

TWYFORD OF KIRK LANGLEY AND SPONDON: PROBLEMS IN THE HISTORY OF A MEDIEVAL DERBYSHIRE FAMILY

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The Twyford family was prominent in medieval times in Derbyshire and Warwickshire, where it succeeded to the lands of the Pipard family. However, it became extinct during the mid-16th century and only three connected versions of the pedigree have been traced, one at the College of Arms,¹ a fuller version of the same in the copy of the 1611 Visitation of Derbyshire² at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and a third version in the copy of the 1611 Visitation of Derbyshire at Queen's College, Oxford.³

It appears that there was some connection between the Pipard and Twyford families. All the medieval coats of arms ascribed to these families are variants of two bars and a canton, usually with a cinquefoil on the canton. The Derbyshire Twyfords bore argent two bars sable, on a canton of the second a cinquefoil or.⁴

Lysons⁵ is probably wrong in saying that the Pipards took the name of Twyford, but there may well have been a marriage. Ralph Pipard granted Sir John de Twyford the manor of Stretton Baskerville, Warwickshire, in 1301,⁶ reserving himself a life interest at a rose rent. Spondon, Chaddesden, and Kirk Langley belonged to Robert Fitz Nicholas,⁷ to whom Ralph was heir, and Ralph, Lord Pipard, died seised of property in Spondon and Chaddesden 3 Edward II.⁸

Sir John de Twyford was lord of Stretton Baskerville with the members 1316, of Kirk Langley 1316 (*villa integra*) and 1346 (*di. f. quondam Radulpho Pypard*), and of the tenth part of a fee, once Ralph Pypard's in Spondon 1346. The half fee is apparently the same as that in Thurvaston which John held in 1330.⁹ In 1327, with Margaret his wife, he was granted view of frankpledge in Kirk Langley by the king.¹⁰

Apparently Sir John de Twyford was a retainer of Thomas and Henry, Earls of Lancaster, for he received pardons in 1318 as an adherent of Earl Thomas, in 1321 (on the testimony of Sir Hugh Daudele the son) for anything done against the Despensers, father and son, and in 1325 of 100 marks for the 100 l. 'wherewith he had made fine [in 1322] for his life and lands for having been a rebel and an adherent of rebels'.¹¹ In 1329, with Henry de Twyford and Hugh Daudeleye, he was one of those who came armed to the Parliament of Bedford among the adherents of Earl Henry and David, Earl of Athol, and had to pay 200 l. for a pardon.¹² These activities clearly had some effect on his local position. Having been knight of the shire for Derby in 1314 and 1318, he does not seem to have held office again until he received the commission of the peace (Staffordshire 1331 and Derbyshire 1332). He occurs in commissions of array 1333, of oyer and terminer 1331, 1333 and 1341 and as John de Twyford the elder was appointed justice in eyre for Pickering forest 1334¹³ and a tax commissioner for Derbyshire 1340. He seems to occur last in 1346 (as witness to a deed of Alice, widow of Giles de Astley¹⁴) and 1346/7 (when assessed for land in Warwickshire¹⁵), and is described as knight in a deed of 2 Edward II 1318, 1346, and on all the Twyford pedigrees.

Sir John de Twyford may have been a relation of Master John de Twyford, one of the seven executors of William de Ferrers, Earl of Derby in 1255, and to the Twyfords of Twyford, Leicestershire (who held land there of Hugh de Audele in 1333). He married Margaret and was father of Robert (to whom he gave land in Spondon and Chaddesden

1343¹⁶), Edward, and probably John (vicar of Spondon 1361 and 1383) and Thomas (Knight of the Shire for Derby 1381). Robert and Edward are both shown as his sons on all three pedigrees, while the Queen's College pedigree also makes him father of Michael, Philip, Elizabeth (crossed out and Joanna wife of Henry — (blank) added), Isabella wife of John Chandos, and Elena wife of John Curzon. It is possible that he had a second Robert, vicar of Spondon in 1352.

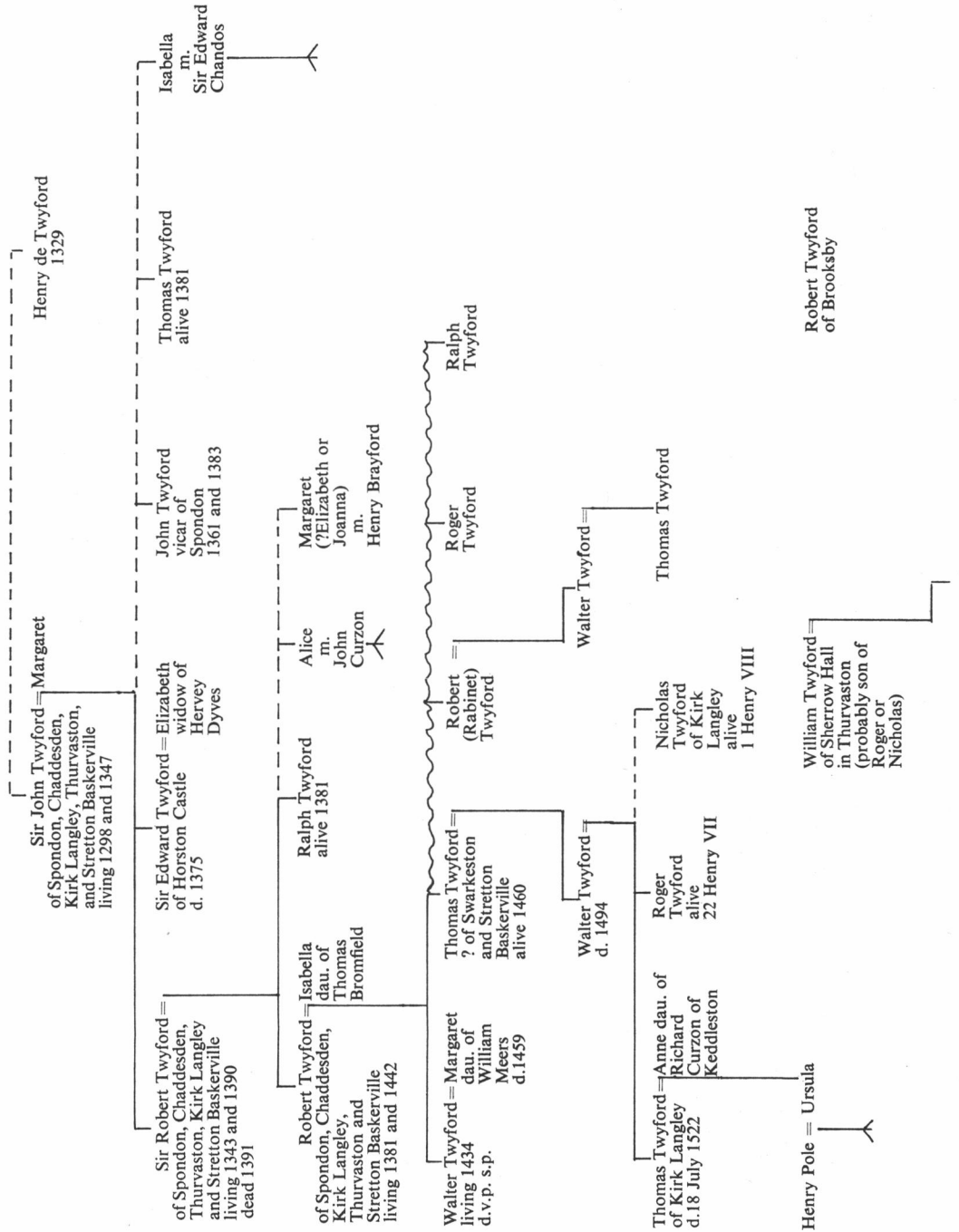
Sir Edward Twyford, second son of Sir John, was with the King in France in 1360. He held the manor and castle of Horston of the King in 1363 and at his death in 1375.¹⁷ He married Elizabeth, widow of Hervey Dyves, but seems to have had no children.

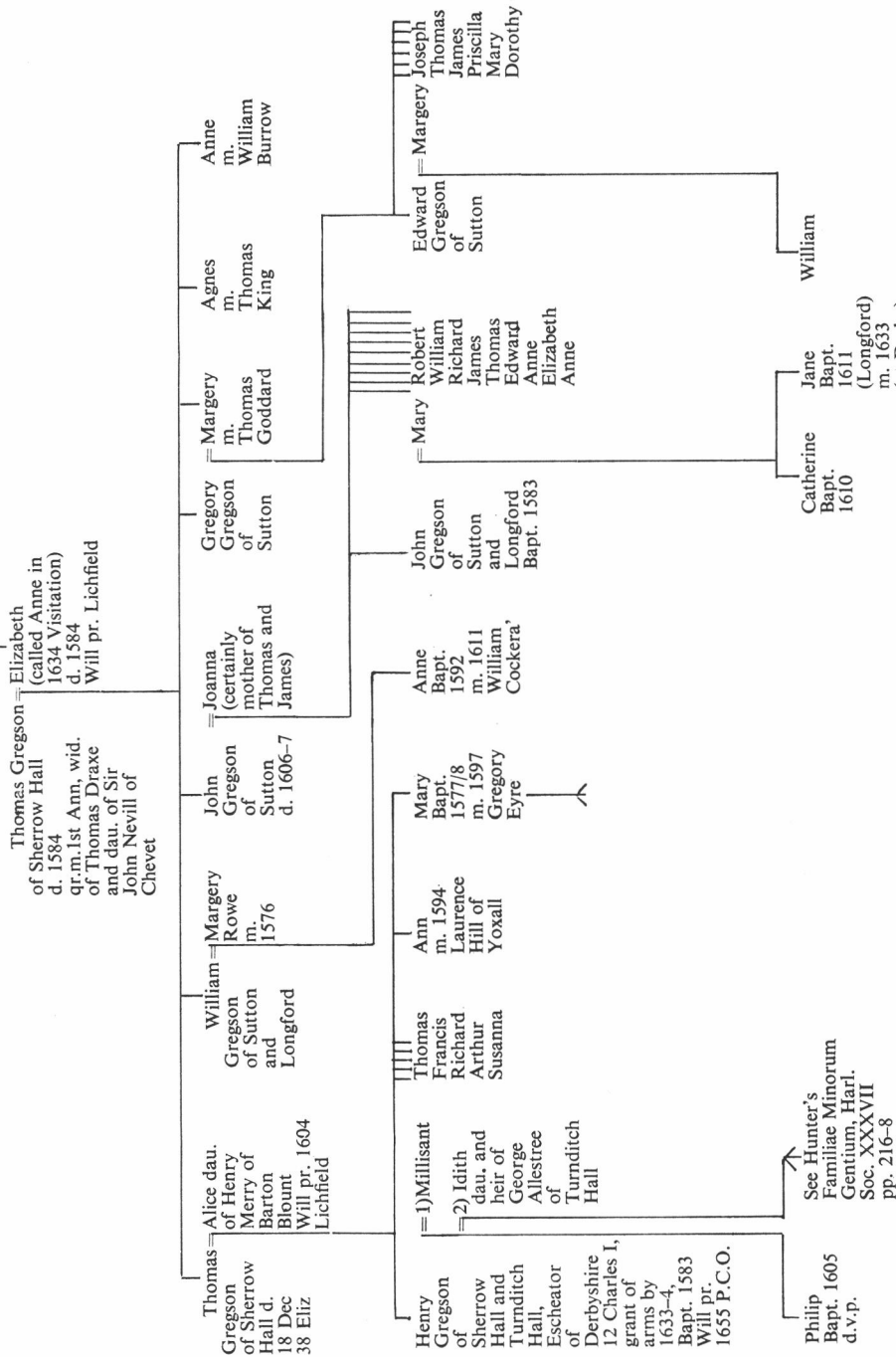
Sir Robert Twyford, eldest son of Sir John, was also in the wars, and one of those whom the Commons petitioned the King to ransom in 1376.¹⁸ He was Knight of the Shire for Derby 1352, 1365, 1368, 1369 and 1377, Sheriff of Nottingham and Derby 1364–66, escheator of Nottingham and Derby 1368–70, and occurs in a commission of oyer and terminer 1354 and as an assessor of taxes 1379. In 1381 he entailed the manor of Stretton Baskerville on his son Robert, with contingent remainder to his other son Ralph.¹⁹ He was alive as late as 1390 but dead 1391,²⁰ apparently after giving land in Spondon to his son Robert.²¹

Besides Robert and Ralph (both shown on the pedigree at the College of Arms), he was, according to the Bodleian copy of the 1611 Visitation, father of Alice, wife of John Curzon (father of John Curzon of Kedleston) Margaret wife of Henry Brayford, and Isabella (described as coheir), wife of Sir Edward Chandos. There is no doubt as to the Curzon and Chandos marriages, but some confusion as to the generations, and much as to the coheirship. The marriages occur on both Curzon and Chandos pedigrees. Isabella clearly married Sir Edward Chandos of Radburne, which makes it likely that she was daughter of Sir John de Twyford, as her son Sir John Chandos K.G., was killed in France in 1369. Elizabeth or Alianore wife of Sir John Lawton was Chandos's sister and coheir, and their only daughter and heir Elizabeth took Radburne to her husband Sir Peter Pole, ancestor of Major J. W. Chandos-Pole, the present owner. Twyford was one of the quarterings of Pole of Radburne in the 1569 Visitation. I am not, however, clear as to which of several John Curzons married Alice (or Elena) Twyford, although Harleian MS. 1537²² shows the arms of Curzon quartering Twyford.

Robert Twyford, eldest son of Sir Robert Twyford, was an Esquire of the Body to Henry IV. He occurs as patron of Kirk Langley in 1391 and lord in 1410 and was escheator for Nottingham and Derby 1407. He occurs holding half a fee in Kirk Langley in 1428 and 1431, when he also held the tenth part of a fee in Spondon. These fees are said to be in Thurvaston and elsewhere in 1401–2.²³ In 1442 he and Thomas Staunton had a grant of £18 a year from the manor of Bolsover, in place of a grant for life to the former by Henry IV.²⁴ According to the Queen's College pedigree, he married Isabella, daughter of Thomas Bromfield and was father of Robert (or Rabinet) and Ralph. According to the pedigree at the College of Arms, however, he was father of Walter (who married Margaret but died without issue in his father's lifetime) and Thomas (who was father of a second Walter, described mysteriously as '*nunc clamans*'). These two versions seem to be reconciled, at least in part, by the Bodleian pedigree which repeats the College of Arms pedigree, adding that Margaret (wife of Walter) was daughter of William Meers, but goes on to show that Robert also had three illegitimate sons, Robert (father of another Walter who had another Thomas), Roger, and Ralph. Cox²⁵ says that Robert de Twyford, Rector of Mugginton in 1399, had a large family by a concubine. Presumably this Robert must at any rate have been son, legitimate or otherwise, of Robert Twyford, Esquire of the Body. An illegitimacy could explain the claim to coheirship on the Chandos and one version of the Curzon pedigrees, except that such claims often occur unjustifiably on early generations of Visitation pedigrees. It could also explain why Walter Twyford the legitimate grandson of Robert was '*nunc clamans*'.

PROBABLE PEDIGREE OF TWYFORD





Gregson additions from register of Sutton-on-the-Hill

Ralph Twyford of Kirk Langley, gentleman, either son or brother of Robert, Esquire of the Body, held a quarter of a fee in Thurstaston in 1431,²⁶ while Thomas Twyford of Swarkeston, apparently son of Robert, received a pardon in 1460.²⁷ Writs of *diem clausit extremum* were issued to the Escheator of Derby in 1459²⁸ on the death of Margaret, late wife of Walter Twyford, and to the Escheators of Warwick and Derby 1494²⁹ on the death of Walter Twyford, esquire. This Walter, presumably a grandson of Robert, occurs as Patron of Kirk Langley in 1474. In 1488 Thomas Twyford sold the manor of Stretton Baskerville to Henry Smyth, the transfer being confirmed to Henry's son Walter by Robert Twyford of Brooksby, Leicestershire, in 1525.³⁰

Clearly at this time the pedigree has become rather muddled. According to the Queen's College pedigree Robert or Rabinet Twyford (son of Robert, Esquire of the Body) was father of Thomas, Walter, and Roger, of whom Thomas died 11 Edward IV, and was father of Walter (died 9 Henry VII) who was in turn father of Thomas Twyford who married Anna, daughter of Richard Curzon. All one can say is that Robert, Esquire of the Body, seems to have been succeeded, at least in the bulk of the Derbyshire properties, probably by Thomas and then by Walter and finally another Thomas.

This last Thomas Twyford with Roger his brother conveyed lands in Spondon and Chaddesden to John Curzon 22 Henry VII.³¹ He occurs as patron of Kirk Langley 1496, 1508 and 1518, and apparently served in France in 1513 as a captain, with Roger Rolleston as his petty captain, and 94 men.³² He had a brother Roger (alive 22 Henry VII) and probably another brother was Nicholas Twyford of Langley and London, gent, who received a pardon 1 Henry VIII.³³ I am not certain whether Thomas was the same as Thomas Twyford who sold Stretton Baskerville, but certainly Thomas of Kirk Langley could have married the daughter of Richard Curzon of Kedleston. According to Cox³⁴ Bassano, who wrote in 1710, records in the Twyford quire at Kirk Langley the effigy of a man in armour and his wife, and at her feet a girl child with an inscription for Thomas Twyford, armiger, who died 18th July 1522 and Anna his wife. But he records the arms of Twyford as *quartering* on a bend, three martlets (Curzon, although he mistook popinjays for martlets). However, the arms of Twyford also occurred in the church *impaling* Curzon over the door through the screen into the Twyford quire.

This last Thomas Twyford left an only daughter and heir, Ursula, who married Henry Pole, second son of Henry Pole of Heage, and one of a junior branch of the Poles of Radburne. On the tomb of their son another Henry Pole, Cox records this shield: Quarterly, first and fourth Pole quartering Chandos, second Twyford quartering what 'seem to be' Shakerly and Lytton, and third Dethick.

However, a younger branch of the Twyfords of Kirk Langley remained about a generation longer at Thurstaston nearby (in the parish of Sutton-on-the-hill) which it will be remembered Sir John de Twyford had owned, for the 1634 Visitation of Derbyshire at the College of Arms³⁵ records that Thomas Gregson married Anne, daughter and sole heir of William Twyford of Sherrowhall (or Sharow Hall, in Thurstaston).

Even here some confusion exists. The Visitation of Derbyshire 1662-4 shows Thomas Gregson as marrying Ann, daughter of Sir John Nevill of Chevet, Yorkshire. The Visitation of the North 1563 shows Ann Nevill as marrying Thomas Draxe of Woodhall³⁶ and secondly Thomas Gregson. Her second husband is given as Thomas Grexon of Elstone in Lancashire in the Bodleian copy of this Visitation,³⁷ while Hunter³⁸ derives the Gregsons of Sherrow Hall from this part of Lancashire. Lysons, however, says the Gregsons acquired Sherrow Hall by marriage with the Twyford heiress who was perhaps Thomas Gregson's *second* wife. Curiously, his widow's name was Elizabeth.³⁹ She was buried at Sutton on 24th July 1584 and he on 23rd April preceding, and certainly her son Thomas and grandson Henry both succeeded to Sherrow Hall. Henry Gregson had a son Philip, baptised in 1605, by his first wife Millisant, but shortly after remarried Idith, daughter and heir of George Allestree of Turnditch Hall, to which he moved

from Sherrow Hall about this time, and only his second wife's children seem to have survived him. When the last of the Twyford lands passed from their descendants is uncertain.⁴⁰

I would like to thank for their help Major J. W. Chandos-Pole of Radburne Hall (for kindly going through the catalogue of his archives for references to Twyford and Gregson, but to no avail) and A. Colin Cole, Esq., Windsor Herald. It has not been possible to trace any relevant Twyford wills, nor any court rolls for Sutton or Thurvaston. The Appletree hundred court rolls among the Duchy of Lancaster records at the Public Record Office contain only records of hundred courts.

REFERENCES

- ¹College of Arms MS. C.4.7b.
- ²Bodleian Library MS., Clarendon Dep. C.420.
- ³Queen's College, Oxford, MS. XCI. The Twyford pedigree is given with that of Curzon.
- ⁴See the two copies of the 1611 Visitation referred to, the Bodleian copy of the Visitation of Derbyshire 1569 (MS. Top. Derbyshire b.1) and Bodleian MS. Rylands e.6.
- ⁵Rev. Daniel and Samuel Lysons: *Magna Britannia* v, p. cx (1817).
- ⁶*Victoria County History of Warwickshire* (V.C.H. Warwickshire), vi, 240-1.
- ⁷*Calendar of Inquisitions post mortem*, ii, no. 20, Tuesday after Epiphany 1273.
- ⁸*Calendar of Inquisitions post mortem*, v, no. 191, 18 Nov. 3 Edward II.
- ⁹*Feudal Aids*, i, 255, 257-8 (Derbyshire 1316 and 1346); v, 176 (Warwickshire 1316); and vi, 562 (Duchy of Lancaster in Derbyshire 1330).
- ¹⁰*Calendar of Charter Rolls*, iv, 422, 8th May 1327.
- ¹¹*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward II*, iii (1317-21), 230; iv (1321-4), 18; and v (1324-7), 109.
- ¹²*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward III (1330-1334)*, 33, 15th December 1330; and *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* ii, no. 1111 (p. 275), 3rd February, 3 Edward III.
- ¹³*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward III (1334-8)*, 1.
- ¹⁴*Calendar of Ancient Deeds* v, A 12138.
- ¹⁵*Calendar of Fine Rolls*, vi, 17, 10th February 1346/7.
- ¹⁶College of Arms MS. C.4.7b.
- ¹⁷*Calendar of Inquisitions post mortem*, xiv, no. 210, Monday after the feast of St. Silvester, 1375.
- ¹⁸*Rotuli Parliamentorum*, ii, 343a.
- ¹⁹*V.C.H. Warwickshire*, vi, 240-1.
- ²⁰When his son was patron of Kirk Langley.
- ²¹College of Arms MS. C.4.7b and Bodleian MS. Clarendon Dep. C.420.
- ²²At f. 27.
- ²³*Feudal Aids*, i, 262, 303 (for 1428 and 1431); and vi, 592 (for 1401-2).
- ²⁴*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry VI*, iv (1441-6), 63, 3rd April 1442.
- ²⁵*Feudal Aids*, i, 298.
- ²⁶J. C. Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire* (Cox), iii, 215.
- ²⁷*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry VI*, vi (1452-61), 619, 9th October 1460.
- ²⁸*Calendar of Fine Rolls*, xix, 213, 3rd May 1459. Her husband and father-in-law were among those from whom the oath was to be taken 1st May 1434 (*Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry VI*, ii (1429-1436), 412).
- ²⁹*Calendar of Fine Rolls*, xxii, no. 501, 26th October 1494.
- ³⁰*V.C.H. Warwickshire*, vi, 240-1.
- ³¹Queen's College, Oxford, MS. XCI.
- ³²*Calendar of Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII* (C.L.P.) i (pt. 2), no. 2392 (at p. 1063), 16th June 1513.
- ³³*C.L.P.*, i (pt. 1), no. 438(1), m. 24 (at p. 215), 19th June 1 Henry VIII.
- ³⁴Cox, iv, 268-9, 273-5.
- ³⁵Bodleian Library MS. Rylands c. 33.
- ³⁶His will dated 1553, when he had 12 children, and proved at York 1556/7.
- ³⁷Bodleian Library MS. Rylands c. 22.
- ³⁸*Familiae Minorum Gentium* (Harleian Society, xxxvii, 215).
- ³⁹The will of Elizabeth Gregson of Over Thurvaston, Sutton in the Field, widow, proved 1584 at Lichfield, refers to her late husband Thomas Gregson, her sons Thomas, William, John and Gregory, and her daughters Margery Goddard, Agnes Kinge, and Anne Burrow.
- ⁴⁰The Gregsons can be traced in the Sutton register until 1613, somewhat expanding Hunter's pedigree. Alice, not Ann, Merry was wife of the second Thomas Gregson. (Her will pr. Lichfield 1604). John, third son of Thomas and Elizabeth, was buried 1606-7, and merited an inquisition post mortem. His son John (bapt. 1583) had daughters Catherine and Jane, baptised 1610 and 1611 respectively (the latter at Longford), of whom Jane married William Hayne of Kirk Ireton at St. Alkmund's, Derby, in 1633.