:** To everyone of my household servants, both men and
womenkind that shall dwell with me¹⁵⁷
14 at my decease, I will and give five shillings a piece. **Item:** I will and give
unto **Richard Barton, the son**
15 **of my brother Henry Barton,** the sum of ten pounds of lawful and good
english money to be
16 paid to the said Richard, his executors or assigns, by his said father, his
executors or assigns, immediately
17 after the decease of **John Barton, the brother of the said Richard.** And
therefore I do will and appoint
18 that my executrix do and shall pay the said ten pounds unto the said
Henry, my brother, within one

157 "mee"; double "ee" throughout this probate copy which is unusual

19 year next after my decease. And so shalbe discharged thereof against the
said Richard Barton and all
20 others. And my will and desire is that the said Henry Barton, my brother,
his executors and
21 assigns, do and shall put out and employ the said ten pounds so by him
received. And the yearly
22 profit thereof arising and to be made, from time to time, do pay and bestow
upon and towards
23 the means and maintenance of the said John Barton, his son, during the
whole term of the
24 natural life of the said John¹⁵⁸ **Item:** I will and give unto **Stephen Barton,**
my son, the sum of
25 two hundred pounds of lawful and good english money to be paid unto him
by my executrix here=
26 after named at his age of twenty and one years. And if the said Stephen,
my son, shall decease
27 before his age of twenty and one years, then I will the said two hundred
pounds shalbe paid

158 was John expected to die fairly soon. Otherwise it could have been a long time before Richard received the money, his brother having received all the profits to be made from investing the capital Richard was to have eventually. Later on in the will (line 82), in the eventuality of both his sons dying without issue, John leaves all his land etc. to Richard and Henry, the "two sons" of his brother Henry.

28 to **Henry Barton, my son**, his executors or assigns at such time as the said
Stephen ought
29 to have received the same by virtue of this my will (if he had lived). **Item:** I
have and hold,
30 to me and mine heirs, divers houses, lands and tenements by the way of
mortgage whereof the
31 times of some of them for (the redemption thereof) are coming about. And
the times of some
32 other of them, when they should have been redeemed, are past. My will
and mind, notwithstanding
33 ?? that **Helen, my loving wife and executrix** hereafter named, shall have
and receive the
34 monies for such and for many of the said houses, lands or tenements at the
time of the redemption
35 of the same is coming about and shall not be expired at the time of my
decease. And also I will
36 that if payment shall not be tendered unto my said wife at any time after
my decease of the
37 money that ought to have been paid for the redemption of such any or so
many of those houses, lands
38 or tenements as were forfeited unto me before my decease, I say that I will
that my said wife shall

39 also have and receive those moneys and shall and may, upon payment
thereof, deliver up the
40 evidences and writings to me made touching those houses, lands or
tenements so forfeited or any
41 of them. Otherwise, if she, my said wife, shall not in her life time be paid
any such money, I will
42 the said houses, lands and tenements, with their and every of their
appurtenances, to me mortgaged
43 and forfeited and not redeemed according to the purport of this my will,
unto Henry, my son,
44 his heirs and assigns, forever. The residue and all other my goods, cattells,
chattels and
45 debts of what name, nature of ??ide soever, I will and appoint shalbe had,
holden and enjoyed in
46 this manner following: that is to say, by the said Helen, my wife, here
executors and assigns,
47 if that she, the said Helen, shall remain sole and nor marry again after my
decease. But if
48 that the said Helen shall marry again after my decease, then she shall have
and hold my
49 said goods, cattell, chattels and debts and the moneys of the mortgaged
lands, houses and tenements

50 aforesaid which she hath or shall receive by virtue of this my will, only until
her marriage again
51 after my decease. And then I will and give to the said Helen only one third
part of the said goods,
52 cattell, chattels and debts and moneys (in three parts to be divided, valued
and proportioned by my
53 overseers hereafter to be named or one of them). And she to take the first
choice thereof and yet,
54 nevertheless, she¹⁵⁹ shall stand and be charged with all my debts and
legacies because my will and
55 mind is that there shalbe a deduction, consideration and allowance of all
my debts, legacies, several
56 charges and other expenses occasioned by my death for heriot, the feodary,
the probaton of this
57 my will and the like out of my said goods and stock unto my said wife.
And the remainder shifted
58 and laid into three parts whereof my said wife first to have one and the
other two parts
59 thereof, one to be and remain unto **Henry, mine eldest son**, his executors
and assigns and

159 "he" in probate copy but the context shows that the reference is to Helen

60 the other unto the said Stephen, my son, his executors and assigns forever.
And I make and
61 ordain the said Helen, my wife, to be the sole eexecutrix of this my
testament and last will. And
62 I make and desire **my loving kinsman Thomas Barton of the Courtlege in
Hadlow**
63 aforesaid and **my good friend William Pawley, th'elder of the Stryeward in
Hadlow** to be
64 overseers of this my testament and last will, that the same may take effect
according to my
65 mind and meaning therein declared. And I give to either of them, for their
pains herein to be
66 taken, forty shillings over and above their charges thereby occasioned.
This is also the last will of
67 me the said John Barton made and declared the day and year first herein
written touch
68 =ing the ordering, willing and disposing of all my lands and tenements
and hereditaments with
69 th'appurtenances. **Item:** I will, give and devise unto Henry Barton, mine
eldest son, all that
70 messuage or tenement wherein I now dwell. And the housing, barns,
buildings, yards, closes,

71 orchards and lands arable, meadows and pastures with their and every of
their
72 hereditaments and appurtenances to the said messuage or tenement
adjoining containing, by
73 estimation, thirty and five acres together lying or being in Hadlow
aforesaid. And also
74 all other my houses, lands and tenements with their appurtenances,
situated, lying or being in
75 Hadlow, aforesaid. To have and to hold all the said messuage or tenement,
housing, barns,
76 buildings, yards, closes, orchards and lands arable, meadows and pastures
with th'appurtenances
77 thereto belonging and adjoining. And also all other my lands and
tenements in Hadlow
78 aforesaid and all my reversions, remainder, interest and demand of, in and
to all and every the
79 same with their hereditaments and appurtenances unto the said Henry
Barton, my son, and to
80 the heirs of his body lawfully to be begotten. And for default of such issue
unto the said Stephen
81 Barton, my son, and to the heirs of his body lawfully to be begotten and for
lack of such

82 issue, the remainder thereof unto **Richard and Henry, the two sons of my**
83 **brother Henry**
84 **Barton** and to their heirs and assigns forever. Notwithstanding my will is
85 that the said
86 Helen, my wife, shall or may have and hold my said messuage or tenement
87 wherein I now
88 dwell and the housing, lands and appurtenances thereto adjoining,
89 containing, by estimation,
90 five and thirty acres lying together in Hadlow aforesaid with **Newwayfield**
91 during her
92 widowhood next after my decease. She keeping and maintaining all and
every the same, well and
sufficiently repaired during her said widowhood and with committing or
doing any manner
of wilful or negligent strip or waste in or upon the same, or any part thereof
(anything in this
my will contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding). **Item:** I will
give and devise unto
Stephen Barton, my son, all my messuage or tenement, housing, buildings,
yards,
closes, orchards and lands arable, meadows and pastures with their, and
every of their,

93 hereditaments and appurtenances, situated, lying and being in **Goudhurst**
in the county of
94 Kent, to have and to hold all and every the said messuage or tenement and
premises in
95 Goudhurst aforesaid unto the said Stephen my son, and the heirs of his
body lawfully to be
96 begotten and for want of such issue unto the said Henry, my son, his
brother, and to the heirs of
97 his body lawfully to be begotten. And in default of such issue, the
remainder thereof unto Henry
98 and Richard, the two sons before named of my brother Henry Barton and to
their heirs and
99 assigns forever. **Item:** I will, give and devise to the said Stephen Barton,
my son, heirs
100 and assigns forever, all that annuity or rent charge of twenty shillings
heretofore sold and
101 granted to me and mine heirs by James Barton, now deceased, to be
payable to me and
102 mine heirs forever. In witness whereof I have to this my testament and last
will, written
103 in eight sheets of paper, set my hand and seal yeven the day and year first
above written.

John Barton. These being present and witnesses, **John Hooper**, norie
pubq.¹⁶⁰

160 John Hooper was the only witness.

The Bartons of East Peckham

161		will	dated	proved	Ref.	
Henry	East Peckham		13 Dec 1602	1604	PCC: Harte 59	page b.202
Richard	East Peckham; Hadlow		8 Jun 1604	1605	PCC: Hayes 44	page b.211
Charles	East & West Peckham		5 Jun 1615	1615	PCC: Rudd 118	page b.229
Anthony	East Peckham (Great)		4 Aug 1624	1624	PCC: Byrde 85	page b.234
John	East Peckham		5 Jun 1626	1627	PCC: Skynner 95	page b.239
Thomas	East Peckham		13 Apr 1630	1630	PCC: Scroope 104	page b.251

The will of Stephen Barton of West Peckham proved in 1645 (**CKS: Drb/Pwr 23.20; Drb/Pw 31**) has also survived but it has not been investigated.

Three of these wills were written by Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne who wrote a large number of wills between 1578 and 161:

Henry Barton	1602	}	decorated in the
Richard Barton	1604	}	Hooper style
Charles Barton	1615		has the Nicholas Hooper "mark" at the end

161 the surname has been omitted in order to give space for the lengthy locations

John Hooper, Nicholas's son and a notary public wrote three in the 1620s:

John Barton 1626

John Barton 1628

The will of Anthony Barton was written, in 1624, by Edmund Porter and there is a definite difference in style, for example, the introduction although similar in what it says does so in a different way.

Henry Barton, 1602

Henry and Richard Barton were brothers. Henry mentioned his three children in his will and Richard his seven although his second daughter is known only because Richard leaves twenty shillings to “[Richard Dormar, my grandchild, . . . to be paid to Henry Dormar, his father](#)”.

It is Richard's son John who mentions the children of his sister Alice Richardson but he also mentions “[Richard Fenner, my sister's son](#)”. Was there another sister or had the Henry Dormar died and his widow married again?

The Thomas whose will of 1630 has survived could be another brother - John mentions Thomas, son of his brother Thomas and the testator of 1630 had a son

Thomas, but there is nothing else to connect the testator to the family shown below.

e60 ¹⁶²				e62				e61				e90			
Henry - Johan								Richard - Anne ¹⁶³							
will: 13 Dec 1602								8 Jun 1604							
e63 e64 e65															
Mary Henry John															

e67				e68				e69				e80			
Charles - ?? ¹⁶⁴ - Anthony - Margaret				John - Alice				Walter				Alice - John			
will: 5 Jun 1615				4 Aug 1624 Porter				Jun 1626				hardson			
e75 e76				e78 e79				e81 e82				e84 e85			
George Joh				Ann Elizabeth				Anne Elizabeth				John Thomas			
												e87 e89			
												Thomas Richard			

- two of his best pillows, three pillow beres
- three tablecloths, half a dozen of table napkins
- four hand towels
- all her wearing apparel as well linen as woollen
- all her chests which she brought with her
- four of his best pewter platters
- four of his best pewter dishes
- six salvers
- a dozen of pewter spoons
- two pewter pottengers
- two of his best brass pots saving one
- two best kettles
- his best brass stupnet
- one best pewter candlestick, one best latten candlestick
- his little joined table with a cupboard in it
- two joined stools
- his tub chair
- one of his best kyne to be taken at her choice
- such necessary brewing vessels for her use as shall be thought meet by his overseers

Nicolas Hooper's
mark

1 In¹⁶⁵ the name of god Amen. The thirteenth day of December in the
2 year of our lord god one thousand, six hundred and two. And in the five
and
3 fortieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of
god
4 Queen of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, etc.
5 I, Henry Barton, of East Peckham in the county of Kent, **yeoman**,
6 being¹⁶⁶ at the time of writing hereof something visited by sickness and
grippes
7 And thereby, as also otherwise, put in mind of my last end and of the
sudden

165 decorated "I"

166 "bee", "mee" throughout including "beefore" on line 16

8 change and alteration of the life of man, not knowing how soon it may
please god
9 so to alter the case with me, that I cannot, or may not, dispose of my
transitory
10 possessions in such sort as I would, And willing to set such order with the
same
11 that no contention fall out thereabout after my decease. Therefore I do
12 ordain and make this my present testament and last will in manner and
form
13 following¹⁶⁷: And **First** and principally I give, commend and bequeath my
14 soul into the hand of Almighty god, trusting by an assured faith in the
merits and passion
15 of his dear son, Jesus Christ, my alone saviour, that the same shalbe
16 presented pure, and without spot, before the throne of his majestie. And
17 my body to the earth to be buried in the churchyard of East Peckham
18 aforesaid, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to life eternal.
19 **Item:** I will there shalbe bestowed at the day of my burial, or within
20 one month then next following, among the poor of East Peckham aforesaid,
end of first page of original

- six shillings and eight pence. And likewise within the

167 "following"

- said time among the poor of **Hadlow** other six shillings and eight pence of lawful
- money. **Item:** I will and give unto **Johan, my well beloved wife**, my best bedstead with
- my best bed, bolster, coverlet and all other things thereunto belonging which shalbe found
- to be best after my decease and six pairs of sheets, the best of her own make, two of
- my best pillows, three pillow beres, three tablecloths, half a dozen of table napkins,
- four hand towels and all her wearing apparel as well linen as woollen,
- all her chests which she brought with her, four my best pewter platters, four
- my best pewter dishes, six salvers, a dozen of pewter spoons, two pewter pottengers,
- two my best brass pots saving one, two best kettles, my best brass stupnet, one
- best pewter candlestick, one best latten candlestick, my little joined table with a
- cupboard in it, two joined stools, my tub chair and one of my best kyne to be taken at her choice. Also I will that my said wife shall have such
- necessary

- brewing vessels for her use as shalbe thought meet by mine overseers hereafter
- named. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my daughter, Mary Barton**, the sum of forty
- pounds of good and lawful money of England to be paid to her, the said Mary,
- my daughter, within the space of nine months next after my decease by mine
- executor hereafter named. **Item:** I will and give to every of my household servants, at the
- time of my decease being, two shillings a piece. The residue of all my goods, cattells, leases
- debts and moveables whatsoever, (except my lease on **Northfrith** which lease on Northfrith I give unto my

start of page 3 of original:

- 3.1 **son, Henry Barton**), I wholly, fully and with good effect, intent and purpose, give
- 3.2 and bequeath to **John Barton, my youngest son**, which John my youngest son, I
- 3.3 make and ordain my whole and sole executor of this my will, to see the same proved,

- 3.4 my debts and legacies paid and my body honestly and decently buried.
And I
- 3.5 desire **my brother Richard Barton**, and my trusty friend **Olyver Budgin**,
- 3.6 to be supervisors and oversers of this my will, to whom I will and give as a token
- 3.7 of my good will, toward their pains, 10s a piece, besides such charges as they.
- 3.8 or either of them, shalbe at about this will.
- 3.9 **This is the last will**¹⁶⁸ of me the said Henry Barton, the father,
- 3.10 made and declared the day and year first above written, concerning the order and disposition
- 3.11 of all my land, tenement and hereditaments whatsoever, situated, lying and being within
- 3.12 the several parishes of Hadlow and East Peckham in the county of Kent.
And
- 3.13 **First:** I give and bequeath to the said John Barton, my younger son, all that
- 3.14 my lease which I gave for four score and nineteen years in certain land called
- 3.15 **Allens Loves** in Hadlow which I took of Henry Barton, my son. Also all

3.16 those my three fourth part which I have of a certain tenement and land
end of page 3

- called **Sheriff** in
- Hadlow aforesaid which I late purchased of **John Pickarell**¹⁶⁹ and **Richard Collyer**. And
- also all those three other parcels of land whereof two are called **Hickett wood** and the third
- the **Broomfield** containing, in the whole, be estimation, eleven acres whether more or
- less together lying and being in Hadlow aforesaid. And also all those three my three acres
- and three roods¹⁷⁰, by estimation, lying in West Peckham aforesaid, parcel of the lands late
- purchased of **Thomas Tuttesham, gentleman**, deceased. To have and to hold all the said
- lease and three fourth parts of the said tenement called Sheriff, the said three parcels

169 there were Pickerels (including John Pickerell) in Shipbourne at the time this will was written

170 1 rod, as a square measure, is 30.25 square yards, 1/160 of an acre (4840 square yards)

- called Hickett wood and Broomfield and the three acres and three roods by estimation
- in West Peckham withall and singular thappurtenances, unto the said John Barton, my
- son and the heirs of his body lawfully begotten or to be begotten and, for lack of such issue,
- the remainder thereof to my eldest son Henry Barton and to the heirs of his body
- lawfully begotten forever. **Item:** I give and bequeath to the said Harry¹⁷¹ Barton, my
- eldest son, all that my one acre of meadow in a meadow called **Pengeherst** within
- the parish of Hadlow which I late purchased of **John Iden**¹⁷², **Esquire**, and also all that
- parcel of meadow, by estimation, four acres lying in Hadlow aforesaid which I late
- purchased of **Richard Fane, gentleman**, to have and to hold all the said acre of meadow

¹⁷¹ "Harry" used here, "Henry" elsewhere

¹⁷² is this John Eden, gent, uncle of the John Barton who wrote his will in 1600?

- in Pengeherst and the said four acres late purchased of the said Richard Fane unto
- the said Henry Barton, my eldest son, and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten
- or to be begotten and, for lack of such issue, the remainder thereof to the said John
- Barton, my son and to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten forever. In witness
- whereof, to this my present last will and testament, being five sheets of paper, I, the said
- Henry Barton have, to every sheet or leaf hereof, written my name with mine own hand and
- to this fifth or last leaf or sheet have written my name and set my seal. And I do hereby
- revoke all other former wills whatsoever heretofore by me made. And I do publish and
- declare this only to be my true and last will yeven the said thirteenth day of December

- millimo sexcentisimo secondo¹⁷³. In the presence of **William Tindley, Henry Kedoll** and
- me, **Nicholas Hooper**, writer hereof. Henry Barton, the mark of William Tindley, the
- mark of Henry Kedoll.

Richard Barton, 1604

The will of Richard Barton, written in 1604 by Nicholas Hooper, takes repetition to a fantastic level of excess. For example: "the next feast of the feasts aforesaid which shall next ensue, follow, come, and be next after the said next marriage of her my said wife aforesaid".

¹⁷³ why is the year given here in the Latin? This is the only time this form has been noted in a will written by Nicholas Hooper. Unfortunately this usage was not checked when the original will (PCC: Prob 10/227) was examined.

Nicolas Hooper's
mark

1 In¹⁷⁴ the name of god Amen. The eighth day of June in the year of our
2 Lord God one thousand, six hundred and four¹⁷⁵, And in the second year of
the reign
3 of our sovereign Lord James, by the grace of god king of England, France
and Ireland,
4 defender of the faith, etc. And of Scotland the seven and thirtieth. I,
Richard
5 Barton of East Peckham in the county of Kent **yeoman**, being¹⁷⁶ in good and
perfect health

174 decorated "I" and "h" in "the"

175 since the punctuation, particularly the placing of commas, is easy to read on the original, this transcript shows that used by Nicholas Hooper

176 "beeing", double "e" throughout including "beefore" on line 14 and "beelonging" in the will concerning his land

6 and of perfect mind and remembrance, thanks therefore be given to
Almighty god, notwithstanding
7 aged, and thereby put in mind of my last end, and of the sudden alteration
of life, knowing most
8 assuredly that I shall change the same, but the time being altogether
uncertain. And willing that
9 my transitory possessions, which god hath lent me in this world, should be
quietly enjoyed after
10 my decease, by those whom I have meant the same unto: Therefore I do
ordain and make
11 this my present testament and last will in manner and form following¹⁷⁷:
And **first** and
12 principally I give and commend my soul into the hand of Almighty god
who gave it, knowing
13 assuredly by a true faith in the merit of Christ's death and passion, that the
same shalbe presented
14 without spot before the Throne of his majesty. And my body to the earth
from whence it
15 came, to be buried after a decent manner. **Item**: I will there shalbe paid
and given to the church

177 "folowing"

16 wardens of East¹⁷⁸ Peckham aforesaid 20s. To the churchwardens of
17 **Hadlow** 10s, And to the
18 churchwardens of West Peckham 10s, requesting them and any of them
19 severally for their sendall
20 parishes to take so much pains as to distribute the same several sums
21 within short space after my
decease, among those of the several parishes aforesaid, which by them
severally, shalbe thought to have
most need to be relieved¹⁷⁹. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Anne, now my
well beloved wife**, All
and every those goods whatsoever called commonly household stuff which
she brought with her at our marriage¹⁸⁰.
end of the first page of the original

- And also the sum of thirty and five pounds of lawful money, two kyne at

178 "West" corrected to "East"; this is unlikely to have been an error made by the testator. A more feasible explanation is that the scribe was writing from notes.

179 these instructions are, at least as far as the wills examined is concerned, unique in their detail and would therefore appear to be the request made by the testator rather than the scribe using more or less standard terminology.

180 this type of phraseology usually indicates a second wife at least when the testator is "aged"

- her choice, one of my best hogs, all her own wearing apparel as well linen as
- woollen, and six pairs of my best sheets, a tablecloth, a dozen of table napkins, a pair
- of pillowbeers, two hand towels, one featherbed, a bolster, a coverlet, two blankets,
- my joined chair of ??, one stone¹⁸¹ of good wool. Also one good flitch of bacon and two
- crocks of butter of twelve pounds a piece at the least, six stone of good cheese, one
- brandiron, a spit and half a quarter¹⁸² of apples, if so many shall be in my house
- at the time of my decease. And further, I give unto her, the said Anne, my wife
- twelve bushels of good wheat and one quarter of like good barley malt and a
- quarter of oats. All which wheat, malt and oats I will shall be carried by

¹⁸¹ 14 pounds

¹⁸² a quarter can be a quarter of a hundredweight (28 pounds) or a grain measure of 8 bushels, a bushel being 8 gallons; apples were often measured in bushels used as a measure of capacity.

- mine executor hereafter named, or his assigns, unto the house hereafter in this
- my will limited to her, my said wife, to the use of my said wife within the first
- year next after my decease, by two bushels at a time or otherwise as she, my said
- wife shall reasonably demand the same within the said year. And likewise two
- good cords, or loads, of good wood for her burning, I will shall be carried and laid down
- to her use at the place aforesaid within convenient time within the said first year.
- And all the rest of the householdstuff, kine and other guist? to my said wife given, I
- will shall be delivered to her presently after my decease. **Item:** I will and give unto
- **my daughter, Alice, the wife of John Richardson,** five pounds of lawful money to be
- paid to her within one whole year next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath
- unto **my son, Anthony Barton,** the sum of fifty pounds of lawful money and
- two pewter platters and two pewter dishes of the best sort and one chest bought

- of **John Cotton's widow**, to be paid and delivered unto him within one whole year
- next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **John Barton, my son**, the
- sum of forty pounds of lawful money to be paid to him within one whole year
- next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Walter Barton, my son**,
- the sum of forty pounds of lawful money and two pewter platters and two
- pewter dishes of the best sort and the best chest that I have in my house save one
- to be paid and delivered unto him within one whole year next after my decease.
- And I further will that if any of my said sons happen to decease before the
- time, or several times, afore specified for payment of any their portions
- aforesaid, that then his and their parts so deceased shall remain and be
- paid equally among the overliver or overlivers of them at such time or times
- as they should have been severally paid if they had lived. **Item:** I give and
- bequeath unto every of my said sons, John, Walter and Anthony, to every
- of them, two pairs of sheets, one of the best and the other of the coarse sort,
- to be allotted and divided unto them by mine overseers hereafter named ---
- tly

- after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Thomas Barton, my son,** the
- sum of forty shillings of lawful money. And whereas I have made a lease
- unto my said son Thomas Barton, of a tenement called **Lovats** which I
- hold of **George Multon, gent. and Audrey his wife**¹⁸³ and of so much of the
- lands thereunto belonging as is now in the occupation of the said Thomas,
- to
- hold to him for the term of all the years yet to come, contained in the same
- grand lease, if
- the said Thomas shall so long live. I will that after the decease of the said
- Thomas,
- my son, or the time afterwards limited in the said lease to him made (if he
- happen
- to decease) all the said messuage or tenement called Lovats and all the
- saies lands
- contained in the same and now in the occupation of the said Thomas
- Barton, my
- son, unto the said John Barton, my son, to hold to him and to his assigns
- from

183 spelt "wief"; George Multon (i1584 - i indicates reference in the Ightham database) and Audrey/Athelreda (i1585) were the second generation of a small family prominent in Ightham from about 1550 to 1650.

- the determination of the said lease made to the said Thomas, my son, unto the end
- of all the years then to come, mentioned in the said lease made from the said George
- Multon and Audrey paying therefore yearly, during the residue of the years contained in the said grand lease unto mine executor hereafter named or his executors or
- assigns, the accustomed rent referred in and by the same lease by me made to my said
- son Thomas Barton. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto Anthony Barton, my son, one lease which I bought of **Dane Sommer** and which he had of the
- said George Multon and Audrey, his wife, of the tenement and lands which **Perry's widow** holdeth of them for term of her life. And the reversion and term of years contained in the said lease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Richard**
- **Dormar, my grandchild**, twenty shillings of lawful money to be paid to **Henry**
- **Dormar, his father**, to the use of his said son within one year next after my decease.
- **Item:** I give and bequeath to every of my household servants, at the time of my

- decease being 6s and 8d a piece lawful money. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto
- the said Anne, my wife, before named, the one half of all such tussham¹⁸⁴ and yarn
- as shall be in my house at the time of my decease, to be divided by my said overseers
- hereafter named. **Item:** I further will (if it shall please my said wife to accept of it)
- that she shall have sufficient and competent meat and drink, fire and flett, washing
- and such other necessities meet for her with my son and executor hereafter named,
- in the farmhouse wherein I now dwell until the feast of Saint Michael, the Archangel next coming after my decease without paying, or allowing any thing for the same. **Item:** I give and bequeath to the said John Barton, my son,
- my lease of **Peckhams Place** and the land thereto belonging lying in Hadlow which
- I hold of **Robert Kerwyn**. And which he holdeth from **George Rivers**, **esquire** pay=
- ing the rent and doing the covenant therein reserved and mentioned.

184 "tussume" - hemp or flax (used in West Kent; Dictionary of the Kentish Dialect

page 5 of original:

- 5.1 The¹⁸⁵ Residue of all my goods, and Cattells, leases, debts and chattells, I wholly
- 5.2 fully, and with good effect intent and purpose, give and bequeath to **Charles Barton, my son**, which
- 5.3 Charles Barton my son, I make and ordain my whole and sole executor of this my will
- 5.4 To see the same proved, my debts and legacies paid and performed, and my body honestly, and
- 5.5 decently buried. And I desire **my loving kinsman Thomas Barton of Steyne**¹⁸⁶ and, my
- 5.6 **loving neighbour John Wilkins**, to be supervisors and overseers of this my will, desiring
- 5.7 them to see the same executed (to their powers) according to the true meaning of the same. To
- 5.8 whom I give five shillings a piece, as a token of my good will, over and above all such charges

185 small decoration by initial "T"

186 this could be the Thomas of Steyne (Hadlow) who wrote his will in 1622 (or his father)

5.9 and expense, as they or either of them shall layout in any business about this my will¹⁸⁷.

Nicolas Hooper's
mark

5.10 This is the last will¹⁸⁸ of me the said Richard Barton, made and declared
5.11 the day and year first above written, concerning the order, and disposition
of all my land and
5.12 Tenements in East Peckham aforesaid, And Hadlow in the said county of
Kent, or in either of
5.13 them. **And First** I will that the said Anne, my wife, shall have the use and
occupation
5.14 of All my messuage or tenement, with the Barns and buildings thereto
belonging, and the
5.15 closes, garden, Orchard and land thereto belonging, containing in the
whole by estimation Ten

187 again this is phraseology is much more detailed than usual

188 the Nicholas Hooper decoration is part of the decoration of this phrase

5.16 acres whether more or less thereof be had, situated lying and being in East Peckham aforesaid,
5.17 which I late purchased of Henry Huggen¹⁸⁹. To have and to hold to her my said wife, from the
5.18 next feast of Saint Michael Th'archangel, next following after my decease, for by, and
end of the fifth page of the original

- during the term of her natural life if she so long keep herself a widow,
- keeping the tenements and buildings thereof sufficiently repaired and paying the
- Lord's rent to be due for the same; And making or doing no manner of waste in
- or upon the same other than necessary hedgeboot to be taken upon the same of
- such tenet as groweth in the hedges without felling of any tree or trees. And of
- the topping and shredding of such oaks and trees as have heretofore been topped or shred.
- And paying out of the same messuage and premises, yearly during her said widow=

189 There were a large number of Huggens in Shipbourne

- hood, unto Walter Barton, my said son and his heirs, the sum of forty shillings
- of lawful money at the feast of Saint Michael th'archangel and the Annunciation
- of the blessed virgin Mary by equal portions, the first payment thereof to begin at
- the feast of the Annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary which shall next be and
- come next after the commencement or beginning of the time of her, my said wife.
- And I do hereby devise that if it shall happen the said sum or yearly payment
- of forty shillings, or any part or parcel thereof, to be behind unpaid after either of
- the said feasts in which (as afore is said) the sum ought to be paid by the space
- of 28 days, being lawfully demanded at the said messuage, that then, and at any
- time after, it shall and may be be lawful unto the said Walter Barton, my son, his
- heirs and assigns, to enter in and upon all the said messuage or tenements and

- all other the premises, withall and singular thappurtenances, and the same and every
- parcel thereof to have and enjoy to him and his heirs. And the said Anne Barton,
- my wife, from there wholly to amove¹⁹⁰ and put out any grist or other thing what=
- soever herein specified or contained to the contrary hereof in any wise notwithstanding.
- And after the decease or next marriage of her, the said Anne, my wife, or other
- reentry or forfeiture of the premises aforesaid, I give and bequeath all the said messuage
- or tenement, and all and every other the said lands and premises withall and singular
- th'appurtenances unto the said Walter Barton, my son, his heirs and assigns, to the only
- use and behoof of the said Walter Barton, my son, heirs and assigns, forever. Furth=
- ermore, my will and meaning is that if my said wife happen to marry again, or to

190 remove? but definitely written (in the probate copy) "amove"

- forfeit the said messuage and premises for lack of payment of the said forty shillings
- (as aforesaid), that then my said son Walter Barton, his heirs and assigns, shall well
- and truly pay unto her, my said wife or her assigns, yearly afterwards during her
- said natural life, out of the said lands and premises, the sum of forty shillings
- of lawful money of England at the feast of Saint Michael th'archangel, the Nativity
- of our Saviour Christ, th'annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary and the Nativity
- of Saint John the Baptist, quarterly by equal portions, the first payment thereof to
- begin at the next feast of the feasts aforesaid which shall next ensue, follow, come,
- and be next after the said next marriage of her my said wife aforesaid or forfeiture
- aforesaid by her made. And I will that, for lack of payment thereof, or any parcel
- thereof, it shall and may be lawful unto her, my said wife and her assigns, after such

- default made after any of the said feasts, by the space of fourteen days, to enter in
- and upon the said message, and all other the premises, withall and singular th'app=
- urtenances, and there to distrain. And the distress or distresses

page 8 of original:

- 8.1 there from time to time so had and taken, from thence to bear, load, drive and carry away. And
- 8.2 the same to hold and keep, until she or they be fully paid the same and every parcel thereof together with
- 8.3 such costs as by that occasion shalbe sustained. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Anthony Barton**
- 8.4 **my son** All that parcel of land called the **Bounde** containing, by estimation, six acres whether more
- 8.5 or less, lying in **Hadlow** aforesaid, which I late purchased of the heirs of **Thomas Bond**.
- 8.6 To have and to hold the same withall and singular thappurtenances, unto the said Anthony Barton
- 8.7 my son, his heirs and assigns, To the only use and behoof of the said Anthony my son
- 8.8 his heirs and assigns forever. In witness whereof, I the said Richard Barton

- 8.9 to every sheet or leaf of this my will being eight sheets or leaves of paper,
written in broad
- 8.10 lines¹⁹¹, have subscribed my name with mine own hand. And to this 8th or
last leaf or sheet have
- 8.11 subscribed my name, and set my seal. And I do hereby revoke, and
renounce all other former
- 8.12 wills, by me heretofore made, yeven the day and year first above written.

Nicolas Hooper's
mark
with initials

Read, Sealed and acknowledged
to be the last will of the said

Richard Barton¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ looks like "double spacing" compared with most wills

¹⁹² written by Richard Barton

Richard Barton, the day and
year first above written, in
the presence of me

Nicholas Hooper writer hereof and of
Thomas ???

Charles, son of Richard

Charles, Anthony and John were three of the sons of the Richard Barton who died in 1604. Only the first and last pages of Charles's will have been transcribed so that details of his family are not known but:

- Anthony left “seven pounds of money yearly until he come to the full age of four and twenty years” to George, the son of his brother Charles.
- John left £5 to John, the son of his brother Charles “to be paid unto him at his age of twenty and one years if he shall live to accomplish that age.”

Although, without studying his will further, the family of Charles is not known, he had a large establishment. He left £3 to one of his servants, 5s each to two others, 10s to his “boy” and 10s each to two maid servants.

only the first and last pages have been transcribed.

- 1 In¹⁹³ the name of god Amen. The fifth day of June in the year of our our
Lord God one
2 thousand, six hundred and fifteen. And in the thirteenth year of the reign
of our
3 sovereign lord James, by the grace of God, king of England, France and
Ireland, defender
4 of the faith, etc. And of Scotland the eight and fortieth. I, Charles Barton,
of East
5 Peckham in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being¹⁹⁴ sick in body but of perfect
mind and remembrance,
6 thanks therefore be given to Almighty God, do ordain and make this my my
present last

193 "In the" in larger letters than rest of will but with only very slight decoration

194 "beeing" - double "e" throughout

7 will and testament in manner and form following¹⁹⁵: And **First** and
8 principally I give,
9 commend and bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty God who gave
10 it me, trusting through
11 an assured faith which I have in the merit, precious death and blood
12 shedding of his dear son Jesus Christ
13 that the same shall be saved. And my body to the earth to be buried in the
14 churchyard of
15 East Peckham aforesaid in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to
16 life eternal.

Item: I give and bequeath to the poor of the parish of East Peckham
aforesaid 10s and
to the poor of the parishes of **West Peckham, Hadlow and Mereworth**, to
every of them
5s a piece, all which sums given to the poor I will shalbe paid by mine
executrix hereafter
named to the churchwardens and overseers of the poor of every of the said
parishes
by them to be given (with the advice of my overseers hereafter named)
where most need

195 "following"

17 shalbe at their discretion. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my goddaughter,**
18 **Elizabeth Barton, daughter of**
19 **my brother, John Barton,** one silver spoon and five shillings of money.
20 And to my **godson, Thomas Barton, son of my brother Thomas Barton,** the
21 like sum of five shillings. And to **my goddaughter Elizabeth, daughter of Henry**
22 **Fenner, 2s.**
23 And to all the rest of my godchildren, coming and demanding the same of
24 mine executrix, 12d a piece. **Item:** I give to **my servant, William Goslyn, £3, to**
25 **my servants Charles**
26 **Jerred and Henry Clerke,** either of them 5s apiece. And to my boy **Thomas**
27 **Crudeherst 10s.** And
28 to my **maid servants, Johane Harde and Elizabeth Simons 10s apiece.** And
29 to **my cousin John**
30 **Standen** fifty shillings. All which sums I will shalbee paid within one year
31 next after my decease

end of first page

fifth page of original

5.1 of the same tenement and farm, at a day yet to come. And whereas in
consideration thereof, the

5.2 conveyance of the same made to me and to the said Robert Olyver and to
our heirs, my
5.3 will and true meaning is. And I do hereby give and bequeath, to the said
Robert
5.4 Olyver and his heirs, all my estate, right, use, possession and in trust
whatsoever of, in and to the same
5.5 he, the said Robert Olyver, his heirs or assigns, discharging my said
executrix, her executors and
5.6 assigns, of and from the same bond and sum therein contained, and all
forfeitures there
5.7 contained, according to right and equity, without fraud or guile. In witness
whereof, I,
5.8 the said Charles Barton to this my last will containing five sheets of paper
5.9 have to ende sheet, set my hand and to this first and last sheet set my
hand and
5.10 seal, yeven the day and year, first above written

Nicolas Hooper's
mark
with initials

Sealed and
acknowledged as the true
and last will of the said

Charles Barton in the
presence of:

Thomas Barton
Sallomon Newman
John Barton and
Nicholas Hooper, sen. writer

Charles Barton

Anthony, son of Richard

Anthony Barton appointed as his executors his brother and the brother of his first wife, William Ferryman. In 1623, when her father John Porter of Seal wrote his will, Anthony's wife was John's daughter Margaret who, in 1623, was forty. Anthony does not give the name of his second wife - he does not mention her at all. From his will, he had two children, Ann and Elizabeth, who could have been by either wife. His executors were instructed to "[see them brought up in the fear of god and unto their learning in books and sewing](#)" so perhaps Margaret died between the summer of 1623 when her father wrote his will and October 1624 when Anthony wrote his.

1 In the name of god Amen. I, Anthony Barton, of Great
2 Peckham in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being of good and perfect
memory, thanks be given
3 unto god therefore, do make this my last will and testament in manner and
form
4 following: **First:** and principally I bequeath my soul unto the almighty god,
my maker and
5 unto Jesus Christ, his son, my redeemer, which shed his most precious
blood for my sins, hoping,
6 that when it shall please god to take me to his pleasure, out of this world,
to enjoy the special
7 happiness in the world to come, there to rest and remain for ever, which
god he grant, Amen.
8 **Item:** I will and bequeath unto the poor people of the parish of Great
Peckham the sum
9 of twenty shillings in money to be paid by my executors. **Item:** I give and
bequeath unto the

10 poor people of **Seal**¹⁹⁶ the sum of twenty shillings to be paid by my
executors. **Item:** I
11 give unto **my godson Anthony Swan** twenty shillings in money to be paid
by my executors.
12 **Item:** I give unto **my servant John Chowing** twenty shillings to be paid by
my executors.
13 **Item:** I give unto my **goddaughter, John Chesman's daughter**, five shillings
to be paid by my
14 executors. **Item:** give unto my other four servants now dwelling with me
six shillings
15 and eight pence a piece, to be paid to them severally by my executors.
Item: I give and
16 bequeath unto **George Barton, son unto my brother Charles Barton**, seven
pounds of
17 money yearly until he come to the full age of four and twenty years, to be
paid by my
18 executors out of the rent of all my lands during that time. **Item:** I will and
bequeath
19 unto **my daughter, Anne Barton**, one featherbed, one bolster of feathers
with the bed

196 there were Bartons in Seal but their relationship (if any) to these Bartons has not been determined; Anthony's second wife was Margaret Porter, daughter of John Porter of Chart in Seal

20 stead and all furniture belonging thereunto wherein I now lie in the
parlour. And also one
21 flockbed and bolster and one chest, one box and half my linen. **Item:** I will
and
22 bequeath unto **Elizabeth Barton, my daughter**, one new bedstead unset up
and one feather
23 bed and flockbed, furnished as the other is, and one chest and one box and
the one
24 half of my linen. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto my two daughters, Anne
Barton and
25 Elizabeth Barton, all those my goods and lands not bequeathed, to be
equally divided
26 between them both when that they shall come to the full age of one and
twenty years
27 a piece. And if it shall so please god to take either of them before they
come to the full
28 age of one and twenty years a piece, then the one to enjoy the other's part
given to them
29 in this my last will and testament. And for the performance of this my last
will and testa=
30 ment, I ordain and make **my brother Walter Barton** and **my first wife's**
31 **brother, William Ferryman** my sole executors, they receiving my goods and
rents of my

32 lands until my children shall come to their full ages (of) one and twenty
33 years hoping
34 they will see them brought up in the fear of god and unto their learning in
35 books and
36 sewing desiring **my brother Thomas Barton** and **Robert Swan** to be my
37 overseers
38 unto this my last will and testament. In witness hereof I have put my hand
39 and seal
40 this fourth day of August 1624. And in the 22 year of the king's majesty's
reign
of England, France and Ireland and of Scotland the fifty and seven. I will
my
executors to give unto my overseers ten shillings a piece. Anthony Barton.
Sealed and ?? in the presence of me **Edmund Porter, writer,** and **William
Raynes**
his mark hereunder written.

John, son of Richard

John's two daughters were also called Elizabeth and Anne. The arrangements for the maintenance of Elizabeth are interesting showing how Elizabeth, who was presumably in her mid-teens, was to be given some independence.

Alice, his wife was to have all his “houses, lands and tenements . . in East Peckham, West Peckham and Hadlow” for five years after his death towards the “maintenance and the bringing up of Elizabeth” who was to “kept and maintained with all manner of necessaries except spending money and apparel which the said Elizabeth shall provide and find herself during the said five years, if the said Alice, my wife, shall so long live, upon this condition . . that the said Alice, my wife, (besides the keeping of her, the said Elizabeth as aforesaid) do and shall yearly and every year during the said five years, pay or cause to be paid to her, the said Elizabeth, towards her apparelling and spending money, five pounds per annum, to be paid unto her half yearly by equal portions upon reasonable demand thereof to be made”.

1 In¹⁹⁷ the name of god Amen. The fifth day of June
2 in the year of our lord god one thousand six hundred, twenty and
3 six. And in the second year of the reign of our sovereign lord Charles, by
the
4 grace of god, king of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of
the faith.
5 I, John Barton, of East Peckham in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being¹⁹⁸ at
6 this time in reasonable good health and of good memory, thanks be given
to god,
7 do ordain and make this my testament and last will in manner and form
following:
8 **First** and principally yielding my soul to Almighty god, my maker, with an
9 assured hope of salvation through his mercy in the merit and mediation
10 of his dear son, Jesus Christ, my saviour. And my body to the earth in
decent manner to

197 decorated "I"

198 "beeing", "bee", etc. throughout

11 be buried. **Item:** I will to the poor of East Peckham aforesaid forty
12 shillings. And to the poor of **Hadlow** ten shillings to be paid
13 and distributed within one month next after my decease. **Item:** I will and
14 give to **Anne, my daughter**, six pairs of my sheets indifferently to be had.
15 **Item:** I will to **Alice, my loving wife**, all the household stuff which she
16 brought with her unto me when we married. And also half of all that linen
17 hath made, or caused to be made, since the time that we were married.
And also the
18 little joined table in the chamber over the parlour and my cauldron with
two ears?.

19 **Item:** I will to **Elizabeth, my daughter**, all other my household stuff,
implements
20 and husbandry tackling not formerly given to my said wife and Anne my
21 daughter. **Item:** I will and give to **John Barton, son of my brother**
22 **Charles Barton**, five pounds to be paid unto him at his age of twenty and
23 one years if he shall live to accomplish that age. **Item:** I will and give
24 to **Thomas Barton (son of my brother Thomas Barton)** ten pounds to
25 be paid unto him within one year next after my decease. **Item:** I will and
26 give unto **John Richardson** and **his brother Thomas Richardson, my sister's**
sons, twenty

27 shillings a piece. And to **Richard Fenner, my sister's son**¹⁹⁹, another twenty shillings.

28 To be paid to every of them within one year next ensuing after my decease.
end of first page of original

page 284, probate copy (Skynner 95)

All other my goods, money, debts and
12 chattells not before bequeathed, I wholly will, give and bequeath unto the
said Alice, my
13 wife whom I make and ordain the sole executrix of this my testament and
last will to
14 see the same proved, my debts and legacies paid and my body decently to
be brought to
15 the earth. And I desire and appoint **my loving brothers, Thomas Barton
and Walter**
16 **Barton** to be overseers that this my will may take effect according to my
mind
17 and true meaning so much as in them, and either of them, shall lie. To
whom I give,
18 for their pains (as a token of my love) five pounds a piece of lawful english

199 which sister was married to a Fenner by 1626?

19 money to be paid them, by my said executrix, over and above any charge
which they,
20 or either of them, shall expend by reason of this my will.

This is also the last will of

21 me, the said John Barton, made and declared the day and year first above
written
22 touching my lands and tenements and the disposing thereof. **Item:** I will
that the
23 before named Alice, my loving wife, shall or may have and hold all my
houses, lands
24 and tenements, with their appurtenances, situated, lying and being in **East**
Peckham, West
25 **Peckham and Hadlow** in the said county of Kent, for, by and during the
term of
26 five whole years next ensuing after the decease of me, the said John
Barton, towards
27 her maintenance and the bringing up of Elizabeth, to be by her brought
28 up and kept, or to be caused to be kept and maintained withall manner of
necessaries
29 except spending money and apparell which the said Elizabeth shall
provide and find her

30 self during the said five years, if the said Alice, my wife, shall so long live,
upon
31 this condition (that is to say) that the said Alice, my wife, (besides the
keeping of her,
32 the said Elizabeth as aforesaid) do and shall yearly and every year during
the
33 said five years, pay or cause to be paid to her, the said Elizabeth, towards
her
34 apparelling and spending money, five pounds per annum, to be paid unto
her half
35 yearly by equal portions upon reasonable demand thereof to be made. And
likewise,
36 upon this condition that neither the said Alice, my wife, nor any other
person or persons
37 for her, or by her means, privitie or consent, shall cut or waste all or any the
woods
38 underwoods, timber and trees, in or upon all or any of my lands or
tenements
39 or any part or parcel thereof, neither shall commit or do any other manner
of
40 strip or waste upon my said lands and tenements or any part thereof.
Notwith=

41 standing, my meaning is that my said wife shall, or may, have meet and
necessary
42 hedgeboot for the inclosing of the premises in good order and season to be
taken
43 at her pleasure of the bushes and shrubby stuff wherewith the said hedges
are, and
44 have been usually made. And the overplus or leavings thereof, shall or
may have for
45 her fire to be kept and expended only upon the premises. And if that shall
not suffice,
46 to provide the residue that shalbe wanting at her own charges. And yet my
will is
47 that she shall have on the premises, timber for reparations (if any shall
need) by
48 the assignment of my overseers, or either of them, their or either of their
heirs or
49 assigns, necessarily to be expended in the premises and not elsewhere.
And in default
50 of such assignment by the space of one month next after a reasonable
request in
51 that behalf, from time to time, to be made at the now dwelling house of the
said

52 Thomas Barton, one of my overseers, the said Alice to take the same without any

next page of probate copy

1 assignment where it may be spared during the said four²⁰⁰ years, if she shall so
2 long live. And after the decease of the said Alice, if she shall die within the said five
3 years, or else at the end of the said five years, I will, give and devise to Anne Barton
4 my daughter, all my lands with their appurtenances lying in Hadlow aforesaid,
5 containing, by estimation, eight acres, more or less, and also four other parcels
6 of my lands lying in East Peckham aforesaid, with their appurtenances, whereof
7 three are called the **Brent land** and the other the **Six Acres**, containing, in the
8 whole, by estimation, twenty and eight acres, whether more or less, thereof be had.
9 To have and to hold, my said lands in Hadlow and the said four parcels in

200 why the change from five to four years?

10 East Peckham with their appurtenances, unto the said Anne, my daughter,
and to
11 the heirs of her body lawfully to be begotten. And for default of such issue
to
12 Elizabeth, my daughter, and to the heirs of her body lawfully to be
begotten. And
13 for default of such issue to Thomas Barton, the son of my brother, Thomas
14 Barton, and to his heirs forever. And from and after the decease aforesaid
of
15 my said wife (if she shall decease within the said five years) or else at the
end
16 of the said five years, I will, give and devise unto the said Elizabeth, my
daughter,
17 all other my houses, lands, tenements and hereditaments, situated in East
Peckham,
18 aforesaid, and West Peckham or elsewhere lying and being (not formerly
willed to the
19 said Anne, my daughter. To hold to the said Elizabeth and to the heirs of
her body
20 lawfully to be begotten. And for and in default of such issue unto the said
Anne²⁰¹,

201 shouldn't this be Elizabeth?

21 my daughter, and to the heirs of her body lawfully to be begotten. And for
22 default of such issue, the remainder thereof to the before named Thomas
Barton,
23 the son of my brother Thomas Barton, and to his heirs and assigns forever.
24 Notwithstanding, if the said Alice, my wife, shall live to the end of the said
five
25 years, then I will and my mind is, that the said Alice, and her assigns, for,
by
26 and during the whole term of her natural life, from thence forth, shalbe well
27 and truly paid out of my house, tenements and lands aforesaid, lying and
being
28 in East Peckham aforesaid (those four parcels always excepted by me
formerly
29 willed and devised to the said Anne, my daughter) one annuity or yearly
rent of
30 ten pounds²⁰² of lawful and good english money issuing, going and yearly
31 to be taken out of the said houses, lands and tenements in East Peckham
(except
32 before excepted) to be paid her quarterly by equal and even portions. And
for

202 only twice what Elizabeth was to have just for apparell and spending money

33 default of payment, it being lawfully asked or demanded at my now
dwelling
34 house in East Peckham aforesaid, by the space of ten days next after the
end
35 of every quarter, I will that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said
36 Alice, and her assigns, to enter and distrain, into and upon my said
messuage
37 or tenement, houses and lands in East Peckham aforesaid, or into or upon
any
38 part thereof (except before excepted). And the distress and distresses there
had
38 taken or found lawfully

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1 from there to bear, load, drive, carry away, withhold and keep irreplegible
2 until the said annuity, and all arrearage thererof, and also all her costs
3 and charges occasioned by the taking, leading and driving of such distress
and
4 distresses, shalbe to the said Alice and her assigns, fully and truly paid,
5 from time to time, according to the purport of this will. Provided always,
and
6 my very will and mind is, that if the said Alice, my wife, shall attempt or

7 go about to have or change any jointure or dower out of, in or to my
8 lands, tenements, houses or hereditaments or any of them, or any other or
9 greater estate or demand out of, in or to the same, or any part thereof, then
is
10 to her appointed by this my will, that then and from thence forth forever,
the said
11 annuity of ten pounds per annum, to her before willed to be paid during her
12 life as aforesaid, shalbe void and of none effect and the payment thereof
shall,
13 from thenceforth, cease and determine (any grant or gift of the said
14 annuity by this my will to the contrary notwithstanding). Provided further,
and
15 my will and mind is that the five years before mentioned shall begin at the
Michaelmas next
14 after my decease. And in the interim between my death and that
Michaelmas, my said wife
15 shall have the use of all my houses, lands and tenements on the conditions
aforesaid²⁰³.

In witness whereof I have caused this my will to be written in five

203

this could have been a maximum of twenty-one weeks, from 5th June to 31st October; since the will was not proved until 7th October, it could have been considerably less.

sheets of paper with the interlination and words stricken out about the middle of the third sheet and to the last of the said sheets have set to my name

And to them all my name

John Barton²⁰⁴

witnesses hereunto and sealed and
declared in the presence of

Daniell P²⁰⁵ Pinckey, churchwarden
of Tonbridge and John Hooper, norie pbq.

Thomas Barton, will 1630

This is the second Thomas to have a Robert Olyver as his brother-in-law. Unfortunately the only relative he mentions other than his children and Olyver is his nephew John Barton. There are so many John Bartons that this does not help in placing the testator into the Barton families. He could have been the brother of

²⁰⁴ looks like a signature

²⁰⁵ a large "P"; was this Pinckney's mark?

Charles, Anthony and John who had died in 1615, 1624 and 1626 respectively. In his will, John mentions Thomas, the son of his brother Thomas, and the 1630 testators's only son was called Thomas. The nephew mentioned could have been Charles's son John.

Will of Thomas Barton of East Peckham

written 13th April 1630; proved 18th November 1630

transcript from probate copy

- 1 In the name of god Amen. In the
- 2 thirteenth day of April in the first year of the reign of our sovereign lord
Charles, by the grace
- 3 of god, king of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of the faith,
etc. Anno Dm one
- 4 thousand, six hundred and thirty. I, Thomas Barton of East Peckham in the
county of Kent, **yeoman**, being

5 sick in body but of good and perfect memory, thanks be²⁰⁶ given to
Almighty god, do make this my²⁰⁷
6 testament and last will in manner and form following: **First** and
principally I commend my soul into
7 the hands of Almighty god, my maker, and my body to be buried in the
churchyard of East Peckham aforesaid.
8 **Item:** I give unto the poor of the parish of East Peckham aforesaid the sum
of twenty shillings to be distribut=
9 ed amongst them by my executor hereafter named within one month after
my decease. **Item:** I give unto my
10 **daughter, Susan, the wife of John Keeble**, the sum of ten pounds to be paid
her within one year after my
11 decease. **Item:** I give unto **Margaret Barton, my daughter**, the sum of two
hundred pounds of good, English
12 money to be paid unto her within one year after my decease. **Item:** I give
unto **my daughter, Elizabeth**,
13 **Barton**, the like sum of two hundred pounds to be paid her within one year
after my decease. **Item:** I give

206 "bee"; again the probate copy of this will is unusual, having double "ee" throughout

207 "last will" was written at the end of this line and then crossed out; the phrase "last will and testament" is much more common than the reverse order used here (and in other Barton wills) so that the clerk copying the will could have started by writing the usual phrase and then finding he had to alter it.

14 unto either of my said daughters, **Margaret and Elizabeth**, five pound a
15 piece to be paid them within one
month after my decease. **Item:** I give to **my servants, William Sunder and**
Thomas Summner, to either of
16 them, five shillings to be paid them within one year after my decease. **Item:**
I give to **John Barton, my nephew**,
17 ten shillings to be paid him within one year after my decease. **Item:** I give
to my daughter, Margaret
18 Barton, one featherbed, one flockbed, four blankets, two coverlets and two
bolsters.

inserted

Item: I give to my daughter, Elizabeth Barton, one featherbed, one
flockbed, four blankets, two coverlets and two bolsters.

Item: I give to
19 either²⁰⁸ of them, one chest. **Item:** my will and mind is that all my linen
should be divided into three equal
20 parts and that my said daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth, should have
two parts thereof and the third

208 both of them

21 to remain to my executor. **Item:** the rest of all and singular my goods,
cattells, chattells and credits,
22 my debts and legacies being paid, I give and bequeath unto to **my son**
Thomas Barton whom I make
23 and appoint my sole executor of this my testament and last will. This is
the last will and testament
24 of me, the said Thomas Barton concerning the disposing of my lands and
tenements. **Imprimis:** my
25 will and mind is that **Cobham meade** lying in Hadlow in the county of Kent
should be sold by my
26 executor aforementioned if it so happen that my goods and chattells do not
amount to so great sum as
27 will satisfy my debts. **Item:** the rest of all and singular my land and
tenements whatsoever I give unto
28 my said son Thomas Barton and to his heirs forever. **Item:** I desire **my**
loving brother Mr. Robert
29 **Oliver of Leybourne**²⁰⁹ and my kinsman **Mr. Robert Oliver, his son,** to be
overseers of this my
30 testament and last will. In witness whereof, I, the said Thomas Barton,
have hereunto set my

209 about seven miles from Hadlow

31 hand and seal the day and year first above written. Thomas Barton.
Sealed, signed and declared
32 to be the testament and last will of me the said Thomas Barton in the
presence of us **Robert**
33 **Oliver and John Keobbe**²¹⁰, his mark.

²¹⁰ was this John Keeble, Susan's husband?

The Bartons of Seal

Only one will has survived for a Barton of Seal and that dates from eighty years before the first record in the parish register. This is the will of Richard Barton dated 11th August 1497; it was written in English and a transcript is given below.

Information on the later Bartons of Seal has been obtained from the parish registers with a gap of eighty years between Richard and the Adam who was father of four children born between 1577 and 1586. Adam had a son, grandson and great-grandson, all called Thomas so that, in the latter half of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth, the Bartons were a thriving Seal family.

Sixteen Barton wills from Hadlow and East Peckham, written between 1530 and 1645 have survived and details of these are given in [The Bartons of Hadlow](#). There does not appear to be any connection between the two sets of Bartons except that, in 1624, Anthony Barton of East Peckham left twenty shillings to the poor of Seal.

Richard Barton, will 1497

Richard was married but does not appear to have had any children; his executors, John Lamporte of Seal and John Olyver of Kettles, were each left the extremely high payment of £10 compared with what executors were usually given - 3s 4d being a common amount even when the will would have been quite difficult to administer. However Richard's executors would have faced a number of problems, the bequests made by Richard including:

- 20 marks to be paid to Richard's godson over 13 years
- an annuity of 40s to Richard's wife, Lucy, for the rest of her life
- 40s to Richard's kinsman to be paid over 6 years
- 3s 4d per year to be paid to Seal church and 3s 4d per year to Kemsing church for **28 years** for an annual obit.

How was the money for this to be organised? Excluding Lucy's annuity but including money to the church and the poor at his burial and month's mind, the ornaments for the churches and the costs of probate, etc. the total would have been over approaching £40, £60 when the payments to the executors are included. There is no mention of income from land which could have paid for these bequests. If Richard had this money, plus that for the annuity, as capital, would his executors be expected to invest and manage this over a long period of time?

John Olyver died in 1512 (see Olyvers) which would just have seen the payments made to Richard's godson but have left another thirteen years for the obits.

Will of Richard Barton

written 11th August 1497

transcript from probate copy; CKS: Drb/Pwr 5.295

1 In dei nom. Amen. The 11th day of August the year of
2 our lord 1497. I, Richard Barton of Seal,
3 whole in mind, do make my testament. **First:** I bequeath
4 my soul and my body to be buried in the churchyard
5 of Seal aforesaid. **Item:** I bequeath to the high altar
6 for my tithes forgotten 3s 4d. **Item:** I bequeath to
7 . . . to pray for me 3s 4d. **Item:** I bequeath
8 to 3 priests? being dirige the mass and to poor folks on the day
9 of my burying 6s 8d. And at my month's day to 5 ?
10 and poor folk 20s. And I bequeath to **Richard Payth', my**
11 **godson,** 20 marks ? to be paid by my executors, or by their
12 assigns, in the space of 13 years next after my decease, that

is to say, 20s yearly during twelve years and in the 13th year 26s 8d. And the first payment to be given at the feast of saint Michael tharchangel which shalbe in the year of our lord 1498²¹¹. Also I bequeath for an annual obit to be done for me and my friends in the church of Seal by the space of 28 years yearly 3s 4d, that is to say a dirige and a mass and the remnant to the poor people in like wise. I bequeath for an annual obit to be done for me and my friends in the church of **Kemsing** by the space of 28 years yearly 3s 4d, that is to say a dirige and a mass and the remnant to the poor people. Also I bequeath to every of my godchildren, when they can say their pater nostrum, 4d. Also I bequeath to the church of Seal, with the assent of **William Porter, the elder**, for the restoration? of the goods of canon²¹² 5 marks sterling. Also I bequeath to **Lucy, my wife**, all my household stuff and 40s yearly during her life to be paid by **John Lamporte and John Olyver, my executors** or by their assigns under this condition following: that if the

²¹¹ one mark was 13s 4d, two-thirds of a pound; therefore 20 marks was £13 6s 8d giving, as Richard Barton specifies, 12 payments of £1 and a final payment of £1 6s 8d. The first payment was to be made nearly 15 months after Richard wrote his will.

²¹² "restoration" is the only word which may have been read incorrectly but what does the phrase mean?

31 said Lucy, my wife, or her assigns, (by no manner ?? of
32 obligation, claim any other dowry And if the said Lucy or
33 her assigns)²¹³ claim any other dowry by obligation or by
34 any other thing, Then I will that she have no part of this
35 40s nor nothing of my said household stuff. Also I bequeath
36 to **Richard Boteler, my kinsman**, 40s to be paid by mine
37 executors, or their assigns, in the space of 6 years
38 next after my decease, that is to say, six yearly 6s 8d.
39 And if any money be left after my bequests and debts be
40 paid, then I will that it be disposed by the good disposition
41 and discretion of **John Lamporte of Seal and John Olyver of**
42 **Kettles** whom I ordain and make my executors that they
43 dispose of the said goods to the churches of Seal and Kemsing
44 an ornament where most need is for the health of my soul
45 and all my friends' souls. And I bequeath to my executors

213 the phrases in () seem superfluous; they could have been written in the original and not corrected or may be due to incorrect copying of the original into the probate book

46 every of them for their labour £10 sterling²¹⁴. witness: Sir William
 47 Yanson, vicar of Seal²¹⁵, John Dobell²¹⁶, Thomas Olyver²¹⁷ and others.

Adam Barton of Seal

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M	C	Died
#837	<u>BARTON, Adam</u>				1	4	23 Feb 1591 at about 40
• #839	<u>Barton, Sara</u>	27 Jan 1577			0	0	
• #924	<u>BARTON, William</u>	1 Nov 1579			0	0	
• #1177	<u>BARTON, Thomas</u>	26 Dec 1582			1	10	2 Dec 1638 age 56
			see below for his family				
• #1330	<u>BARTON, George</u>	30 Jan 1586			0	0	

214 there is no doubt that the amount in the probate book is £10; an error could, of course, have been made when the will was copied but, given the word "sterling", the amount must have been at least £1.

215 vicar of Seal from, at least, 1492 until his death in 1508 (A.C. Vol.20, p.265, Incumbents of Kemsing with Seal)

216 the will of a John Duple written in 1527 has survived

217 the will of Thomas Olyver of Seal (#3905) dated 1505 has survived

The Seventeenth Century Bartons

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M C	Died
#1177	<u>BARTON, Thomas</u>	26 Dec 1582	1602?		1 10	2 Dec 1638 age 56
#2081	<u>Margaret, his wife</u>				1 10	22 Aug 1637 in her 50s
• #2082	<u>BARTON, Thomas</u>	4 Sep 1603			3 8	
	see page b.264 for his marriages and family					
• #2083	<u>BARTON, William</u>	7 Sep 1606	26 Aug 1638	Anne Polhill	1 5	
			at 32 years			
	expected to be in the Knole MS of 1648 but was not included					
• • #3699	<u>BARTON, William</u>	15 Aug 1639			0 0	
• • #2197	<u>BARTON, Thomas</u>	5 Dec 1641			0 0	16 Jul 1643 19 mths
• • #2198	<u>Barton, Elizabeth</u>	24 Mar 1644			0 0	
• • #3700	<u>Barton, Mary</u>	4 Feb 1649			0 0	
• • #3701	<u>BARTON, George</u>	12 Sep 1651			0 0	
• #2084	<u>Barton, Margaret</u>	24 Jul 1608			0 0	14 Dec 1614 age 6
• #2085	<u>Barton, Jane</u>	4 Oct 1612			0 0	
• #2086	<u>BARTON, Adam</u>	13 Nov 1614	"son of Thomas & Margaret"		0 0	18 Jan 1638 age 24
• #2087	<u>BARTON, George</u>	16 Mar 1617	"son of Thomas & Margaret"		0 0	5 Oct 1638 age 21
• #2088	<u>Barton, Sara</u>	30 May 1619			0 0	
• #2089	<u>BARTON, Reynold</u>	31 Mar 1622			0 0	13 Apr 1622 2 wks
• #2090	<u>Barton, Margaret</u>	7 Mar 1624			0 0	
• #2091	<u>Barton, Susan</u>	18 Nov 1627			0 0	

In his will written at the end of June 1627, Thomas Rolfe of Seal gave "[unto the children of Thomas Barton, th'elder, of the parish of Seal . . . butcher, five pounds . . . to be put out for their uses, . . . until such time as that the youngest child shall come to the age of sixteen years. And to be equally divided betwixt the seven youngest children](#)". In the summer of 1627, Thomas Barton had a total of seven children including Thomas, the eldest (#2084), who was already married. Did Rolfe count the baby who would be baptised in the November as one of Thomas's children so that the eldest would be excluded from the inheritance? See [Rolfe](#) for more details.

An attempt has been made, on the next page, to assemble all the children whose father was a Thomas into a family. This has included showing #1177's eldest son marrying four times. The children #2187, #2188, #2189 are more likely to be #2082's children than #1177's. If all these children and wives "[of Thomas Barton](#)" belonged to the same Thomas, his third wife must have died soon after the birth of James. There could, of course, have been four different Thomas Bartons.

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M C	Died
#2082	<u>BARTON, Thomas</u> -----	4 Sep 1603			4	8
		listed in the Knole MS of 1648 for Stone Street and Bitchet				
	Marriage 1	22 May 1625(I)	Elizabeth Allyn	1 1		
		married at 21	#3942			
• #2186	<u>BARTON, Thomas</u>	12 Feb 1626			0	0
		"son of Thomas Barton, the younger"				
	Marriage 2					
#2185	<u>Mary, his wife</u> -----	<1605			1 5	5 May 1640 in her 30s/40s
		died 3 days after her son John was baptised				
• #2187	<u>Barton, Marie</u>	13 Sep 1629			0	0
• #2188	<u>Barton, Elizabeth</u>	18 Dec 1631			0	0
• #2189	<u>Barton, Sarah</u>	12 Jan 1634			0	0
• #2190	<u>BARTON, Adam</u>	23 Oct 1636			0	0
• #2191	<u>BARTON, John</u>	2 May 1640			0	0
	Marriage 3	>May 1640				
#2192	<u>Elizabeth, his wife</u> -----				1 1	1641?
• #2193	<u>BARTON, James</u>	15 Jun 1641	"son of Thomas & Elizabeth"		0	0
	Marriage 4	end 1641				
#2194	<u>Anne, his wife</u> -----				1 1	
• #2195	<u>Barton, Charity</u>	4 Aug 1642	"son of Thomas and Anne"		0	0

I, William Batt of Sydenham in the **parish of Lewisham** in the county of Kent, **husbandman**, being of good and perfect memory and in health of body, thanks be given to Almighty god, do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following: That is to say, **First:** I bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty god, my blessed saviour and redeemer, by the merit of whose obedience in his life and death, I trust to appear as righteous before god in the day of judgement. And I leave my body to be buried in the churchyard of Lewisham in hope to be united again unto my soul to live in happiness for ever at the blessed resurrection.

As for my worldly goods, which it hath pleased the lord in his mercy to bestow upon me: **First:** I give unto twenty of the poorest widows in the parish the sum of ten shillings to be distributed among them by the minister or churchwardens at the day of my burial.

As for my land left unto me by **my father, William Batt**, and which I now am quietly possessed of at the making of this will, it is my resolute mind and true will that, after my decease, it shall be equally divided, according to the custom on the country, between **my four daughters**, namely **Philip, the wife of John Lacy** and

Isabell, the wife of John Pidgeon and Jone, the wife of Robert Tolesberry and Alice, the wife of Nicholas Rundell, to remain unto them and to the heirs of the bodies of the said daughters, I bequeath for ever. And the one, for lack of issue, to be heir unto each other.

Further I do give unto my son-in-law Nicholas Rundell the sum of five pounds of lawful money of England to be paid unto him within one year after my decease.

As for the rest of my worldly goods, my debts, legacies and funeral discharged, my will is they shall be equally divided between my four daughters, Philip, Isabell, Jone and Alice. And I make and ordain my sons-in-law, John Pidgeon and Robert Tolesberry to be my full executors of this my last will and testament. And I desire **my loving friends, James Brinckhouse and Leonard Alderson** to be the overseers thereof. And I do give them for their pains three shillings and four pence a piece sterling. And in witness hereof I, the said William Batt, have set my hand and seal upon the eighteenth day of March above written unto this my last will and testament.

The mark of William Batt

John Becket of Seal

The will of John Becket of Seal (CKS: Drb/Pw 9; Drb/Pwr 13.505), written 6th October 1570 has survived and it is one of the few wills which has an inventory attached to it.

It is only from his will that we know that Johane Becket, whose marriage to John Holloway on 1st June 1572 was recorded, was his daughter and that he also had two sons. His son John could have been the John Becket who was neighbour and overseer to John Weekes in 1607.

The residue of John's goods, etc. was to be be equally divided between his wife, Margaret and John Harris. There is no clue as to the relationship between John Harris and the Becketts and no Harrises appear in the parish register until 1614.

An **Agnes Webb, widow**, was buried on 8th September 1571; she could have been Mother Webb living in the alms house in 1570 to whom John gave 4d.

	#634 John	-	Margaret #3969
will:	6 Oct 1570		
bur:	16 Oct 1570		

#3970		#3971	
John		Gilbert	
born:		#356	
		Johane ²¹⁸	- John Holloway
		<1548	
			#355

Will of John Becket of Seal

written 6th October 1570
transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. in
2 the year of our lord god 1570. And
3 in the 12th year of the reign of our
4 Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth.

218 John Holloway (#355) married Johane Becket on 1st June 1572 and they had three daughters (who all married) and two sons who died aged 5 and 2½; the wills of both John and Johane (who died in 1625 and 1635 respectively) have survived - see *holloway.will* for more details.

5 The 6th day of October, I, John Becket,
6 of the parish of Seal within the
7 county of Kent, being sick in body (but,
8 thanks to Almighty god) of perfect
9 mind and memory, do make my last
10 will and testament in manner and form
11 following: **First:** I bequeath my soul
12 into the hands of Almighty god, my saviour and
13 Redeemer and my body to be buried in Seal
14 churchyard aforesaid. **Item:** I give to **Mother**
15 **Webb**²¹⁹ of the almshouse of Seal 4d. **Item:**
16 I give to **John Becket and to Gilbert**
17 **Becket, my sons**, to every of them, 40s
18 in lawful money of England. **Item:** I
19 give to **Johane Becket, my daughter**,
20 40s likewise in lawful money of
21 England. The said 40s to be paid to
22 every of them at the end of one
23 year next after the day of my death.
24 And I will also that if any of my

219 An **Agnes Webb, widow**, was buried in Seal on 8th September 1571; she could have been Mother Webb living in the alms house in 1570.

25 two said sons and daughter do die
26 within the said year next after the
27 day of my death without lawful heirs
28 of their body, that then the other shall
29 enjoy his or their said portion or bequest
30 of 40s. **Item:** all the rest of my goods
31 and moveables unbequeathed, my debts
32 paid, I give to **Margaret, my wife**
33 **and to John Harris** equally to be divided
34 between them to their proper uses whom
35 I ordain and make my executors of this
36 my last will and testament. Witnesses:
37 **Gilbert Jenyns, clerk, vicar of**
38 **Kemsing and Seal, John Holloway, John Becket**²²⁰ with others

220 presumably the testator's son

The true inventory of all and singular the goods and moveables of John Becket, late of Seal where he lived, priced and valued by **James Holloway**²²¹, **William Tomlyn**²²² and **John a Court**²²³ of the parish of Kemsing and Seal and within the diocese of Rochester, the third day of January in the 13th year²²⁴ of the reign of our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth, as followeth²²⁵:

221 James Holloway who died in 1571 and whose will has survived, was John Holloway's father (Johane's father-in-law)

222 #61; he died in 1592, probably in his mid to late fifties; his will has survived see *tomlynw.will*

223 John Akourt had eight children baptised in Kemsing between 1561 and 1583; see More Families & Transcripts

224 practically three month's after John died

225 one "l" in original

In the hall

Impris a cupboard, a long table, a chair, 3 small stools	5s
--	----

In the chamber

Item	two flock beds, 2 bedsteads, 2 coverlets, 2 bolsters, 3 chests	13s 4d
------	--	--------

Item	his apparel: two russet coats a doublet of black fustian, a pair of hose, a hat	10s
------	--	-----

In Linen

Item	sheets, 8 pair; two tablecloths, two pillow beres	16s
------	---	-----

In the kitchen

Item	7 pieces of brass priced at	20s
------	-----------------------------	-----

Item	15 pieces of pewter ²²⁶ priced at	10s
------	--	-----

Item	a spit --, a pair of cobirons, a trivet, a gridiron, a dripping pan, a pair of tongs	2s
------	---	----

Item	3 tubs and other temperry	13s 4d
------	---------------------------	--------

Item	the chest priced at	4s
------	---------------------	----

226 assuming the pieces were, on average, approximately the same size, brass was more than twice as expensive as pewter

The cattell

Item	two oxen priced at	53s 4d
Item	three kine priced at	46s 8d
Item	sheep threescore	£7
Item	two mares and a colt	40s
Item	4 hogs	6s 8d
Item	a cock and 3 hens	16d
Item	in corn and hay	£5
		227

The debts that he owe at the hour of his death:

Item	to John a Court of Kemsing	21s
------	----------------------------	-----

The debts owing to him is nothing.

The Beechers of the Sevenoaks/Tonbridge Area

A large number of Beecher wills have survived for villages in the Sevenoaks/Tonbridge area (none from the towns themselves) but, except for the group from Penshurst/Leigh/Chiddingstone/Brasted, it has not been possible to connect the groups from different villages together. For the sake of completeness all the surviving wills are listed below. The earliest known Beechers are those recorded in the Seal. parish registers.

228	229		date of will	Ref:		
R William Beecher	x4	Leigh	1531	9.22		page b.281
R William Beecher	x6	Leigh	5 Apr 1558	12.271	6	page b.283
R Nicholas Beecher	x7	Leigh	4 Mar 1559	12.319	6	page b.285
R James Beecher	x8	Leigh	26 Feb 1567	13.298	9	page b.289
R John Beecher	x45	Leigh (Wickhurst)	20 May 1593 ²³⁰	18.499	17	page b.302

-
- 228** R - will proved at the Rochester Consistory Court; Ref: CKS: Drb/Pwr; Drb/Pw
P - will proved at the PCC; Ref: PCC: S: will proved at the Deanery of Shoreham; Ref: CKS
- 229** # indicates a reference in the Seal database, x in the database which covers a number of villages in the locality and people born in one village but living later in another location; "p" those in the Penshurst database.
- 230** "John Beecher of Wickhurst in Leigh" buried 19 Mar 1596 at Penshurst; will proved at Rochester on 27th April 1596; it was also proved at the PCC ten days later.

P	John Beecher	x45	Leigh, Wickhurst	20 May 1593	Drake	25	
R	John Beecher	#351	Seal	3 Jun 1566 ²³²	13.262	8	page b.323
R	Margaret Beecher	#617	Seal	18 Aug 1568 ²³³	13.375		page b.327
R	William Beecher	#260	Seal	16 Jan 1605 ²³⁴	191.441	20	page b.328
R	John Beecher (senior)		West Farleigh	30 Oct 1569 ²³⁵	14.260		page b.343
R	Elizabeth Beecher		West Farleigh	20 May 1578	16.7	12	page b.345
P	James Beecher	x57	Penshurst	13 Apr 1604 ²³⁶	Windebanck	45	page b.355
P	Anne Beecher	x62	Hever (Heaver)	8 Feb 1611	Wood	25	page b.361
S	Ann Beecher		Penshurst	Dec 1628	w/1/135	spinster ²³⁷	
S	Joan Beecher	x83	Penshurst	8 Dec 1635 ²³⁸	w/1/213		page b.363
S	Edward Beecher	x69	Penshurst	1635/6	w/1/214		page b.366

232 buried 8 Jun 1566

233 buried 23 Aug 1568

234 buried 29 Jan 1605

235 will proved proved 1575/6

236 James was buried, in Penshurst, on 3rd May 1604 but his will was not proved until four years later

237 see **Beecher in More Families & Transcripts** for the will of Ann Beecher of Penshurst

238 Joane Beecher, widow, was buried on 21st February 1635/6; her will was proved 9th March 1635/6

S	William Beecher	x118	Penshurst	23 Aug 1638 ²³⁹	w/1/226		page b.370
P	James Beecher	x61	Penshurst, Hever	27 Dec 1643	Rivers	71	page b.376
R	John Beecher		Capel	proved 1606		20	page b.380
R	John Beecher		Capel	19 Jun 1633	22.64	29	page b.381
P	Edward Beecher	x32	Brasted	12 Apr 1614	Lawe	36	page b.385
S	Edward Beecher	x23	Brasted	Sep 1616	w/1/145		page b.388
S	Andrew Beecher	x30	Brasted	18 Nov 1624 ²⁴⁰	w/1/193		page b.391
S	William Beecher	x42	Chiddingstone	31 Mar 1637	w/1/218		page b.398
P	James Beecher	x99	Chiddingstone	28 Feb 1638	Lee	150	page b.409
P	George Beecher	x113	Chiddingstone	24 Sep 1638	Harvey	35	page b.419
S	Richard Beecher	x33	Chiddingstone	15 Apr 1640	w/1/232		page b.401
P	Marie Beecher		Chiddingstone	23 May 1647	Essex	150	page b.403
P	Edward Beecher		Wrotham	12 Jan 1643/4	Essex	11	page b.428

239 William was buried, in Penshurst, on 26th August 1638; his will was proved 11th October 1638

240 proved 6 May 1631

Except for John of Wickhurst, all the PCC and Shoreham wills which have survived are from the seventeenth century. The transcript of Ann Beecher's will, CKS: Prw/w/1/135, is given in Beecher in More Families and Transcripts.

The will of John Beecher of Wickhurst in Leigh (x45) was written by Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne, who wrote a large number of wills between 1578 and 1618,. It was proved at both the PCC and RCC and, in addition to the probate copies, "originals" have survived for both courts. That at the PRO is decorated at the beginning and has Nicholas Hooper's decoration with his initials at the end whilst that at CKS does not have any decoration and is, presumably, a copy; it does not look to be in Nicholas Hooper's handwriting.

The will of William Beecher of Seal, written in 1605, includes some phrases which occur frequently in the wills written by **Nicholas Hooper** but the writing is not his and the name of **John Stace**, one of the witnesses, is written in a stylised form so that he could have been the scribe. Given the number of wills and other writing being carried out in the area by the Hoopers it is likely that other writers, some of whom might have been trained by the Hoopers, would use some of their phraseology.

Thomas Leddall wrote three of the surviving Chiddingstone wills and two of those from Penshurst. In that of Joane Beecher, widow of Penshurst, (1635) and that of

James Beecher in 1638, his name is followed by "scr." In the wills of William Beecher (1638) and Richard Beecher (1640), his name just appears as a witness. The end of the will of William Beecher of 1637 (x42) has not survived but the writing is very similar to the others and there are a number of phrases common to all the wills, for example "joyful resurrection" and "not well" which, whilst they may occur elsewhere, are not common. Leddall spells be as "bee" in a similar way to Nicholas Hooper but he does have two "l"s in "following".

Four of these Beechers whose wills have survived asked for a sermon to be preached at their funeral: James (x57) in 1604 and Anne (x62), his daughter, in 1611 (both of whom wanted Lawrence Decosse, parson of Chiddingstone, to preach the sermon, and George Beecher (x113) in 1638 and James Beecher (x61) in 1643. George requested that 20s be given to the minister who preached, the others 10s.

Bequests to the Poor

Thirteen of the total of twenty-seven Beecher testators whose wills have survived included bequests to the poor but none of those from Seal, West Farleigh or Capel.. They cover the whole period investigated and vary considerably within regard to both amount and when they are to be distributed:

x8 James Beecher Leigh	1567	poor men's box Chiddingstone	10s
		poor men's box Leigh	10s
x45 James Beecher Leigh	1593	boxes or chests of the poor, Penshurst	2s
		boxes or chests of the poor, Leigh	2s
x57 James Beecher Penshurst	1604	poor, distributed at burial	20s
x62 Anne Beecher Hever	1611	poor of Hever	20s
		poor of Chiddingstone, distributed at burial	20s
x23 Edward Beecher Brasted	1614	poor of Brasted, within 14 days of decease	20s
		poor of Bletchingley, within 14 days of decease	20s
x30 Andrew Beecher Brasted	1624	poor of Brasted, within six months of decease	20s

x83 Joane Beecher Penshurst	1635	poor at funeral	10s
x42 William Beecher Chiddingstone	1637	poor of Chiddingstone, within 1 year of decease	40s
x118 William Beecher Penshurst	1638	poor of Penshurst, within half year of decease	13s 4d
x113 George Beecher Chiddingstone	1638	poor at burial	20s
		poor, Sunday after burial	20s
		poor, one year after burial	20s
x99 James Beecher Chiddingstone	1638	poor of Chiddingstone, within 20 days after decease	20s
x33 Richard Beecher Chiddingstone	1640	poor of Chiddingstone, within 1 year of decease	20s
x61 James Beecher Penshurst	1643	poor of Penshurst, within 3 months of decease	40s
		poor of Chiddingstone, within 3 months of decease	40s

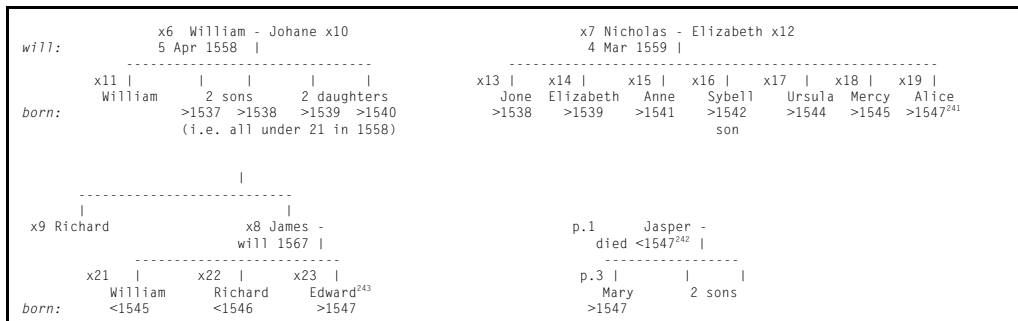
The Beechers of Leigh

Five Rochester Consistory Court wills from Leigh have survived but they do not give any indication of how the testators were related. The will written by William Beecher in 1531 has not been transcribed but he asked to be buried in the churchyard of Leigh “before the porch door”. This William could have been the father of the William who wrote his will in 1558.

William (x6, will 1558), Nicholas (x7, will 1559) and James (x8, will 1567) could have been brothers or cousins and James had a brother Richard whom he appointed his executor. James leaves £8 to the daughter of Jasper Beecher who also had two sons; Jasper Beecher was buried, in Penshurst, on 27th November 1560.

Nicholas, although he had six daughters, only mentions one son who had the unusual name (for a man) of Sybell. James had three sons, William, Richard and Edward so that it is unlikely that John Beecher of Wickhurst (x45, will 1593) was the son of either Nicholas or James. In addition to a son William, William had two sons born after 1537 and it is possible that one of these was John.

Individual trees can be produced from these three wills but give little information:



²⁴¹ all underage in 1559; dates given allow for only eighteen months between each birth and make Jone only a year under age; at the other extreme, Jone might have been under ten

²⁴² possibly the Jesper Beecher who was buried, in Penshurst, on 27th November 1560

²⁴³ this Edward could possibly have been the Edward Beecher of Brasted who wrote his will in 1616 with x22 the Richard of Brenchley mentioned by Edward as his brother (see page 9)

Three Early Wills

Will of William Beecher of Leigh 1558

written 5th April 1558

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The 5th day of April
2 in the year of our lord god 1558, I,
3 William Beecher of the parish of Leigh²⁴⁴ in the
4 county of Kent, **husbandman**, being in good
5 memory, thanks be to Almighty god, do make
6 my last will and testament in manner and
7 form following: **First:** I bequeath my soul
8 to Almighty god, my body to be buried within
9 the churchyard of Leigh aforesaid.
10 **Item:** I make **Johane, my wife**, my sole executrix
11 and I do give unto her and her heirs
12 all my moveables and one parcel
13 of ground, by estimation one acre
14 and half adjoining unto **Thomas Olyver**

15 to pay my debts. **Item:** I give unto **William,**
16 **my eldest son,** my house and the
17 residue of my lands paying unto his
18 **two brothers** £4 a piece and to his
19 **two sisters** three pounds that is to say 15s
20 a piece to be paid as they come to 18
21 years of age but, if it happen that any
22 of them, my said sons, die within
23 the years of 21 of their age that then
24 their portion to remain in William,
25 my eldest son's hands. **Item:**
26 I give unto Johane, my said wife, the
27 profits of my house and land
28 as long as she keep herself widow.
29 **Item:** I will that Johane, my wife, shall
30 repair th'end of the house which
31 I lately builded. **witnesses: John**
32 **Stace and Cristofer Gurley.**

1 In the name of god Amen. In the
2 year of our lord god 1558, the 4th day of
3 March, I, Nicholas Beecher, within the parish of
4 Leigh²⁴⁵, being whole in memory, thanks be unto
5 god, but sick in body, do make and ordain this
6 last will and testament in manner and form
7 following: **First:** I bequeath my soul to
8 Almighty god, my body to be buried within
9 the churchyard of Leigh. Also I will 4d
10 to be paid to the high altar by my executrix
11 at the day of my burial for my tithes
12 negligently forgotten. I will and bequeath to **my daughter**
13 **Jone** 20 nobles²⁴⁶ to be paid unto her by my executrix
14 when she shall come to the age of 21 years and if it
15 fortune that my foresaid daughter Jone to die

245 "Lygh" throughout

246 1 noble was 6s 8d, one-third £1, thus 20 nobles were £6 13s 4d

before she shall come to th'age of 21 years,
then I will that the foresaid 20 nobles to lie
dead and unpaid. Also I will and bequeath to my
daughter Elizabeth and unto **my daughter Anne**
either of them 20 nobles to be paid unto
them by the hands of my executrix when that
they, or either of them, shall come to the age
of 21 years as is aforesaid. And if it fortune
that my daughter Elizabeth or my daughter Anne to die
before they shall come to th'age of 21 years, then
I will that their portion so deceased shall lie dead
and unpaid²⁴⁷. Also I will that **my other 3 daughters,**
Ursula, Mercy and Alice, shall have, either of them,
20 nobles when that they, or either of them, shall
come to the age of 21 years, by the hands of my
son Sybell. And, if it fortune that my daughters,
Ursula, Mercy or Alice, to die before they come
to the age of 21 years, then I will that their

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this phrase "dead and unpaid" is most unusual; in addition, why were Jone, Elizabeth and Anne not all included together? Is this an indication that the will was "built up" as the testator's thoughts developed? First he specifies Jone's inheritance; then he realises his next two daughters should be treated in the same way. He has three more daughters but, although they are to eventually receive the same amount as their elder sisters, it is their brother rather than their mother who will be responsible for the payment.

34 portion so deceased shall lie dead and unpaid.
35 Also I will and bequeath to my son Sybell 2
36 kine and the ??²⁴⁸ of them to be kept to the
37 use of my said son until he come to th'age
38 of 21 years. The residue of all my goods and
39 cattell not bequeathed I give and bequeath to
40 **Elizabeth, my wife**, whom I do make and ordain
41 my sole executrix. Also I will that when my
42 son shall come to the age of 21 years that
43 Elizabeth, my wife, shall have the hall and the
44 two chambers at the upper end of the hall to her
45 use, dwelling in them herself during her life. Also I
46 will she shall have room to bake in the
47 kitchen. Also I will that then my son Sybell
48 shall provide firewood sufficient for my foresaid
49 wife's use. Also I will my wife shall have
50 the upper Meadow and ??
51 and make of grass in **Chekehouse meadow** to her use
52 during her life provided always that my
53 said wife shall to ?? and go her ??
54 not to ?? nor ?? during her life. Also

55 I will that if it please god to take Elizabeth,
56 my wife, to die ?? before Sybell, my son,
57 come to the age of 21 years, then I do ordain
58 and make ?? ?? and **John Children** to be
59 my executors. And to fulfil and pay all ??
60 legacies as then shall be unpaid
61 though that Elizabeth my wife ??
62 ?? And they to have in their behalf, their
63 charges borne out of my lands paid ??
64 that my executrix shall keep my housing.
65 ?? ??

66 This is the last will of me the foresaid
67 Nicholas Beecher, made the day and year above written
68 concerning all my lands and tenements set, lying and being in
69 Leigh, Chiddingstone and Sevenoaks or elsewhere
70 within the county of Kent. **First:** I will and bequeath
71 to my son Sybell my tenement called **Chekehouse**
72 set, lying and being in within the county of Kent
73 and in the parish of Leigh aforesaid, to him in fee
74 simple with all the appurtenances thereto
75 belonging with a parcel of ground called
76 ?? felden with a garden called ??

77 garden set, lying and being in the parish
78 of Leigh aforesaid. And 2 pieces of ground
79 called **Abion field** lying in the parishes of
80 Sevenoaks and Leigh aforesaid, to my foresaid
81 son Sybell in fee simple. Witnesses
82 **William Children, senior, John Ha...**
?? John ?? **John Children**

Will of James Beecher of Leigh 1567

written 26th February 1566/7
transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. the 26 day
2 of the month of February in the year of our lord god
3 according to the computation of the Church of
4 England 1566. I, James Beecher of the parish of
5 Leigh in the Diocese of Rochester and in the
6 county of Kent, **yeoman**, being of good and perfect
7 remembrance although sick in body, do make this
8 my last will and testament in manner and form
9 following, that is to say, **First:** I bequeath my soul
10 unto Almighty god and my body to be buried in

Christian burial where it shall please god to ap
point. **Item:** I give and bequeath all my cattle²⁴⁹
of what kind soever, those as well which now
remain in my possession as well as those my cattle
now being out to farm unto **William Beecher, Richard
Beecher and Edward Beecher, my sons**, equally to
be divided between them. **Item:** I give and bequeath
unto **my kinswoman, Mary Beecher, the daughter
of Jasper Beecher, deceased**, the sum of eight
pounds lawful money of England at the full age
of 20 years of the said Mary Beecher or at the day
of the marriage of the said Mary Beecher. And
if it happen the said Mary Beecher to depart
this world before her said age of 20 years or
day of marriage, then I will the said sum
of eight pounds shall remain unto **the sons
of the said Jasper Beecher** equally to be divided
between them. And if it happen either
of the said sons to depart this world before
the receipt of their portions of the said eight
pounds, then the survivor of either of them to have

249 "cattell" but here obviously means cattle

the whole. **Item:** I will and bequeath unto **Edward Beecher, my said son**, the sum of £21 17s lawful money of England which sum, my will and mind is that my executor hereafter named shall have the keeping during the term hereunder specified and shall keep and bring up my said son Edward to school with so much of the said sum of £21 17s as shall keep him from the day of probation of this my will until the full end and term of three years then next following. And at the end of the said term of three years, my will and mind is that the residue of the said sum of £21 17s as shall remain upon my executor's account allowed by the Ordinary or Chancellor of the said diocese of Rochester for the time being shalbe repaid and delivered unto the said Edward, his executors or assigns. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto my **said son Richard Beecher** all that my implements or stuff belonging to my team or plough of what name soever they be²⁵⁰. **Item:** I will and

250 this implies that there was not an agreed name for these implements

bequeath all my household stuff, as plate, bedding,
linen, woollen, brass and pewter unto William
Beecher, Richard Beecher and Edward Beecher,
my said 3 sons, equally to be divided between
them. **Item:** I give and bequeath the sum of 20s
lawful money of England to be paid by mine
executors hereunder named in manner and form
following, that is to say, 10s thereof to the poor
men's box of the parish of **Chiddingstone** within the
said county and 10s residue of the said sum
of 20s to the poor men's box of the parish of
Leigh aforesaid. The residue of all and
singular my goods, moveables and unmoveables,
not before given nor bequeathed, my debts
and legacies being first paid, I wholly give
and bequeath unto William Beecher, Richard
Beecher and Edward Beecher, my said sons,
equally to be divided between them. And if it
shall happen any of my said three sons to depart
this world, then I will the part of him or
them so deceased, of all and singular the said
goods to them bequeathed, to remain to the survivor
or survivors of them or either of them so deceased.

Item: I make and ordain **Richard Beecher,**
my brother, to be sole executor of this my last
will and testament and he to have for his
labour 20s lawful money of England over and
above his costs and charges in that behalf
sustained. Also I appoint **Walter Everest of**
Chiddingstone aforesaid to be supervisor of this
my said last will and testament and he to
have 10s lawful money of England over and above
all expenses borne to see this my will performed in all
points. **Item:** I will that the said Richard Beecher
shall have the keeping of my son Edward's part
of his goods before to him bequeathed until the said
Edward shall accomplish and come to his full
age of 18 years, the said Richard Beecher
putting in sufficient sureties unto **John Everest**
of Chiddingstone, aforesaid, yeoman, for the true
delivery of the said goods.

This is the last will and testament of
me, the said James Beecher, made the day and
year abovesaid of and upon the disposition of
all my lands and tenements, reparations?,

98 rents and services with their appurtenances set,
99 lying and being within the parish of Chiddingstone
100 in the county of Kent or elsewhere within
101 the same county, all which land and tenements
102 and other premises with thappurtenances, I
103 will and bequeath to William Beecher, Richard
104 Beecher and Edward Beecher, my 3 sons, and
105 to their assigns for and during all the term
106 of their natural lives equally to be shifted and
107 divided to and among them by the discretion of
108 Richard Beecher, my brother and executor
109 aforesaid. And, after the decease of the said
110 William Beecher, Richard Beecher and Edward
111 Beecher, or any of them, then I will that all and
112 singular the said land, tenements and other
113 the premises, with thappurtenances to remain
114 and be to their several heirs of their bodies
115 lawfully begotten. And if it shall happen that
116 the said William Beecher, Richard Beecher
117 and Edward Beecher, or any of them, to decease
118 without heirs of their bodies lawfully begotten,
119 that then I will that the remainder of his or
120 their part or parts of the said lands so deceased

121 shall remain unto the survivor or survivors of
122 the said 3 sons and to the heirs of their bodies
123 lawfully begotten. And for lack of such heirs
124 of the said three sons, then the remainder thereof
125 to the right heirs of me the said James Beecher
126 for ever. In witness whereof I have set to my
127 hand and seal in the presence of **Thomas**
128 **Robinson, Thomas Williams, Rowland Filie,**
129 **Edmund Tucker, writer.**

This will, written by Edmund Tucker, is not decorated at all.

John Beecher of Wickhurst in Leigh, 1593

The PRO will of John Beecher proved in 1596 is the same will as was proved in the Rochester Consistory Court. Dated 20th May 1593, it was written by Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne, who wrote many wills for villagers in the neighbourhood and this is a very interesting will and also very long - 10½ pages in the probate book, six pages in the original and written on both sides of the paper.

Wickhurst is just over a mile northwest of the centre of Leigh. Although John gave his parish as Leigh, he asked to be buried in Penshurst and he left money to the poor boxes in both parishes. Many of the Beechers in the Leigh, Chiddingstone, Penshurst area seem to have had connections in a number of parishes. By the 1630s Wickhurst was owned by James Beecher of Hale in the parish of Chiddingstone who wrote his will in 1638.

John's burial was recorded on 19th March 1596, nearly three years after he had written his will but, in 1593, he was in "reasonable good health of body . . notwithstanding lame and sundry wise visited with grief".

How (or if) he was connected to the earlier Beechers shown above is not known. Since he had four sons who all seem to have been over twenty-one when he wrote his will, he must have been born in the 1530s.

He had been extending and furnishing his mansion house and his joined table, all the ceiling and wainscot work in the new hall at Wickhurst and the glass in the windows was all to remain as standard and implements there, "without alteration for ever".

Unusually for a yeoman with a mansion house which he was obviously improving, only one bed is listed amongst his bequests but the item of furniture which did feature prominently was the chest, a total of seven being itemised in his will - see

Table Beecher.1 below. At least four of these, those given to Robert and Anne, were in the chamber in which he lay and in the two given to Robert he kept a variety of implements and goods all of which Robert was to have except for those "writings" which did not concern the lands and tenements given to Robert.

His wife Margaret was to have the liberty to reap and carry away her corn and firewood at any time within one year after John's decease "[without paying anything for standing of the same corn or other commodity](#)". The mention of all the victuals in the house at the time of his death is an unusual bequest.

Providing she did not remarry, Margaret was to "[enjoy during the whole term of her natural life](#)" all the new hall and entry of the tenement called Wickhurst "[together with all the chambers or lofts over the same and all the other rooms commonly called the new building with the occupation of all such stuff as I have left as standards there with free liberty to come, go, carry and recarry to and from the same by and through all usual ways and grounds which I now use, or have used, at her and their will and pleasure](#)." Thus, particularly if Margaret was a second, younger wife, it could have been some years before John junior came into complete possession of his inheritance.

Margaret was also to have "[free liberty to come and go to and from the water in the close there and free liberty there to wash . . . and free occupancy of the garden and orchard adjoining to the said new building . . . and also that my said son John](#)

. . shall provide . . one good and lawful coard²⁵¹ or load of wood towards her fuel without anything therefore to be paid. And also that my said son John, . . shall at his . . cost and charges well and orderly keep for my said wife, upon the land herein to him willed, one cow for her to be provided winter and summer as a milk cow ought to be kept without fraud or guile without anything therefore to be paid for the whole term of her said widowhood or else will well and truly pay, or cause to be paid, a consideration of the keeping of the said cow the sum of twenty shillings at (her) the free choice.”

Table Beecher 1:

Items Bequeathed by John Beecher of Wickhurst, 1593

wife, Margaret (x52)	<p>a cloak which had belonged to John's daughter-in-law "all my household stuff and instuff whatsoever not by me willed or delivered"</p> <p>two of the best kine, to be taken at her choice the corn as well on the ground as other wheresoever all the provision of victuals for house being there at the time of his decease all the fire wood cut down before his decease</p>
son, Robert (x50)	<p>one joined chest one chest of plankbox one plain bedstead one coverlet coloured blue and red one white blanket my second feather bolster my second harrow</p>
daughter, Anne (x54)	<p>two joined chests, one directly and one when her mother died</p>
daughter, Ellen (x53)	<p>one joined chest "commonly called her own chest"</p>
sons, Richard & Robert	<p>all his wearing apparel except one cloak</p>

son, Richard (x49)	one chest called his own chest one chest of plank board such goods and implements as shall be in them at the time of my decease. coverlet coloured yellow and red russet blanket my best feather bolster an iron pot with a pair of iron pot hooks
son, Edmond (x51)	residue

John, the testator's eldest son (x48), does not feature in Table 1 but he was to receive the mansion house of Wickhurst and all that went with it. Richard and Robert did receive some land and Edmond, his father's executor, was to have "[all that new house, with barn thereunto belonging, lately built . . upon a meadow called Round Comen together with the close, garden, orchard and five parcels of land and meadow](#)" but the inheritances of John and Edmond did carry a number of obligations.

As the major heir, John (and his heirs forever) was to be responsible for making and keeping all the hedges and fences dividing the lands bequeathed to him and the lands left to Richard and Robert. He also had to allow sufficient ditch room by the fence "[for the better keeping of the fence](#)".

In his will, John Beecher of Wickhurst mentioned land which he had "lately" purchased from John Beecher of Penshurst (deceased in May 1593 when John of Wickhurst wrote his will) and his son James. It could be this James whose will dated 13th April 1604 has survived.

Will of John Beecher of Leigh 1593

written 20th May 1593; proved 27th April 1596

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The 20th day of May in the year of our lord
2 one thousand, five hundred, ninety three. And the
3 five and thirtieth year²⁵² year of the reign of our Sovereign
4 lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England,
5 France and Ireland, defender of the faith, I, John
6 Beecher of **Wickhurst** in the parish of **Leigh** in the
7 county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at the time of
8 making hereof in reasonable good health of body
9 and of perfect mind and remembrance, thanks
10 therefore be given to Almighty god, But yet notwithstanding
11 lame and sundry wise visited with grief, putting me

252 "1593" and "35th" in original

in remembrance of my last end and of mine estate
and condition, And therefore do ordain and make
this my present testament and last will in manner
and form following, that is to say, **First:** and principally
I give, commend and bequeath my soul into the hands
of Almighty god, my maker, and to Jesus Christ, his
dear son and my only saviour and redeemer by whose
merit, precious death and blood shedding I hope
to be saved and my body to be buried, at the discretion
of mine executor hereafter named, in the church
of **Penshurst** in the said county. **Item:** I will and
bequeath unto the boxes or chests of the poor within
the parishes of Leigh and Penshurst aforesaid two
shillings a piece. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Robert
Beecher, my son**, two chests standing in the chamber
wherein I lie at Wickhurst whereof one joined and
the other of plankbox, together also with (all)
implements and goods whatsoever which I (have in)
the same chest, or either of them, at the time of my
decease (except such writing as shall happen to be
therein which shall not concern such lands and
tenements as shall not herein be given to the said
Robert, my son). I will that my table being joined

and all sealing²⁵³ and wainscot work being now
in the new hall at my said mansion house called
Wickhurst and glass in the windows there shall there
remain as standard and implements without
alteration for ever. **Item:** I bequeath to **my daughter,**
Anne, two joined chests being in the chamber wherein
I now lie, one of them to be delivered presently
after my decease and the other after the decease of
her mother, my wife. **Item:** I give and bequeath
to **Ellen, my daughter**, one joined chest, which
is commonly called her own chest, to be delivered to
her presently after my decease. **Item:** I give and
bequeath to **Richard and Robert Beecher, my sons,**
equally between them, all my wearing gear
and apparel whatsoever except one cloak which
was my daughter-in-law's which I give unto my
wife. Also I give unto the said Richard one
plain bedstead, also two chests, one called his
own chest and the other of plank board at Wickhurst
aforesaid being together, also such goods and
implements as shalbe in them at the time of my

56 decease. Also one coverlet coloured yellow and red,
57 one russet blanket, my best feather bolster and mine
58 iron pot with a pair of iron pot hooks. **Item:** I give
59 and bequeath to Robert Beecher, my son, one
60 plain bedstead standing at Wickhurst, one coverlet
61 coloured blue and red, one white blanket, my
62 second feather bolster and my second harrow. **Item:**
63 I will and bequeath to **Margaret, my wellbeloved wife,**
64 all my household stuff and instuff whatsoever not
65 by me willed or delivered, also two of my best kine,
66 to be taken at her choice, and also my corn,
67 as well on the ground as other wheresoever, with the
68 liberty to reap, have and carry away the same at her
69 will and pleasure and her assigns with also all my
70 provision of victuals for house being at the time
71 of my decease. And also all my wood whatsoever
72 which shalbe provided and cut down before my
73 decease for firewood in my close or any other my
74 ground (except timber) with also liberty at any time
75 within one year next after my decease for
76 carrying away of the same without paying any
77 thing for standing of the same corn or other commodity
78 before to her given and without let or demand of my

executor or any other person or persons whatsoever by
his means or procurement. The residue of all my . .
and cattells whatsoever, as well moveable as immove
able, and also my leases and profits of lands mentioned
in any of the same (my debts and legacies being
paid and performed, I wholly, fully and with good
effect, intent and purpose, give and bequeath to
Edmond Beecher, my son, which Edmond I do
ordain and make my whole and sole executor of
this my present testament and last will, to see the
same proved and my body honestly brought to the earth.

This is the last will of me the said **John Beecher,**
the elder, made and declared the day and year
above written concerning the order and disposition
of all my lands, tenements and hereditaments
with thappurtenances situated, lying and being
in the parishes of Leigh and Penshurst aforesaid
or elsewhere. And first I will and bequeath
to **John Beecher, my eldest son,** all that
mansion house or tenement called Wickhurst with
thappurtenances, one barn, one outhouse and all the
closes, gardens and orchards thereto adjoining and

belonging and also seven parcels of land with thappurtenances
thereto also adjoining called **Little Spelfeld, Greater
Spelfeld, Little Sedcopp, Greater Sedcopp, Lancefeld,
Scoppit** and the new lane or by any other
name or names whatsoever the same or any of them
be now, or heretofore have been, called or known by,
containing, in the whole, by estimation, 18 acres
whether more or less thereof be had together, situated,
lying and being in Leigh aforesaid. And also one
parcel of meadow called **Wickhurst meadow** or by what
other name the same is called containing, by
estimation, four acres lying and being in Leigh
aforesaid, to have and to his hold all the said messuage
or tenement and all other premises with all
and singular thappurtenances unto my said eldest son,
John Beecher during the whole term of his
natural life. And after his decease, the same with
all and singular thappurtenances to remain to the
heirs male of the body of the said John, my son,
lawfully begotten or to be begotten, forever. And for
lack of such heirs male, then I will all the said
messuage and all and every other the premises with
thappurtenances shall remain to the right heirs

124 of the body of me the said John Beecher, thelder
125 forever. Furthermore, my will is that my said
126 son John and his heirs forever shall, at his
127 and their costs and charges, make and keep all
128 the hedges and fence dividing the lands to him
129 afore willed and the lands hereafter willed to
130 my sons Richard and Robert called **Dartnolle**
131 **meade** and I will that my said son John and his
132 heirs shall have a sufficient ?? ditch room upon the
133 said Dartnolle mead close by the same fence at his and
134 their will and pleasure for the better keeping of the
135 fence aforesaid. **Item:** I give and bequeath to my
136 sons Richard and Robert Beecher all those
137 parcels of land and meadow with all
138 thappurtenances called **Little Milfeild, Great (Milfeild?),**
139 **Broome Croft, Hamstand Wood** with a barn
140 upon, built being . . . and Dartnolle or
141 whatsoever name or names, the names . . .
142 or any of the same are or have been called
143 by, containing, by estimation, twenty acres
144 more or less together, lying and being in **Penshurst**
145 aforesaid or Leigh aforesaid or in any other . . .
146 whatsoever together also with such way and . . .

147 leading to the said parcels as I do now and
148 have commonly used leading from the highway
149 at **Haleoke**²⁵⁴. To have and to hold the said parcels
150 of land and meadow and barn, withall and singular
151 thappurtenances, together with the way aforesaid, to
152 Richard Beecher and Robert Beecher, my sons,
153 to the only use of them, the said Richard Beecher
154 and Robert Beecher, my sons, and to their heirs
155 forever. **Item:** I give, will and bequeath to **Edmond**
156 **Beecher, my son**, all that new house, with
157 barn thereunto belonging, lately built and
158 in and upon a parcel of meadow called
159 **Round Comen** together with the close, garden,
160 orchard and five parcels of land and meadow,
161 sometimes but three sendalls and called the
162 round common and long common, containing in the
163 whole, by estimation eight acres whether more
164 or less, together situated, lying and being in the parish
165 of Penshurst aforesaid. And which three parcels, now

254 there is a Hale Oak Farm about 1½ miles southwest of Sevenoaks Weald and 1½ miles north of Penshurst

166 five sendalls²⁵⁵, with the said house, barn, close, garden
167 and orchard, I, the said John Beecher the elder, late
168 had and purchased of **one, John Beecher, late of**
169 **Penshurst aforesaid, yeoman, deceased.** And also one
170 other parcel of meadow called **long meadow** or
171 by whatsoever other name it is, or hath been, called
172 containing, by estimation, two acres whether more
173 or less, lying in Penshurst aforesaid over against
174 the land called long comen and lately by me
175 purchased of **James Beecher²⁵⁶, son of the said John**
176 **Beecher,** to have and to hold all the said new house,
177 barn, close, garden and orchard and five parcels
178 of land and meadow and the said other parcel
179 called long meadow withall and singular thappurtenances
180 unto the said Edmond Beecher, my son, and to his
181 heirs forever. **Item:** I will that the said Edmond,
182 my son, his heirs or assigns, shall pay, out of the lands
183 and tenement to him and them before willed, to my
184 said wife or her assigns, for and toward the bringing

255 above it appears to have been five parcels or three sendalls

256 the will of James Beecher of Penshurst was proved in 1608

185 up of my daughter Anne, one annuity
186 or annual rent of twenty shillings lawful money
187 to be paid to the said Margaret, my wife, or
188 her assigns, half yearly, viz. Michaelmas and
189 Annunciation, by equal portions until my said daughter
190 Anne, shall accomplish her full age of fifteen years
191 (if she so long live). And also for and toward the
192 bringing up of Ellen, my daughter, one other
193 annuity of twenty shillings lawful money
194 half yearly, by equal portions, at the same feasts
194 to be paid until my said daughter, Ellen,
196 shall attain to her full age of 15 years (if she
197 so long live). And also shall pay, out of his
198 said land before to him willed, unto my daughter Anne
199 the sum of £6 13s 4d to be paid at
200 her full age of twenty years if
201 then living. Also to my said daughter Ellen, at her
202 full age of one and twenty years, if still
203 living, the like sum of £6 13s 4d without
204 fraud or connivance. And if it happen either of
205 the annuities to be unpaid . . . lawful for
206 Margaret and her assigns and her daughters
207 to enter the lands bequeathed to Edmond and distrain

208 to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.
209 Provided always, and my very will and intent is,
210 that the said Margaret, my wellbeloved wife, and
211 her assigns shall have, hold, possess and enjoy
212 during the whole term of her natural life
213 (if she so long keep herself sole and unmarried)
214 all the new hall and entry, parcel of the said tenement
215 called Wickhurst together with all the chambers or lofts
216 over the same and all the other rooms commonly called
217 the new building with the occupation of all such
218 stuff as I have ?? standards there with
219 free liberty to come, go, carry and recarry to and
220 from the same by and through all usual ways and
221 grounds which I now use, or have used, at her and
222 their will and pleasure. Also free liberty to come
223 and go to and from the water in the close there
224 and free liberty there to wash at her and their
225 will and pleasure during the term aforesaid.
226 And also the free occupancy of the garden and orchard
227 adjoining to the said new building now into two
228 sendalls divided with free liberty to go and come,
229 carry and recarry, to and from the same by and
230 through all the ways aforesaid, at her and her assigns

231 will and pleasure during all the said term without
232 let of the said John or his heirs or any other person
233 or persons by his or their means or preferment and
234 also that my said son John, and others to whom the
235 premises shall appertain, shall provide and lay near
236 the said new building where the same shalbe appropriate
237 by my said wife yearly during the said term
238 (if my said wife shall and will dwell there so long)
239 one good and lawful coard²⁵⁷ or load of wood towards
240 her fuel without anything therefore to be paid.
241 And also that my said son John, his heirs or assigns,
242 and others to whom the premises to him willed shall
243 appertain, shall at his or their like cost and
244 charges well and orderly keep for my said wife,
245 upon the land herein to him willed, one cow for
246 her to be provided winter and summer as a milk
247 cow ought to be kept without fraud or guile
248 without anything therefore to be paid for the
249 whole term of her said widowhood or else
250 will well and truly pay, or cause to be paid, a

257 a cord of wood was a pile of wood such as split up roots and trunks of trees stacked for fuel and should measure 8 feet long by 4 feet high by 4 feet wide

251 consideration of the keeping of the said cow
252 the sum of twenty shillings lawful money
253 yearly to be paid without fraud or guile at the
254 free choice of her the said Margaret. Also I will
255 that all and every the annuities before by me
256 granted to any person or persons shall begin
357 at the next Michaelmas or Annunciation next
258 after my decease. And I ordain and appoint my
259 friend and **brother-in-law Thomas Water**
260 **stone** to be supervisor and overseer of this my will
261 to whom I will, for his pains herein to be taken
262 over and above his expenses the same
263 to be laid out, 3s 4d. Provided also that if
264 Edmond, my son and executor before named shall
265 refuse the probation of this my will or shall happen
266 to be in his ?? affairs or otherwise
267 letted that he cannot prove the same within three
268 months next after my decease, then I will and
269 ordain the said **Thomas Waterstone** to be my ??
270 and sole executor of this my will and for
271 the use of my said executor to see the same
272 fulfilled and proved, as much is within him
273 lie, according to the true meaning hereof

274 residing, as if my son Edmond had proved
275 anything also herein before mentioned to the contrary
276 hereof, in any wise, notwithstanding provided,
277 and my full purpose, will, intent and ??
278 is that, if my said son John Beecher shall, at any
279 time in his life time advisedly, determinately or
280 purposely, attempt or go about to sell the said land
281 and tenements, or any of them, herein before to him
282 willed and entailed or otherwise to alter, break or infringe²⁵⁸
283 the entail herein by me set down by any art or deed
284 whatsoever well proved, contrary to the true sense
285 and meaning of the same or shall, at any time in
286 his said life time, fell or cut down any the woods
287 or trees or any of them standing and growing in
288 and upon any of the land to him willed other than
289 for necessary timber for the needful reparation of the
290 houses afore to him willed and for needful hedge boot
291 and tenet to be employed only upon the said land, or
292 any of them to him given, That then the heirs
293 male of his body next entail, if any be, or other
294 my right heirs, shall immediately after such art or

258 "infringe" in the original

295 arts duly proved, enter upon all and every the
296 said land and tenements herein to him willed,
297 withall and singular thappurtenances. And the same,
298 withall and singular thappurtenances shall hold to
299 him and to his heirs forever in as ample and
300 large manner and form, to all effect and intent
301 whatsoever, as if my said son John were presently
301 dead (anything also whatsoever in this present
302 contained to the contrary hereof in any wise
303 notwithstanding. And lastly, whereas all my
304 lands and tenements for the most part willed
305 to **my sons, John, Richard and Robert** are contained
306 altogether in several evidence thereof heretofore
307 made now in my custody and keeping, my
308 will and mind is that **my said son Edmond** and
309 his heirs shall forever hereafter have the keeping
310 of all and every the same writings
311 concerning the land to them, and of them,
312 willed and that at any time whensoever, the said John,
313 Richard or Robert or their heirs shall come bringing
314 with him or they, for that purpose, two honest men
315 whereof one of them to be skilful in reading and
perusing of the same shall, at all lawful times,

316 and upon request thereof made, have the view and
317 oversight of all and every the same and shall take
318 out any copy or copies of the same at his or
319 their charge. **In witness whereof I**, the said John
320 Beecher, the elder, to this my present last will and
321 testament have set my hand and seal
322 the day and year first above written. In the
323 presence of **Robert Bourdman, Samuella Turk,**
324 **William Evan, James Beecher, Thomas Turk,**
325 and of me, **Nicholas Hooper²⁵⁹**, writer hereof,
and others.

259 "Hooper" is here (in the RCC probate copy) abbreviated to "Hoop"; this hardly seems worthwhile given that this copy was 10½ pages

The Seal Beechers

In Seal, there was basically just one Beecher family: John (#351), a yeoman who died in 1566 and his eldest son, William (#260), a millwright who died in his sixties in 1605. In March 1532, Richard Christopher (a family subsequently, at least, closely connected to the Beechers) left **Katherine Beecher**, his goddaughter, 6s 8d but there is no other mention of a Katherine.

The Olyvers, another large Seal family, were also connected with the Beechers; John Beecher (#351) witnessed the will of Thomas Olyver of Fawke (#233) in 1562 and Thomas Olyvers's two sons, John (#70) and Robert (#136), witnessed the wills of both John Beecher and his wife, Margaret (#617).

In 1541, when Gilbert Biggyns wrote his will, John Beecher was living in Gilbert's "messuage or tenement" which was to be sold on his wife's death.

In 1648 a list of the householders of Seal was made but no Beechers are mentioned. It appears that, by the middle of the seventeenth century, there were no Beecher families remaining in Seal..

The Family of John Beecher

[illegible]

- 260 Thomas and John were both underage and apprentices when their father died; Margaret was probably the
eldest and married by 1566 but the other three were not married at that time; they have been entered in the
order in which they were given in the wills of both their father and mother
- 261 John married **Sidney Oxley** (#1657) on 3rd May 1593 when he was 26 by which time he was the **minister of
Rotherfield in Sussex**; no children were recorded but they would have lived in Rotherfield. Sydney could have
been the daughter of **John Oxley** (#460) - see **Oxley**
- 262 probably died before the birth of #834 and, given the short interval between the two births, probably at a very
early age.

William Beecher of Seal

William married three times; his first two wives (aunt and niece) were from the large Christopher family:

- married Johane Christopher on 13th May 1565; Johane and three of her four brothers were over 21 when their father, William Christopher (#257) died at the end of 1562 so that she was born, at the latest, in 1541, probably a few years earlier
- married 12th February 1593 when Agnes was 22 and William about 53; she was almost exactly the same age as William Beecher's eldest daughter, also called Agnes.
- Agnes must have died before 1605 since, when William died his wife was "Marie".

William had ten children by his first and second wives but, unfortunately, nothing is recorded in Seal for any of these children except the eldest son, another John, who married a woman from Seal and became minister of Rotherfield in Sussex where the family may have settled.

John and Margaret's children other than William, are known only from the wills but William, probably born about 1540, was a man of some position in Seal in the

latter part of the sixteenth century. With his brother-in-law **James Christopher (#155)**, he was the executor of the will of his mother-in-law, **Margaret Christopher (#258)** who died at the end of 1576. In 1577, he witnessed James's will and also that of another of his brothers-in-law, **Thomas Christopher (#794)**.

In 1591 William suffered a burglary. "At Maidstone Assizes, on July 1 1591, **Abel Taylor of Maidstone, labourer**, was indicted for grand larceny. On 29 June 1591, he stole into the house of **William Beecher at Seal** and stole a sheet (2s), a tablecloth (2s) and a cloak (5s). On 29 June 1591 at Seal, he stole a sheet (2s) and a yardkerchief (6d) from **Thomas Lake (#1789)**. Guilty, allowed clergy"²⁶³.

In his will William refers to his "eldest daughter Dorothy" whose married name was Pococke and his "youngest daughter Dorothy". Agnes was William's eldest daughter but he had two called Dorothy, one by his first wife, baptised in 1573 and another, twenty-two years later, by his second wife. William also mentions his three grandsons, Robert, William and Nicholas Pococke.

The 1565 will of Robert Pococke or Peacock of Seal has survived but, by the end of the century, there were Pocockes in Sevenoaks but not in Seal. No marriage of Dorothy Beecher to a Pococke is recorded in Sevenoaks but "**Robert Pococke son of**

-- Pocock of Seal" was baptised there on 26th February 1598; he could have been Dorothy's son.

William must have been approaching sixty when he married his third wife, Marie, who is known only from his will and the "writing" concerning the transfer of some land to Richard Pelsett; a transcript of this writing is included (see page b.336)

The Seal Wills

Will of John Beecher of Seal 1566

written 3rd June 1566; buried 8th June 1566

transcript from the original

1 In the name of god Amen. The 3 day of June in
2 the year of our lord god 1566 in the 8th year of the
3 reign of our sovereign lady Elizabeth, by the grace of god,
4 Queen of England, France and Ireland, defender
5 of the faith, I, John Beecher of the parish of Seal
6 within the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being sick in body
7 but, thanks unto almighty god, sound and perfect of
8 memory, do make my last will and testament in form
9 following²⁶⁴: **First**: I bequeath my soul into the hands
10 of almighty god, my saviour and redeemer, and my body
11 to be buried in the churchyard of Seal. **Item**: I
12 give and bequeath to **Margaret, my daughter**, 6s 8d
13 good lawful money of England to be paid with
14 in one year after my decease. **Item**: I give to **Agnes**,

264 one "I", i.e. "following"

15 **Johane and Dorothy, my daughters**, to each of them
16, three pounds of good and lawful money of England
17 to be paid unto them at the day of their marriage²⁶⁵.
18 And if it happen any of them to de
19 part this present life before the day of
20 their marriage, the one to be the others heir of
21 the said bequest²⁶⁶. **Item:** all the rest of my goods
22 and moveables unbequeathed, I give unto
23 **Margaret, my wife**, paying my debts and fulfilling
24 my bequests and legacies, whom I ordain
25 and make my sole executrix of this my
26 last will and testament.

27 This is the last will and testament of me, John
28 Beecher, concerning my lands ?? at
29 **Holenden within the parish of Leigh**²⁶⁷.
30 **Item:** I give and bequeath all the said land called

265 perhaps Margaret, the eldest daughter, was already married and had had a dowry although when their mother died in 1568 she lists all her children other than William as if they were not married

266 what if one or more of them did not marry?

267 spelt "Lighe" which was the usual spelling

31 **Le Hoppes** with the appurtenances unto **William Beecher, my son,**
32 and to his heirs forever paying unto **Thomas Beecher, my son,** £11
33 good and lawful money of England. That is to say in manner
34 and form following: five pounds to be paid unto
35 him at the Annunciation of the virgin Mary
36 next after the said Thomas shall come out
37 of his apprenticeship.
38 And that day two years next after six
39 pounds more, the full content of the
40 aforesaid £11. Paying furthermore unto
41 **John Beecher, my son,** £11 of good and
42 lawful money of England in manner
43 and form following: that is to say five
44 pounds at the feast of the Annunciation
45 of the virgin Mary next after
46 he shall come out of his apprenticeship
47 and that day two years next after six pounds
48 more in full contentment of the aforesaid £11
49 To have and to hold all the aforesaid
50 lands called **Le Hoppes** with the
51 appurtenances to the said William Beecher,
52 my said son, and to his heirs forever.
53 and I will the foresaid payments to be

54 paid to every of them, at the several
55 days above written, at my house that
56 I now dwell in at **Fawke** in the parish
57 of Seal by William, my son, his
58 heirs, executors, assigns or administrators.
59 **Item:** I will also if the one depart this
60 present life before the said money be
61 paid, the other to be his heir of the fore
62 said money. And for lack of payment
63 of the said money or any part or parcel
64 thereof, that then it shalbe lawful
65 for the said Thomas and John, my
66 sons, to enter and possess the said
67 lands called Le Hoppes to them
68 and to their heirs forever. These
69 being witness **Gilbert Jenyns²⁶⁸**, clerk,
70 **John Olyver, Robert Olyver and Henry Johnson.**

268 vicar of Seal from 1561 to 1602; could have written the will

Although Margaret's will is definitely nuncupative, according to the parish register Margaret was buried five days after it was written.

1 In the name of god Amen. The 18th
2 day of August in the year of our lord god 1568,
3 Margaret Beecher, widow, of the parish of
4 Seal in the diocese of Rochester made her
5 testament nuncupative in manner
6 following. **First:** she bequeathed her soul
7 unto Almighty god and her body to be buried
8 in Christian burial. **Item:** in consideration
9 that **William Beecher, her eldest son,** hath
10 all the lands given by his father, she gave
11 and bequeathed unto **Margaret, Agnes,**
12 **Thomas, Johane, John and Dorothy Beecher,**
13 **the rest of her children,** all her moveable
14 goods and cattell to be divided between them
15 according to the discretion of **John Olyver** and
16 **Robert Olyver** whom she did put in trust

17 to dispose the same to the use of her said
18 children aforesaid. These being witnesses
19 **John Olyver, Robert Olyver**²⁶⁹ and **Margaret**
20 **Olyver, widow, and Agnes Olyver.**

The Will of William Beecher of Seal

written 16th January 1604/5; buried 29th January 1604/5

transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. The sixteenth day of January in the year of our
2 lord god one thousand, six hundredth and four. And in the year of the reign
of our
3 sovereign lord James, by the grace of god king of England, France and
Ireland
4 defender of the faith, the second and of Scotland, the eight and thirty.
5 I, William Beecher, of the parish of Seal in the county of Kent,

²⁶⁹ the brothers John (#70) and Robert (#136) Olyver of Fawke; Margaret could have been their mother (#234) and Agnes, John's wife (#71)

6 **millwright**, being sick and weak in body but yet of good and perfect
remembrance
7 (thanks be given to Almighty god) do ordain and make this my last will and
8 testament concerning the order and disposition of all that substance and
9 worldly wealth whereunto almighty god, of his great bounty, hath endowed
me,
10 in manner and form following: **And First** and principally I give,
11 commend and bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty god . .
12 to Jesus Christ, his dear son, mine only saviour and redeemer by whose
13 merit, precious death and blood shedding I trust only to be saved and my
body
14 to be buried in the churchyard of Seal aforesaid by the discretion of my
15 executrix hereafter named. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Agnes, my**
daughter,
16 Three Pounds of good and lawful money in the hands of **Robert Palmer** of
17 **Hunton**²⁷⁰ in the county of Kent, **millier**, together with that bond or specialty
18 which I have concerning the same besides ten shillings which I owe her.
Item:
19 I give and bequeath to **my eldest daughter, Dorothy Pococke**, twelve pence
of lawful
20 money to be paid her within one year next after my decease. **Item:** I give

21 and bequeath to **Robert Pococke, William Pococke and Nicholas Pococke,**
22 **three of the children**
23 **of my daughter Dorothy,** to either of them twelve pence to be paid within
24 one
25 year next after my decease likewise. **Item:** Whereas I have mortgaged²⁷¹
26 four parcels of land called and known by the name of **Upperlands** with the
27 appurtenances containing, by estimation, eighteen
28 acres, situated, lying and being in the parish of Seal aforesaid which I
29 purchased of **Thomas Walter of Sevenoaks** in the county of Kent, **butcher,**
30 to **Robert Pelset**²⁷² of Seal aforesaid, **yeoman,** for twenty pounds upon
31 condition for the payment of one and twenty pounds and twelve shillings²⁷³
on the
twentieth day of September next coming, as by and in certain writings
indented thereof made, bearing date the 16th day of September in the first
year of the king's majesty reign²⁷⁴ as

271 end of the first page; each page is signed by William Beecher and it looks as if he could write his name

272 #43 who died in 1611

273 an interest rate of 8% assuming the land was mortgaged for one year

274 that would have been 16th September 1603 so that William would have been paying interest for two years - 32 shillings on £20 (400 shillings) an annual rate of 4% simple interest

32 more plainly may and doth appear, My will and mind is that
33 **Marie, my wife**, shall content and pay the said sum of one and twenty
34 pounds and twelve shillings to the said Robert Pelsett at the day aforesaid
35 for the redeeming of my said land. And I give, will and bequeath one
36 parcel of the said four parcels of land called Upperlands containing by
37 estimation four acres and bounding to the lands late **William Christopher**²⁷⁵
and
38 to the land of the chief lord of the Manor of Seal²⁷⁶ and to the land
40 of **Robert Olyver**²⁷⁷ against the north and west and to the other lands
41 called Upper lands against the south and east to Marie, my wife, and to her
42 heirs forever for to be sold if need shall require²⁷⁸ for the payment of the
43 sum of one and twenty pounds and twelve shillings to the said Robert
Pelsett.
44 **Item:** I give and bequeath the other three parcels of land called Upperlands

275 the only known William Christopher who could have been "late" in 1605 is #251 who died in 1592; he did not give any details of his land which was to be divided between his children. This phrase could, however, mean the land which lately belonged to William Christopher but now belonged to somebody else.

276 a very rare reference to the lord of the manor

277 Robert Olyver of Fawke (#136) who did not die until 1610

278 Marie did sell this parcel - see transcript of the writing, below

45 with the appurtenances to the said Marie, my wife, for and during her
46 natural life.
47 And after the decease of the said Marie, my wife, I will and bequeath the
48 three parcels of land with the appurtenances called Upper lands last
49 mentioned to **Richard**
50 **Beecher, my son**²⁷⁹ and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten
51 or to be begotten and for default of such issue, I give and bequeath the
52 said three parcels of land with the appurtenances called Upper lands last
53 mentioned to
54 **William Beecher, my son**, and to his heirs forever. Upon condition that he,
55 the said William,
56 my son, do content and pay, or cause to be contented or paid, to my
57 **daughter Alice and my youngest daughter Dorothy**²⁸⁰, to either of them,
58 thirteen?
59 pounds of lawful money a piece, to be paid within one year next after my
60 said son William shalbe possessed of my said three parcels of land called
61 Upper lands by virtue of
62 this is my last will and testament as aforesaid. And if my said son William

279 his youngest son, baptised 25th April 1598 and therefore only six

280 Alice and Dorothy are his daughters by his second wife, the Richard who was to have the three parcels of land if he lived, was their full brother. But it appears that they would only get the sums of money if Richard died and their older, half-brother, inherited.

57 Beecher shall happen to make default of payment of the said
58 sums of money to my said daughter Alice and my youngest daughter
Dorothy before willed to
59 them, contrary to the intent and meaning of this my last and testament
60 before said, then I will and bequeath all the said three parcels of land
61 called Upper lands last mentioned with the appurtenances to my said
daughters
62 Alice Beecher and Dorothy Beecher²⁸¹. And to their heirs for ever.
63 **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Richard Beecher, my son**, one parcel of land
called
64 the ?? lying and being upon **Fawke Common** and not enclosed containing,
by estimation, nine?
65 acres of land, to my said son Richard Beecher and to his heirs forever.
Item: the residue of my goods, chattels,
66 moveables and implements of household, I wholly, fully and with good
intent
67 and purpose, give and bequeath to Marie, my well beloved wife, toward the
bringing up

281 but Alice and Dorothy do not appear to have received anything from their father if Richard lived to inherit

68 of my children²⁸² which Marie I make and ordain my sole executrix to see
my
69 will proved, my debts and legacies paid and my body decently buried and
70 I desire my good friends **Thomas Cotten of Sevenoaks, butcher**, and **William
Collins**
71 of the same, **carpenter**, to be supervisors and overseers of this my will
desiring
72 them, as they are men of good conscience, that they will take some pains
that
73 the same may be fulfilled to either of whom I give as a token of my good
will 12d.
74 Provided furthermore and my will and meaning is that no gift, grant or
75 bequest herein contained shalbe in any wise prejudicial or hurtful to the
said Marie,
76 my wife, but that it shall and may be lawful to her, the said Marie, to have
and retain
77 her widow's right and dower out of the house wherein I now dwell and all
the land
78 thereunto belonging with their appurtenances according to the Custom of
Gavelkind,

282 it does not appear that Marie had any children, those whom Marie would be responsible for were Alice, Dorothy and Richard, aged ten, nine and six respectively when their father died

79 This my present will or anything therein contained to the contrary thereof
not
80 withstanding. And I do annihilate and revoke all former wills heretofore
81 by me made and do declare and pronounce this to be my last will and
testament
82 In witness whereof to this my present last will and testament containing
83 four sheets of paper to the three first whereof I have set to my hand And to
84 the last and fourth I now set to my hand and seal yeven the day and
85 year first above written

Read, sealed, published and
declared the day and year
first above written in the presence
of **John Stace**²⁸⁴, **Thomas Cotton**
and **William Collins**²⁸⁵

William Beecher²⁸³

283 could be William's signature which also appears on the first three sheets

284 the name of John Stace is written in a stylised way and he could have been the scriptor of the will which shows some of the hallmarks of wills written by Nicholas Hooper who wrote the title deed for William's widow (see page 336). Examples include "notwithstanding", "yeven" and "First and principally". There are two marks below the names which could be those of Thomas Cotton and William Collins.

285 there are two marks below these names which could be those of Cotton and Collins

Marie Beecher's Writing

written 20th October 1605; William Beecher buried 29th January 1605

A title deed (bargain of sale) for some land which Marie Beecher, the widow of William Beecher of Seal (#260), sold to **Richard Pelsett** in 1605 has survived²⁸⁶; it was written by **Nicholas Hooper** who wrote a number of wills for parishioners in Seal and neighbouring parishes including that of John Beecher of Leigh in 1593.

Nicolas Hooper's
mark²⁸⁷

To all christian people to whom this present writing shall come, **I, Marie Beecher** of Seal in the County of Kent, **widow, late wife of William Beecher**, late of Seal aforesaid, millwright deceased, do send greeting in our lord God everlasting. **Know** yee that I, the said Marie Beecher, for and in consideration of a certain sum of money, to me by **Richard Pelsett**²⁸⁸ of Seal aforesaid, yeoman, well and truly at the ensealing of these present in hand paid whereof

²⁸⁷ There are two Nicholas Hooper "marks" at the top of this title deed, one in a fine pen as used for the majority of the writing and the other in a wide pen as used for the initial phrase and other key words. The "T" of "To" is decorated with another Nicholas Hooper "mark" as the cross bar. Lines have been ruled, in pencil, for writing on and lines for the left and right margins are also clearly visible.

²⁸⁸ This land was part of that mortgaged to Robert Pelsett (see William Beecher's will, page 328); the parcel given to Marie to sell to pay the mortgage was estimated, in William's will, to be four acres but that which Marie sold is given as five and a half acres. Did she sell more than the original parcel left to her or were the two estimates just different?

I acknowledge my self to be well and truly contented and satisfied And thereof
and of every part and
parcel thereof, do acquit and discharge the said Richard Pelsett, his heirs
Executors and Administrators,
and every of them, forever by these present. have bargained and sold, granted
and delivered,
demised, feoffed and confirmed, And by this my present writing, do bargain and
sell, grant
deliver, demise, feoff and confirm unto him, the said Richard Pelsett, All that
parcel of
land and wood, parcel of certain land called Upperlande containing by estimation
five acres and a
half of land whether more or less thereof be had, as it is now hedged, staked and
marked out
through a certain pit or water there, that is to say lying and being in Seal aforesaid
and
bounding to the land or common there called **the Buske** and the land of theirs of
William Christopher
against the north, To other land and wood there residue of the said land called
Upperlande against
the South and East and to certain land late the said William Beecher, my said late
husband

called **Mustwood** against the west, Together with all and every meadow right, claim, interest, benefit and demand whatsoever of me the said Marie Beecher, Of, in and to the said parcel of land and wood or of, in or to every or any part of parcel thereof, **To have and to hold**, all the said parcel of land and wood and all and every other the premises with all and singular thappurtenances unto the said Richard Pelsett, his heirs and assigns, to the only use and behoof of the said Richard Pelsett, his heirs and assigns, forever. To be holden of the chief lord or lords of the fee or fees thereof by service thereof to them first due and of right accustomed.

And I, the said Marie Beecher, and mine heirs, All the said parcel of land and wood, And all other the premises withall and singular thappurtenances, unto the said Richard Pelsett, his heirs and assigns to the only use and behoof of the said Richard Pelsett, his heirs and assigns forever against me and mine heirs only, shall and will warrant and evermore defend by these present.

In witness whereof I, the said Marie Beecher, to this my present writing, have set my hand
and Seal, yeven the twentieth day of October in the Third year of the Reign of our Sovereign lord James, by the grace of God, King of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, And of Scotland the nine and thirty.

Nicholas Hooper's
mark
with initials

The Family of *Humphrey Beecher*

There was also Humphrey Beecher who was slightly younger than William but not mentioned as one of the elder John's children; he married twice but both his wives died in their thirties and of the two children recorded, the first died very soon after birth.

Num	Name	Born	Married	Spouse	M	C	Died
#1069	<u>BEECHER, Humphrey</u> -----	<1564			2	2	26 Aug 1624 in his 60s
	Marriage 1		5 Jul 1584	Elizabeth Thomas of Capel	1	2	
#1070	<u>Thomas, Elizabeth</u> -----	<1564			1	2	27 Feb 1595 in her 30s
• #1407	<u>Beecher, Dorothy</u>	6 Nov 1586			0	0	12 Nov 1586 <1wk
• #1515	<u>BEECHER, Richard</u>	8 Sep 1588			0	0	
	Marriage 2		> Feb 1595	Johane Beecher(m)	1	0	
#2092	<u>Beecher(m), Johane</u> -----				1	0	17 Feb 1604

Other Beechers of Seal

The only other Beechers recorded in the Seal parish registers are:

Jacob/James Beecher (#2216) who had two children baptised in Seal:

Jacob Beecher (#2218) baptised 2nd June 1612

Mary Beecher (#2219) baptised 2nd April 1615

Mary could have been the Marie Beecher who married **John Stapart** in **Ightham** on 28th July 1639 when she would have been 24.

Margaret Beecher (#507)) was buried on 21st January 1638 but there are no clues as to which Beecher family she belonged.

Edward Beecher (#3623) who married **Joane Cumbridge** (#3624) on 21st May 1649.

The West Farleigh Wills

John Beecher, blacksmith, and his wife Elizabeth, the testators of the two West Farleigh wills which have survived, seem to have had a son, Richard, and a daughter who married Thomas Oliffe. John, whose will was not proved until over six years after it was written, does not mention any land and both wills are quite short that of Elizabeth being nuncupative.

Will of John Beecher of West Farleigh

written 30th October 1569; proved 1575/6

transcript from probate copy, original has not survived

1 In the name of god Amen.
3 year of our lord god one thousand, five
5 John Beecher, the elder, of

7 in the county of Kent, **blacksmith**,
9 and perfect remembrance, laud and
11 god, my maker and redeemer,
13 yard of West Farleigh before said. **Item:**

The 30th day of October in the
hundred, three score and nine, I,
West Farleigh of the diocese of
Rochester
being of whole mind and in good
praise be unto Almighty
my body to be buried in the church
I give and bequeath unto **Richard**

15 **Beecher, my son**, one Andfile²⁸⁹,
 17 sledge²⁹⁰, two pairs of smith's tongs,
 19 unto the said Richard when he
 21 age. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Johan Eliott** one great brass pan?, one
 23 brass that hath a boule upon it.

24 The residue of all my goods I
 26 **Beecher, my wife**, whom I
 28 last will and testament, these
Thomas Covenry and Thomas Day.

give and bequeath unto **Elizabeth**,
 make sole executrix of this my
 being witnesses: **James Cartlett**

289 hand file

290 sledge hammer

291 hand hammer?

1 In the name of god Amen.
2 The twentieth day of May in the year of our lord god
3 one thousand, five hundred, three score and eighteen and in
4 the twentieth year of the reign of our sovereign lady
5 Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France
6 and Ireland, defender of the faith, Elizabeth Beecher of
7 the parish of West Farleigh in the county of Kent and diocese
8 of Rochester, **widow**, being in perfect mind and memory made
9 her testament nuncupative in manner and form following: **First:**
10 she gave, willed and bequeathed unto **Thomas Fishenden** (whom,
11 upon her deathbed she called unto her) all whatsoever goods she had
12 the day of the date above written, paying her debts and legacies, which
13 debts come but to the sum of ten pounds that is for shame and
14 that should have been paid ere this time but that the house is
15 in controversy, and giving out of the same goods unto her
16 **daughter Oliff** the bed lying upon the trucklebed, three blankets,
17 a coverlet, a bolster, two pillows, five pairs of sheets, two

18 chests. Then being present and hearing these words **Thomas Oliff**²⁹²
John Beecher, John Bayes, Johane Alphine and Allen Shyming.

The Beechers of Penshurst

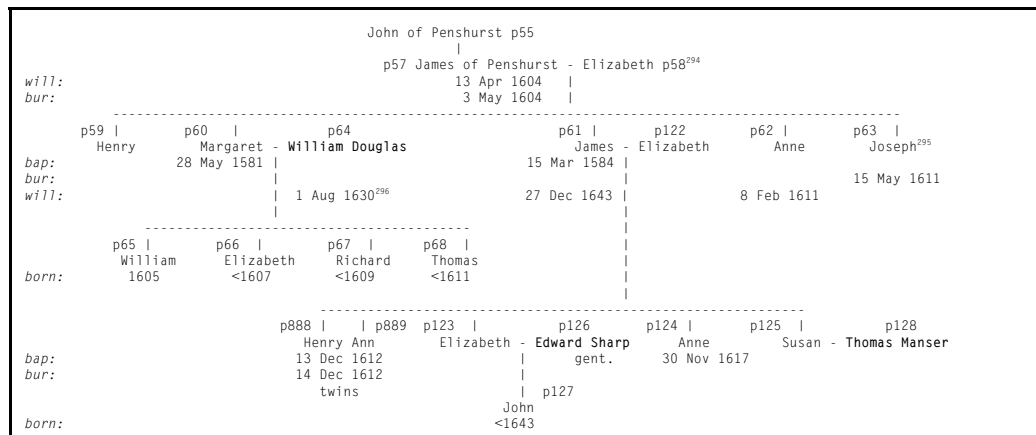
The will of James Beecher dated 1604 is the earliest Beecher will for Penshurst. The wills of his daughter Anne (1611) and son James (1643) and also his son-in-law, William Douglas (1634 - see **Douglas**) have also survived.

There was, however, a James Beecher in Penshurst forty years earlier. On 2nd November 1565, Richard Hurte, of Westwell, butcher, and Melcher Sharpe of Boughton Aluph, husbandman, broke into the close of **James Beecher** at Penshurst and stole 5 cows valued at £8. They were indicted for grand larceny at the March 1566 Assizes. Hurte was at large and Sharpe was found not guilty and bailed²⁹³.

292 her daughter's husband?

293 Cockburn (Eliz.I) 373

The Family of James Beecher of Penshurst



A chrism son of Richard Beecher was buried in Penshurst on 7th June 1643.

²⁹⁴ "p" indicates a reference in the Penshurst database

²⁹⁵ died three months after his sister wrote her will

²⁹⁶ when William wrote his will in 1630 his wife was Joan and he had six more children

James Beecher of Penshurst

James (p57), who was a churchwarden of Penshurst in 1601, was buried on 3rd May 1604, less than three weeks after his will was written. It was not proved until May 1608. James mentions three sons and one daughter, Anne, underage when the will was written. The bequests made to them and his wife were:

Bequests made by James Beecher of Penshurst, 1604

Elizabeth, wife (p58)	£10 per year £40 chamber over hall; all his linen, some pewter and brass free fire and flett a cow	from a tenement lent out; to receive profits until loan was repaid to be kept by James
Henry, eldest son (p59)	£80 land in Speldhurst half of residue	in hands of Thomas Smith

James, son (p61)	£30 half of residue	
Joseph, son (p63)	£30	
Anne, daughter (p62)	£50	immediately after the decease of James (even though she was not yet 21)

James left his wife, Elizabeth, the chamber, with its bed and furnishings, over the hall in his house in Penshurst for her natural life with free ingress and egress and with free use of fire and flett (house room). He also left her all his linen and "[such brass and pewter as shall be thought sufficient for her use by the discretion](#)" of his overseers. In addition, his son James was to keep, without payment, a cow for his mother for the rest of her life. But why was his son Joseph left such a small amount compared with his brothers. One possibility is that he had had money spent on his education or to set him up in an apprenticeship.

James's daughter Anne died in the spring of 1611 and from her will we learn that James had another daughter, Margaret (p60), married to William Douglas. It is therefore likely that Margaret was already married when her father wrote his will

and had perhaps just had a marriage portion. This would agree with her having four children when her sister Anne died and mean that she was born about 1580. From this deduction, p57 could have been the James Beecher for whom the baptism of Margaret, James and Anne were recorded in Penshurst in the 1580s.

A James Beecher of Penshurst wrote his will in December 1643 and he could have been the son of the James who died in 1604 (p57). If so, he was fifty-nine; his daughter Anne, who was twenty-six when he died and not yet married, was made joint executrix with her mother.

Edward/Edmund Beecher of Penshurst

An Edmund Beecher was buried, in Penshurst, on 19th January 1635/6. This could have been the "Edward Beecher" of Brooke Street in Penshurst whose will was proved in the Deanery of Shoreham in March 1635/6. In the will the first name of the testator and his son are both difficult to read and could be Edmond as easily as Edward. He could have been Edmund (p51), the youngest son of John Beecher of Wickhurst (see page b.301). Unfortunately, although the year in which the will was written (1635) is clear, the month is not: "the thirtieth day of ?? "

Edward/Edmund had a daughter married to John Carpenter and a son, probably called Edmond, who had two sons and three daughters alive in 1635 with the daughters, at least, all under twenty-one and a son who had died before him, leaving a widow, Joan. Or was Joan Edmond's wife and the annuity was left to her only if, and when, she became a widow? This seems particularly possible since Edmond's wife is named as Joan further on in the will. The register for Penshurst does not include any entries which could be those of this family.

The legacy to Henry, the second son of Edward/Edmond's son, was an annuity of twenty shillings a year rather than a lump sum. Annuities were usual for wives and widowed daughters but only occasionally left to children such as Henry who could only have been a young boy - possibly only two - a Henry, son of Edmund Beecher, was baptised 20th October 1633. It would be interesting to know what differentiated children left annuities from those left more normal legacies; were they those who were in some way disabled and thus unlikely to ever be self-sufficient? Edmund and Joan had another son William, born at the end of 1640.

		x69 Edward/Edmund of Penshurst -			
will:		1635/6			

	p72		p75		p74
	Edmund - Joan		??? - John Carpenter		
			of Chiddingstone		

	p76		p78		p79
	Edmund		Joan		Katherine
				p80	
				Jane	
				p77	
				Henry	
bap:				20 Oct 1633	
					p121
					William
					17 Dec 1640

Joane Beecher of Penshurst 1636

Joan Beecher, widow, was buried in Penshurst on 21st February 1635/6, 2½ months after writing her will but, although she mentions two sons, one with two children, and two daughters, one married to Robert Bartlett, it is not possible to identify the family with any of those derived from the parish register.

				?? - Joan (widow 1636)	p83
will:		8 Dec 1635			
bur:		21 Feb 1636			

p84		p85		p86	
	Richard -		Elizabeth		William
					Marie - Robert Bartlett

p89				p90	
	Thomas		Elizabeth		

William Beecher of Penshurst 1638

The William who died in 1638 could have been the William who was churchwarden of Penshurst in 1611. He had four children and the Richard and Susanna baptised in 1609 and 1613 respectively could have been two of these and the Ann Beecher, widow, buried on 19th January 1650 his wife.

William's wife, Ann, was to have "[such goods and household stuff as was hers at the time of](#)" their marriage. Since his children were adults, does this imply that Ann was his second wife whom he had married not very long before 1638? Another pointer to this interpretation is that William was expecting Anne, fairly

soon after his death, to move leaving his children (or at least Richard and Susanna) in what had been the family home since he left her some wheat and oats half of which was to be delivered to her "at the time of her removing from my children" and the rest within the following eight weeks. She was also to have two kyne and a hog, the latter being a relatively unusual bequest. See page b.375.

Richard, William's son and executor, was to sell the messuage called Franks, in Chiddingstone leaving £100 of the price as a loan to the purchasers "for the yearly payment of five pounds unto Ann, my wife, during the rest of her life", an interest rate of 5% with Richard receiving the £100 on Ann's death. If Susanna, William's youngest daughter, married or left her brother's care, Richard was to pay her an annuity of forty shillings for the rest of her life.

William's two married daughters, Elizabeth and Clemence, were also to have annuities of £2 each which were to come from some land in Penshurst then occupied by Thomas Streatfield. These annuities were to be held and enjoyed by Elizabeth and Clemence, their heirs and assigns forever. If they were to be inherited by their children and subsequent heirs, how did the payments ever cease?

William was the brother of Ann Beecher (p955) whose will is given in [Beecher in More Families & Transcripts](#) ; this gives two other sisters and a brother.

		p118 William - Anne	p106		
<i>will:</i>		23 Aug 1638			
<i>bur:</i>		26 Aug 1638		19 Jan 1650	

	p107	p111	p108	p109	p112
	Elizabeth - Nicholas	Ashdowne	Richard	Clemence - Jeremy	Gilbert
<i>bap:</i>			3 Sep 1609		
					p110
					Susanna
					22 Aug 1613

The Penshurst Wills

Will of James Beecher of Penshurst 1604

written 13th April 1604; buried 3rd May 1604; probate May 1608

transcript from probate copy

- 1 In the name of god Amen. On the thirteenth day of April
- 2 in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord James, by the grace of god,
king of
- 3 England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, the second and of
Scotland

4 the seven and thirtieth²⁹⁵, I, James Beecher of the parish of Penshurst,
yeoman, being
5 sick in body but of sound remembrance, thanks be given to god, do make
this my last
6 will and testament in manner and form following: **First:** I bequeath my soul
to god

7 and my body to be buried in the churchyard of Penshurst, aforesaid,
according to the
8 discretion of mine executors. **Item:** I give to **my cousin Decosse, parson of**
9 **Chiddingstone**, for a sermon at my funeral, ten shillings. **Item:** I give and
bequeath
10 to the poor of the parish of Penshurst, aforesaid, to be distributed at my
burial, twenty
11 shillings. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Elizabeth, my wife**, the sum of ten
pounds by
12 the year during the term of her natural life, issuing and coming out of my
tenement
13 commonly called and known by the name of **Raponce** in Penshurst
aforesaid, to be paid,

14 unto her or her assigns, half yearly after the time of my decease, by **James,**
15 **my son** which
16 afterwards shalbe nominated one of mine executors. Provided always that
17 if, at any time, or
18 times after the half year day wherein it shalbe due any part of this annuity
19 or annual
20 rent shalbe unpaid for the space of twenty days, that then and any time
21 after, it shalbe
22 lawful for Elizabeth, my wife, aforesaid, or her assigns, to enter and distrain
23 and the
24 distress so taken to lead, drive, and carry away and the same to hold only
25 until she
26 be satisfied and paid. **Item:** I give and bequeath to Elizabeth, my wife
27 aforesaid, forty
28 pounds of good and lawful money of England which is in the hands of
29 **Matthew Frye** of
30 the parish of Pelehurst²⁹⁶, yeoman, and the profits of the same until it be due
31 from
32 the said Matthew Frye. **Item:** I give and bequeath to Elizabeth, my wife
33 aforesaid, the

296 does not look like the other Penshursts

24 chamber over the hall in my tenement and dwelling house in Raponce of
Penshurst
25 aforesaid with the bed and bedstead therein and all the furniture and other
bedding
26 therein at the making of this my will and testament for her habitation and
dwelling,
27 for her use and necessities during the term of her natural life with free
ingress and egress
28 unto the same, from time to time, during the term of her life aforesaid and
also with free
29 use of fire and flett during the time of her life. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
Elizabeth,
30 my wife aforesaid, all my linen and such brass and pewter as shalbe
thought sufficient
31 for her use, by the discretion of the overseers of this my will hereafter to be
named. **Item:**
32 I will that **my son James** shall keep a cow for Elizabeth, my wife, his mother,
during
33 the term of her life freely. **Item:** I will that **Henry and James, my sons and**
executors,
34 shall keep **Anne, my daughter,** unto the time of her marriage or to the age of
one and

35 twenty years at their proper cost and charge. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
Henry, my
36 son, the sum of fourscore pounds of lawful money of England which is in the
37 hands of **Thomas Smith**²⁹⁷ of the parish of Penshurst aforesaid. **Item:** I give
and
38 bequeath to James, my son, thirty pounds of good and lawful money of
England. **Item:**
39 I give and bequeath to **Joseph, my son**, thirty pounds of good and lawful
money of
40 England. **Item:** I give and bequeath to Anne, my daughter, fifty pounds to
be paid
41 to her by my executors hereafter named immediately after my decease. This
is also the
42 last will and testament of me, the aforesaid James Beecher of Penshurst in
the county of
43 Kent, yeoman, touching the disposition of my lands and tenements. **Item:** I
give and bequeath
44 to **Henry, my eldest son**, all that my tenement and lands called **Smatel---**,
situated,

²⁹⁷ Edward Beecher of Brasted (x32) whose will of 1614 has survived, married Marie, the daughter of Thomas Smith of Penshurst

45 lying and being in the parish of **Speldhurst** in the county of Kent, to have
and to
46 hold to him and to his heirs forever. The rest of all my goods unbequeathed,
my debts
47 and legacies and all my funeral expenses being discharged, I give and
bequeath to Henry and
48 James, my sons aforesaid, whom I constitute and make executors of this my
last will and
49 testament. And I intreat **Walter Woodgate**, my neighbour of Penshurst, and
William
50 **Duglass, my son-in-law**, to be overseers of the same. And for their pains I
give
51 to them ten shillings a piece over and besides all their charges. **Witnesses**
at the making
52 subscribing or making and sealing hereof: **Lawrence Decosse, Walter**
Woodgate, William
53 **Duglass.**

1 In the name of god Amen. The eighth day of
2 February in the year of our lord god 1610, I, Anne Beecher of Hever in the
county of Kent, **spinster**, being
3 sick in body but whole in mind and in good and perfect remembrance, lauds
and praise to almighty god,
4 do make and ordain this my present last will and testament in manner and
form following: **First:** I com
5 mend my soul to Almighty god, my maker and Redeemer, and my body to
be buried in the church
6 yard of **Chiddingstone**. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Mr. Dyosse**, minister²⁹⁸
of the word of God,
7 ten shillings for a sermon to be made at my burial. **Item:** I give unto the
poor of the parish
8 of Hever twenty shillings. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto the poor of
Chiddingstone twenty

²⁹⁸ this is obviously the parson of Chiddingstone mentioned in the will of Anne's father, James Beecher whose will he also witnessed and possibly wrote.

9 shillings to be distributed at my burial. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto
10 **William, Elizabeth, Richard**
11 and **Thomas Douglas, the children of William Douglas and Margaret, his**
12 **wife, my sister,** the sum of
13 20s a piece to be paid unto them within half a year after my decease. **Item:**
14 I give and bequeath unto
15 **my brother Joseph Beecher** twenty pounds of good and lawful money of
16 England, parcel of the fifty pounds
17 which is in the hands of **William Chapman of Town Malling** in the county of
18 Kent, **merc**er, to be paid
19 unto him, the said Joseph, within a whole year next after my decease by my
20 executor if he do receive the said
21 fifty pounds within the said year, otherwise to be paid unto him as soon as
22 he can receive it
23 out of the hands of the said William Chapman²⁹⁹. **Item:** I give unto **my**
24 **brother James Beecher,** eight
25 pounds of lawful English money to be paid unto him within one half year
26 after my decease. **Item:** I give
27 unto **my brother Henry Beecher** eight pounds to be paid unto him within
28 one year after my decease. My

299 Was this the fifty pounds left by her father and "invested" for when she married? It looks as if it had been lent to William Chapman for a specific term.

19 debts paid, legacies fulfilled and my funeral expenses discharged, the rest of
my goods unbequeathed, I give
20 unto **my loving brother-in-law, William Douglas** whom I make my whole
executor of this my last will
21 revoking and renouncing all other wills formerly made. **Witnesses:** of this
my last will: **Commend Balen,**
22 **William Douglas, Henry Beecher, Rachel Medhurst.**

Will of Joane Beecher of Penshurst 1635 written 28th December 1635; proved 9th March 1636
transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. The twenty eighth day of December Ad 1635
2 in the eleventh year of the reign of our sovereign lord king Charles, I
3 Joane Beecher of Penshurst in the county of Kent, **widow**, being aged and
not
4 well of bodily health but of perfect mind and memory (god be praised) do
ordain
5 and make this my last will and testament in manner and form following:
First:
6 resting my soul into the merciful hands of Almighty god and to Jesus Christ,

7 my only saviour and redeemer, by whose death and passion I fully trust with
an
8 assured hope to attain to the joyful resurrection of eternal life, committing
my
9 body to the earth and to be buried in the churchyard of Penshurst. **Item:** I
give
10 to the poor people resorting to my funeral ten shillings to be paid them
11 by my executor. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Elizabeth Beecher, my**
daughter,
12 one featherbed and bedstead, the best two pillows, two blankets, one
covering . .
13 pair of sheets and one old sheet, three tablecloths, two pairs of pillow
14 beres, one long towel, half a dozen of napkins, two yard kerchiefs, half
15 a dozen pieces of pewter, one little iron pot, one brass chafer, one of my
16 biggest plain chests. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Marie, my daughter,**
17 **the now wife of Robert Bartlett,** one pair of sheets and four pieces of
18 pewter. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Richard Beecher, my son,** twelve
19 pence to be paid unto him upon demand thereof, by mine executors. **Item:**
20 I give and bequeath unto **Thomas and Elizabeth Beecher, the son and**
daughter of
21 **the said Richard,** to each of them one sheet to be delivered to them upon
22 demand thereof. The residue of all my moveable goods and
23 chattells whatsoever unbequeathed, my debts, legacies and funeral

24 discharged, I give and bequeath unto **William Beecher, my son**, whom
25 I do make and ordain the full and sole executor whereof to this my present
testament and
26 last will, I the said Joane Beecher, have hereunto put my hand and seal
27 the day and year first above written.

Joane Beecher

300

Read and acknowledged

in the presence of

her mark

Robert Knight

Thomas Leddall, scr.

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The thirtieth day of ?? in . . .
2 lord god 1635
3
4 I, Edward Beecher, of **Brooke Street** in the parish of Penshurst,
5 **yeoman**, being weak and sick in body but whole and perfect in memory,
thanks be given to Almighty
6 god for the same, make my will in this wise: my soul I give and bequeath
unto Almighty god
7 and my body to be buried in the churchyard of Penshurst aforesaid. **Item:** I
give unto ??
8 **Carpenter, now the wife of John Carpenter of Chiddingstone, my daughter,**
five pounds of lawful
9 money for to be paid unto her at the end of one whole year next after my
decease, if she so long live.
10 **Item:** I do give unto **Joan Beecher, my son's wife, my daughter-in-law,** three
pounds a year

11 during the time of her widowhood. **Item:** I do give unto **Henry Beecher, son**
12 **of Edmond**³⁰¹ **Beecher,**
13 **my son,** twenty shillings a year during the term of his natural life and . .
14 **Item:** I do give unto the **three children of Edmond, my son, Joan, Katherine**
15 **and Jane,** unto each and
16 every of them, forty shillings when they shall accomplish the full age of one
17 and twenty years or else at the
18 day of their marriage, which of those two shall first befall. And the residue
of all my goods I do give unto
Edmond, my son, moveable and immoveable whatsoever, my debts and
legacies paid, my funeral
charges first faithfully discharged and paid. And all the residue I do give
unto Edmond my son except
my ?? in the hall and joined bedstead with feather bed and all unto
belonging, one joined ?? , six of my

301 throughout this will this name of both son and grandson looks like "Edwanne", "Edmanne" or "Edmoine"; the parish register records the burial of "Edmond" Beecher in January 1635/6 which could have been that of the testator; "Edmond" is used for both son and grandson throughout this transcript.

302 what determined whether a young person should get an annuity rather than a lump sum and, if the person lived for a long time, who saw to the paying of it and where did the money come from?

19 best knives?, all the which I do give unto **Edmond Beecher, my son's son,**
20 **my godson,** . . .
21 directly upon the decease of the said Edmond, his father, whom I do make
22 my sole executor. Concerning my tenements and lands: **Item:**
23 I do give unto Edmond Beecher, my son, my tenement lying and being at
24 Brookestreet in Penshurst
25 aforesaid during his natural life with all buildings, all lands, meadows,
26 pastures and feedings and
all And, at the decease of the
said Edmond, I do give unto the said Edmond, his son, all and every the
forenamed premises
unto his heirs forever on condition that he shall pay, or cause to be paid . . .
I have given and allowed in this my will the which shall be due or payable .

- that Edmond, my son, shall
- not make any further waste of the wood but as shall be needful for to be
spent
- upon the premises. And I do ordain, make and ?? **John ---** of
Chiddingstone, yeoman,
- and **Robert Beecher of Penshurst** for to be supervisors of this my last will
and testament

- for to see it well and faithfully performed and kept according unto . . .
- and unto my true ?? and meaning and not otherwise for to be ??
- . . . and my mind is being . . . that if Edmond, my son do decease, **Joan, his wife,**
- shall have the use and managing of my tenement and lands for the bringing up of her children until Edmond, my
- son's son, shall accomplish the full age of one and twenty years.

And hereunto I put my hand and seal acknowledging it
for to be my last will and testament in the presence of

James Beecher, sc³⁰³ by me **Edward**
John Morris

Beecher my mark

1 In the name of god Amen. The three and twentieth day of August Ao Dm
1638
2 in the fourteenth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord king Charles,
3 I, William Beecher, the elder³⁰⁴, of Penshurst in the county of Kent, **yeoman**,
being,
4 at this time, not well in body but of good and perfect remembrance (praised
be³⁰⁵
5 God) do make and declare this my last will and testament in manner and
form
6 following: **First:** I commend my soul to Almighty god and to Jesus Christ,
7 my only saviour and redeemer by whose death and passion I fully trust to
have
8 all my sins freely forgiven and to attain to the joyful resurrection of eternal
9 life, committing my body to the earth and to be buried in the churchyard of
10 Penshurst in decent sort. **Item:** I give to the poor people of the said parish

304 who was William Beecher, the younger, since the only son mentioned was Richard?

305 "bee" throughout

12 thirteen shillings and fourpence to be distributed to them within one half
year
13 next after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Anne, my loving**
wife,
14 all such goods and householdstuff as was hers at time of our marriage. And
farther
15 I will unto the said Anne two kyne and one hog to be delivered unto her by
16 the discretion of my overseers of this my will presently after my decease and
17 also one quarter of wheat, two quarters of oats whereof four bushels
18 of the same wheat and eight bushels of the same oats to be delivered to the
said
19 Anne at the time of her removing from my children and the residue of the
20 said wheat and oats to be delivered unto her within eight weeks next
21 after her removing³⁰⁶. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Elizabeth, my**
daughter, now wife
22 **of Nicholas Ashdowne,** one pair of my best sheets. **Item:** I give and
bequeath
23 unto **Clemence, my daughter, now wife of Jeremy Gilbert,** one pair of
sheets.
24 **Item:** I give unto **Susana, my daughter,** one joined chest, one flockbed and
25 bolster, one pair of sheets and a blanket. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto

306 a quarter was 8 bushels; thus each instalment was half the total

26 **Walter Carnell** ten shillings of lawful money. The residue of all
27 my goods and household stuff whatsoever unbequeathed, my debts,
legacies
28 and funeral discharged³⁰⁷, I give and bequeath unto **Richard Beecher, my**
29 **son** whom I do make the full and sole executor of this last will and
30 testament. And further, my will is that the said Richard, his executor or
assigns, shall provide for the
31 said Susana, my daughter, at his or their proper costs and charges all
necessaries during the
32 term of her natural life so long as she remain unmarried. And I do make my
33 loving **brother-in-law William Turk and my loving friend William Hubbert**
supervisors
34 of this my last will to whom I give full power by virtue hereof to join with
35 mine executor to make sale of so much of my stock as they shall think good
in their discretion
36 to be sold for the payment of my debts.
37 And I do give unto them, in token of my love, six shillings and eight pence a
piece over and
38 above their charges and pains taken herein.
39 This is the last will and testament of me, the said William Beecher, made
and declared the

307 "discharged", a form often used by the scribe Nicholas Hooper but this will was written by Thomas Leddall

40 day and year aforesaid concerning the disposing of all my lands, messuage,
41 tenement, hereditaments and annuities whatsoever, situated, lying and
being in **Chiddingstone**
42 and Penshurst, aforesaid or elsewhere. **Item:** I will and devise that my said
executor,
43 with the advice of my overseers, shall sell and make sale of all my messuage
or tenement
44 called **Franks** with the edifices, buildings, orchards, gardens and all those
lands
45 thereunto belonging, situated, lying and being in Chiddingstone leaving the
sum of
46 one hundred pounds of lawful money of England of the said moneys that the
said tenement and lands
47 shall amount unto in the purchasers hand for the yearly payment of five
48 pounds unto Anne, my wife, during the term of her natural life. And after
49 the death and decease of the said Anne, I will the said hundred pounds to
be paid to the said
50 Richard, my executor, within two months next after her decease. Provided
always
51 that, if Susana, my daughter, at any time do happen to marry or go away
52 from the said Richard, my son, his executors or assigns shall pay, or cause
53 to be paid, unto the said Susana, my daughter, forty shillings yearly and
54 every year during the term of her natural life and be clearly acquitted

55 of all other charges and expenses for or concerning the said Susana. **Item:** I
give, devise
56 devise and will unto Elizabeth, my daughter, now wife of Nicholas
Ashdowne,
57 unto Clemence, my daughter, now wife of Jeremy Gilbert, one annuity or
annual
58 rent of four pounds the year issuing and to be taken out of and in the lands
of **Thomas**
59 **Streatfield** called **Boards** also **Hodelies** situated, lying and being in
Penshurst
60 equally between them, to have, hold and enjoy to the said Elizabeth and
Clemence,
61 their heirs and assigns forever. In witness whereof to this my present
62 testament and last will, containing two sheets, to be my last will, I the said
William
63 Beecher have set my hand and seal the day and year aforesaid.

Read, sealed and declared to be **William Beecher**³¹⁰
the last will of the said William Beecher
in the presence of: **George Beecher**³¹¹ **Thomas Carnell** **Thomas Leddall**³¹²

William's Wife - mother of Walter & Thomas Carnell?

From the will of Henry Carnell written in 1634, his mother, Anne was by then the wife of William Beecher. Henry had two brothers, Walter and Thomas. With ten shillings left to Walter Carnell and Thomas Carnell a witness, it looks as if the above testator was their stepfather.

³¹⁰ looks like a signature

³¹¹ was this the George Beecher of Chiddingstone who wrote his will a month after William?

³¹² these all look like signatures (the two Thomases are very different) and Leddall probably wrote this will as he had done that of Joane Beecher in 1636

1 In the name of god Amen. I,
2 James Beecher of **Hever** in the parish of Penshurst in the county of Kent,
yeoman,
3 being sick in body but of sound and perfect memory (thanks be given to god
therefore)
4 do this seven and twentieth day of December in the year of our lord god
1643 make
5 and ordain this my last will and testament assuredly trusting and believing
to have
6 remission of all my sins and salvation by the death, merit and passion of
Jesus Christ,
7 my only saviour and redeemer, into whose hands I commend my soul; and
my body I
8 commit to the earth therein decently to be buried. I give to the Minister that
shall
9 preach my funeral sermon ten shillings. And to the poor of the parishes of
Penshurst
10 and **Chiddingstone**, I give the sum of four pounds, that is to say 40s to the
poor

11 of Penshurst and forty shillings to the poor of Chiddingstone, to be paid
within
12 three months after my decease. **Item:** I give to **my daughter, Anne**, the
lease and
13 benefit thereof which I have of one **George Walter** and the benefit of a bond
14 wherein **Thomas Waller, gent.**, is bound to me. Also I give to my said
daughter
15 Anne, all my lands and tenements as are mortgaged to me by **Thomas**
Jessop of
16 **Sussex**, to have and to hold the same, to the said Anne and her heirs. Also
17 to her the said Anne, I give the benefit of a bond wherein **Robert Marchant**
18 **of Sussex** is bound to me. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Thomas Manser**
and Susan,
19 **his wife, my daughter**, and to the heirs of their 2 bodies, and for default of
such
20 issue, to the right heirs of the survivor of them, all that messuage and farm
21 called **Blackham in Penshurst** aforesaid. But not to enter upon the same till
22 two years after my decease and, during the said two years, I give the profit
23 thereof, and of every part thereof, to my executors hereafter named. But
24 my will is that the said Thomas Manser and the said Susan, his wife, shall,
25 from and after the said two years, pay thereout to **my loving wife, Elizabeth**,
26 the yearly sum of ten pounds of lawful money of England by quarterly
27 payments.

authority to distrein in the event of nonpayment

- And of this my last will and testament, I constitute and make my said
- **wife Elizabeth and my said daughter Anne**, my executors. In witness whereof I
- have hereunto set my seal the day and year above written, the mark of James
- Beecher. Sealed and published to be the last will and testament of the said
- James Beecher in the presence of **John Seyliard, Thomas Hadless**.

- After the sealing and delivery hereof, I the said James Beecher do further
- make my will as follows: **Item:** I give to my said **loving wife Elizabeth**, for and
- during the term of her natural life, and after her decease to **Edward Sharp,**
- **gentleman, my son-in-law**, and to **Elizabeth, the said wife of the said**
- **Edward Sharp,**
- **my daughter**, during their natural lives and the life of the longer liver of them
- and after their decease to **John Sharp, son of the said Edward and Elizabeth,**
- my daughter and to his heirs forever, all those my thirty acres of land, by
- estimation, more or less, with the barns thereupon, called **Hunte meade**, an acre
- and a half in **Eastmead**, a yard in **Floodmeade**, Barnfield, the ?? , the

- lady croft, **Smithfield** the ?? and two crofts in **Penshurst** above
- written. And I, the said James Beecher, do allow my said wife Elizabeth
- sufficient firing to be taken upon the said lands to be spent in the house
- where
- I do now dwell. **Item:** I give to my said daughter, Anne, her heirs and
- assigns,
- five acres of land and meadow with the barn thereupon in Penshurst
- aforesaid.

.

- And I desire **John Seyliard of Chiddingstone and William Beecher**, my
- neighbour, to be overseers of this my will and helpful to my said executors.
- Which
- last writing, at the same time after a short pause, he also published to be
- a part of his said last will in the presence of John Seyliard and Thomas
- Hadless.

will proved by relict Elizabeth and daughter, Anne Beecher

The Capel Wills

The two Capel wills are very difficult to read; they are probably those of father and son and the first is nuncupative. The John who wrote his will in 1633 left thirty shillings to John Beecher, son of John Beecher. If this was the testator's grandchild, there were four generations of John Beecher in this family.

Will of John Beecher of Capel, 1606

nuncupative will proved 1606

transcript from the original; the probate copy has not survived

The top of the will has deteriorated so that no date is readable but the will was proved in 1606.

1 John Beecher of Capel, **husbandman**,
2 being in perfect memory and understanding declared unto
3 us, **William Milles and Mark? Shelly of Tudeley** as witnesses
4 thereof his last will and testament in manner and form following:
5 **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Joan Beecher, my wife**, and **Richard**
6 and **John Beecher, my sons**, all and all manner of my goods,
7 cattells and chattels of what kind and nature form they be
8 equally to be shifted out and divided between them. And I make
9 and ordain them all my executors of this my will and testament.

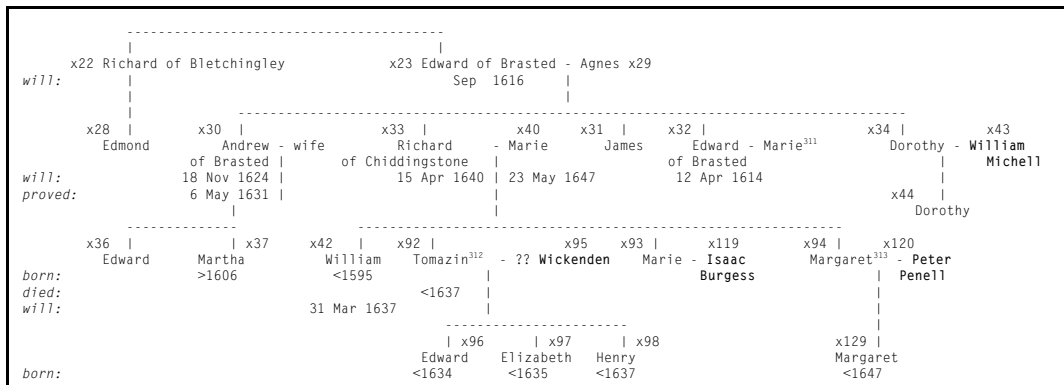
1 In the name of god Amen. The nineteenth day of June Anno Dominum
1633 and in the ninth year of the reign of our
2 sovereign lord Charles, by the grace of god king of England, France and
Ireland, defender of the faith, I, John Beecher of Capel,
3 in the county of Kent, **husbandman**, do ordain and make this my last will
and testament in manner and form following: **First:** and principally
4 yielding my soul to Almighty god, my maker, with an assured hope of
salvation, remission and forgiveness of my sins through his . .
5 in the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ, my saviour and redeemer, and
my body to the earth with the assurance and hope of resurrection
6 to eternal life. **Item:** I will and bequeath unto **John Beecher, son of John
Beecher**, thirty shillings to be paid within two years
7 after my decease. **Item:** my will and meaning is that my wife shalbe my
whole executor and to discharge my debts and expenses.
In witness whereof we **Joseph Horiam?**
hereto set our hands **Henry Swane.**

Edward Beecher of Brasted and his Descendants

The will of the Edward Beecher of Brasted who died in 1616 (x23) and those of a number of his descendants have survived. Edward had four sons (Andrew, James, Edward and Richard) and a daughter Dorothy (x34) who, because she married William Michell, determines the relationships between the father and his sons which otherwise, given so many Edwards, Richards and James, would have been very difficult if not impossible to decipher.

The wills of Edward and his son Andrew were both witnessed by William Outram who was, perhaps, the writer of these wills. Both have the unusual phrase "[my body to the grave to be buried after the manner of Christian burial](#)".

Edward left to his grandson, William, the "[now only son](#)" of his son Richard, five parcels of land totalling twenty acres but, of the names, only Little and Great Brook field are decipherable. The wills of both William and his father Richard (of Chiddingstone) and mother Marie (also of Chiddingstone) have survived.



311 the daughter of Thomas Smith of Chipsted

312 Thomasin Beecher married Henry Everest on 6th December 1621 in Sundridge; if this was Richard's daughter, she must have married twice

313 Marie and Margaret married between the beginning of 1637 when their brother wrote his will and 1640 when their father died so that they were probably born between 1612 and 1616. William seems to have been of age in 1616 when his grandfather died in which case he would have been born before 1595 with Thomazin also being born before 1600. Perhaps William and Thomzin were children of a first marriage and the two younger daughters of Richard and Marie.

Edward's son Edward (x32) died two years before his father; he was married but does not appear to have had any children. His will was possibly written by Lawrence Decoise, the parson of Brasted who was mentioned by Anne Beecher in 1611 and her father (who describes him as a cousin) in 1604.

Andrew Beecher of Brasted

Andrew Beecher (x30) wrote his will in 1624 but it was not proved until 1631. Although his wife was still alive, he does not give her name and he expects her to buy back all his "goods, implements and household stuff whatsoever" after they has been valued by "four honest and substantial neighbours" two of whom were to be chosen by his wife and the other two by his overseers. The money, which was to be paid by his wife to his overseers within three years of his decease was to be "towards the making of a portion" for his daughter Martha (x37) who was to be educated and brought up during these three years by his wife at her cost. Andrew had land in Surrey as well as Kent but he did not itemise it, leaving it all to his son Edward (x36) who was to pay his sister Martha £60 when she reached the age of twenty-one or when she married if this was earlier. Thus Martha was not twenty-one when her father wrote his will and, from the need for Andrew's wife to provide for her education, she appears to have been considerably younger. Yet Andrew appoints Martha to be his executrix completely neglecting his wife.

Andrew's bequest of twenty shillings to his sister Dorothy was "for the attendance and pains taken with me in my sickness" and, from the time between the date of the will and when it was proved, it looks as if her ministrations were rewarded with Andrew's recovery.

The Brasted Wills

Will of Edward Beecher of Brasted 1614

written 12th April 1614; proved 10th May 1614

transcript from probate copy

- 1 In the name of god Amen.
- 2 On the twelfth day of April in the year of the reign of
- 3 our sovereign lord James, by the grace of god king
- 4 of England, France and Ireland, defender of (the faith)³¹⁴, the
- 5 twelfth and of Scotland the seven and forty, I, Edward
- 6 Beecher of the parish of Brasted in the county of
- 7 Kent, **yeoman**, being sick in body but of good remembrance,

³¹⁴ "the faith" omitted

thanks be to god, at the making hereof, do make and declare
this my last will and testament in manner and form following:
First: I bequeath my soul to god and my body to be buried
in the churchyard of the said parish of Brasted. **Item:** I will,
give and bequeath to **Marie, my wellbeloved wife**, my lease of
a tenement or messuage which I had of **her father, Thomas
Smith**, lying, situated and being in **Chipsted in the parish of
Chevening**. **Item:** I will, give and bequeath to the said Marie
the obligation or bond whereby **Richard Hayward of the parish
of Sevenock** standeth bound to Thomas Smith of Chipsted and
which the said Thomas Smith passed unto me. **Item:** I will,
give and bequeath to the said Marie, my wife, fifty pounds
of lawful money of England. **Item:** I will, give and bequeath
to **Dorothy Michell, my sister and to her daughter Dorothy**, the
sum of twenty pounds. And my will is that **Edward
Beecher, my father**, have the keeping and disposing of the said
twenty pounds for the use and behoof of the said Dorothy, my sister, and
of her daughter, Dorothy. **Item:** I will, give and bequeath to **my brother
Andrew Beecher**, all my household stuff and to **my brother, Richard
Beecher**, my
wearing apparel. **Item:** my debts, my legacies above given and my funeral
expenses being paid and discharged by Richard and Andrew, my brothers,
aforesaid, I will, give and bequeath all my other moveable goods, annuities,

30 bonds and judgement or execution upon a bond and debts of any sum
31 or sums of money due to me, to be equally divided between **my three**
32 **brothers, Richard, James and Andrew.** **Item:** I will, give and bequeath to
33 my foresaid three brothers, Richard, James and Andrew, my house,
34 tenement or messuage called **Painters** with the lands thereto
35 belonging, lying, situated and being in the parishes of Chiddingstone
36 and Penshurst in the county of Kent. **Item:** of this my last will and
37 testament, I constitute and make **Richard Beecher of the parish of**
38 **Bletchingley**³¹⁵ in the county of **Surrey, my uncle,** sole executor.
39 In witness whereof I have set my land and seal to these . . .
40 the day and year above written, Edward Beecher. In the presence
41 of **Lawrence Deiose, parson of Brasted**³¹⁶, **William Michell,** his mark.

315 about twelve miles from Penshurst

316 parson of Chiddingstone when, ten years earlier, he witnessed the will of James Beecher. The first eight lines of this will are practically word for word the same as the beginning of James's will so that it is likely that both were written by Deiose.

- 1 In the name of god Amen. I, Edward Beecher³¹⁷ of Brasted in the county of
Kent
2 . . . September in the year of the reign of our
3 . . . 1616, being very sick in body
4 but, thanks be to god, of good and perfect memory, do make, constitute and
ordain this my last
5 will and testament. **First:** I commend my soul to the Almighty god, . . .
6 . . . and my body I commend to the grave,
7 to be buried in the manner of Christian burial. And for my lands and goods,
8 I give and dispose them in manner and form following:
- 9 **First:** I give and bequeath to **William Beecher, my grandchild³¹⁸**, and now
the only
10 son of **Richard Beecher, his father**, all those five parcels of land whereof . . .

317 this Edward was the father of the Edward whose will was written in 1614, see page 385

318 see William's will, page 398

11 are called and known by the name of **Little Brook field** and **great Brook field**
12 . . . and containing, by estimation, twenty acres, more or less, situated,
13 lying and
14 being together in the parish of **Chiddingstone** and now in the th'occupation
15 of **John Pullinger** or of his assigns. To have and to hold the said five
16 parcels of land unto the said William Beecher, my grandchild, and to his
17 heirs forever.
18 And, if the said William Beecher, my grandchild, shall happen to die
19 without issue of his
20 body lawfully begotten, then to the next issue male of the said Richard
21 Beecher, the
22 father and his heirs for ever. And for want of such issue male of the said
Richard Beecher,
the father, lawfully to be begotten, then to the eldest male issue of **James
Beecher,**
my second son, and his heirs for ever.
Item: I give and bequeath unto James Beecher, my second son, that my
message
or tenement withall and singular the appurtenances called ?? by the name
of ??

23 **Browning**, situated and being in Chiddingstone abovesaid and now in the
tenure of
24 the said John Pullinger. To have and to hold the said Browning with
thappurtenances
25 unto the said James Beecher and his heirs for ever.
26 **Item:** I give and bequeath more to the said James Beecher, those my three
parcels
27 of land called **Hales field**, containing, by estimation, twelve acres, more or
less
28 in Chiddingstone aforesaid, to have and to hold the said three parcels called
Hales
29 fields unto the said James Beecher and his heirs for ever.
30 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Dorothy Michell, my daughter**, the sum of ten
pounds
31 remaining in the hands of **William Michell, her husband**, for which I have
his bond.
32 **Item:** I give and bequeath to the poor of Brasted the sum of twenty shillings
and to the
33 poor of **Bletchingley** the sum of twenty shillings severally to be distributed
at the
34 disposition of my executrix within the space of fourteen days next after my
burial.
35 Also I do ordain and appoint **Agnes Beecher, my loving wife**,

my sole executrix.

The mark of Edward Beecher

. . and declared to be the last will and testament of the said Edward Beecher in the presence of

Edmund? Beecher

William Outram

Will of Andrew Beecher of Brasted 1624

written 18th November 1624; proved 1631

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. I, Andrew Beecher³¹⁹ of Brasted in the county of Kent,
2 **yeoman**, this eighteenth day of November in the year of our lord god one thousand

319 the son of Edward of Brasted who died in 1616 even though Edward does not mention Andrew in his will; the relationship is known because Andrew mentions his "sister Michell" who was Edward's daughter

3 six hundred, twenty and four, being very sick in body but, thanks to the
4 Almighty
5 god, of good remembrance and being minded to set and dispose of my
6 effects in land
7 and goods to my children before the extremity of sickness come, do make
8 this my
9 last will and testament in manner and form following: **First:** I commend
10 my soul to the almighty god, my maker and redeemer, ?? ?? by whose
11 merits I hope to be saved and to have a joyful resurrection, my body
12 to the grave to be buried after the manner of Christian burial in the parish
13 churchyard of Brasted. **Item:** I give to the poor of Brasted the sum
14 of twenty shillings to be distributed by my overseers hereafter named
15 within six months after my decease. **Item:** I give to **my son Edward** and his
16 heirs all my lands, tenements and hereditaments, whatsoever **in Surrey** and
17 **Kent** reserving to my loving wife her dower? in the same for and during her
18 natural life, my son Edward paying, or causing to be paid, to **my daughter,**
19 **Martha,** within six months after the day of her marriage or at her age of
20 twenty
21 and one years, whichever shall first happen, the sum of three score pounds
22 of
23 lawful money of England and my will is that, if my son Edward do not,
24 or refuse to, pay the said three score pounds in manner aforesaid, that then

20 it shall be lawful for my said daughter Martha

to take rents, etc. until paid

- . . . that all my goods, implements and household stuff whatsoever,
- forthwith after my decease, shalbe praised by four honest and substantial neighbours
- whereof two of the praisers shalbe of the commendation and appointment of my said
- wife and the other two of the commendation and appointment of my overseers.
- And my goods and household stuff being thus praised and valued ?? and to the use and
- advantage towards the making of a portion for my daughter Martha, then my will
- is that my said wife shall have them as they are praised at to her own use, paying,
- giving and ?? to my said overseers for such sums as for . . .
- amount unto to be to my said overseers within three years after my decease
- to the use of my said daughter and my will is that during the said three years
- my said wife shall educate and bring up my said daughter Martha at her own

- cost and charge³²⁰. And if my said wife shall refuse to take the said goods and
- household stuff and to pay for them so much as the ?? within three
- years after my decease as aforesaid, then I will that they shalbe sold by mine
- overseers to the best advantage of a portion for my said daughter in manner aforesaid.
- And the benefit and increase of the stock that thereof shalbe made shall go towards
- the maintenance and bringing up of my said daughter. And my will is that my
- said wife shall have the education and bringing up of my children³²¹ and shall
- take and increase the rent and benefit of their lands and stock for their maintenance so long
- as she shall continue a widow, using my said children to the liking and content of my overseers. But if she happen to marry, then their education

320 it seems extraordinary that Andrew's widow should have to buy back all her husband's goods and household stuff in order to provide a portion for the daughter

321 were there other children besides Martha and Edward; was Edward already of age?

- and bringing up shalbe at the disposition of the said overseers. **Item:** I hereby
- nominate and appoint my daughter Martha my sole and absolute executrix and my
- **cousin Edmond Beecher of Bletchingley, yeoman, and my brother Richard Beecher**
- **of Chiddingstone**, my overseers, to see my funeral expenses discharged, my debts
- paid and this my last will in every respect performed. **Item:** I give and bequeath
- to **my sister Michell**, for her attendance and pains taken with me in my sickness, the sum
- of twenty shillings to be paid her within three months after my
- decease. **Item:** my will is and I do hereby request **my loving friend William Outram**
- **of Sundridge, yeoman**, to be aiding and assisting to my said overseers in
- the proving of this my will or in doing any other thing wheresoever, by them, he
- shalbe requested for the better furthering and better advancement of
- my children's portions. **Item:** I hereby default, frustrate and make void
- all former wills whatsoever whether they be made by writing or by word
- of mouth. In witness where to this my last will and testament
- containing three sheets of paper, I have set my hand and seal the day

- and year first above written.

Andrew Beecher³²²

Sealed and delivered, published and declared
to be the last will and testament of me the said
Andrew Beecher in the presence of

William Outram

Peter Deane?

Robert Watts, his mark

Robert Eryad, his mark

³²² looks like a signature

Edward's Grandson, William of Chiddingstone

The William of Chiddingstone whose will of 1637 has survived is identified as that of the grandson of the Edward Beecher of Brasted whose will of 1616 has survived (x23). This is because the land he leaves was that given to him by Edward, his grandfather, and it includes Little and Great Brook field.

According to Edward's will, if William died "[without issue of his body lawfully begotten](#)" this land was to go to "[the next issue male of the said Richard Beecher . . . and for want of such issue male of the said Richard Beecher . . . to the eldest male issue of James](#)", Edward's second son. William did die "without issue of his body lawfully begotten" but he leaves the land to be divided equally between his two sisters which seems to go against Edward's wishes. Nothing is known of James so perhaps, if he had had no children, William felt free to dispose of it as he wanted.

William had had three sisters, his third sister, who died before him, had married a Wickenden and had three children to each of whom his other sisters were to pay £2 when they reached the age of twenty-one. William seems to have been of age when his grandfather wrote his will in 1616 but he refers to his sisters as Marie and Margaret Beecher so that they were not married and William's nephew, Edward Wickenden may have eventually inherited his land.

1 In the name of god Amen. The last day of March, Ano. Dm. 1637 in the
2 thirteenth year of the reign of our sovereign lord, king Charles,
3 I, William Beecher of the parish of Chiddingstone in the county of Kent,
yeoman
4 being not well in body but of good and perfect memory, God be praised, do
5 make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form
following:
6 **First:** I give and bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my maker and saviour
7 and to Jesus Christ, my only saviour and redeemer, by whose precious death
8 and blood shedding I fully trust to attain to the joyful resurrection of life
9 eternal, committing my body to the earth to be buried in the churchyard
10 of Chiddingstone. **Item:** I give to the poor people of Chiddingstone forty
11 shillings to be distributed to them within one whole year next after my
decease
12 by mine executrixes hereafter named. Concerning the disposing
13 of all these my lands given unto me by **my late grandfather, Edward**
14 **Beecher**, deceased, situated, lying and being in Chiddingstone aforesaid.
Item:

15 I give, will and bequeath the foresaid lands being five pieces or parcels
16 with thappurtenances, commonly called **Little Hillyfeild and Great**
17 **Hillyfeild, Little Brooke**
18 **feild and Great Brookefeild**, containing in the whole, by estimation, twenty
19 acres,
20 be it more or less, unto **Marie Beecher and Margaret Beecher, my**
21 **sisters**, to be equally divided between them, to have, hold
22 and enjoy unto the said Marie and Margaret Beecher, my sisters, their
23 heirs and assigns for ever. Provided always upon condition that the
24 said Marie and Margaret, my sisters, their heirs and assigns, shall pay out of
25 the said lands
26 unto **Edward Wickenden, Elizabeth Wickenden and Henry Wickenden, my**
27 **late sister's children**, to either of them two pounds a piece of lawful money
28 of England when they, and either of them, shall accomplish their several
29 ages of
30 one and twenty years. And for default

Richard of Chiddingstone and his wife, Marie

The will of Richard Beecher of Chiddingstone, written in 1640, is that of William's father since the references to his children agree with William's to his sisters. If William was of age when his grandfather died, Richard must have been about seventy when he died.

The will of Richard's wife, Marie, has also survived. It was written in May 1647 when, even if she had married young, she must have been in her seventies although she was still "[in perfect health both in body and mind](#)". She had been appointed her husband's executrix and passed on the remaining work on her husband's will to her son-in-law, Isaac Burgess whom she also made executor of her will. Since most men left legacies which were to be executed after the decease of their widow, whenever the widow was the executor there would be some work to be done after her death.

Marie had obviously been helping her grandchildren to get established and left Henry, youngest son of her daughter Thomazin, five pounds provided that she had not put him out to indenture before she died. Henry's mother had died more than eight years before when he must only have been a young child.

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The fifteenth day of April Ao Dm 1640 and in the
sixteenth
2 year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, king Charles, I, Richard Beecher of
Hale
3 in the parish of Chiddingstone in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at this
present time
4 sick and not well in body but of a good and perfect memory, praised be
God³²³, do make and declare this my last will
5 and testament in manner and form following: **First:** yielding my soul to
Almighty god and to Jesus
6 Christ, my only saviour and redeemer, by whose death and passion I fully
trust to have all my sins
7 freely forgiven and to attain to the joyful resurrection of eternal life
committing my body to the

323 this phrase inserted as an afterthought

8 earth and to be³²⁴ buried in the churchyard of Chiddingstone aforesaid.
Item: I give to the poor
9 people of Chiddingstone twenty shillings to be distributed to them within
one year next after
10 my decease. **Item:** I give unto **Marie, my daughter, the now wife of Isaac
Burgess**, one
11 joined bedstead with the feather bed and bolster whereon I now lie with
blankets, covering and all
12 belonging to it after the decease of **Marie, my wife.** **Item:** I give and
bequeath unto **Margaret**,
13 my daughter, the **now wife of Peter Penell**, one other joined bedstead with
the feather bed and bolster,
14 blankets and covering being in the chamber where I now lie after the
decease of the said
15 Marie, my wife. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Edward Wickenden and
Henry Wickenden**
16 and **Elizabeth Wickenden**, the children of Tomazin, my late daughter
deceased, to every
17 either of them four pounds a piece of lawful money of England to be paid
unto

324 "bee" throughout

18 either of them out of my goods and moveables by the appointment of Marie,
my wife,
19 within one year next after her decease. The residue of all my moveable
goods
20 unbequeathed, cattell, chattels and household stuff unto Marie, my wife,
whom I do
21 make the sole executrix of this my last will and testament. In witness
22 whereof, to this my present testament and last will, I the said Richard
23 Beecher have set my hand and seal the day and year above written.
Read, sealed and declared **Richard Beecher**
in the presence of
Edward Everest of Hale his mark
his mark
Thomas Leddall

Will of Marie Beecher of Chiddingstone 1647

written 23rd May 1647

transcript from the probate copy which is difficult to decipher

1 In the name of god Amen. The three and
2 twentieth day of May in the twentieth year of the reign of our Sove

3 reign Lord, Charles, by the grace of god, of England, Scotland, France
4 and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, Anno Dominum one thousand
5 six hundred and forty seven. I, Marie, **the widow and executrix of Richard**
6 **Beecher, late of Hale** of the parish of Chiddingstone in the county of Kent,
7 deceased, being in perfect health both in body and mind (thanks be
8 ascribed
9 ?? therefore to Almighty god) do make and ordain this my last
10 will and testament in manner and form following: **Imprimis:** I commend
11 my soul into the hands and gracious ?? of Almighty god, my
12 most merciful saviour and redeemer, in sure and certain hope of the
13 resurrection to life eternal. And my body to be buried in the christian
14 burial where it shall please Almighty god. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
15 the poor of the parish of Chiddingstone twenty shillings to be paid half
16 a year after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Margaret, the wife**
17 of **Peter Penell**
18 biggest brass kettle,
19 **Item:** I give unto **Margaret, the daughter of Peter**
20 **and Margaret Penell** aforesaid, one c--- out of my store. **Item:** I give
21 and bequeath unto **Henry Wickenden, my grandchild**, five pounds provi
ded that I do not put him out to indenture? before my decease. **Item:** I give
and

22 bequeath unto **Elizabeth Wickenden, my grandchild**,³²⁵ five pounds to be
paid her
23 one year after my decease. And the residue of my goods and chattels and
cattle,
24 hereditaments . . . as well within doors as without,
25 I give and bequeath unto **Isaac Burgess, my son-in-law**, whom I make,
constitute
26 and ordain to be mine executor of this my last will and testament, giving
27 him hereby to enjoy all my goods as aforesaid, to perform both the last will
28 and testament of Richard Beecher, my late deceased husband and this my
last
29 will and testament in every respect accordingly³²⁶. And I appoint my
30 trusty and wellbeloved **friend, Edward Beecher of Chiddingstone** aforesaid,
mine
31 overseer. The mark of **Margaret Beecher, Edward C----**, the mark of
(*other witnesses: John Spenser, John ??, John ??*)

325 either Edward Wickenden, mentioned by his grandfather in 1640, had been indentured or otherwise set up or he had died

326 all Richard's legacies, except that to the poor, were to be paid after the death of his wife

Hale and Wickhurst

Both these locations are mentioned by a number of Beechers. Marked on the current Ordnance Survey map is Hale Oak Farm about 1½ miles north of Penshurst with Hale Farm about half a mile to the southwest of it and Halls's Green about the same distance to the northeast.

John Beecher's will of 1593 describes him as "[of Wickhurst in the parish of Leigh](#)" and this John also mentions the highway at Hale Oak. In 1616 Edward Beecher of Brasted left twelve acres of land called Hales Fields to his son James about whom nothing more is known.

The 1638 will of a James Beecher "[of Hale in the parish of Chiddingstone](#)" has survived and Richard of Chiddingstone in 1640 is also given as "of Hale". Richard's wife, Marie, is also "of Hale". James does not give the name of his house in Chiddingstone in which he dwelt which he left to his eldest son Edward. Perhaps this was "Hale" and sometime between 1638 and 1640, it was acquired by Richard.

The 1638 James could have been the son of Edward of Brasted but Andrew, another brother who died in 1631, does not mention him. In 1638, James also owned a parcel of land called Wickhurst. On leaving it to his son Edward, he

gives its size as eighteen acres but describes it as in Penshurst. Wickhurst is marked on the current map as about 1½ miles northwest of the centre of Leigh, 2½ miles northeast of Chiddingstone and 2½ miles due north of Penshurst. Thus its position in the parish of Leigh, as given by John Beecher in 1593, seems more accurate. There is also a Wickhurst manor near the village of Weald but that is even further from Penshurst. See Indentures in [section Z in More Families & Transcripts](#) for an indenture regarding the sale of the Wickhurst rents in 1610.

James Beecher of Hale in Chiddingstone

Although there are a number of James Beechers, it has not been possible to identify this James. He could have been the fourth son of Edward of Brasted which, as described above, could possibly account for with him being “of Hale”. The testator of 1638 owned land over a wide region stretching nearly to Maidstone in the east and to Speldhurst and Capel, south of Tonbridge and this was to be divided between his four children:

will:										x99 James - Elizabeth x100									
										28 Feb 1638									

x101		x102		x103		x105						x104							
Edward		James		Elizabeth -		Thomas Everest						Mary							

Land Left by James Beecher of Hale in 1638

Location	description	acres	To:
Chiddingstone: "messuage or tenement wherein I now dwell"	barns, buildings, closes, gardens and all those lands, arable, pasture, meadow and wood ground	36	Edward
Penshurst: Wickhurst		18	Edward
Shipbourne: Puttenden	barns, buildings, closes, yards, gardens, lands	18	James
Sevenoaks and Chiddingstone: Rotherden	parcel of land	30	James
East Malling	one little messuage or tenement with the backside		James
Hunton: Fox Croft	annuity of 33s 4d from messuage and land	1	James

Ightham	message with the backside		Elizabeth
East Farleigh	message, edifices and buildings, closes, gardens and lands	5	Mary

Will of James Beecher of Chiddingstone 1638

written 28th February 1637/8; proved 2nd November 1638

transcript from probate copy

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The last day of February
- 2 anno dominum 1637 in the thirteenth year of the reign of our sovereign
- lord, king
- 3 Charles, I, James Beecher of **Hale** in the parish of Chiddingstone in the
- county of
- 4 Kent, **yeoman**, being at this time not well in body but of a good and perfect
- mind and
- 5 memory, praised be god, do make and declare this my last will and
- testament in manner
- 6 and form following: **First:** I commend my soul to Almighty god and to
- Jesus Christ, my

7 only saviour and redeemer, by whose death and passion I fully trust to have
all my sins
8 freely pardoned and forgiven and to attain to the joyful resurrection of
eternal life, committing
9 my body to the earth from whence it was taken, in decent sort to be buried
in such parish church=
10 yard where it shall please god to call me. **Item:** I give to the poor people of
the said parish
11 twenty shillings to be distributed to them within twenty days next after my
decease by mine
12 executors. **Item:** my will and meaning is that **Elizabeth, my loving wife,**
shall have the use of all
13 my household stuff during the term of her natural life. And after the
decease of the said
14 Elizabeth, my wife, I give and bequeath all the said household stuff unto
my four children,
15 **Edward and James, Elizabeth and Mary,** to be equally divided between
them. **Item:** I give
16 unto the said **Elizabeth, my daughter, the now wife of Thomas Everest,** ten
pounds of
17 lawful money of England to be paid unto her within three months next
after my

18 decease by mine executors. The residue of all my moveable goods, chattels
19 and cattell
20 whatsoever, my debts, legacies and funeral paid and discharged, I give
21 and bequeath unto
22 Edward Beecher and James Beecher, my sons, whom I do make the full
23 and sole executors
24 of this my last will and testament

22 This is the last will and testament of me, the said James Beecher made
23 and
24 declared the day and year aforesaid concerning the disposing of all my
25 messuages, tenements,
26 hereditaments and lands, situated, lying and being in the several parishes
27 hereafter named.

25 **Item:** I give, will and devise unto Edward Beecher, my eldest son, his heirs
26 and assigns,
27 all that messuage or tenement wherein I now dwell with the barns,
28 buildings, closes,
29 gardens and all those lands, arable, pasture, meadow and wood ground
30 with thappurtenances
31 unto the said messuage belonging, containing by estimation thirty and six
32 acres, be it more

29 or less, situated, lying and being in **Chiddingstone** aforesaid. And also one
other parcel of
30 land with the appurtenances commonly called **Wickhurst**, containing, by
estimation, eighteen
31 acres, be it more or less, situated, lying and being in **Penshurst**³²⁷ in the
county aforesaid.
32 To have, hold and enjoy all the said messuage or tenement and all the
other premises with
33 thappurtenances unto the said Edward Beecher, my son, his heirs and
assigns forever.
34 **Item:** I give, will and devise unto James Beecher, my son, his heirs and
assigns, all
35 that messuage or tenement commonly called **Puttenden** with the barns,
buildings, closes, yards,
36 gardens and all those lands with thappurtenances to the said messuage or
tenement belonging,
37 containing, by estimation, eighteen acres, be it more or less, situated,
lying in the parish of

³²⁷ in Leigh when John Beecher owned it in 1593 (Wickhurst is 1.5 miles northwest of the centre of Leigh)

38 **Sheephome**³²⁸ in the county aforesaid. And also all that parcel of land with
thappurtenances
39 commonly called **Rotherden** containing, by estimation, thirty acres, be it
more or less, lying
40 and being in the parishes of **Sevenock and Chiddingstone** or in one of
them. And also
41 one little messuage or tenement with the backside and appurtenances,
lying and being at
42 **East Malling** in the county aforesaid. And also one annuity or yearly rent
of thirty three
43 shillings and four pence issuing, ?? and to be taken out of and in one
messuage and one
44 acre of land called **Fox Croft** lying and being at **Hunton** in the county
aforesaid. To have,
45 hold and enjoy, all the said messuage, tenement and lands with
thappurtenances called Puttenden
46 and the parcel of land called Rotherden and the little messuage or
tenement and the said
47 yearly rent or annuity of thirty three shillings and four pence with their and
every of

328 Shipbourne?

48 their appurtenances, unto the said James Beecher, my son, his heirs and
assigns forever.

49 **Item:** I give, devise and will unto Elizabeth, my daughter, the now wife of
the aforesaid

50 Thomas Everest, her heirs and assigns forever, one messuage or tenement
with the backside

51 and appurtenances, lying and being at **Ightham** in the county aforesaid.
Item: I give, devise

52 and will unto Mary Beecher, my daughter, and to the heirs of her body
lawfully begotten,

53 forever, all that messuage or tenement, edifices³²⁹ and buildings, closes,
gardens and all those

54 lands with thappurtenances lying and being at **East Farleigh** in the county
aforesaid and

55 to the said messuage or tenement belonging or appertaining, containing,
by estimation, five acres

56 be it more or less. And for want of issue of the said Mary, of her body
lawfully begotten,

57 I give, devise and will all the said messuage, tenement and lands, with
thappurtenances unto

329 was there something different about the buildings in East Farleigh that "edifices" were included in the description or was it just that someone (James or the scriptor?) wanted to use a different word?

58 the said Edward and James Beecher, my sons, their heirs and assigns
forever. In witness
59 whereof, to this my present testament and last will, containing three
sheets of paper, I the
60 said James Beecher, have set my hand and seal the day and year aforesaid,
the mark
61 of James Beecher. Read, sealed and declared to be the last will and
testament of the said James
62 Beecher in the presence of **Thomas Leddall, scr.**
Fortune Budgen

will proved by sons Edward and James

George Beecher of Chiddingstone 1638

George Beecher was a mercer whose father and first wife, Elizabeth Jewell (see **Jewell in Families & Transcripts**), had been buried in the churchyard of Chiddingstone; he had had two grave stones set up to their memory and wished to be buried between them with the minister preaching a sermon at his funeral. George's second wife, probably the mother of his youngest son, Jarvis, was

pregnant when he wrote his will. He also had an older son (but not yet of age), George, who could have been from his first marriage.

	x114 Elizabeth	-	x113 George	-	Jane	x116
<i>will:</i>			24 Sep1638			

	x115 George		x117 Jarvis			?
<i>born:</i>	>1617				wife pregnant	

The mercer was obviously wealthy and he left his wife, Jane, some interesting items:

- two featherbeds with bolsters, pillows, sheets and blankets and his "tapestry coverlet with the valence of Irish stitch"; this is thought to be white work on linen which could have either been bought by George with his business connections or made by the women of the household since patterns were already available for this type of work to be carried out in the home.
- three chairs of Tustaffaty (was this another form of tapestry?), a low chair and two low stools of leather with wrought cording? and a joined chest.

She was also to have the chest and the linen, pewter and brass which she had brought with her when she married and £40 paid in two annual instalments of £20. George's son Jarvis is thought to be the son of his second marriage; he was to receive £60 when he was twenty-one and £6 a year in the meantime for his maintenance and education. "To this end" George left £120 in the hands of his executors from which the yearly maintenance was to be paid and Jarvis's £60 when he came of age but also "the rest of the said one hundred and twenty pounds, being three score pounds"³³⁰, George left to the child with which Jane was pregnant.

George owned land in a variety of places including half shares in two messuages and the land attached to them³³¹:

- a messuage and lands in Smarden left to Jarvis
- his half parts of a messuage and lands in Chevening and a "messuage with appurtenances" in Sevenoaks and an "annuity or rent charge" of forty shillings of which George's part was twenty shillings yearly, to his unborn

³³⁰ does this imply that the £6 a year maintenance would come out of the interest gained on the £120 (5%) so that £60 would remain after Jarvis had had his £60 when he came of age?

³³¹ George Beecher and John Hollomby had together purchased both the property in Chevening and that in Sevenoaks prior to 1637 when John Hollomby (x1604) wrote his will - see [Hollomby in Families & Transcripts](#)

child. But his executors were to receive "the rent and profit thereof" until the child was twenty-one "for and towards his or her yearly maintenance".

- his messuage with appurtenances and lands in Chiddingstone Street, the house and land called Stonelake and "all other my lands whatsoever in the realm of England" except one mead in Penshurst adjoining to French mead to his son George.

George appointed his two friends, Richard Stretfield of Penshurst and John Sapper of Westerham, to be his executors until George reached the age of "two and twenty years" when he was to become his father's executor with Stretfield and Sapper giving him a full account of what had happened to the estate whilst they were responsible for it. One task they had to undertake was the sale, to James Beecher of Penshurst³³², of the mead in Penshurst excepted from George's inheritance. James Beecher was expected to pay £35 and enter into a bond for £100 regarding assurance of the lands George had purchased in Smarden. As with so many of these land deals, this seems very complicated - see the will for more details. George's executors were to use the £35 to pay his legacies and they were also to receive the rents, issues and profits from his various messuages and lands until the legatees came of age but they were not to sell any of the "timber

³³² was this x102, the son of the James Beecher of Penshurst whose will was written in February 1638?

trees or pollard" although they had to carry out any "necessary reparations" and pay Jane £20 a year which George had promised her before their marriage.

Will of George Beecher of Chiddingstone 1638

written 24th September 1638; proved February 1639

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. I, George Beecher of Chiddingstone
2 in the county of Kent, **merc**er, being sick in body but of good and perfect
mind and memory, thanks
3 be given to god, therefore do, this four and twentieth day of September in
the year of our lord god 1638,
4 make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form
following: **First:** I humbly commend
5 my soul into the hands of god Almighty, assuredly trusting and believing to
have remission of all my
6 sins and salvation by the only merits, death and passion of Jesus Christ,
my saviour and redeemer, my
7 body I commit to the earth therein decently to be buried in the churchyard
of Chiddingstone between

8 the two grave stones there by me set up, the one for my father deceased
and the other for **my late**
9 **wife Elizabeth, deceased.** **Item:** I give and bequeath to the poor of the
parish of Chiddingstone aforesaid
10 the sum of forty shillings, twenty shillings whereof to be distributed among
them, at the discretion
11 of mine executors hereafter named, upon the next Sunday after my burial
and the other twenty shillings
12 at twelvemonth end after my burial. And to other poor that shall ?? to my
burial I give
13 twenty shillings among them to be distributed at the like discretion of my
said executors. **Item:** give to
14 the Minister that shall preach my funeral sermon, the sum of twenty
shillings. **Item:** I give to my
15 **manservant, Peter, and my maidservant, Frances,** two shillings a piece.
Item: I give to **my loving**
16 **wife Jane** the bedstead which I bought of **Mr. Hawkins** and, after that my
said executors have chosen out
17 my best featherbed and bolster and three pillows, then I give my said wife
Jane, which she shall make
18 choice of, one of my other featherbeds and one of my bolsters with a pillow
and two blankets, my tapestry

19 coverlet with the valence of Irish stitch. Also a pair of sheets with a
pillowbere, also my three
20 chairs of Tustaffaty and a low chair and two low stools of leather with the
wrought cording?
21 thereto belonging. Also my joined chest at the feet³³³ of the bed in the
chamber where I now lie.
22 Also the chest which she brought and also the linen, pewter and brass she
also brought to me.
23 **Item:** I give to my said wife, Jane, the sum of forty pounds of lawful money
of England to be paid unto her
24 her in manner and form following, that is to say, twenty pounds thereof in
and upon the feast of
25 St. John the Baptist next and twenty pounds residue of the said forty
pounds in and upon the feast
26 of St. John the Baptist which shalbe in the year of our lord god 1640. **Item:**
I give to **my son,**
27 **Jarvis Beecher,** the sum of three score pounds of like lawful money of
England to be paid him at his
28 age of one and twenty years if he shalbe then living to receive the same
and, towards his maintenance in

333 definitely "feet" rather than "foot"

29 the meantime, I give him six pounds by the year to be paid into the hands
of my said wife Jane if
30 she live so long and, after her decease, to such person or persons that shall
have the education of him and,
31 to this end, I leave in the hands of mine executors the sum of one hundred
and twenty pounds that they
32 thereout may pay him his said legacy of the residue pounds and allow the
said yearly maintenance
33 and the rest of the said one hundred and twenty pounds, being three score
pounds, I give and bequeath
34 to such child, whether son or daughter, which my said wife Jane now
goeth withall, to be paid to
35 him or her at his or her age of one and twenty years if he or she shalbe then
living to receive
36 the same. And further, I give to my said son Jarvis, and the heirs of his
body lawfully to be
37 begotten, after my said wife Jane, her decease, all that my messuage and
lands, lying and being in
38 **Smarden** in the said county of Kent which I late purchased of **Thomas**
Stanford, deceased and after
39 his decease to the son or daughter which my said wife Jane now goeth
withall and, after the decease of the

40 said son or daughter, to **my son George Beecher** and to his heirs forever.
41 **Item:** I give and bequeath to such son or daughter which my said wife Jane now goeth
42 withall that my half part of the messuage and lands thereto belonging in **Chevening** in the said
43 county, or elsewhere in the county of Kent, now in the occupation of **Christopher Longley**. Also all that
44 my half part of my messuage with thappurtenances in **Sevenock** in the said county now in the
45 occupation of ³³⁴ **East**. Also my part of the annuity or rent charge of forty shillings going out of the
46 lands of **John Meredith,**
47 **gent.,** which is, for my part, twenty shillings yearly, to have to the said son
48 or daughter, which my said wife Jane now goeth withall, and the heirs of his or her body lawfully to be
49 begotten. And for default of such issue to the said Jarvis Beecher, my son, and the heirs of his body lawfully
to be begotten. And for default of such issue, to my said son George and his heirs forever. But my will is
that mine executors shall receive

334 blank left here

50 the rent and profit thereof till my said son or daughter, which my said wife
Jane now goeth withall, shall
51 accomplish his or her age of one and twenty years for and towards his or
her yearly maintenance. **Item:** I
52 give and bequeath to my said son George all that my messuage with
thappurtenances in **Chiddingstone**
53 **Street** and my lands therewith belonging and also mine house and land
called **Stonelake** and all
54 other my lands whatsoever in the **realm of England** not before otherwise
willed and bequeathed except
55 one mead in **Penshurst** in the said county, adjoining to **French mead** there,
to have and to hold the
56 same (except before excepted) unto my said son George Beecher and the
heirs of his body lawfully
57 to be begotten. And for default of such issue to my said son Jarvis and the
heirs of his body lawfully
58 to be begotten. And for default of such issue to the heirs of my body
lawfully to be begotten³³⁵.
59 And for default of such issue to my right heirs forever. And I do hereby give
power and authority

335 this can presumably only apply to the son or daughter which his wife "now goeth withall" unless he had some other children who he does not mention

60 to **Richard Stretfield of Penshurst**, aforesaid, **yeoman** and **John Sapper of**
61 **Westerham** in the said
62 county, **yeoman**, and the survivor of them, to sell to **James Beecher of**
63 **Penshurst** aforesaid, yeoman, and
64 to his heirs forever, all that my mead in Penshurst aforesaid before
65 excepted, the said James
66 Beecher paying to them, the said Richard Stretfield and John Sapper, the
67 sum of thirty
68 and five pounds of lawful money of England and entering into a bond of
the ?? sum of one hundred
pounds to make further assurance of the lands purchased, by me, of the
said Thomas Stanford and
that his wife shall claim no right thereunto or to any part thereof³³⁶. The
rest of my goods, debts,
chattels and cattells and household stuff whatsoever, I give and bequeath
to my said two friends, Richard
Stretfield and John Sapper, for the benefit and behoof of my said son
George after my debts

336 does this mean that James Beecher was to pay a total of £135 for the mead in Penshurst? From below (line 74) it looks as if James was paying only £35 to George's estate. Perhaps he was to stand surety for £100 owed to Stanford until George's executors paid it, whenever it was due.

69 and legacies paid and my funeral expenses born and the said Richard
Stretfield and John Sapper
70 I make and ordain the executors of this my last will till my said son George
shall accomplish his
71 age of two and twenty years and then to account to him, my said son
George, thereupon, allowing
72 my said executors their charges and expenses and then I make him, my
said son George, my sole
73 executor, accounting to that child which shalbe my heir all the common
law. And I do hereby appoint
74 that when the thirty and five pounds shalbe paid to my said executors by
the said James Beecher,
75 the sum shalbe disposed of by my said executors for the payment of my
legacies or for the behoof of my
76 said son George. And I further appoint that my said executors shall have
and receive the rent,
77 issues and profits of my said messuage and lands at Smarden, devised to
my said son Jarvis,
78 during the life of my said wife Jane. And also of my messuage and lands
before devised to my said
79 son George till his age of two and twenty years but not to sell any of my
timber trees or

80 pollard but see necessary reparations thereunto, paying to my said wife
Jane the yearly rent of twenty
81 pounds which I assured her before our marriage. And the residue of the
rent and profits of my messuage
82 and lands devised to my said son George, mine executors are to give
account thereof to my said
83 son George at his said age of two and twenty years and thereout yearly
maintaining my
84 said son George in the meantime. In witness whereof I, the said George
Beecher, have hereunto
85 set my hand and seal the day and year first above written: **George Beecher.**
Sealed
86 and published to be the last will of the said George Beecher in the
presence of **Peter Penell,**
John Seyliard, Hugh Willey, Richard Beecher

Will proved by John Sapper and Richard Stretfield

Edward Beecher of Wrotham

Edward Beecher of Wrotham was a tailor and his wife, Elizabeth whom he made his executrix, was pregnant when the will was written although it was not proved until four years later. Edward left all his land to Elizabeth for her natural life and then to the issue of the unborn child. In default of such issue it was to be equally divided between the children of his three brothers, Henry, Robert and William. These brothers have not been identified from the known Beechers but the parish records have not been investigated.

Will of Edward Beecher of Wrotham 1644

written 12th January 1643/4; proved 1647/8

transcript from probate copy

- 1 In the name of god Amen. I, Edward
- 2 Beecher, of Wrotham in the county of Kent, **tailor**, this twelfth
- 3 day of January, Anno Dominum one thousand, six hundred, forty
- 4 three and in the nineteenth year of the reign of our sovereign
- 5 lord, king Charles, being ³³⁷ in body but of sound and perfect memory,

³³⁷ an insertion mark was entered here but no word; the missing word would be expected to be "sick"

6 ?? thanks be therefore given to Almighty god, do make and
7 ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following, viz:
8 **Imprimis:** I surrender my soul and spirit into the hands of Almighty
9 god, my creator, who gave it, steadfastly trusting through the alone merits
10 of my only saviour, Jesus Christ, to obtain remission of all my sins.
11 And my body to the earth to be decently buried hoping for a joyful
12 resurrection to life everlasting. **Item:** I give and bequeath to my
13 **loving wife Elizabeth**, whom I make my sole executrix, all my
14 goods, household stuff and personal estate whatsoever. This is also
15 my last will and testament containing the disposition of my lands
16 and tenements made and declared the day and year above written. **Item:**
17 I give and devise all and singular my lands, tenements and heredita
18 ments whatsoever and wheresoever unto the said Elizabeth, my wife, for
and during the term of her natural life. And from and after her decease, I
give and devise the same lands, tenements and hereditaments³³⁸
to such child my said wife Elizabeth now goeth withall. And
19 to the heirs of the body of such child lawfully to be begotten and
20 for want of such issue to **my three brothers, Henry Beecher, Robert**
21 **Beecher and William Beecher**, and their heirs equally to be divided
22 between them. In witness whereof I have to this my present last will
23 and testament, written on one sheet of paper, put my hand and seal

338 a large insertion in the margin of the copy

24 the day and year first above written. **Edward Beecher** signed, seal
signed **Nicholas Mylbon**?

*the will was proved by Edward's wife, Elizabeth, but not until the beginning of
1648.*

Arthur Benden of Pembury

This will (CKS: Drb/Pw 16, Drb/Pwr 18.266) was written, by **Richard Johnson**, on 10th June 1593. Arthur's wife had been married previously and, when he came to write his will, Arthur had five stepsons. Of particular interest are the large number of small bequests:

To:	
Robert Morter, wife's son	a pied twelve monthling bullock
William Morter, wife's son	a pied twelve monthling bullock
James Morter, wife's son	twenty sovereign shillings and six pence
John Morter, wife's son	two barrow hogs . . .
Thomas Morter, wife's son	one pied cow and twenty shillings
five godsons one goddaughter	5s each

brother-in-law, Adam Enge	2 bushels of wheat his best black coat
William Dorbe William Lardgas, widower	1 bushels of wheat
seven men of Pepingbury John Neaves, widower	1 tulvat of wheat
Nicholas Turner of Pepingbury	one of his best shirts, one of his holy day boins?, canvas doublet hat a pair of knirollowed? - stockings?? a pair of shoes."
Thomas Ellis	his black coat

1 In the name of god Amen.
2 The tenth day of June in the 35th year
3 of the reign of our sovereign Lady Queen
4 Elizabeth, Ann. Dom. 1593. I, Arthur Benden
5 of the parish of Pepingbury in the county of
6 Kent and within the diocese of Rochester, being
7 sick in body but of perfect mind and remembrance
8 (thanks be given to god) do make this my last
9 will and testament in manner and form following:
10 (that is to say) **First:** I bequeath my soul into
11 the hands of Almighty god, my saviour and redeemer,
12 by whose death and passion I hope assuredly
13 of everlasting salvation, and my body to be
14 buried in the churchyard of Pepingbury
15 aforesaid.

- **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Robert Morter, one of my wife's sons**, one
- **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **William**

- **Morter, his brother**, one pied twelve monthling bullock . . **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **James**
- **Morter, one other of my wife's sons**, twenty sovereign shillings
- six pence of lawful English money . . **Item:** I give and bequeath to **John**
- **Morter, one other of my wife's sons**, two barrow hogs . . .
- . . **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Thomas Morter, his brother**, one pied cow
- . . and also twenty shillings of like lawful english money.

five shillings to each of his godsons: **Richard Milering, Stephen Enge, Edward Turner, Arthur Hartnopp** and **James Doewich?** and to **Mary Ellis**, his goddaughter,

"And further, my will and mind is that, if the said James Doewich, my godson, be dead (as it is suggested) then my will is that the 5s given to him as aforesaid shalbe paid to his sister, **Elizabeth Deowich**, and that the same shalbe delivered unto my very friend **James Dipping of Frant, his godfather**, to be employed to the use of the said James (if he be living) and to be paid to him with the increase thereof, at his age of eighteen years or else to the use of the said Elizabeth . . ."

"Item: I will and bequeath unto **my brother-in-law, Adam Enge**, 2 bushels of wheat, whereof one bushel to be delivered unto him within one week next after

my decease and the other bushel to be delivered unto him within twenty weeks next after my decease."

"**Item:** I give and bequeath unto **William Dorbe** of Pepingbury aforesaid 1 bushel of wheat. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **William Gulde, Edward Horton, William Rablis, Samuel Bowter, Richard Dorkle, John Shuver, th'elder** and **Robert Borge** of Pepingbury aforesaid, to every of them, one tulvat of wheat"

"**Item:** I give and bequeath to **William Lardgas, widower**, one bushel of wheat and to **John Neaves, widower**, one tulvat of wheat. . . . **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Nicholas Turner** of Pepingbury one of my best shirts, one of my holy day boins?, my canvas doublet, my hat, a pair of knirollowed? stockings and a pair of shoes."

"All the rest . . . to **Eve, my wife**"

Overseers: Adam Enge, brother-in-law and **Thomas Ellis** of Pepingbury
"to Adam Enge my best black coat and to Thomas Ellis my black coat."

mark of Arthur Benden
in presence of **Richard Johnson**, writer hereof.

I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, our lady saint Mary and to all the holy company of heaven and my body to be buried next to my husband in the church of Saint John Baptist if I decease in the said parish.

The Benges of Pembury

Four wills have survived for Benges of Pembury, or Pepingbury, as it was often written at that time:

	dated	CKS: Drb/Pw	Drb/Pwr
John Benge	1476	4.218	
John Benge	25 Jul 1557	5; 12.118	page b.439
Elizabeth Benge	26 Mar 1556/7 ³⁴²	-; 12.376	page b.442
William Benge	25 Dec 1581	13; 16.174	page b.444

That of John Benge of 1476 has not been investigated.

William was the son of John and Elizabeth and Elizabeth appointed him the executor of her will. John appears to have left his daughter, Johane, the rent from one of his houses of 6s 8d a year at least until she was twenty-one (the will is not clear here) when she was to receive the sum of £6 13s 4d (10 marks). Elizabeth, his wife, who was appointed his executrix, was to dispose of the residue of his

342

The year written in the probate book is definitely 1556, that would be 1557 in the new calendar. Probate was 4th December 1559 and Elizabeth (who was John's wife) was a widow when her will was written so it would seem that this date should be 1557/8. or even 1558/9

goods, etc. "as she shall think best for the health of my soul and all christian souls."

Elizabeth had an elder daughter, Parnell Croch, and thus, presumably John was her second husband. Thomas Acroch was one of the witnesses of John's will.

```

                                x1474
    ?? Croch - Elizabeth - John x1476
will:      | 26 Mar 1558 | 25 Jul 1557
            x1475 |      |
            Parnell |      |
            -----
    x1477 |      x1483      x1478 |
will:    - William - Margaret      Johane
        | 25 Dec 1581 |      born >1537343
        |      |
        |      |
    x1480 |      x1484 | x1485 | x1486 | x1487 |      |
born:    John -      Mary      Sara      Margaret      Elizabeth      ???
        <1560 |      <1576      <1578      <1579      <1581      1582
        | x1482
        John
born:    <1582

```

³⁴³ "x" indicates a reference in the miscellaneous database; since Johane was not twenty-one in 1557 when her father died; William, however, since he had a grandson in 1581 must have been born about 1530

William had a son John who was obviously established when his father died but also a young family of four daughters and his wife, Margaret was pregnant when William wrote his will. It is thus likely that Margaret was William's second wife. He leaves all his land and tenements to her, for her natural life, provided that she brings up their children and pays his legacies to his daughters when they reach the age of twenty-one or marry. Margaret was also allowed to sell as much wood from his land as was necessary to discharge his debts.

If Margaret died before his children had had their legacies, William's two brothers were to let out the land so that the profits could be used for the benefit of the children. These brothers had different surnames from William and were thus his brothers-in-law: one could have been Margaret's brother or both could have been the husbands of his sisters.

Will of John Benge of Pembury

written 25th July 1557; probate 29th August 1557

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The 25th day of July
2 in the year of our lord god 1557. I, John
3 Benge of the parish of Pepingbury within the
4 diocese of Rochester, but good of remembrance,

5 thanks be to god, make and ordain this
6 my last will and testament in manner and
7 form following, that is to say, **First:** I give
8 and bequeath my soul to Almighty god, the father,
9 to our lady Saint Mary and to all
10 the holy company of heaven. And my body
11 to be buried within the churchyard of Pepingbury
12 aforesaid. **Item:** I give unto the high
13 altar of Pepingbury aforesaid, for my tithes
14 negligently forgotten 4d. **Item:** I give and
15 bequeath to **Johane, my daughter**, £6 13s 4d
16 to be paid to her when she shall be of th'age
17 of 21 years. And she to have the ??³⁴³ of
18 my house that John now dwelleth in. And
19 of a little meadow that on the northside
20 of the same house called the ley meadow
21 besides the said £6 13s 4d and that is to say
22 6s 8d by the year of the house and
23 mede unto such time as the said £6
24 13s 4d to my said daughter, at the age of
25 21 years, be fully satisfied and paid. And

26 also yearly after the said age of 21 years,
27 she to have the said £6 13s 4d fully
28 satisfied and paid³⁴⁴. **Item:** I make **Elizabeth,**
29 **my wife,** my sole executrix to whom I
30 do give all the residue of my goods and
31 cattells, my debts and legacies paid and
32 this my last will and testament
33 fulfilled according to the tenor hereof.
34 And she to dispose them as she shall think
35 best for the health of my soul and all
36 christian souls. **Item:** I make mine overseer
37 **William Hartridge** to see this my last will and
38 testament to be fulfilled according to the tenor
39 hereof. And I give him for his pains taking
40 3s 4d. And he to have his costs born
41 when he shall take any pains herein.

42 This is the last will and testament
43 of me the above named John Benge concer
44 ning the disposition of all my lands and
45 tenements, rents, reversions and services with

344 was this duplication caused by a copying error on the part of the probate clerk?

46 th'appurtenances, situated, lying and being
47 within the realm of England. **First:** I
48 will, and my very will and mind is that
49 **my son, William Benge**, shall have all my
50 said lands, tenements, rents, reversions and
51 services with th'appurtenances to him and his
52 heirs for evermore, he paying to Elizabeth, my
53 wife, his mother, 26s 8d by the year yearly
54 during her natural life time. And she to have
55 the chamber ?? during all her said natural
56 life time at Pepingbury The day and year
57 above said, these witnesses **William Hartridge**,
58 **Thomas Acroch** and **George Fanback**.

Will of Elizabeth Benge, widow

written 26th March 1557/8?; probate 4th December 1559

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. In the 26th day
2 of March and in the year of our lord god

3 1556³⁴⁵, I, Elizabeth Benge, the late
4 widow of John Benge of the parish of
5 Pepingbury in the diocese of Rochester,
6 being perfect of mind and memory, do
7 ordain this my last will and testament
8 in manner and form following: **First:** I
9 bequeath my soul to Almighty god
10 and my body to be buried in the church
11 yard of Pepingbury. Also I bequeath
12 to **mine eldest daughter, Parnell Croch,**
13 my best russet petticoat and my ??
14 russet petticoat and my best smock and
15 a ???. Also I bequeath to **Elizabeth**
16 **Barbett** my gown and my two red petticoats,
17 a hat and a cap. Also I bequeath to **Johane,**
18 **my daughter**³⁴⁶, a bed and all that belongeth
19 to it and 4 pairs of sheets, a pair

345 written in numerals, definitely "1556" but must be after summer 1557 when her husband died, that is 1557/8 or 1558/9, probably the latter since the date of probate was December 1559

346 Johane would be the daughter to whom her father left £6 13s 4d when she was twenty-one; Parnell must have been Elizabeth's daughter by an earlier marriage. One of the witnesses to John's will was Thomas Acroch; perhaps he was a relative of Elizabeth.

20 of pillowberes and a tablecloth
21 and two chests. All the residue of my
22 moveable goods not given nor bequeathed,
23 I give and bequeath to **my son William**
24 **Benge** which I do make and ordain mine
25 executor of this my last will and testament.
26 These being witnesses: **Richard Knight**
27 **William Hartridge** with others.

Will of William Benge of Pembury

written 25th December 1581

transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. The five and twentieth
2 day of December, Anno Do. 1581 and in the 23rd year of
3 the reign of our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth,
4 I, William Benge, of Pepingbury in the county of Kent
5 and within the diocese of Rochester, being sick in body
6 but of perfect mind and remembrance (thanks be given to god)
7 do constitute, ordain and make this my last will and testament
8 in manner and form following (that is to say) **First:** I bequeath

9 my soul to Almighty god, my saviour and redeemer, and my
10 body to be buried in the churchyard of Pepingbury aforesaid.
11 **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **John Benge, my son**, the sum
12 of 26s 8d of lawful english money over and above such money
13 as I do now owe unto him, to be paid within two years after my decease.

daughters: Mary, Sara, Margaret, Elizabeth (not married)

bequests include ewes and ewe tegs

- All the rest of my goods and cattels, moveable and unmoveable, my funeral discharged

to **wife Margaret** - executrix

- lands, tenements and hereditaments with thappurtenances, lying and being
- in the said parish of Pepingbury in the said county of Kent, that is to say, **First:** I give unto Margaret, my wife, All my said lands
- and tenements with thappurtenances, for and during her natural life upon
- this condition following: that she shall bring up my children until they
- shall accomplish years of discretion or be able to be put to service. And
- also pay unto them such sendall, legacies or portions as hereafter shalbe

- declared . . .
- . . . daughters at age of twenty years or marriage

And further I will that

- it shall and may be lawful ?? for the said Margaret, my wife, or her
- assigns, to ?? and take in ?? my said land (before appointed unto
- her) ?? such firewood for and during her natural life. And also to
- fell and take so much of my wood as shall discharge such debts as I
- do owe at the time of my decease. Provided always, and my will
- is that the said Margaret, my wife, shall, from time to time during
- her life, repair and maintain sufficiently the houses, buildings
- and edifices now standing and being in and upon the said lands
- having sufficient timber upon the said land for the reparations of the said
- houses and buildings
- above assigned unto her. And if it so happen that the said Margaret,
- my wife, do decease before the legacies or portions above willed
- unto my said daughters be performed in manner and form above declared,
- that then I will and appoint that my very loving **brothers,**
- **William Songell and Thomas Page** of Pepingbury, aforesaid,
- shall have power and authority by this my last will and testament to
- let out all my said lands and tenements with th'appurtenances and the
- issues and profits of the same to provide, ?? and take to
- the performance of the legacies above mentioned and to the bringing

- up of my said children until such time as the same shalbe
- fully accomplished in manner and form above declared. And they to have
- reasonable allowance from time to time for their travel and pains
- in and above the performing of this my last will and testament.

- And further, my will and mind is that if the child
- that my wife now goeth with
- my said land and tenements with thappurtenances (after the decease
- of the said Margaret, my wife, and my legacies as aforesaid being well
- and truly performed according to th'intent above declared) unto that
- child (if it fortune to be a son) and to the heirs male of his
- body, I bequeath. And for lack of such issue to **John**
- **Benge, the younger, the son of John Benge, my son**, and to the
- heirs male of his body lawfully begotten. And for lack of
- such issue to the right heirs of me, the said William Benge,
- forever. These being witness **Richard Robins, Richard**
- **Ceavor?, Thomas Baker and Richard Johnson**, with others.

In 1630, William Benge, labourer of Ightham, was indicted for keeping an unlicensed tippling-house - see [Unlicensed Tippling-houses in More Families & Transcripts](#) and between February 1636 and July 1638 a William Benge was served with a number of writs of attachment (Cockburn (Chas.I) 487, etc.).

*The **Bennetts** of Bidborough*

Two Bennett wills proved at Rochester have survived from Bidborough (or Bitborowe):

Lawrence Bennett	24 Jul 1576	CKS: Drb/Pw 12; Drb/Pwr 15.13	page b.451
William Bennett	3 Apr 1608	CKS: Drb/Pw 23	page b.453

Two other Bennett wills which were proved at the PCC have survived but neither have been investigated. in detail:

- The will of **Richard Bennett of West Peckham** was written, on 24th December 1590 (33rd year of the reign of Elizabeth) by **Thomas Tuttesham, junior** "[writer hereof](#)" who, like his father earlier, wrote a number of wills for people in West and East Peckham in the 1580s and 1590s. The other witnesses were **Anthony Tuttesham** and **Thomas Tuttesham, senior**. It was proved at the PCC but not until May 1595 (PCC: Scott 26); the original has survived but there was no decoration on it and it is in a bad condition (Prob 10/158).
- The will of **Richard Bennett of Bidborough**, dated 9th April 1638, was proved at the PCC in 1638 (PCC: Lee 41). The witnesses were **Hugh Wilroy**,

clerk, (who perhaps wrote the will), **Janet Clordge** (or Elordoge), **Christopher Clordge** and **William Thatcher**.

Lawrence and William Bennett

Lawrence had a son William who could be the William whose will was written by **Thomas Stubberfield** in 1608 when his wife was Elizabeth. It was considerably altered on 13th December 1610 by which time William was married to Joan and the bequests to Joan are very different from those made to Elizabeth. The will was not proved until 1615 so that it is probable that William did not die until some time after the changes were made.

	x1448	Lawrence - Elizabeth	x1449 ³⁴⁷
<i>will:</i>	24 Jul 1576		

	x1450	x1452	x1451
	Marten	Elizabeth -	William ³⁴⁸ - Joan
<i>will:</i>			3 Apr 1608

	x1453	x1454	x1455
	Thomas	Ame - William Coxe	

		x1456	x1457
	son	Elizabeth	Bettres ³⁴⁹

347 "x" indicates a reference in the miscellaneous database

348 Elizabeth died after April 1608 and William was married to Joan before December 1610

349 Beatrice?

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The 24th day of July in the year of our lord god
anno domen 1576.
- 2 And in the 18th year of reign of our most gracious sovereign lady Elizabeth,
by the grace of god
- 3 Queen of England, France and Ireland³⁴⁷, defender of the faith, I, Lawrence
Bennett of Bidborough
- 4 in the diocese of Rochester and within the county of Kent, **husbandman**,
being well of mind and in good
- 5 and perfect Remembrance, thanks be unto god, doth ordain and make this
my present testament
- 6 and last will in manner and form following: **First:** I bequeath my soul into
the hands of almighty
- 7 god, my creator, Redeemer and saviour and my body to be buried in the
churchyard of Bidborough aforesaid
- 8 or where it shall please almighty god.
- 9 **Item:** I will and bequeath unto **Marten Bennett, my son**, one brown cow
with a shyll in the forehead and a brown calf

347 "Ingland"; "Yerelland"

10 And one pair of sheets, the which cow and calf and pair of sheets to be
delivered at the feast of Saint
11 Michael, th'archangel, immediately after my decease, in to the hand of
Thomas ?? unto the forsaide
12 Marten, for the behoof and only use and profit of my son Marten. Also I
will and bequeath unto **William Bennett, my son,**
13 one new shirt, one ?oof, one pair of hose and a pair of new shoes³⁴⁸. All the
rest of my goods, ungiven or un
14 bequeathed, my debts first contented and paid, I will and bequeath wholly
unto **Elizabeth, my wife,** whom I make
15 my sole executrix. And **William Ellyard** to be the overseer of this my
present testament and last will,
16 to be performed and kept in every point, and for his pains I will my wife to
give him 12d
made in the presence of **William Ellyard, William Bennett,**
Thomas Gower, Christopher Sandes, ??
with others

348 "showes"

1 In the name of god Amen. I, William Bennett, the elder, of Bitborrowe in
the county of
2 Kent, **husbandman**, calling to my remembrance the uncertain state and
condition of this tran
3 sitory life and considering, withall that life, as death is most certain and
unknown, willing therefore
4 and minding, by god's grace before my departure out of this life, so to
dispose of that little which god, of
5 his great goodness, hath lent me in this life, that the same may be first
pleasing to god, to the wellbeing
6 and comfort of my wife and children and the satisfaction of all men, being
now of ??
7 perfect memory, both of mind and body, thanks be unto god, do this third
day of April in the year
8 of our Lord God 1608, make, ordain and declare this my present last will
and testament in manner and
9 form following: **First** and principally I do most humbly commend my soul
unto the mercy of Almighty

10 god and my body to be buried in convenient time after my decease.
Touching the disposition of
11 my transitory goods, first I will and bequeath³⁴⁹ unto **Joan, my wife**, a
pewter dish and a
12 porringer, 6 spoons, 6 trenchers, 2 wooden platters and a cup, 2 wooden
dishes, a long
13 trendle and a woollen trendle, a drink vessel called a prime and the use of
the upper
14 room? in the cupboard next to the chamber door. **Item:** I give more unto
her 2 great pewter platters,
15 four great pewter dishes, 2 Easter parsifal dishes, a pewter candlestick, a
salt, a brass candlestick
16 a ?? and a basket. I will and my mind is that
17 my wife shall have her dwelling in my house wherein I now dwell and have
so altered? to her own
18 use and commodity the bed chamber wherein we now usually do lie with
the bedstead, bed and bedding

349 from here to the end of line 15 originally read: "unto Elizabeth, my wellbeloved wife one ewe and four sheep whereof two to be of her choice and the other two at the appointment of mine executor. **Item:** I will and bequeath unto my said wife thirty three shillings and four pence". This has been crossed out and replaced with the lines given, the new ones being written between those crossed out. These changes were made in 1610, two and a half years after the original will was written but the will was not proved until 1615. See memorandum at end of the will.

19 there now being withall other furniture necessary for her use there³⁵⁰
20 with free liberty to have the use and commodity of the fire from time to
time and at all ??
21 during her abode there and also to have for her own use the commodity or
use of any necessaries.
22 I give unto my said wife 10s yearly during her life to be³⁵¹ paid by mine
executors
23 about the house so long as she shall there dwell. But if it shall happen my
said wife to like ??
24 leaving the chamber and other necessary furniture above mentioned to
mine executors
25 of some other dwelling and so depart from my said house, then I will that
my said executors shall
26 pay unto my said wife 20s³⁵² yearly during the term of her life to be paid her
quarterly. Also I will

350 "so long as god shall lend her life" written here and then crossed out

351 "bee" here and there are other occurrences such as "shee" but no more than 50% have double "e" compared with many of the Hooper wills, in particular those of Nicholas Hooper, where practically all have "ee".

352 originally 40s (xl)

27 and my mind is that my said wife shall have all such goods as were hers
before ??
28 to dispose of at her will and pleasure. Provided always that if it shall
happen the said yearly ??
29 of 10s or 20s³⁵³ in manner and form as is afore mentioned, or any part
thereof, to be ??
30 unpaid, in part or in all, by the space of twelve days next after the end of
any term in which it
31 shall happen to be due, that then ?? I will, and my mind is, that it shalbe
lawful to and for my
32 said wife, or her assigns, into the said house, barns, orchard or any part
thereof to enter and distrain
33 and the distress or distresses there so found and had from thence, to load,
drive, carry and convey away
34 and the same to withhold, impound and detain until the same yearly rent
and every part thereof and with the
35 arrearage, if any shalbe, be unto my said wife fully satisfied and paid.
Item: I give unto **Thomas, my son**, if he be living 20s if he come and
demand it³⁵⁴. The residue of all my goods

353 changed from 33s 4d or 40s

354 this item inserted

36 and cattell, I wholly give and bequeath unto **my son-in-law, William Coxe**
37 **and Ame, now his wife**
38 upon condition that they shall instly? and truely perform this my last will
39 and testament, pay my debts,
40 legacies and funeral expenses, as also keeping all such bargains as I have
41 made with my
42 man. Touching the disposition of my tenement with the barn, orchard and
43 gardens with all and
44 every their appurtenances, situated, lying and being in Bitborrowe afore
45 named, I wholly give and bequeath
46 unto the said William and Ame Coxe during their natural lives and after the
decease of
them both, I will and my mind is that the same house or tenement, withall
and singular the appur
tenances, shall remain and be to the only use and behoof of the sons of the
said William and
Ame Coxe, to their heirs forever. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Elizabeth**
and Bettres
Coxe, children of my said daughter, to either of them 20s a piece, to be paid
them by their brother one whole year next after
he shall happen to enjoy the benefit of the said house. **Item:** I ordain and
make the said

47 William Coxe and Ame, his wife, executors of this my last will and
testament requiring them
48 to see the same instly and truly performed according to the special trust I
have of them.
49 In witness of this my last will and testament, I, the said William Bennett,
have set my hand and seal.

William Bennett his mark witness unto the same those whose names
be here

after written **Rowland Stubberfield, Abraham Knell** his mark and
Thomas
Stubberfield, writer hereof.

Memorandum that the rasing³⁵⁵ and interlining in the whole legacy
concerning

Elizabeth, late his wife, and Joan, now his wife was acknowledged by the
said William

the 13th day of December in ano. 1610 in the presence of me, Rowland
Stubberfield and

the above named Abraham Knell
his mark

*The **Bests** of Seal and Kemsing*

No Bests appear in the parish registers for Seal, Kemsing or Ightham but three wills have survived of which only one postdates the start of the registers.

Thomas Best	Seal	November 1531	CKS: Drb/Pwr 9.13	page b.461
William Best	Seal	19 April 1534	CKS: Drb/Pwr 9.134	page b.463
William Best	Kemsing	24 June 1580	CKS: Drb/Pw 14, Drb/Pwr 17.252	page b.466

Thomas had a son William who was probably the testator of the 1534 will; the William of Kemsing could be the grandson, of the first William but there is no evidence of this connection.

```

                                #4015356 Thomas - Agnes #4016
will:                            Nov 1531 |
                                |
                                #4017 William - Agnes #4018
will:                            10 Apr 1534 |
                                |
                                -----
                                #4019 | #4020 | #4021 | | |
                                William John Gilbert three daughters
born >1509 >1513 >1513 >1513
                                all alive 1534

```

```

                                k927357
                                - William - Elizabeth Fremlyn k932
will:                            | 24 Jun 1580
bur:                            | 2 Jul 1580
                                -----
                                k929 | k930 | k931 |
                                Martin John Thomas

```

356 # indicates reference number in Seal database

357 "k" indicates a reference number in the Kemsing database. William Best married Elizabeth Fremlyn (who has not been identified in the large Fremlyn family) on 11th November 1577. His sons would appear to be from an earlier marriage.

In **Richard Tebold's** will of 1570, land, probably part of **Dynes in Kemsing**, was described as "[late in the occupancy of William Best](#)" and the will also included "[a parcel of ground, called Chipmanford in Sevenoaks in the tenure of William Best](#)". This William Best could have been the William who died in 1580.

There were no Best children baptised in Sevenoaks in the 1500s. A **Susan Best** married **Cleseus Garrington** in Kemsing on 27th September 1583 but this is the only mention of a Garrington.

Will of Thomas Best of Seal

written November 1531; probate 25th February 1532

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The year
2 of our lord god 1531 . . day
3 of November. I, **Thomas Best** of Seal,
4 whole of mind, make my testament in this
5 wise. **First:** I bequeath my soul to god,
6 my body to be buried in the church of
7 Seal. **Item:** I bequeath to the high altar
8 40d? **Item:** I bequeath to an honest person (priest?)

9 to sing for me in the church of Seal
10 by the space of a quarter of a year 3s 4d
11 **Item:** I bequeath to each of my godchildren 4d.
12 **Item:** I bequeath to **John Olyver**³⁵⁸, **my godson**,
13 6s 8d. **Item:** to the 3 other children of **Thomas**
14 **Olyver**³⁵⁹, each of them a sheep. **Item:** the residue
15 of all my moveable goods, my debts and
16 bequests fulfilled, I give to **Agnes, my wife**,
17 and to **William, my son**, equally to be
18 divided betwixt them which William I
19 ordain and make mine executor and he to
20 have for his labours 6s 8d.

21 This is the last will of me the foresaid
22 Thomas Best made the day and year aforesaid.
23 I will that William, my son, have all my
24 lands and tenements with the appurtenances
25 to him and his assigns for evermore, paying

358 Thomas Olyver of Fawke (#233)'s eldest son (#70)

359 Thomas Olyver had four children who survived to adulthood, John (#70), Robert (#136), Sylvester (#134) and Elizabeth (#306). John was definitely born before 1531 (one of his daughters married in 1573) but the others did not marry until the 1560s and thus Thomas, in 1531, may have had other children about nothing now is known.

26 to Agnes, my wife, yearly during her life
27 £3 6s 8d to be paid half yearly
28 33s 4d and her dwelling in the house
29 the which I, the said Thomas, doth dwell in
30 in the parish of Seal.

witnesses: . . . **John Theobald**³⁶⁰ and others

Will of William Best of Seal

written 19th April 1534; probate 24th July 1534

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The 19 day
2 of April, I, **William Best of Chart** in the parish
3 of Seal, whole in mind, make my testament
4 in this wise: **First:** I bequeath my soul to god,
5 my body to be buried in the church yard of Seal.

360 John(2) Tebold (#673)

6 **Item:** I bequeath to **Gilbert, my son**³⁶¹, all my right?
7 of my tenements, some time pastures? and a parcel
8 of land called **Old Beryland** and another parcel
9 of land called **Walling** and another parcel of land
10 called **Crochicroft** and he to enter into these
11 lands at the age of 21 years. **Item:** I bequeath to
12 **William, my son, all the residue of my lands**
13 and he to enter at the age of 24 years. And
14 he to pay **Gilbert, his brother**, £20 which he
15 ?? to the age of 21 years. And I will the
16 said William pay to **John, his brother**, when
17 he is 21 years old, forty pounds. **Item:** I will
18 that William, my son, pay to his mother yearly
19 40s for an annuity out of my lands ??
20 called **Malen Hawe** (House?) and another parcel of land called **Fortes**
21 and another parcel of land called **Mydells fields** and another parcel of land
22 and for lack of payment thereof, I will my said wife enter
23 . . . the said lands and in any parcel
24 thereof. **Item:** I will that John, my son, for lack of pay-
25 ment of the said £40 to him bequeathed, enter into

361 no grandchildren mentioned by William's father, Thomas, but not all of William's children (if any) could have been born between 1531 and 1534

26 **Mellars Mede** . . and it to keep til he
27 be paid of his said money. Also I will that Gilbert,
28 my son, for lack of payment of the said money to
29 him bequeathed, enter into **Mellars Mede** until the
30 time he be paid his £20. Also I will that **Agnes**,
31 **my wife**, have all my lands unto the time the
32 children come to the said age. And also all
33 my moveables, paying to my three daughters
34 when they come to their marriage, to each one
35 of them, £40. **Item:** I will if William, my son
36 fail under age, John, my son to be his heir.
37 And the said John to pay to Gilbert £40. **Item:**
38 I will if Gilbert, my son, fault under age, John
39 to be his heir. **Item:** I will that Agnes, my wife, give
40 to William, my son, at lawful age, six oxen and
41 two mares. **Item:** I will that Agnes, my wife,
42 be sole executrix of this my last will, to dispose
43 for my soul, and all person's souls. And I make
44 **Thomas Swaynland** and **John Swaynland** over
45 seers. These witness: **Thomas Olyver**, **William**
46 **Thomlyn**, **John Swaynland**, **James Porter**³⁶², **William**

362 possibly the James Porter who died in 1563 (#229)

48 Watts, William Terry, John Robert, Thomas Archer,
49 Edward Terry, John Tyzwal?³⁶³, Richard? Stone, John
50 Stone, John Dogget, Robert Terry

Will of William Best of Kemsing

written 24th June 1580; filed 1587

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. the 24th
2 day of June in the year of our lord god 1580
3 I, **William Best of Kemsing**, being sick of body
4 but of perfect mind and remembrance, thanks be
5 to Almighty god, do make this my last will and
6 testament in manner and form following: **First:** I
7 bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my maker and Redeemer
8 trusting to be saved by the merits of Jesus Christ
9 and my body to be buried in Christian burial. I give and
10 bequeath to **Martin, my son**, a featherbed, two coverlets,
11 a blanket, four pairs of sheets, the which four

363 was this John(2) Tebold/Theobald (#673)?

12 pairs of sheets I brought. I give and bequeath to the
13 same Martin, my son, two bolsters. **Item:** I
13 give and bequeath to **John, my son**, my best cloak. **Item:** I
14 give and bequeath to **Thomas, my son**, all the
15 rest of my wearing raiment, that is to say my
16 jerkin, my doublet, my ??³⁶⁴ my hat. And all the
17 residue of my moveable goods unbequeathed, I give unto
18 **Elizabeth, my wife**, whom I make my sole executrix of
19 this my last will and testament. In witness to this
20 . . will **William Denman**³⁶⁵, **John Chownings**³⁶⁶
William hassodwone, reader? of Kemsing
William Best

364 rarerans? rere and?

365 there were Denmans in Seal (including at least two Williams) and in Ightham

366 John Chownings of Kemsing (k50) married in 1563 and had four children in the next twelve years

The Bettes, yeomen of Mereworth & West Peckham

Two following Bettes wills have survived:

A short extract is given from the first and a note on the second.

John Bettes	Mereworth	8 Aug 1588	CKS: Drb/Pw 15; Drb/Pwr 17.367	below
Alexander Bettes	West Peckham	21 Nov 1594	CKS: Drb/Pw 17; Drb/Pwr 18.366	page b.469

Will of John Bettes, yeoman of Mereworth

written 8th August 1588; proved September 1589

extract from original;

Also I give unto the said **Godly, my wife**, two quarters of wheat and two quarters of barley malt to be paid unto her, the said Godly, by mine executor in manner and form following: that is to say, every quarter next after my decease, two bushels of wheat and two bushels of barley malt until the full sum of four quarters be fully satisfied³⁷¹.

371 a quarter is 8 bushels so that, at two bushels every quarter of a year, Godly would receive her wheat and barley for two years.

In witness whereof I, the said John Bettes, have hereto put unto my hand yeven³⁷² the day and year first above written.

John Bettes his mark; by me **Samuel Cook?**, by me **William Wheler**, by me **Thomas Brand, minister**.

Will of Alexander Bettes, yeoman of West Peckham

written 21st November 1594

includes the phrase “[child of salvation](#)”

at end: anything afore in this my said will to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding

“Present at the reading, declaring and pronouncing of this my said will **Thomas Tuttesham**, writer hereof”. This was probably Thomas Tuttesham, junior, - see Tuttesham in [More Families & Transcripts](#)

372

"yeven" is used often by the Hoopers but only occasionally otherwise; this will looks as if was written by a practiced hand - perhaps that of the minister, Thomas Brand.

This is a long will of 4 pages

I bequeath my soul to my saviour Jesus Christ trusting by the virtue of his death, of his passion and resurrection, I have and shall have remission of my sins and resurrection of my body and soul. The burial of my body I do commit . . to the discretion of my executors. **Item:** I will and bequeath to be distributed in direge, masses and among poor people at the day of my burial 10s. And . . at my month's mind 10s. And also at my 12 month's mind 10s. **Item:** I bequeath to the high altar of Strood church aforesaid a diaper cloth to the same and a plain towel for to be a housing towel there.

1 In the name of god Amen. In the year of our lord god
2 1541 and in the 32 year of the reign
3 of our Sovereign Lorde King Henry the 8, **I, Gilbert**
4 **Byggyne of Seal**, sick in body but whole and perfect
5 of mind make this my testament and last will
6 in manner and form following: **First** I bequeath my
7 soul to Almighty god and my body to be buried
8 in the churchyard of Seal aforesaid **Item**
9 to the high altar there 4d. Also I will there
10 shalbe bestowed the day of my burying to priests?
11 clerk? and to poor people 6s 8d. And in like
12 wise I will there shalbe bestowed as much at
13 my month's day. Also I bequeath to my kinsman
14 **Roger Robinson** 10s to be paid to him at his
15 age of twenty years. Also I bequeath to
16 **Agnes Hallson**, my? mayde? in moneys worth
17 10s to be paid to her at the time of her
18 marriage or at her full age of 24 years
19 if she happen not to marry before. All the

20 residue of my goods, my debts and bequests
21 paid and fulfilled, I give and bequeath them
22 wholly to **Johan, my wife**, whom I make my
23 sole executrix. And I constitute and ordain and
24 make **John Denman**³⁶⁹ to be my overseer to
25 whom I bequeath for his labours 12d.

26 This the last will of me the said Gilbert
27 Biggyns made the day and year above said as
28 concerning my tenement or messuage in the
29 which **John Beecher**³⁷⁰ now dwelleth in ??
30 I will that Johan, my wife, shall have the
31 said tenement or messuage to her and to her
32 assigns during her natural life. And after
33 her decease, I will it shalbe sold by the advice
34 of the Vicar and the churchwardens for the
35 time being with two or four of the most decent?
36 husbandmen? of the parish of Seal aforesaid.

369 vicar of Seal 1545 to 1548 (#3933)

370 John Beecher (#351) had probably married a year or two before Gilbert wrote his will since his eldest son married in 1565.

37 Also I will that 10s thereof be bestowed on the highway
38 between **Seal Park gate and Childsbridge**. And if
39 it fortune that the said highway be mended before
40 that time, then I will it shalbe bestowed in the parish
41 where most needed by the discretion of the Vicar
42 and the churchwardens for the time being. Also I
43 will have bestowed after the decease of me and my wife
44 upon an obit to be kept yearly the space of 15
45 years within the parish church of Seal aforesaid
46 3s 4d that is to say, one dirge, one mass. And the
47 residue to be given to poor people. Also I will have,
48 every year, the space of 20 years, 12d bestowed
49 upon the maintaining of a taper to burn before
50 the sacrament each Sunday. And principally 12d?
51 with a pound of wax. And the surplus
52 to the use of the church. Also I will that the
53 surplus of the sale of the said house shalbe
54 bestowed upon the taking down of the old steeple
55 and setting forth of our lady chancel by the
56 devise of the Vicar for the time being and
57 the church wardens. And if it be done within two
58 years next after the decease of Joane my wife And
59 if not, then I will it shall be bestowed towards the

60 buying of a white damask cape³⁷¹ as far as it will
61 go. The men being witnesses:

William Gyles? ?? ??

John Thebold³⁷² and John Denman

371 cope?

372 #673

Thomas Bingham was buried on 24th March 1582/3³⁷³

1 In the name of god Amen. On the 17th
2 day of March in the year of our lord god 1582, I, Thomas
3 Bingham of the parish of Charlton within the county of Kent,
4 the imperfect servant of my lord god, being sick in body but
5 perfect in memory, I praise god, do make and ordain this my last
6 will and testament in manner and form following: **First:** and
7 chiefly I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my creator,
8 nothing doubting of his mercy through the merit of his son,
9 Jesus Christ, my redeemer, to have free forgiveness of all my sins.
10 And, when he shall please to call my soul to his mercy, I
11 desire that my body be buried in the churchyard of Charlton
12 as near the gate as may be.

The Blatchers of Seal, Shipbourne and Tonbridge

The "Blatchers", or "Blaccherll" as the name was spelled in some of the earlier wills, were probably associated with the land now called "Black Charles" just to the north west of the centre of Underriver. In 1317 a John Blakecherl was one of the witnesses of a charter concerning the sale of some woodland to the south of what is now Hall Farm and was then Hale Manor³⁷⁴

Seal Wills from the Fifteenth Century

Thomas Blatcher	10 May 1476	CKS:Drb/Pw	3.230	page b.480
John Blakcherle	Feb 1477/8		3.206	page b.482
Richard Blatcher	1480c		3.269	page b.486
Richard Blatcher	5 Jan 1481/2		3.286	page b.487

374 Gordon Ward, *Sevenoaks Essays*, p.235, Sevenoaks 1980 edition

Transcripts of these four wills (including translations of those parts written in Latin), were made in 1931 by J.H.Morrison³⁷⁵. These have been used as a basis for the transcripts given here.

J.H.Morrison describes how both of the Richard Blatcher wills had been hurriedly and badly copied. The first is undated but, from its place in the register, he took it as belonging to the year 1480; the second gives the 5th January 1481/2 as the date it was written. The wives of both these Richards were called Emma. It is possible that both were wills of the same Richard? This would mean, however, that the first one was not proved in 1480.

The Early Blatchers

Thomas Blatcher, who died in 1476, had three sons:

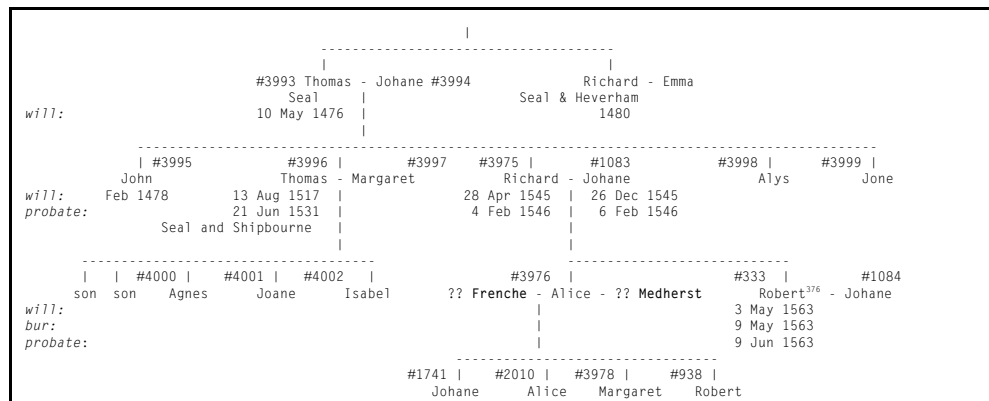
- John, will 1478
- Thomas, will 1517, of Shipbourne but with land in Seal
- Richard (#3975), possibly Richard of Seal, will 1545

and a brother Richard, possibly the Richard whose will of 1480 has survived. This Richard made another Richard his heir but without specifying the relationship; he could have been his nephew, Thomas's son

Thomas's son John died less than two years after his father so that his will is mainly concerned with fulfilling his father's wishes regarding his brothers and sisters. Thomas's three sons appear to have been of age in 1476; if he married in the 1440s, he was probably in his fifties when he died.

Since all the children of the Thomas who wrote his will in 1517 seem to have been of age at that time, this Thomas must have married no later than the early 1480s; thus these two Thomases could have been father and son with the son being in his sixties when he wrote his will and, assuming he lived until a short while before probate was granted, about eighty when he died.

The Early Blatchers



376 witnessed the will of Thomas Olyver of Seal (#333) in 1561

first part in Latin translated by J.H.Morrison SLSC: D206c/1; second part in English transcribed by J.Fox supplemented by J.H.Morrison's transcript.

In the name of God amen. I, Thomas Blatcher³⁷⁷ of Seal in the year of the Lord 1476, the 10th day of the month of May, sound of mind and of whole memory, make my will in this manner. **First:** I bequeath my soul to god, etc. and my body to be buried in the chapelyard of Seal. Also I bequeath to the high altar there for tithes forgotten 12d. Also I bequeath to the fabric of the same chapel 20d. And the rest of all my goods not bequeathed I give and bequeath to **Joan, my wife.** Also I appoint the said Joan and **Richard Blatcher my brother** my executors and the **vicar of Seal**³⁷⁸ supervisor of the same testament and last will as will be made clear in what follows, that they may arrange for the salvation of my soul as shall seem expedient to them. Given the day and year aforesaid.

This is the last will of me, Thomas Blatcher of the parish of Seal, made the

³⁷⁷ "Blaccher" in this will

³⁷⁸ Richard Cutler (Incumbents of Kemsing with Seal, A.C. Vol.20,p.264)

month and year abovesaid. **First** I will that **Johane, my wife**, shall have my tenement and all my lands the which were mine at the hour of my death to her and her assigns during the term of her life except 4 pieces of land called the **Westmed, Huntcroft**, the **Seer** and **Petfield**³⁷⁹ the which I will that **John, my son**, shall have with this condition that he shall not interrupt nor let my said wife nor her assigns of all manner of corn, grains, pasturing and meadows growing or being upon the said 4 pieces of land for the cure of my death unto the feast of All Halloween then next following. And also that the said John erye³⁸⁰ and sow all such land as my said wife will conserving to her use at such time as she will require him. And to that intent I will that the said John shall have 6 oxen with the whole plough. And also the said John shall pay, or (cause to be) paid to **Thomas, his brother, and Richard**, to each of them 4 marks of lawful money of England. Also to **Alys and Jone**³⁸¹, to each of them 20s and to each of them a cow. Also I will that John, my son, shall have the said tenement with th'appurtenances the which I have assigned unto my wife Johane after her decease. Written the 10th day of May the year of our lord abovesaid.

379 "all on the hill south of Black Charles" - J.H.Morrison

380 "eryere": ear-iron of a plough ("A Medieval Farming Glossary", Essex Record Office, 1997); thus this sentence can be interpreted that John was to plough and sow this land for his mother.

381 Alys and Jone were Thomas's daughters as is known from the will of John Blatcher, Thomas's son

In the name of god Amen. On Sunday the next after the Feast of Saint Valentine the martyr in the year of the lord 1477, I, John Blatcher³⁸² of the parish of Seal, sound of mind, etc.³⁸³ **First:** I bequeath, etc. in the churchyard, etc. Also I bequeath to the high altar there 6d. Also to the sacristy there 4d. Also to the clerk there 4d. Also I appoint for one chaplain engaged to celebrate in the church of Seal soon after my death for a quarter of a year, to pray for my soul and for the souls of my father and mother, that he have payment for his pains 33s 4d through my executors. Also I bequeath to the bells of **Sevenoaks** 20d. Also I bequeath to repairing the king's highway at **Whithill** 20d; and between **Mostellysoke** and **Gotern**³⁸⁴ 5s to be laid out there for my soul. Also I bequeath to **Alice Storm** 12d

382 "Blakeherle"

383 In the opening lines the writer who copied the will into the Register has truncated the conventional phrases "sound of mind and memory though weak in body", "I bequeath my soul to God and my body to be buried in the churchyard" - J.H.Morrison

384 "Mostellysoke" could be "Muster Oke" and "Getetter" is probably Godden. In 1512 John Olyver of Kettles, which is just north of Black Charles, left money for the highway between Muster Oke and Whitepetts and his widow, Alice, in 1521 10s for "amending the foul ways between Muster Oke and Smythet Green". Godden Green is about halfway between Underriver and the village of Seal and to get to Seal church from Underriver (a distance of nearly three miles with Carters Hill to climb) would have been a difficult journey in anything other than good weather. John Blatcher's Whithill could have been John Olyver's Whitepetts.

and to **Joan Storm** 12d and to **John Storm** 14d which is in his hand. Also I appoint that my executors immediately after my decease shall sell all my chattels, living³⁸⁵ and dead, or my corn to pay my debts and legacies and to make the cost of my trental and my anniversary. And I make **Richard Carter sub le Ryver**³⁸⁶ and **Olyver Dowle**³⁸⁷ my executors and I ordain **Robert, vicar of Seal**³⁸⁸ my supervisor and he shall have for his pains 20d. And I assign to each of my executors for his pains 3s 4d. In witness whereof, etc. Given etc.

This is the true and last intention of John Blatcher of Seal made the day and year aforesaid concerning all my lands and tenements in which **Richard Pelsett**³⁸⁹ and **William Porter**³⁹⁰ are now feoffees to my use only according to the will of **Thomas Blatcher, my father**, deceased, as the limits and bounds of the same are divided

385 presumably his livestock

386 "of Underriver"?

387 probably "Dowble" (or Duble), a local yeoman family at this time (J.H.Morrison)

388 Robert Snowe (Incumbents of Kemsing with Seal, A.C. Vol.20,p.265)

389 Pelsett of Shoads House, now demolished, which stood just south of the present (1931) Underriver House (J.H.Morrison); this Richard Pelsett could have been the one whose will of 1486 has survived - see *pelsetw.will*

390 William Porter owned Hall Place in the mid 1400s and the family continued there into the seventeenth century - see *porterw.will*

and appear and in his said will are declared. **First:** I will and appoint that my said feoffees or their assigns shall, after my decease, demise and easeoff Richard Carter sub le Ryver or two other men only to the use of the aforesaid Richard and by him nominated of and in a piece of land called **Hentercroft** and in a meadow adjoining called **Westmede** lying next to the land of the aforesaid Richard Carter, that is to say, in two indented charters of re-entry for security of the payment of 8 marks for the said land and meadow by me, John, in the presence of my neighbours thus sold to the same Richard Carter for the aforesaid sum of 8 marks, that is to say in 8 years next after my decease to pay to my executors to pay my debts and legacies and all the rest of my will³⁹¹. Also I will and appoint that within one year next after my decease that my executors receive and take my corn and grass on the said piece of land adjoining called **Sere and Petfield in Seal**³⁹². And that thereupon my said feoffees, or their assigns, devise and grant to **Thomas Blatcher and Richard Blatcher, my brothers**, if they be then living, the aforesaid two pieces of land adjoining named above, with all their appurtenances subject to this condition and my will, that my aforesaid brothers receive and have the aforesaid two pieces of land with their appurtenances in the name and for the

391 one mark was 13s 4d; the bequests in the first part of John's will came to £2 2s 6d and thus required over 3 marks to satisfy them. Was Richard Carter paying for this land 8 marks a year for eight years or 8 marks in eight years time? This part, and the next, is obviously concerned with the eight marks which Richard and Thomas were to receive from their father's will.

392 the four pieces of land mentioned by John were those left to him by his father which he was to receive directly although his mother had certain rights concerning them.

sum of eight marks of English money which my late father assigned to them to be paid by me, John Blatcher. And if for the said debt of 8 marks the said lands are delivered to those two brothers of mine, that thereupon my executors shall be thereof quit and discharged. And if it happen that the aforesaid Thomas and Richard, my brothers, will not receive the aforesaid two pieces of land above named on such a condition, that thereupon I will and appoint that my feoffees and my executors sell the aforesaid two pieces of land with appurtenances at the best price and pay to Thomas and Richard, my brothers, 8 marks of English money for the debt assigned by my father. And my executors thereupon shall lay out the remainder thereof for my soul. Also I will that my executors pay to **Alice and Joan, my sisters**, when they come to their marriages, to each of them 20s as the gift my father so assigned to them. Also I will and appoint that my aforesaid feoffees immediately after the decease of Joan, late the wife of my father Thomas, devise and grant to Thomas and Richard, my brothers, all that messuage with the garden and a piece of land lying opposite with all their appurtenances in which the aforesaid **Joan, my mother**, remains "sub le Ryver" and holds for the term of her life. To hold to my aforesaid brothers, their heirs and assigns for ever, if they are then living. And if they shall have deceased without heirs of their bodies that thereupon my feoffees and my executors shall sell the aforesaid messuage, garden and piece of land lying opposite, with all their appurtenances, at the best price. And of the moneys received therefor, I will that my sisters shall each have thereof 40s. And I assign to a chaplain engaged to celebrate in the church of Seal for a quarter of a years 33s 4d. And the rest thereof then remaining, I will that my

executors pay and dispose of to the **brothers of Aylesford**³⁹³ 6s 8d. And to each of my feoffees 3s 4d. And other moneys in works of mercy 7s, wrongs (done by me) to be repaired and to be distributed in alms as they would answer before the last Judgement. In witness whereof, etc. these being witnesses **Richard Whiter, John Wylde, James Janyn, John Storm, Olyver Dowle, Richard Carter, Richard Carter** and others given, etc.

Will of Richard Blatcher of Seal 1480

written in Latin; undated
translation by J.H.Morrison

This is the last will etc. of me, Richard Blatcher made the day and year above written. **First:** I will that **Emma, my wife**, have my house and my lands at **Heverham** in the parish of **Kemsing**³⁹⁴ to her heirs and assigns for ever. Also I will that the aforesaid Emma, my wife, have my house and lands in the parish of Seal during her life. And after the decease of the said Emma, I will that the said house

³⁹³ a Carmelite priory

³⁹⁴ "Everham", a hamlet in Kemsing often spelled without the "H"

and lands with their appurtenances remain to **Richard Blatcher** and his heirs male of his body lawfully begotten for ever. And if it happen that the aforesaid Richard die without heirs male, then I will that the aforesaid house with the land adjoining aforesaid be sold and the money therefrom raised and perceived, I will that an honest priest shall be paid to celebrate for the salvation of my soul and the souls of all the faithful departed for as long as the said money lasts. etc.

Will of Richard Blatcher of Seal 1482

written 5th January 1481/2, in Latin

translation by J.H.Morrison

In the name of god Amen, etc. The 5th day of the month of January in the year of the lord 1481, I, Richard Blatcher of the parish of Seal make my will, etc. **First:** I bequeath my soul to god, etc. and my body to be buried in the churchyard of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul there. Also to the high altar 8d and to the clerk of the parish³⁹⁵ 8d. Also to the fabric of the same church 6d. Also I bequeath to the

highway between **Walle Lane**³⁹⁶ and my gate 6d. Also I ordain and appoint **Emma, my wife and Thomas** 8d³⁹⁷ **Ayner** my executors. Also I bequeath to the said Thomas for his pains 3s 4d. And the rest I give and bequeath to the said Emma, my wife, that she herself may dispose, etc.

396 probably for Welle Lane, the road to Kettleshill (J.H.Morrison)

397 The "viijd" after "Thomas" is a meaningless insertion (unless it may be taken to imply that a legacy has been accidentally omitted in the copy) - J.H.Morrison

Wills from Seal, Shipbourne and Tonbridge

The Seal Blatchers had connections with Shipbourne and Tonbridge, Shipbourne being very close to Underriver where the Blatchers lived. The wills which have survived are:

	will	burial	Ref: CKS: Drb/ Pw Pwr		
Seal:					
Richard Blatcher	28 Apr 1545		3	10.141	page b.492
Joan Blatcher	26 Dec 1545			10.144	page b.494
Robert Blatcher	3 May 1563	9 May 1563	7	13.75	page b.496

Shipbourne:

Thomas Blatcher	13 Aug 1517	probate 1531 ³⁹⁸		8.290	page b.499
John Blatcher	2 Oct 1582	6 Oct 1582	13	16.202	page b.515
William Blatcher (senior)	22 Jan 1584/5	15 Jan 1585/6		17.122	page b.504
Thomas Blatcher	20 Jun 1611		21	20.313	page b.523
Richard Blatcher	9 Apr 1623	12 Apr 1623	26	21.12	page b.534
Joane Blatcher	20 Mar 1625	18 Mar 1627	27	21.297	page b.536
Richard's widow (nee Page)					
John Blatcher	23 Mar 1623	27 Mar 1623	26	21.15	page b.555

398 probably the son of Thomas who wrote his will in 1476; 14 years between the will being written and probate being granted on 21st June 1531 in the church of Malling

Tonbridge:

William Blatcher	11 Nov 1613	4 Dec 1613	22 20.448	page b.542
Agnes, William's widow	4 Apr 1622	19 Mar 1623	26 21.16	page b.549
William Blatcher	28 Apr 1640	7 May 1640	30 22.370	page b.561

A number of these wills were written by members of the Hooper family who carried out this service in the parishes surrounding Shipbourne for a very long period. Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne from 1576 to his death in 1618, wrote the wills of John Blatcher in October 1582 and William Blatcher in January 1585. His son John, a notary public and parish clerk of Tonbridge, wrote the wills of William Blatcher in November 1613 and his widow, Agnes, in April 1622 whilst another of Nicholas's sons, Robert, wrote that of John Blatcher in March 1623.

At least three of these wills were proved locally:

- that of Thomas Blatcher was proved in June 1531 in the church of Malling
- that of John Blatcher of Shipbourne was proved "[in Shipbourne church before me, Nicholas Hooper, curate here, by virtue of a commission to me delivered? the 29th day of November 1582](#)"
- that of William Blatcher was proved on 24th June 1586 before John Stockwood, vicar of Tonbridge in the porch of his church.

Richard, Joan and Robert of Seal

The Richard and Joan whose wills were written in 1545 were husband and wife and the parents of the Robert who died in 1563. Richard could, possibly, be #3975, (see above) with Alice born about 1520. She was "Alice Frenche" when her father wrote his will in 1545; neither he, nor Alice's mother later in 1545, mention any grandchildren so she may have married only a short time before her father died.

It looks, from his will, as if Robert did not have any surviving children; he made Robert Frenche, his nephew, his heir. Robert had land in Gravesend as well Seal, Sevenoaks and Shipbourne.

Alice's children are known from the will of her brother Robert who, in addition to making his nephew Robert his heir, left the daughters 20s each. He refers to his sister as Alice Medherst so that, by then, she had been widowed and remarried.

It was probably this Robert Blatcher who, in 1555 with John Goodhews, brought a case against John and Clemence Tebold regarding some land in Seal - see **Seal Fines in Section Z of More Families & Transcripts**.

First: I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my maker and redeemer of all the world, to our lady saint Mary and to all the company of saints in heaven, and my body for to be buried in the churchyard of the parish church of Seal aforesaid.

Item: I bequeath to the high altar there for my tithes forgotten or withheld with other discharging of my duties 12d. **Item:** I bequeath to be bestowed at my burial ten shillings, and at my month's day, another 10s. **Item:** I bequeath to the reparation of the parish church of Seal ?? **Item:** I bequeath to ?? priest, being of good name and form for to sing for my soul, my friends' souls and all ?? parish church of Seal . . of a year 33s 4d of lawful money of England. **Item:** I bequeath to any of my godchildren being alive at my decease 4d.

Item: I bequeath to **my daughter Alice French**³⁹⁹ 40s to be paid to her within one year next after my decease. The residue of all my goods not bequeathed, my debts and bequests first paid, I give to **Johane, my wife, and to Robert, my son,** equally for to be divided between them, the which Joan and Robert I make mine

399

the only known Alice, wife of a Frenche, was having children in the late 1550s and 1560s; after the death of her husband, John Frenche, in 1578 she married Thomas Homewood and her burial was recorded in 1621; obviously she was not born early enough to have been Richard Blatcher's daughter.

executors. And **John Denman**⁴⁰⁰ of Seal aforesaid my overseer to whom I bequeath 40 shillings?."

This is the last will of me the said **Richard Blatcher** of the said parish of Seal to the disposition of all my land and tenements lying in the parishes of Seal and Shipbourne . . within the County of Kent. First I will that Joan, my wife, shall have my house, garden and orchard sometime **Richard Carter's of Underriver** in the ?? of **William Stace**⁴⁰¹ dwelleth and . . the same house containing by estimation two acres and a half . . more or less and a croft of land lying after northside of the highway and part of the said tenement leading from **Smythet Oak to Smythet** . . to have to the said Joan, my wife, during her natural life. And after her decease to remain to Robert, my son, and to his heirs and assigns for ever. Also I will that the said Joan my wife shall have her dwelling within my house in the which I do now dwell in half a year after my decease without any matter or let or trouble of my son Robert, his heirs or assigns. The residue of all my land and

400 a John Denman was vicar of Seal 1545 to 1548 but he had an elder brother, also John, who a prebend of Rochester; the witness's to Johane Blatcher's will of 1545 include "Doctor Denman, vicar" and John Denman, th'older

401 There was a William Stace having children in the 1560s; the William Stace mentioned in this will could have been his father.

tenements I give and bequeath to Robert my son and to his heirs and assigns for ever. These witness: **John Tebold**⁴⁰² of Seal aforesaid

John Be--- of Sevenoaks

John Denman with others.

Will of Joane Blatcher of Seal

written 26th December 1545; probate 6th February 1545/6

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The 26th day of December
2 in the year of our lord god 1545, I, **Johane**
3 **Blatcher** of the parish of Seal, widow, being in
4 my good, whole and perfect mind, thanks be unto god,
5 do make my testament in manner and form following:
6 **First:** I bequeath my soul to Almighty god
7 and my body to be buried in the churchyard
8 of Seal aforesaid. **Item:** I bequeath to the
9 reparation of the church of Seal aforesaid
10 6s 8d. **Item:** I bequeath to **Alice French, my**
11 **daughter**, 2 kine and 13s 4d in money, a
12 little cauldron, a new pan, ??

13 a brass pot with a narrow mouth, 3 pairs of
14 sheets, a mattress, a bolster, a coverlet, a
15 ??, 6 pieces of pewter, 3 porringers, 2
16 candlesticks and my best tablecloth. **Item:**
17 to **Maryon, my maid**, two ewes and a red
18 kirtle. **Item:** I bequeath to **Richard Blatcher**⁴⁰³
19 a bullock of 12 months of age . . . to
20 **Agnes Wellington?** and to **Alice, her daughter**, to
21 each of them a ? ?. **Item:** to **Johane Hadlow**⁴⁰⁴
22 a r..ede gown and a sheet. **Item:** to **Margaret**
23 **Ford**⁴⁰⁵ a petticoat of carfay. **Item:** to ??
24 wife, dwelling at **Romford in Essex** ??
25 ?? a ? gown. **Item:** to every of my
26 godchildren now being alive 4d.

27 The residue of all my goods not given nor
28 bequeathed, my debts first paid, and my bequests

403 nothing to indicate Richard's relationship to Johane

404 there were a large number of Hadlows in Ightham

405 Margaret (#561), wife of Lawrence Ford, died in July 1563

29 ?? and fulfilled, I give and bequeath the
30 whole to **Robert, my son**, the which Robert
31 I make whole executor of this my present testament.
32 The witnesses: **Doctor Denman, vicar?**
33 of Strate?, **John Denman, th'older, Richard**
34 and **Nicholas Waller**.

Will of Robert Blatcher of Seal

written 3rd May 1563;

buried 9th May 1563; probate 9th June 1563

"**First:** I give and bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my maker and Redeemer and my body to the earth. **Item:** I will there shall be bestowed at my burying to poor people and other deeds of Charitie 40s. **Item:** I will to the poor money box of Seal 5s. **Item:** I will and give to the poor money box of **Shipbourne** 2s."

"**Item:** I will to **Johane Frenche, Alice Frenche and to Margaret Frenche**, my sister's daughters, to either of them 20s of lawful money of England for to be paid to either of them when they shall come to their ages of 21 years. If any of the foresaid 3 maidens die before they come to their ages of 21 years, then either for to be others heirs."

"**Item:** I will to **Margaret Bowman**, my servant, 40s. And to **Agnes Stays**, my servant 40s. And to **Thomas Birde**, my servant 40s. **Item:** I will to R-- Weekes, widow, 3s 4d. **Item:** I will to **Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne**⁴⁰⁶ aforesaid . 3s 4d.

"And the residue of my moveable goods, chattels and debts to me owing, I give and bequeath to **Johane, my wife**, whom I make my sole executrix for to prove this my last will and testament and to pay my bequests and my debts . . whereof the foresaid Robert Blatcher, to this my last will have set my sign. and Seale . . the day and year above written."

"This is the last will me the foresaid **Robert Blatcher**, made and declared the day and year above said as confirming the disposition of all my said tenements, woods and annuities in the parishes of **Seal, Shipbourne, Sevenoaks and Gravesend** or elsewhere in the County of Kent. **First:** I will and bequeath to Johane, my wife, all my said land . . for the time of her natural life paying to my sister, **Alice Medherste**, 10s? a year, yearly for ?? to be paid out of my said land for the time of her natural life of my said sister Alice with a clause of distress for lack of payment thereof quarterly to be paid and my will is that Johane, my wife, shall keep all the appurtenances of my house. It shall be lawful for Johane, my wife, for to take

shipment, fitter boot, plough boot⁴⁰⁷, and main boot and shall fell no timber but only for the ?? needful to the foresaid house and for palings and ?? for to be spent on the same ground and nowhere else."

"Item: I will and bequeath to **Robert Frenche**⁴⁰⁸, my sister's son, after the decease of Johane, my wife, all my said land, tenements and annuities in the parishes of Seal, Shipbourne, Sevenoaks and Gravesend to have and to hold all the foresaid land, tenements and annuities to the foresaid Robert Frenche and to his heirs for ever." These being witnessed: **John Start, Henry Collyn,**
Gilbert Jenyns, vicar, and others.

407 "boot" - profit (profit from ploughing? but what is shipment profit, fitter profit?, etc.)

408 Alice Blatcher's son, Robert Frenche, could have been the Robert Frenche who married Agnes Pynden, in Seal, in 1578 (#938 in Seal); Alice was married by 1545 (see her father's will, page 492) but since, from her brother's will, she also had three daughters, he could have been born between 1550 and 1555.

The Shipbourne Blatchers

The family connections of the Shipbourne and Tonbridge testators can be determined by cross references in their wills but a Thomas who has not been identified was:

Thomas Blatcher, potter, who was buried Shipbourne on 8th February 1569

Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne

The Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne whose will was written in 1517 was one of the three sons of Thomas of Seal whose will of 1476 has survived.

Will of Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne

written 13th August 1517; probate 21st June 1531

transcript from probate copy (original has not survived)

- 1 In the name of god Amen. the
2 13th day of August the year of our lord 1517⁴⁰⁹.

409 probate was not granted for another 14 years

3 I, Thomas Blatcher, of the parish of Shipbourne, whole of
4 mind, make my last will in this wise. **First:**
5 I bequeath my soul to god and my body to be buried
6 in the churchyard of Shipbourne. **Item:** I bequeath
7 to the high altar? there 20d. **Item:** I bequeath so
8 much money for the mending of the church
9 there as they stood⁴¹⁰ to ring the bells as shall
10 sufficiently mend it. **Item:** for the mending of the
11 highway 3s 4d. **Item:** to **Agnes, my daughter,**
12 20s. **Item:** to **Joane, my daughter,** 20s. **Item:** to
13 **Isabel, my daughter,** 40s. **Item:** to every one of my
14 godchildren 4d. **Item:** to the church of Shipbourne
15 3 kine continually to endure⁴¹¹ for the maintaining
16 of ?? taper before the image of the ??
17 and the image of our lady within the church of Shipbourne.
18 **Item:** for ?? ?? 3s 4d. **Item:** I bequeath
19 to **Margaret, my wife,** my house with all my land,
20 lying and being within the parish of Shipbourne for the

410 seems to mean that the floor where the bellringers stood was to be repaired

411 another phrase which does not seem to make sense

term of her natural life, keeping herself widow and
do not marry, except the house that I bought of
Goodwyn of Shipbourne. **Item:** my will is that Margaret,
my wife, shall keep all manner of reparations for the
term of her life sufficiently. **Item:** I will that after
the decease of Margaret, my wife, that my house with all
my land, lying and being within the parish of Shipbourne
and Seal unto my children, either one to be either's
heir. **Item:** I will that one brother shall not sell ??
another his parcel of the land but he shall sell it to
his brother or let it, hire to ?? if he be unable
to buy it but he shall not sell it to no other man
under no manner of colour but by that is left able
to by the ?? of his feodeers?. The residue of
all my goods, moveables, I will to Margaret, my
wife and she to dispose as she shall think best for the
health of my soul, paying my legacies and my bequests
and I ordain and make my executors, Margaret, my
wife and **Henry Pay** and the said Henry shall have
for his labour 3s 4d. These being witness
Steven Lorkyn, Henry Pay and William Blatcher.

William, the Patriarch

The John, Thomas and Richard of Shipbourne were three of the sons of William who, in 1585, was “[impotent and aged and thereby put in remembrance of the sudden change in the mortal and transitory life](#)”. Even so, he lived for another year.

William's eldest son, John, a shingler, had died in 1582. John's eldest son (or at least his eldest surviving son) was baptised in 1564 so that John was probably born in the late 1530s and his father, William, either married late or was only in his early seventies when he wrote his will. William's wife, Johane, who died in 1602, lived into her eighties if she was the mother of all William's children.

John's brother, William (\$700), could have been the William Blatcher, shingler, who was indicted as an accessory to a large gang of men who burgled a number of houses in 1581. He was found not guilty - see [John Howells in More Families & Transcripts](#).

The message in which William lived was at Budd. A **traveller** who died in a barn at Budd was buried on 8th February 1603 by which time William's son Thomas was living there.

				\$680 ⁴¹² William - Johane \$681			
will:		22 Jan 1585		"aged"			
bur:		15 Jan 1586		10 Feb 1602			

\$47		\$108		\$194		\$700	
John -		Thomas ⁴¹³ -		Richard -		William ⁴¹⁴	
will: 2 Oct 1582		20 Jun 1611		9 Apr 1623		Alice ⁴¹⁵	
bur: 6 Oct 1582				12 Apr 1623		Margaret ⁴¹⁶	
		\$110					
		William					
bur:		1 Aug 1573					
see page b.514				see page b.532			

- b.503

	\$92 James - Anne Brough \$93 married 1 Dec 1571		
bur.	3 Mar 1595		

	\$94	\$95	\$150
	Thomas	Marie	James
bap:	13 Jan 1572	21 Mar 1574	15 Nov 1579
bur:			11 Aug 1584

Will of William Blatcher of Shipbourne

written 22nd January 1584/5

transcript from probate copy (original has not survived)

1 In the name of god Amen.
2 The two and twentieth day of January in the
3 year of our lord god one thousand, five
4 hundredth, four score and four and in the
5 seven and twentieth year of the reign of
6 our sovereign Lady, Elizabeth, by the grace
7 of god, Queen of England, France and
8 Ireland, defender of the faith. I, William
9 Blatcher, the elder, of Shipbourne in the
10 county of Kent and diocese of Rochester,
11 **yeoman**, being impotent and aged and thereby
12 put in remembrance of the sudden

and change in this mortal and transitory life,
notwithstanding of reasonable good health of
body and perfect of mind and remembrance,
thanks be given to god almighty,
do ordain and make this my present testament
in manner and form following: And **First:** and
principally, I give, commend and bequeath my
soul to Almighty god, my maker, saviour and
redeemer, Jesus Christ, by whose merit, precious
death and blood shedding, I trust to be saved.
And my body to the earth to be buried in the
churchyard of Shipbourne aforesaid. **Item:** I give
and bequeath to the box or chest of the poor
within the parish of Shipbourne, aforesaid, 12d.
Item: I will and bequeath to my godson,
William Blatcher, the son of John Blatcher⁴¹⁷,
my son, three shillings, four pence. The
residue of all my goods and cattells, as well moveable
as unmoveable, my debts being paid and funeral
discharged, I wholly, fully and with good intent and
purpose, give and bequeath to **my wellbeloved wife,**

⁴¹⁷ John (#47) had died in 1582

34 **Johane**, which Johane I ordain and make my whole and sole
35 executor of this my will to see my body honestly
36 brought to the earth and this my will proved. And
37 I ordain and make **my natural son, Thomas Blatcher**,
38 to be assistor and co-administrator with my said wife
39 in the probation of this my will and in any other
40 business whatsoever which shall appertain or belong
41 to the same and which my said wife shall request
42 him unto. To which Thomas I give and bequeath,
43 for his good will and travail therein to be taken
44 six shillings eight pence over and above his
45 charges⁴¹⁸ and expenses therein to be laid out.

46 This is the last will of me the
47 said William Blatcher, the elder, made and
48 declared the day and year first above written
49 concerning the order and disposition of all
50 my messuage or tenement wherein I now

418 "charges" - probate copy; no "d" in discharged on line 32

51 dwell, situated, lying and being at **Budd**⁴¹⁹ in
52 Shipbourne aforesaid and all the barns,
53 buildings, closes, gardens, orchards, land,
54 meadows, pastures and feedings withall and
55 singular th'appurtenances to the same belonging,
56 or in any wise appertaining, together, situated,
57 lying and being in Shipbourne aforesaid or else
58 where in the county of Kent. And further
59 I will, give and bequeath all my said land,
60 testament and hereditaments withall and singular
61 th'appurtenances whatsoever to the said Johane,
62 my wife, To have and to hold the same, with
63 all and singular th'appurtenances unto the said
64 Johane, my wife, during the term of
65 her natural life, she taking mete and
66 necessary timber upon the premises for the
67 necessary reparations of the housing? there
68 and also necessary firewood and fuel, to be
69 likewise taken upon the premises where it
70 be best spared and least harm done, for to

419 to the west of the parish of Shipbourne, just over a mile east of the centre of Underriver; when **Thomas Collyns** was buried, in Shipbourne in 1587, he was given as "of Budds"

71 be spent in my said mansion house during the
72 whole term of her said natural life,
73 committing no other wilful waste in any of
74 the premises. And after the decease of the said
75 Johane, my wife, I will and bequeath all and
76 singular the said messuage or tenement
77 and all other premises withall and singular
78 th'appurtenances unto the said Thomas
79 Blatcher, my son, to have and to hold
80 all the same, withall and singular the appurtenances
81 unto the said Thomas, my son, his heirs
82 and assigns forever. Provided,
83 notwithstanding and my very will and mind
84 is that the said Thomas, my son, his
85 heirs, executors, administrators or assigns,
86 shall pay out of my said land, tenements and
87 hereditaments to him before willed, the sum
88 of one hundred pounds of good and lawful
89 money of England in manner and form
90 following (that is to say) to my other
91 **two sons, viz: Richard and William Blatcher,**
92 to either of them Twenty pounds a piece of lawful
93 money. And to **my three daughters, viz: Alice,**

94 **Margaret and Marie Blatcher**, to either of them
95 the sum of Twenty pounds a piece of good and
96 lawful money of England to be paid to them,
97 my said sons and daughters, in manner and
98 form as hereafter followeth (that is to say)
99 the said twenty pounds to my said son
100 William willed, I will shalbe paid to him, his
101 executors or assigns, within one whole year
102 next after the longest liver
103 of the said Johane, my wife, or of me the said
104 William, the father, or within 21 days next
105 after request thereof, the said year being
106 fully passed. At or in the said mansion house
107 wherein I now dwell and the said sum of
108 twenty pounds to my said son Richard
109 willed {*as for William, but within two years*}

- the said twenty pounds to my said
- daughter Alice willed, I will ten pounds
- thereof shalbe paid to her at the day of
- her marriage upon lawful request or

- knowledge of her said marriage⁴²⁰
- by her, to the said Thomas or his heirs
- to be made. And the other ten pounds
- residue thereof I will shalbe paid to her,
- her executors or assigns, within three
- whole years next after the decease of the
- longest liver of the said Johane, my
- wife and of me, the said William, or within
- 21 days next after the request thereof,
- the said three whole years by then fully
- passed. And at or in the said place. And
- the said twenty pounds to my said
- daughter Margaret willed {*as for Alice but within four years*}

- said twenty pounds to my said daughter
- Marie willed
- {*as for Alice but within five years*}

- And if it shall
- happen my said daughters, or either
- or any of them, not to be married before the

420 spelt "marriage" but no "d" in marriage on previous line (probate copy)

- end or any limitations which their
- or any of their said payments of the
- said ten pounds should be paid as is
- aforesaid, then I will that she or they
- so not being married, her of their executors
- or assigns, shalbe paid her whole payment
- of twenty pounds (the full portion to them
- and each of them willed) at such due time
- and place as the said sum and sums of
- ten pounds to them, and every of them,
- willed should be paid as aforesaid.
- And furthermore, my very will, mind and
- intent is that, if my said sons William or
- Richard, or either of them, their or either
- of their executors or assigns or the
- said Alice, Margaret or Marie, my
- daughters, or any of them, their executors
- or assigns, not to be paid his, her or their
- said several sum and sums of £20 a piece,
- at the several time, times and dues afore
- mentioned and according to the effect
- and true meaning of this my will,
- that then my said sons, or either of them,

- and my said daughters, every or any
- of them so not paid, their executors,
- administrators or assigns, shall enter in
- and upon all my said lands, tenements
- and hereditaments and every of them.
- And the same and every of them shall have,
- hold, possess and occupy, from time to
- time, consequently?, one after another until?
- they and every of them so unpaid shall
- receive and take of the issues and profits
- thereof so much money or other ??
- as shall amount to the sum and sums
- of twenty pounds (the portion of him or
- her so unpaid) and the same issues and
- profits so detain and keep to his, her
- and their use (and uses) so unpaid; any
- thing whatsoever herein before mentioned
- to the contrary in any wise
- notwithstanding. In witness whereof I,
- the said William Blatcher, the elder, to this
- my present last will and testament have

- set my hand and seal yeven¹ the day and
- year first above written, in the presence of
Henry Lorkyn, James Blatcher, Thomas Blatcher, William?
- **Blatcher, son of the said William,** **Nicholas Hooper,** writer hereof,
- By me, James Blatcher
- the mark of Henry Lorkyn the mark of Thomas Blatcher
- the mark of William Blatcher the mark of William Blatcher

Tabitha Blatcher's Baseborn Son

Thomas Blatcher (\$168), son of **Tabitha Blatcher** (\$167), was baptised on 27th October 1580 and buried ten weeks later on 10th December. No father was given so he was most likely “baseborn”. It is not known who was Tabitha’s father.

¹ given

John Blatcher, shingler

John was a shingler and was probably only in his forties when he died in 1582. He and his wife had had six children, one son and five daughters but three of the daughters had died very soon after birth. John left £20 to Helen and Anne but, according to the parish register, "[Anne, daughter of John Blatcher](#)" was buried 21st August 1582, six weeks before John wrote his will. Helen was thirteen at this time but nothing more is known about her. John's wife was pregnant in 1582 and another daughter, Francis, was born at the beginning of 1583.

John lived in a mansion house called Marchers but also owned Melsers Court which was occupied by James Blatcher, probably the same James who witnessed William's will.

[illegible]

1 In the name of god Amen. The second day
2 of October in the year of our lord god a thousand five hundred
3 four score and two and in the 24th year of the reign of our sovereign
4 Lady Elizabeth, the Queens majesty. I, John Blatcher, of **Shipbourne**,
5 in the County of Kent and diocese of Rochester, **shingler**, being at
6 the making hereof very much grieved with sickness but yet of perfect
7 mind and remembrance, thanks be given to Almighty god, do ordain and
8 make this my present testament and last will in manner and form
9 following: That is to say, **First** and principally I give, commend and
10 bequeath my soul into the hands of almighty god, my maker,
11 saviour and only redeemer, Jesus Christ, by whose merit, precious death
12 and bloodshedding I trust to be saved and my body to be buried in the
13 churchyard of Shipbourne aforesaid. **Item:** I give and bequeath
14 to the box or chest of the poor within the parish of Shipbourne
15 aforesaid, 3s 4d. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my two daughters**,
16 **Helen and Anne Blatcher**, to either of them the sum of £20
17 to be paid to them, and either of them, at their and either of
18 their several age and ages of 20 years or within one month
19 next after their and either of them shall attain to their several

ages of twenty years. And if either of them happen to decease before they shall attain to their said age and ages, then her portion so dying I will shalbe paid to the survivor of them. **Item:** I will unto that child which **Helen, my wife**, now goeth withall, whether it be a man child or a woman child, the sum of £20 of lawful money to be paid in like manner at the age of 20 years of the same child. And if it fortune the same child to decease before the said age, I will the £20 to it willed shalbe and remain to my other said two daughters or any of them then living. And also, if one of my other said two daughters die before their said age, Then I will that the said child and the overliver shall have her part so deceased equally between them. And if they both die, then the said child to have all the said sum and sums to them, and either of them, before willed. The residue of all my goods and chattels, as well moveable as unmoveable, my debts paid and legacies performed, I wholly, fully and with good effect, intent and purpose, give and bequeath to the said Helen, my well beloved wife, which Helen I make and constitute my whole and sole executrix of this my present testament and last will. And I desire **my trusty friend and natural brother, Thomas Blatcher**, to be my overseer of the same, to whom I give for his labour and pains therein to be taken, above and besides his charges and expenses therein to be laid out, five shillings.

This is the last will of me, the above John Blatcher,
made and declared the day and year first above written, concerning
the order and disposition of all my lands and tenements whatsoever
with th'appurtenances severally set, lying and being within the parish of
Shipbourne aforesaid. And first I will that the said Helen, my said
wife, shall have, retain and take the issues, revenues and profits
of all that messuage or tenement called **Melsers Court** in the occupancy
of **James Blatcher** and all the lands thereto belonging, severally set
lying and being in Shipbourne aforesaid which I late purchased of
Henry Lorkyn and now in the occupancy of the said James and of me,
the said John, containing, by estimation, 16 acres and to let and set
the same during the term and space of six years next ensuing
after the day of the date of this my will, keeping the reparations thereof
from time to time and making no wilful waste in and upon the
same. And after the end of the said term of six years, I will,
give and bequeath the same, with th'appurtenances to **my son,**
William Blatcher, to him and his heirs, the same with th'appurtenances
unto the said William, my son, his heirs and assigns forever.
Item: I will, give and bequeath to the said Helen, my wife, all
that mansion house, messuage or tenement, wherein I now dwell
called **Marchers** withall barns, stables, buildings and edifices
thereto belonging and all the gardens, closes, orchards, lands,
meadows, pastures and feeding thereto belonging, withall and singular

th'appurtenances together set, lying and being in Shipbourne aforesaid containing, by estimation, forty acres to her and to hold the same withall and singular th'appurtenances unto the said Helen, my said wife, and her assigns, during the whole term of her natural life, she keeping all the reparations belonging to the said tenement and houses, well and sufficiently and doing no manner of wilful waste in and upon any of the same lands. And after her decease, I will and bequeath the same withall and singular th'appurtenances unto my said son, William Blatcher, to him and to his heirs, the same withall and singular th'appurtenances unto the said William, my son, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item: Whereas I am, or mine heirs, executor or Administrator, are to receive of **Roger Knell of Shipbourne, trugger**, the sum of £30 as by a c---ting? indented of Re-----, between me and the said Roger made, it may appear, I will that my said wife shall receive and take up the said £30 at the times therein specified. And if the said William, my son, shall molest or trouble my said wife in the receiving of the same, or any part thereof, or shall make any fraudulent compact or bargain with the said Roger Knell whereby the land which I have sold to the said Roger shall, or may be, entered, Then I will all that tenement called **Melsers Court** with the barn, garden, orchard and one parcel of land thereto next adjoining containing, by estimation, three acres and a half and adjoining to

89 the lands of **Mr. Thomas** on the eastside parcel of the lands before
90 willed to the said William unto the said Helen, my wife, and to her
91 heirs for ever (any gift of the same before herein mentioned
92 to him the said William to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding).

93 In witness whereof I, the said John Blatcher, to this my present
94 testament have set my hand and seal upon the day and
95 year first above written in the presence of
Henry Lorkyn⁴²², Thomas Blatcher, David Tyndley,
Nicholas Hooper and others

from the original:

signed **b⁴²³** John
Blatcher

422 also witnessed the will of William, John's father, in 1585

423 John Blatcher's mark is similar to a lower case "b"

This will was proved in Shipbourne church⁴²⁴ before me, **Nicholas Hooper, curate** here, by virtue of a commission to me Delivered? the 29th day of November 1582 in the 25th year of our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth; signed
by me Nicholas Hooper

Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne and Smarden

Since John had died before his father, Thomas (\$108) was his father's main heir. William, when he died in 1586, left his messuage at Budd with all its barns, etc. to Johane for the term of her natural life during which time she was allowed to take "[necessary timber . . for the necessary reparations . . and also necessary firewood and fuel, to be taken . . where it be best spared and least harm done.](#)" Only when she died would Thomas inherit.

When Thomas inherited he was to pay each of his two younger brothers and three sisters (see page b.503) twenty pounds, each one inheriting at yearly intervals

424

The proving of the will in Shipbourne church was recorded in the probate statement following the probate copy of the will.

after the death of their mother with the sisters receiving ten pounds when they married and the other ten pounds three, four and five years after Thomas inherited. But Johane lived until 1602, sixteen years after William's death.

Marie married in 1587; did her mother provide her with a dowry? Margaret was married by 1611 but Alice never married, Thomas leaving her an annuity of £3 when he died in 1611.

Since Thomas lived until 1611 he would have had time to pay all of his father's bequests. From his will, at that time, he was at Smarden, about twenty miles south east of Shipbourne.

Although he may have married, by then he did not have a wife or any children and he made his brother, Richard, his heir and executor. His will gives an example of why the Blatchers are seen as a close knit, extended family. Thomas exhorts his brother not "to strip or waste" the land left to him but "to preserve the same to the benefit of his son Thomas" (\$108's nephew). He expected that Richard and Thomas would have to sell part of it towards the payment of some of the legacies but the residue was to be for the benefit of Thomas's heirs "as my ancestors and myself have done, beseeching god that he may be a good husband and living in his fear, prosper in his sight and in this present world".

The payment period for the bequests to be paid by Richard and his son Thomas were dependent on how long Richard lived and actually stretched over fifteen years (see Table below) but, since many legacies were to be paid out of yearly profits from land, legatees often had to wait a considerable time. We have already seen how long the children of \$680 had to wait for their legacies. The ramifications of wills could go on for such a long time and their execution and overseeing must often have been very complex with plenty of opportunity for "fraud and guile".

Thomas's Bequests to be Paid by his Brother (R.) and Nephew (T.)

Beneficiary	\$	Relationship to Testator	Amount	to be paid by: within:		
Alice	701	sister	£3	R.	yearly from	1611
Johane	682	sister	£6	R.	2 yrs of T.'s death	1613
Margaret	702	sister		R.	money for a ring	
Alice	701	sister	£3	T.	yearly from	1623

Richard ⁴²⁵	683	nephew	£30	T.	2 yrs of R.'s death	1625
William ⁴²⁶ (son of John)	49	nephew	£20	T.	2 yrs of R.'s death	1625
Katherine	601	niece	£10	T.	4 yrs of R.'s death	1627
Richard Davis	690	nephew	40s	T.	5 yrs of R.'s death	1626

Will of Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne and Smarden

written 30th June 1611; proved 28th February 1611/2

transcript from probate copy which is tightly bound (original in bad condition)

1 In the name of god Amen. The thirtieth day of
 2 June in the ninth year of the reign of our sove
 3 reign lord James, by the grace of God, king of
 4 England, France and Ireland, defender of the

⁴²⁵ since father does not mention him in his will in 1623, he perhaps died before his father

⁴²⁶ William died in 1613 but left his legacy of £20 to his wife Agnes; however she died in 1623 a month before Richard. William was witness to the will of Michael Latter of Tonbridge written in 1597

5 faith. And Scotland the forty and four;
6 of the incarnation of our lord and saviour, Jesus
7 Christ, one thousand, five hundred and eleven.
8 I, Thomas Blatcher, of Shipbourne in the
9 county of Kent and the diocese of Rochester, now
10 at **Smarden** in the said county and diocese of
11 Canterbury, sick in body but of perfect memory,
12 thanks be unto god, ordain and make my
13 will and testament in manner and form following:
14 And first and principally I give, commend
15 and bequeath my soul unto Almighty god, my ??
16 and my body to be buried in such place as it
17 please god to assign. And touching those
18 my blessings as god hath given me, I give and
19 bequeath to **my brother, Richard Blatcher**,
20 my lands and tenements and hereditaments in the
21 said parish of Shipbourne, or elsewhere in the
22 county of Kent, for and during his natural life,
23 he paying out of it such legacies as I shall
24 hereafter assign to be paid by him. And from and
25 after the death and decease of my said brother
26 Richard, I will, give and bequeath my house at

27 **Buds plain**⁴²⁷ in the parish of Shipbourne afore=⁴²⁸
28 said and all my lands thereto belonging and usually
29 letten therewith and now in the occupation of
30 **Richard Knight and Richard Davis** or their
31 assigns, unto **Thomas Blatcher, son of my**
32 **said brother Richard Blatcher**, and his heirs
33 forever, paying also out of the same such legacies
34 as hereafter I shall, in this my will, assign him
35 to pay. And likewise, after the death and decease
36 of my said brother Richard, I will, give and be=
37 geath unto **Nevill**⁴²⁹ **Blatcher, the son of my**
38 **said brother Richard Blatcher**, all that my little
39 tenement or house in Shipbourne aforesaid, with
40 all the land thereto belonging, now in the occu=
41 pation of my said brother Richard or his as=
42 signs. To have and to hold to him, the said Nevill,

427 left to him by his father, William, in 1585. In his will of 1628 Stephen Arnold of Shipbourne describes a message or tenement "at **Bodes plain** with the barns and stables thereunto adjoining and gardens with the closes and orchards and five parcels of land" which he had lately purchased of **Thomas Blatcher**

428 "=" used as a hyphen

429 "Nicholas, son of Richard Blatcher" was baptised in March 1585; was he this "Nevill" or was there another son whose baptism was not recorded?

43 his heirs and assigns forever. **Item:** I give,
44 commend and bequeath unto **Richard Blatcher,**
45 **son of my said brother Richard,** thirty pounds
46 to be paid him by the said Thomas Blatcher,
47 my brother's son, out of the land to him bequea=
48 thed within two years after the death of my said
49 brother Richard. **Item:** I give and bequeath
50 unto **William Blatcher, the son of my brother**
51 **John Blatcher,** twenty pounds to be paid him
52 also within two years after the death of my said
53 brother Richard Blatcher, by the said Thomas out
54 of all my lands to him bequeathed. **Item:** I give
55 unto **Katherine Blatcher, the daughter of my**
56 **said brother Richard Blatcher,** ten pounds to
57 be paid her within four years after the decease of
58 my said brother Richard, by the said Thomas, his
59 son, out of my lands to him bequeathed. **Item:** I
60 give and bequeath unto **Margery Fremlyn,**
61 **sister⁴³⁰ Fremlyn's daughter,** ten pounds to

430 Marie Blatcher (#382, see tree on page 3) married Stephen Fremlyn on 15th October 1587 in Shipbourne; the Fremlyns were a Kemsing family and they had a daughter, Mary, baptised in Kemsing in 1593 who could have been this Margery

62 be paid her likewise out of my lands bequeathed
63 to Thomas Blatcher, my brother Richard's son
64 within four years after the death of my
65 brother Richard. **Item:** I give and bequeath
66 unto **Richard Davis, the son of Richard Davis**
67 of Shipbourne aforesaid, forty shillings to be paid
68 him within five years after the decease of my
69 said brother Richard and my great brass ??
70 that is a cast pestnett?. Also my will and (intent)
71 is that, albeit I have given my brother Richard
72 all my lands and tenements during his life,
73 he shall not strip or waste the same by de—
74 of the housing? or felling or selling of timber?
75 thereof but to preserve the same for the ---
76 ning of the housing and benefit of his son
77 Thomas who is to have the land after the . .
78 he may have the same to serve his use . .
79 theirs and sell that that may be well spared tow
80 ard the payment of such legacies as
81 not were payment of within the terms . .
82 ment to him assigned by this my will . .
83 same and to . . the residue for the benefit
84 of his heirs as my ancestors and myself

85 have done, beseeching god that he may be a good
86 husband and living in his fear, prosper in his
87 sight and in this present world. **Item:** I give
88 and bequeath unto **Richard Davis of Shipbourne,**
89 **th'elder,** my bedstead in the great chamber
90 over the hall in the new end of my house at
91 Buds plaine and the bed, bolster, blankets,
92 coverlets and all other the furniture
93 thereunto belonging in such manner and form as
94 I myself use the same. **Item:** I give unto
95 **my sister, Alice Blatcher,** three pounds a
96 year to be paid her half yearly every year
97 during her natural life by my brother Richard
98 Blatcher out of my land. And by his son
99 Thomas after his death and his heirs if she
100 happen to outlive my brother Richard and his
101 son Thomas. And if she be not paid half
102 yearly, or within three weeks after the end of
103 any half year, the first term of payment
104 to begin at the end of the first half year
105 after my death, then it shalbe lawful for her
106 to distreyne all and every part of my said land
107 and tenements before bequeathed to my said brother

108 or his said son Thomas. **Item:** I give and
109 bequeath unto **Johane Davis, the wife of Richard**
110 **Davis of Shipbourne, the elder daughter of my**
111 **said brother Richard,** six pounds to be paid
112 her by my said brother Richard out of
113 my lands within two years after my decease.
114 I give and bequeath unto **Margaret Chanfield,**
115 **the wife of Sampson Chanfield, gent., ??**
116 shillings to make her a ring . .
117 to wear in memory of **me, her brother.** **Item:** I
118 give and bequeath unto the poor of the parish
119 of Shipbourne aforesaid 40s to be distributed
120 amongst them half a year after my decease
121 by the discretion of the minister there, my
122 brother Richard and the churchwardens.
123 I give unto the poor of the parish of Smarden
124 where now I lie sick and am not likely to leave
125 here before my death 3s 4d to be distributed
126 unto them of the poor there as the minister and
127 churchwardens shall them think to have
128 need of it, in short time after my death.
129 Also my very true mind and will and ?? is
130 that, if my brother Richard or his son Thomas

131 or his heirs shall not pay the legacies
132 I have given and bequeathed at their . .
133 according to my true meaning that then it shall
134 and may be lawful for all and every of those
135 whom I have given any gifts or legacies in
136 this my will out of my land in after and . .
137 several days of payment to enter and distrain
138 and the said to hold, lead and drive away and
139 detain until he, she, they or either of them
140 so driven to take distress for his, (her or their)
141 legacy shalbe of the legacy given
142 to him, her or them, or any of them, fully
143 content or paid. **Item:** All the residue of my
144 goods and chattels, not before given of bequea=
145 thed nor hereafter by way of codicil (if I see
146 good to make any) to be bequeathed, my debts
147 being paid and my funeral discharged, I
148 give and bequeath unto the said Richard, my
149 brother, whom I ordain and make my full,
150 whole and sole executor of this my last will
151 and testament. In witness whereof I, the
152 said Thomas Blatcher, the testator, have to
153 every sheet of this my last will and testament,

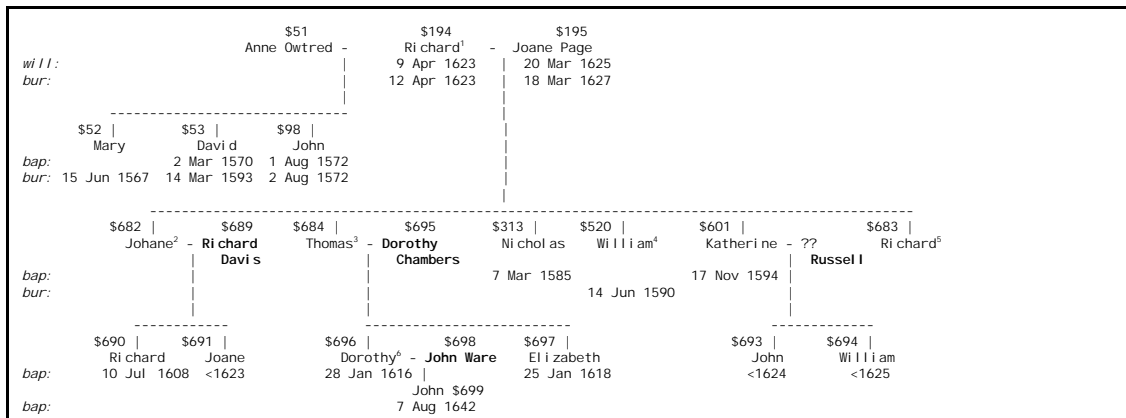
154 being written in two several sheets of paper,
155 set my hand and seal the day and year first
156 above written. In presence of the witnesses whose
157 names are published, witnesses to this will
158 **John Langley, clerk⁴³¹, Edward Pell**, by his mark
Eliyers Pell

431 who probably wrote the will

Richard Blatcher's Family

Presumably at least partly because his elder brother Thomas (from whom Richard inherited Buds) had detailed what was to happen on Richard's death, Richard's will is very short and does not mention land at all. Details of his family can be built up from the Shipbourne parish records and Thomas's will. Since none of the children born to Richard Blatcher (and presumably Anne Owtred) survived, there is nothing to indicate that Anne's and Johane's Page husbands was the same man. If it was the same Richard he must have been born between 1540 and 1545 making him about eighty when he died in 1623; his wife Johane would have been about seventy when she died.

Their son Richard was mentioned by his uncle Thomas in his will of 1611 but he was not mentioned by either of his parents; perhaps he died before 1623. Both of them mentioned their granddaughter Johane Davis but neither of them Johane Davis's brother Richard.. Their grandmother also mentioned Thomas's and Katherine's children.



- 1 Richard married Anne Owtred on 20th January 1566 and Joane Page on 29th November 1581
- 2 married 31st May 1607
- 3 married 19th December 1614
- 4 "son of Richard Blatcher"; could have been son of #194
- 5 uncle Thomas mentions Richard in 1611; the only son mentioned by father in 1623 is Thomas
- 6 married 25th July 1639; they had a son John (\$699) baptised on 7th August 1642

1 In the name of god Amen. the
2 ninth day of April in the ⁴³⁸ year of the reign
3 of our Sovereign Lord James, by the grace of God, king
4 of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith,
5 and of Scotland, the and of the incarnation
6 of our lord and saviour, Jesus Christ, one thousand, six
7 hundred, twenty and three. Richard Blatcher⁴³⁹, of
8 Shipbourne in the county of Kent and diocese of
9 Rochester, sick in body but in perfect memory, thanks be unto
10 God, ordain and make this my last will and testament
11 in manner and form following: and **First** and principally
12 I give and commend and bequeath my soul unto Almighty
13 God, my maker and my body to be buried in that place
14 as shall please god to assign and, as touching

438 both here and on line 4, a space was left, presumably because the scribe did not know the year and intended filling it in later

439 "I" would be expected before the name and the word "and" is duplicated on the next line

15 my earthly blessings that god hath given me⁴⁴⁰, I give and
16 bequeath to **my beloved wife, Joane Blatcher**⁴⁴¹, all my house goods
17 and all my linen and bedding. **Item:** I give and
18 bequeath to **my son, Thomas Blatcher**, one long table, one
19 joined cupboard and one joined chest standing in the
20 hall, one long table in the kitchen loft with frames and
21 forms belonging to them both. **Item:** I give and bequeath
22 to my son, Thomas Blatcher, one iron plate that standeth
23 behind the fire in the kitchen. Also I do make and
24 ordain Joane Blatcher, my beloved wife, my sole executrix
25 to see this my will fulfilled. In witness whereof
26 I have set my hand and seal the day and year above
27 written. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Joane Davies, my grandchild**, one
28 joined chest that my writings be in. Sealed and signed
29 in the presence of **Richard Porter**, the mark of **William**
30 **Sinn, Lyonell Parker, Richard Blatcher**

440 "mee"

441 Johane Page married Richard on 29th November 1581; she must have been about seventy when she died in 1623. The Pages were a large Shipbourne family.

1 In the name of god Amen. The twentieth day of March in
2 the year of our lord god 1624, I, Joane Blatcher of Shipbourne,
3 being in the diocese of Rochester, do ordain and
4 make this my last will and testament, being weak
5 in body but in perfect remembrance, thanked be god.

6 **First:** I bequeath my soul to god, my maker and to Jesus
7 Christ, my redeemer in whom I hope to be saved and my
8 body to be buried in the churchyard of Shipbourne and,
9 for my worldly goods, I give as followeth:

10 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **John Russell, my grandchild,**
11 one joined chest and the biggest brass pot.

12 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **his brother, William Russell,** one
13 copper? brass pot and one boarded⁴⁴² chest. **Item:** I give and bequeath to
Dorothy

14 **Blatcher, my grandchild,** one feather pillow and one brass
15 chafing dish. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **her sister,**
16 **Elizabeth Blatcher,** one feather pillow. **Item:** give to **Joane**

442 or "bounded"

17 **Davies, my grandchild**, one red petticoat, one stuff ??,
18 one round table and one pair of sheets. **Item:** I give and
19 bequeath to **my son, Thomas Blatcher**, one joined
20 bedstead, one ?? covering. **Item:** I give and bequeath
21 to **my daughter, Joane Davies**, one settle, one feather bolster
22 and three ? ?. **Item:** all the rest of my
23 goods, I give and bequeath to **my daughter, Katherine Russell**,
24 whom I do make my sole executrix to see my body
25 buried and this my will performed.

the mark of **Joane Blatcher**

witness to this will
the mark of **Richard Goodwin**
and **Reynold ??**

The Tonbridge Blatchers

William Blatcher, yeoman of Tonbridge, (\$49) who died in 1613 was the son of the John who died in 1582 - see page b.514. His will was complicated because he married twice and also because of the longevity of some of the Blatchers.

He was one of the legatees of his uncle Thomas (\$108) but only after the death of his other uncle, Richard (\$194) who lived into his eighties. Thus he leaves "to Agnes, my loving wife, all that legacy of twenty pounds which is to me willed by Thomas Blatcher, my father's brother".

When Agnes wrote her will nine years later, Richard was still alive so that Agnes left "unto William, my son, all that legacy of twenty pounds which his father gave and appointed to me". Did William receive it in 1625, two year's after the death of his great-uncle?

William's eldest son, John (\$706) was by a first marriage with William marrying, in 1594 or 1595, Agnes, a widow who had had five children by her first husband. William and Agnes had two sons, Thomas (\$805) and William (\$708), but since Thomas is not known except for his baptism in Tonbridge, he probably died young.

William and Agnes's Two Marriages

	(1)	\$49	(2)	\$705	(1)	\$800	
	-	William ⁴⁴³	-	Agnes	-	John Carpenter	
<i>will:</i>		11 Nov 1613		4 Apr 1622			
<i>bur:</i>		4 Dec 1613		19 Mar 1623		21 Jul 1593	
	\$706	\$710		\$801	\$707	\$802	\$803
	John ⁴⁴⁴	Bridget Children ⁴⁴⁵		Ann	Margaret	William	Susan
<i>bap:</i>	about 1590			8 Aug 1585		13 Apr 1589	
<i>bur:</i>	27 Mar 1623 ⁴⁴⁶					21 Jan 1593	
		\$805		\$708			
		Thomas		William ⁴⁴⁷	-		
<i>bap:</i>		28 Mar 1596		22 Jun 1599			
	see page b.541						

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 443 | William married Agnes on 5th March 1595; all dates are for Tonbridge |
| 444 | by his father's will, John had to pay an annuity of £6 per year jointly to Agnes, his stepmother, and William, his half brother for the lifetime of the one who lived longest. If John defaulted with the payment of this annuity, it appears that he had to pay William £60; since his stepmother lived for ten years and William was alive then, it may have cost John less to pay the £60 (except that he would have had to find this as a lump sum). |
| 445 | married John Blatcher on 5th August 1616 in Tonbridge |
| 446 | died very soon after his stepmother |
| 447 | had a daughter, Elizabeth (\$1518), born before 1622; could be the William Blatcher whose will of 1640 has survived |

John was his father's executor and main heir and the instructions from his father are interesting:

John was to "take into his hands" eight loads of "hay from **Marches in Shipbourne** and all the oats there . . (by estimation fifty coppes⁴⁴⁸), one cow . . and all such household stuff . . also all those 39 lambs . . upon certain lands, parcel of the **Trench of Tonbridge** and my right . . . in the lease of the same trench lands. Also two couple of my middling oxen with tigtets and yokes and my black mare (now being upon the farm lands where I now dwell), one great joined chest in the chamber of my now dwelling house, 2 pairs of hempen sheets, two pillows and two pillowcoats, one covering which was of his mother's making, two blankets, 6 table napkins and one little chest wherein, amongst others, the writing touching the tenement of Marches, also all those 8 acres of wheat now being upon the said farm or Tenement of Marches. All which shalbe delivered and taken into his hands within fourteen days next after my decease"⁴⁴⁹.

John's inheritance was only "upon condition that he . . . make, seal and deliver, effectively, according to the law" to Agnes and William (his stepmother and step-brother) an annuity of six pounds "during the whole term" of their natural lives

448 copp - conical heap of barley, oats, etc. (particularly in Kent)

449 an unusually short time for the transfer of such a large number of items

"and of the longest liver of them"; nothing further is recorded for William. If the annuity was not set up, John was to pay £60 to Agnes and William; since Agnes lived for ten years as a widow, the total amount paid by John would not have been much different (assuming William did not outlive his mother by many years) but he would have had to find the whole of the money within two years of his father's death.

John and Bridget's Children

\$706 John Blatcher of Marches - Bridget Children \$710					
	\$712	\$713	\$711	\$1931	\$714
	John ⁴⁵⁰	William	Margaret ⁴⁵¹	Thomas Borden/Balden	George ⁴⁵² - Elizabeth Walmsley
<i>bap:</i>	22 Sep 1617	12 Mar 1618	6 Feb 1621		2 Feb 1623
<i>bur:</i>	20 Nov 1646				

450 #706's son John could have been the John Blatcher who had a son Thomas (\$2042) baptised on 18th January 1646 and also the John buried in 1646

451 married 6th August 1644

452 married 25th March 1650 and had a daughter Mabel (\$2190) baptised 4th December 1650

1 In⁴⁵³ the name of god Amen. the eleventh day of November in the eleventh
year of the
2 reign of our sovereign lord king, James England, France and Ireland,
defender of the faith,
3 and of Scotland the 47th, 1613. I, William Blatcher of Tonbridge in the
county of Kent,
4 **yeoman**, being lame and very feeble in body⁴⁵⁴ and thereby, as by many
other examples, put in mind of
5 my departing out of this world, notwithstanding of good and sound
memory and remembrance, thanks
6 be⁴⁵⁵ given to almighty god, to the intent that those transitory goods which
god hath blessed me withall, may
7 be peaceably enjoyed after my decease by those to whom I shall appoint
the same, do therefore ordain

453 decorated "I"

454 he was born in 1564 and was therefore only 49

455 spelt "bee" throughout as is usual when written by a Hooper

8 and make this my present testament and last will in manner and form
following: **First:** I commit
9 and yield my soul to Almighty God, my maker, with an assured hope of
salvation through his mercy and
10 the merit and mediation of his dear son, Jesus Christ, my saviour and
Redeemer, and my body to the
11 earth with an assured hope of Resurrection to eternal life at the great and
general day of judgement.
12 **Item:** I will and give to the poor of Tonbridge 10s. **Item:** I will to **John**
Averie, my servant, 20s and
13 to **Agnes, his sister,** 10s. **Item:** I will and give, assign and appoint, to
Agnes, my loving wife,
14 all that legacy of twenty pounds which is to me willed by **Thomas Blatcher,**
my father's brother, to
15 be paid to her as to mine assigns, her executors and assigns at such time
as the same shalbe
16 payable by the will of the said Thomas Blatcher. **Item:** I will and appoint
that **John Blatcher,**

17 **my son**⁴⁵⁶, shall take into his hands, to his own use, all these goods
following and particularly mentio=
18 ned, that is to say, 8 loads of hay housed and laid at **Marches in**
Shipbourne and all the oats there
19 likewise laid in (by estimation fifty copps), one cow there and all such
household stuff as I have
20 there, also all those 39 lambs which I have upon certain lands, parcel of the
Trench of Tonbridge
21 and my right which I have in the lease of the same trench lands. Also two
couple of my middling oxen with tigets and yokes and
22 my black mare (now being upon the farm lands where I now dwell), one
great joined chest in the
23 chamber of my now dwelling house, 2 pairs of hempen sheets, two pillows
and two pillowcoats, one
24 covering which was of his mother's making, two blankets, 6 table napkins
and one little chest wherein, amongst

456 John would appear to be an adult (he married in 1616) but William married Agnes (who was a widow) in 1595; John was probably the son of an earlier marriage. William was thirty when he married Agnes but Agnes could have been a year or too older since her first daughter was born in 1585 and she could have had a son earlier than this

25 others, the writing touching the tenement of Marches, also all those 8 acres
of wheat⁴⁵⁷
26 now being upon the said farm or Tenement of Marches. All which shalbe
delivered and taken into his
27 hands within fourteen days next after my decease upon condition that he,
the said John, my son,
28 do and shall, within two whole years next ensuing after my decease, make,
seal and deliver
29 effectually, according to law, to the said Agnes, my wife, and to **William
Blatcher, my son**⁴⁵⁸, one
30 Annuity or Annual rent of six pounds of lawful English money to be issuing
out of the said Tenement
31 called Marches and all the lands hereunto belonging and out of one other
tenement called Nyzels⁴⁵⁹,
32 lying and being in the parish of Shipbourne aforesaid in the county of Kent,
to be payable to the

457 is this wheat already sown for next year?

458 William and Agnes had two sons baptised in Tonbridge but, presumably, Thomas (who would have been seventeen) died before his father; William was fourteen in 1613.

459 this name can be read more clearly in the will of John Blatcher, William's son (see page 559) but even there it more a "guess" based on there being a Nizels to the west of Shipbourne

33 said Agnes, my wife, and the said William, my son, and their assigns for,
by and during the whole
34 term of the natural lives of the said Agnes and William and of the longest
liver of them and of
35 either of them⁴⁶⁰, at the feasts of the nativity of our lord Christ,
th'annunciation of the blessed virgin Mary, the
36 nativity of St. John the Baptist and Saint Michael Th'archangel, by equal
and even portions, the
37 first term of payment thereof to be and begin at that feast, of the feasts
aforesaid, that shall next come
38 and be after the end of the said two whole years by distress to be taken for
non payment thereof at the said
39 feasts or within 12 days then next ensuing which other words and
circumstances to effect and according to
40 due ?? and order of law. Or else, at the said two years end shall ?? and,
in lieu of all the said
41 goods, cattels and chattels so by him taken into his hands, well and truly
pay to the said Agnes, my wife,

460 it is most unusual for mother and son to share an annuity in this way; perhaps William was disabled in some way and thus unable to marry or set up on his own

42 and William, my son, the sum of threescore pounds of good and lawful
money of England⁴⁶¹ without
43 any fraud or further delay. **Item:** I will and give to the said William
Blatcher, my son, the sum
44 of four score pounds of lawful English money to be paid to him at his age of
24 years by mine
45 executrix hereafter named. And if he shall happen to decease before his
said age, then I will that the said
46 £80 shalbe paid to the said John, my son, at such time as the same should
have been paid to the
47 said William if he had lived.

48 The residue of all my goods, cattels, chattels, debts and rights, I wholly and
fully give and
49 bequeath to the said Agnes, my loving wife, whom I make and appoint to
be my executrix, to see
50 this my will proved, my debts and legacies paid and my body decently
brought to the earth.

461 equivalent to paying the annuity for ten years but with the total payment "up front"

51 And I desire **my loving brother-in-law, John Wybourne⁴⁶² of Wrotham,**
52 **tanner, and William Paurcher**
53 of **Maghfield, yeoman**, to be my overseers to see, so much as in them lieth,
54 that this my will may be
55 performed according to the tenor and true meaning of the same (All
56 necessary expenses by them to
be expended any way thereabouts being to them allowed by my said
executrix).
In witness whereof I have, to this my present testament and last will, set
my hand and seal yeven⁴⁶³ the day
and year first above written **William Blatcher⁴⁶⁴**

Sealed, published and declared in the presence of
John Amerie⁴⁶⁵ **John Hooper, notary public.**

462 was Agnes originally Agnes Wybourne?

463 "given" and another sign of a "Hooper will"

464 his signature

465 looks like a signature

1 In⁴⁶⁶ the name of god Amen. The fourth day of April in the year of our Lord
God
2 One Thousand, Six hundred, twenty and two. I, Agnes Blatcher of
Haseden in the parish
3 of Tonbridge in the county of Kent, **widow**⁴⁶⁷, being⁴⁶⁸ sickly, aged and ??
in body but of
4 good memory and remembrance to the intent that no distress shall or may
arise about any of
5 my goods after my decease, do therefore for the ordering of my estate,
ordain and make this my
6 Testament and last will in manner and form following: **First** and
principally, yielding my soul
7 unto Almighty God, my maker, with an assured hope of Salvation through
his mercy and the

466 decorated "I"

467 of William Blatcher whose will of 1613 is given on page 542

468 "beeing", etc. throughout

8 merit and mediation of his dear son Jesus Christ, my Saviour. And my
body to the earth in
9 decent manner to be buried. **Item:** I will to the poor people resorting to my
burial
10 Ten shillings, then to be distributed among them. **Item:** I will unto
Elizabeth Blatcher⁴⁶⁹,
11 **my grandchild**, twenty shillings in money and one pair of sheets to be well
worth
12 6s 8d of lawful english money. To be paid and delivered unto her at her
age of
13 Twenty years if she live to accomplish that age and not otherwise. **Item:** I
will
14 unto **Susan, my youngest daughter**, one featherbed and one feather bolster
(of my goods) at the
15 choice of my executor and by him to be delivered unto her within one week
next after my decease.
16 **Item:** I will and give unto **my two daughters**⁴⁷⁰, viz. Margaret and Susan,
one chest

⁴⁶⁹ William's daughter?

⁴⁷⁰ these were William's stepdaughters, Agnes's daughters by her first husband, John Davis; Susan was baptised the same day her father was buried (21st July 1593)

17 with a spring lock now standing in the loft over the hall of my now
dwelling house, And
18 all the linen which shalbe therein at my decease and which now I have put
therein for them
19 amongst which is the sheet which I have appointed to lie over my corpse at
my burial (my
20 winding sheet being else where amongst my other linen). All which chest
and linen
21 therein I will my said two daughters shall and may, as soon as they will
after my
22 burial, divide and shift lying the same into two as equal parts as they can
and ??
23 first and eldest to choose one part thereof and the youngest the other part
to be to them and
24 their several assigns for ever. And I also give to either of my said
daughters a
25 piece of gold of 11s worth which they shall find in a ?? box in the said
chest, wishing
26 content, ?? and love amongst them. And their brother. **Item:** I will unto
William, my
27 **son,** All that legacy of Twenty Pounds which his father gave and appointed
to me by his will

28 And which was given to his father by the will or Codicil of Thomas
Blatcher, the which
29 £20 if not now unpaid. **Item:** I will to **widow Goodhews**⁴⁷¹ my red petticoat.
And I will that
30 which sum of my other clothes as well linen as woollen, my said executor
after my decease do clothe
31 and apparel my said grandchild Elizabeth Blatcher.

32 The Residue of all my goods and chattels, I wholly give and bequeath unto
the said
33 William Blatcher, my son, whom I make the sole and only executor of this
my
34 testament and last will to see the same proved, my debts and legacies paid
and my body decently
35 buried. And I desire my good neighbour, **Olyver Budgen**, and **my son-in-**
law John Blatcher⁴⁷²
36 to be overseers and to be aiding and assisting that this my will may take
effect according to my

471 "Goodhughe" in original

472 Agnes's stepson

37 purport and true meaning therein. And I give to my said neighbour 3s 4d
and to the said John
38 Blatcher ten shillings over and above their expenses by that occasion to be
sustained. In witness
39 whereof I have to this my testament and last will whereby I also revoke all
former wills by me made,
40 set my hand and seal, yeven, the day and year first above written.
Sealed, declared, subscribed
and published in the presence of

Edward Tynlie
John Hooper, notary pbq.

the mark of **Agnes**
Blatcher

John Blatcher of Shipbourne, 1623

John of Shipbourne who died in 1623 was the eldest son and principal heir of William of Tonbridge. Even though he was only thirty-three when he died, John was a very wealthy yeoman by the time he came to write his will in 1623 when he had three sons and a daughter of which the eldest was five. He left his four eldest servants twelve pence each, implying that he had more than four.

To his daughter Margaret, just two years old, he left £50 to be paid when she was twenty. Otherwise his wife Bridget was to have all the profits from his land until their sons were twenty-one "[toward the education and the bringing up](#)" of the children.

John was writing his will just a few days after the burial of Agnes, his stepmother. Did Bridget continue to pay the annuity to John's stepbrother William whom John had appointed one of his overseers? John was buried on 27th March 1623 and Richard, John's great uncle, on 12th April. Richard and Agnes were in their eighties and sixties respectively but why did three Blatchers succumb in March/April 1623?

John's youngest son, George, was to have the messuage or tenement called Nysels but Marches was again to pass to the eldest son, another John (\$712), who

was only five when his father died. When he came into his inheritance he had to pay his mother's jointure and annuity of £10 per year and £100 to his brother William when he reached the age of twenty-four. This William could have been the testator of 1640 but only two daughters, Ann and Elizabeth, and a wife whose name was not given, are mentioned.

Will of John Blatcher of Shipbourne

written 23rd March 1622/3

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The three and twentieth day of March An Do.
1622.
- 2 And in the twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord James by the
grace of
- 3 God, king of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith. And of
4 Scotland, the six and fifty. I, John Blatcher of **Marches**⁴⁷³ within the parish
5 of Shipbourne in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at the time of

⁴⁷³ William Blatcher of Tonbridge owned Marches in Shipbourne (see his will of 1613) his main heir was his son John who was, therefore, probably this John Blatcher

6 making hereof very sick, yet of good and perfect remembrance, praise be⁴⁷⁴
god,
7 And knowing assuredly I shall change this my life, the time thereof being
altogether
8 uncertain, do therefore (to avoid trouble after death) do make and ordain
this my
9 Testament and last will in this manner following, that is to say, **First** and
10 above all things I do most willingly resign and surrender up my soul unto
11 Almighty god, my most merciful Creator. And my body to the earth
whereof it
12 was to be buried in the churchyard of Shipbourne⁴⁷⁵ aforesaid in sure
13 and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto life immortal. **Item:** I give
and
14 bequeath among the poor people of Shipbourne aforesaid ten shillings to
be
15 distributed among them within one month next after my decease by my
executrix.
16 **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **my four eldest servants?** twelve pence a
piece.

474 "bee" here and also later

475 Hadlow originally, crossed out and replaced with Shipbourne

17 **Item:** I give and bequeath unto **Margaret Blatcher, my daughter**, the sum
of
18 fifty pounds of lawful english money to be paid unto her at her age
19 of twenty years by my executrix hereafter named. The residue and all
20 other my goods, moveables, cattals and chattels, whatsoever, I fully and
wholly
21 give and bequeath unto **Bridget, my wellbeloved wife**, whom I make and
22 ordain my whole and sole executrix to see this my will proved, my funeral
23 and legacies paid and discharged⁴⁷⁶ according to the tenor and meaning of
this my will.
24 And further my will and meaning is that my said wife and executrix shall
have
25 hold and ?? all the ?? issues and profits of all my land and tenements
26 whatsoever until **my eldest son, John Blatcher, and my youngest son,**
George⁴⁷⁷ Blatcher, shall accomplish their full age of
27 one and twenty years, toward the education and bringing up of the said
John and my other children.

476 no "d"

477 William crossed out and replaced with George here and also on line 56 below; George was baptised only seven weeks before the date on John's will. William, who was five, appears on line 43 but John, the eldest son, was only six. Margaret married when she was 23 and George when he was 27.

28 This is the last will and testament of me the said John Blatcher made and
29 declared the day and year above said Concerning the order and disposition
of all my
30 land and tenements. I give and bequeath unto the said John Blatcher, my
31 eldest son, immediately after his age of 21 years, All that my messuage
32 or tenement wherein I now dwell together withall the barns, edifices and
33 buildings, closes, gardens, orchards, land, meadows, pastures, feeding,
woods,
34 commons, freedoms and appurtenances hereunto belonging, commonly
called by the
35 name of **Marches**, situated, lying and being within the parish of
Shipbourne
36 aforesaid, To have and to hold the same with the appurtenances unto the
said John, his
37 heirs and assigns, to the only use and behoof of the said John, his heirs and
38 assigns forever. The said John, his heirs and assigns, paying unto the said
Bridget,
39 my wife, his mother, out of the same, as well her jointure or Annuitment of
ten
40 pounds by the year by me formerly granted as also all other rents and
Annuities
41 issuing and payable out of the same. Provided always, and it is likewise
my will

42 and meaning that the said John Blatcher, my eldest son, his heirs and
assigns,
43 shall likewise pay unto **my second son William Blatcher**, out of the same
44 land and tenements, the sum of one hundred pounds of good and lawful
45 money of England at the age of four and twenty years of the said William.
46 And for default of payment thereof in manner aforesaid, I will it shall be
47 lawful for the said William to enter into and upon the before mentioned
lands and
48 tenements called Marches, and every part thereof, with th'appurtenances
and the same
49 to possess, hold, keep and enjoy until the said hundred pounds, and every
50 part and parcel thereof, shall be fully satisfied, contented and paid. **Item:** I
give
51 and bequeath unto George Blatcher, my youngest son, all that my
messuage or
52 tenement called by the names of **Nyzels** now in the tenure of **Simon**
Wayman with the barns,
53 buildings and land thereto belonging and also one parcel of meadow land
near **Strumboldhill**
54 in Shipbourne aforesaid, to have and to hold the same, with
th'appurtenances, unto the said
55 George Blatcher, my youngest son, his heirs and assigns, to the only use
and

56 behoof of the said George, his heirs and assigns, for ever. **Item:** I ordain,
57 appoint and **my loving Brothers, George Children and William Blatcher**⁴⁷⁸,
58 overseers of this my will, earnestly entreating them to be assisting and
aiding in the
59 accomplishment and fulfilling of the same what in them, and either of
them,
60 shall or may lie whose charges any ways to be expended about the same I
will
61 shall be, from time to time, allowed by my said wife and executrix. **Item:** I
give to my said overseers as a token of my love, three shillings a piece⁴⁷⁹.
In witness whereof
62 I, the said John Blatcher, to this my last will and testament have set my
hand and
63 seal, the day and year above dated, acknowledged the same to be my very
true
64 and last will.

Read, sealed, pronounced and declared
to be the true and last will of the said

The mark of John Blatcher

⁴⁷⁸ his brother-in-law and half-brother, \$708

⁴⁷⁹ this item inserted

John Blatcher in the presence of

Thomas Plane and
Robert Hooper
writer

Will of William Blatcher of Tonbridge

written 28th April 1640; proved 5th Jun 1640

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. I, William Blatcher of
2 Tonbridge in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, being sick and
3 weak in body but of perfect memory, thanks be to
4 Almighty God, do make this my last will and testament
5 in manner and form following, viz. First and princi
6 pally I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, my
7 maker, trusting only in the merit of his (only son),
8 my saviour, and my body to be buried in the church
9 yard of Tonbridge aforesaid. **Item:** I give unto **Ann**,
10 **my daughter**, one joined bedstead and featherbed, a bolster,
11 a pair of blankets and the best coverlet, one pair

of fine hempen sheets and the biggest joined chest. **Item:**
I give unto **my daughter, Elizabeth**, one other joined
bedstead and a feather bed and bolster, a pair of
blankets and a coverlet and a pair of fine hempen
sheets and one other joined chest. **Item:** I give unto
my two daughters, Ann and Elizabeth, ten pairs of sheets,
coarse and fine, to be equally divided between them.
More, I give unto the said Ann and Elizabeth, my
daughters, one dozen pieces of small and great pewter.
Item: I give unto them, the said Ann and Elizabeth, my
daughters, fifty shillings a piece to be paid to them,
the said Ann and Elizabeth, at the age of one and
twenty years if they shall so long live. But if it
shall happen that either of them shall happen to
die before they come to the age of one and twenty
years, the other to be her heir and if it so happen
that they shall both die before the said age of one and
twenty years, that then my will is my wife shall have
the said five pounds. **Item:** I give unto my wife the
messuage wherein I now dwell with the barns, closes
gardens, orchards and all those my lands in
Tonbridge and Leigh near Tonbridge aforesaid, to her
and to her heirs forever, she paying all debts

35 and my funeral expenses discharged⁴⁸⁰ and all other my
36 moveable goods I give unto my said wife whom I make
37 my sole executrix, to pay those my debts and legacies.

38 **Item:** I intreat my loving friend, **Anthony Chittenden**,
39 to be overseer of this my last will, to see my debts
40 and legacies performed and, for his pains so
41 taken, I will him twelve pence. And this the
42 last will and testament of me, William Blatcher,
43 made this 28 day of April in the sixteenth
44 year of the reign of our sovereign lord Charles⁴⁸¹,
45 by the grace of god, of England, Scotland, France
46 and Ireland, king, defender of the faith.
47 Sealed and delivered with my own hand, William Blatcher,

48 in the presence of **Thomas Latter, Thomas Wylawe**
signed **John Latter and John Gilbert**

480 no "d" in either original or probate copy

481 1640

The Blatcher Messuages: Marches and Budd

The inheritance of Marches can be traced from father to son from the 1580s to the 1620s. From John, the shingler (\$47) it went to William (\$49) and then to John (\$706) and his son, another John (\$712). The shingler may have received Marches from his father William who died four years after his eldest son.

Its extent is given by the description in the will of 1623: "all that my messuage or tenement wherein I now dwell together withall the barns, edifices and buildings, closes, gardens, orchards, land, meadows, pastures, feeding, woods, commons, freedoms and appurtenances hereunto belonging, commonly called by the name of **Marches**, situated, lying and being within the parish of Shipbourne".

Besides Marches, Nizels and Melsers Court, the Blatchers also owned Budd in Shipbourne "and all the barns, buildings, closes, gardens, orchards, land, meadows, pastures and feedings withall and singular th'appurtenances to the same belonging" (William, 1585). Although Richard's will of 1623 is very short we do gain a bit more detail of Budd which Richard had inherited from his brother. Richard leaves to his son, Thomas, "one long table, one joined cupboard and one joined chest standing in the hall, one long table in the kitchen loft with frames and forms belonging to them both. . . one iron plate that standeth behind the fire in the kitchen".

Dangers to Ward Against

The complexities encountered due to the long period of time which could elapse before all the bequests were honoured has already been mentioned. Testators also tried to guard against "fraudulent compact or bargain" even though in the next sentence they assumed that everyone would deal honestly with each other.

When John Blatcher, the shingler (\$47), wrote his will in 1582 he was due to receive £30 from Roger Knell⁴⁸² and he directed that his wife was to receive this at the times specified in the indenture but, "if the said William, my son, shall molest or trouble my said wife in the receiving of the same . . . or shall make any fraudulent compact or bargain with the said Roger Knell whereby the land which I have sold to the said Roger shall, or may be, entered, then I will all that tenement called Melsers Court with the barn, . . . before willed to the said William unto the said Helen, my wife".

Care had to be taken that the inheritance was not squandered or dissipated outside the family. It has already been noted how the first person taking over a house and land was to "keep all manner of reparations . . . sufficiently". When land was to be divided between sons, there was fear that one might sell his inheritance

outside the family. Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne writing his will in 1517, having left his land after his wife's death to his two sons, adds "I will that one brother shall not sell to another his parcel . . but he shall sell it to his brother, or let it or hire it . . if he be unable to buy it but he shall not sell it to no other man under no manner of colour".

In 1622, Agnes, the widow of William of Tonbridge, gives one of the reasons for writing a will: "to the intent that no distress shall or may arise about any of my goods after my decease, do therefore for the ordering of my estate, ordain and make this my testament and last will".

Charitable Bequests and Introductions to Wills

The fifteenth century wills all leave money to the high altar, the amounts ranging from 4d to 8d. Although Thomas and Richard both leave money for the upkeep of the fabric of the church it is John (in 1478) who leaves the most money for religious purposes and good works, probably because he had the most money.

Two unusual bequests were 4d to the sacristy and 20d to the bells of Sevenoaks and he also wanted a chaplain to be "engaged to celebrate in the church of Seal

soon after my death for a quarter of a year, to pray for my soul and for the souls of my father and mother"; for this he was to receive payment of 33s 4d.

Good works took the form of money to be spent on the King's highway but this does not look completely like charity since the roads selected for improvement could usually be seen to be those most used by the testators and, in the case of Richard (1480) was very obvious: "from Walle Lane and my gate". John again could afford a considerable amount: 20d for the highway at Whithill and 5s for that between Muster Oak and Godden.

Thomas Blatcher of Shipbourne in 1517 left 20d to the high altar and, what seems like a very open-ended bequest "so much money for the mending of the church there . . to ring the bell as shall sufficiently mend it". He also left three kine for the maintaining of a taper before "the image of our lady".

Bequests to the church were usual before the 1530s but, as late as 1545, Richard Blatcher of Seal left to the high altar "for my tithes forgotten or withheld with other discharging of my duties 12d." He was also harking back to earlier times with his introduction: "I bequeath my soul to Almighty god, my maker and redeemer of all the world, to our lady saint Mary and to all the company of saints in heaven" and his bequest to a "priest, being of good name and form for to sing for my soul, my friends' souls and . . ." in the parish church of Seal for the space "of a year 33s 4d of lawful money of England". The payment to the priest, however, seems to have

gone down since John, nearly seventy years earlier, was paying 33s 4d for three months.

A hundred years later the tenor of the introduction had completely changed. William Blatcher, in 1613, writes "First: I commit and yield my soul to Almighty God, my maker, with an assured hope of salvation through his mercy and the merit and mediation of his dear son, Jesus Christ, my saviour and Redeemer, and my body to the earth with an assured hope of Resurrection to eternal life at the great and general day of judgement".

Similarly, John Blatcher in 1623: "First and above all things I do most willingly resign and surrender up my soul unto Almighty god, my most merciful Creator. And my body to the earth whereof it was to be buried in the churchyard of Shipbourne aforesaid in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto life immortal".

Wills of the *Blundells* of Tonbridge

Four wills have survived for Tonbridge Blundells:

	written:	buried:	CKS: Drb/Pw; Drb/Pwr		
William Blundell	17 Oct 1570		9;	13.506	page b.572
Joan Blundell	5 Oct 1586	3 Oct 1588 ⁴⁸³	15;	17.394	page b.578
William Blundell	4 Jan 1590		15;	17.409	page b.579
Thomas Blundell	13 Jan 1628		27;	21.306	page b.581

The will of Thomas Blundell was written by John Hooper, notary public and parish clerk of Tonbridge who wrote a number of wills for people in the Tonbridge area

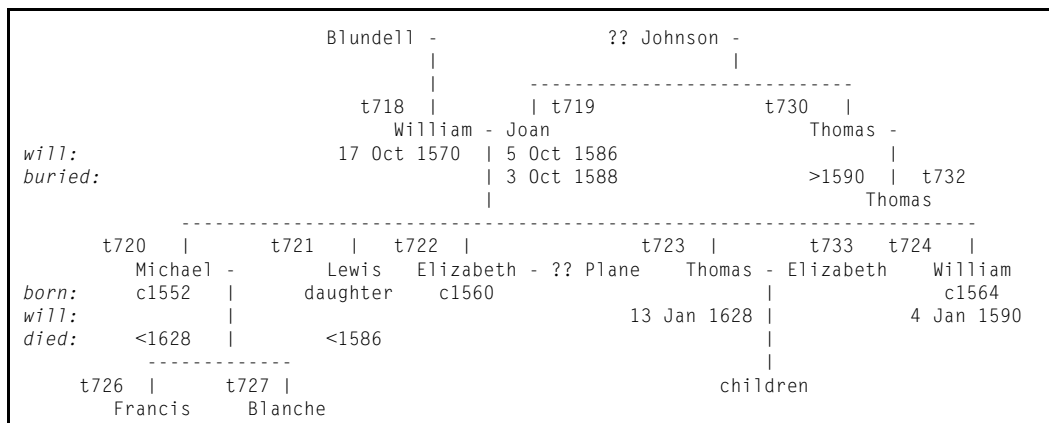
Joan was the wife of the William whose will was written in 1570. The other two wills appear to be those of the sons of William and Joan but, whilst Thomas must have been about seventy when he died, William was only in his twenties. William appoints his uncle, Thomas Johnson, to be his executor and a Thomas Johnson, probably Joan's brother, was a witness to her will.

483 proved 16th September 1589

The wills of William and his wife were both proved locally, William's before William Charlton, clerk and vicar of Tonbridge in the diocese of Rochester, January 157? (probably 1571 in the new calendar) and Johane's in Tonbridge before John Stockwood, vicar there, the 16th September 1589

The three wills from 1570, 1586 and 1590 are practically identical with regard to the request concerning soul and body, those of the two Williams being exactly the same even though there is a twenty year gap between them.

Possible Relationships of The Blundells



William Blundell, cutler

The William who wrote his will in 1570 was a cutler and his eldest son, Michael, was to receive the implements from his shop on his father's death - perhaps he was old enough to be working as a cutler. Everything else was left to his wife for the term of her natural life. When she died, the arrangements were complicated depending on which of his children survived.

When his mother died, Michael was to inherit the dwelling house and all its appertenances paying his brother Thomas £5 within five years of his mother's death and his brother William £10 within eight years, providing that they were then of age. Since William's wife, Joan lived for another eighteen years, both Thomas and William would have been of age. William, a bachelor, died not much more than a year after his mother.

William, the father, was concerned that his son William should learn to write and read "[perfectly](#)" and if Joan died before William had finished his schooling, Michael was to see that this was completed. Otherwise, James Lawrence was to have the custody of William being paid 2s a week by Michael "[towards his schooling](#)". Was this 2s a week expected to cover his keep as well as the tuition fees?

William also had two daughters, Lewis and Elizabeth, but they only come into his will if Michael dies without issue. Since Joan mentions all three sons in her will and her daughter Elizabeth, it looks as if Lewis died before her mother but that neither she nor Elizabeth received anything from their father. By the time her mother died Elizabeth had married so that she was probably born about 1560.

Will of William Blundell 1570

written 17th October 1570; proved January 1571?

transcript from probate copy

1 In the name of god Amen. The
2 17th day of October in Anno 1570, I,
3 William Blundell of the parish of
4 Tonbridge in the county of Kent
5 and in the diocese of Rochester, **cutler**,
6 being sick in body but whole in
7 mind and of perfect remembrance
8 (lauded be god) doeth ordain and make
9 this my last will and testament in
10 manner and form following, that is
11 to say, **First**: I will and bequeath my
12 soul unto Almighty god, my saviour

and redeemer, and my body to be
buried in the churchyard of the
parish church of Tonbridge.

Item: I will unto **Johane, my wife,**
all my moveable goods and cattells,
as well within doors as without. I
mean cows and cattell what
and where so ever it be (the implements
of the shop only excepted) the which
implements of my shop I will unto
Michael Blundell, my son. All the
rest as is aforesaid (my debts and
legacies being well and truly paid)
I will as is aforesaid to the said Johane,
my wife, whom I ordain and make
my sole executrix for the performance
of this my last will and testament.
As touching my dwelling house
with the appurtenances thereunto belonging,
my very mind and will is that
immediately after the decease of Johane,
my wife, that Michael Blundell, my
son, shall have and enjoy the same

36 to him and to his heirs for ever, yielding
37 and paying unto **Thomas Blundell,**
38 **my son,** within five years after the
39 decease of the said Johane, my wife,
40 £5 of good and lawful money of
41 England. And if he be then of lawful
42 age, if not to be paid at his full
43 age of 21 years⁴⁸⁴. Also I will that
44 the said Michael Blundell shall
45 pay unto **William Blundell, my son,**
46 within 8 years after the decease of
47 my foresaid wife, £10 of good and
48 lawful money of England and if
49 he be then of lawful age or else to
50 be paid at the age of 21 years
51 as is aforesaid. Provided always,
52 that if it fortune that Johane, my wife,
53 fail before the forenamed William, my
54 son can write and read perfectly, my

484

if there was a possibility that Thomas would not be 21 five years after William's wife died, he must have been under 16 when William wrote his will in 1570. A Thomas Blundell was buried on 23rd December 1574 but this was not William's son since Johane mentions all three sons in her will of 1586. Since Johane did not die until 1588, he would have had to wait until 1593 for his inheritance, twenty three years after his father wrote his will.

55 very will is that the foresaid Michael,
56 my son, shall keep and maintain
57 the foresaid William, his brother, at
58 school to write and read until he be
59 perfect⁴⁸⁵. And if the said Michael
60 refuse to do as is aforesaid, then I
61 will that **James Lawrence** shall
62 have the custody of the said William,
63 my son, and the said Michael
64 shall pay, or cause to be paid toward
65 his schooling unto the said James, 2s
66 a week till the said William, my son,
67 be perfect as is aforesaid. In witness
68 hereof, I, the said William Blundell, have
69 set my hand the year and day above
70 written. Provided always that,
71 if it fortune that the foresaid Michael,
72 my son, do fail without issue of his

485 using the same argument to deduce William's age as was used for Thomas, he must have been at least three years younger than Thomas, that is under thirteen in 1570. However, if he could not yet read and write in 1570, it is likely that he was considerably younger than this. From this instruction to Michael should Johane die, can it be assumed that Johane, without specific instruction from her husband, would ensure that William continued his schooling?

73 body lawfully begotten and before the
74 payment as is aforesaid, that is to
75 say to his brother Thomas £5 and his
76 brother William £10, that then I will
77 that William, my son shalbe heir unto
78 the foresaid Michael, paying unto
79 Thomas, my son, as is aforesaid
80 £5 and to his two sisters £3 6s 8d a piece,
81 that is to say, to **Lewis Blundell, my**
82 **daughter**, £3 6s 8d. And to **Elizabeth**
83 **Blundell**, also £3 6s 8d of good and
84 lawful money of England⁴⁸⁶. And if
85 it fortune that both the said
86 Michael and William fail without
87 issue of their bodies lawfully begotten
88 and before the payments aforesaid,
89 then I will the forenamed tenement
90 with thappurtenances unto Thomas,
91 my son, paying his sisters as is
92 beforesaid. Also, it is my very will

486 it would appear that William's daughters were to receive something from his estate only if Michael died without a direct heir

93 that if it fortune my sons,
94 William or Thomas to fail before
95 the payments to be made as is afore
96 said, that the said Michael, my son,
97 shall pay unto his fore
98 named sisters £3 6s 8d apiece as
99 aforesaid. The which payment to be
100 made unto the foresaid Lewis and
101 Elizabeth within 4 years after the
102 decease of their foresaid mother.
103 And if it fortune that all my fore
104 said sons do fail without issue of
105 their bodies lawfully begotten, then
106 I will the said tenement with the
107 appurtenances unto my forenamed
108 daughters and their heirs lawfully
109 begotten for ever. Witnesses unto this
110 will **Henry Stoberfield, old Walter's**
111 **wife whose name is Alice** and others.

1 In the name of god Amen. The 5th of October 1586, I, Johane Blundell,
2 **widow** (late the wife of **William Blundell of Tonbridge** within the
3 county of Kent, cutler, deceased) being of good mind and perfect
4 remembrance, praised be god, therefore do make and ordain
5 this my last will and testament in manner and form
6 following: **First:** I bequeath my soul unto Almighty god, my only
7 saviour and redeemer and my body to be buried within the
8 churchyard of Tonbridge. **Item:** I give unto **Richard Heath** twenty
9 shillings of good and lawful money of England to be paid within
10 six months next after my decease. **Item:** I give unto **Richard**
11 **Allchine** thirty shillings of good and lawful money of England
12 to be paid within six months next after my decease. **Item:**
13 I give unto **Elizabeth Plane, my daughter**, three pounds
14 of good and lawful money of England within one year next
15 after my decease. **Item:** I give unto **Michael Blundell, my son**,
16 the mill withall implements. The rest of all my goods
17 and chattels I give unto **Thomas Blundell and William Blundell**,
18 **my sons**, whom I do make and ordain mine executors
19 to perform this my last will and testament.

Witness hereunto

Thomas Johnson, senior

and **Richard Johnson** with others

William Blundell, bachelor

William (1590) made a bequest to his brother Thomas's "[first son . . if it please god to save him](#)". Perhaps he was very young when his uncle died and not expected to live.

Will of William Blundell 1590

written 4th January 1589/90

transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. The 4th day of January 1589
2 I, William Blundell of Tonbridge within the county of
3 Kent, **bachelor**, being sick of body but whole in
4 mind, praised be god, therefore do make and ordain
5 this my last will and testament in manner and form
6 following: **First:** I bequeath my soul unto Almighty
7 god, my only saviour and Redeemer. And my body

8 to be buried in the churchyard of Tonbridge.
9 **Item:** I give unto the poor people of Tonbridge 12s⁴⁸⁷
10 to be given and distributed in bread at the day
11 of my burial. **Item:** I give unto **the first son of my brother Thomas**, if it
please god to save him, five pounds of lawful money of England.⁴⁸⁸

12 The residue of all my goods
13 and chattels I give unto **Thomas Blundell, my**
14 **brother**, whom I do make mine executor, paying
15 my debts and legacies. And I do appoint my
16 **uncle, Thomas Johnson**, my overseer.

William Blundell ⁴⁸⁹ mark

487 looks like "s" (shillings) rather than "d" (pence) although the latter was more usual; perhaps William, not having to provide for a wife and children, could be more generous to the poor

488 part of this line inserted

489 vertical cross

Thomas Blundell, yeoman

Thomas did not mention any children in his will and, since he made the daughters of his brother Michael his executrixes and leaves money to a number of other people who could be related, it appears that he did not have any children who lived into adulthood.

Will of Thomas Blundell

written 13th January 1627/8

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The thirteenth day of January in the year of our
- 2 Lord God one thousand, six hundred and
- 3 twenty and seven. And in the third year of our sovereign Lord Charles, by
- 4 the grace of God, king of
- 5 England, Scotland, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, I, Thomas
- 6 Blundell of Tonbridge in the county
- 7 of Kent, **yeoman**, being of perfect mind and memory (God be praised), do
- 8 ordain and make this my testament and
- 9 last will in manner and form following: **First:** and principally,
- 10 commending my soul to Almighty God, my

6 maker, with an assured hope of salvation through his mercy in the merits
and mediation of his dear son, Jesus
7 Christ, my blessed saviour and redeemer. And my body to the earth in
decent manner to be buried at the
8 discretion of **Elizabeth, my loving wife**, To whom I give all my goods and
chattels towards her better
9 means and maintenance and the payment of all my debts. The which
Elizabeth I make and ordain the sole executrix of this my testament and
last will.
10 This is also the last will of me, the said Thomas Blundell, made and
declared the day first above
11 written touching the ordering and disposing of my Messuage and the
houses and appurtenances hereafter
12 mentioned. **Item:** I will and give full power to the said Elizabeth, my wife,
at any time after
13 my decease, by deed with . . . and . . . Indenture or any otherwise to sell,
give, grant,
14 enfeoff . . . to any person or person whatsoever, All that my messuage or
tenement wherein I, the
15 said Thomas, do now dwell. And all the shops, outhouses, buildings,
stables, gardens and all
16 other appurtenances thereto belonging, now in th'occupancy of me, the
said Thomas Blundell and

17 of **Marie Denton, widow** and **Thomas Beafier, mercer**, situated, lying and
being in Tonbridge
18 aforesaid, viz: to the high street leading through the town towards the
South and to the tenement of **Tabitha**
19 **Allen, widow**, towards the north, to her and her heirs, the said messuage or
tenement, shops, outhouses,
20 buildings, stables, gardens and their appurtenances to such person or
persons who shall buy the same of my said
21 wife. And to the heirs and assigns of the said person or persons, in fee
simple forever. And my will and
22 mind is that my said wife, with the money for which she shall sell the
premises or any parcel thereof, shall
23 pay me debts which I am very careful and desire as to have discharged.
And the overplus of the
24 money arising of the purchase (if any overplus thereof shall be after the
payment of all my debts)
25 I will shall be and remain to my said wife for her to dispose at her will and
pleasure.
26 And if my said wife shall happen to depart this life before sale by her made
of the said messuage and premises,
27 then I will and give full power to **Frances and Blanche Blundell, daughters**
of my late brother,

28 **Michael Blundell**, deceased, and to either of them, to sell, give, grant,
29 enfeoffe and confirm by any
30 lawful conveyance whatsoever to any person or persons whatsoever, in
31 such ample manner as is before
32 appointed to my said wife. All the said messuages and premises before
33 mentioned and appointed to be sold
34 for such reasonable price as may conveniently be had for the same. And
35 with the money arising of the sale
36 thereof, to pay all my debts undischarged by my said wife. And the
37 overplus, if any shall be,
I will shall be disposed and paid by them in this manner: viz. one third part
thereof to **Henry**
Alchen, my kinsman, Samuel Ireland, my godson⁴⁹⁰, **Richard Johnson, my**
godson, and Marie
Marlor, my goddaughter, equally to be divided between the said Henry,
Samuel, Richard
and Marie and the residue of the said overplus, viz. 2 other third parts
thereof (??
to be divided), I will to the said Frances and Blanche Blundell, equally
between them.

38 In witness whereof I have to this my testament and last will set my hand
and seal hereon
39 the day and year first above written.

The mark of Thomas Blundell

Read, sealed, published and declared with these ??
(and to either of them) ??
before the ensealing in the presence of **William Walker, junior,**
John Hartridge and **John Hooper, noris pbq.**

Concordate and original
?? to **M-- John Hooper, noris pbq.**

Wills of the Boardmans, blacksmiths of Tonbridge

Two wills have survived for Boardmans of Tonbridge:

Robert Boardman	28 Oct 1607	CKS: Drb/Pw 21	page b.588
John Boardman	1 Jun 1625	CKS: Drb/Pw 27	page b.591

John was Robert's son and both their wills were written by John Hooper, notary public and town clerk of Tonbridge who wrote a number of wills for people in the area for at least forty years: 1601 to 1641. Neither is decorated but the handwriting looks the same as that of decorated wills by John Hooper. Only the originals have survived.

Robert and John were both blacksmiths. Robert left his smith's bellows and anvil to his son John and his next three sons, William, Robert and Michael, were to share all the other tools and implements belonging to his trade as a blacksmith; these included coals, iron and shoes (presumably horse shoes).

Thus it appears that at least four of Robert's sons were following his trade as a blacksmith. If the three sons could not agree on how the items were to be divided between them, two of their father's friends were to lay them out into "three equal

parts as they can and as they think meeteth and afterwards my said sons to cast lots for their parts as laid out and divided".

Robert had two underage children, Samuel and Sara, to each of whom he left some household items. These they were to have "at their several ages respectively of 21 years till which their several ages respectively, I will my executrix shall have the occupation of the said legacies of the said Samuel and Sara". This phraseology is unusual with its use of the word "respectively" and generally nothing is said about legacies of specific items to underage children except that they are to receive them when they are of age although wills sometimes state that legacies of money are to be invested for the child's benefit.

John seems to have only one child - a son Robert, this being his wife's second marriage. She had two surviving daughters from her first marriage and they were to be John's heirs if Robert died before he came of age.

Robert's family is shown on the next page; "t" indicates a reference in the Tonbridge database.

		t755	Robert - Johane	t756													
will:		28 Oct 1607															

	t766	t757		t758		t759		t760		t761		t762		t763		t764	
?? Houn. .-	Margaret	-	John	William	Elizabeth	Robert	Michael	Johane	Samuel	Sara ¹							
will:			1 Jun 1625														
born:																	
t767		t768				t769											
	Ruth	Elizabeth				Robert											
born:						>1604											

Will of Robert Boardman of Tonbridge

written 28th October 1607

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. the eight and twentieth day of October 1607
and
- 2 in the fifth year of our sovereign Lord James by the grace of
- 3 god, king of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith and of

¹ John was most likely the eldest son; Samuel and Sara were underage in 1607; William, Robert and Michael were probably given eldest first and similarly with Elizabeth and Johane but where the daughters came with regard to the sons is not known

Scotland the 41st. I, Robert Boardman, th'elder, of Tonbridge in the
county of Kent, **blacksmith**, being sick and weak in body but of perfect
remembrance, do make this my testament and will in manner and form following:
First: I
commend my soul to God, my maker, with hope of salvation through Jesus
Christ, my saviour, and my body to the earth from which it was taken.
Item: I
I give and bequeath to **John, my son**, my smith's bellows and anvil
to hold to him and his executors for ever. All other my tools and
implemements
belonging only to my trade, together with such coals, iron and shoes
thereto be
longing as I have provided and made, I will shalbe equally divided
and shifted amongst **my three sons, William, Robert and Michael**, and if
they
cannot themselves agree in shifting thereof, then I desire and appoint
my good **friends, William Fathers and William Rootes, butcher**, to layout all
the residue of my said tools, implements, coals, iron and shoes, into such
three
equal parts as they can and as they think meeteth and afterwards my said
sons to cast lots for their parts as laid out and divided, to hold my

19 said tools and other my provisions? so shifted to them and their executors
and assigns in
20 ?? for ever. And I will this shift to be made within so convenient time
21 after my decease as may be. **Item:** I give to either of **my two daughters,**
22 **Elizabeth and Johane,** five shillings to be paid them within three months
next
23 after my decease by mine executrix. **Item:** I give to **Samuel, my**
24 **son,** my cupboard in the hall, one boarded chest and one pair of sheets and
25 to **Sara, my daughter,** the joined bedstead wherein I lie and one little
26 boarded chest and one pair of sheets to be delivered them by my executrix
27 at their several ages respectively of 21 years till which their several ages
28 respectively, I will my executrix shall have the occupation of the said
29 legacies of the said Samuel and Sara. The residue of all my goods, cattells
30 and chattels, wood and household stuff not before willed, I wholly give and
bequeath
31 to **Johane, my wellbeloved wife,** towards the bringing up of the said
Samuel
32 and Sara which Johane I ordain and make my sole and ?? executrix. In
33 witness whereof I have hereto set my hand and seal ?? the day and
34 year first above written.

X mark of Robert Boardman th'elder

Read, sealed published and
declared in the presence of
William
John Hooper

Will of John Boardman of Tonbridge

dated 1st June 1625
transcript from original

1 In the name of god Amen. the first day of June
2 Ao dm 1625. And in the first year of the reign of
3 Lord Charles, by the grace of god, king of England, Scotland,
4 France and Ireland, defender of the faith. I, John Boardman,
5 of Tonbridge in the County of Kent, **blacksmith**, do ordain
6 and make this my testament and last will in manner and form
7 following: **First:** I commend my soul to Almighty God, my
8 maker, with an assured hope of salvation through his mercy in the
9 merit and mediation of his dear son, Jesus Christ, my saviour. And
10 my body to the earth in decent manner to be buried. **Item:** I will to
11 the poor people of Tonbridge three shillings and four

12 pence. **Item:** I give to my two brothers one shilling a piece of lawful
13 english money

14 The residue of all my goods, cattle and chattels, I will and give
15 to **Margaret, my loving wife**, whom I make and ordain
16 the sole, full and only executor of this my testament and
last will.

17 This is also the last will of me the said John Boardman
18 made and declared the day and year first above written
19 ?? the ordering and disposing of my house wherein
20 I now dwell with th'appurtenances situated in Tonbridge above
21 written. **Item:** I will, give and devise to **Robert, my son**,
22 and to his heirs forever, all the said messuage or tenement
23 with the shop and all th'appurtenances thereto belonging which I late
24 purchased to me and mine heirs of **George Lampard**, situated and
25 being in the said town of Tonbridge. And my said wife to
26 have the use and profit of the same till the age of 21 years of my
27 said son for? his bringing up until his said age. And if my
28 said son shall decease before his said age, without heirs of his
29 body lawfully begotten, I will the said messuage, shop and appurtenances
30 to the said Margaret, my wife, for term of her natural life and,
31 after her decease, to **Ruth and Elizabeth Hourn..** her two
32 children by her first husband and to their heirs and assigns

33 forever. In witness whereof I have to this my testament and last will
34 set my hand and seal herein the day and year first above written.

signed John Boardman

X

sealed, ?? and
declared in the presence of

X Richard Hoade (mark) William Abraham
John Hooper⁴⁹², sen.

⁴⁹² "Hooper" looks the same as in John Holloways's will also written in 1625 and the writing of the phrase "herein the day and year above written" is exactly the same in both wills

Richard Boggesse of Chevening

There were a number of wills for **Bogherst** proved in both the RCC and PCC but Richard's is the only one from Chevening.

Richard Boggesse's will (**CKS: PRS/w/1/195**) was dated 3rd February 1630/1 and it was proved on 23rd August 1631. The "original" which has survived is written in a professional hand with the initial "I" slightly decorated but it was a copy made by Christopher Thomas, notary public. The first named witness was Robert Brownell who was also the first witness of the will of Walter Leigh of Sevenoaks written in the spring of 1631. Both include similar but unusual phrases so that it is probable that Brownell wrote both these wills.

There are a number of other unusual phrases in the will. Richard's wellbeloved wife Emme was also described as his "[dear wife](#)" but she was to loose the inheritance of all her husband's moveables, not only if she remarried but also if she happened to "[take any inmate into house with her](#)".

Richard's will also states "[that he that is not content with this my will shall be deprived of his part herein](#)" but one would have thought that those most discontented might be those who had not been left anything at all. Richard's

eldest son, Thomas, was a citizen of London and his youngest son, Henry, a carpenter. Another of his sons, Richard, was to receive all the "[shop tools fit for his trade](#)" which seems to imply that Richard the testator, even though he was described as a yeoman, had practised a trade, perhaps carpentry.

Richard's bequest to the poor of the parish of Chevening was a total of thirty shillings, five shillings to be paid to the minister and churchwardens every Good Friday "to be given to the honest poor as long as that 30s doth last".

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                                x1316 Richard - Emme x1317
will:                          3 Feb 1631 |
-----
x1318 |          |          x1681          x1319 |          x1320 |          x1321 |
Thomas  ?? - John Stileman          Richard          Roger -          Henry
          |
          -----
x1682 |          |          |
John   other children

```

1 In the name of god Amen. February the third 1630. I, Richard
2 Boggesse, the elder, of the parish of Chevening in the county of Kent,
yeoman, sick in body but of
3 good and perfect memory, for which I praise my god, do institute and make
my last will and testament
4 in manner and form following, First and most specially I commend my soul
to God, my maker, and
5 to Jesus, my Redeemer, and to the holy ghost, my sanctifier, believing my
salvation by the merit of
6 Christ Jesus and by no other means and my body to be buried at
Chevening. And for my
7 worldly goods I thus dispose of them. **First:** I give and bequeath to⁴⁹³ **my**
wellbeloved wife, Emme
8 **Boggesse**, all my land for and during her natural life and after her decease
to **my son**,
9 **Thomas Boggesse, Citizen of London**, and to his heirs lawfully begotten or
hereafter to be

493 this was first written as "unto" but the "un" has been crossed out

10 begotten for ever. And for want of such heirs, I give my said lands to **my**
11 **youngest son, Henry**
12 **Boggesse, carpenter**, and to his heirs lawfully begotten for ever. But if it
13 happen
14 the said Henry to die without such issue, to **my son, Richard Boggesse**, and
15 his lawful
16 heirs for ever. And for want of such issue to **my son, Roger, his son.** **Item:** I
17 give to
18 my said wife all my moveables during her natural life, she not wilfully
19 wasting, selling nor
20 spoiling of any thing to impoverish the stock but out of them to pay all my
21 debts whatsoever
22 and legacies hereafter mentioned. And if it happen my wife to take any
23 inmate into house
24 with her, or to be married again to any man hereafter, then my former gift
25 shall be taken
26 out of her use and shalbe to my son Thomas for the purpose above
27 mentioned and there shall
28 only remain to her the proper use of my lands during her life. **Item:** I give
29 to my
30 son Richard ten pounds to be paid within six months after my decease and
31 all the
32 shop tools fit for his trade. **Item:** I give to my son Henry twenty pounds

22 whereof I will ten shalbe paid one year after my decease, the other ten two
23 years after
24 my decease. **Item:** I give to **Thomas, the son of John Banister of**
25 **Westerham**, five pounds
26 and I give to the rest of his children five pounds to be equally divided
27 amongst them,
28 to be paid to their father, John Banister, to their use within three years my
29 decease.
30 And if any of them die in the mean season, that legacy shalbe divided to
31 the survivor.
32 **Item:** I give to **John, the son of John Stileman**, five pounds to be paid to his
33 father
34 for his use within four years after my decease. And to the rest of his
35 children five pounds to be
36 equally divided, paid in like manner. **Item:** I give to **my grandchild, John,**
37 **the son of Roger**
38 **Boggesse**, forty shillings to be paid to my son Thomas to his use against he
39 come to
40 lawful age. **Item:** I give to **William and Margaret Brownell, the children of**
41 **Robert**
42 **Brownell**, 6s 8d a piece to be paid to them within six months after my
43 decease. **Item:**

33 I give to the poor of the parish of Chevening 30s to be paid to the minister
and
34 churchwardens then being, upon every Good Friday after my decease by
five shillings a time
35 to be given to the honest poor as long as that 30s doth last and to be paid
out of my
36 lands. **Item:** I give to all my godchildren of 12 years or under the sum of
12d a piece.
37 And I institute and appoint Emme, my dear wife, and Thomas, my eldest
son, executors
38 of this my last will and my will is that my wife, at her decease, shall have
the disposing
39 of the one half of my goods which shall remain after my legacies be paid
and the other half to
40 be to my other executor, namely my son Thomas, to himself, his executors
and assigns,
41 etc. And my will is that he that is not content with this my will shalbe
deprived of his
42 part herein and it divided among the rest. And I intreat **my son-in-law,**
John
43 Stileman and my good friend **Richard Bassett** to see this my last will
executed and
44 performed and to each of them I give ten shillings. In witness that this is

45 my last will and testament I have put my hand and seal to these present
46 the day and year above written. **Richard Boggesse**, his mark, and seal.
Signed
47 and sealed in the presence of **Robert Brownell, Richard Bassett**, his mark.

494

Chris. Thomas
notary public
Richard Baker

. . . diseased in my body but whole and perfect of mind

First: I commend my soul into the merciful hand of Almighty god and my body to be buried in the churchyard of Hoo.

Just an extract from the preamble of this will (CKS: Drb/Pw 5; Drb/Pwr/12.5)

Blank Page

John Bowmer and the Setons of Seal

Bumer, Boomer and Bowman are alternative spellings of this name.

The burials of John and his wife were recorded in the Seal parish register but his will allows us to relate the Bowmers and Setons as shown below.

Although in his will John is described as a labourer, he owned a tenement and half an acre of land at Seal Chart and was able to leave his grandson brass pots, pewter and a salt cellar. John Theobald, one of his witnesses, was part of the parish gentry and Margaret Theobald was another witness. When the will was written John was "well in body" and he lived for over a year after this.

John's daughter, Jane, married Thomas Seton on 22nd June 1611. Five months earlier she had had a son, Thomas, who was described at his baptism "the spurious son of Jane Bowmer". The father of Jane's son, who was mentioned in his grandfather's will when he was seven, could have been Jane's husband. Thomas's first wife and their daughter were buried together.

		#3979 John - John's wife	#3980
will:		2 Nov 1618	
bur:		20 Jan 1620	
	#3382	#3381	#3384
	Elizabeth - Thomas Seton	-	Jane -
mar:		22 Jul 1611	
bur:	2 Feb 1608		
	#3383		#3384
	Elizabeth		Thomas
bap:	1 Jan 1606		27 Feb 1611
bur:	2 Feb 1608		

There were other Setons in Seal but their connection with the Thomas above is not known

Will of John Bowmer

written 2nd November 1618; proved 27th November 1620

CKS: Drb/Pw 25; Drb/Pwr 19IIA.57

transcript from the original will

1 In the name of god Amen. The second day of November in the year
 2 of our lord 1618 and in the year of the reign of our most
 3 gracious sovereign lord James, by the grace of God, of England,

4 France and Ireland the first and of Scotland the ??.

5 **I, John Bowmer**, of the parish of Seal within the county of Kent,

6 **labourer**, being well in body and of good and perfect mind and

7 remembrance, thanks be unto God, do make this my last will and

8 testament in manner and form following: That is to say, **first** and

9 principally I commend my soul into the hand of Almighty god

10 assuredly trusting through the merits of my maker, the death and passion

of our

11 lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to obtain remission of all my sins

12 and to have everlasting salvation in his most blessed Kingdom and my

13 body I commit to the earth whereof it was made. **Item:** I give and bequeath

14 all that my tenement and ground withall and singular th'appurtances

15 containing by estimation one half acre of ground more or less lying

16 and being at **Chart** in the parish of Seal aforesaid unto **my daughter**

17 **Jane Seton** for and during her natural life and from and after her

18 decease I do give and bequeath the remainder of the foresaid house and

19 land withall and singular th'appurtances unto **Thomas Seton alias**

20 **Bowmer, son of my said daughter Jane Seton** and to his heirs

21 for ever. **Item:** I give and bequeath unto the said Thomas Seton

23 alias Bowmer, two great brass pots, one brazen caheur⁴⁹⁵, half

24 a dozen of my best pewter, one salt cellar and over and above

495 a "chaffer"? (a vessel for heating water)

25 I give and bequeath unto the said Thomas, my godson and grandchild
26 the one half of the residue of my goods. All the residue of my goods
27 and chattels, not before bequeathed, I give and bequeath unto my said
daughter
28 Jane Seton after my debts paid and legacies discharged whom I do
29 make my sole executrix of this my last will revoking hereby all other
30 my former wills and further I do appoint and make my well beloved
31 friends, **Richard Walker and John Rogers, also of Seal**, overseers of this my
32 last will and testament desiring them to see this my will performed
33 and I do give them for their pains 12d a piece. In witness
34 whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year
35 above written in the presence of

John Theobald; Margaret Theobald
Richard Matthew; Thomas Upton

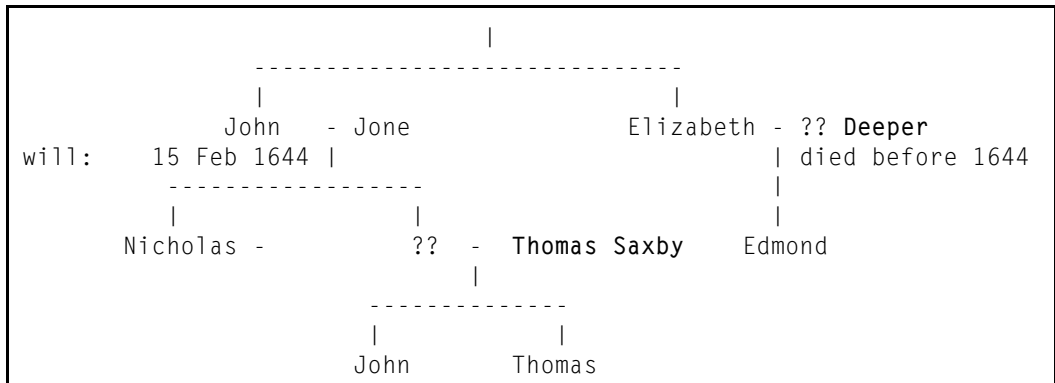
The names of the witnesses look like signatures but John Bowmer made his mark. John Theobald could have been John(4) Tebold (#1750) and the will of a Margerie Theobald has survived from 1638. Otherwise the overseers and witnesses have not been identified although the names Walker, Rogers and Matthew appear in Seal.

John Brattle of Wrotham

No other land besides that leased from his son, Nicholas, was mentioned by John in his will (CKS: Prs/w/1/249) although half of his goods and "personal estate", to be inherited by his son, was apparently sufficient to pay his wife, Jone, £40 within six months of his decease. Nicholas was to pay this £40 "before he intermeddle with the altering of the property or disposing of any of my said personal estate" but, if he defaulted on any of the payment, "then the legacies to him before herein bequeathed, shall cease . . and be utterly void" and he was to receive just twenty shillings.

Hops were obviously one of John's sources of income since he leaves hop poles to his wife and son and the leased land was a "hopground newly planted".

John revoked all former wills "by me heretofore made" and this phrase, whilst not common, appears in a number of wills. It implies that it was not unusual for people to write a will other than on their deathbed which then, at a later date, was superseded by a new one.



Will of John Brattle of Wrotham

written 15th February 1643/4; proved 24th October 1644

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The fifteenth day of February Anno diem 1643.
And in
2 the nineteenth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord king Charles that
now is. I, John Brattle
3 of Wrotham in the county of Kent, **yeoman**, of sound and perfect memory
(thanks be given to Almighty god)

4 revoking all former wills by me heretofore made do make and ordain this
my last will and testament
5 in manner and form following. That is to say **Impris** I surrender into the
hands of Almighty god, my saviour, my soul and
6 spirit, nothing doubting but through the alone merits of my only saviour
Jesus Christ, to
7 obtain remission of all my sins. And my body I commit to the earth to be
decently buried hoping
8 for a joyful resurrection to life everlasting. **Item:** I give and bequeath to the
poor of the parish of
9 Wrotham forty shillings to be distributed amongst them within one month
after my decease at the
10 discretion of my executors. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my daughter ??**
now wife of Thomas
11 **Saxby**, ten pounds to be⁴⁹⁶ paid within six months next after my decease.
Item: I give and
12 bequeath to **my grandchild and godson, John Saxby, son of the said**
Thomas Saxby, five
13 pounds to be paid when he shall accomplish his age of one and twenty
years. But in case the

496 "bee" here and in a few other places but "ee" not used in ant other word

14 same John Saxby happen to decease before his said age, then I give and
bequeath the same
15 five pounds to my grandchild Thomas Saxby, his brother, to be paid at his
like age.
16 **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my sister, Elizabeth Deeper, widow**, twenty
shillings. And to my
17 **two godsons Edmond Deeper and John Hartnupp**, five shillings a piece as
token of my
18 love. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **my loving wife Jone** the stock of hop
poles now being in
19 and upon the hopground newly planted being part of the **Brooks** which (??)
I hold by lease
20 from **my son Nicholas Brattle and his wife**. **Item:** my debts and legacies
paid and my funeral
21 discharged, I give and bequeath the moiety or one half of all and every my
goods, cattell, chattels,
22 household stuff and other my hoppoles and personal estate whatsoever to
my said loving wife Jone
23 for her to dispose of at her will and pleasure. **Item:** I give and bequeath
unto my said wife Jone
24 the sum of forty pounds of lawful english money (over and besides her
former legacies) to be

25 paid to her by my said son **Nicholas Brattle** out of the other moiety of my
personal estate
26 within six months after my decease before he intermeddle with the altering
of the property
27 or disposing of any of my said personal estate. **Item:** the said Nicholas
Brattle, my son, first
28 paying the said forty pounds to my said wife Jone as aforesaid, I give and
bequeath the said other
29 moiety or one half of my goods, cattell, chattels, household stuff and of my
said other hoppoles and
30 personal estate whatsoever to my said son Nicholas Brattle, his executors
and assigns for ever, he and they,
31 paying and discharging half my debts, funeral and other legacies.
Provided always that if the
32 said Nicholas Brattle, my son, shall make default of payment of the said
forty pounds or any part
33 thereof to my said wife as aforesaid, then the legacies to him before herein
bequeathed, shall
34 cease, determine and be utterly void. And then I give and bequeath to
him, the said Nicholas, my
35 son, only twenty shillings. And then also and from thenceforth, I give all
my goods, chattels

36 and personal estate to the said Jone, my wife. And I do hereby constitute,
ordain and make
37 the said Jone, my wife, and the said Nicholas Brattle, my son, executors of
this my
38 last will and testament. And I do appoint **Sir Nicholas Miles, knight**, and
?? ??
39 overseers of this my last will desiring them to see the same ?? ?? ??
40 witness whereof to this my last will and testament written on two sheets?
of paper and have set my
41 hand and seal the day and year first above written
Signed, sealed, published and discharged
in the presence of
?? **Jacob Heath**

*The **Brewers** of Seal, Ightham and Shipbourne*

There were two Brewer families in Seal:

Andrew Brewer	mason and bricklayer , whose will has survived, having children in the 1570s and 1580s; his family his will	page b.614 page b.616
John Brewer	having children in the 1620s and 1630s	page b.618

Both the Brewer families were unfortunate in the number of their children which did not survive. Out of Andrew and Maryon's five children only two were still alive when their father wrote his will in 1592. Out of the nine live children born to John and Mary only Susan and the John born in 1630 are not recorded as dying in infancy or early childhood.

There is no known connection between these two families. Other Brewers in Seal include a **Brewer and her child** who were buried on 24th September 1615. Others Brewer events include two plague deaths - Gabriole Brewer's wife and daughter and the marriage of Timothy Brewer who was probably born in Shipbourne - see below.

Andrew Brewer of Seal

An **Andrew Brewer, labourer**, was indicted for burglary at Rochester Assizes on 15th March 1582 in that, on 21st November 1581 he burgled the house of **Alice Fuller** (i2762)⁴⁹⁷, widow, at **Ightham** while she and Anne, her daughter, were there and stole a pair of sheets (5s), 4 kerchiefs (8s), several corner kerchiefs and a pillowbar (3s) and 7s in money. Not guilty.⁴⁹⁸ It is possible that Andrew was classed as a labourer by the court in 1582 but, ten years later, was a mason and bricklayer.

In 1590, when William Pynden's will was written, it appears that Andrew Brewer, together with John Walter the younger and Christopher Coates, were bound to Pynden to pay him £5.

497 "i" indicates a reference in the Ightham database, # in that for Seal and \$ in that for Shipbourne

498 Cockburn (Eliz.I) 1115

1 In the year of our lord god 1592, the tenth day of
2 May and in the thirty third year of
3 the reign of our sovereign lady Queen
4 Elizabeth by the grace of God Queen of
5 England, France and Ireland, defender
6 of the . . . I, Andrew
7 Brewer of the parish of Seal within the
8 County of Kent, **mason and bricklayer**,
9 being sick in body but, thanks be to
10 almighty god, of sound and perfect memory
11 do make my last will and testament in
12 in manner and form following: **First:** I bequeath
13 my soul into the hands of Almighty
14 god and my body to be buried in the church
15 yard of Seal aforesaid. **Item:** I bequeath
16 and give all my moveables within the house
17 and without, my debts being payed, unto **Maryon**
18 **my wife**, she seeing my body to be hereafter
19 buried in the grave. Also this is my last

20 testament of my five houses and land situated
21 and lying within the parish of Seal
22 aforesaid. The . . . five houses and land
23 I give unto the said Marian, my wife, during
24 her natural life, seeing? and maintaining
25 the said houses lawfully repaired
26 and, after her decease, I give the said
27 houses and land with their appurtenances
28 unto **my two sons, Henry Brewer** and
29 **James Brewer** and to their heirs for
30 ever. Furthermore, calling to my remembrance my
31 **son, Oswald Brewer**, whom I had by my
32 **first wife**, whom I have not seen
33 this 24 years⁴⁹⁹, I will that my two sons,
34 Henry and James, shall pay unto him four
35 marks of good and lawful money of England
36 within one year after the death of
37 my said wife Maryon whom I ordain
38 and make my sole executrix of this my

499 24 years from 1592 gives 1568, the year his first wife died; if she died at, or soon after, Oswald's birth, he would have been 24 when his father died. Since the marriage of Julian and Andrew was not recorded in Seal, Julian could have come from another village to which she returned for the birth of her first child who was perhaps brought up by her parents.

39 last will and testament. In witness whereof
40 I, the said Andrew Brewer, have set my
41 hand mark, the day and year above written.

witnesses: **Gilbert Jenyns**, vicar of Seal (who probably wrote the will),
James Woodd, Margaret Thomas⁵⁰⁰ with others

John Brewer of Seal

#3641 John - Mary #3642									
#3643	#3644	#3645	#3646	#3647	#3648	#3649	#3650	#3651	
James	John	Susan	John	John	Margaret	Katherine	Stephen	Anne	
bap: 1 Apr 1622	19 Jun 1623	17 Jun 1625	25 Nov 1627	21 Jan 1630	23 Aug 1632	17 Jul 1634	14 Jan 1638	10 Nov 1639	
bur: 13 May 1622	5 Aug 1624		16 Mar 1629		17 Feb 1638	30 Nov 1636	15 Apr 1638	18 Apr 1640	
aged: 6 weeks	13 months		15 months		5½ years	2 years	3 months	5 months	

John's wife is known as "Mary" from the last three births where her name is given as well as John's. It is likely that she was the mother of all these children.

⁵⁰⁰ James Wood (#1308) and Margaret Thomas (#349?)

Gabriole Brewer

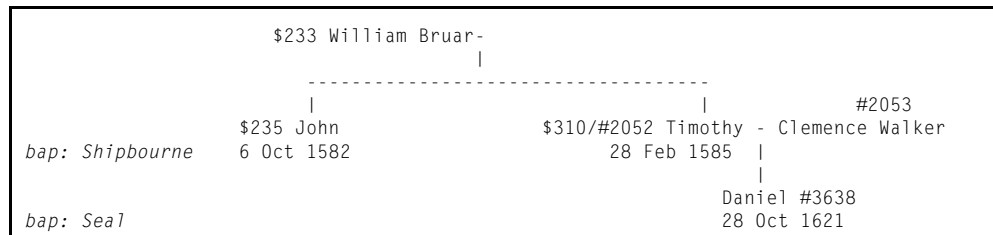
On 26th October 1603, the daughter of **Gabriole Brewer** was buried in Seal, followed two days later by **Gabriole's wife, Johane**. These were two **plague deaths** and this is Gabriole's only appearance in the registers. He could, however, have been the Gabriell Brewer living in Ightham in 1604 and brought before the Court for harbouring a stranger, **James Butler**. If Butler was not removed, or sureties found for him, Brewer (who was described as an armorer of London) was to be fined £5.⁵⁰¹

In his will written in November 1619, Henry Swaynsland (#1711) mentions his kinswoman "**Sylvester, daughter of Gabriell Bruer of Charing Cross**". Since Gabriell is a very uncommon name, either he remarried or Sylvester was born before 1603; in either case her relationship to Henry Swaynsland is not known.

501 CRI 1938, p.18

Timothy Brewer

The Timothy Brewer who married Clemence Walker in Seal on 22 September 1616 is likely to have been the son of William Bruar of Shipbourne in which case he was 31 when he married. Their only recorded child was baptised in Seal:



The *Britters/Brittens* of Wrotham

The will of Thomas Britter and that of Rachel Britten, widow have survived; since Thomas's wife was Rachel and Rachel mentions the same children as Thomas, it is obvious that these were the wills of husband and wife.

Thomas Britter	3 Dec 1624	Apr 1625	CKS: Prs/w/1/163	page b.622
Rachel Britten	2 Mar 1641/2	Jun 1649	PCC: Fairfax 83; Prob 11/208	page b.626

Thomas's will was written by George Segars who wrote a number of wills between 1619 and 1644. One of the witnesses to Rachel's will was Charles Hutchinson, clerk, who witnessed, and possibly wrote, a number of wills in Wrotham.

[illegible]

Ann, mother of Jane, Mary and John, must have married before 1620 and born, at the latest, in the late 1590s. This means that her mother, Rachel, would have been born about 1570 and must therefore have been in her seventies when she wrote her will. Since it was not proved for another seven years, she could have lived well into her eighties.

Rachel left £9 to her executors to be expended on her burial but gives no details as to how it is to be spent. It seems a large amount even if it included a distribution to the poor.

Will of Thomas Britter of Wrotham

written 3rd December 1624; proved April 1649

transcript from original

- 1 In the name of god Amen. The third day of December Anno diem 1624 and
- in the
- 2 two and twentieth year of the reign of our sovereign Lord James by the
- grace of god of
- 3 England, France and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc. And of
- Scotland the eight and
- 4 fiftieth. I, Thomas Britter th'elder of Wrotham in the county of Kent,
- yeoman**, being sick

in body yet of good and perfect memory, thanks be given to Almighty god,
do make and ordain
this my present last will and testament in manner and form following:
first and principally
I commend and bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty god, my
maker and creator, and
to Jesus Christ, my only saviour and redeemer, hoping and steadfastly
believing, through the
merits of his death and passion, to have everlasting life. And I bequeath
my body to the earth
from whence it came, to be buried at the discretion of my executrix
hereafter named.
Item: I give unto **Jane Burr, Mary Burr and John Burr, children of my
daughter, Anne
Burr**, to each of them ten shillings to be paid unto them within one year
next after my
decease by my executrix. All the residue of my goods and chattels
whatsoever, my debts and
legacies and funeral expenses discharged, I wholly give and bequeath unto
my wellbeloved
wife, Rachel Britter, whom I make sole executrix of this my last will and
testament.

16 This is the last will and testament of me, the said Thomas Britter, made
and declared the
17 day and year abovesaid, touching the disposition of my lands and
tenements whatsoever.

18 **Item:** I wholly give and bequeath the same unto the said Rachel, my wife,
for and during the
19 whole term of her natural life without impeachment of or by any manner of
??

20 And after her decease, I wholly give and bequeath the same unto **my son,**
Thomas
21 **Britter** and to his heirs and assigns for ever. Provided always and upon
22 condition that the said Thomas, my son, do pay unto **my two daughters,**
Anne now
23 **wife of Vryne Burr and Rachel Britter,** the sum of twenty pounds a piece of
24 lawful English money within one year next after the decease of the said
Rachel, my wife. But if either of them
25 happen to die before the same several sums of twenty pounds a piece shall
become due and
26 according to this my will ought to be paid unto them, then the portion or
legacy of her so
27 dying to be paid unto her children if she shall have any at the time of her
decease.

28 But if she so dying shall have no children at the time of her decease, then
the portion
29 of her so dying to be paid unto her that shall survive upon like condition for
non payment
30 as aforesaid. In witness whereof I, the said Thomas Britter, th'elder,
revoking all former
31 wills, have to this my present testament and last will set my hand and seal
and
32 published the same to be my will the day and year first above written.

Sealed and published and those words inserted (of the said
Rachel, my wife⁵⁰²) interlined before th'ensealing and publishing
hereof in the presence of **Geor. Segars**⁵⁰³
Robert Wyborne **George Covett**

Thomas
Bretter⁵⁰⁴

502 inserted on line 24

503 name followed by a small decoration or "mark"

504 could be a signature; as could those of the other two witnesses

1 In the name of god Amen. The second
2 day of March Ao dm 1641, in the 17th year of the reign of our sovereign
3 Lord Charles, by the grace of God of England, Scotland, France and Ireland
4 king, defender of the faith, etc. I, Rachel Britten of Wrotham in the county
of
5 Kent, **widow**, being in bodily health and good and sound remembrance,
laud and praise
6 be unto Almighty God, do make and ordain this my last will and testament
in
7 in manner and form following: **First:** I bequeath my soul to god, my
creator, by
8 whose mercy in Jesus Christ, I trust to be saved and my body to the earth
to be
9 buried by my executor. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **William Britten, the
eldest**
10 **son of my son Thomas Britten, deceased**, the sum of thirty pounds to be
paid to him by my
11 executor. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Jane Burr, the daughter of Vrias
Burr, my**

12 **son-in-law**, the sum of twenty pounds to be paid to her within one quarter
of a year
13 after my decease. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Katherine Burr, the**
daughter of the
14 **said Vrias**, the sum of twenty pounds to be paid to her within one quarter
of a
15 year next after my decease. **Item:** I give more to her: my featherbed with
the stead
16 and all the furniture thereof in which I now lie. **Item:** I do give to the other
17 **four children of the said Vrais Burr, viz. Mary, John, Richard and Anne,**
18 ten pounds a piece to be paid to them within one quarter of a year after my
19 decease⁵⁰⁵. **Item:** I give to **Margaret Wells, daughter of my son-in-law**
Thomas Wells
20 of Wrotham, the sum of twenty pounds to be paid her within one quarter of
a year
21 after my decease. **Item:** I give more to her: a featherbed and the furniture
belonging
22 which I sent to my daughter Wells, her house. **Item:** I give more to the
other **six children**
23 **of the said Thomas Wells**, the sum of ten pounds a piece to be paid to them

24 within one quarter of a year after my decease. **Item:** I give to **my daughter,**
25 **Anne,**
26 **wife of Vrais Burr,** and **Rachel, the wife of Thomas Wells,** all my wearing
27 apparel and linen and household stuff which I have at the house of the said
28 Anne, my daughter,
29 and at the house of **Robert Carpenter.** **Item:** I give to Vrias Burr and
30 Thomas Wells the
31 sum of nine pounds to be expended on my burial whom I do make my joint
32 executors of
33 this my last will and testament. **Item:** I do give to the poor of Wrotham 20s.
34 And all the
35 residue of my goods, cattle and chattels whatsoever unbequeathed I do
36 give to my said
37 executors. Rachel Brittens mark. Sealed, subscribed and declared in the
38 presence of **Charles**
39 **Hutchinson, clerk,** and **Robert Carpenter**

1 In the name of god Amen. The first day of March in the year of our lord a
millm.
2 decem., I, John Broke of West Malling in the diocese of Rochester, clear of
mind and whole of remembrance being, make and
3 ordain this my present testament and last will in this manner of wise. In
the first, I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, to our
4 lady saint Mary and to all the holy company of heaven, my body to be
buried in the parish churchyard of West Malling before
5 said, beside the east cross. **Item:** I bequeath to the high altar of the same
church for tithes and offerings negligently forgotten
6 and withholden 12d. **Item:** I bequeath to the feast night of our lady within
the same church to pray for my soul and all christian souls
7 16d. The residue of all my goods not bequeathed after my debts paid and
this my present testament and last will fulfilled
8 and performed, I give and bequeath to **Pernell, my wife**, to dispose therein
as it may seem her to the pleasure of Almighty
9 God and health of my soul and all christian souls. Which said Pernell, my
wife, I make and ordain mine executor in ??

10 ??ing of this my present testament and last will and **William Stephenson**
mine overseer. And I bequeath him for his labour
11 20d. To these ?? witnesses **Thomas Smith**, vicar there, **Richard Sandes**,
gent., **Roger Essex** and others.

1 In the name of god Amen. The 20th day of April in the
2 year of our lord god 1577. I, Johane Brooke, **widow**, of the
3 parish of Tonbridge in the county of Kent, being of good and perfect
4 Remembrance, thanks be to god, do make and ordain this my last
5 will and testament in manner and form following: **First:** I
6 bequeath my soul to Almighty god and my body to be buried
7 in the churchyard of Tonbridge aforesaid.

8 **First:** I will and bequeath unto **John Brooke, son of Robert**
9 **Brooke, my son**, 20s to be paid to the said John, or his
10 assigns, when he cometh to the age of 20 years.

11 **Item:** I will and bequeath unto **William Brooke, son of**
12 **Robert Brooke, my son**, 20s to be paid to the said William,
13 or his assigns, when he cometh to the age of 20 years.

14 All the residue of my goods unbequeathed, I will and
15 bequeath unto **James Romney, my son-in-law**, whom I
16 ordain and make my executor of this my testament
17 and last will to see my debts and legacies paid.

witness to this my last will
and testament **John Jeffrey**
Thomas Latte of Holden

		- Johane	
<i>will:</i>		20 Apr 1577	
<i>bur:</i>		24 Apr 1577	

	Robert -		daughter - James Romney

<i>born:</i>	John	William	
	>1557	>1558	

Other than her burial, there are no records for Johane Brooke in the Tonbridge parish registers.

This will (CKS: Drb/Pwr 18.280; Drb/Pw 16) was amended a number of times. The first version was written on 5th May 1591 (the three and thirtieth year of the reign); this was amended on 12th June 1592 (the four and thirtieth year) and the final version on 19th January 1593 (the five and thirtieth year). All versions were written by Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne. The changes which were made are given in footnotes. John Burrell was buried on 29th January 1592/3, ten days after the final changes were made.

Nicolas Hooper's
mark

- 1 , In⁵⁰⁶ the name of god Amen.
- 2 The nineteenth day of January in the year
- 3 of our lord god one thousand, five hundredth

506 letter "I" decorated

4 fourscore and twelve. And in the five and
5 thirtieth year of the reign of our sovereign
6 lady Elizabeth, the Queen Majestie, that now
7 is. I, John Burrell of Tonbridge, in the
8 County of Kent, **shoemaker**, being at the time
9 of making hereof very sick of body but⁵⁰⁷ of good
10 mind and remembrance, thanks therefore be
11 given to Almighty god, and willing to⁵⁰⁸ set in
12 order those things which god hath made me
13 Steward over in some good sort, And willing
14 that no contention or strife should be for the
15 same after my decease, Therefore I do ordain
16 and make this my present testament and
17 last will in manner and form following: And **first** and
18 principally I give, commend and bequeath my soul
19 into the hands of Almighty god, my maker, trusting
20 and assuring myself, by a sure faith in the merit
21 of Christ's death and passion that the same shall be

507 changed from "in reasonable good health of body and"

508 "and willing to" replaced "Notwithstanding finding myself subject to divers infirmities and ?? that it may please god suddenly to visit me that I cannot or may not"

22 presented without spot before the throne of his
23 majestie. And my body to the earth to be buried
24 in the churchyard of Tonbridge aforesaid.
25 **Item:** I will there shall be distributed among the
26 poor, that have most need, resorting to my burial
27 6s 8d. **Item:** I give and bequeath to **Katherine**
28 **Burrell, my daughter,** my best featherbed on which
29 I lie⁵⁰⁹ and the same bedstead, one best bolster,
30 one best pillow, one of my best coverings, one⁵¹⁰
31 of my best blankets, two⁵¹¹ pairs of my best
32 sheets and one that was her brother's and one fourth
33 part of all my pewter⁵¹² of all sorts . a brazen
34 mortar and pestle, a brass pot and a brass
35 possnett⁵¹³ all which I will shall be delivered into

509 "on which I lie" added

510 originally two coverings, four blankets changed to two and finally to one

511 originally "seven", then "three"

512 various other changes to this list

513 "and a cauldron" crossed out

36 the hands of my overseers hereafter named
37 presently after my decease. And to be by them
38 kept to the use and behoof of her, the said
39 Katherine and by them to be delivered at
40 her age of one and twenty years or at the day
41 of her marriage which shall first happen.
42 If she decease before the said age or marriage,
43 then I will the same shall be presently delivered to
44 my wife and executor hereafter named to the
45 use of her and my other children. Also I will and
46 give to the said Katherine, my daughter, four⁵¹⁴
47 pounds of lawful money which I have put into the
48 hands of the said my overseers which four pounds
49 I will shall be put out to some good use to the
50 use of the said Katherine. And to be paid
51 and delivered to her with the said profit thereof
52 at her said age or marriage which shall first
53 happen. And if she decease before then, to
54 be paid, immediately after her decease to my

514 originally "ten"

55 said wife to the use of her and my⁵¹⁵ said
56 other children. And if my said wife happen
57 to be deceased then, I will all the said goods
58 and money to be kept by my said overseers and
59 given equally amongst my other children, viz:
60 **John and Henry, my sons**, or the overliuer of them
61 at a convenient age. And I will that my said
62 overseers shall place out my said daughter
63 Katherine, presently after my decease, to some
64 honest place fit for her age and abilities. And
65 I will that she shall be guided and ruled by them,
66 my said overseers.⁵¹⁶ **Item:** I give and bequeath
67 to the said Katherine, my daughter, so much of
68 my new russet as shall make her a sufficient
69 gown and my best hat and that chest which her

515 both here and in line 45 above, "my children" was originally "her children"

516 In the first version, the testator's wishes regarding the residue follow here immediately. In the second version there was a large addition: "**Item:** I give and bequeath to my said sons John and Henry, one cauldron, my second best featherbed, my second best bedstead with the furniture to it belonging and three pairs of my second best sheets and £3 of money to be delivered and paid at their ages of 21 years." with another eight lines of bequests all crossed out.

70 mother⁵¹⁷ gave her and all that which is in it. The
71 residue of all my goods and cattalls, moveable
72 and unmoveable, whatsoever, I wholly, fully and
73 with good effect, intent and purpose, give
74 and bequeath to **Bridonie, my wellbeloved wife,**
75 towards the bringing up of my other children⁵¹⁸
76 And to dispose the same to them at her will
77 and pleasure⁵¹⁹ and the said Bridonie I make and
78 ordain my whole and sole executrix to see

517 it seems that Katherine was John Burrell's daughter by a first wife and she had had a brother who had since died to whom their mother had left a sheet

518 "other children" replaces "said sons and that other? which she now goeth withall"

519 "(if she marry again" was here originally but this looks like a correction made when the will was first written since the following lines were included, in the first version, after "discharged":

"Provided notwithstanding, my will and mind is that, if my said wife happen hereafter to marry again, then the said party who shall marry her, which surety which him shall best . . . enter bond to my said overseers, or one of them, for the payment of . . . so much money as all my goods which she shalbe possessed of by virtue of this my . . . deducted £10 which shall stand charged to pay in debts, shall by an Indenture to be fairly and indifferently priced amount unto, equally between my said sons and *the said other child* at their age and age of 21 years. And if either of them decease before their said age, then the overliver to have the whole sum and if both decease before then to return to my said wife is she be living, if not then to my said daughter Katherine, her executors, administrators and assigns."

The phrase "the said other child" was crossed out presumably when the first set of changes were made, the whole being crossed out in the final version.

79 all my debts paid and funeral discharged⁵²⁰.
80 And I desire my good friends and neighbours,
81 **John Stene and John Brooker** to be supervisors
82 and overseers of this my will desiring them
83 to take pains⁵²¹

- that the said be performed according to the content
- of the same. To whom I give towards their pains
- besides their expenses to
- be borne, 6s 8d a piece. Such expenses as
- shall be laid out about my said daughter, or
- any thing to her belonging to be deducted
- in their account to her and the rest by my
- said wife to be borne. In witness whereof,
- I, the said John Burrell, to this my present
- last will have set my hand and seal yeven⁵²²

520 "d" in the probate copy but not in the original will

521 the following two lines were omitted from the probate copy

522 given

- the day and year first above written

The original will concludes:

in the presence of me, **Nicolas Hooper, writer hereof,**
and others: **John Brooker, John Stene and Thomas Walter** with others

John Stene

Thomas Walter

the mark of John

Burrell

All of this, except for John Burrell's mark, has been crossed out and replaced with the following (the beginnings of the lines are missing)

Recorded and acknowledged by the testator in
such sort as is now stricken out, the said 19 of January
. . . in the presence of **John Stockwood⁵²³, William Johnson**
of me, **Nicolas Hooper, writer hereof.**

523 John Stockwood was the vicar of Tonbridge

The Butlers of East Peckham

Three Butler wills have survived for East Peckham:

	written	proved		
John Butler	12 Mar 1612	Sep 1612	PCC: Fenner 75; Prob 10/294	page b.642
John Butler	15 Aug 1622	Sep 1622	PCC: Savile 81	page b.647
Richard Butler	13 Jun 1637	Oct 1637	CKS: Prs/w/1/222	page b.649

The 1612 will was written by Nicholas Hooper, curate of Shipbourne, who wrote a large number of wills between 1574 and 1618. Only the first and last of the seven pages have been transcribed but these are decorated in the typical Nicholas Hooper manner.

The John Butler who died in 1622 could have been the son of the John who had died ten years earlier. The will of 1622 could have been written by Stephen Arnold; there were Arnolds in the area from at least the 1530s until the end of the period studied (1650) with a will written by Nicholas Hooper for Steven Arnold of East Peckham in 1608 and one for a Steven Arnold of Shipbourne in 1635.

The will of Richard Butler was proved in the Deanery of Shoreham and is very difficult to read so that only part of it has been transcribed.

Nicholas Hooper's
mark

1 In⁵²⁴ the name of god Amen. The twelfth day of March in the
2 year of our lord God, one thousand, six hundredth and eleven, And in the
ninth year
3 of the reign of our Sovereign Lord James, by the grace of God, king of
England, France
4 and Ireland, defender of the faith, etc. And of Scotland the five and
fortieth. I, John
5 Butler, the elder, of **Littlemyll** within the parish of East Peckham in the
county of Kent, **miller**,
6 being⁵²⁵ at the time of making hereof in reasonable good health of body and
of perfect mind and remembrance,

524 decorated "I"

525 "beeing", "bee", "mee", etc. throughout, including "beefore"

7 thanks therefore be given to Almighty God, notwithstanding old and full of
aches and infirmities
8 which do assummon me of my last end, not knowing when it shall please
God to call me out of this
9 miserable world and willing to set in order those small and transitory
possessions which God hath
10 made me steward of here in this world, that no contention fall out about
the same after
11 my decease, Therefore I do ordain and make this my present testament and
last will in
12 manner and form following⁵²⁶. And **First** and principally, I give, commend
and bequeath
13 my soul into the hands of Almighty God, trusting that the same (through
the merits,
14 precious death and blood shedding⁵²⁷ of his dear and only son, Jesus
Christ, my only lord and
15 Saviour) shalbe presented pure and without spot before the Throne of his
majesty. And

526 "folowing"

527 "Bludshedding"

- 16 my body to the earth from whence it came, to be buried in the churchyard
of East Peckham
- 17 aforesaid, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life.
-

last (7th) page:

- fear of God and a brotherly unity during the whole course of their lives.
And lastly I will
- that if ambiguity or doubt arise between my said sons or any of them about
this my will
- or about the plain construction or meaning of this my will or any thing
therein contained, that the same
- shalbe, from time to time, discussed and decided by the said **Thomas
Chapman**, my said Overseer and
- by **Nicholas Hooper, the elder, writer** of this my will as long as either of
them shall live⁵²⁸. **Item:** I give to
- **John Butler, my son**, my flockbed which I lie on, a pair of sheets, my best
coverlet, two blankets and

528 Nicholas Hooper must have been in his sixties in 1612; he died in 1618

- the bolster thereto belonging and a pillow. All which not be shifted by executorship aforesaid. In witness
- whereof I, the said John Butler the elder, to this my last will and testament, containing seven sheets
- of Paper, have set my hand and seal. And I do hereby revoke all former wills by me heretofore
- made and do pronounce and declare this to be my true and last will, yeven the day and year
- first above written

Nicholas Hooper's
mark
with initials

Read, Sealed, pronounced and
declared as the true and last will

the mark of John

of the said John Butler, the elder, the

X

day and year first above written, in

the presence of me, **Nicholas Hooper**, writer hereof

Butler

and of **Thomas Chapman**

John Dennis

William Raynes

the mark of John

Dennis

the mark of William

Raynes

- I, John Butler, of East Peckham in the
- county of Kent, **yeoman**, being at the time of making hereof visited with sick
 - ness but of sound and perfect memory, praised be god, and knowing assuredly that
 - all flesh is subject unto death and mortality so I myself shall change this my life.
 - Therefore, to avoid trouble after death, do make, ordain, publish and declare this my
 - present testament and last will in manner and form following, that is to say: **First**
 - and principally I do most willingly submit, surrender and bequeath my soul unto god,
 - my most merciful creator, trusting in the mercy and passion of Christ Jesus,
 - my saviour, to have remission and pardon of all my sins. And my body to be
 - buried in the churchyard of East Peckham aforesaid. This is the last will and

- testament of me, the said John Butler, first above written. **Item:** I give and bequeath
- the house where I now dwell, commonly called or known by the name of **Youngs,**
- withall the barns, stables, buildings and other edifices thereunto belonging
- with the appertenances, with the orchard, colores(??) and gardens, unto **John Butler,**
- **my brother William's son.** Item: I give and bequeath to the said John Butler, my
- brother William's son, all the residue of my lands, lying and being in the parish of East
- Peckham, aforesaid or elsewhere that I am now owner of. **Item:** I give and bequeath
- all my moveable goods unto **Steven Butler, my brother** whom I make my whole
- executor, to pay all my debts whereto I, the said John Butler, have set to my hand and
- seal to this my last will and testament the day and year first above written. The
- mark of John Butler. Read, sealed and delivered in the presence of
- me, **Stephen Arnall (Arnold??)**

1 In the name of god Amen. I, Richard Butler, **yeoman**, of
2 East Peckham. **First:** I bequeath my soul unto god and my body to
3 be interred by my executor or administrator in the earth. I
4 do institute and appoint **Stephen Butler, my son**, my executor.
5 **First:** I give unto **Mary Butler, my wife**, ? ?
6 ? ? in the lease of **Thomas Wood's** house
7 **blacksmith** ? ?

- ? ? remain a single woman. **Item:** I grant unto my
- said wife full power to take away all such moveable goods as
- were hers before I married her. **Item:** I give unto Stephen
- Butler, my son, all that messuage or hereditament now in the occupa
- tion of Thomas Wood with all the appurtenances ??
- **Item:** I give unto **Elizabeth ??, my daughter**, ?? to be paid unto
- her at the end of 12 months after my decease.

? ?