

SCUDAMORE DESCENDANTS OF CERTAIN YOUNGER SONS THAT CAME OUT OF UPTON SCUDAMORE, WILTSHIRE

by Warren Skidmore

Preface

The Skidmores of both Somerset and Derbyshire were settled in the area surrounding the village of Wellow in Somerset from the late 15th century. A large number of descendants from around the world come from these ancestors. This family is well documented in Warren Skidmore's "Thirty Generations". However, where this family came from, as with the large Westerleigh, Gloucestershire branch, is unknown.

Though Skidmore/Scudamore had been a local name in Upon Scudamore up to the 14th century, that branch of the family appeared to end and a cadet branch blossomed in Herefordshire. The family then reappeared in Somerset with a single mention of John Skydemor in 1441 in Dunkerton (next to Wellow) amerced in a view of frankpledge. The line that has been documented as continuous began with Robert Skydmor who is first noticed as a juror in a view of frankpledge in Wellow Hundred in 1486. Of course, this was a time before parish records were required. Unless a person is mentioned in a legal document that has survived they will not have been recorded, and it is likely that there are many people, and indeed generations, of which we do not know.

Nevertheless, it does seem that the Wellow Skidmores migrated from elsewhere. The most likely place, given the size of the family there, would be Herefordshire. However, a possibility existed that they may have come from Devon. Skidmores were certainly prominent there, being farmers, clergy and lords of a manor. The family, though, disappears from the Devon records at around the time the Skidmores made their appearance in Wellow.

Warren Skidmore had a particular interest in the medieval Skidmores and the history of the time. I suggested to him that the possibility of a migration from Devon should be investigated. He began the search enthusiastically and we began an almost daily correspondence for several years. In the absence of other evidence, Warren had found it useful to investigate the lords of the manor and which lands they held, as tenants are thought to move between these lands. The following paper was the result, with Warren's meticulous research, which gives a fascinating history of the lords who held land both in Devon and around Wellow in Somerset and Westerleigh in Gloucestershire. As well as being interesting for Skidmore genealogists it brings together a great deal of medieval evidence for other historians.

Though, there is great deal of circumstantial evidence the Wellow Skidmores, and perhaps the Westerleigh Skidmores, may have come from Devon, Warren concluded that the "smoking gun", as he put it, has not yet been found. So, this paper gives a basis for further work.

As Warren noted at the beginning of the paper, this was to be his last work. This was the case, as he passed away only a few weeks after he completed it, at the age of 87. I miss greatly our conversations. However, his work on the Skidmore family is immense and invaluable. This final work of his stands as a tribute to his energy, his dedication, his thoroughness and his genealogical and historical research abilities.

Dr David Skidmore, August 2016

INTRODUCTION

This paper starts with a personal note. My interest in genealogy started at the age of 10 or 12 when my grandfather (1865-1939) told me what his grandfather (1802-1875) told him about the early history of the family. I was born in 1926 and have told much of this to my two grandsons. It has since been printed in an expanded account in my book *Thomas Skidmore (Scudamore) 1605-1684*, a book that consumed much of my discretionary time for several years.

Now at the age of 87 it is time for me to hang up my computer with OP no. 46. I have attempted here to give a record of some of the men named Scudamore or Skydmore who came out of younger sons born at Upton Scudamore in Wiltshire. It is also intended to supplement my book *The Scudamores of Upton Scudamore* (2nd edition, 1989) which deals with the senior branch of the *Scudemers* from the time of William the Conqueror down to the death of Sir Peter (IV) Scudamore.¹ He died in 1382 leaving a daughter but no male heir. However there were already a great many men, younger sons, then living with some variation of the surname who came out of Upton Scudamore. Some small part of them are remembered here with their families in the **Sections** next below.

This short list could be extended down to the present time by the posterity that came out of younger sons down through the centuries. Ideally it would be grand if we could start with the Poll Tax taken of all of England in 1377. It recorded the names of both men and women beginning at the age of 14-years. It included as well at most places their servants and dependents, with their occupations and even relationships. No other record ever approached this genealogical detail until it was dictated by political necessities of the censuses taken in the 19th century.

The House of Commons at the beginning of Richard II's reign forced heavy taxation to fund military expeditions to France that eventually achieved nothing. The imposition of these three *poll* taxes greatly extended the range of the citizenry who were forced to pay. There was an enormous non-compliance with the tax that helped produce the "Peasants Revolt" in 1381.

Small portions of the poll taxes do survive and have been printed in three heavy volumes, but the greater portion have been lost by the actions largely of the citizens who attacked the local taxors and saw their records destroyed. There were, for example, Skydemores at Bratton Clovelly in Lifton Hundred in Devon, but all that survives for that hundred is the names of the local men who collected the tax there in 1377, with the number of persons taxed and then the final sum extracted from them. The list of residents at that place has been lost, there and elsewhere in much of England as well.

¹This book will be cited briefly hereafter as *Upton Scudamore* (2nd ed.).

SECTIONS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Section One. Chettiscombe, Devon..... | 4 |
| Exeter, Devon. | |
| Shirwell, Devon. | |
| Sheepstor, Devon. | |
| Section Two. Great Somerford, Wiltshire..... | 12 |
| London. | |
| Section Three. Tytherton Lucas, Wiltshire | 16 |
| Compton Chamberlayne, Wiltshire. | |
| Section Four. Bratton Clovelly, Devon | 21 |
| Section Five. Dunkerton, in Wellow Hundred, Somerset | 29 |
| Chewton Mendip, Somerset. | |
| Eyam, Derbyshire. | |
| Section Six. Frampton Cotterell and Westerleigh, Gloucestershire | 46 |
| Section Seven. Waddeston, Buckinghamshire | 66 |
| Oxford. | |
| Appendices. | |
| Great Somerford..... | 69 |
| Tytherton Lucas | 71 |
| Bratton Clovelly. | 74 |
| Dunkerton in Wellow Hundred. | 78 |
| Waddeston. | 84 |
| <i>Other unidentified Skidemores born before elsewhere before 1604.....</i> | <i>85</i> |

SECTION ONE

The Skydemores of Chettiscombe, Devon

The Scudamores, lords of Upton Scudamore in Wiltshire, owed their early allegiance in Devon to the patronage of the Courtenay family (Earls of Devon) in Devon and Somerset. First to Sir Hugh de Courtenay (1250-1292) of Okehampton, who married Eleanor le Despenser, and then to their son of the same name (*ca.*1276-1349). The title of Earl of Devon (of the Courtenay creation) was revived for him in 1335. He was destined to become a great soldier in the Hundred Years War in service to Edward III, and was one of an elite group of knights selected to protect the King's body. He was by the personal invitation of the King himself made the twelfth founding knight of the Order of the Garter in 1348 at Windsor Castle. After a distinguished career he was buried the following year in Exeter Cathedral. The Skydemores in Devon, some in reduced circumstances, continued to enjoy the patronage of the Courtenays for several generations.

Sir Walter (I) de Skydemore (died 1318) of Upton Skydemore, was the son and heir of Sir Peter (II) Skydemore (died 1293), lord of Upton Scudamore.² This Sir Walter *de Kydemor* (bearing arms *Gu. 3 stirrups Ar.*) and Sir Philip *de Courteney* were together in 1309 at a great tournament held at Dunstable in Bedfordshire. Their names are together on a roll of their heraldic arms which suggests that they came to the field as companions in the same retinue.³ These tournaments were a chance for the young nobility and gentlemen to both display, and improve, their skills. It was also a great social event. It attracted an audience that survived to celebrate her "accession day" in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

On 8 March 1315 (in the eighth year of the reign of Edward II) Sir Walter is said to have held Chettiscombe and West Chevithorne, near Tiverton, of the King.⁴ This was a clerical error however, as the name of the tenant-in-chief of the King was Sir Hugh de Courtenay. In the following year Courtenay's inquest post mortem correctly reported that at "*Chettescoube. Two parts of 1 knight's fee held by Walter Skydemor which the said heirs ought to hold of the said Hugh and of the said honour,*" that is, that it was really held in chief by Hugh de Courtenay of his Honour of Plympton. Later it was worth £10 by the year on 18 October 1315 when Edward II gave it (and certain other lands) to his young half-brother Edmund Plantagenet of Woodstock, the Earl of Kent (1301-1330).⁵

Sir Walter died in the summer of 1318. He was living on the octave of St. John the Baptist (1 July) when he made an important purchase of land. For £100 he bought from

²For full lives of Sir Walter and his father see my *Upton Scudamore* (2nd ed.), pages 35-9. A Simon has also been suggested as the father in earlier work but there is not sufficient evidence for this conclusion.

³Sir Philip Courtenay of Ilminster, Devon (who bore arms *Or, 3 Torteeaux Ar.*), was the brother of Hugh, the second Earl of Devon. See the "Roll of Arms, Tournament at Stepney 2 Edward II," in *Collectanea topographica et genealogica*, vol. 4 (London, 1837) where the editor C. E. Long assigned them the numbers 196 and 197 on the list. See also the article by A. Tomlinson "Retinues at the Tournament at Dunstable, 1309" *The English Historical Review*, vol. 24 (Jan. 1959), 70-89.

⁴William Harding, *History of Tiverton in the County of Devon*, (Book III, 1847).

⁵Chettiscombe, about two miles northeast of Tiverton, Devon, had been held earlier by Sir Hugh Courtenay who sold it to Sir Thomas de Pine, who had in turn then sold it to King Edward I.

Nicholas Malemayns two messuages, 108 acres of land, six acres of meadow, and pasturage for eight oxen, two bulls, eight cattle, 25 pigs, and 200 sheep, as well as 13s 4d in rent at Warminster and Bishopstrow.⁶ Several additions were made by his son and grandson to their lands there and by 1372 the estate was known later as the manor of Warminster Scudamore. Sir Walter died shortly before 11 September 1318 doubtless at his home at Upton Scudamore.

His death was not noticed immediately by the clerks at Westminster for on 8 June 1319 a writ was addressed to Sir Walter Scudamore commanding him to cause all estreats of the rolls of himself and his associates, as former justices of assizes, of oyer and terminer, and of gaol delivery, to be delivered to the Exchequer.⁷

Sir Walter left a last will and testament which unfortunately is lost to us. In 13 Edward II (1319/20) his son and executor John de Scudemore, *clerk*, was cited by the King's court for detaining 40 marks due from his father's estate to John de Craule. It appears that his brother-in-law John Beaumont paid the debt to Craule but he had not been repaid for this by John Scudamore. On 17 August 1329 John de *Bello Monte* [Beaumont] put in his place Richard de la Hays, another clerk, to prosecute of a recognisance for £40 made to him in chancery by John de Escudemour. Beaufort's claim went unpaid and 18 April 1331 he renewed it naming John de Anlaghly, clerk, and Henry Bony to prosecute the execution of the same recognisance for £40 "made to him in chancery by John *de Escudemor*."⁸

Nothing is known of Margery, the wife of Sir Walter (I) Scudamore, beyond her name. She was mentioned only once in a suit about a tenement at Clewer, Berkshire that was brought at Easter term of 1348 by a grandson after her death.⁹

Children:

- i. Sir Peter (III), his heir, who died in 1342 as lord of Upton Scudamore.¹⁰
- ii. Sir John, a clerk, the Prebend of Hayes, in Exeter, Devon, of whom further.
- iii. Walter, of Great Somerford, Wiltshire, noticed later.
- iv. Ralph (perhaps). A Ralph Skydemor is found in 1332 at an unknown tithing in Tavistock Hundred when he paid a tax of 12d in a lay subsidy taken there.¹¹ Nothing more is known for certain about him, but he was the probable ancestor to the families at Sheepstor and Bratton Clovelly, Devonshire noticed hereafter.
- v. Alice, who married Sir John Beaumont (1270?-1330) of Shirwell, Devon noticed below.
- v. Eleanor, who was the first wife of Sir Henry Percy of Great Chalfield, Wiltshire.¹² The Percys had one daughter, Beatrice, a minor in 1359, who married firstly John Belet, but left issue only by her third husband Robert

⁶*Cal. of Ancient Deeds*, v, 506 (no. 13410). As Sir Walter died soon after, it was done again by Peter, his son and heir, on the morrow of St. Martin's, 12 Edward II. See also *Upton Scudamore*, 2nd ed., Appendix I, no. 27.

⁷*Parl. Writs*, (1830). There were similar writs to 157 other men trying to collect old debts owed to the Crown. Still another writ went out to him under the date of 5 June 1320 on the same subject.

⁸*Close Roll*, 1330-3, 302.

⁹PRO, CP 40/354 mem. 288d.

¹⁰For an account of Sir Peter (III), see *Upton Scudamore*, 2nd ed., 50-54.

¹¹It is at the Public Record Office, but has never been printed.

¹²*Bristol & Glouc. Arch. Soc.*, xxiii, 206.

- vi. Beverly. The Beverlys pressed a claim in 1431 for the possession of Great Chalfield against the posterity of Sir Henry Percy's second wife, Constance.¹³ Maud, who married about 1314 Sir Edmund de Plescy (1286-1327) of Barnsley, Gloucestershire. On 16 June 1327 Walter de Skydemor, her presumptive nephew, with both Robert Sawoury of Wiltshire, and William Ayet of Hertfordshire, as her mainpernors in chancery for Maud. She was now a widow who had a licence from the new King to marry whom she wanted.¹⁴ Her son Nicholas de Plescy was born about 1317 now became a ward of the Crown and is noticed later. Maud Plescy also petitioned the King to restore her dower in the manor of Barnsley, Gloucestershire, which her late husband had granted in 1322 (some eight years after their marriage) to Hugh Despenser, the elder.¹⁵

Exeter, Devon

Sir John de Skydemor (or *Skodemor*), a clerk, was the eldest son and executor of Sir Walter (I) of Upton Scudamore and Chettiscombe. He was instituted as the Prebend of Hayes in the Castle of Exeter on 5 March 1312/13 with Lady Alianora de Courtenay as his Patron.¹⁶

Lady Alianora was the daughter of Sir Hugh Le Despenser of Ryhall, Rutland (the Justiciar of England), and his wife Aline, the daughter and sole heir of Phillip Bassett, lord of Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Alianora married Sir Hugh (I) de Courtenay of Okehampton, Devon who died on 28 February 1292. He left his widow Alianora (who lived on until 1328) in control of a part of his estate until their son Hugh (II) de Courtenay (1276?-1340) became of full age.¹⁷ The young Hugh, noticed earlier, later was made the first Earl of Devon (again of the Courtenay creation) in 1335.¹⁸

It is possible that John Skydemor's office had the favour of presentation by Lady Alianora because her daughter Aveline Courtenay had married Sir John Giffard (*ca.*1287-1322) about a year earlier in 1311. Giffard was hanged at Gloucester for treason in 1322, and later two of her Skydmore cousins from Upton Scudamore (who had been Giffard adherents in his rebellion) and had narrowly escaped that fate themselves.¹⁹

Prebendaries were important as they looked after the income which came from the manors belonging to the Cathedral. The collegiate chapel of the Holy Trinity at Hayes was founded by King Stephen. It was sometimes known as the free chapel of *Heis* one of the four prebendaries.²⁰ It is not known how well John initially undertook his role as the *Magna*

¹³VCH, *Wilts.*, VII, 60.

¹⁴*Patent Roll*, 1327-30, 126; *Fine Roll*, 1327-37, 49.

¹⁵*Glos. inq. p. m.*, (Index Library) V, 203, 236. Edmund de Plescy was a son of John de Plescy. His son Nicholas was 14 and more when the inquest was taken on 18 February 1331 at Cirencester.

¹⁶*The Register of Walter de Stapeldon, Bishop of Exeter AD 1307-1326*, G. Bell and Sons, 1892. There is some confusion in the register as Walter de Wereminster is also listed as instituted on 6 April 1313. This is likely to have been wrongly transcribed and should have been April 1312 with John de Skydemor succeeding Warminster.

¹⁷It appears she had some rights of patronage after that as well.

¹⁸Cokayne, G. E. (editor), *Complete Peerage*, revised edition, (London, 1910-59).

¹⁹*Patent Roll*, 1321-4, 57. On 20 August 1321 Peter and Walter Skydemore had pardons of all their felonies as followers of Sir John Giffard. See also *Upton Scudamore*, 2nd ed., 50-1.

²⁰*Magna Britannia*, VI (Devonshire), 1822.

Britannia records that “It was reported to Bishop Stapeldon at his visitation in 1321, that the chapel was ruinous, in part roofless, and that it could not be used for divine service. It is probable that in consequence of this report that Skedimore saw it promptly repaired.”

On 16 May 1328 John de Stonford acknowledges that he owed 100s to John de Escudemore to be levied in default of payment on his lands and chattels in Devon.²¹

In 1339 the register of Bishop Grandison notes that John, the Prebend of Hayes in the castle of Exeter, also had the custody of the parish church at Okehampton which was the principal seat of Courtenay family.

Sir John Skidemor seems to have had an exceedingly long life at Exeter and must have survived until at least the age of 80. At his death Thomas de Courtenay, clerk, the Prebendary of Cutton, was named to succeed him at Hayes on 13 November 1369. His father, Sir Hugh (III) de Courtenay (1303-1377), the second Earl of Devon, was his patron which suggests the importance and income that Skidemore enjoyed during his time at Okehampton.²²

It is interesting to see that John de Skydemore, the Prebend, had John Grandison (who had been made the Bishop of Exeter by the patronage of the Earl of Devon) as his superior after 1327, and that the bishop was after 1335 also the lord of Ewyas Harold in Herefordshire. In 1368 Peter Eskydemore, the lord of Upton Scudamore (which belonged to that honour) paid the 25s in rent that he owed for Upton Scudamore to John *de Gruanson*, the Bishop of Exeter.²³

Shirwell, Devon

Alice, a daughter of Sir Walter (I) Scudamore and his wife Margery, married Sir John Beaumont (1270?-1330), lord of what is now Youlston Park, then a hamlet near Barnstaple. He was the son of Sir Phillip Beaumont (died 1272) and Ermengardal Punchardon.²⁴ It may be taken as certain that Alice came out of Upton Scudamore for the inquest *post mortem* of Sir Peter de Escudamor in 1293 confuses her with Alice Bavant. Some part of the 24 jurors then said collectively, but in error, that “*Alice de Beaumont, daughter of the said Peter, is his next heir, and is of full age.*” Peter’s next heir was in fact his daughter *Alice de Bavant*, and Alice Beaumont was his sister and not his heir.²⁵

It is not known how Alice was introduced to the Beaumonts, but it may have been by the Courtenays since her intended husband had earlier held land that had belonged to Hugh de Courtenay.

Her husband John Beaumont was a Member of Parliament for Devon in 1325.²⁶ He purchased the wardship of Nicholas de Plescy, his wife’s nephew, in 1328 from another Devonshire knight, Sir John de Sully, who had it by a grant from the Crown. The John de

²¹*Close Roll*, 1327-30, 388. Elsewhere in the same roll (page 567) it is noticed that Stonford was a witness for Beaumont. He was the same John Stonford was also an attorney for the Skidmorers at Great Somerford, Wiltshire in 1330 which effectively ties these two branches together.

²²*The register of John de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter AD 1327-1369*, II.

²³*The Hungerford Cartulary, a calendar of the Earl of Radnor’s cartulary of the Hungerford family*, edited by J. L. Kirby (Wiltshire Record Society, Trowbridge, 1994), no. 389. This work will be cited frequently hereafter as the *Hungerford Cartulary*.

²⁴Edward T. Beaumont (*The Beaumonts in History AD 850-1850*, (Oxford, 1929), 61. Also see Sir William Pole, *Collections towards a Description of the County of Devon*, (London, 1791).

²⁵*Wilts. Inq. p. m.*, 1242-1327, 194.

²⁶*Report and Transaction of the Devonshire Association*, vol. 44, 380.

Eskidemour, who testified to this purchase, was early the Prebend of Hayes. He was previously indebted to Plescy's estate for £40, a debt that his brother-in-law seems to have assumed, and on 17 August 1329 John de *Bello Monte* [Beaumont] puts in his place Richard de la Hays, clerk, to prosecute of a recognisance for £40 that had been made to him in chancery by John de Escudemour.

Sir John died in 1330. His widow Alice was owed £300 by John de Chudleigh, a sum that was due at Easter term in 1338. When he failed to pay it she promptly obtained a sheriff's order of imprisonment against him.²⁷

None of Alice Beaumont's children seem to have produced offspring. Her daughter Joan married James Chudleigh and died childless devising her estates elsewhere.²⁸ Richard Beaumont, a cousin of Alice's husband, became the ancestor of a Sir Thomas Beaumont (1401-1450) of this Devonshire family but who had been born on 21 September 1401 at Yate, Gloucestershire. He also became the eventual heir and lord of Frampton Cotterell in Gloucestershire, (next to Mayhill in Westerleigh) two manors which he inherited from his mother Isabel Willmington, wife of William Beaumont. Sir Thomas, the son, married firstly Phillipa, a daughter of Sir John Dynham, and he will be noticed later at both Westerleigh and Dunkerton in Somerset. Sir Thomas Beaumont maintained an estate back at Shirwell in Barnstaple, Devon where he died on 17 November 1450. He had spent Christmas in 1449 at London.²⁹

Youlston Park in Shirwell passed in the time of Henry VII from Margaret Beaumont, a granddaughter and eventually one of the heirs of Sir Thomas, to her husband Sir John Chichester. Their splendid house in the park there is now a popular summer resort.

Sheepstor, Devon

Sheepstor today is a small village on the western side of Dartmoor in Roborough Hundred, seven miles southeast of the early market town of Tavistock. Ralph Skydemor, who was taxed 12d at Tavistock, Devon in a lay subsidy assessed in 1332. He was one of the more prosperous residents there and proximity suggests that he was ancestor to the Skydemores found soon after at Sheepstor.

Sheepstor had been held much earlier by the Combe family. Herbertus de Combe held lands at *Shytelescomb* "accounted as in Tavistock" from Guy (*Wido*) de Breteville of Tavistock.³⁰ In 27 Henry III (1242/3) Herbert de Combe held Sheepstor as half a knight's fee of the Honour of Plympton.³¹ Sir William Pole, the distinguished historian of Devon, notes that the lord of *Shcitestor* in 24 Edward I (1295/6) was John Herbert "of Combe." A fairly satisfactory account of the Skidemores fee can be derived from the few deeds that survive for

²⁷*Close Rolls*, 1337-1339, 268. This may have been due as a settlement at the marriage of her daughter Joan.

²⁸*Report of Devon Assoc.*, vol. 75, 280.

²⁹*Ibid.*, vol. 34, 723, and vol. 50, 435. Sir Hugh de Courtenay (died 1426) married Maud, another daughter of William and Isabel (Wilmington) Beaumont, as his third wife.

³⁰Thomas Westcote, *A view of Devonshire in MDCXXX with a pedigree of most of its gentry*, (Exeter, 1845).

³¹The Honour of Plympton was then held by Baldwin (III) Reviars (died 1245) whose eventual heir was Hugh (III) de Courtenay (died 1340), Earl of Devon and lord of Okehampton, Devon.

them there, and the ancestry of the Elford's whose pedigree was set down by the heralds in 1620.

The first three generations at Sheepstor may have left other sons, but only the elder son and heir for the first three generations is presently known.

FIRST GENERATION

1. JOHN DE SCUDAMORE, was the first of his name at Sheepstor. In 19 Edward III (1345/6) he held half a knight's fee there from the Courtenay's Honour of Plympton "which John Herbert formerly held." It can be taken that when John Scudamore married an unnamed daughter and heiress of John Herbert he was early of sufficient stature himself to have married into what was then an old landed family. He was certainly known to Herbert as a tenant of the Courtenays of Okehampton, and the date of this deed suggests that he might very well have been a nephew and namesake of John Skydemore, the Prebend of Hayes.

The fees of the Courtenay Honour of Plympton were responsible for maintaining the castle of Plympton where it is said that they "enjoyed great privileges and had lands extended over several estates in different parishes, and which was formerly bound to keep in repair a turret of Plympton Castle."

SECOND GENERATION

2. WILLIAM SKYDEMORE held Sheepstor on 5 March 1377 according to the inquest *post mortem* taken after the death of Hugh (II) de Courtenay (1303-1377), the second Earl of Devon. This William died before 1390 and was succeeded by his son now styled John Scudamore, the lord of Sheepstor.

THIRD GENERATION

3. JOHN SCUDAMORE. Copies of two deeds survive for him. He gave a charter on 2 December 1390 granting land at Sheepstone to Richard Middleworry. Then a year later on 15 December 1391 he confirmed to a certain John Sanders the land which John Herbert (undoubtedly Scudamore's grandfather) had previously granted to Sanders. He was succeeded by his eldest son.

FOURTH GENERATION

4. JOHN SCUDAMORE. He was the lord of Sheepstor when on 10 October 1483 he gave a confirmation of land at Sheepstor which Herbert de Combe (who he called "my kinsman and ancestor") had once granted to Ralph de *Veteriponte* (Vipont). He died without male issue, but he left two daughters as his co-heiresses.

Children:

- i. Joan. As the eldest daughter she took Sheepstor to her husband John Elford.

Their son, another John Elford, succeeded to the manor. He died there on 6 February 1517 and "buried under a faire stone" in the church at Sheepstor, but this monument has now disappeared.³²

- ii. Dionysia. She married _____ Cole, by whom she is said (apparently in 1620) to have had a son John Cole of *Addiscombe*, Devon.³³

Towards the end of the 15th century Sheepstor went from the Scudamores to the Elford family. In 1620 Walter Elford (1576-1648) of Sheepstor presented his deeds and other muniments to the Clarenceux Herald who set down that "by which it appeareth that his ancestors married the co-heirs of Scudamore near 200 years since, by which marriage they became possessed of the manor of *Shittistore*, alias Sheepstor, which they possess and enjoy to this day."

The Elfords thereafter quartered the stirrups of the Scudamores of Upton Scudamore, but with a difference (Gules, 3 stirrups *silver*) in the right of their descent from Joan Scudamore. The church of Widecombe-in-the Moor, Devon also had the arms of Elford impaling the Scudamore stirrups and leathers.³⁴ The stirrups were sometimes differenced in the Elford arms when descending through female lines as *argent* or *sable*.

Sheepstor continued with the Elfords until the death of Sir William Elford, a Baronet, of Bickham, Devon who died without issue on 30 November 1837.³⁵ Their house at Longstone in Sheepstor had been built by Walter Elford in 1633, and is said later to have been "mutilated by Georgian alterations." It was reduced to a farmhouse by 1850 and still later was described ruinous and abandoned.³⁶ Almost nothing remains of it today.³⁷

The fate of the younger sons perhaps out of the first three generations of this family at Sheepstor is not known. A son very probably went to Bratton Clovelly. Probably others were drawn to Exeter, the largest city in Devon, which would have offered opportunities to an ambitious young man. Some may have joined the naval tradition for which the Courtenay family was known. They had a port Plympton and a **THOMAS SKYDEMOUR** of Plympton Earls was accused, with others, by the "provost and commonality" of an affray in the market there between 1418 and 1424.³⁸ Still another **JOHN SKYDEMOUR** was assessed at Totnes in 1414, and he may also have been a seafarer.

In a lay subsidy taken in 1377 of Exeter a **ROBERT SKYDEMOUR**, a leathermaker, paid a tax of 2d.³⁹ Later a **JOHN SKYDEMOUR** is noticed in a roll of the Mayor's Court of

³²His arms, a bull passant, on a monument erected later are attributed to Bevill in a heraldic manuscript giving the blazons and shield of the family. Elsewhere he is said to have married a Cole, and his son Roger Elford is said to have married a daughter of Adams.

³³Dr. David Skydmore suggests that this *Addiscombe* may be Edgecumbe, now largely only a farmstead in Milton Abbot near Tavistock.

³⁴Charles Worthy, *Ashburton and its neighbourhood*, 1875. Also see Worthy's *Devonshire Parishes: or the antiquities, heraldry and family history of twenty-eight parishes in the arch-deaconry of Totnes* (2 volumes), Exeter, William Pollard (1887), I, 24-54.

³⁵John Burke, *A genealogical history of extinct and dormant baronetcies of England, Ireland and Scotland* (2nd edition, 1841).

³⁶White's *Devonshire Directory* (1850).

³⁷James Brooke (1803-1868), the first white Rajah of Sarawak, purchased an estate near Sheepstor after a public subscription, and is buried in the churchyard at Sheepstor.

³⁸PRO, C1/2/7 Court of Chancery

³⁹Maryanne Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 391.

Exeter in 1432) as an apprentice for eight years of John *Colle*, deceased.⁴⁰ If the young Skydemore was apprenticed at about the usual age of 13 years (and then expected to be admitted as a freeman at 21) this would suggest that he was born about 1419. It seems possible that both Cole and Skydemore were kinsmen and both came out of Sheepstor. Then a **THOMAS SKIDMORE** was one of the four bailiffs of Exeter in 1547 and was at the defence of the city at the siege of Exeter on 10 July 1549 during the Prayerbook Rebellion.⁴¹

⁴⁰*Exeter Freeman* (Devon and Cornwall Record Society, J. Townsend & Sons, 1973), 47.

⁴¹Robert Polwhele, *History of Cornwall, civil, military, religious*, 1816.

SECTION TWO

The Skidemore family of Great Somerford, Wiltshire.

Walter de Skidemore, the third son of Sir Walter (I) Scudamore (1250-1318) was the first of the family at Great Somerford. He was an eighth generation descendant of Ralph *de Scudemor* who did guard in 1086 at the castle at Ewyas Harold in Herefordshire. As a younger son he had no interest in any land in Herefordshire or Wiltshire that Ralph had after the Norman Conquest as a reward for services at the castle at Ewyas Harold.

We first hear of this Walter when he and his elder brother Peter (III) Skidemore (1280-1342) had a full pardon as a follower of Sir John Giffard on 20 August 1321.⁴² However Walter seems to have refrained when Sir Peter, his elder brother, and the ill-fated Giffard resumed their hostilities against King Edward II later in the same year.

Then on 16 June 1327 Walter de Skydemor, (together with two friends Robert Sawoury of Wiltshire and William Ayet of Hertfordshire) were mainpernors in chancery for Walter's sister Maud, the widow of Sir Edmund de Plescy (1286-1327). She had a licence from the new King Edward III to marry whom she wanted.⁴³ She had married Plescy about 1314 and their son Nicholas was born about 1317. Maud Plescy also petitioned the King to restore her dower interest in the manor of Barnsley, Gloucestershire. Her late husband had granted it in 1322, some eight years after their marriage, to the younger Hugh Despenser (1261-1326).⁴⁴

Later in the same year on 26 December 1327 Walter had a grant of a messuage and curtilage, together with an acre of land in Upton Scudamore from John Petit who held them from the enfeoffment of his brother Peter (III) Escudemor, "lord of Upton Escudemor," as Petit's charter notes.⁴⁵ For this Walter agreed to pay Petit 2s at each of the four legal terms of the year. This deed points out the plight of younger sons. Walter's messuage and a bit of fenced-in land could not possibly support him in the fashion that he had enjoyed when he was young and living at home in his father's household. Younger sons of gentle birth had several choices. They could go into the church and then expect to find a satisfactory ecclesiastical living elsewhere. Or they could become a professional soldier or courtier competing with an enormous number of other young men for patronage from the nobility or the Crown. Such information as we have suggests that the young Walter may have taken still another way to enhance his status, by finding either a likely heiress or a widow in comfortable circumstances.

The young Walter appears twice more in the charters that survive for Upton Scudamore. As Walter Escudemor he was a witness there on 16 February 1332 to a grant from Walter de

⁴²*Patent Roll* (1321-4), 19.

⁴³*Ibid* (1327-30), 126; *Fine Roll* (1327-37), 49.

⁴⁴*Glos. inq. p. m.*, (Index Library) V, 203, 236. Edmund de Plescy was a son of John de Plescy. Edmund's son Nicholas was 14 and more when his father's inquest was taken on 18 February 1331 at Cirencester. Elsewhere we find that Sir John Scudamore of Exeter, Devon, the elder brother of this Walter, also was indebted to their sister Plescy's estate for £40.

⁴⁵*Hungerford Cartulary*, no. 380. See also *Upton Scudamore*, 2nd ed. Appendix I, no. 39.

Park to Walter le Scut for certain lands in the manor.⁵ Later in the same year on 26 September 1332 Isaac de la Mare of Upton Scudamore granted to Walter “son of Sir Walter Escudemor, Knight” several small pieces of land there totaling 15½ acres.⁶ Formerly called “the younger” during his father’s lifetime, he was now called “the senior.” Hence on 23 October 1334 Walter de Park gave to his son Walter Park the reversion of certain lands at Upton Scudamore noting that they were held by Walter Escudemor, *senior*.⁷

There is no later mention of the senior Walter Scudamore at Upton Scudamore after 1332. Despite his conveyancing it does not seem to have been his abode, for he was not taxed there in either of the two subsidies that survive for Upton in 1327 or in 1337. We first hear of this Walter Skydmore at Great Somerford and Seagry in Wiltshire in a suit tried before Richard Willoughby, a Justice of Common Pleas, at the Hilary term of 1330.⁸ It was brought by William, the son of Roger Dancy, against John de Skidmore.⁹ Dancy, by his attorney Roger Bankwell, demanded six pence in rent from John Skidmore for land previously owned by his grandfather William Dansy. Skidmore replied by his attorney John de Stonford,¹⁰ that the elder William Dansy had before his death granted the land to Nicholas Murdak of Burton Hill in Malmesbury, and that his grandson was due no further rent. Stonford also stated that Murdak had then granted his interest to one *Roger de Skidmore*. Correctly this was *Walter*, who had then enfeoffed his son who was the defendant John Skidmore.¹¹ However Justice Willoughby then handed down a decision that since the young Dansy “did not show any other deed” that he found Dansy had lost his suit in 1330.

Taking all the positive evidence we now know that the senior Walter Scudamore (now with a son John) had gone soon after to the Malmesbury area at Somerford Mautravers (now Great Somerford, Wiltshire).

Walter de Skydemore and his son John Skydemore were later named in a very complicated suit brought by Thomas d’Aldon and his wife Maud at the Hilary term in 1340. Maud d’Aldon (1304-*ca.*1366) as a child became the sole heiress of her father Sir Stephen Burghersh who had died 1310. She was also the niece of Batholomew Burgherst, the elder (died 1355).¹² Her marriage to Walter (III) Pavely had been arranged by her uncle while they both were children.¹³ This young Walter Pavely was the eventual heir to Hilperton, Wiltshire

⁵Hist. Mss. Com., *Hastings*, I, 220. See also *Upton Scudamore*, Appendix I, no. 42.

⁶*Hungerford Cartulary*. See also *Upton Scudamore*, Appendix I, no. 43.

⁷Hist. Mss. Com., *Hastings*, I, 220. *Upton Scudamore*, Appendix I, no. 47.

⁸Somerford Mautravers in Wiltshire, now known as Great Somerford, is about halfway between Malmesbury and Chippenham. There is an excellent history of Seagry by Rev. H. K. Anketell, a former vicar there, in the *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, XXIII (1887). The benefices of the rectory of Little Somerford and the vicarage of Seagry were both absorbed in 1967 into the church at Great Somerford.

⁹William “Daucy” is correctly *Dancy* (now *Dansey* or *Dauntsey*).

¹⁰John Stanford (1290?-1372?) of West Down, Devon. In 1328 Stanford had been indebted to John de Skydemore, the Prebend of Hayes in Exeter, Devon and had also testified for Sir John Beauford of Shirwell. He was made a Justice of Common Pleas by 1342 and a Justice of Assize by 1346. See Edward Foss, *The judges of England with sketches of their lives*, III, 512.

¹¹It seems likely that the Roger de Skidmore set down in the “Law French” abstracted record of the proceedings was an error for *Walter* de Skidmore, and that it was Dansy (not Skidmore) who had a father named Roger.

¹²G. E. C., *Complete Peerage*, II, 426.

¹³Marriage in childhood was a common practice. Margaret Beaufort was divorced from her first husband at the age of ten, and bore her only child (the future King Henry VII) fathered by her second

which his grandfather Walter (I) Pavely had acquired by 1303.¹⁴ Walter (III) died untimely in 1327 leaving at his death a seven year old son Walter (IV) by Maud Burgherst, the fourth generation of Pavelys at Hilperton named Walter. The Pavelys were associates, possibly even kinsmen, of the family at Upton Scudamore. Walter (II) Pavely (who died in 1323) had frequently testified to the charters of Sir Peter Scudamore (died 1293) and Sir Walter Scudamore (died 1318) both of Upton Scudamore.

Walter (III) Pavely (who died in 1327) was a member of Parliament only once for Kent in 1324. This was not due to native ability but rather because his wife Maud's family, the Burghershhs, were large and influential landowners in Kent. The next Sir Walter (IV) Pavely, K.G. (1319-1375), was a considerable soldier but he also owed much of his prominence to his cousin, the younger Bartholomew Burghersh, who died in 1369. They had served together in Brittany for the King in 1342-3 and again in 1345.¹⁵

In 1340 Maud, the Pavely widow of 1327, and her new Aldon husband, were now trying by their attorney William de Waver to recover Maud's dower and income from the same lands at Great Somerford and at Seagry. This was not a great estate but was described as only a single messuage, a carucate of land, 12 acres of meadow, and with only 10s due in rent.¹⁶

John de Bockington now appeared as an attorney for the Skydemors. He said that the lands (with small variations in description) consisted only of 6s in rent, two parts of one messuage, and one carucate of land in the vill' of Somerford Mautravers. Brockington also contended that the Aldons were owed nothing in dower because a certain Nicholas Murdak of Burton [Hill] in Malmesbury had all of the right in the same lands which the Aldons claimed. He also said that Murdak had been disseised by Walter (III) de Pavely "while he lived." It was left unstated here the Pavelys were then living at Hilperton in Wiltshire.

Nicholas Murdak then brought an action against Walter, the eight year old son of Walter (II) de Pavely, in an assize of *novel disseisen* on the Monday next before the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary (5 September 1328). It was tried at Salisbury before John Stonford, who was now a Justice of Assize. The suit also named John de Seagry, a knight, and Philip Bacon, Alice de Sterkele, Maud de Sterkele, and William Chiper, who were all tenants of some unidentified messuages of Skidmore's land there.¹⁷ That assize also appears to have found that Murdak should recover his seisin. However the Aldons, by their attorney William de Waver, said (predictably) that this was not so, and that Nicholas Murdak had not been disseised by Pavely. The case was to be continued after the octave of Holy Trinity (28 May

husband Edmund Tudor before her 14th birthday.

¹⁴The manor of Hilperton has been acquired by Walter (I) de Pavely and his wife Joan, and their son Walter (II), from John de Taney. (*Feet of Fine, 1272-1327*, Wiltshire Archeological Society) 48.

¹⁵Both Walter (IV) Pavely and his younger brother Edward, the two sons of Alice, their father's second wife, died with issue and a part of the Pavely estate was soon after in contention with the Aldon family. (*Genealogist, New Series*, xiii) 95. The co-heiresses of Sir John Pavely (died 1361), who was a younger son of Walter (II) Pavely, and their husbands prevailed in their possession of Hilperton.

¹⁶Maud Aldon's interest apparently came down to her from Maud Burgherst, a daughter of the Bartholomew de Badlesmere (died 1322) who had bought the reversion of Great Somerford in 1309 from William Montfort.

¹⁷The assize taken on 5 September 1328 at Salisbury could not be found at the old Public Record Office on Chancery Lane in a search made over 30 years ago, and again recently at the National Archives now at Kew. The assizes of *novel disseisen* are not used often enough by family historians. It is a class of records that usually will produce a brief pedigree of at least one of the parties.

1340).¹⁸

It seems likely that Walter Skydmore, *senior*, was alive as late as 20 June 1346. On that day his nephew, now *Sir* Walter Escudenor, obtained written letters of protection while serving in France with the Black Prince. These letters, a kind of passport, gave the names correctly of Sir Walter's father (Peter III *Escudemor*) and his grandfather (Walter I *Escudemor*) probably to differentiate him from his uncle Walter, *senior*, who was still living at Great Somerford.

Walter Skydmore may very well have been carried away by the Black Death in 1348-9 which killed over a third of the population of England. This catastrophe proved advantageous however to the survivors, for it left new tenants able to negotiate leases for what were now empty houses, untilled land, unfed animals or un-harvested crops. This led to a great migration elsewhere for new leases or the sale of estates from surviving lords (or their heirs) on very favourable terms

London

Walter's son John Skydemore went up to London, fell in with evil companions, and came to a sad end. On the night of Monday after Epiphany, 6 January 1345, Hugh de Reding, a taverner, John Bussard de Thacchesham [Thakeham, Sussex], John de Wysbech, a fishmonger, and John Skydemore happily called "*of Malmesbury*," broke into the shop of William de Dustone who was a hosier in Cordwainer's Street. They took away several pieces of cloth of different colours to the value of 100s which was found later in their possession. At the petition of Dustone they were delivered on 13 January 1345 to a court presided over by John Hammond, then the Lord Mayor of London. On being asked how they would acquit themselves, both Reding and Bussard said that they were clerks and were imprisoned.

Wysbech and Skydemore could not take the benefit of clergy, but pleaded not guilty and put themselves on the mercy of the court. The jury of 12 men retired and after deliberation said on their oath, that Wysbech and Skydemore were guilty; "therefore let them be hanged."¹⁹

¹⁸PRO, CP 40/321, membrane 185d. An abstract appears in the *Yearbook of Edward III*, 13/4, (Rolls Ser.) 314. I am indebted to Dr. David Skydmore of Glyndwr University for a photographic copy of the original suit.

¹⁹*Calendar of the letter-books preserved among the corporation of the city of London at the Guildhall*, ed. Reginald R. Sharpe (1904), Letterbook F, 261.

SECTION THREE

The Skidemores of Tytherton Lucas, Wiltshire

1. **ELIAS SCUDEMOR.** (Elias is also written in documents as Elis, Elys and Elyas). He was born perhaps as early as 1230, a younger son of Sir Godfrey Scudamore (died 1266) of Upton Scudamore. His paternity is proved by a charter in the Hungerford family cartulary in the Wiltshire Record Office. It could also be inferred, as his mother Maud was the daughter of Elias Giffard (died 1248) and his first wife Isolda Musard. Maud Giffard brought with her as a *maritagium* (marriage settlement) some part of Tytherton Lucas. So Elias Scudemore had both his grandfather's name and also his interest at Tytherton Lucas, a place some 20 miles due north of Upton Scudamore.

The cartulary of the Abbey of St. Aldhelm at Malmesbury, Wiltshire also has a number of incidental references to three generations of Scudamores at Tytherton Lucas in Chippenham Hundred, although the family were never benefactors of the abbey themselves. The Malmesbury Cartulary is woefully short of dates but these benefactions were during the time of the Abbot, William de Colerne, who ruled the abbey from 1260 to 1296.

Sir Godfrey held Tytherton [Lucas] and Kellaways jointly with Elis (I) Kellaways (who had married Berta Giffard) as two fees in 1242 from their mutual father-in-law Elias Giffard. Godfrey de Scudemore was one of 12 jurors in an assize held to decide a plea concerning half a hide of land at Fowlswick in Chippenham [Hundred] between Peter Burrell and his wife Alice, a daughter and heir of Thomas Crok.²⁰ John de Gardino, of Tytherton, by an undated charter gave to the abbot and monks at Malmesbury several crofts in Tytherton, one of a half acre adjoining the land of Godfrey *de Escudemor*. The same John de Gardino later gave the abbey a tenement in the vill' of Tytherton as well as the gift of a halfpenny's rent, "it being the same halfpenny which was taken as rent annually by custom from Lady Maud *Deschiedemore*."²¹

By an undated charter, but about 1260, John Burrell of Fowlswick in Chippenham granted to Elias Escudemor "son of G[odfrey] Escudemor" an acre of land in the east field of Langley [Burrell] between the land of Walter *Galwey* [Kellaway] and William de Cruce for the annual rent of a pair of gloves to be given at Easter.²²

Later we learn that William Kellaway, son of a Sir Elis Kellaway, gave to Malmesbury

²⁰*Malmesbury Registery* (Rolls Ser.), II, 206-8. Elis Kellaways and Simon de Park are familiar names among the other jurors. Peter Burrell held Langley [Burrell] in 1242 from the Earl of Salisbury; it is midway between Hardenhuish and Tytherton Lucas. Fowlswick Farm survives as a place-name about two miles north of Chippenham on the road to Malmesbury.

²¹*Ibid.*, 134-5.

²²Wiltshire Record Office, *Hungerford Cartulary*, no.370. A fuller abstract of this charter will be found in Upton Scudamore, Appendix 1, no. 8. Aubrey gives a brief abstract in his *Collections*, 73. John Burrell was a brother of Peter Burrell, perhaps a second man of that name (*Malmesbury Registery*, II, 210). Sir Richard Colt Hoare misreads this charter [*Modern Wiltshire* (Warminster) 54] making Elis the son and heir of Godfrey Scudamore who was dead by 1196. He then invents some engaging nonsense to account for the succession of Sir Peter Scudamore I by sending Elis off to the Holy Land with Richard Coeur de Lion having first enfeoffed his younger brother Peter in his estates.

Abbey several fields in Tytherton in free alms. One of these was an acre bounded on the east by the land of Elis Escudemore; another called *la Brechede acre* in Fuwelmere was between the land of Ralph de Baynton and Elis Escudemore; and a third of 2½ acres was between the land of Elis Eskudemore and Richard Clerk.²³

Still later this messuage and crofts, the early gifts of John de Gardino, were let to John de Baynton by Abbot William de Badminton who died in 1324. He had succeeded William de Colerne as abbot in 1296, one of the fields at *la Muche* was next to the land of Walter Eskudemor, and another of an acre in *Stanedelf* is described as adjoining the land of the same Walter Eskudemor.²⁴ These bits of land must have been held by the Walter (I) Scudamore who died in 1318, the lord of Upton Scudamore and a nephew of Elis Scudamore.

Such evidence as we have suggests that perhaps Elis Scudamore may have died without surviving issue. Tytherton Lucas is not enumerated among the possessions of Sir Peter (II) Scudamore II at his death in 1293, but then by 1332 it was valued at 5s 10¾d and was held by Sir Peter (III) Escudemor.²⁵ Early it had been joined once again to Upton Scudamore and it was still possessed by Sir Peter (IV) Scudamore at his death in 1382.

2. JOHN SCUDAMORE. Elis had at least one other younger brother John, and like so many other younger sons he found a career in Holy Orders. He had the living of the church at Norton [Bavant] and our entire knowledge of him comes from a suit tried before a justice of the common pleas. This had its roots in a lease made earlier by Godfrey Scudamore to William *le Fevere* [the Smith] on 5 May 1252. His father gave the lease of a free tenement of 64 arable acres and 300 acres of pasture in Rodburst and Norton “by the rent and ward of Ewyas Castle” who were the chief lords of Norton.²⁶ At the Michaelmas term in 1261 William brought a suit against John de Scudemore, parson of the church at Norton, asking that John allow him the right of common pasture in Norton. John did not come to court when the case was heard on 3 November 1261 and the sheriff was ordered to produce any records which he might have so that a judgement could be given by the octave of Purification next.²⁷ We hear nothing more of the matter, although the determination in the case may have been on record in the roll of the court sitting at the Hilary term of 1262. There is nothing to show the relationship between Sir Godfrey Scudamore and the parson of Norton, but they are likely to have been father and son.

There is an obscure **SIMON SCUDAMORE** in this period. He is mentioned in 1348 in a suit in the plea rolls brought by Walter (II) Scudamore, lord of Upton Scudamore.²⁸

There is also a Walter de Scudemore who is mentioned as holding half a carucate of land at Hardenhuish from John de Bath.²⁹ If this Walter Scudamore was the same man who was a customary tenant at Compton Chamberlain in 1274, then he may have left two sons, Robert and Richard Skidemore.³⁰

²³*Malmesbury Registery*, II, 144-5.

²⁴*Ibid.*, II, 335-6.

²⁵*The Wiltshire Tax List of 1332*, edited by D. A. Crowley (Trowbridge, 1989) 98.

²⁶*FF Wilts.*, 1192-1272, 45.

²⁷PRO, KB 26/171 mem. 42.

²⁸PRO, CP 40/354 mem. 288d.

²⁹*Wilts. Inq. p. m.*, 1242-1327, 185. This is the same land which Sir Godfrey and Maud acquired by exchange with Henry de Bath (died 1260) in 1249. John de Bath was his son and heir (*DNB*, I, 1322).

³⁰*Ibid.*, 92. Still another Walter *Sodemer*, a confusion, paid 4½d rent at Purton, Wiltshire, to the

Compton Chamberlayne, Wiltshire

The hundred of South Damerham includes the parishes of South Damerham, Martin, Compton Chamberlayne, Longbridge Deverill, and Monkton Deverill. It will include Heytesbury Hundred, but only the three parishes of: Compton Chamberlayne, Longbridge Deverill, and Monkton Deverill, all in South Damerham Hundred.

Walter Hungerford (1378-1449), the first Baron Hungerford, held Wellow Hundred, who will be noticed later, had a sizable estate at Teffont Evias which adjoins Compton Chamberlayne. It came down from Robert de Ewyas who granted one knight's fee in Teffont to Godfrey de Ewyas who held it in 1166. It went to his son Alexander de Ewyas whose heirs were his two daughters Parnel and Phillippa. Philippa married Robert Chamberlayne whose family held Compton Chamberlayne. Three-quarters of Alexander's fee went at his death to Philippa Chamberlayne as the elder sister, and the other quarter to her younger sister Parnel.

Philippa married Thomas Kellaway, who had an estate at Teffont in 1242 and 1275, as her second husband. The whole of Kellaway's portion had passed by 1353 to Edmund Hussey, who settled the reversion of Teffont Evias between 1360-2 on his daughter Joan Hussey. Joan married firstly John Whyton, and secondly Sir Thomas Hungerford (1328-1397) and they were the parents of Walter, the first Lord Hungerford.

Parnel Chamberlayne's quarter of her father's estate (which amounted to 114 acres) came down to Oliver de Harnhan and his wife Joan who sold it in 1377-8 to Sir Thomas Hungerford and his wife Joan Hussey.³¹ After the death of his mother Joan in 1412 Lord Hungerford succeeded to what was now the reunited old fee of both parts Teffont Evias.

The Hungerford household, probably with their steward and other retainers, visited Teffont Evias in 1424-5 which had been leased for many years to tenants who farmed and, more importantly, reared sheep which became the principal source of the great Hungerford fortune.

In 1274 Walter, Robert and Richard Skidemore are found as customary tenants at Compton Chamberlayne. Their posterity continued there for the next three centuries, until Richard Buttler *alias* Skydemore was buried in February 1576/7). His widow Agnes, and their children Thomas and Elizabeth Scudamore, disappear from the parish and had presumably settled elsewhere.

FIRST GENERATION

1. **WALTER SKIDEMORE** was one of a great many persons who held virgates or half-virgates of land at Compton [Chamberlayne] who were fortunately listed on 14 March 1274 in the Inquest *post mortem* of Nicholas (II) de Haversham, the lord of a manor there.

Nicholas had succeeded his father of the same name in 1251 and was sometimes called Lord Nicholas de Haversham. He possessed Haversham in Berkshire (probably his seat), but he was also charged by Henry III to answer for the royal castle at old Sarum and the work on his unfortified palace at Clarendon in Wiltshire. When he died in 1273 the direct line of the

abbey at Malmesbury at Michaelmas 1284. (*Malmesbury Registry*, II, 158-61). In the subsidy of 1332 an Alice de *Sondemer* was assessed at Purton which proves that the Walter Sodemer there in 1284 was not a Scudamore.

³¹*Hungerford Cartulary*, no. 726. Oliver Harnham and his wife Joan acquired the manor and advowson of Teffont Evias on 6 December 1376 from John Fraunceys.

Haversham ended. For his tenement Walter had paid Haversham 6s 8d in rent by the year due in two equal portions at the feasts Annunciation and Michaelmas. He also owed services to the lord of the manor that are noticed as being worth 2s 7³/₄d annually.³²

Contemporary with this Walter Skidemore at Compton are a Robert Skidemore and Richard Skidemore who are mentioned later on the list. They also held half virgates owing the same sums and services as Walter Skidemore who may have been their father. Nothing more is known of any of these three men but it may be taken as certain that they were ancestors to the family that came after them. They are listed here as presumptive sons,

- i. Robert, living 1274.
- ii. Richard, living 1274.

NEXT GENERATION

2. **JOHN ESCU DE MOR**, probably a grandson of Walter (no. 1) Skidemore, was assessed at Compton in [South] Damerham Hundred in 1332 on 4s 4d (a considerable sum), while down on the list a Walter *Escu De Mor* was assessed on a much smaller sum of only 20d.³³ Again we can only assume as a possible son,

- i. Walter Escu de Mor, living 1332.

NEXT GENERATION

3. **JOHN ESCUDAMORE**, is said to have lived back in the long reign (1327-1377) of Edward III. He was undoubtedly a grandson of the John *Escu de Mor* taxed in 1332 noticed above and is said to have been a villein tenant at Compton Chamberlayne.

In 1358 Compton Chamberlayne and the whole of England was stricken by the Black Death which carried away at least a third of its population which took a long time to recover. In 1431 the parish was scarcely able to maintain its own vicar at St. Michael's. Later they were totally unable to pay the 20 marks they also owed yearly to the cathedral church of St. Edmund at Salisbury who held the advowson of St. Michael's.

This John was remembered much later in a *De Banco* roll for a case tried at Hillary term in 1436, in the 14th year of the reign of Henry VI. Included in the testimony is a pedigree of three generations of the Scudamores at Compton Chamberlayne presented as evidence. John Scudamore was long dead by 1436 but he is said to have been survived by three sons, two of them named John:

4. i. John Scudamore, called "the elder".
- ii. Edmund Scudamore, who testified in 1436, of whom nothing more is known.
5. iii. John Scudamore, called "the younger."

NEXT GENERATION

³²A full translation of the text of the inquest of 1274 will found in the Appendix.

³³*The Wiltshire Tax List of 1332*, edited by D. A. Crowley (Wiltshire Record Society, Trowbridge 1989), 12. Only eight men were enumerated at Teffont (p.46) with James Husse being the only familiar surname. In 1332 it is curious to find that Farleigh [Hungerford] in Somerset was enumerated on the border but in Bradford Hundred now in Wiltshire.

4. **JOHN SCUDAMORE, the elder.** He had a son Nicholas, perhaps with others.
 6. i. Nicholas, of whom further
5. **JOHN SCUDAMORE, the younger.** He had a son, still another John.
 7. i. John, of whom further.

NEXT GENERATION

6. **NICHOLAS SCUDAMORE**, the son of John (no. 4) Scudamore the elder. He was in trouble in 1436 with Isabella, the wife of Walter Strikland. Isabella was the daughter and heiress of John de Olney, and a great, great-granddaughter of Nicholas (II) de Haversham. She was now (by descent from Haversham) the lady of a manor in Compton Chamberlayne.³⁴ She claimed in a suit that Nicholas Scudamore was a fugitive villein tenant appendant to her manor. Edmund Scudamore and his brother John (the younger) are said to have acknowledged that they were villein tenants of Isabella. The justices hearing the case were puzzled about how the case should be tried, and it was continued from term to term for another year. No verdict was ever given, and villein tenancy was never proved and largely at this time long forgotten. Clearly Isabella Strikland still lost her plea.

Her tenant, now called Nicholas *Skydmore*, went a few parishes away to the manor of Upton Knoyle (in East Knoyle) where “Skydmarsh Wood” was probably named earlier for the family at Upton Scudamore who had an interest in the parish. On 20 June 1460 Nicholas is noticed in the Tropenell Cartulary when Robert Herdell, and Richard Coof and wife, released to Thomas Topenell (*ca.*1408-1488) and others, their land in Hindon, Knoyle, and Milton *quod Nicholas Skydmore disit quod redditus episcopies est in certo, tam pro fgirma, quam tenemento in Hyndon, Knoyell et Milton cennatum ad summar un toto et non magis, ad x marcas exceptis xvj d.*³⁵ Nothing more is known about Nicholas or his possible posterity.

7. **JOHN SKYDMORE**, who was living in 1436 was the son of John (no. 5) Scudamore “the younger.” Nothing more is known of him at present.

³⁴Isabella Strikland was a daughter of John Olney, a granddaughter of William Olney, and a great grand-daughter of the Sir John Olney, knight, who had married Matilda, the daughter and heiress of the Nicholas Haversham who had died in 1274 as lord of Compton Chamberlayne. Her descent is recited in a deed when Richard Strikland, the son of Walter (who had died in 1444) and Isabella, sold his manor and advowson of the church at Haversham, Buckinghamshire on 6 April 1449. See *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds in the Public Record Office*, (London 1900) III, no. B220.

³⁵*The Topenell Cartulary, being the contents of an old Wiltshire muniment chest*, edited by Rev. John Silvester Davies (Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Devises, 1908), 2 vols. The original volume, in vellum, is preserved at Topenell’s seat at Great Chalfield, Wiltshire.

SECTION FOUR

The Skidemores of Bratton Clovelly, Devon.

Bratton Clovelly is in Lifton Hundred which has over 20 parishes with innumerable hamlets within them.³⁶ It is eight miles west of Okehampton in the same hundred, whose castle there was once the principal seat of the Earls of Devon, now ruinous, but it is still the principal market town for west Devon. Bratton Clovelly is a large rural parish with indifferent soil and no mineral or other natural resources, yet the parish still has one of the noblest churches in Devon with a magnificent Norman font. The parish was never particularly prosperous and the lords of the manor, frequently absentees, never made any major investments or built any extravagant manorial houses at Bratton. As it appears that both Skydmore families at Wellow in Somersetshire and Westerleigh in Gloucestershire came with roots anciently at Bratton it is useful to start with the early history of the manor.

A family named *Deaudon* held it in the 13th century. Joan, a daughter of Sir Hamlyn Deaudon married Sir Roger Clavill who gave the manor a name corrupted over time to Clovelly. The manor passed to his daughter Mabil who married Sir Baldwin Malet. *Mabil* held Bratton, Northcombe, and Southcombe as a knight's fee in the reign of Edward I. "In her widowhood," she granted her manor of Bratton in 1280 to Thomas de Tynworth, Lucy his wife, and Richard, their son (who died young). Thomas de Tynworth became the lord of Bratton with *Combe* and *Godescote* [Guscott] and died in 1296 leaving a young daughter Hawise by his wife Lucy.³⁷ It was usually advantageous for a widow to remarry, and Lucy did so promptly. Her second husband was Simon (I) de Meriet who was seated at Bradford {by Wellington} in Somerset, but he is then also found in 1301 as the lord of Bratton in Devon.³⁸ Simon was dead by 23 October 1309 when Lucy de Meriet also "in her pure widowhood" at Bradford released her interest in certain other lands that had lately belonged to her father in Kent.

On 19 November 1311 her son Walter de Meriet made a complicated settlement in trust to his attorney Simon le Sauvage. It was at the time of his death to benefit firstly his mother Lucy de Meriet for the term of her life, then secondly to her daughter Hawise (his half-sister) in several fees including the manors of Bratton, and also Bradford (by Wellington), Hoccombe (next to Lydiard St. Lawrence), Bickelegh by Milverton, together with the advowson of the church at Bradford. All of these places except the manor of Bratton [Clovelly] were in Somerset, and were to be held in trust for the term of Walter's life, and then to uses specified in the settlement concerning Walter's other presumptive devisees.³⁹

Walter Meriet, for some unknown reason then went into Holy Orders. On 28 January

³⁶The Skidemores settled at Bratton Clovelly but had posterity or associates at many of the tithings within Lifton Hundred: at Bradstone, Bridestone, Broadwoodwider, Coryton, Dunterton, Germansweek, Kelly, Lamerton, Lewtrenchard, Lifton (the parish), Lydford, Marystow, Marytavy, Okehampton, Sourton, Stowford, Sydenham Damerall, Trushelton, and Virginstow.

³⁷Hawise Tynworth married John de Barkeley of Dursely, Gloucestershire and died without surviving issue. Her husband held the manor of "Bratton cum Borsleigh [Boasley]" in 1316.

³⁸Bradford is five miles northwest of Wellington, and the same distance southwest of Taunton. Milverton is nearby.

³⁹PRO, Feet of Fine, Divers Counties, 5 Edward II, no. 53. On 17 December 1320 Walter, lord of the manor, presented Simon de Sauvage, an acolyte, to the church at Bradford.

1322/3 he was collated to the Chancellorship of the church at Exeter, and on 24 April 1327 made a Prebendary of the Cathedral church at Wells in Somerset. He died on 18 May 1345 holding no lands in Devon, but was seized in Somerset with Combe Florey, Hestercombe, and 19 acres of land in Taunton.⁴⁰ He was succeeded firstly by his nephew Simon (II) Meriet, aged 30 and upward, a son of his younger brother John Meriet who had died in 1327.⁴¹ Later as Sir Simon de Meriet he settled his seat at Bradford (called here “by Taunton”) on himself and his wife Margery, and then in February 1346/7 granted to his wife a life estate in Bradford together with the advowson of the church there.

Sir Simon had also succeeded to Hestercombe in Somerset on the death on the death of his uncle Walter. Simon (II) Meriet and died himself in 1368 without issue, the last of the name to hold the Meriet manors.⁴² His widow Margery married Thomas de Willington before April 1372 as her second husband, a gentleman who had been remembered earlier in 1345 in Walter Meriet’s long and complicated settlement.⁴³ Thomas Willington died on 4 August 1382 and Ralph, a minor son of his late brother John de Willington, was found to be his nearest heir.⁴⁴ Margery seems to have outlived all the other of Walter Meriet’s presumptive heirs named in his settlement as well.⁴⁵ She also survived Willington as well, and died in 1390.⁴⁶

Her heir was found in 1390 to be Sir John Willington of Umberleigh in Atherington in north Devon, the elder brother of her second husband. Sir John had presented rectors to the church at Atherington as early as 1375, but from 1393 to 1422 the incumbents were appointed by the Crown during the minority of Willington’s heirs. His eldest son was a minor, Ralph Willington, (noticed above) who died on 19 August 1382.⁴⁷ Lady Joan de Mohun obtained from the Crown a grant of wardship of the boy. When Ralph died the estate then passed to his younger brother John Willington. He was called a “lad of unsound mind,” and also became a ward of the Crown. At his death, an idiot, the heirs to Umberleigh (and the large estate attached to it) now reverted back to the boy’s two surviving aunts, the daughters of his grandfather Sir Henry Willington (1305-1349). Sir Henry and his wife Isabel (a daughter of Sir John Whalesborough) who had left an enormous number of fees in Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucester, Wiltshire, Devon and

⁴⁰Thomas Hugo, *History of Hestercombe* (London, J. R. Smith, 1874), 17. Hestercombe was a manor in Kingston, Somerset, near Taunton.

⁴¹There are monuments to a recumbent knight and two ladies in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Coombe Florey. They are said to be of Sir John Meriet (died 1327) of Hestercombe and his two wives.

⁴²Benjamin Wyatt Greenfield, *Genealogy of the Somerset family of Meriet traced in an unbroken line from the reign of the Confessor to its extinction in the reign of Henry V*, (Taunton, 1883). .

⁴³Thomas Willington was a younger son of modest means, and his elder brother John had granted him a life interest in two messuages in Sandhurst and Ablington in Gloucestershire. They came down to Sir Thomas Beaumont (1401-1450) who will be noticed in the Sections dealing with at bot Wellow and Westerleigh. They descended to Hugh Beaumont (147?- 1507), who seems to have wasted his estate, and sold Ablington manor in to Richard Durham in 1501 and Frampton Cotterell (which included land in a part of Westerleigh) to King Henry VII in 1505.

⁴⁴*Inq. p. m.*, 7 Richard II, no. 78.

⁴⁵*Fin. Conc. Divers Counties*, 47 Edward III, no. 749.

⁴⁶*Fin. Conc.*, Richard II, no. 77. After her death the manors of Hestercombe and Combe Florey (and the advowson of the chantry at Combe Florey) and several other manors and lands in Somerset and Devon were conveyed away by a final accord entered at the September term of 1393.

⁴⁷Lady Joan de Mohun (died 1404) was a daughter of Sir Bartholomew Burghersh, the elder, and wife of Sir John (III) de Mohun, 2nd Lord Mohun of Dunster Castle in Somerset.

Oxford. On 26 November 1397 it was recorded,

that on the death of John de Welyngton, knight, a tenant in chief, that his son and heir Ralph had died a minor and that John a brother and heir of said Ralph, an idiot, also dying a minor, the King with the assent of William Beaumont, who married Isabel, one of the sisters and heirs of the said John, and of full age, and with the assents of the next friends of John Wroth, son of Margaret, the other sister and heir.⁴⁸

Isabel Willington (1370-1424) was the elder sister.⁴⁹ She married Sir William Beaumont of Shirwell about 1396 and was succeeded by their son and heir Sir Thomas Beaumont (1401-1450). He was also lord of both Frampton Cotterell and Yate in Gloucestershire in the right of his mother, and had Shirwell from his father (and much more to be noticed elsewhere). Isabel's sister Margaret Willington married Sir John Wroth, and their daughter Elizabeth became the wife of Sir William Palton.⁵⁰ Palton had both Dunkerton and Chewton Mendip in Somerset held by 1450, where messuages were held at both by the Skydmores of Wellow Hundred.

The manor of Bratton in Devon had been granted in October of 1344 by Walter de Meriet, the cleric, to Robert de Somerton and his son Thomas.⁵¹ Then almost immediately after at the death of Simon (II) Meriet in 1345 Bratton, and *Bratton St. Mary* (presumably the advowson), *Combe*, and *Godescote* were held by Thomas de Somerton, probably with Hugh de Courtenay (1303-1377), the second Earl of Devon, as the tenant in chief of these fees. Still later other Thomas and Robert Somertons succeeded to Bratton, and then finally to Somerton daughters who married into the Franceys and Kirkham families. The place was known for a time as *Bratton Franceys* until the male line ran out in 1547, when it went back to being known as Bratton Clovelly.

The Courtenays had a long interest at Bratton. Hugh Courtenay was the chief lord of "Bratton *lacerat*" in 20th year of the reign of Edward I (1292), and another unidentified Hugh Courtenay died in the time of Henry IV (1399-1412) holding *Wyke Langford* (now Germansweek), and *Combe*, and *Godescote*, all in the barony of Bratton Clovelly.⁵²

FIRST BRATTON CLOVELLY GENERATION

1. JOHN SKYDEMORE is the first of his name found at Northcombe in Bratton Clovelly in the time of Thomas de Somerton who had bought the manor in October 1344.⁵³

In 1377 the Poll Tax shows that Henry Visak collected the tax owed from 82 unnamed persons in the tithing of Bratton Clovelly.⁵⁴ Four early manorial rolls survive for Bratton for the

⁴⁸*Patent roll*, 1396-1399.

⁴⁹Charles Worthy, *Devonshire Wills*, (London, 1896), 261.

⁵⁰Sir William Palton was presumably a son of the Richard de Pulton noticed in the Meryet fine of 28 May 1405.

⁵¹FF, Devon 18 Edward III, no. 127. The inquest post mortem of Walter Meriet taken on 7 June 1345 states that he had no lands in Devon but was possessed of Widecombe, Ellworthy, and Plash in Somerset.

⁵²Now Northcombe and Germansweek (once called Wyke Langford) are places in modern Bratton Clovelly

⁵³*Report and Transaction of the Devonshire Association*, (Okehampton, 1895), vol. 27.

⁵⁴Carolyn C. Fenwick, *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1279, and 1381*, part 1 (Oxford University Press,

period 1377-8, that also dealt with matters called for as *Views of Frankpledge* brought before a court held for Liston Hundred. The presence of all men over the age of 12 were required to attend but apparently only two tithings Bratton and Godyscote had elected a “tithingman”. These were officers, like a kind of police constable, who saw that anyone in the hundred guilty of minor local offences were apprehended and brought to the court.

Somerton was lord of the manor on Thursday, 1 October 1377, when at the first of these courts it was recorded in heavily abbreviated Latin by a quill pen that John *Skedemur* and Henry *Visack* were present. They gave a pledge of 20s as the sureties for Robert Blagrove and his wife Blythe who were the executors of the will of William Colyn. Robert Colyn accused them of keeping from him two oxen worth 40s which had been the gift of his mother. This Blagrove agreed to do this and also not to keep back from him a cow worth 10s for which they pledged another 40d to guarantee her presence at court.

Two months later on Thursday, 1 December 1377, William Bouedone complained that Walter Langsford had not raised 20s from the goods and chattels which Alice Cadi owed him, and Walter was bound over to appear for which Godfrey Payn and John Skedemur pledged 10s.

The next roll is more interesting for on Thursday, 6 May 1378, John Skedemur was fined 2d as one of ten brewers all in the lord’s mercy, and fined for having a brew house and having broke the assize.⁵⁵ The local assize laid down the price of ale based on the cost of the grain and malt. These brew houses were the predecessor of the modern public houses and were sometimes called “the poor man’s parliament” where a man could sit by a good fire in winter and argue with his neighbors.

SECOND GENERATION

2. THOMAS SKYDEMOR. In 10 Henry IV (1408-9) six manorial courts for Bratton were held. John Benete was the tithingman and he presented Robert Reva, John Bussope, Stephen Colyn, Robert Roberte, and Richard Chard were fined for living outside the manor and county. This they had done “against the statute of the lord King.” Reverend Whale adds that this was an offence that occurred repeatedly in the rolls. Seemingly the Skidmores were still in residence there.

In 1409 Roger Waye, Robert Kirkham, John Upercote, William Charde, Thomas Skidemore, William Bortone, Richard Estelake, John Skydemore and Matthew Beaumonde [Beaumont] are found under Landford as freehold *heirs* (tenants). Thomas Skydemore (presumably the same man) also had another freehold tenement held from Roger Waye. Stitched to this roll of 1409 is a list of the names of 68 persons headed “*censurum anno 21*” which has not unfortunately been printed.

In the roll of 1416, a dagger was drawn, and the “tenants of the homagium” were ordered collectively to pay 20s. The Bratton freeholders in 1416 included Thomas Skidemore, and several other tenants including John Skydemore and (probably only coincidentally) Matthew Beamont.

1998), 123, 136. William Norlor collected the tax from 54 persons at Germansweek, and Henry Sampson at Okehampton took payments from 135 persons, probably largely servants of the Earl of Devon.

⁵⁵The ten other brewers fined on the same day at Bratton were Walter Roberd, Thomas Cloue, William Uppecote, John Veyse, John Roue, John Aylecote, Henry Vysak (fined 6d), John Miller, Thomas Langeworthy, Robert Colyn. Their fines totaled 4s 10d which went to Thomas Somerton as lord of Bratton.

Thomas Skidmore had a wife Alice who was one of the daughters and coheirs of a William Wortham who is said to have lived in the brief reign of Richard II (1377-1399). This comes from a herald's visitation of Devon taken a great many years later in 1620. The heralds set down the six daughters of William Wortham of Wortham in Lifton Hundred, which is only seven miles west of Bratton Clovelly.

Wortham left no surviving son and his six daughters were all co-heirs to his estate.⁵⁶ By law and custom Wortham manor went to Agnes as the senior daughter who had married Otes Dinham.⁵⁷ Their descendant and eventual heir was a John Dinham who was living at the age of 65 in 1620 and then in possession of Wortham by right of his descent from Agnes Wortham.

This Thomas Skydemore (unless there were two of them) must be the same man who had another wife Joan who had with Henry Vysak [Visack] sold as the *querent* [buyer] and the Skydemores as *deforciantes* [sellers] a messuage in Okehampton which "Robert atte Wood held for life of the inheritance of Joan in the aforesaid vill." The messuage was *formerly* to revert to Thomas and Joan (but only then to the heirs of Joan) when Robert died. However it was now agreed to revert to Henry *Visazck* and his heirs *forever* on Robert's death, and for this Henry Visack gave the Skydemores 10 marks of silver.⁵⁸

THIRD GENERATION

3. JOHN SKYDEMORE. On the Wednesday before the feast of St. Margaret, 12 Henry IV (15 July 1411) Walter Milermete made a gift to Jordan Langeston and Roger Legh of a messuage and lands at Axworthy, Lobbewylle (Lobhill) and Alder (both in Trushelton), and others at Lydeford, Curmylle, Forssyn, and Tavystoke (Tavistock). The deed was signed at Axworthy and there were five men who testified to it: William Were, Thomas Kelly, John Maynard of Langaforde, John Skedamore "of Northcome," and Richard Grenaforde.⁵⁹

There is a surveying manorial court roll for Bratton for 1422 which has been only partly abstracted by Reverend T. W. Whale. There is no Skydemore mentioned in these extracts. The family at Bratton Clovelly were clearly of some standing as Edmund Lacy, the Bishop of Exeter on 6 February 1428/9 gave a licence to John Skydemore, his wife and his children, to hear mass celebrated in their presence in their chapel dedicated to St Gregory in their house at Northcombe in the parish of Bratton [Clovelly].⁶⁰ This concession may have been granted because Northcombe was an inconvenient distance from St. Mary's in Bratton village about three miles away, or perhaps to spare them from attending mass in a nearby church which was closer but not in their parish.⁶¹

John Skydemore clearly had children but nothing further is presently known of this family

⁵⁶*The visitation of the county of Devon in the year 1629.* (London, Harleian Society, 1872), 100. The other daughters married Richard Knight, [blank] Audrie, Richard Millaton, Otes Dinham, Thomas Skidmore and John Greenfield.

⁵⁷Otes Dinham is thought to have been from the Dinham family of Hartland, Devon which is close to Bratton Clovelly.

⁵⁸Feet of fine, PRO, CP 25/1/45/69 no 92.

⁵⁹The original document is at the West Devon Record Office, Ref. 107/916.

⁶⁰*The register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter (AD1420-1455)*, London, G. Bell and Sons, 1909-15.

⁶¹Manors in Bratton Clovelly, 150. In 1422 Combe was held by the Prior of Plymton and William Hankeford, a clerk, was to do homage for it.

after 1429.⁶² There are manorial rolls (*Court Leet* and *Court Baron*) for 1408, 1416, 1432, 1437, 1492, 1504, 1552, 1627, and 1684, none seen, all held by the West Devon Record Office at Plymouth.

Included here is an account of a William Skydemore (or Skydymor) who may have been from Bratton Clovelly, although there is no authority for this at the moment.

WILLIAM SKYDEMOR “**alias SKYDYMOR**” of Exeter was the plaintiff from Devon in 1450 in a suit tried at Westminster against John Wakham, a tailor of Marlborough, William Fox, a yeoman of Exeter, and Thomas Sayer, a merchant of Plymouth.⁶³

Fourteen years earlier, on 15 August 1436, this William Skydemore had benefitted greatly from the will of John Orum, the Chancellor of Exeter Cathedral.

Item. I bequeath to William Skydemore, my long-time servant, a bed with a hanging depicting St. Catherine with a painting of her “with a lamb.” Item. I bequeath to his wife a pair of small knives. Item. I bequeath to the same William my best salt-cellar together with a coverlet and my next-best “*robam*.” Also clothes for their bed to be chosen by William Skydemor. Item. I bequeath to William Skydymor, a young student for the space of one year, or as much as pleases him, four pence weekly.⁶⁴

His benefactor Orum was probably born in or before 1364 at Wells, Somerset. He began his career as a vicar choral at Wells Cathedral, and in 1400 (after study at Oxford University where he graduated as a doctor of theology) had an appointment to the archdeaconry at Barnstaple in Devon. He had been earlier from 1414 a residuary canon at Exeter Cathedral, and he requested in his will to be buried there on the north porch. Skydemore, *servientis mei*, was the first among the three executors commissioned to handle his charitable and other gifts.*

The lamb which had decorated Orum’s bed (left to Skidemore) stemmed from a spectacular conversion from the ministry of St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), A prisoner, Nicolo di Toldo, had assaulted the priest who tried to prepare him for death. Catherine went to the prison and Nicolo was so transformed by her presence that he confessed, received communion, and asked her to be by his side at his execution. She wrote a message at the scaffold that he was “meek like a lamb and, seeing me, he laughed.” She knelt by his side and caught Toldo’s severed head in her hands.

The wealthy seem to have had a custom at this time of decorating their beds. Sir Walter Hungerford (who will be referred to a great many times in this paper) died in 1449. He left a bed in his will described as “decorated with Lancastrian badges.”

The continuing patronage by the Courtenays of the Skidmores (particularly in Holy Orders) in Devon must be noted.

WARIN SKYDEMOR and William Wolfich held lands and tenements at Burgate and Stuckton, places that are near Fordingbridge in west Hampshire. On 15 March 1341 John Tracy,

⁶²Sir William Pole mentions a John Skidmore living “at Northcombe in Tavistock Hundred in the time of Henry VI” [1422-60] in his *Collections towards a history of the County of Devon* (London, 1791), 347. This must be the Northcombe at Bratton Clovelly in Lifton Hundred which adjoins.

⁶³PRO. CP40, Henry VI (1450), no. 45. The full testimony in this case has not been seen.

⁶⁴*The register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter, 1420-1455.* (Devon & Cornwall Society, vol. 63) 25.

junior, lord of Nether Burgate, son of Sir William and Joan Tracy, gave John Algnel a letter of attorney enfeoffing John le Pyk of Breamore in one croft and five acres of pasture which Warin Skydemore had sometime held from them in Stuckton.⁶⁵ [This Warin was presumably dead in 1341, and his relationship to the Tracys in unknown.]

NORMAN SKYDYMER. In 1358 a deed from John de Alschauet [Alchane], son and heir of John de Alschauet, granted all his messuages, lands, and tenements to Norman Skydymer in *Alschauet* in Poleshill [*Pollishill*] and in Weekmoor [*Wycemor*] in Milverton, Somerset. The witnesses were John de Sidenham, Richard Lucy, Henry atte Fene, Thomas Bastard, Robert atte Combe. It was signed in 1358 at *Bryfford* (SBradford by Taunton?)

JOHN SKIDMORE. The Skydmores retained a connection with the Bishop of Exeter after the death of John de Skydemor, the Prebend of Hayes. An interesting case is set down in the register of Bishop Thomas Brantyngham. On 31 July 1372 a certain John Skidmore, Marshall of the Bishop's Hall at Exeter brought a suit claiming that he was robbed and a harp was taken from the Bishop's cart and was taken away by thieves. The archdeacons of Totnes and Barnstaple and the dean and rector of Torrington were required by the Bishop to admonish thieves in their congregation and if the harp was not returned within eight days then the thieves were to be excommunicated and denounced.⁶⁶

JOHN SKIDMORE, THE ELDER. He apparently lived in Lifton Hundred, and if so is probably at Bratton Clovelly. He is named with several other clergy tried in a suit in chancery in 1393. He is said to be from the parish of St Mary Church near Tavistock when he was named with John White of Meadwell hamlet in Kelly, Devon, John Leigh of St Mary Church (both in Lifton Hundred), and Thomas, the parson of the parish of Tavistock, all of whom were indebted to the Prior of Plympton. Since he is styled as John, the elder, it suggests that there was another John Skidmore "the younger" also in the area.⁶⁷

[SIR] RICHARD SKYDMORE, a clerk, was instituted on 6 June 1401 at Shillingford with his patron being Baldwin Shillingford.⁶⁸ Sir Richard resigned as rector of Shillingford on 14 April 1422 and was replaced by John Nicolle who was instituted on 17 April with Sir Hugh Courtenay, Earl of Devon as his patron. On the same day 14 April 1422 Sir Richard was instituted as chaplain of the chantry at Kenn by the same Hugh Courtenay, the 4th Earl of Devon.⁶⁹

ROGER SKYDAMORE. On 27 February 1413 the King at Westminster gave a licence to Edward de Courtenay (1357-1419), the third Earl of Devon, to conduct 40 pilgrims from England to Santiago in Galicia in northwest Spain. In the ninth century a cult arose about the Apostle James in Santiago de Compostela which gave Galicia an importance it held throughout the Middle Ages. Santiago became a major destination for pilgrims to travel the "Way of Saint James". The group of 40 sponsored by Courtenay sailed from Plymouth on a bark called the *Margarete de Plymouth* for Santiago under the patronage of Roger Skydamore.⁷⁰

ROGER SKYDMORE, another of this name, was a devoted adherent of the old Catholic faith and the incumbent priest in 1546 at Great Torrington, Devon. This manor at Torrington had been given to James Bassett (1526-1558) of Umberleigh, Devon by Queen Mary. Bassett served

⁶⁵Hampshire Record Office, 1 M53/521. These places are close to Fordingbridge in Hampshire.

⁶⁶The Register of Thomas Brantyngham, Bishop of Exeter, Chapter 7, folio 14v. It is discussed by J.M. Wasson, in his *Devon*, 1986.

⁶⁷PRO, C241/181/99. This suit has not been seen.

⁶⁸*The Register of Edmund Stafford, 1395-1419*. The title "Sir" was commonly used by the clergy in this period but had nothing to do with knighthood.

⁶⁹*The Resister of Edmond Lacy, 1420-1455*.

⁷⁰Thomas Rymer's *Foedera*, (1701-13), VIII, 772-5.

at court, lastly in King Philip's privy chamber in 1554. He also was later known as a Popish rebel, and it may be taken as certain that Roger Skydmore, who he nominated to the church at Great Torrington, shared his view in matters of religion. Bassett was also a great friend of still another Edward Courtenay (*ca.*1526-1566), the first Earl of Devon, and made his nephew James Courtenay as the overseer of his will.

[SIR] HENRY SKYDMORE is first noticed as the Vicar at Woburn, Buckinghamshire. He was succeeded there by Simon Felmersham who was presented to the church on 30 July 1471. Henry Skydmore was instituted as a chaplain to the church at Hardington Mandeville, Somerset, on 21 October 1472 where Sir William Courtenay was patron of the living.⁷¹ On 25 January 1489 Henry Skidmore of *Hardynton* had a papal dispensation (at his supplication) to receive and hold for life another benefice. He then also became the Rector of Grittleton in Wiltshire from 1491 until his death in 1511.⁷² He died at Hardington Mandeville before 5 May 1511 when Sir John Philbert presented to the church at Hardyngton "vacant by the death of Sir Henry Skydmore". His will was dated 26 March and proved 18 November 1511. It directed that he was to be buried at St. Mary's in Hardington Mandeville, and with the exception of a single bequest of eight pence he left his entire estate to John Bevyn, esquire, who was also to serve as executor.

⁷¹Sir William Courtenay was the son of Sir Phillip Courtenay of Powderham, Devon during the lifetime of his wife Elizabeth, a daughter of Walter, Lord Hungerford of Wellow, Somerset.

⁷²Grittleton was in the deanery of Malmesbury, and his patron was the Abbot of Glastonbury.

SECTION FIVE

The Skydemore family of Dunkerton in Wellow Hundred, Somersetshire.⁷³

John Skidemore who had settled by 1441 at Dunkerton was one of a colony of personages there who came of Devonshire. The Courtenays who were early benefactors of the Scudamore family in Devon also had several fees largely in the southern part of Somerset. But earlier a Sir Richard Lovel (1288-1350) of Castle Cary in Somerset was an early keeper of Dunkerton about 1327 (in the time of Edward II) by descent.⁷⁴ The manor had passed to John de Moels (1305-1327), who also had extensive estates in Devon and half the barony of North Cadbury in Somerset.

Moels had the usual compulsion of the men of his status to keep the land he had, and then to acquire still more by purchase, a royal grant, or by marriage to an heiress or a wealthy widow. So he gained the small manor of Dunkerton, Somerset and more when he married Lovel's daughter Joan about 1319. When Moels died in 1337 he was succeeded by two daughters, co-heiresses: Isabel who married William, Lord Bortreaux of Cornwall, and Muriel who married Thomas Courtenay (1311-1356) from Dunterton, a manor and parish on the River Tamar adjoining Cornwall.

Sir Thomas Courtenay was a grandson of the Hugh (I) de Courtenay (died 1292) and Alianora Despenser. Hugh is noticed elsewhere as the lord of a fee at Chettiscombe, Devon in 1315 which was held by Sir Walter Scudamore of Upton Scudamore in Wiltshire. Thomas also had a powerful set of relatives as the 4th son of Hugh (II) de Courtenay. His father was married to Agnes St John and the title of Earl of Devon was revived for him. Sir Thomas had two uncles Hugh (III) de Courtenay (the second Earl (who had married Margaret de Bohun), and John de Courtenay, the abbot of Tavistock.⁷⁵

Sir Thomas came by Woodhuish and Dunterton in Devon, and Wootton Courtenay and Cricket Malharbe in western Somerset. He married about 1343 Muriel de Moels (1322-1362) at Cadbury, the eldest daughter of John de Moels and Joan Lovel. It probably was, as usual, not a romantic match but Muriel brought him Dunkerton in Somerset and Over Worton in Oxfordshire and then still more) at her father's death in 1337.⁷⁶ He was a soldier commissioned with his brother Hugh (III) Courtenay as commanders of men in Devon and Cornwall, and died on 21 August 1356 at Dunterton, Devon. It is not known that they ever lived at Dunkerton, and his wife

⁷³There is a short history (96 pages) of Wellow called *Via Old England* by I. W. Fussell, the vicar from 1944 to 1959, published in 1946. It depends in part on the book by Canon John Edward Jackson (1805-1891), *A guide to Farleigh Hungerford, Co. Somerset, containing an account of the castle, the old chapel and monuments, the parish church, and Farleigh House: Illustrated with ground plans and woodcuts*, printed in 1860.

⁷⁴*Fine roll*, 1307-1327.

⁷⁵Douglas Richardson, *Plantagenet ancestry, a study in colonial and medieval families*, (Revised edition, 3 vols., Baltimore, Md., 2004) 274.

⁷⁶They are said to have married before 27 August 1337 at Over Worton, Oxfordshire without licence after her father's death and before the inquest was taken on his estate. This was an offense for which they were pardoned.

Muriel (who was named for her grandmother Muriel de Soulis) survived him and died at Cadbury, Somerset in 1362.

Sir Thomas was succeeded by his son, another Hugh Courtenay, who was still a minor when Dunkerton was taken into the King's hands. The young Hugh became a ward of the Crown and died unmarried in 1369 to be succeeded by his two elder sisters as co-heiresses. Muriel had already been married Sir John Dinham (1318-1383) of Hartland, Devon by 27 March 1357.⁷⁷ Her younger sister Margaret, married Sir Thomas Peverell (1340-1422) of Harmatehy in St. Breward, Cornwall.⁷⁸ According to Hugh Courtenay's inquest taken in 1369 he held both Dunterton in Devon and Dunkerton in Somerset, places with nearly identical names that must be carefully distinguished. His father's Inquest post mortem suggests that Dinhams got the manors in Devon while the Peverells had at least a part of the Somerset and Wiltshire manors.

Dunkerton then passed, presumably by purchase, to John de Pederton and his wife Cecilia Turney of Hardington, Somerset during the reign of Edward III. Their daughter Agnes inherited Hardington, Somerset and married John Bamfylde (died 1390) of Poltimore near Exeter in Devon.⁷⁹ On 20 January 1439/40 they settled a life estate in both the manor and the advowson of the church at Dunkerton with other estates in Somerset on themselves. Thomas Gybbe, the parson of the church at Poltimore, was party to a remainder being added to the settlement that entailed the manors on their two sons William and Peter Bamfylde. Sir William, the elder, had Poltimore in Devon and Peter, the second son, had Hardington but succeeded his brother as lord of Dunkerton about 1452.⁸⁰

John and Agnes Bamfylde also had two daughters, Thomasine who married Walter Pauncefoot and Elizabeth who married Henry *Frauncey* (later Francis) who was already the lord of both Compton Flory in Somerset and Bratton Clovelly in Devon, manors that had formerly been Meriet fees. In 1437 a court roll of Bratton Clovelly shows that Henry Frauncey and his steward were paid 40d for their expenses, and the inquest taken after his death in 1456 found that Henry *Franceis* held Bratton manor from Thomas Courtenay (1414-1455), the 5th Earl of Devon.⁸¹

Sir William Palton and his first wife Elizabeth Wroth also had several tenements in Dunkerton that had come down to the Willingtons in the long time of descent from Simon (II) de Meriet who also held Bratton Clovelly. As noticed elsewhere Simon's widow Margery outlived most of her husband's heirs. She married Thomas Willington soon after who had been named earlier one of Simon Meriet's heirs. After Margery's death in 1390, for want of any other contender, her late husband's nephew John Willington was found to be her heir. The boy was "a

⁷⁷This John Dynham (or his son) was probably a brother-in-law to Otes Dinham, and also to Thomas Skidmore of Bratton Clovelly who had married Alice Wortham.

⁷⁸Margaret Peverell's daughter Katherine married Walter, Lord Hungerford (1378-1449) and they were buried in Salisbury Cathedral. Their daughter Elizabeth Hungerford married Sir Philip Courtenay of Powderham Castle, Devon.

⁷⁹William Phelps, *The history and antiquities of Somerset*, vol. I, 426-9. The family had come earlier from Weston Bamfylde in Somerset to Poltimore.

⁸⁰Sir William Bamfylde was sheriff of Devon, and died about 1474/5 when his Inquest post mortem was set down. Peter Bamfylde died without issue leaving a will dated 24 April 1494 that left his estate to his cousins (later ennobled) at Poltimore. Lord Poltimore was still the patron of All Saints, Dunkerton in 1840 and the estate was sold in 1845. The house was reserved for the family until 1920 when it was put on the market ending a presence that had existed at Poltimore by the Bamfyldees for over 600 years.

⁸¹Inq. p. m. 35 Henry VI, no. 12. Bratton, known for a time as *Bratton Francis*, passed to his son Nicholas Francis (1435-1480). The name later returned to Bratton *Clovelly*.

lad of unsound mind” and died in 1396 and the estate then passed to another Willington nephew John Wroth, also a minor, who became a ward of the Crown.

When the young Wroth died in 1407 his heir was found to be his sister Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir John Wroth, of Brompton Ralph in Somerset, and his wife Margaret Buckland.⁸² She became the first wife of Sir William Palton, a Knight of the Shire for Somerset, and took to him a large estate. She too was fragile and died childless soon after in 1412. Her husband was the son and eventual heir of Sir Robert *Paulton* of Paulton, Somerset by his wife Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Sir William Asthorpe of Camerton which adjoined Dunkerton. Camerton was a manor that been held by the Dinham, Asthorpe, and Paulton families, but his mother also held, more importantly, the manor and advowson of Croscombe which was hard by Wells. When he succeeded at Croscombe he built a fine new manor house there about 1420.⁸³

However Sir William Palton did not stay at Croscombe for long, and from 1422 to 1448 he held and lived at Umberleigh in Atherington, Devon which was a much larger house that also headed up an even more important estate. Palton was a tenant there of the Beaumonts, cousins of his first wife, who also granted him the right to present to the church at Atherington which he first did in 1422, and he also maintained a resident chaplain to the perpetual chantry in the chapel at Umberleigh.⁸⁴

He was sheriff of Devon for 1427-8 and was worth £200 in a lay subsidy collected for the county. He had married secondly (perhaps back in Somerset) Anne, a daughter of Sir Philip Courtenay and Katherine Hungerford. She was a granddaughter of Walter, the first Lord Hungerford, and was seized of Courtenay land at Hockombe, Wyke and Bourbache which Palton settled on himself and his wife. She survived him and married Richard Trewin as her second husband.

When Palton died in 1450 he left no issue by either of his wives. His manor of Camerton (which included part of Carlingcott) had been settled earlier on his second cousin Margaret, a daughter of Ellis Fitzpayne of Stoodleigh in Devon, who had married John Austell and was survived by two daughters. Joan Austell took Camerton (and some other Fitzpayne fees) to her husband John Kelly who was seated at Germansweek in Bratton Clovelly. Kelly is noticed in 1462 as a lord at both *Carlingcott* (partly in Camerton) and Bratton Clovelly and died three years later in 1465. The other sister Agnes Austell married firstly Thomas Burton, and secondly by 1439 Nicholas St. Loe (died 1486).⁸⁵ Agnes was succeeded by her son Sir John St. Loe, who died in 1499 and by a grandson Nicolas St. Loe who died in 1508. Her husband was said to have had only a moiety of her estate, but a grant made in 1439 indicates that Charlton Mackell which had belonged to Ellis Fitzpayne had passed to the St. Loe family.⁸⁶

The land that his childless first Wroth wife had brought Palton went to Sir Thomas Beaumont (1401-1450) who was her first cousin.⁸⁷ Beaumont was seated at his ancestral home

⁸²J. S. Raskell, *The Commons of the Parliament of 1422* (University of Manchester Press, 1954) 207-8. Wroth, a Lancastrian, also held Enfield, Middlesex.

⁸³It still survives but would certainly have disappeared if it had not been a Baptist Chapel for 250 years. Recently a number of harmless early alterations made by the Baptists have been removed to reveal the great hall. See Anthony Emery, *Greater medieval houses of England and Wales, 1300-1500*, vol. III (1996).

⁸⁴Beatrix F. Cresswell, *Umberleigh Chapel*, (A paper read at Barnstaple, 23 June 1938).

⁸⁵William Henry Hamilton Rogers, *West Country stories and sketches, biographical and historical* (1895), 194.

⁸⁶British Library, *Harleian Charter 111 D 5*. See also VCH Somerset, III, 95-110.

⁸⁷*Close Roll*, 1447-1454, 150-2.

Shirwell in Devon where Alice Scudamore, the wife of an earlier Sir John Beaumont (1270-1330), had herself been the lady of Shirwell.

Palton held nothing in chief from the crown in Somerset and on 18 May 1450 the Escheator there was ordered “to remove the King’s hand and meddle no further with Palton’s manors.”⁸⁸ There were then reversions made earlier by Palton to Sir Thomas Beaumont and others in what had become a very complicated estate.⁸⁹ Any profit from a number of other Palton lands in Somerset, including his land at Dunkerton and Chewton Mendip, was to be delivered by writ to Beaumont.

This Sir Thomas Beaumont had also been the heir earlier to the Willington lands at Frampton Cotterell and Yate, manors which were close to Westerleigh in Gloucestershire where Richard Skydmore had settled by 1552. Beaumont was born at Yate in 1401 and he died (probably in London) shortly after Palton in 1450. He was succeeded by his son Philip Beaumont (1432-1475) who was a Member of Parliament in 1467 and the Sheriff of Devon in 1469. Philip died without issue and Hugh Beaumont (*ca.*1457-1507) was his brother and next heir. Hugh transferred all of his lands by feoffes, and one of these, Giles, Lord Daubney, got Beaumont’s estate at Withycombe in Somerset. Finally in 1505, Hugh sold Frampton Cotterell to Henry VII.⁹⁰

Early there was a colony of Devonshire men about Dunkerton. While as yet there is no proof it seems likely that Skydmores came out of Bratton Clovelly as retainers of either the Bampfylds or the Paltons. A good many years earlier Thomas Hungerford (1328-1397) had founded his family’s presence in the area. His early expertise as the steward of a number of manors held by several magnates (including the Burghersh) during the 1350s and 1360s that brought on 21 March 1369 the whole of Wellow Hundred (which included several tithings including Dunkerton) for which he paid the enormous sum of £1000.⁹¹ He fortified the manor house at Farleigh (another tithing in the hundred) and between 1380 and 1390 and his son Walter Hungerford added the outer court and moat to their castle after 1420.⁹² They knew full well that there was nothing that would improve their status nearly as much as an imposing residence.⁹³ Thus the seat of the Hungerfords became known as Farleigh *Hungerford* and prospered for 300 years but was described as ruinous by 1701. It was acquired by Thomas Scudamore (1793-1874) and then passed to his grandson John James Scudamore Collins of Newton St. Loe. Collins was still in possession in 1931 when it was occupied as a farmstead but still with some surviving oak carvings.

⁸⁸*Close roll*, 1447-50, 150-2. There were also orders sent to the escheators of Devon, Cornwall, and Wiltshire where Palton also held land.

⁸⁹One of them, Henry Milleward, was then the rector of the church at Shirwell, Devon.

⁹⁰Edward P. Beaumont, *The Beaumonts in History A.D. 850-1850* (typescript), 64-7.

⁹¹*Hungerford Cartularly*, nos. 789. Later when Hungerford acquired Heytesbury in Wiltshire from Burghersh, his widow Margaret Burghersh alleged that Hungerford had obtained it by sharp practices “of procurement, conyne et malyce” and that he kept the manor by exerting his local influence and abusing his office as a Justice of the Peace in Wiltshire.

⁹²Rev. John Edward Jackson, (1805-1891), *A guide to Farleigh Hungerford, Co. Somerset. Illustrated with ground plans and plates of arms, and an Appendix of ancient manorial and ecclesiastical deeds* (3rd edition, 1879). Canon Jackson, a fine historian, noticed elsewhere in a file called *Hungerford Family Papers* that “Porche and Skydmer” were the principal tenants at Twinhoe of the Burghersh.”

⁹³The new artillery made the defensive value of a moated castle useless, but hundreds continued to be built throughout England to impress the local citizenry.

FIRST GENERATION

Male heads of household have been given a code to enable tracking in the databases of the Skidmore/ Scudamore One-Name Study. John Skydemore next below has the code WLW [1].

WLW [1]. **JOHN SKYDEMORE** was probably from Bratton Clovelly in Devon but living at Carlingcott in Somerset by 1441. He is found mentioned at a court held with a View of Frankpledge for Wellow Hundred on the Tuesday before Hockday in the 19th year of the reign of King Henry VI (18 April 1411). These courts were held periodically to ensure that all adult men who had a fixed abode in a tithing attended the court, did not engage in illegal behavior, heard presentments of those who did, and saw that compensation was then made to injured parties, and then to make pledges for the behavior for the members who were accused of an offense.

John Skydemore of Carlingcott in Dunkerton now owed fealty and suit of court to Walter, the first Baron Hungerford (1378-1449), who had acquired Upton Scudamore and all of the ancient Scudamore fees in Wiltshire from the trustees who acted for the bankrupt Reynes family noticed in the Appendix.⁹⁴

The business of these courts was managed by the steward of the hundred in English, but the minutes of the proceedings were set down by a scribe in ink on membranes in medieval Latin. At this court John Skidemore in the Spring of 1441 was noticed in the text:

Wellow [*Welewe*] Hundred a legal court was held together with a View of Frankpledge at the same place on the Tuesday before Hockday in the 19th year of the reign of King Henry, the sixth of his name after the [Norman] conquest. [18 April 1441].⁹⁵

Several lines below,

The jurors say, and on their oath believe, that John [fined 4d] Tonor, John [fined 4d] Skydemore, and John [fined 4d] Wheler were presented as being in default for not paying the rent [owed to the lord] and therefore they were fined 4d by the court and each of them is in the mercy of the lord [of the hundred].⁹⁶

Nothing more is presently known about this John Skydmore. He may have been born at Carlingcott in Wellow, but such information as we now have suggests that he came out of the family earlier at Bratton Clovelly in Devon. It seems next to certain that he was the father of Robert Skidmore with whom the expanded pedigree of the family at Carlingcott begins.

It must be noted, however, that there were a great many other John Skydemores elsewhere at this time and he might very well have been one of them who settled and then died at Wellow.

⁹⁴By J. L. Kirby, *The Hungerford family in the late middle ages* (M.A dissertation, University of London), 1939.

⁹⁵PRO, SC2/200/47, 3mm. There are six other court rolls that survive for Wellow Hundred (nos. 48-53) for scattered years from 1411 to 1493, and still another for 1554-58 at the Somerset Heritage Centre. They have not been seen.

⁹⁶John *Franceys*, possibly also from another family of this surname at Bratton Clovelly was the first of the jurors. If so, he may have been one of the colony of Devon men at Wellow who were mentors of Skydemore.

SECOND GENERATION.

WLW [2]. **ROBERT SKYDMORE**, a son of John (no. 1) Skydmore, was early a man of some standing in Wellow Hundred for he is found as a juror in the rolls that survive for courts held for the hundred on 23 October 1486, 11 November 1488, and on 5 May 1489.⁹⁷ On 10 October 1512 he (or perhaps his son of this name) was fined 2d for having brewed and broke the assize and he was in mercy. The local assize laid down the price of ale based on the cost of the grain and malt. On the same day Robert Skydmore paid an additional 2d for *pickage*, the right to set up a stall to sell ale on market day. Brewing ale was always profitable for many people drank beer in preference to the local water. Robert was fined a like sum on 10 October 1513 and paid still another 2d to sell ale on market day.

On 24 April 1514 he was a juror once again at court when Richard Skydmore and two other local boys Robert Manfylde and William Love “as all being twelve years or more” were brought to court.⁹⁸ All men over the age of 12 had to be enrolled in their tithing and to participate in the duties owed to the group.

It was his wife Agnes Skydmore who was taxed as a widow on 40 shillings in goods in a Lay Subsidy taken for Wellow Hundred in 15th year of the reign of Henry VIII (1523/4)⁹⁹. This assessment of 40sh (£2) on her goods was then an unlikely sum for a brewer’s widow to owe which suggests that she might have brought to the marriage a settlement from her family.

Children:

3. i. William
- ii. Thomas
4. iii. Richard
- iv. A daughter who married Robert *Mylward* (Millard).

THIRD GENERATION.

WLW [3]. **WILLIAM SKYDMORE** was clearly the son and heir of Robert (no. 2) Skydmore from whom he inherited a small estate at Dunkerton. William seems to have prospered and improved his lot to the extent that he settled at Twinhoe in Wellow parish. He was assessed 20s in 15th year of Henry VIII (1523/4) on £20 in goods in a Lay Subsidy.¹⁰⁰

He was also able to afford the lease of Wellow parsonage from the abbey of Cirencester. This also included the right to present the incumbent, then a curate, to St. Julian’s church. The notorious William Crouch was able to purchase the reversion of William Skidmore’s lease from the abbey and it was alleged that he was so impatient to take possession of it that he hastened Skidmore’s death.

Crouch sent his servant William Kent, who was familiar with a Doctor Guilliam at Bath, to fix a medicine that Skidmore was taking for a leg complaint so “that myght by meanes of that

⁹⁷PRO, SC2/200/49 (Rolls for the 2nd, 5th, and 6th years of the reign of Henry VII (1485-91).

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, SC2/200/50, for 5th, 6th, and 24th to 28th years of Henry VIII (1513-1537).

⁹⁹It has been estimated that a shilling then would be worth £20 in buying power today, and if this is so the old pound would be worth roughly £240 today.

¹⁰⁰I am grateful to the late John Selwyn Hunt of Potton, Bedfordshire who found (a tedious job) and copied all of the Skidmore entries in the surviving Lay Subsidies for Wellow at the Public Record Office in 1989.

to short his lyfe.” For this Kent later confessed that the doctor was to have £6 13sh 4d as well as a “nagge to carye hym owte of the countre.” Further Kent said that Crouche, his master, had motioned the doctor to do it, and Crouch watched as the doctor had “pounded [the fatal dose] in a dish and wrapped [it] in paper.”

William’s widow Joan Skidmore, testified about the matter in a case heard before the Star Chamber at Westminster. She stated that she was then about 50 years of age and that her late husband had held a life interest in the farm [lease] of Wellow parsonage from Cirencester Abbey. Her late husband, she said, had died before 16 July 1543 of a medicine given him for a disease in his leg.¹⁰¹ However back at Bath the doctor had fled the city with suspicious haste, and nothing seemingly could be proved.¹⁰² However Crouch still made good his reversion of the patronage of the church at Wellow and presented John Simmonds, a clerical kinsman, as its curate in 1545.¹⁰³

Joan seems to have survived her husband by about 20 years. In a Lay Subsidy taken between the third and sixth years of the reign of the young Edward VI (1549-52) for *Combhwey* [Combe Hay], an adjoining tithing in Wellow Hundred, Joan Skydmore was taxed on £18 in goods for which she was assessed 18s.¹⁰⁴ She was buried on 25 July 1563 at St. Julian’s.

WLW [4]. **RICHARD SKIDMORE, SENIOR**, of Twinhoe in Wellow, born by 1502 a son of Robert (no.2) Skydmore, was the eventual heir of his father. In 1514 he and two other boys were brought to court as all “being twelve years or more.” He married Julian (whose family name is unknown) who survived him. Richard Skydmore was a juror at a View of Frankpledge held for Wellow Hundred on 8 June 1544. He was taxed at Wellow tithing on £10 in goods for which he paid 10 shillings in the lay subsidy of 1549-52.¹⁰⁵

His will dated 13 August 1554 called him a yeoman. He asked to be buried in the churchyard at Wellow, and he left 4d. to St. Andrew’s the cathedral church at Wells. He left “two of my best oxen in my plough” to his son Richard. His son Edward was to have £10. He left a ewe to William, “my brother’s son,” and Robert Mylward’s two sons were also to have one ewe each. To Julian his wife “my manor if my son Edward die under age.” His son Richard and his wife Julian were to be executors, and George Skidmore and Robert Fraunces were to be supervisors.¹⁰⁶ The witness were Sir Thomas Alyn, curate (who undoubtedly wrote the will), William White, William Parch, John Cullen, and others not named. It was proved promptly at Wells on 23 October 1554.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹*Star Chamber Proceeding, Henry VII and Henry VIII*. Somerset Record Society, no. 27 (1910), 149-50.

¹⁰²Jean Manco, “The Unscrupulous William Crouch,” *Bath City Life*, May 1995. I am greatly indebted to Jean Skidmore of Torquay for this reference.

¹⁰³Rev. F. W. Weaver, *Somerset Incumbents* (1889), 207. In 1532 Crouch had persuaded the Prior of Bath to appoint John Simmonds as Master of St. John Hospital.

¹⁰⁴PRO, E. 179/170/236

¹⁰⁵PRO, E.179/170/44, taken in the 5th year of reign of Edward VI.

¹⁰⁶His son George Skydmore, who seemingly did not benefit from his will, had only recently arrived at his majority.

¹⁰⁷W. S. Lansdown, of Bulawayo, Rhodesia was a descendant of Sarah Scudamore and John Lansdown who were married in 1610 at Wellow. He looked into his family history by post and then came to England about 1935 and did more intensive research. He made excellent copies of the early wills for the Lansdown and Scudamore families which were totally lost soon after in the German bombing of Exeter on the night of May 4th, 1942. His copies, happily, found their way back to the

He had four known sons.

Children:

5. i. George, of Wellow, the eldest son.
6. ii. Richard.
- iii. Edward
7. iv. Robert.

THOMAS SKYDMORE, born about 1500, a son of Robert (no.2) Skydmore. He was elected in 1509 “from Wellow” as a scholar, just aged nine, at Winchester College in Hampshire. Seventy poor boys there were educated in grammar and the liberal arts to ensure a future supply of clergy of good learning and character.¹⁰⁸ The record notes that his father, not named, was a tenant of the school. The college did not have the gift of the living or any known estate in Wellow, although William Wykeham (*ca.* 1324-1404), the bishop of Winchester, who had founded the institution did have some association with Wellow.¹⁰⁹ Thomas went up to New College, Oxford (also founded by Wykeham), where he matriculated on 7 July 1517. Alas Thomas Skydmore, who had the start of a clerical career died untimely as a scholar at New College before 15 January 1517/8.¹¹⁰

FOURTH GENERATION

WLW [5]. **GEORGE SKYDMORE**, of Whittoxmead in Wellow, born about 1527 as the eldest son of Richard (no. 4) and Julian Skydmore and was invariably styled a gentleman. He was taxed earlier at Combe Hay in 1551 on £10 in goods, for which he was assessed 10s.¹¹¹ He married Marjorie, a daughter of William Collins of English Combe who survived him briefly and was buried as his widow Margaret on 28 October 1583 at Wellow.

The Skydmores of his generation faced a religious problem. If they clung to the old Catholic faith after the death of Queen Mary in 1558 they were known as “recusants” and faced a fine if they did not conform in matters of faith as Protestants. It was extremely politic to attend church at least on Easter during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Probably most of them were only lukewarm Catholics and managed to conceal the belief of their ancestors.

George Skydmore had died on 6 March 1582/3 at Wellow, perhaps of the plague common that year. He was buried at St. Julian’s two days later and probably had conformed with the rest of his family. It seems likely that he died quickly before there was time to dictate a last will and testament. However a copy of his widow Margaret’s will (the original destroyed) makes up the

Somerset Record Office. Another abstract of Richard’s will is in the Pilley Collection at the Hereford City Library. It mentions “to Julian my wife, my manor if my son Edward die under age” (not in the Lansdown copy but added above). It also named the testator’s brother *John* as the father of his nephew William, but this must have been an error as there was no John Skydmore then in Somerset.

¹⁰⁸Letter of 9 September 2010 from Suzanne Foster, the archivist of Winchester College, to Dr. David Skydmore.

¹⁰⁹Wykeham had a multiplicity of interests and associates (including the Burghershs) which may have taken him to Wellow. See the *Hungerford Cartulary*, no. 634.

¹¹⁰T. F. Kirby, *Annals of Winchester College from its foundation in 1382 to the present time* (Oxford, 1892).

¹¹¹PRO, E.179/170/44, taken in the 5th year of reign of Edward VI.

loss. She remembered her son Thomas and her three daughters Mary, Joan and Margaret. The overseers were Thomas Rosewell and her brother John Collins, and the witnesses were her two brothers-in-law Richard and Robert Skydmore.

The inquest *post mortem* of George Skidmore's estate taken on 3 April 1583 at Frome, Somerset, shows that he held in chief from Queen Elizabeth two messuages, 160 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 60 acres of pasture, and six acres of wood at Whittoxmead which he had settled on 12 February 1582/3 on Thomas Rosewell of Dunkerton, gentleman, Thomas Llewellyn of Hemington, gentleman, and John Collins (his brother-in-law) of Englishcombe, yeoman. They were to hold his land and to perform the terms of his will while his only son was a minor.¹¹²

He had another messuage, 40 acres of land, ten acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture, and two acres of wood at Carlingcott (doubtless the ancestral homestead) which had been leased before the time of his death to his younger brother Robert Skydmore, the elder.

Children:

- i. William. He was remembered in the will of his uncle Richard in 1554, but died before his father and was buried on 9 May 1579 at St. Julian's.
8. ii. Thomas.
- iii. John. He was baptized 25 July 1563, who also died before his father.
- iv. Mary, who was remembered in her mother's will.
- v. Joan, baptized 13 October 1566. She married John Shepherd *alias* Gibbs.
- vi. Margaret, baptized 18 November 1568. She married William Meacer (Measer) on 26 November 1593 at Wellow.

WLW [6]. **RICHARD SKYDMORE**, a yeoman of Twinhoe in Wellow, was born about 1540 a son of Richard (no. 4) Skydmore, senior, by his wife Julian, and was a minor about 13 years of age at his father's death in 1554. He married Mary Bull on 19 November 1570 at Wellow.¹¹³ He was taxed 6s 8d on £4 at Wellow in the Lay Subsidy taken in 15 Elizabeth (1572/3). According to the rolls of leases for Wellow manor on 2 April 1576 he had a copyhold tenement at Twinhoe worth £30 by the year held from Sir Walter Hungerford for the term of the lives of himself, his son George, and his daughter Julian. His daughter died an infant soon after and is marked "mort" in the roll. Their ages are given gratuitously in the roll; Richard was 65, his George 35, and his son Edward, added later, was 20.

Richard was buried 19 June 1620 aged about 80. His wife did not long survive him and was buried on 7 August 1620. His will was dated 25 April 1619 and was proved 9 August 1620 (two days after the death of the widow). He asked to be buried in the churchyard at Wellow, and he left 6d to St. Andrew's, the cathedral church at Wells.

His will mentions only his two children who were still unmarried. His son Thomas was to have £10 and his daughter Mary was to have a marriage bed and its furniture "which standeth over the hall" in his house. Other personal goods included from the same room that Richard Evans was to have a table and John Evans a "little table." Anne Measer (presumably a niece) was to have his bed "which I do lie upon" to be delivered to her after the death of his wife Mary who was to be his residuary legatee and executrix. He named Henry Redman, Richard Millerd, and

¹¹²A transcript will also found in the appendix.

¹¹³The Bull family bore arms at least by 1634 and John Bull of Twinhoe in Wellow is mentioned in the *Visitation of the county of Oxfordshire taken in the years 1566, 1574 and 1634* (Harleian Society, 1871) 306.

Thomas Milliard as the overseers of his will. It was proved by his eldest son George as the widow Mary Skidmore had died before accepting the probate on his will. The inventory of his estate totaled £29.11.6d.

- Children.
9. i. George.
 - ii. Julian. She was living on 2 April 1576 but was buried on 17 April 1577 at St. Julian's.
 - iii. Joan, baptized 22 January 1575/6.
 - iv. Julian, baptized 19 December 1578.
 - v. Margery, baptized 21 February 1583/4. She married Henry Caynes on 28 October 1613 at Wellow,
 - vi. Edward, baptized 23 January 1585/6.
 10. vii. Thomas, baptized 12 April 1588.
 - viii. Mary, baptized 10 October 1591.

WLW [7]. **ROBERT SKYDMORE**, the elder, of Carlingcott in Dunkerton, was born about 1540 probably the youngest son of Richard (no. 4) and Julian Skydmore. He was still a minor in 1554 at his father's death and is not mentioned in his will, but there is no better test of a pedigree than the descent of real property. The ancestral tenement at Carlingcott was conferred to him on 9 June 1609 by his nephew Thomas Skydmore (1562-1609) on extremely lenient terms. The lease which had been made in 1561 still had a further 61 years to run at the death of his nephew, and he paid only £1 in annual rent. The lease also specified that his son Robert was to succeed his father there.

Robert Skydmore, senior, was still living as late as 9 June 1609, a very old man, when this was set down in the inquest *post mortem* of his nephew Thomas. He was assessed there on £3 3sh 0d in goods in 7-8 James I (1609-11).

He was survived by three sons, and had at least two known daughters.

Children: (Born at Dunkerton, order uncertain.)

11. i. Robert, the younger.
12. ii. William.
- DBY [1].iii. Thomas.
- iv. Thomasin, who married Laurence Hedges of Burnett, Somerset on 19 May 1606.
- v. Margaret. She was buried on 11 January 1607 as the daughter of Robert Skidmore, "the elder."

FIFTH GENERATION

WLW [8]. **THOMAS SCUDAMORE (SKIDMORE)**, of Whittoxmead in Wellow, was baptized 10 October 1562, a son of George (no. 5) and Margerie (Collins) Skidmore. He married Anne, the daughter of William and Elinor Middlecott of Bishopstrow in Warminster, Wiltshire. Middlecott was a successful clothier, and his will in 1562 left his daughter Anne Skydmore a "standing bedstead with a feather bed and all things belonging thereunto" and also remembered his grandchildren George, Elinor, Sara and Rebecca Scudamore. Thomas Scudamore was appointed overseer of the will of John Rosewell of English Combe on 4 September 1596 and

William Rosewell, Junior, owed the estate of Thomas Skydmore £5 in 1609; both were probably kinsmen. On 1 December 1603 James Bisse had a licence to alienate the manor of Batcombe, Somerset, to Thomas Skidmore.

He died at Wellow on 5 April 1609 leaving a will proved 21 July 1609 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. It directed that he was to be buried in the church at Wellow where his brother was buried. He left 12d to the Cathedral church of Wells, and 20sh to the church at Wellow. It provides for all of his children. His eldest daughter was to have £20, his daughter Sarah £60, and his daughter Rebecca £50, and “all marriages with mother’s consent, or at age 20.” Thomas Skydmore, his second son, was to have an estate held by Kelson for 61 years, and also for 61 years the estate in *Cridlingcott* in Dunkerton which “my uncle Robert Skydmore” and Robert Skydmore, his uncle’s eldest son, held for the term of their lives from Thomas Skydmore, the elder. His son Thomas was also to have one yoke of oxen, one cow, 20 sheep, and six silver spoons at the age of 22. The residue of his estate was given to his wife Anne who was to be the sole executrix. The overseers of his will were Edward Middlecote, and John Collins, Thomas Collins, John Gibbs, and his kinsman William Rede.

The inquest *post mortem* on his estate was taken on 9 June 1609 at Wells for the lands which he held in chief of King James I.

Anne survived her husband by many years and was assessed in 1628 as Anne Skidmore, Senior, at Combe Hay, Somerset. She was buried 30 June 1636 at Wellow. She left a long will dated 11 March 1632/3 and proved 30 May 1636. It and a detailed inventory of her possessions show that she presided over a comfortable household.¹¹⁴

Children:

- i. Eleanor, baptized 31 July 1588 who married Richard Lansdown of Camerton on 6 June 1609 and was living in 1632.
- ii. Sarah, baptized 16 August 1590 who married John Lansdown on 3 May 1632.
- iii. William, baptized 18 March 1592/3, buried 19 April 1593.
- iv. Rebecca, baptized 8 September 1594 who married Giles Hicks on 10 June 1619.
13. v. George, born 25 April 1597.
- vi. Elizabeth, baptized 28 July 1600 and buried an infant on 16 June 1601.
- vii. William, baptized 23 September 1604, buried 2 October 1604.
14. viii. Thomas, of Whittoxmead (baptized at Wellow on 16 December 1605 and buried there on 27 February 1674/5) leaving issue not noticed here.

WLW [9]. **GEORGE SCUDAMORE**, baptized 30 September 1571, son of Richard (no. 6) and Mary (Bull) Skydmore. He was married, but the name of his wife is presently unknown.

Children.

- i. Mary, baptized 8 March 1607/8. She married John Coole on 24 June 1630 at Wellow.
- ii. Margaret, baptised 19 August 1610. She may be the Margerie Skidmore, not otherwise identified, who was buried on 18 March 1638/9.

¹¹⁴Copies made by W. S. Lansdown of both the will and inventory survive (the originals lost in the bombing of Exeter in World War II). They can be found in the Appendix.

- iii. Anne, baptized 17 July 1614.
- iv. Densabell, baptized 8 June 1617.

EDWARD SCUDAMORE, of Twinhoe, was baptized 23 January 1585/6 at Wellow, a son Richard (no. 6) and Mary (Bull) Skidmore. He stated in 1620 in a suit he brought in chancery that he left Wellow “forced to want for his livelihood to seek his fortune in remote parts.”

He accumulated some money and finding that his father was greatly in debt returned home to Wellow and took charge of his father’s copyhold at Twinhoe. He stocked the land in return for his father’s promise to surrender the lease to the lord of the manor for a new lease for further lives that would include his son Edward. He also paid an annuity to his father for his support and that of his mother. Richard Skydmore, the father, later refused to honor this agreement and Edward Skydmore brought a suit in the Court of Requests at Whitehall in 1620 to answer these charges.¹¹⁵ It seems to have been successful for in the Rental Roll of the manor the name of his brother George is crossed off the entry made on 2 April 1576 and that of Edward Skydmore was added in his place.

Edward Skydmore was assessed 16sh on £2 in lands at Wellow in the Lay Subsidy of 1628. He married Anne, probably a daughter of Humphrey Grey of Bassett House, Leicestershire, and died without issue. His will (as Edward Scudamore, *Gentleman*) is dated 22 October 1653 and proved 28 January 1653/4 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.¹¹⁶ It provided an annuity of £8 to be paid annually to his wife Ann. The executor of his will was his “worthy friend” Master Walter Scudamore of Kentchurch, Herefordshire to whom he left all his estate so that Walter could pay his debts, legacies and funeral expenses. This will was signed at Kentchurch Court since Robert Scudamore and Martin Scudamore (two of Walter’s brothers) and two Welshmen were the witnesses to it.¹¹⁷

His assets apparently did not cover the legacy to his wife for in a chancery suit which Walter Scudamore brought in 1670 the defendant John Parsons of Wellow, in his answer, says that the relict of Edward Scudamore “had been maintained as one of the poor of the parish of Wellow at the charge of the said parish which the defendant, an inhabitant in Wellow, hath contributed unto.”¹¹⁸ This is borne out by the poor accounts of Wellow which show that Anne had received 8sh a month in 1673 and 1674, together with some extra payments for a sheet, house rent, and for mending her clothes. She was also supplied with “bere fife monts at 2s ye mont -- 10s.” Anne Scudamore, his widow, was buried 24 May 1674 at Wellow and there was a final payment of five shillings for her coffin.

WLW [10]. **THOMAS SKYDMORE** was baptized 12 April 1588, a son of Richard (no. 6) and Mary (Bull) Skidmore. He was a tailor by trade and married firstly Ann Pickering on 22 July 1619 at Wellow. He is presumably the man assessed 8s on £1 in lands at Wellow in the Lay Subsidy of 1628. On 6 January 1637 John Payne of Midsummer Norton, yeoman, and Thomas Skidmore of Wellow, tailor, had a deed from Philip Tibbot of Padstow, Cornwall for land at Englishcombe, Somerset.¹¹⁹

He married secondly Elianor (Willsire?) who was the executrix of his will. It was proved

¹¹⁵PRO, C.8/17050.

¹¹⁶PRO, PROB 11/236.

¹¹⁷What led Edward Scudamore to impose himself on the family at Kentchurch, or for Walter Scudamore to accept the imposition, is unknown.

¹¹⁸PRO, C.7/489/39.

¹¹⁹Cornwall Record Office, Ref. no. PB/1/550.

on 4 February 1658, and left to his son Thomas the furniture in his shop. His daughter Elizabeth (who married a *Methuon*) and all her children were to have only a shilling each. He left his grandson Daniel £4 to be paid to him at the time he was bound apprentice, but until then it was to remain in the hands of the young Daniel's unnamed "cozen" William Willsire, the younger. John Light and William Willshire were named as overseers.

The family name of his grandson Daniel, perhaps Willsire, is not presently known.

Children: (Christenings not found.)

15. i. Thomas.
- ii. Elizabeth. She married _____ Methuen, by whom she had children.

WLW [11]. **ROBERT SKYDMORE**, the younger, was the son and heir of Robert (no. 7) Skydmore of Carlingcott. He was a churchwarden at Dunkerton in 1603, 1607, 1613 and 1623 and was assessed there in the Lay Subsidy of 1628/9 on £7/8/0 in land at Dunkerton.

Children:

- i. Robert. He was perhaps the man exempted from the Hearth Tax in 1665 as he was "not rated to Church or poore by reason of his poverty."¹²⁰
- ii. James, buried 24 December 1609.
- iii. James, born about 1611. He was apprenticed to William Hulett, a merchant taylor of Fleet Street in London on 25 September 1626 for seven years and was admitted as a freeman of the city on 11 April 1636. He died at Limehouse in Stepney, called "a citizen and a merchant taylor" leaving a will (signed as James *Scudamore*) dated 11 May and promptly probated 13 June 1656.¹²¹ It remembers his wife Joane, his brother Thomas (apparently back in Somerset) and his brother's two children Thomas (to whom he left £5 and two fowling pieces), and Elizabeth Scudamore.
17. iv. Joseph, baptized 18 September 1615 (a twin). He had a wife Joan (buried as his widow on 19 February 1678/9 at Marksbury, Somerset). Their three daughters were christened. at Marksbury. Joseph also was exempted like his father from the Hearth Tax in 1670 and 1674.
- v. Mary, baptized 18 September 1615 (a twin). She was buried on 11 February 1615/6.
16. vi. Thomas, living 1633.

WLW [12]. **WILLIAM SKYDMORE**, of High Littleton, Somerset, a son of Robert (no. 7) Skydmore of Carlingcott.¹²² He was a husbandman with a lease worth £5 at High Littleton. He left a will dated 10 June 1632. He asked to be buried in the churchyard at High Littleton.

His son Francis was to have the residue of William's estate and he was bound as the

¹²⁰He was exempted again in 1670 and 1674.

¹²¹PRO, PROB 11/256. His will was witnessed by John Minthorne and Sir Ralph Outlaw.

¹²²The register of High Littleton does not begin until 1658 and is very imperfect even after that date.

executor on 16 February 1632/3 with John Miller, a tailor of High Littleton, and Henry Feare of Ston Easton, husbandman, as bondsmen. The witnesses were Thomas Dando and Joan Jones *alias* Collier, widow.

An inventory of William Skydmore's estate was taken on 31 January 1632/3. It totaled £14 1s. 5d, but did not include debts of 38s. owed by Moses Lokier of Clutton, 30s. owed by Robert Hill of Paulton, and 6s. owed by Thomas Branch of Cloudhill. Itemized were his wearing apparel, "hay and corn growing," seven sheep, and his two leaseholds worth £3 and 20s.

Children:

- i. Elinor. Her father remembered her two children (her married name unstated) who were each to have a lamb.
- ii. Mary. She never married and apparently had special needs that were provided for in her father's will. She was to have her father's leasehold of Peters Cloudhill (worth 20 shillings) and his overseers were to see that his son Francis "keep her well," but if not then his overseers Richard Hill and Thomas Dando, yeomen of High Littleton, were to have the lease "and so they keep her." Mary Skidmore "of Hallatrow" died soon after her father also leaving a will in 1632 (now lost) once at the Archdeacon's Court at Wells.
18. iii. Francis.

DBY [1]. **THOMAS SKIDMORE**, the first of his name at Chewton Mendip, was born perhaps about 1565 a son of Robert (no.7) Skidmore, the elder, of Dunkerton. He was probably drawn to Chewton (which is hard by Dunkerton) since in the late sixteenth century lead was mined intensively only at two places, in the Mendip Hills in Somerset, and in the Peak District in Derbyshire, Thomas Skydmore married and had issue christened at Chewton Mendip, but seems to have died either elsewhere or intestate. No mention has been found of him in the surviving index to probates, or in the file of early copies of the wills lost in 1942 collected by the Somerset Record Office. Such very negative information as we have suggests that he (and perhaps his wife) might have died in Derbyshire.

Children: (Christened at Chewton Mendip)¹²³

- i. Joan [*Johane*], baptized 1 July 1588 who probably died young.
5. ii. Simon, baptized 1 November 1590 (twin). He was buried 21 October 1595.
2. iii. Robert, baptized 1 November 1590 (twin).
3. iv. Arthur baptized 4 August 1593, probably the first of his name to settle at Eyam, Derbyshire.
4. v. Richard, buried 16 October 1595.
- vi. Thomas, of Taddington.

¹²³Extracts from register of Chewton Mendip (1554-1689) have been made by Mrs. Velma Skidmore of Manhattan, Kansas, using microfilm (no. 1526507) from the Family History Library at Salt Lake City. The earliest registers are in wretched condition. They were read by Mrs. Skidmore through 1689 (an enormous chore) together with what survives of the bishop's transcripts for the parish. There are also extracts from the register, found earlier at the Society of Genealogists in London.

- vii. A son, baptized December 1600. His name illegible in the Bishop's Transcript.¹²⁴
- viii. Mary, baptized 11 October 1601. She may be the lady of this name buried 11 April 1626.
- ix. Joan, baptized 29 January 1602/3, and buried on 9 April 1603 at Chewton Mendip.
- x. George, baptized 11 February 1605/6. Nothing more is known of him.

SIXTH GENERATION

WLW [13]. **GEORGE SCUDAMORE**, of Whittoxmead in Wellow, was born there on 25 April 1597 a son of Thomas (no. 8) and Anne (Middlecott) Scudamore (but baptized there as *Edward* on 23 May 1597). He had a wife Anne who survived him, as did his mother also named Anne (senior). His wife Anne may be the lady of the name who was buried, a widow, at Wellow on 24 May 1674. At the time of the Visitation of Somerset the heralds disclaimed George Skidmore of Whitaxmeade, and nine other men in the county, as *omnes ignobiles* at Bath on 30 August 1623. They had, according to the heralds, "usurped the titles of Gentlemen within the county" and they were disclaimed at Taunton on 16 August 1623.¹²⁵ The pedigrees of the non-gentlemen, if they were ever set down, can not be found at the College of Heralds in London. Elsewhere we learn that a new grant of arms "for a gentleman of inferior revenue" could have been had for a fee of £6.¹²⁶

George Skidmore died on 1 July (buried 5 July) 1627 at Wellow The inquest *post mortem* on his lands held in chief of King Charles I was taken at Yeovil on 26 September 1627. He left posterity *not noticed here*.⁴⁶

DBY [2]. **ROBERT SKIDMORE**, was baptized 1 November 1590 (a twin) at Chewton Mendip a son of Thomas (no. 1) Skidmore. He had a lease for three lives of a certain messuage there (containing only a half acre) from Philip Bridges of Stone Easton on 17 June 1619. At the time of his death in 1634 he was a copyholder at Stock Hill in Chewton Mendip with a house "newly builded by me." He married Mary, (perhaps Lane) who seems to have survived him.

He was buried in the churchyard at Chewton Mendip on 20 May 1634. His will dated 1 May (and proved 2 July) 1634 gives his occupation as "mineral man." He remembered his three daughters Mary, Grace and Elinor who were to have 20s apiece. His sons Lewis and James Skidmore were to have £6.15s.4d. "which was to be put to interest for the use of my two sons until they are able to be put to be apprentices and that my overseers to pay or lay out to bind them apprentices."

He had a lease bearing the date of 17 June 17 James I (1619) for nineteen years from Philip Bridges of Ston Easton, gentleman, for the term of three lives of himself, his wife Mary, and his daughter Mary. It was a "parack" or piece of ground called Scuts (Dents?) Hill of a half acre "with a house newly builded by me." This was left to his wife Mary for life, with remainder

¹²⁴This name is impossible to read, but the surviving smudges look more like *Simon* than any other likely alternative.

¹²⁵Harleian Society, vol. 11, 141.

¹²⁶The cost increased for gentlemen who were worth 100 marks. The fascination with lineage that had started back in the time of the Tudors had continued and bogus genealogies were common with men who had recently come out of the yeomanry.

⁴⁶ See *Scudamore of Wellow, Bath and Frome* at www.skidmorefamilyhistory.com

to his son James. The residue of his estate was left to his widow who was to be the sole executrix. The overseers were his brother-in-law William Lane and Robert Conistre *alias* Allen. The witnesses were Francis Vowles and Thomas Phelps. An inventory of his estate totaled £48.9s.5d.

Children:

- i. Thomas, baptized 22 January 1612/13 and buried 4 May 1616.
- ii. Mary, baptized 29 January 1616/7. She was the eldest surviving child and was living on 17 June 1619 when she (as the first child then born) was named as the third party with her parents in the tripartite lease for three lives from Philip Bridges. She died an infant soon after.
- iii. Mary, baptized 15 September 1620. She married Morgan Hopkins on 5 February 1641/2.
6. iv. James, of the Burrough in Wedmore, Somerset was the eldest surviving son. He was a minor at his father's death, and he and his brother Lewis were "to be put to be apprentices" according to their father's will. He married firstly Jane Hooper and secondly Christian Taylor on 3 February 1652/3.
- v. Lewis. He was a blacksmith who lived first at Nailsea, Somerset (where he owned two houses), but died at Almondsbury, Gloucestershire. His will is dated 31 July (and proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 17 October 1677) when probate was given to his sister Elinor Hulbard, the executrix named.
- vi. Grace. She married Richard Dore on 25 November 1639 at Chewton Mendip.
- vii. Elinor, baptized 3 November 1622. She married Edward *Hulbard* [Holbert] of Weston, Somerset.

Eyam, Derbyshire

DBY [3]. **ARTHUR SKIDMORE** was baptized on 4 August 1593 a son of Thomas (no. 1) (no.1) Skydmore, the elder, of Chewton Mendip. He appears to have been the first of his name in Derbyshire where he was a lead miner at Eyam. The miners in Somerset, as noticed earlier, had devised a superior method of smelting lead with a fixed ore hearth on the ground. This greatly improved productivity and profits for the owners, and an increasing number of Somerset migrants, Arthur Skidmore among them, took the new process up to Derbyshire and did not return.¹²⁷

He died at Eyam, untimely it would seem, before 15 July 1629 when his inventory which totalled £36s 4d was taken of his estate by John Sheldon, Thomas Wilson, and Thomas Cowper of that place.¹²⁸ The administration on his estate was granted a week later on 22 July 1629 to his widow Anne (or *Annis*) Skydmore, and Simon Skydmore of Eyam (doubtless his brother) became her bondsman. Anne Skydmore remained Arthur's widow and was buried at Eyam on 2 April 1654. They had three children, all minors at their father's death.

¹²⁷David Kiernan, *The Derbyshire Lead Industry in the Sixteenth Century* (Derbyshire Record Society, volume XIV, 1989) 171-2. It was said in 1581 that "The beste leade in England is Peak leade in derbyshire, The second [best] is made at Mendiff nere Bristoll."

¹²⁸Appraised were his purse, apparel, a grey mare, two kyne, a heifer, a weaning calf, saucers, basins, kettles, pots, sheets, blankets, chairs, and an acre of grass. His inventory also mentions debts due from Thomas Willson and John Andrews.

Children:

7.
 - i. Thomas. He was ancestor of a large family at Eyam, Derbyshire.
 - ii. Ellen. She married Francis Thornley of Eyam on 8 October 1638 and was buried as his wife on 28 June 1657. Thornley married secondly Elizabeth Chapman, a widow, but he had a number of children by his first wife Ellen Skydmore who died of the plague in 1666 at Eyam.
 - iii. Mary. She married a George Parks who died a widower in 1701 at Wardlow.

DBY [4]. **RICHARD SKIDMORE**, was a son of the elder Thomas (no.1) Skydmore of Chewton Mendip. He went later to Taddington, Derbyshire In 1578 the manager for George Talbot (1522-1590), the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, reported that he was smelting about 54 loads of lead a week from Shrewsbury's mines at Taddington and Brassington.¹²⁹

Richard Skidmore seems to have become an Early communicant of at the chapel of St. Michael and All Angels in the western part of Taddington, Derbyshire.

He requested in his will to be buried inside the church at Taddington "as near conveniently be to the buriall place of my Ancestours. In 2011 Dr. David Skidmore visited St. Michael's church at Taddington and viewed the Skidmore graves just outside the front door with the church historian. At the time of Richard Skidmore's death the floor of the church was earthen and was not flagged with stone until about 1700 and his burial place is unknown.¹³⁰

For later descendants of this branch see Occasional Paper, no. 28, *The Skydmore Family of Chewton Mendip, Somerset, and Eyam, Derbyshire*. A new history of the family in Derbyshire is in preparation by Mrs. Linda (Skidmore) Moffatt.

THIS IS NOW COMPLETE AND CAN BE FOUND AS *SKIDMORE LEAD MINERS OF DERBYSHIRE 1600-1915*, 2ND ED. MARCH 2016 AT www.skidmorefamilyhistory.com

¹²⁹The sixth Earl, and his father Francis Talbot (1500-1560), the fifth Earl, were intimates of the Skydmores at Holme Lacy and, Kentchurch Court in Herefordshire, and also of Sir Philip Scudamore (c.1545-1611) of Burnham in Buckinghamshire. Philip had loaned money to the sixth Earl, a difficult man, and was repaid. Shrewsbury, whose seat was at Sheffield Castle, had bigger and better interests than his lead mines elsewhere. It is most unlikely that he knew any particulars about the Skydmores in Derbyshire, or connected the name with his associates in Herefordshire. See also G. R. Batho, *Gilbert Talbot, seventh Earl of Shrewsbury (1553-1616); the great and glorious Earl*, Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, vol. XCIII (1973), 23-32. The seventh Earl was the last of the Talbots who maintained an interest in lead mining.

¹³⁰The parish register of St. Michael and All Angels in Taddington begins in 1642/3. It has seen by Mrs. Linda (Skidmore) Moffatt of the Skidmore/ Scudamore One-Name Study on a four day field trip to the Record Office at Matlock. The register is most curiously set down for some years with the entries arranged in one chronological list, with the symbols "B, M & S" (for *Bapisatus, Matrimonis Coniuncti, and Sepulta*) in the left margins. The bishop's transcripts for Taddington, Priestcliffe (and Thorpe) were also been read by Mrs. Velma Skidmore using a microfilm (no. 0428945) borrowed from the Family History Library. The paper register before 1643 does not survive. The bishop's transcripts do, but are said to be in miserable condition.

SECTION SIX

The Skydmore family at Frampton Cotterell and Westerleigh, Gloucestershire.

The three Gloucestershire manors of Pucklechurch, Westerleigh and Wick form a group at the southern end of the Cotswolds, just northwest of Bath. The Skydmores elected to settle at Westerleigh for one reason. Wool. The Cotswolds sheep produced some of the best of it. The woollen fabric produced there was in heavy demand locally, but much of it was also exported to France. The French retaliated by selling their wine to England that produced none of it.

Westerleigh did not have a church until the fourteenth century when it and Wick were carved out of Pucklechurch. The chapel at Westerleigh was dedicated on 16 April 1304 when the Bishop Guilborough of Worcester celebrated mass and preached on the text “My house shall be called a house of prayer.”

The Bishop of Bath and Wells in Somerset kept a reeve in the few places that he held in 1553 in Gloucestershire. They supported his interests and income from these manors, and the reeve of the manor of Pucklechurch was allowed a payment of 20s while the reeve of the entire hundred was paid only 8s 4d.¹³¹

Sir Walter Gascelyn (1272-1333) held the manor of Norridge in Upton Scudamore from Peter Eskydemour by the service of half of a knight’s fee. At his death an inquest *post mortem* was taken before a jury in Wiltshire on 16 May 1333. The jurors present stated that he held Norridge Wood and Thoulstone in Upton Scudamore from Peter (III) Eskydemour, lord of the manor. Gascelyn’s house at Norridge included the hall with its chambers, the chapel, the kitchen, half a dovecot, the east orchard adjoining, together with 14½ acres of arable land, five acres of meadow, three acres of woods, two acres of pasture, for which he owed 34s 2d in annual rents for the service of half a knight’s fee and a further 13s 4d which he paid to Sir Peter by the year.¹³²

Gascelyn held land at only two other places in all of England, at both Frampton Cotterell and Westerleigh that were two adjoining parishes in Gloucestershire. In an early lay subsidy taken in 1327 Walter *Gasselin* was taxed 6s 8d at Frampton Cotterell. When he died six years later another inquest *post mortem* was taken in Gloucestershire on 6 May 1333 by 12 jurors who sat at Bristol together with the escheator for that county. The jurors found on their oath that Gascelyn held Frampton Cotterell where there were 12 free tenants who paid annually 4s 2¾d each. They also stated that Gascelyn separately had 18 acres of furze in the “vill of Westerleigh” which he held, not from Sir Peter Scudamore, but from the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Gascelyn had been summoned to Parliament and was a gentleman of considerable reputation in Wiltshire where he testified frequently for the Scudamores at Upton Scudamore. In 1307 Gascelyn was with Sir Walter *de Kydemor* at a great tournament held in 1309 at Dunstable in Bedfordshire (noticed earlier). They were found on a heraldic roll which displayed the arms of

¹³¹PRO, E318/1687.

¹³²*Wilts. inq. p. m.*, 1327-1377, 94. See also *Upton Scudamore*, Appendix I, no. 43A. A stone cross of the 13th century found at Norridge may have come from his chapel. It is now in the Scudamore chantry in the church at Upton Scudamore according to the late R. G. Woodman.

the jousting knights who were there who were probably in the retinue of the Earl of Pembroke.¹³³

Not long before his death Gascelyn, then almost 60, testified on 5 May 1332 for the young John Manduit at Warminster to help prove his age to succeed his late father. Gascelyn testified that he was with Sir Walter (I) Pavely (and his wife Joan) and Richard Dansey when they had gone from Brook House in Westbury to Warminster to attend the christening of Manduit in 1309.¹³⁴ When Walter (II) Pavely died in 1323 William Gacelin, a younger brother of Walter and the rector of the churches at Street and Walton in Somerset, had leave as a close relative from his bishop on 11 February 1323/4 to complete the execution of Pavely's estate.¹³⁵

Walter Gascelyn left two children, a son William born in 1322 and a daughter Julian born in 1325. William Gascelyn, a namesake and nephew of the rector in Somerset, died unmarried in 1346 and his lands went to his only sister Julian who had been married to Geoffrey Stowell (died 1362) of Cothlestone in Somerset.¹³⁶

In 1292 a writ went out from Edward I to Ralph de Willington, described as from both Willington Court in Sandhurst, Gloucestershire and Umberleigh in Devon, to collect men-at-arms and archers and then join the King at Calais in France. Willington was given letters of protection by the Earl of Pembroke but died untimely in the King's service abroad on 11 July 1293. It was set down at the same time that there were six men, including Sir Richard de Merton and Sir Geoffrey de Stawell, who had remained after his death in the retinue of Ralph de Willington "up unto the 11th of July last."

Geoffrey was succeeded by his son Sir Mathew Stowell who had married Eleanor, a daughter of Sir Richard de Merton of Merton, Devon. Thus he had both a father and a father-in-law who were dedicated followers of Ralph de Willington in France. Mathew sold his grandfather Gascelyn's estate at Norridge in 1368 to John *Lye* [Leigh] who added it to his manor of Corsley which adjoined Upton Scudamore.¹³⁷ Mathew Stowell died at Cothelstone about 1379.

It is clear that by 1319 the manor of Frampton Cotterell had passed from his father Geoffrey Stowells to Ralph's father Sir John Willington of Umberleigh in Devon. He was a considerable soldier on campaigns from 1294 to 1322, and held Frampton Cotterell in 1319 from the honour of Wallingford in Berkshire. Sir John was summoned to Parliament in 1338, but died on 16 December in the same year survived by his wife Joan Neville who lived on until 1345.

Umberleigh and his immense estate descended eventually to Isabel Willington, a co-heiress, who married Sir William Beaumont (1367-1408) of Shirwell, Devon. He came from a family that had an earlier Maud Scudamore (noticed elsewhere) who had married a Beaumont and had been the lady of Shirwell. Isabel Beaumont inherited a number of paternal Willington manors in Dorsetshire, Wiltshire, and Berkshire, but in addition she also had the manors of Yate and Frampton Cotterell in southern Gloucestershire that came to her from her mother.¹³⁸

All of this passed to her son Sir Thomas Beaumont (1401-1450). His mother was at Yate on 21 September 1401 where her son Thomas was born. Beaumont became the lord of Frampton

¹³³A. Tomkinson, *Retinues at the Tournament of Dunstable, 1309*. The English Historical Review, vol. 74, no. 90 (January 1959), 83. *Gacelyn* was previously numbered as 185.

¹³⁴*Wilts. Inq. p. m.*, 1327-1377, 85.

¹³⁵*Register of John de Drokenford, bishop of Bath and Wells*. (Somerset Rec. Soc., 1887) 140, 229.

¹³⁶A long pedigree of the Stowell family of Cothelstone Manor was set down in the Visitation of Somersetshire taken in 1623. (*Harleian Society*, 1876) 106-7. It verified that "Sir *Jefferie* Stowell married Julian, daughter and heir of Sir Walter Gascelyn, Knight." The house at Cothelston was largely demolished by Parliamentary troops, but was later rebuilt. .

¹³⁷PRO, CP25 (1)/255/51/133, and the deed found at the WRO 490, 492.

¹³⁸Isabel died on 22 April 1424. Her wealth is displayed in her Inquests *post mortem*, for which see the *Report of the Devon Assoc.*, vol. 55, 245.

Cotterell (and more) and died on 17 November 1450 at his ancestral home at Shirwell, Devon. He was also the heir of a Wroth first cousin to Dunkerton in Wellow Hundred in Somerset which vaguely suggests that the Skydmore of Westerleigh might owe their presence there to a Beaumont.

Hugh Beaumont (*ca.*1437-1507), the sixth and last son of Sir Thomas was his eventual heir. He disposed of his father's lands piecemeal and is said to have "wasted his estate." He rented his principal estate at Shirwell (and Loxhore with it) to Richard Chister for 10s per annum. He also let thirty-four acres of land at Bremeridge in Wiltshire (worth 10s by the year) for a rental of one pound of wax. Of more interest, he sold Frampton Cotterell to Henry VII in 1505. Alas, at Hugh's death in 1507 his inquest *post mortem* stated that he held no land.

The King gave Frampton Cotterell to Giles, Baron Daubney (1451/2-1508) who had been a great favorite of his. Daubney first caught the attention of Edward IV who knighted him in 1478. He was one of those who revolted against Richard III, and fought at Bosworth Field on the winning side with Henry Tudor. He served Tudor, now Henry VII, as his Lord Lieutenant at Calais and his Chamberlain back at court. The King was usually very stingy when it came to granting titles but he made Daubney a Baron by patent in 1486 and a Knight of the Garter in 1487. Giles was honored still more in death when he and his wife Elizabeth Arundel were buried in a chapel at Westminster Abbey where alabaster effigies still adorn their tomb.¹³⁹

Frampton Cotterell passed in 1508 to Henry Daubney, the second Baron Daubney who was created the Earl of Bridgwater by Henry VIII. The Earl and Henry III went soon after out to shoot popinjays together and it appears that their relationship was social and not political since Bridgwater did nothing to serve the government. Frampton Cotterell is found soon after (by 1547) in the hands of Edward, the Duke of Somerset (*ca.*1500-1552). He was the father of Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour, and the uncle of her son the young King Edward VI. Seymour, then the Earl of Hertford, had been between wives in 1535, and had fathered an illegitimate son John born in or by that year.¹⁴⁰ When Seymour became the "Protector of the Realm" and the virtual ruler of England one of his first acts as Protector was to make himself the Duke of Somerset.

On 20 May 1548 Bishop William Barlow, newly arrived at Wells, was forced to yield to the Crown a great many of the manors and lordships that included Westerleigh and both the manor and hundred of Pucklechurch. This was clearly to increase the wealth of the Crown, in the same way that the monastic lands had been taken to pay for Henry VIII's extravagances fighting a useless war in France. Eleven days later Barlow gave a lease of just these three lordships belonging to his diocese to Nicolas Poyntz (1510-1556) of Iron Acton which importantly adjoined both Westerleigh and Frampton Cotterell. Poyntz's lease was to run for forty-two years at a rent of £80 3s 3¾d. Both manors and the hundred were administered by the Court of Augmentations set up in King Edward's reign to manage the monastic lands. The manor of Westerleigh was granted outright to Poyntz on 8 December 1552 when it was then worth £40 16s 2d. However Sir Nicolas then was indebted to the Crown for £806 18s 8d and on 8 December 1552 the Crown was in a splendid position to once again reacquire Westerleigh and the park at Pucklechurch.¹⁴¹

When the Duke of Somerset, the Protector, fell from grace he and his adherent Sir Nicholas Poyntz of Iron Acton were both imprisoned in the Tower in the winter of 1549-50. When Somerset

¹³⁹This Giles Daubney was descended from an Earlier Giles (I) Daubney (*ca.*1333-1386) and his wife Alienore (1335-1400), a daughter of Sir Henry (II) de Willington (1305-1349) and Isabel de Whalesborough.

¹⁴⁰Edward Seymour's wild and dishonored first wife was in a nunnery in 1527, and he did not marry again until about 1535. It may be taken as next to certain that he had some companionship in that interval.

¹⁴¹Phyllis M. Hembry, *The Bishops of Bath and Wells 1540-1640, Social and Economic Problems* (The Athlone Press, 1967), pp.107-111.

lost his head at Tower Hill in 1552 Poyntz was spared, and he seems to have taken on the care of John Seymour's illegitimate son who had Frampton Cotterell probably from by his father. What is certain is that Poyntz arranged the marriage of his daughter Jane, who was born about 1538, to the young John Seymour of Frampton Cotterell. In Poyntz's will dated 26 February 1556 he acknowledged that he owed £200 pounds to John Seymour "so that he assure my daughter Jane a living."

John Seymour and his first Poyntz wife seem to have lived happily at Frampton Cotterell. Sir Nicolas Poyntz, in his time as the lord of Westerleigh, was fiercely Protestant. His son John Poyntz, the brother of Jane Seymour, angry at the return to Catholicism that came back to the country with Queen Mary, fled to the Continent as one of several "Marian Exiles."¹⁴² Who Poyntz found to replace Paulet's son Sir Hugh as the Steward at Westerleigh does not appear. Poyntz was still in possession of Westerleigh at his death in 1556, but his heirs sold it at Hilary term, 12 Elizabeth (1570), to John Roberts, an alderman of Bristol.

John Seymour, now Sir John, lived where he left a long and interesting will dated 27 January 1598 at Frampton Cotterell. He asked firstly to be buried "in the earth at *Gastlinge Chapple* of Frampton church," so obviously the Gascelyn name had survived there for several generations. He left £100 to his second wife Goodith, a daughter of William Sheldon of Besley, Worcestershire, and the widow of Robert Brayne of Staunton, Gloucestershire. Nothing has been learned of Seymour's tenants in 1598, but his will mentions "my landlord John Thynne of Longleat, Esquire" to whom he left his gilt polax (surely decorative and not a weapon). It is possible that the papers of the young John Thynne (died 1604), that survive at Longleat in Wiltshire should contain something useful on the Seymour era at Frampton Cotterell.

Their son Sir Thomas Seymour and his wife Jane Webb also stayed at Frampton Cotterell where he died on 23 April 1627. An inquest *post mortem* taken at Thornbury on 31 July 1628 shows that Sir Thomas had died owning the manor then known as "Gaslings *alias* Frampton Cotterell." All of Seymour's messuages, cottages, closes, meadows, pastures (and the advowson of the church) are enumerated but unfortunately nothing was set down about any of his tenants. His tenement at Westerleigh was listed in 1628 as "20 acres of pasture" but again nothing is said about who held it.¹⁴³ It might possibly have been James Skidmore (*ca.*1565-1629), a substantial yeoman like his father, who had a farmstead called Brownfield at Ashbury at the time of his death about two years after Seymour had died. Ashbury was a hamlet very close to Frampton Cotterell in 1830 but now lost as a place-name.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²Caroline Litzenberger, *The English Reformation and the Laity, Gloucestershire, 1540-1580*, 89.

¹⁴³There is a large manuscript book, apparently a reeve's account from 1524-5, at the Bristol Record Office which has not been seen. It is titled *A Compotus of all the houses, manors, lands and tenements of the Bishopric of Bath and Wells, 16-17 Henry VIII*. It is described as a huge parchment volume, no covers, last few pages covers damaged by damp and the edges of some mutilated by mice.

¹⁴⁴It survived until at least 1830 when it appears as a knoll in the Ordnance Survey map with coordinates at 156-682(812). It may have been formerly reckoned as a part of Mayshill.

FIRST GENERATION

Male heads of household have been given a code to enable tracking in the databases of the Skidmore/ Scudamore One-Name Study. Richard Skydmore next below has the code WGH [1].

WGH [1]. **RICHARD¹ SKYDMORE** may have been born as early as 1480. The first mention of him yet found is in a military muster taken in 1522. Henry VIII had issued a new *General Proscription* on the conduct of musters. Statistics from thirty early counties show 128,250 able men classified by wealth and by the weapons they could provide. The information returned varied from county to county. That for Gloucestershire happily survives in a copy at Berkeley Castle which has the largest collection of medieval manuscripts in the county.

At Westerleigh in 1522 Thomas Wolsey (c.1475-1530), then the bishop of Bath and Wells, was lord of the manor.¹⁴⁵ Sir Amias Paulet (ca.1457-1538) of Hinton St. George in Somerset was the steward.¹⁴⁶ He had the management of the bishop's manors, and William Weston was curate of the church at Westerleigh. Richard Skydmore was listed in 1522 with the able-bodied men in the parish and had land and goods valued at £4. He also possessed splints and a sword that could be used in the defense of the realm, possibly brought home from some earlier service for King and country.¹⁴⁷ It is rather surprising to find that the men with armour or weapons had acquired them at their own expense and not at an expense for the Crown.

The enormous effort in 1522 to list the able bodied men and their weaponry was largely thought to be a scheme used by Wolsey, who had found a promotion upward to Cardinal, to obtain new assessments by subterfuge under the pretext of holding musters” needed to finance Henry VIII’s proposed invasion of France.”¹⁴⁸ The King did follow it with a demand made to Parliament in 1523 for a tax of four shillings on the pound on the goods of the more substantial men in the Kingdom. Richard Skydmore at Westerleigh was assessed two shillings on £4 in goods at the first payment of the tax made in 1524.¹⁴⁹ The collectors were knights of the neighborhood Sir William Denys of Dyham, Sir Edward Wadham of Tormorton, and Sir John Walsh of Little Sodbury. About £150,000 was raised in the country by this subterfuge but it should be remembered this sum was in the greatly depreciated currency of that day.

In 1535 the itinerary for Henry VIII’s “Summer Progress” to the western part of his realm was announced. When Nicolas Poyntz of Iron Acton found his name on the list for a royal visit he spent an enormous sum over the next nine months to enlarge his manor house. A magnificent new wing was added by 350 laborers to include a fashionable and lavishly decorated apartment to house the King and Anne Boleyn. They were no doubt suitably impressed, and Poyntz, now Sir

¹⁴⁵Bishop Wolsey, a humble man of learning, went out from Somerset almost immediately when he was picked by Henry VIII to hold the highest office of state in the Kingdom.

¹⁴⁶He had been made the bishop’s High Steward for life in 1493 with an annuity of 20 marks.

¹⁴⁷A *splint* was armour for the outer arm, sometimes extending down to the back of the hand. John Rogers, senior, his friend and neighbor at Mayshill, was worth £5 and owned a *sallet* and a *gorget* and was assessed on £3 in goods for which he paid 18d. Sir Amias Paulet had raised a command of 25 men in 1513 which he took to France with Henry VIII. Their names are unknown but were probably raised in part from the manors where he had jurisdiction.

¹⁴⁸David Loades, *The Fighting Tudors* (National Archives, 2009), 65.

¹⁴⁹*The Bristol and Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy of 1523-1527*, edited M. A. Faraday (B. & G. Archaeological Society, 2009), vol. 23. The only other Skydmore assessed in Gloucestershire in 1523 was Edward Skydmore of Siddington Langley. He was a younger son of John Skydmore (1486-1571) of Herefordshire, prominent by 1534 as a gentleman usher at the court of Henry VIII and ancestor to the Scudamore viscounts at Holme Lacy.

Nicholas, was knighted during their stay.¹⁵⁰ The principal purpose of the Progress was to give the country population a chance to see and acclaim their King. It may be taken as next to certain that Richard Skydmore and his family made the short trip to Acton Court to add to the clamor which the King expected and welcomed.¹⁵¹

Richard Skydmore's land at Mayshill was owned freehold, and at a View of Frankpledge held for Westerleigh at Pucklechurch on Michaelmas Day in the 31st year of the reign of Henry VIII (29 September 1539) Richard Skydmore and John Rogers of Mayshill were presented to the court to make a ditch from Vern Hill as far as Weynelane Gate and from Weynelane Gate as far as Skydmore's Gate before the next court under the pain of forfeiting 3s 4d each if they did not comply.

John Rogers left a will dated 22 September 1546, but no probate has been found for Richard Skydmore. Gloucestershire is particularly poor in early probates and only a part of the wills once proved in the Archdeacon's Court of Gloucester became a diocese, and only four wills survive at Worcester for Gloucestershire residents.

While Richard Skydmore was living in 1539 he does not appear on the muster taken of able bodied men in the county, aged from 16 to 60, taken only three years later in 1542. Presumably this was because he was dead, or just as likely, exempted as being over the age of 60.

Child: (probably with others)

2. i. John.

SECOND GENERATION

WGH [2]. **JOHN² SKYDMORE**, presumably the son and heir of Richard (no. 1) Skydmore, was born in the general area of 1510 at Mayshill, Westerleigh.

He is first found listed in a muster taken in the tithing of Westerleigh in 1542. The muster is divided into two columns of able bodied men as "archers able" and a slightly longer list of "bylemen able." John Skydmore is listed with the able archers. The tithing had also furnished harness (armor) for four men and two archers and two billmen.

William Barlow, the new Bishop of Bath and Wells, came to his palace at Wells in February 1548. Three months later on the 20th of May he was forced to yield several of his manors including the hundred of Pucklechurch and the manors of Pucklechurch and Westerleigh to the Crown. This was doubtless to increase the wealth of the Crown, at the demand of Edward Seymour, the Duke of Somerset, the Protector. However it is very confusing to find that eleven days after this bishop Barlow gave a lease of the same properties to Sir Nicholas Poyntz (1510-1556) of Iron Acton which adjoins Westerleigh. Poyntz had by this a Pucklechurch Hundred and both manors for forty-two years at a rent of £80 3s 3³/₄d.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰Poyntz was imprisoned in the Tower during the winter of 1551-2 as a close adherent of Edward Seymour, the Duke of Somerset. His daughter Jane Poyntz married Sir John Seymour, an illegitimate son of the Duke and ancestor to the Seymour family who were lords of Frampton Cotterell which adjoins Iron Acton. See "Poyntz of Tylston Lodge" in *Burke's Landed Gentry*, 18th edition, (London, 1965-72). I, 579-81.

¹⁵¹The royal party on this Progress in 1535 later stayed six days in November with Sir John Seymour at Wulf Hall in Great Bedwyn, Wiltshire. This was an unadorned half-timbered house, the home of Henry VIII's later wife Jane Seymour (and her brother Edward who became the Protector of Edward VI).

¹⁵²Phyllis M. Hembry, *The Bishops of Bath and Wells 1540-1640, Social and Economic Problems* (The Athlone Press, 1967), 107, 109-11.

The subsequent history of the manor of Westerleigh is clear as it was granted outright on 8 December 1552 to Poyntz and worth then by itself £40 16s 2d. John Skydmore was probably one of the free tenants at Westerleigh who had paid an annual rent of £2 13s 10d to the bishop's steward but it seems likely that Poyntz asked more in rent to repay his investment.

Prior Holloway surrendered Bath Priory to the crown in January 1539. The church was then stripped of lead, iron and glass and left to decay. It is likely that John Skidmore went from Westerleigh to Abbey Church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Bath as it was a part of the domain of the Bishop of Bath and Wells who could call his tenants to Bath to help restore the fabric of the church there. John Skydmore was buried there on 20 October 1570.

Restoring the abbey was a popular cause and in 1574 Queen Elizabeth promoted the restoration of the church to serve as the grand parish church of Bath. She ordered that a national fund should be set up to finance the work.

The interior fan vaulting ceiling, originally installed by Robert and William Vertue, was restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott but not until between 1864 and 1874. The fan vaulting provided structural stability by distributing the weight of the roof down ribs that transfer the force into the supporting columns via the flying buttresses. Scott's work in the 1870s included the installation of large gas chandeliers made by the Coventry metalworker Francis Skidmore. They were converted to electricity in 1979. Other new features included a new pulpit and seating.

No probate has been found for John Skydmore who died in 1570, but it may be taken as certain that he is the father of three children, known siblings. It is not known where John and his children stood in matter religion which was terribly important in his lifetime and could destroy communities.

Children:

3. i. Richard, named for his father and his eldest son and heir.
4. ii. William.
- iii. Elizabeth. She never married and was buried promptly in the churchyard at St. Mary's, Thornbury, Gloucestershire on 18 September 1614 (the day of her death).

THIRD GENERATION

WGH [3]. **RICHARD³ SKYDMORE**, the son of John (no. 2) Skydmore, was born about 1540 at Mayshill, Westerleigh and was buried in the church or churchyard at St. James the Great, Westerleigh, on 16 October 1609. He married Mary, the daughter of John Hollister, who survived him and married Richard Agrove (1560-1634) of Thornbury, Gloucestershire, on 3 November 1614 as her second husband. She was buried at St. Mary's, Thornbury, as *Mary Grove* on 10 February 1634/5.

He lived on the freehold farm called Brownfield belonging to his grandfather of the same name at Mayshill. He is first mentioned 14 February 1582/3 when Joan Fowler, a widow in the adjoining parish of Wapley, appointed William Kylbey of Tormarton and Richard Skidmore of Westerleigh as overseers of her will signed on that day. On 22 June 1589 he was a witness to the will of William Fowler of Westerleigh, and on 2 July 1598 Christopher Fowler of Wapley was a witness to the will of John Skidmore the elder. All of this testifying back and forth between the Fowlers and the Skidmores certainly suggests that they were related in some unknown way. Much later Edward Fowler (1632-1714), a son of Richard Fowler of Westerleigh, became bishop of Gloucestershire who was kin in a distant, but ascertainable, degree of the Skydmores.

Christopher Hollister, a bachelor brother of Mary Skidmore, in his will of 11 December

1599 left one ewe sheep to her daughter Agnes Skidmore, a ram to her daughter Joyce Skidmore, and a ram to Mary, their mother. Thomas Hollister, the elder, who died in 1612, was an overseer of the will of his brother-in-law Richard Skidmore on 29 August 1609 and another Thomas Hollister (died 1639, the third son of the elder man) was named overseer to the will of James Skidmore on 14 June 1629. Mary Skidmore also had brothers William Hollister (the eldest, a yeoman), and John (living in 1629), together with a sister Agnes (died 1629) who married Nicholas Legg of Latteridge in Iron Acton, Gloucestershire.

Richard Skydmore was also a witness to the will of James Peryman of Westerleigh on 4 June 1589, and to the will of Robert Cornock on 16 December 1590. The will of Thomas Coke of Nibley in Westerleigh dated 16 December 1590 also remembers a debt of 10sh which he owed to Richard Skydmore.

In the great muster of the county taken in August 1608 (and printed in 1902 as *Men and Armour for Gloucestershire in 1608*) Richard Skidmore is not listed with the able bodied men between 16 and 60, but is noted at the end as being “Unable in body but hath one musket furnished.”

The will of Richard Skydmore, yeoman, is dated 29 August 1609 and was proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 30 November of the same year. Probate was given to the widow Mary Skydmore. In it he asks to be buried in the church or churchyard at Westerleigh, and he leaves 6sh 8d to the poor of the parish. To his son William he leaves all the debts due him at “Newbury Hungerford” in Berkshire which was then the center of the clothing business in the south of England. William was also left the debts owed him by John Showell of Cleeve, Gloucestershire, and by Christopher Horner of Bristol “which may be sued for at the cost and charges of my son William.” A search has been made, but no suits in chancery has been found as yet concerning these debts, so it would appear that the creditors happily had paid the sums owed to the testator to his son William without recourse to the courts. He confirmed to his daughter Agnes £20 previously given her which had since been borrowed by her brother William, John Love of Westerleigh, and Thomas Hollister. To his daughter Agnes he also left half his corn, half his hay, half his household stuff “within doors,” six kyne, and two calves. Agnes was still unmarried and early had not had anything in the way of a marriage settlement.

To his godchildren he left 12d each. To Mary Skydmore “my servant” and his niece, he left a calf and a heifer. To the children of his son James he left a yearling and a calf to be sold and the money divided between them, and a heifer to his granddaughter Mary Cornock. To his sons James and John, and his daughter Joyce “now wife of Christopher Cornock” he left 40sh each. To his son William he left “the great crock in the chamber in which I lie.” The residue was left to his wife Mary who was named as the sole executrix. Thomas Hollister and Christopher Cornock were to serve as overseers “and to them 3sh 4d each.” The will was written and witnessed by Reverend Robert Hooper, parson of Iron Acton, and Thomas Hollister was the other witness.

The widow remained for a time at Westerleigh. The will of Richard Fernely, another clothier of Mayshill, dated 1 December 1611 mentions a debt of £10 which he owed to the widow Mary Skidmore. She had moved to Thornbury by 9 August 1612 when she was a sponsor at the christening of her granddaughter Mary Lawrence at that place. She met and married Richard Agrove of Sibland in Thornbury, a widower, on 3 November 1614 at St. Mary’s, Thornbury. He was born in 1560 and was buried at the same church on 20 April 1634. His will left to his wife Mary “my best fflock bed, one pair of sheets, one pair of blanketts, two coverledds, one bolster, one coffer, one brass pann, one kettle, two crocks, six pieces of pewter, two candlesticks, one pewter pot, one faire tablebord with a frame, three gyne stools, one faire cubbord, and one bedstead which remayneth in the possession of Thomas Lawrence, my sonne-in-law” (by which stepson was meant). She also was to have a yearly annuity of £6 lawful money from his estate.

Richard Skydmore had six children, among them two sons named John. Probably one was named to honor his father John Skydmore and the other his wife's father John Hollister.

Children:

5. i. John, the elder. He died before his father, unmarried.
6. ii. James, his son and eventual heir.
7. iii. John, the younger.
8. iv. William.
- v. Joyce. She married Christopher Cornock on 8 November 1604 at North Nibley, Gloucestershire "by virtue of a license from Mr. Doctor Seaman, Chancellor of Gloucester." They lived at Mayshill in Westerleigh.
- vi. Agnes. She married Thomas Lawrence on 15 February 1609/10 at Iron Acton. They lived at The Hackett in Thornbury, Gloucestershire, where she was buried on 9 December 1612.

WGH [4]. **WILLIAM³ SKYDMORE (SCUDAMORE)**, was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh about 1545. He was doubtless over 60 in 1608 and a younger son of John (no. 2) Skydmore of that place. He is probably the William Skidmore who had a wife Isabel, and they were (with Margery Atkins, and Cicely Peryman) witnesses to the will of William Parker at Westerleigh on 18 November 1614. This is the last mention of this William living at Westerleigh. He was dead by 30 November 1615 when the administration of his estate was given to his son John Scudamore.

Much of what we know of this William Skidmore, alias Scudamore, comes from the long gossipy will of his sister Elizabeth who had gone in the 1590s to live in the household of Sir John Stafford at Marlwood Park in Thornbury, Gloucestershire. Sir John on the point of leaving for the expedition to Spain, left a will never probated (as he survived) on 10 May 1596 leaving £5 to Elizabeth Skidmore of his household. Sir John Stafford had served with Sir John Scudamore (1542-1623) of Holme Lacy as Gentlemen Pensioners at the court of Queen Elizabeth. Both his wife Lady Mary Scudamore (c.1550-1603) and Stafford's mother (who stayed frequently at Marlwood Park) had been ladies-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth.¹⁵⁵ It may be taken as likely that Elizabeth Skidmore heard some bits of news about the Scudamores at court, and probably introduced her father and the Westerleigh family to the return to the fashionable French spelling of their surname.

Elizabeth Skidmore was buried in the churchyard at St. Mary's, Thornbury, on 18 September 1614 leaving a long will dated the same day. She left Sir John Stafford the chest or coffer "now in the chamber within the dayhouse" and he was named the sole executor of her will. There were a multitude of other small bequests to Lady Dorothy Stafford, his wife, and to her other friends at Thornbury both in cash legacies and in personal property. She also remembered most of her nephews and nieces back at Westerleigh. To William Skidmore's son of Mayshill, she left 40sh of the £6 "which the William his father oweth me," and the other £4 she left to the two children of Christopher Cornock "which he had by Joyce the daughter of my brother Richard Skidmore." There were gifts of clothing and personalty to Mary, Elizabeth, and Margery "daughters of my brother William Skidmore," and to Mary Skidmore, her sister-in-law. She also remembered Mary, the daughter of Thomas Lawrence of The Hackett, Thornbury, and she left

¹⁵⁵See my *Occasional Paper*, no. 29 "Lady Mary Scudamore (c. 1550-1603), Courtier" on the Skidmore website.

“my great coffer and the linen in it at my decease” to the wife of William Croome of Westerleigh (who was the daughter of James Skidmore).

William Scudamore had died before 30 November 1615 when the administration on his goods was given to his natural son John Scudamore, and then to James Scudamore, a yeoman of Westerleigh, and Joseph Whitewood, a yeoman of Mangotsfield. John Scudamore came back three years later on 18 September 1618 and now known as “John Scudamore of Bath in the diocese of Bath and Wells administrator of all and singular the goods, rights and credits of William Scudamore, deceased, late while he lived of Westerleigh in the diocese of Gloucester concerning the amount rendered, and gave a new cause indemnifying the office in the sum of forty pounds.” It is not clear why a second probate was called for, but perhaps some further assets of the estate may have been found. Early his estate was of a respectable size for John Scudamore. now living at Bath, was bound for £40.

Only one son-in-law of William Scudamore of Mayshill has been identified. This was Joseph Whitehead (or Whitehead) of Wickwick, a hamlet in the adjoining parish of Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire. In 1608 Joseph *Whitwood* was a servant to Arthur Kemis, gentleman, of Wickwick, and was aged about 20 and of the tallest stature fit to make a pikeman. He was fined at the court held for Westerleigh on 30 October 1627 “for oppressing our common, 40sh.” He was buried as Joseph Whitehead on 23 April 1629 at Frampton Cotterell, leaving a will dated two days earlier naming his wife Margery his executrix. She survived him by only two years and was buried at the same church as Margerie Whitehead on 6 June 1631. Margerie *Whitwood* left a will mentions her four children John, Anne, Elizabeth and Katherine Whitewood, and made Richard Atwood and “my brother Thomas *Scidmore*” as her executors.

Mary and Elizabeth, the other two daughters of William Scudamore, were both apparently unmarried in 1614, and nothing more has been found about them.

Children:

9. i. Richard.
10. ii. William.
11. iii. John.
12. iv. Thomas.
- v. Mary. She was a servant to her uncle Richard Skidmore in 1609, and still unmarried when she was remembered in the will of her aunt Elizabeth Skidmore in 1614.
- vi. Elizabeth, living 1614.
- vii. Margery. Roger Kemys, a gentleman, of Wickwick in Frampton Cotterell, left her 10 shillings in his will proved 19 July 1610. She had married Joseph Whitewood (*alias* Whitehead), a yeoman, of Wickwick, by 1615. She was buried at St. Peter's, Frampton Cotterell on 6 June 1631.

FOURTH GENERATION

5. **JOHN⁴ SKIDMORE**, was born about 1560 at Mayshill, Westerleigh, the son of Richard (no. 3) and Mary (Hollister) Skidmore. He died there, unmarried, between 2 July and 1 November 1598 (the date and probate of his will), apparently a clothier like his father.

Nothing is known of this John except for the provisions of his own will proved at Gloucester. In it he directs to be buried in the churchyard at Westerleigh. He left to his brother John “the younger” and his two sisters Joyce and Agnes two kyne to be divided among them. The

children of his brother James were to have a shilling each to be paid from the hire of a cow in their father's possession, and the rest of the hire was to go to James Skidmore himself. To his sister Joyce he left $\frac{3}{4}$ of a yard of Stamell cloth. To his brother John and his sisters he left 13 shillings which John Dewes owed him for the hire of a cow in his hands. To his brother William Skidmore he left 13s 4d "which Langly owes me." To his cousin Mary (presumably the daughter of his uncle William Skidmore) he left 5 shillings. The rest of his estate was left to his brother John who was to be the whole executor. John Haller *major* (senior), Christopher Fowler, and John Skidmore were the witnesses.

WGH [6]. **JAMES⁴ SKIDMORE**, was born about 1565 at Mayshill, Westerleigh, the son and eventual heir of Richard (no. 3) and Mary (Hollister) Skidmore. He is called "of Ashbury" (a hamlet less than a mile south of Mayshill) at his burial in the church or churchyard of St. James the Great, Westerleigh, on 20 June 1629.¹⁵⁴ He married on 30 May 1585 Amy, the daughter of Reynold and Isabel Somerell, at St. Peter's in Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire.¹⁵⁵ Amy Skidmore, his widow, was living as late as 15 October 1634.

The first mention yet found of this James Skidmore is on 28 January 1590/1 in the will of Martin Neale of Westerleigh which mentions a debt of 12sh owed to him by James Skidmore. He and Edward Somerhill were witnesses on 18 November 1596 to the will of Margaret (Tillinge) Patch, a widow of Frampton Cotterell, and both are listed as indebted to her while she owed a debt to Christopher Hollister.

The will of Reynold Somerell of Frampton Cotterell was dated 26 August 1605 and left his daughter Amy, the wife of James Skidmore, one cow immediately after his decease and 5 shillings each to her children. The will of Isabell Somerell, his wife, on 13 December 1606 also remembers Amy Skidmore and her children so: "I give to Amy Skiddmore and unto John her son my greatest pan and my will is that the said Amy and John shall pay to Elizabeth the daughter of the said Amy 3sh 4d apiece." Her grandson John was also to have a coffer in the parlor, and her daughter Amy Skidmore was to have half her wearing apparel except for her best hat which was to go to Isabel's sister, Sibell Dagg. Amy Skidmore was also to have a bordcloth (tablecloth), and her daughter Elizabeth Skidmore was left a pewter basin. Nicholas Whitehead was one of the witnesses to her will.

The muster of 1608 lists James Skidmore as a husbandman and says that he was then about 50, and a "trayned soldyer of middle stature fitt to make a musketyer." An undated Lay Subsidy was taken of Pucklechurch Hundred in the 1620s. There were 15 personages who were taxed as of subsidy rank at Westerleigh (three Hollisters among them) but James Skidmore is curiously missing probably as he was then living at Frampton Cotterell.

On 21 October 1624 James Skidmore and William Croome, his son-in-law, are among the jurors for the King in a view of frankpledge held at Westerleigh. The manorial records, almost totally lost in the medieval period, happily survive for the years 1625 to 1653 in the Court Book kept for Westerleigh during the time of the Stuarts. On 6 April 1626 James Skidmore was the foreman of the jury charged with making the ameracements on the local residents.

The will of James Skidmore was dated 14 June 1629 and directs that he be buried in the church or churchyard at Westerleigh. To his son John he left a tablebord, benches, and a wainscot in the hall of his house, excepting only the cupboard which was to go to his daughter Elizabeth Croome. To his son John he left all his tools of iron "such as shovels and axes" and all other

¹⁵⁴Ashbury is a place-name now lost. On the 1830 Ordnance Survey map it was on a knoll at coordinates 156-682812.

¹⁵⁵This name is sometimes found as Sommerhill or Summerill.

implements about his house which should be remaining at the death of his executrix. The furnishings of his hall were not to be delivered to his son John and his daughter Elizabeth until after the death of his wife “and further my will is that all things mentioned shall remain after the decease of my son John unto the next survivor of my name ensuing.” And to his granddaughters Ann and Isabell Skidmore, daughters of his son Richard, he left a bond dated 1 March 1616 wherein Robert Hobbes, the younger, was bound to pay him £40 on the death of his father Robert Hobbes, the elder. All the rest of his goods and chattels were left to his wife who was named the sole executrix. The overseers were Thomas Roach of Nibley, Thomas Hollister of Natrig Hill, “and to each of them 8d each.” The witnesses were his sons John, Richard and Gilbert. The last two, while witnesses, did not benefit from his will. A curious note on the back of his will mentions “Detts owed by Mr. James Skidmore to Mr. Hobbs of Cowley in ye countie of Somerset, fowerteene pounds.”

On 6 June 1631 Nathaniel Cope, a tanner at Westerleigh, mentions in his will his debts owed to the widow Skidmore and William Prigge for horse hides purchased from them. William Croome, Amy Skidmore’s son-in-law, was a witness to Cope’s will. At the manorial court on 14 October 1629 we find “Item we present that Edward Milles is to make an adequate fence and ditch from the land of the widow Skidmore as far as the lane by the house of John Pickard before the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary next (25 March 1630) upon pain to forfeit 10sh.” On 15 October 1634 at the manorial court it is recorded that “Item we present that the widow Skidmore is to make and repair her ditch and fence between *her land called Brownfield* and Ashbury Hill before the feast of the Birth of Christ next, upon pain to forfeit 5sh.”

James Skidmore was early (like his father) a tolerably wealthy yeoman who also aspired to be buried within the church. He was able to afford the apprenticing of all four of his younger sons to tradesmen in Bristol, while eldest son John could count on inheriting what was doubtless a profitable estate in Brownfield after the death of his mother.

Children:

13. i. John, baptized on 7 January 1587/8 at Frampton Cotterell, his son and heir.
- ii. Elizabeth, born about 1590. She had married (by 1614) William Croome of Westerleigh. She was buried in the church of St. James the Great, Westerleigh, on 9 May 1637.
14. iii. Richard, born about 1595 at Westerleigh.
15. iv. James, baptized 22 July 1599 at Westerleigh.
16. v. Gilbert, baptized January 1601/2 at Westerleigh.
- vi. Reynold, baptized September 1605 at Westerleigh. He had the uncommon given name of his grandfather Somerell. Nothing more has been learned of him and he may not have survived to adulthood.

WGH [7]. **JOHN⁴ SKIDMORE**, the younger, was born about 1570 at Mayshill, Westerleigh, the son of Richard (no. 3) and Mary (Hollister) Skidmore. He died, possibly in Ireland, but perhaps more likely at Berkeley, Gloucestershire. This borough (which was governed by a mayor and alderman) was about 12 miles north of Westerleigh. There are several entries in the register of St. Mary’s church there for what is probably the man from Westerleigh. However John is a very common given name in the period and we may be dealing with two different men.

Richard Skidmore, his father, had been a clothier with business interests at Newbury and Hungerford in Berkshire which suggests that he was the John Skidmore who had children baptized in 1590 and 1593 at Newbury, and in 1603 and 1607 at Hungerford. Both places were centers of

the clothing business. The registers are both reasonably complete between 1593 and 1603 and the John Skidmore of that place disappears completely between these dates so he may have been back in Gloucestershire or elsewhere, possibly even in Ireland. These children are presented for him as the *Westerleigh* John, although we have only circumstantial evidence for the identification. No further record has been found of the Berkshire man or his children (who happily had rather uncommon given names) elsewhere in England, unless he did go eventually to Berkeley (which was like Newbury and Hungerford a town and not a rural parish).

Our next probable mention of him is in the parish of Wickwar, about five miles north of Westerleigh, where he was presented to the Consistory court at Gloucester 17 June 1607 on a suspicion of incontinence with Joan Sims at Doynton, Gloucestershire. The same charge was presented in the record one month later calling John Skidmore “now of Deynton.” He replied to the court soon after from Doynton on 23 September 1608 saying that it was four years since this matter had first been presented and that *Joane Simes* had died “nere fower yeres a goe.” He also deposed at the same time that “he is presently to depart unto Ireland upon necessary suytes.” This last statement may have been only a diversion which he hoped would put an end to the proceedings against him.

The only John Skidmore in Gloucestershire in the muster of 1608 was (perhaps significantly) a *weaver*, aged about 40, and of “lower stature fitt to serve with a calyver” living now at Berkeley, noticed above. He married Mary Tyson on 16 April 1608 at Berkeley, but they had no children christened there.

He was left a legacy of 40 shillings in the will of his father Richard Skidmore on 29 August 1609 but unfortunately his abode is not given. He was buried at Berkeley on 16 May 1629 but no probate has been found on his estate. His widow Mary Scidmore married Richard Davis, a widower, on 22 June 1636 at Berkeley.

Children: (Possible, as known)

- i. Underwood, baptized 19 July 1590 at St. Nicolas, Newbury, Berkshire. No burial has been found but he died young.
- ii. Bridget (Brigit), baptized 11 February 1592/3 at Newbury. [This given name was probably more common in Ireland than Berkshire.]
- iii. Underwood, baptized 3 July 1603 at St. Lawrence’s, Hungerford, Berkshire.
- iv. Benjamin, baptized 16 August 1607 at Hungerford.

WGH [8]. **WILLIAM⁴ SKIDMORE**, was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh, about 1570, the son of Richard (no. 3) and Mary (Hollister) Skidmore. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the three men of this name living at Westerleigh before 1615, but we believe this is the William Skidmore who had died before 12 March 1622/3 at Westerleigh, when the administration on his estate was granted to his widow Joan Hooper. If this is so, then this William had a wife Joan who had married before the date of his probate Robert Hooper as her second husband.

On 7 May 1605 William Skydmore appeared at the Consistory Court at Gloucester on a charge of defamation brought against Francis Nash *alias* Dewse of Westerleigh. Nash, who was a warburner at Westerleigh aged about 40 in 1608, had accused William Skidmore of unlawfully having carnal knowledge of the body of one Elizabeth Long who was the wife of Henry Long of Westerleigh.¹⁵⁶

In the muster of 1608 this William Skidmore was aged about 40, of middle stature fit to

¹⁵⁶*Gloucester Diocesan Records* /B4/1/2727.

make a musketeer, and already a trained soldier and a “subsidy man.” He was also a *warburner*, an occupation which has defied definition.

The will of Thomas Peryman of Mayshill dated 6 February 1613 mentions a debt of 2s 8d owed him by William Skidmore of Mayshill, and 15d owed him by James Skidmore of the same place.

Two sons have been assigned to this William Skidmore extracted from the surviving Bishop’s Transcripts, without any real authority to do so. However it seems certain that he was older than his cousin William (no. 10) and these sons early are not the children of his uncle William (no. 4). William Skidmore (no. 10) appears to have been unmarried in 1608, and as the child James born in this year was probably named for his uncle this attribution of his parentage is likely to be the correct one.

On 12 March 1622/3 the administration on the goods of William Skidmore, late of Westerleigh, was given to Robert Hooper and Joan, his wife, the relict of William Skidmore. Christopher Cornock of Westerleigh (who would have been a brother-in-law of the deceased if all of our identification is correct) was the bondsman and bound in the sum of £8.

Children: (Probable, as known)

- i. James, baptized 7 January 1607/8. No further record.
- ii. Richard, baptized 28 December 1612. No further record.

WGH [9]. **RICHARD⁴ SKIDMORE**, the father of Thomas Skidmore of New England, was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh, about 1580 the son of William (no. 4) Skidmore (or Scudamore). He was buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity, at Westbury-on-Trym, Gloucestershire, on 25 November 1606. He had married Annes [Agnes], a daughter of Richard Lawrence, on 4 September 1604, who had been christened as his daughter of 28 April 1583 at Horfield, Gloucestershire (which adjoins Westbury-on-Trym). Agnes Skidmore, the widow, married John Cooke as her second husband.

Westbury-on-Trym is about 12 miles west of Westerleigh and is now a part of metropolitan Bristol. Annes Lawrence was an orphan at the time of her marriage to Richard Skidmore. Richard Lawrence, a stonemason of that place, had been buried on Christmas Day 1603 leaving a will dated two days earlier. In it he left his daughter Annes “half my household stuff and the whole and entire sum of £13 6s 8d of good English money.” He was also survived by two sons Robert Lawrence (baptized 15 June 1585 at Horfield) and Thomas Lawrence (whose christening has not been found). Annes Skidmore also had a stepmother Joan Lawrence, and Joan’s son Richard Hewes was a stepbrother.

Richard Skidmore returned soon after his marriage to Westerleigh for he and his wife were presented to the Consistory Court (known familiarly sometimes as the “bawdy court”) on 12 December 1604 called “of Westerleigh” on a suspicion of incontinence before marriage. It is likely that Annes Skidmore was already visibly with child. This was a frequent offense, and it was invariably treated with relative leniency by the court.

Less than two years later Richard Skidmore was dead at Westbury-on-Trym, probably after an accident as his will states that he was “broke in body.” He is called a carpenter in his will, and he left his wife a debt (probably wages) of 35 shillings owed him by Stephen Hiett (1561-1618), a local yeoman. All of his estate was to be divided between his wife, who was named executrix, and his son Thomas. The will was written by the Reverend Christopher Trumper, curate of Westbury-on-Trym, in the very familiar hand found in the parish register of Holy Trinity which

Trumper kept. Trumper and Alice Sheppard were the two witnesses. Alice Sheppard had been betrothed to Thomas Lawrence, the brother of Annes Skidmore. He was buried on 27 April 1606 at Holy Trinity. He left a brief will (spoken in the presence of his brother Robert Lawrence and Robert's wife) in which he directed that Alice Sheppard, his contracted wife, should have the administration of his goods.

The will of Richard Skidmore was probated at Bristol on 12 September 1607, and the administration was granted to the widow. On 27 September 1608 she married John Cooke of Westbury-on-Trym. Their children, christened at Westbury-on-Trym, were half-brothers and sisters of Thomas Skidmore. None of them are known to have followed him to New England.

Children: (Surnamed *Cooke*)

- i. Mary, baptized 4 March 1608/9.
- ii. Isabel, baptized 21 March 1610/1.
- iii. Martha, baptized 24 February 1613/4.
- iv. Arthur, baptized 27 May 1616. He was buried 18 October 1616.
- v. William, baptized 5 October 1617. He was buried 12 October 1617.
- vi. Dorothy, baptized 19 May 1619. She was buried 23 March 1632/3 as "ye daughter of Annes Cooke."
- vii. John, baptized 14 November 1621.
- viii. Silvester, a daughter, baptized 30 September 1625.

This list of Cooke children is to be received with some caution for there were two John Cookes in the parish, but as the other was a gentleman (and is usually so identified) the above list seems probable. No probate has been found for either John or his wife Annes Cooke, and we do not know how many of their children may have survived to adulthood.

Two burials are found at Holy Trinity for women who might have been the mother of Thomas Skidmore. An Agnes Cooke was buried on 30 July 1639, and an Agnes Cooke "widow" on 24 November 1655.

Child:

WFF [1]. i. Thomas Skidmore (Scudamore), born 1605, who left for Massachusetts by 1636.

WGH [10]. **WILLIAM⁴ SKIDMORE**, was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh, about 1585 the son of William (no. 4) Skidmore (or Scudamore). He can probably be identified with the burial for a William Skidmore at Henbury, called "a poore man of Westerleigh," whose burial is found in the register of St. Mary's church there on 12 October 1640. Henbury is a large parish that adjoins Westbury-on-Trym.

In the muster of 1608 this William was called a carpenter aged 20 and "of middle stature fitt to make a musketyer."

It is difficult to separate this man from his cousin of the same name (no. 8) but he is probably the William Skidmore of Westerleigh who on 23 September 1613 was detected on a suspicion of incontinence with Anne Androwe *alias* Smith and was cited to the Consistory Court at Gloucester. He was purged to produce four witnesses to testify on his behalf, but failed to do so and was ordered to appear. He did not appear, possibly because he had already married Anne Androwe *alias* Smith.

He is remembered in the will of his aunt Elizabeth Skidmore on 18 September 1614. To

William Skidmore's son of Mayshill, she left 40 shillings of the £6 "which the William his father oweth me." William Skidmore, the younger, is not mentioned in the administration papers of his father in 1615.

He was present at two courts held for Westerleigh on 21 October 1624, and again on 19 October 1626. On 23 October 1628 he was presented to the same court for a "bloodshed upon Steven Pullen with a chesill" for which he was fined 3s 4d, and then disappears.

This William Skidmore appears to have been the "black sheep" of the Westerleigh family. He was gone from Westerleigh, and perhaps pointedly was not mentioned in 1636 in the probate of his bachelor brother Thomas Skidmore.

Child: (Probable)

- i. Ann. She was married (as Ann Scudamore) to Richard Conoway by licence on 4 July 1639 at Henbury.

WGH [11]. **JOHN⁴ SKIDMORE**, was born about 1587 at Mayshill, Westerleigh, the son of William (no. 4) Skidmore or Scudamore. He was buried at the Abbey Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Bath, Somerset, on 2 February 1636/7. He was twice married, 1stly to Mary Clement on 27 February 1613/4 at St. James, Bath who was buried 1 August 1615 at the church of St. Thomas a Beckett, Somerset. He married secondly Joan, a daughter of William Bowes of Claverton, Somerset, at Claverton in 1617. Joan was the mother of all his surviving children. At the time of this marriage he was identified as "of St. James's within the city of Bath." Joan Skidmore was buried 26 October 1665 at the Abbey Church, Bath, and left a will (now lost) that was recorded at the Bishop's Court at Bath.

He is probably the John Skidmore cited to the Consistory Court at Gloucester on 4 January 1603/4 for teaching a school at Westerleigh without a licence.

In the muster of Gloucestershire in 1608 he was noted as aged about 20, and a servant to Richard Blosser, a weaver, and "of lower stature fitt to serve with calyver."

He was presumably still living at Westerleigh on 30 November 1615 when he was granted the administration of his father's estate, but was living at Bath when he obtained an acquittance on 18 September 1617 after settling his father's affairs. He was living in Bath in the mid-1620s when an undated lay subsidy survives for Somerset.

On 23 February 1627/8 John Skidmore was a yeoman of Widcombe, Somerset, when he had a bond for £80 from Robert Fisher for a payment of a house purchased by Fisher from Skidmore.

He was buried on 2 February 1637 at Bath. His original will was lost in the German bombing of Exeter in World War II, but fortunately an excellent abstract of it was made before the war. It was dated 31 January 1637, and from it we find that this John Skidmore (Scudamore) was a blacksmith. (It would be interesting to know if Thomas Skidmore of New England might have learned this trade from his uncle.) He left his five children John, Joan, William, Alice and Robert £20 each. His wife was to have his house in Cheap Street in Bath (in the shadow of the great Abbey Church) and after her death it was to go to his son John who was then to pay further legacies of £13 6s 8d to his brothers and sisters. If John should die before his mother, or refuse to pay the legacies, then it was to go to his son William who was to pay the survivors £20 each, and if William should also have died, then to his son Robert, and then to his daughters. His wife was named his executrix, and the overseers were *his uncle William Robins*, and his brother-in-law Richard Druce. The witnesses were William Bowes, William Robins, Richard Druce, and Robert

Rendell.

His brother-in-law Richard Druce was Lord Mayor of Bath in 1649, and had married Alice Bowes (born 1600) at Bathwick on 20 January 1622/3. Probability would suggest that his uncle William Robins of Bath was, in fact, his wife's uncle but it is not beyond possibility that Robins' wife was a daughter of the John Skidmore buried in the Abbey Church on 20 October 1570 if this man was the testator's grandfather. The precise relationship of Robins to Skidmore awaits some further evidence.

Joan Skidmore prospered and survived her husband at Bath by several years. On 22 February 1636/7 she was named one of the two executors of Thomas Skidmore of Westerleigh, no doubt to protect the interest of her children in the estate. Thomas Skidmore (Scudamore), of New England, was the other. On 4 May 1641 she was assessed 8 shillings on £1 in land at Bath Forum in the parish of St. Peter and St. Paul in a lay subsidy raised in the county.

On 12 May 1654 Robert Fisher of the city of Bath brought a suit in chancery against Joan Skidmore (PRO, C3/433/27). He complained that by deed of 23 February 1627 he became bound for £80 to John Skidmore, her husband, conditioned for the repayment of £43 4s 0d which he repaid with interest at or near the prescribed time of payment. Joan Skidmore refused, according to Fisher, to give up the deed although he had been frequently asked her to do so.

She was buried 26 October 1665 at the Abbey Church. Joan Skidmore also left a will which was destroyed in the bombing of Exeter, but unfortunately no copy of it is known to exist.

Children: (First wife)

- i. Mary, baptized 27 February 1614/5 at St. James, Bath. A few weeks later she was also christened on 9 March 1614/5 at the Abbey Church in Bath. She was buried 15 January 1616/7 at Widcombe, Somerset.

(Second wife, born at Widcombe)

18. ii. John, his heir, baptized 10 May 1618.
- iii. Joan, baptized 26 March 1620. She married Henry Coombes on 16 July 1639 at the Abbey Church, Bath.
- iv. William, baptized 21 September 1621 at St. Thomas a Beckett, Widcombe (now a part of Bath), Somerset. He had died beyond the seas, a bachelor, before 19 November 1657. He went with his brother John to London where he was apprenticed on 13 February 1638/9 for eight years to his uncle Robert Bowes, a merchant taylor of St. Saviour's, Southwark. He lived with his uncle in that parish across the Southwark Bridge over the Thames from the city of London. He was admitted a Freeman of London on 8 December 1647. He died abroad (the country is unfortunately left unstated) and the administration on his estate was granted on 19 November 1657 to his uncle Robert Bowes. The probate shows that his mother Joan Skudamore, his brothers John and Robert Skudamore, and Alice Wallis "*alias* Skudamore," had all renounced their right to administer his estate.
- v. Alice, baptized 29 March 1625. She married William Wallis and was buried 21 July 1668 at the Abbey Church, Bath.
- vi. Robert baptized 17 July 1627. He was buried 8 March 1659/60 at the Abbey Church, Bath.

12. **THOMAS⁴ SKIDMORE**, was born about 1589 at Mayshill, Westerleigh, the son of William (no. 4) Skidmore (Scudamore), and died there, a bachelor, before 14 September 1636.

In the muster of 1608 he was aged about 20 and a servant to Simon Smith, a husbandman in the adjoining parish of Wapley. He was then “of middle stature fitt to make a musketyer.”

On 21 October 1624 Thomas Skidmore held by indenture a messuage on Westerleigh Street in Westerleigh. On the same day it was ordered that “Item we present Thomas Skidmore to scour his ditch from the backside of Robert Good as far as the ditch of William Prigg before the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle next (21 December 1624) upon pain to forfeit 3sh 4d.” On 22 March 1630/1 Thomas Skidmore, senior and Thomas Skidmore, junior, uncle and nephew, listed together, are among those who attended and were fined to pay the expenses of the court. The younger man (the nephew) is Thomas Skidmore soon after in New England. Later in the same year (1631) Thomas Skidmore, the uncle, was named an overseer in the will of his sister Margery Whitewood.

On 26 February 1631/2 we find: “Item we present Thomas Skidmore to give security to the parish and its subtenants before the 16th day of April next upon pain to forfeit £5 or otherwise dispose.” This was one of a long series of similar entries at this court. It would appear that the common was overgrazed and those who had too many beasts there were to remove them. Against the name of Thomas Skidmore in the margin is *non fit* (not done) and on 11 October 1632 he, James Rogers, Robert Sherman, Mariam Browne (daughter of William Browne, gentleman) who had not complied with the first order were warned once again according to the first presentation.

The administration on his estate was first given on 14 September 1636 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury to John Ellerie of Westerleigh, a creditor. However on 22 February 1636/7 this grant was brought into court and revoked and a new grant was made to Thomas Skydmore, a nephew, and to Joan Skydmore, widow. The first of these was the New England man, and the second was Joan, the widow of his brother John of Bath.

FIFTH GENERATION

WGH [13]. **JOHN⁵ SKIDMORE**, was baptized in 1587 at the church dedicated to St. Peter at Frampton Cotterell, the son of James (no. 6) and Amy (Somereil) Skidmore. He was living 26 September 1633 at Westerleigh. He married Elizabeth, a daughter of John Parker, on 15 June 1618 at St. Mary’s, Thornbury, Gloucestershire.

He is remembered in the wills of his Somereil grandparents and on 29 September 1614 gave a bond of £10 at the apprenticing of his younger brother James Skidmore at Bristol.

He was heir to this father and doubtless farmed the acres at Brownfield that had been held by his ancestors at least as early as the reign of Henry VIII. As one of the more substantial freeholders of the parish he was present at almost every sitting of the Westerleigh Court from Michaelmas 1626 forward. He is last mentioned as present at court on 26 September 1633, and then disappears having presumably died. No probate has been found for him.

The will of John Parker, of Thornbury, dated 28 March 1626, gave a pewter platter to John and Elizabeth Skidmore, two of his grandchildren. It would seem likely that there were other younger children of whom we have no present knowledge.

Children: (As known)

19. i. Edward, born about 1619.
- ii. John, baptized 22 March 1621/22 at Westerleigh.
- iii. Elizabeth, living 1626.

WGH [14]. **RICHARD⁵ SKIDMORE** was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh, about 1595, the son of James (no. 6) and Amy (Somerell) Skidmore. He may be the Richard Skidmore who married Elizabeth Jezoppe on 26 October 1636 at St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol as a second or later wife.

Richard Skidmore was apprenticed at Bristol on 20 January 1609/10 to John Tym, a cooper, and Blanche his wife. He finished the term of apprenticeship and was admitted a Freeman of Bristol as a hooper on 6 August 1617.

His daughters are remembered in the will of their grandfather in 1629 but nothing else is known of them. No probate has been found for Richard Skidmore at Bristol, but it should be noticed that the administrations on intestates are missing before 1770 in the Bristol Diocese.

Children:

- i. Ann, living 1629. No further record.
- ii. Isabel, living 1629. No further record.

15. **JAMES⁵ SKIDMORE** was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh, and christened there in the church of St. James the Great on 22 July 1599, the son of James (no. 6) and Amy (Somerell) Skidmore. He probably died before his father.

He was apprenticed at the age of 15 to Edmund Belsier, a soap chandler of Bristol, and Agnes his wife, on 29 September 1614. His older brother John Skidmore was bound in the sum of £10 to pay for the expense of the apprenticeship. He was never admitted as a Freeman which suggests that he may have died before he had completed the term of his apprenticeship.

Neither he nor his brother Gilbert were remembered in the will of their father.

16. **GILBERT⁵ SKIDMORE**, the son of James (no. 6) and Amy (Somerell) Skidmore, was born at Mayshill, Westerleigh, and christened there in January 1601/2. He married Deborah Jeffery at St. Augustine, Bristol on 26 November 1629.

He was apprenticed to Edward Wickes, a house carpenter, and Elinor his wife, at Bristol on 13 July 1620, and was admitted as a Freeman of Bristol as a carpenter on 29 July 1628.

He was a witness to the will of his father but did not benefit from it. He was dead by 25 January 1643/4 when a probate inventory (valued at £5) was taken of the estate of the widow Deborah *Skeedmore*, late of St. Peter's parish in Bristol. The inventory was made by William Workman and William Alderson, and it shows that Deborah Skidmore died in rather poor circumstances. Her wearing apparel was valued at £2 10sh, and a chattle lease on her house was worth only £1 according to the appraisers. Her personal property included a flockbed, two pillow *beares* (cases), ten pieces of pewter, a little table and carpet, a dripping pan, and not much else. The probate three days later supplies some final news on poor Deborah Skidmore: "Item paid for the funerall £2.00.00."

WFF [1]. **THOMAS⁵ SKIDMORE (SCUDAMORE)**, born in 1605 the son of Richard (no. 9) and Annes (Lawrence) Skidmore. He married Ellen, probably a daughter of William Prigge, and went to Boston, Massachusetts in 1636 where he left a large posterity.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷See my book *Thomas Skidmore (Scudamore) 1605-1684, of Westerleigh, Gloucestershire, and*

WGH [18]. **JOHN⁵ SCUDAMORE (SKIDMORE)** was christened 10 May 1618 at St. Thomas a Beckett, Widcombe (now part of Bath), Somerset, the son of John (no. 11) and Joan (Bowes) Skidmore. He married firstly _____ Wilde, and secondly Catherine Cutts, a widow (who married John Rowland as her third husband on 18 November 1680 at St. James, Duke's Place, London). John Scudamore died in the parish of St. Michael's, Paternoster Royal, London, "of ye stoping of ye stomach" and was buried there on 7 May 1674 leaving a will dated four days Earlier.

He had been apprenticed to John Cooper, a merchant tailor of Lombard Street, London on 5 September 1631 for a term of eight years, and was admitted a freeman of London on 16 October 1639. He practiced this trade thereafter in the parish of St. Michael's, Paternoster Royal, in London.

The will of Hannah Wilde, a widow of St. John's, Walbrook, London, dated 30 March 1651 and proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, mentions her son-in-law John Skidmore and her grandson Robert Skidmore and left each of them 12d.

John Scudamore died in the parish of St. Michael's, Paternoster Royal, in the city of London, leaving a will dated 3 May 1674. He left his son Robert Skidmore £50 to be paid within six months after his death. To his three grandchildren John, Robert, and Hannah Scudamore he left £20 each. This was to be paid for them twelve months after his decease to Mr. William Hill and to his kinsman Robert Bowes of *Lumbert* (Lombard) Street in London, to be put out to earn interest for his grandchildren "at the best advantage." He left £20 for his funeral expenses, and 20sh to the poor of the parish. He left his friends William Hill and Robert Bowes 10sh each to buy mourning rings. His wife Catherine was to have the rest of his estate, and she was to serve as executrix. A codicil to his will remembers his son-in-law (stepson) John Cutts. The will was proved on 15 October 1674 at the Peculiar of Arches, and is now at the Lambeth Palace Library. A later probate shows that Catherine, his widow, had married John Rowland who was dead by 27 July 1686 when his estate was administered by his son Thomas Rowland.

We know a great deal about this family from a manuscript pedigree set down by George Beale Scudamore (1789-1876), a descendant, and the first genealogist of the family. He lived in the 1820s at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, London, and later at Walworth and Bethnal Green. According to him this John Scudamore (born 1618), his great-great-great-great-grandfather, was a knight (which was not the case, alas) while Robert Scudamore, his only son, is said (quite correctly) to have been a weaver and a freeman of London who was dead in 1682. His account of his later family has been verified by written evidences, and it has been used in this work.

Children: (First wife)

20. i. Robert born about 1640.
(Second wife)
- ii. Hannah. She was buried in the north aisle of St. Michael's, Paternoster Royal, on 8 December 1664.
- iii. John. He died "of a consumption" and was buried in the middle of the north aisle at St. Michael's, Paternoster Royal on 16 July 1671.

Fairfield, Connecticut, his ancestors and descendants to the ninth generation.

SECTION SEVEN

The Skidemores of Waddeston, Buckinghamshire

The Courtenay family of Okehampton held a number of other manors outside Devon in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Somerset and elsewhere. One of particular interest was at Waddesdon where John Skydemore came out of Devon as a tenant of Edward de Courtenay (*ca.*1357-1419), the third Earl of Devon.¹⁵⁸

FIRST GENERATION

1. **JOHN SKYDEMORE**, is found there at Eythrope, a manor which had been carved out of the modern parishes of Waddeston and Wotton Underwood.¹⁵⁹ His place of birth in Devon is unknown. He seems to have had some training in the law, and soon after was styled a gentleman.

He was a man of affairs with many friends or clients that he testified for or obliged about Buckinghamshire. On 30 July 1401 John Skydmore (whose abode is not given) gave a bond of £40 in chancery for Richard Symeon of Oving, Buckinghamshire, that “Symeon would not do or procure no hurt or harm to John Crawford.”

Skydmore’s right to certain tenements in North Marston in Buckinghamshire were given to him on 6 October 1408.¹⁶⁰ Then Skidmore, now called “of Devon” was a mainpernor on 3 January 1411/2 for Thomas Pyfit of Lincoln in a suit brought by John Ryle, a goldsmith of Lincoln.

On 4 January 1420 John Skydemore was appointed her attorney by Lucy, the wife of Richard d’Arches, to deliver the seisin of certain lands there.¹⁶¹ The manor of Eythrope in Waddesdon was held separately from Waddesdon by the d’Arches family until Joan d’Arches (died 1496), the heiress of Richard d’Arches, married John Dinham of Devon (see the Dynham family below) and Eythrope passed to that family.

On 20 January 1424/5 Thomas atte Welle granted land to him in Aylesbury, one of a number of subsequent transactions with Skydemore.¹⁶²

At Easter in 1426 John Skydmore, called a “gentleman of Eythrope” was the defendant in a case where he was accused of not paying back bonds which he been given to hold in safe keeping. He pleaded that he was only to pay back the bonds when certain conditions had been fulfilled and this had not been done. He requested that the court should warn Henry Cryps who was a gentleman of Oxfordshire and owner of the bonds before they were repaid.¹⁶³

On 5 September 1438 John Scudamore *alias* Shepard of Dorton, Buckinghamshire (about

¹⁵⁸VCH, Buckingham, IV.

¹⁵⁹It is called Grendon Underwid on some old maps.

¹⁶⁰PRO, CP 25/1/22/114, number 10. Marston, which lies a few miles north, was loosely linked to Waddesdon

¹⁶¹PRO, AR/1/909.

¹⁶²Papers of the Hampton family of Droitwich, at the Worcestershire Record Office.

¹⁶³PRO, CP 40/661, rot. 347d.

four miles from Waddesdon), gave a quitclaim deed as a kinsman and heir of John Segrim of Boarstall, Buckinghamshire.¹⁶⁴ John Skydmore of Eythrope seems to have been nearly related to the Wymond family noticed next.

Children: (perhaps with others)

2. i. George, of whom further.
3. ii. William, born about 1420, noticed hereafter.

Oxford

2. GEORGE SKYDMORE, He was apparently apprenticed to a master butcher of Oxford, and is first noticed there 17 January 1433 when he and Thomas Wymond of Oxford (very possibly his kinsman or master) had a grant of a messuage with crofts, gardens and curtilages in the parish of St. Michael's South for the sum of £32.¹⁶⁵

At an unknown date he gave a silver secular cup to the church at Marston, Oxfordshire. It is almost six inches tall, on a pedestal base decorated with three *talbots* (hounds) which recalls the three lions on a coconut cup at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. Both date from the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The Marston Cup has the name of a previous owner **George Skydmore** scratched on the bottom, but it was probably used as a chalice in the church despite its secular appearance and origin.¹⁶⁶

On 5 April 1435 George Skydmore, Thomas Wymond, and several other master butchers of Oxford came to an agreement that they would not trade on Sundays after eight o'clock in the town.

He was chamberlain for the town in 1449 and one of the two annual bailiffs as early as 1453 and then for several years thereafter. He was a parishioner of St. Michael's church at Southgate and he and three other parishioners had a grant from the burgesses of a *turrell* (a store house) by the gate.

In 1445 he had a lease for seven years from Sir Robert Corbet of a manor house in Tubney village about 10 miles southwest of Oxford. George Skydmore was to have, according to the lease, all the houses within the courtyard, that is the hall with the upper and lower chambers, and all the houses within the courtyard, the grange, the cowhouse and stable, with a garden adjacent, a meadow annexed, and two pastures called *Costowes*, *Westmeade*, *Westfelde* (with the right of rabbit-catching, without excessive destruction) and *Horsbriggenmeade*. "Provision was made for accommodating Corbet there if necessary, and for this Skydmore was to pay seven marks annually and two cartloads of best hay, and the royal taxation. He also agreed to "enclosing all the lands with hedges and ditches, and being liable to rebuild the hall if by negligence it be burned down."¹⁶⁷

On 29 September 1449 George Skydmore was named as the residuary legatee of Thomas Elkins, a Freemason of Oxford in his will.

In 1463 he was the tenant of land in the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Oxford, for which

¹⁶⁴Nothing more has been learned of the Segrim family in Buckinghamshire.

¹⁶⁵This is now the site of Christ Church College at Oxford.

¹⁶⁶"The Marston Chalice" was first noticed in a long article in *The Times* for Sunday, 27 August 1921. A longer article by E. Alfred Jones, with a fine photograph, is in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, XLI (December 1922), 274-6.

¹⁶⁷John Brooks, *Tubney, Oxfordshire: Medieval and Later Settlement*, Oxoniensus, XLIX (1984) 126.

he paid an annual rent of £8 to Osney Abbey.

He married, probably as his second wife, a widow Margaret Havell. On 4 November 1468 he and Margaret, and her son John Havell, had a lease for the term of three lives of a messuage in St. Michael's at Southgate. Nothing further has been learned of George Skydmore after this date.

3. WILLIAM SKYDMORE was born about 1420. He was apprenticed to Thomas Fawconer, a mercer of London, but was released from his indenture on 9 November 1434 on the grounds that Phillippa, the widow and executrix of Fawconer, had not taught or provided for him after her husband's death. On 5 November 1466 Thomas Gould, a yeoman, made a gift of all his goods and chattles to William Skydmore, a mercer of London. At Michaelmas in 1470 Skydmore was sued as one of the executors of John Derby of London. He may have been living as late as 28 January 1493/4 when William Wymond, dyer, Thomas Wymond, fuller, William Proude, draper, and William Skydmore, mercer, entered into a bond in the sum of £15 for the payment of a like amount into the chamber by William Wymond for the use of the children of John Pace, tallowchandler, deceased, when they marry or come of age. Nothing more has been learned of him.

Children: (as known)

4. i. John, of whom further.

4. JOHN SKYDMORE. a son of William Skydmore, is first noticed on 20 July 1446 in St. Michael's parish when he and another were sureties for Thomas Monmouth, master of Bedelly Hall, Oxford. He and John Havyl (presumably his half brother), butchers, were sureties on 22 April 1468 at Oxford, and on 12 February 1470 he, Stephen Havile, and others testified to a quitclaim deed for the same land where Christ Church College now stands that was once owned by his father. Nothing more is known of him. In 1464 an Edward Skydmore paid 8sh rent to Osney Abbey for a tenement in the parish of St. Peter le Bailey. No probate has been found of him.

APPENDIX TO GREAT SOMERFORD.

The abstracts of cases set down in the plea rolls were transcribed into “Law French.” They were set down in the long period when the common law was evolving, and were probably used by the young attorneys studying at the Inns of Court in London or been cited when a similar case came before the courts.

DANSY VS. SKIDMORE, 1330¹⁶⁸

CP40/roll/membrane. *Court of Common Pleas, 4 Edward III (1330), Hilary Term, 4 Edward III (1330), Plea No. 5, Folio No. 4a.* Marginal heading “Ayel.” Recorded in Law French.

Incipit [first line]: “*William le fitz Rog[er]. Daucy porta brief Daiel vers J[ohn] de Skidore, &demanda vi d. de rent.*” John “de Stouford” was attorney for the defendant Skidmore, and Roger “de Bankwell” for the plaintiff. Richard de Willoughby (Wilby) was the justice who presided.

Summary: In a writ of aiel¹⁶⁹, plaintiff William “le fitz Roger Dancy” demanded six pence of the rent of the seisin of his grandfather, alleging that his grandfather had enfeoffed Nicholas de B[urton] before the statute to hold of him and his heirs.¹⁷⁰ Defendant [John de Skidmore] alleged that the tenements were outside of plaintiff’s fee, and that plaintiff’s grandfather [William Dancy] had enfeoffed [Nicholas Murdak] to hold of the chief lord, so that he had nothing in the tenements after the feoffment. Issue was joined on whether the tenements were within plaintiff’s fee.¹⁷¹

Writ: In a writ of aiel, plaintiff demanded six pence of rent. Defendant alleged that the tenements were outside of plaintiff’s fee, judgment if without specialty he should be received. Plaintiff replied that he had demanded of the seisin of his grandfather, and thus his writ comprised a title of succession, where he should not by law make another title, and if the court awarded, he would say enough. [Richard de] Willoughby, J[ustice] C[ommon] P[leas] said, say then. Plaintiff asserted that his grandfather William [de Dancy] had been seised of the tenements of which etc., and had enfeoffed Nicholas de B[urton] of the tenements before the statute, to him and his heirs forever, to hold of him and his heirs, by fealty and by the services of six pence per year, of which rent plaintiff’s writ was now brought, and plaintiff’s grandfather had died seised of this estate, and so the tenements were within plaintiff’s fee. Defendant [Skidmore] said that plaintiff’s answer amounted to nothing more than that the tenements were within plaintiff’s fee, out of plaintiff’s fee, ready etc. Willoughby JCP asked how out of plaintiff’s fee, and said that it was necessary for defendant to answer to his deed that he alleged, for this was not a plea of replevin. Defendant alleged that plaintiff’s grandfather W[illiam] had enfeoffed N[icholas de] M[almesbury]. of these tenements, to him and his heirs forever, to hold of the chief lord of the

¹⁶⁸The original Latin text of this suit survives at Kew (CP40/280/4a) but has not yet been seen.

¹⁶⁹A writ of ayle was brought against a defendant who had dispossessed a plaintiff of land which his grandfather had died seized. It was similar to the writ of mort d’ancestor which served a plaintiff more closely related.

¹⁷⁰Nicholas “de B.” is the Nicolas “of Burton” (now Burton Hill) in Malmesbury, but also with an alternative surname Nicholas Murdak.

¹⁷¹The chief lord of the fee presumably was John Mautravers who died in 1341.

fee, which N[icholas] continued this estate until he enfeoffed R[oger de] Skidmore of these tenements forever, to have as above; R[oger] had enfeoffed defendant [John de Skidmore] to him and his heirs; and defendant said that he had never had anything in the tenements after the feoffment made to N[icholas], judgment if plaintiff would be received to say that the tenements were within his fee. Plaintiff said, within plaintiff's fee in the manner that he had said, ready. Defendant [Skidmore] said that the tenements had been outside of plaintiff's fee by a deed to which plaintiff's grandfather, of whose seisin etc. was party, to which it was necessary that plaintiff answer. Willoughby JCP said that plaintiff had claimed that his grandfather W[illiam] had enfeoffed N[icholas] M[urkak] to hold as above, and defendant did not show any other deed except what he said, by reason of which it was not necessary that plaintiff answer to what defendant said, but to aver that the tenements were within his fee etc., and thus they were at traverse, and what they said would be entered of the one part and the other in the manner that they had said, and on this to the contrary, etc.

ALDON VS. MURDAK, 1340¹⁷²

Placita de Banco. Hilary term, 14 Edward III (1340), Roll, membrane 183, dorso.

(43) Thomas de Aledone and Matilda his wife brought a writ of Dower against Walter de Skidemore and his son John.

–(Dorworthy). He (Nicolas) whose estate we have brought an assize of Novel Disseisen against Walter son of Walter, son of Walter de Pavely, the heir of whose endowment she demands, and it was found that he (Nicolas) was seised and disseised; and that the estate of her husband was mesne between the disseisin and the recovery; judgment.

–(W. Thorpe). The seisin of our husband is admitted, and we are strangers to the record on both sides; wherefore, judgment; for although we should desire to disprove the action of seise, he who is a stranger could not maintain another's suit or action.

–(Stouer). He has his estate and is tenant of the land; and if you demur, it is to the whole. – (W.Thorpe). We tell you that Nicolas whose estate, &c., was not disseised before the seisen of her husband, ready &c., This issue is double, either that he was never disseised to which you cannot be received in contradiction to the verdict – or that the disseisen was after the seisen of your husband.

–(Thorpe). So also the plea that he was never so seised that he could endow us is double; but it is a good issue; and nothing here lies in her but the disseisen before the seise of my husband which I have traversed and that is sufficient for me, and it would be unreasonable to compel me to admit a disseisin when perchance there never was any.

–(Stouer). By the manner of your plea it seems that a disseisen must be understood as not denied, and then this will be a reason that you should show the disseisen to have been at such a time that it does not oust you from your dower.

–(Thorpe) That is not necessary for I am charged only in respect of a certain time.

–(Stouford). Nicolas recovered, as above; and before the seisen and disseisin on which he recovered her husband had nothing.

–(Thorpe). The disseisin was not affected before the seisin of our husband' ready &c., and the otherside said the contrary.

¹⁷²*Year Books of the Reign of King Edward the Third*, Volume 20, Issue 20, edited by Alfred John Horwood, 314-15. Dorworthy, Thorpe and Stouer were attorneys presenting the pleas of their clients. The original suit in Latin is at Kew, CP40/321/183d.

APPENDIX TO TYTHERTON LUCAS

Inquest post mortem of Nicholas de Hamersham, lord of Compton, taken on Saturday next after the feast of St. Gregory, 2 Richard (14 March 1274) taken before Walter Lord, Subescheator of the County of Wiltshire. (The jury named.).

Rents and Services of those [Customars] holding Half Virgates of Land.

Walter Skidemore holds half a virgate of land, paying therefor yearly 6s. 8d. at the said terms [of Annunciation and Michaelmas] by equal portions, and he owes works which are worth 2s ³/₄d. Robert Gregory and Godia, the widow, and Robert Skidimore and John Gregory and Robert Holewee and Gregory Pyes and Will Welmed and Agnes, relic of Hugh, and Richard le Lung and Robert Gelus and Alice, the relict of Curtays, and Walter le Curtays and John le Monck and Godfrey Becar and Richard Skidemore and John Gelus and Elienor Monacha (?) and Geoffrey le Welbe and Gunild, the relict of the miller, and Nicholas ate Brok hold in like manner and service as the said Walter Skidemore.

Undated Charter. Philippa, the daughter of Alexandere de Ewyas and the widow of Robert le Chamberlang of Compton, granting with warranty in pure widowhood to Richard le Waleys, servant of the King of the Romans in Wilton, 1 messuage and ½ virgate of her inheritance in Teffont Evias, which were formerly held by Robert Novus, rendering 1d yearly at Easter to Philippa for all services. For this grant Richard has given 1 mark. Witnesses; Geoffrey le Chamberlang, Geoffrey Huse, Thomas de Kelewe, William de Douston, Robert Cole of the same, John de Babeton, Rrichard le Bunt, Robert Wariur, clerk.¹⁷³

De Banco Roll, 15 Henry VI (1436-7), membrane 327.¹⁷⁴

Wiltshire. Walter Strikland and Isabella, his wife, sued Nicholas Scudamore, in a plea of “*de nativitate*” claiming Hicolas as a fugitive villein tenant appendant to their manor of Compton Chamberlayn, and they stated that John Scudamore, the of the defendant, had been the villein tenant of Matilda, the great grandmother [*proava*] of Isabella, in the reign of Edward III, and from her they gave this descent: Matilda, was seised in the time of Edward III, by William [Olney], then John [Olney], then Isabella [Strikland], the plaintiff.¹⁷⁵

From John Scudamore, the villein tenant in the time of Edward III, they gave this descent of the defendant [Nicolas] - - John Scudamore, living in the time of Edward III, [who had] John the elder, Edmund [living 1436], John, the younger. Nicholas, the [son of?] John Scudamore, the elder, defendant, and still another John Scudamore, son of John Scudamore, the younger, [living 1436]. Edmund and John, the younger [uncles of Nicholas, the defendent], were present in Court, and acknowledged that they were the villein tenants of Isabella. As the Court was

¹⁷³*Hungerford Cartulary*, no. 674. There are some 68 deeds (no. 668-736) found in this cartulary that were transferred to the Hungerfords when they acquired the manor of Teffont Evias. Many of them date back to the Chamberlayne era.

¹⁷⁴This abstract by George Wrottesley, with a tabular pedigree of the Scudamores, was first published in the *Genealogist, New Series*, XVIII, 24. Later it was collected by the author into his book *Pedigrees from the plea rolls: collected from the pleadings in the various courts of law, A. D. 100 to 1500, from the original rolls in the Public Record Office*, 1905.

¹⁷⁵Another court case (PRO CP40/615, membrane 105) records the eight generations who held this manor at Compton Chamberlayne in this period from the time Hugh Haversham (died 1221) who had it by a quitclaim deed from Robert Chambedrlyne in 1208.

puzzled how the action should be tried, it was adjourned from term to term up to Hillary, 16 Henry VI when the record terminates.

The parish register of Compton Chamberlaye.

It is one of the very few that survives from the time that General Registration was ordered to be kept in 1537. The first register is badly faded and was kept in a tiny, spidery hand. Alas, the Early entries also do not include the name of the parent of the children baptized.

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----------|
| 1539 August | HUMPFRYE SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1540 November | JULIAN SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1541 April | JOAN, daughter of ROBERT SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1542 June | HUMFRY SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1542 June | JOHN SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1542 August | Thomas Harvest and ELIZABETH SKIDMORE | married. |
| 1542 _____ | JAMES, son of ROBERT SKYDMORE | baptized. |
| 1543 August | JOAN SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1544 September | THOMAS SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1544 February | JOAN SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1544 _____ | JOHN SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1545 January | JOAN SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1545 February | JOAN SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1545 July | RICHARD SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1546 August | ANTHONY SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1546 February | ELIZABETH SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1548 August | AGNES SKIDMORE | baptized. |
| 1548 August | RICHARD SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1548 August | AGNES SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1549 January | KATERINA PAPER otherwise SKIDMORE | buried. |
| 1558 October | JOHN PIKER and SYBIL SKYDMORE | married. |
| 1559 August | EDITH BUTTLER <i>alias</i> SKYDMORE | baptized. |
| | [She was living in April 1600, age 40 and a spinster, when she is mentioned in the Consistory Court Papers at Salisbury.] | |
| 1561 September | JOHN BUTTLER <i>alias</i> SKYDMORE and Elinor _____ | married. |
| | [Elinor, wife of John Skidmore of Compton Chamberlain, was a witness in a libel suit in 1572 brought by Francis Nicholas against Agnes Hutchins.] | |
| 1564 August | MARGARET SKYDMORE | buried. |
| 1565 December | JOHN BUTTLER <i>alias</i> SKYDMORE | buried. |
| 1574 April | JOHN SKYDMORE | buried. |
| 1574 September | THOMAS BUTTLER <i>alias</i> SKYDMORE | baptized. |
| 1576 February | RICHARD BUTTLER <i>alias</i> SKYDEMORE | buried. |
| 1592 May | ELIZABETH SKYDMORE | baptized. |
| 1599 June | ELIZABETH, daughter of EDITH BUTTLER <i>alias</i> SKYDMORE | buried. |

The parish continued to decline, and in 1545 there were only three people (Elysabeth Powell, John Bedlecomb and Robert Merchant) substantial enough to be taxed. The Scudamores seem to have largely removed by that time.

Will of Richard Scudemor, yeoman of Compton Chamberlain.

In the name of god Amen on the eyghth Daye of Marche in the yere of oure Lord god 1576. I Rychard Scudemor of comton Chamberlene sycke in bodye but hole in mynde And of perfecte Remembrece thanks be unto god Doe make my last wyll And testament in maner & fforme folowinge/ firste I geve and bequeathe my soule to Almighty god my maker and Redemer and my bodye to be buried in the churchyard at Comton aforesayd. Itm I geve to Thomas my sonne my greateste bras crock and beste bras pann saving two. Itm I geve to Elyzabeth my daughter greatest brass pann/ Itm I geve to Thomas my sonne and Elyzabeth my Daughter to eyther of them one bushel of barleye./ also to Richard Nutbeeme & John Snowe to eyther of them one bu[shel] of barleye./ Itm I geve to Alexander Sheweth, Joan Nutbeem and Bartholomew Harvast one ewe lambe to every of them./ I geve. to Bartholomew Harvist one ewe shep/ Also I will to John Snowe xxiiii s. for a bolocke whiche I gave him to his mariage And sell yt afterward for so much moneye./Itm I geve to the church at Compton, ii s. the rest of my good s unbequeathed and my Deapte and ffunerall Discharged I geve and bequeath to Agnes my wife who I make my sole Executrix.

Witnesses: at the maKinge hereof

Robert Bonnde, James Elyot, John El____, curate.

Proved the last day of February 1576/7 before an official of the Archdeacon of Salisbury. Inventory taken the same day and exhibited to the court by the executrix Agnes Scudamore. It totaled £17.7.2d.

This Richard Skidmore, yeoman, was assessed 5 shillings on £3 in goods in the subsidy of 1576 at Compton Chamberlayne.¹⁷⁶ He died soon after and was buried there in February 1575/6 as *Richard Buttler alias Skydemore*.

NOTES.

TROWBRIDGE. (Baptisms)

1634 November 2nd

MARY, daughter of JOHN and MARY SCUDAMORE.,

1635 February 14th

JOHN, son of JOHN and MARY SCUDAMORE.

JOHN SCUDAMORE of Trowbridge, clothworker, was bound to Arthur Steart for four years on 2 December 1657. (Bristol Apprentices.)

1639 February 16th

JOSEPH, son of JOHN and MARY SCUDAMORE. .

1641 August 19th

FRANCIS, daughter of JOHN and MARY SCUDAMORE.

FRAUNCIS SKIDMORE of Trowbridge, *spinster*, bound to John Walter of Bristol, merchant, for five years on 8 February 1657/8.

BRADFORD-ON-AVON.

1727 October 15th

Edward Selfe and ELINOR SCIDMORE, married.

GREAT CHEVERELL

1736. THOMAS SCUDAMORE, Return of Grand Jurors.

¹⁷⁶Two Sixteenth Century Taxation List 1545 and 1576, edited by G. D. Ramsay. (Devizes, 1954) 156.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Bratton fine 12d | The tithingman presents the default of Nicholas Kerham who owes suit [attendance] at the court on this day, therefore he is in mercy. Afterwards he paid the fine. |
| Amercements 2s 7d | Also he presents that William Lobet (4d), Baldwin Clerke (3d), Richard Valeys (12d) and William Lobet (12d) common tapsters [innkeepers] sold ale contrary to the assize [The assize of Bread and Ale – The local authority laid down the price of bread and ale based on the current price of wheat and malt.] therefore they are in mercy. |
| Amercements 5d | Also the aforesaid William (2d), Baldwin (1d) and Richard (2d) sold ale in false measure, therefore they are in mercy. |
| Stay | Also he presents that 2 foals have been provided as chattels of Wayfuss worth 12d and they remain in the custody of the reeve. |
| Officers | Also they elected to the office of reeve [the man elected by his fellow tenants to organise the daily affairs of the manor] and William Lobet the tithingman who took the oath and continues. Also Henry Vysake to the office of reeve ending in this year of the Lord. Also William Chaddere who continues. |
| Godyscote Amercement 9d | The tithing man presents that Blytha ate Yeo raised the hue and cry rightly upon Reginald Hethman (7d), therefore he is officially in mercy. And the aforesaid Reginald is in mercy for the offences done to Blytha Yeo and he is distrained. [Everyone was obliged to join in the pursuit of person suspected of an offence if somebody called. Anyone starting the hue and cry without good cause was punished.] |
| Amercement 6d Execution | Also he presents that the aforementioned Reginald struck Blytha ate Yeo with 1 stick against the peace therefore his is officially in mercy to damages 3s whence execution. (In mercy because he did not carry it out.) Also he presents that John Cole raised the hue and cry wrongfully upon William Bokeput therefore he is officially in mercy. And the aforementioned John Cole is in mercy because he did not proceed against the same William in plea of trespass. |
| Recognition 2d | Also Johanna Payn took at the lord's will one cottage, the same cottage which was formerly held by Richard Valeys for rent and duty and customary services. Let it be known the she made fealty to the lord and gave recognition. [This is the procedure for a copyhold tenancy. The entry in the manor court roll is the person's title to the property.] |
| Amercement 6d | Henry Fenemur is in mercy because he cut down the lord's wood near Foesledon without a licence therefore he is in mercy. [There was strict rules about what type of wood could be cut and how much and when.] |
| Amercement 3d | Richard Taylor is in mercy for trespassing in Thomas Estlake's oats with his cattle and he is distrained to make amends. |
| To attach | The same Richard complains about William Bertone in a plea of debt. He has not come to the summons therefore he is attached [bound to appear.] |
| Amercements 18d | Robert Colyn (4d), William Upecote (6d), Richard Grymscote (4d), John Symon (4d) are in mercy because they took excess of pay against the form of statute. [The Statute of Labourers 1351 which aimed to keep wages as they were before the Black Death.] |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Amercement 2d | John Fochedone is in mercy because he has not raised 13s 4d for the work [done] by Alice Hethman whence execution. [Women could be hired to do work.] |
| Amercement 6d | Roger Bredde is in mercy because he took a calf from John Skedemur against his will and he is distrained. |
| Examination | Richard Taylor submits himself to examination against Thomas Eastlake that he did not control his cattle to damages 10s by the pledge of Robert Payn and Geoffrey Payn. |
| Amercement 2d | The same is in mercy for trespassing on Richard Taylor's oats with his cattle and he is distrained. |
| Amercement 6d | The same Richard is in mercy for a false complaint against the same Thomas in a plea of trespass. |
| Stay | Thomas Pacchecote in absence complains about Robert Grymscote in a plea of trespass and it is stayed [held over] (In mercy... at law because he unjustly took his mare and his calf, by the pledge of William Boudoune) |
| Stay | John Bate complains about Robert Cole in absence in a plea of trespass and it is stayed. (In mercy for not proceeding.) |
| Stay | Geoffrey Bremdone complains about William Lobet in absence on a plea of debt and it is stayed. (In mercy for permission.) |
| Amercement 3d | Robert Colyn is in mercy for a trespass done to Richard Beamund that etc. |
| Amercement 2s 2d | The Baliff presents that Walter Mansypdyche (6d), Walter Rysdone (8d), Walter Ayre (6d) and Geoffrey Payn (6d) trespassed with cattle in the lord's pasture above Shoerysdone. [Note the higher penalties for trespass on the lord's land.] |
| Examination | Robert Blakegrove and Blythe his wife, executors of the will of William Colyn present themselves for examination against Robert Payn and Sara his wife that they do not keep back from them one cow and two breeding ewes nor etc... to surrender 20s through the pledge of John Skedemur and Henry Vysake. (In mercy for not proceeding.) |
| Amercement 3d | |
| Execution | John Whetter is in mercy for withholding 12s 8d against Blytha at Yeo whence execution. (The reeve is in mercy for not carrying it out.) |
| Amercements 4d | |
| Distrain | Geoffry Payn (2d) and William Bouedone (2d) are in mercy because they do not stand nor contribute with the tithingman and the tithing of Bratton as was found [by the court] through the whole homage [all the tenants] and are distrained. |
| Amercements 2d | |
| Distrain | Twelve jurors say that the King's highway near Hedysdoneforde is muddy and deep to the harm of the neighbourhood, which the tithingman of Bratton is responsible for repairing therefore he is in mercy and he is distrained. [If twelve men swore that something was true, it was acted upon in the court and the offender was punished.] |
| 3s 4d | 12 jurors say that Henry Fenemur, lately reeve, took a tenure near Fochedone, additional rent to the lord 3s 4d, therefore he is charged [with this amount]. Also a tenure, formerly John de Bratton's called Trylleland, additional rent to the lord 2s 10d for lease of 3 acres of land. |
| Examination | Robert Blagrove and Blythe his wife, executors of the will of William |

Colyn, submit themselves to examination against Robert Colyn that they do not keep back two oxen worth 40s from the gift of his mother to surety 20s through the pledge of Henry Versake and John Skedemur. Also that they do not keep back 1 cow worth 10s to surety 40d through the pledge as above.

To attach

Richard Grymyscote complains about Henry Cole who made 4 defaults in a plea of trespass. And he was bound for one pack animal by which he is more heavily distrained. [A person was allowed three defaults before being obliged to appear.]

Amercement 1d
Remission

John Symond is in mercy for default of an agreement.

Reginal Bredde gives his fine to the lord because he had appropriated a calf of John Skedemur against the peace and against his will as was found by examination.

Total 23s 4d

Steward's expenses 13d.

APPENDIX TO DUNKERTON AND WELLOW.

When Sir Peter (III) Scudamore, the last lord of Upton Scudamore died in 1382 all of the charters that his ancestors had acquired were probably in a “strong box” that was transferred with his lands. Firstly they went wife his sole heir, a daughter Katherine who was then just 14 years old. A marriage was promptly arranged for her, with the consent of her mother Joan, to John Reynes of Clifton Reynes in Buckinghamshire. She took to her Reynes husband not only her body but also the box of charters about the Scudamore fees in Wiltshire, Hampshire. This property was subject only to the life interest in the dower due to her mother.

Katherine was the first of the three wives of John Reynes. She was living in 1388 and was the mother of the three Reynes children that she had by him.¹⁷⁷ Before his wife Katherine’s death Sir John had commissioned at the church at Clifton Reynes two very expensive table tombs carved in stone with 16 coats-of-arms including the arms of both Katherine Scudamore and her mother Joan Brook, both heiresses allied to his family. He also added to the tombs two carved effigies of both his parents.

Later Sir John Reynes, now heavily in debt, had married his third wife Alice Hartwell before 1402 when he gave a bond for £1000 for merchandise to her family, the Hartwells.¹⁷⁸ Reynes later went off to France (perhaps with a small retinue of his own that he paid) with Henry V and fought at Agincourt in 1415.

He came home perhaps with a bit of plunder, but his indebtedness had never been fully satisfied. In 1426 Sir John Reynes and his third wife Alice conveyed Upton and all his other Scudamore fees to feoffees who were then charged with the payment of his debts.¹⁷⁹ This method to satisfy his creditors obviously failed. In July 1435 John Hartwell, junior, a mercer in London, now probably with box, granted to trustees Upton Scudamore and all the other land with which he and his father (Sir John’s stepson) had formerly been seised.¹⁸⁰ The trustees were to pay to the young John Hartwell 50 marks annually at the four terms of the year. This was to provide be used as a quarterly pension for the support for life of Sir John’s widow Alice Hartwell.¹⁸¹

Some 75 earlier on 21 June 1360, Sir Walter (II) Skidemore had granted an interest in certain lands at Bishopstrow to Thomas Hungerford (1328-1397) and his first wife Eleanor Strug, and Thomas their son.¹⁸² On 30 November 1364 when his son Sir Peter (III) Scudamore was preparing to go abroad he made over all of his estates to six trustees, and Thomas Hungerford, the elder, came back at Upton Scudamore to testify to this charter. His son and eventual heir Sir Walter Hungerford was already by 1370 possessed of what is now the manor of Farleigh Hungerford (then Farleigh Montfort) and the whole of Wellow Hundred in Somerset.¹⁸³

The feoffees in turn sold the reversion in 1430 to Sir Walter Hungerford (1378-1449), now Baron Hungerford, and was the only surviving son of Thomas Hungerford (1328-1426). He was just as skillful as his father at acquiring manors in Wiltshire and Somerset. The strong box of Scudamore deeds that he acquired were all copied by a scribe into his great family cartulary which

¹⁷⁷*Upton Scudamore*, 65. Reynes had a second wife Joan Betby of whom little is known at Clifton Reynes beyond her name.

¹⁷⁸*Hungerford Cartulary*, no. 425.

¹⁷⁹PRO, CP25(1)257/61/19 & 31.

¹⁸⁰*Ibid*, nos. 401-5. After a successful suit in chancery the sheriff released the manor of Upton Scudamore to the Hartwells, together with the Scudamore fees in Warminster, Norridge, Thoulstone and a third part of the manor of Hardenhuish

¹⁸¹*Ibid*, no. 403.

¹⁸²*Upton Scudamore*, 105.

¹⁸³*Hungerford Cartulary*, no. 803.

has since been printed in an edition of 500 copies by the Wiltshire Record Society.

LAY SUBSIDIES FOR WELLOW HUNDRED.

For 15 Henry VIII. 1523-4.

Agnes Skydmore, widow, assessed on 40sh. in goods.

Same. [E. 179/170/44, for 5 Edward VI.] 1551.

Wellow tithing. Richard Skydmore, £10 in goods, paid 10sh.

Same. [E. 179/171/283, for 13 Elizabeth.] 1571.

Wellow Hundred not found. No Skidmores detected.

Same. [E. 179/171/347, for 7-8 James I.]

1609/10. This roll is VERY defective and the membrane for Wellow Hundred is illegible.]

At another illegible tithing, but probably Dunkerton,

Robert Skidmore, £3 in goods, paid 3sh.

Same. For 4 Charles I (1638/9).

Robert Skidmore of Dunkerton was assessed £1 8sh on his land.

Anne Skidmore of Combe Hay tithing was assessed the same sum.

Edward Skidmore of Wellow tithing was assessed £2 8sh on his land.

DESCENT OF LAND AT CARLINGCOTT IN DUNKERTON.

Long before his death on 6 March 1583 George Skidmore was seised of two messuages, 160 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 60 acres of pasture and six acres of wood with appurtenances in Whittoxmead in Wellow; and of one messuage, 40 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture, and two acres of woods in *Cridlingcote* [Carlingcott] in Dunkerton.

Just before his death he settled this on trustees.

By his charter dated 12 February 25 Elizabeth [1583] shown to the jurors he granted the messuages by the name of the site of the manor, capital messuage or farm of Whitockmeade with all appurtenances to Thomas Rosewell, Dunkerton, gentleman, Thomas Llewellyn, Hemington, gentleman, and John Collins, [torn]scombe [Englishcombe?], county Somerset, yeoman to hold it to perform his will and testament.

Sir John Spencer was an extremely wealthy merchant in London where he was commonly known by the epithet "Rich Spencer." In 1589 Henry Hastings (1536? 1595), the third Earl of Huntington, sold Spencer several properties in Somerset about Kilmersdon.¹⁸⁴ Spencer seems to have engaged John Hippisley (died 1608) of Cameley and Stone Eston, an attorney, as the Steward to manage his properties in Somerset.

Spencer was the Mayor and then Alderman of London, and was knighted (as was customary) at the end of his mayoralty in 1594-5. At his death in 1609 Thomas Scudamore held two tracts, with Spencer as the main tenant,

One messuage in Carlingcott in the parish of Dunkerton, and by estimation 40

¹⁸⁴The inquest post mortem in 1544 of his grandfather George Hastings (died 1544), first Earl of Huntington, lists these estates as in the "Hundred of Wellow alias Kilmersdon." Carlingcott and Whittoxmead were probably then also part of the Hastings estate.

acres of land, 10 acres of meadow with 30- acres of pasture, in tenure of Robert Scudamore for life for £1 per annum rent, held of Sir John Spencer, knight, by 2d. per annum rent and suit if court to the Hundred of Wellow, worth by office 13/4d., but the rent reserved is £1, by survey £1.

One messuage in White Ox Mead and by estimation 24 acres of land, 6 acres meadow and 5 acres of pasture with appurtenances, in tenure of William Kelson and Joan, his wife, for their lives for 13/4d. per annum rent, held of Sir John Spencer, knight, by 6d. per annum rent and suit of court to the Hundred of Wellow but by what other services [unknown to the jurors] worth by office 8/-, but the rent reserved is 13/4d., by survey 13/4d.

Spencer died at an advanced age on 3 March 1610, leaving his only daughter Elizabeth as his heir. Her father disapproved, but she was carried off by her lover William Compton, Lord Compton, who was said to have suppressed Spencer's will. He was the proprietor of the Kilmersden estates but squandered much of his wife inheritance. She died in 1632, but was noticed as the unnamed heir of Sir John Spencer in 1627.

WELLOW PARISH REGISTER, 1560-1620

In 1962 the early registers were still in St. Julian's church and Ralph Thomas, the vicar, very kindly extracted all of the Skidmore entries for me from 1560 to 1610. In 1989 Mrs. Margaret Bateman of Royston, Hertfordshire engaged a researcher to copy all of the surviving entries in Bishop's Transcripts for Wellow. These copies largely agree but I have merged the lists noting the occasional discrepancy.

Johan Skidmore, buried 25 July 1562.

Thomas Skydmore, bapt. 10 October 1562.

Johan, daughter of George Skydmore, bapt. 13 October 1566.

Margaret, daughter of George Skydmore, bapt. 18 November 1568.

Richard Skidmore & Maria Bull, married 19 November 1569.

George Skidmore, bapt., 30 September 1571.

Johan, daughter of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 22 January 1576.

Julian, daughter of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 17 April 1577. [BT, *buried*, not bapt.]

Will^m Skydmore, buried 9 May 1579.

Julyan, daughter of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 19 Dec 1578.

George Skidmore, buried 8 March 1582.

Mary, daughter of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 21 October 1583. [Found in register.]

Margaret, daughter of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 21 February 1583/4. [BT, not found. ERROR?

See the marriage below of Margaret Skidmore on 26 November 1593.]

Edward Skidmore, bapt. 23 January 1585.

Thomas, son of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 12 April 1588.

Elenor, daughter of Thomas Skidmore, bapt. 20 July 1588. [BT, "ye last daye of Julye."]

Sara, daughter of Thomas Skidmore, bapt. 16 August 1590.

Maria, daughter of Richard Skidmore, bapt. 10 October 1591.

Will^m Skidmore, baptized 18 March 1592/3, and buried 19 April 1592.

Will^m Weaver and Margaret Skidmore, married 26 November 1593.

Edward Skidmore, son of Thomas Skidmore, bapt. 23 May 1597. [BT, Edward, son of Thomas.]
Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Skidmore, bapt. 28 July 1600 and buried 16 June 1601.
William, son of Richard Skidmore, bapt. Sept. 1604.
Thomas, son of Thomas Skidmore, bapt. 16 December 1605.
Mary, daughter of George Skidmore, bapt. 8 March 1607.
Thomas Skidmore, buried April 1609.
Margaret, daughter of George Skidmore, bapt. August 1610.
Anna, daughter of George Skidmore, bapt. 17 July 1614. [BT, not found.]
Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Skidmore, bapt. 8 January 1619/20. [BT, not found.]
Edward, son of Richard Skidmore, buried 6 March 1619/20. BT, not found.]

There is a gap in both the Register and the Bishop's Transcripts until 1640.

Thomas, son of Thomas and Anna *Scudamore*, bapt. 26 February 1639/40.

Inquisition post mortem of George Skidmore, gentleman, taken at Frome, Somerset, 3 April 25 Elizabeth [1583].¹⁸⁵

Long before his death Skidmore was seised of two messuages, 160 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 60 acres of pasture and six acres of wood with appurtenances in Whittoxmead in Wellow; and of one messuage, 40 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 30 acres of pasture and 2 acres of woods in Cridlingcote in Dunkerton.

By his charter dated 12 February 25 Elizabeth [1582/3] shown to the jurors he granted the messuages by the name of the site of the manor, capital messuage or farm of Whitockmeade with all appurtenances to Thomas Rosewell, Dunkerton, gentleman, Thomas Llewellyn, Hemington, gentleman, and John Collins, [torn]scombe [Englishcombe?], county Somerset, yeoman to hold it to perform his will and testament.

On 18 February 1583 Skidmore put his will into writing, saying that they should hold the property to the following uses - -

One half to the use of his wife Margery, if she remain a widow and does not claim dower from his property; and after her death to the use Thomas his son and his heirs for ever, when he reaches 21 years of age, and in the default of issue to the use of the lawful heirs of George Skidmore,

and the other half to the use of Thomas and his heirs, when he reaches 21 years of age, on condition that he allows his mother, while a widow and while she does not claim dower, to enjoy the half appointed to her in peace.

Margery and Thomas were seised accordingly.

Skidmore died on 6 March previously [1582/3]. Thomas his son and heir was 21 years of age and more. [sic].

Sale of Ward, 9 June 1609.¹⁸⁶

Thomas Scudamore alias Skidmore, gent., died 5 April 1609. George Scudamore, son, aged 11 years, 11 months and 10 days at father's death. Wells, 9 June 1609.

1. 2 messuages and by estimation 160 acres of land, 30 acres of meadow, 40 acres of pasture and 4 acres of underwood with appurtenances in White Ox Mead in the parish of Wellow,

¹⁸⁵C142/2101/139.

¹⁸⁶Sales of Wards in Somerset, 1603-1641 (edited M. J. Hawkins), Somerset Record Society, vol.67 (1965) 56.

held of the King as of his honour of Gloucester by Knight's Service worth by office £2/13/4, by survey £3.

2. 1 messuage in Carlingcott in the parish of Dunkerton, and by estimation 40 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow with 30- acres of pasture, in tenure of Robert Scudamore for life for £1 per annum rent, held of Sir John Spencer, knight, by 2d. per annum rent and suit if court to the Hundred of Wellow, worth by office 13/4d., but the rent reserved is £1, by survey £1.

3. 1 messuage in White Ox Mead and by estimation 24 acres of land, 6 acres meadow and 5 acres of pasture with appurtenances, in tenure of William Kelson and Joan, his wife, for their lives for 13/4d. per annum rent, held of Sir John Spencer, knight, by 6d. per annum rent and suit of court to the Hundred of Wellow but by what other services [unknown to the jurors] worth by office 8/-, but the rent reserved is 13/4d., by survey 13/4d.

Ward's father assured parcel to Thomas Collins and others for 18 years in trust for performance of his will, maintenance of his wife and children and payment of his debts. Robert Scudamore has estate in parcel 2 for life, remainder to Robert Scudamore, his son, for life, for £1 per annum rent to ward's father and his heirs. Ward's father demised it to his son, Thomas, for 60 years yielding said £1 per annum rent. Ward's father assured two-thirds of parcel 3 to the use of his last will, etc., as above, and all parcel 3 is devised by ward's father to Thomas, a younger son, for 60 years for 13/4d. per annum rent to ward's father's heirs.

Total, by office £4/6/8 (to the King 17/9d.), by survey £4/13/4.

13 July 1609, sold to Anne Scudamore, mother, for £16, to be paid £8 in hand and £8 on 25 December 1609.

Sale of Ward, 26 September 1627.¹⁸⁷

George Scudamore died 1 July 1627. Thomas Scudamore, his son, aged 4 years and 3 months at father's death. Taken at Yeovil 26 September 1627.

1. 2 messuages or tenements with appurtenances in White Ox Mead in the parish of Wellow, held of William, Earl of Salisbury as of his Castle of Gloucester by Knight's Fee, worth by office £2/13/4, by certificate £18.

2. 1 messuage or tenement with appurtenances in Carlingcott in the parish of Dunkerton now or late in tenure of Robert Scudamore the father, or Robert Scudamore the son, held of the heirs of Sir John Spencer, by 2/- per annum rent and suit of court to the Hundred of Wellow, worth by office 13/4d., by certificate £1.

3. 1 messuage or tenement with appurtenances in White Ox Mead, now or late in tenure of William Kelson and Joan, his wife, held of the heirs of Sir John Spencer, by 6d. per annum rent and suit of court to the Hundred of Wellow, worth by office 8/-, by certificate 16/-.

4. 1 messuage or tenement with appurtenances in White Ox Mead in tenure of Joan Short, widow, and George Short, her son, purchased of Henry Plumley, gent., held of the King in chief by Knight's Service, worth by office 5/-, by certificate 10/-.

Thomas Scudamore, the ward [George's] grandfather, died seised of parcel 1 in fee. Anne, his wife, is living and is dowable therefrom. Said grandfather, being seised in fee of the reversion of parcels 2 and 3 demised them, 30 January 1608-9, to Thomas, his younger son, for 60 years for £1/13/4 per annum rent. Said grandfather died thus seised 5 April 1609 and George, ward's father, was his son and heir. Said ward's father, being seised in fee of the reversion of parcel 4, assured, 16 April 1627, two-thirds of all lands to John Iles and John Gibbs and their assigns for 17 years for 4d. per annum in rent.

Total, by office £3/19/4 (to the King £1/-/7), by certificate £20/6/-.

13 November 1627, sold to Anne Scudamore, the mother, for £20/13/4, to be paid £13/6/8

¹⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 56-7.

in hand and £13/6/8 on May 1 1628.

Will of Ann Skidmore of Whitoxmead in the parish of Wellow, widow.

Dated 11 March 1632.

To the church at Well, 6s. 8d.

To the poor of Wellow, 20d.

To my daughter Elinor Lansdowne one pair of sheets and a coverlet.

To Giles Hicks, son of my daughter Rebecca, £3 8d. [*sic*, but correctly £3.6sh.8d?] when 21.

To Mary and Ann Skidmore, daughters of my son George, deceased, £3.6sh.8d. apiece when 21.

If these three children die underage then bequests to Thomas, son of George Skidmore deceased.

To my son Thomas Skidmore the furnace in the kitchen, one diaper table, table cloth, brass pan, one feather bolster, one bed, one flock bed, one feather bolster, long table board with great chest, and one forme in the great parlour, my brass pt, one great [----] pan, my giltie covered drinking cup, my gilt salt cellar, one yoke with an iron plough rope, a drag and a paire. The residue of all my catell and chattels not given or bequeathed, my wearing apparel, and the wool and linen excepted, which my will is shall be equally divided between Elinor Lansdowne and Sarah Lansdowne who I make my sole executrix.

Overseers: My well beloved friend Edward Middlecott, John Collins, Richard Lansdowne, and my son Thomas Skidmore.

Witnesses: Edward Middlecott, Richard Lansdowne, Thomas Skidmore.

Proved 30 May 1636.

Inventory of the estate of Ann Skidmore taken 1 June 1636 by Edward Middlecot, Richard Lansdown, and Thomas Skidmore.¹⁸⁸

In the hall; One table board. One linen cupboard. One form. Three chairs. Six joint stools. One Bible. One little pair of andovers. One pair of tongs. One fire shovel. One pair of hangers. One pair of bellows, with benches and settles and half a dozen cushions.

In the great parlour: One table board with five forms. One joint bedstead and a flock bed. Two flock beds. Two flock bolsters. A coverlet, with window curtain fringe with iron rod.

In the buttery: Seven boards. Five dozen of pewter of all sort, tackes, and shelves and round table. In the chamber over the hall. One jointed bedstead with settles cords, and mattress and flock bed and a feather bed, and a pair of blankets. A coverlet with curtain fringe and curtain rods. Wine table. One chair. One joined press. Three coverlets. One carpet. Six cushion cases. One cupboard cloth. Two brushes. One chert.

¹⁸⁸While W. S. Lansdown made an excellent copy of this inventory he did not copy the values given for any item, nor the final sum.

APPENDIX TO WADDESTON

The will of George Skidmore [of Wotton Underwood, Bucks.]¹⁸⁹ Dated 26 April 1611.

To son George, 5sh.

To son Thomas, the bed whereon I do now lie with all the furniture belonging to be delivered after the death of my wife, and a colt of year old of bay color, and a cutted tailed heifer color black.

To daughter Anne, £6.6s.8d. when wife finds herself able.

To daughter Jane, £6.6s.8d.

Residue to wife Elizabeth who is to be executrix.

Overseers: John Lovell, Henry Perkins.

Witnesses: John Lovell, Henry Perkins.

Proved 7 June 1611.

The will of Thomas Skidmore, of Wotton Underwood, Bucks., husbandman. Dated 10 October 1625.

Sick in body.

To son George Skidmore, 20 nobles of lawfull English money at the age of 20 years to be paid by my executor.

To daughter Elizabeth Skidmore., 20 nobles at the age of 18.

Residue to wife Annis Skidmore, and she is to be whole executor.

I desire my neighbors Thomas Collye and John Lovell to be my overseers.

Witnesses: Thomas Collye [Cowley], John Lovell.

Probated 9 January 1625. [1625/6]

¹⁸⁹His residence and occupation are unstated, but he was undoubtedly of Wotton Underwood, as the will of his son Thomas who died 1625 shows. They are probably not related to the Burnham or Devon families. He may be the George *Scudamore* who was living in 1573 at Ludgershall, Bucks. On 11 December 1575 William Knighte was presented to the church at Ludgershall with George *Scudamore* and others as witnesses.

OTHER UNIDENTIFIED SKIDEMORES BORN ELSEWHERE BEFORE 1604.

There gentlemen, of whom nothing more is known, may have had connections with the family in Devon living but living later in Somerset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire.

WILLIAM DE SKIDEMORE. In 1361 he held the office of *pesage* (weigher) of wool at *Cicestre* (Chichester, West Sussex). This was a major port for the export of wool staple to France and the Continent. The fortune of the Hungerford family at Wellow was built on wool, and the Courtenays were also great wool merchants through their ports at Exmouth and Dartmouth in Devon.

William's office was doubtless fairly lucrative, which suggests that he was sponsored by someone with influence to the Crown in 1361. In the 1370's the Courtenays at Okehampton Castle included 81 clerics and about 50 attorneys.

THOMAS SKYDMORE was a witness to the will of William Hynde of St. James, Bristol, a burgess and *whittawer* [saddler], on 27 February 1473. He was probably a younger son from Herefordshire sent to Bristol to make his fortune in trade. **ISABEL SKYDMORE**, his servant (and probably a niece or kinswoman) was left a legacy of 40s in the will of William de la Founte, of St. Stephens, Bristol, a merchant, on 12 February 1493. Fount seems to have had a bad reputation at Bristol as a slave trader.

DAVID SKYDMORE. He was the cleric from 1533 to 1544 at Idmiston, Gloucestershire, where John Chacy of Birdlyme in Idmiston, a gentleman, was the patron of the living.

WILLIAM SKIDMORE. He married Margaret Fellows on 4 May 1560 at St. Martin's, Salisbury. He is probably the same as the William Scudamore of St. Edmund's, Salisbury whose administration was given to Agnis Scudamore, widow, and to William Morse, broadweaver, both of Salisbury, on 27 April 1622. They were bound in the sum of £10 and were to exhibit an inventory before the feast of the Penecost next. His inventory totalled only £4 17s 8d and included "all his working tools" valued at 18s and the usual clothing and household furnishings.

WILLIAM SKYDMORE and Margaret Street were married on 25 May 1578 at St. Nicholas, Gloucester. They had a son **Robert** baptized 4 October 1584. Margaret, the wife of William Skydmore, was buried there on 14 August 1585. He is probably the William Scudamore who was disenfranchised on 22 March 1587/8 for stealing lead from the Westgate in Gloucester for sale at Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

THOMAS SKYDMORE of the city of Gloucester. "He liveth with Margaret Wall and yt is not knowne whether married" according to an entry in the Office Papers of the diocese on 9 October 1588.

WILLIAM SKYDMORE was buried on 29 June 1589 at St. James, Bath. [He was probably from Westerleigh, Gloucestershire.]

JOHN SKYDMORE. He married Thomasina White on 18 May 1602 at Stockton, Wiltshire.

WILLIAM SCUDAMORE, a yeoman, married an unnamed daughter of William Harvo. They had a son **Robert Scudamore** baptized 13 November 1614 at Brislington, Somerset. On 19 December 1614 William Scudamore agreed to pay Sir Rowland Lacy, Kt., of Shipton, Oxfordshire, £200 for the loan of £110 on 29 September 1615. His brother-in-law William Harvo of Keynsham, Somerset, and John Wory of Bedminster, Somerset, a yeoman, were bound with Scudamore for the payment of the loan. In 1622 Wory refused to cancel his bond and sued Harvo.

WILLIAM SKYDMORE had a daughter Sara baptized 1 August 1630 at Hanham and Oldham, Gloucestershire. Joan, his wife, was buried eight days later at Kelston, Somerset where her husband William Skidmore is identified as being from Oysterhaven, County Cork, Ireland.