

## The Remarkable Ancestry of REVEREND WILLIAM KEBLE MARTIN

When, in 1968, the Reverend William Keble Martin wrote his autobiography "Over the Hills" he produced a beautiful story about his life and his passion for all wildlife but in particular for the world of plants. Whilst it told us a lot about his life and interests, friends, colleagues and work it made only brief references to his family and background. I felt, that from the little he had said, there was an interesting story to be told and I therefore set about exploring his ancestry which, as it turned out, is really quite remarkable.

The following account traces the history of his direct ancestors and their contribution to history. Some content relates to other members of the family but only where I thought it was relevant to tell the story of his widely spread and influential families. I have tried not to repeat any of the information contained in "Over the Hills" except where necessary, to enlarge on it. Likewise I have also relied on some of the information from Hilary Lees' book, "So Runs My Dream", in which she tells the story of Keble (as he preferred to be called) and his brother Arthur, the architect. Similarly, she only touches briefly on their ancestry. Hilary is Arthur's granddaughter therefore great niece of Keble.

### Descent from a Knight of the Garter

Something that Keble Martin said on the first page of his autobiography was that after he had been ordained and was engaged in humble parochial work he received a request from St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle to contribute to a restoration appeal. Having responded promptly he was surprised to receive a "beautiful certificate" informing him that he was the descendant of a Knight of the Garter. Unfortunately he omitted to identify the name of the Knight or when this occurred.



**Keble Martin**  
(from the book "So Runs My  
Dream" by Hilary Lees)

It seemed to me that if I could identify the knight concerned it would be a good starting point for my investigation. I contacted the 'Friends of St Georges Chapel' via their website to ask whether they could confirm Keble Martin's account and identify the Knight of the Garter. Much to my surprise they replied that they had no record of Keble Martin at all. In their reply they informed me that the appeal was made in 1928 and specifically targeted descendants of Knights of the Garter that had been identified by pedigree research. The reply confirmed that donors had received a certificate and they had been included on a 'Roll of Benefactors'. In 1928 Keble Martin had been the vicar at Haccombe for at least six years and the vicar at Wath for the previous twelve, therefore the event took place some considerable time after he had been ordained.

The reply from St George's chapel was a mystery as it didn't seem feasible that the event didn't happen as described by Keble Martin. It seem equally unlikely that

the records at St Georges Chapel would be incorrect but, as their reply implied that there was no other help they could give me, I decided to continue with my research. By using the methods I had employed to explore my own family's ancestors I hoped, that with a bit of luck the identity of the mystery knight might be revealed. Little did I know what else would turn up!

## THE MARTINS

Keble Martin says that the family home was at Overbury Park in Gloucestershire, where three successive generations of the Martin family had provided members of parliament for Tewkesbury. In fact Overbury is situated in Worcestershire, but so close to the border that today it has a Gloucestershire postcode. It is in fact just seven miles from Tewkesbury.

### The Martins of Evesham

**William Martin b 1583 - (Sixth great grandfather)**

The earliest of Keble Martin's ancestors that I have managed to trace lived in Evesham, Worcestershire which is nine miles to the north of Overbury. This was William, born in 1583 and who married Anne Gardner at Evesham in 1608. Remarkably, of their seven sons and six daughters born between 1611 and 1634, only three survived beyond a year old. Fortunately one son, Thomas, survived but if he had not then there wouldn't have been a William Keble Martin at all.



**15<sup>th</sup> century merchants house, Evesham, which William Martin would have known**

William would seem to have been a well respected resident, being elected as the town's mayor on three occasions, 1623, 1634 and 1641 as well as being a Justice of the Peace. He lived to the age of 70. During the same period a Robert Martin also served as mayor and might well have been a relative, perhaps a brother?



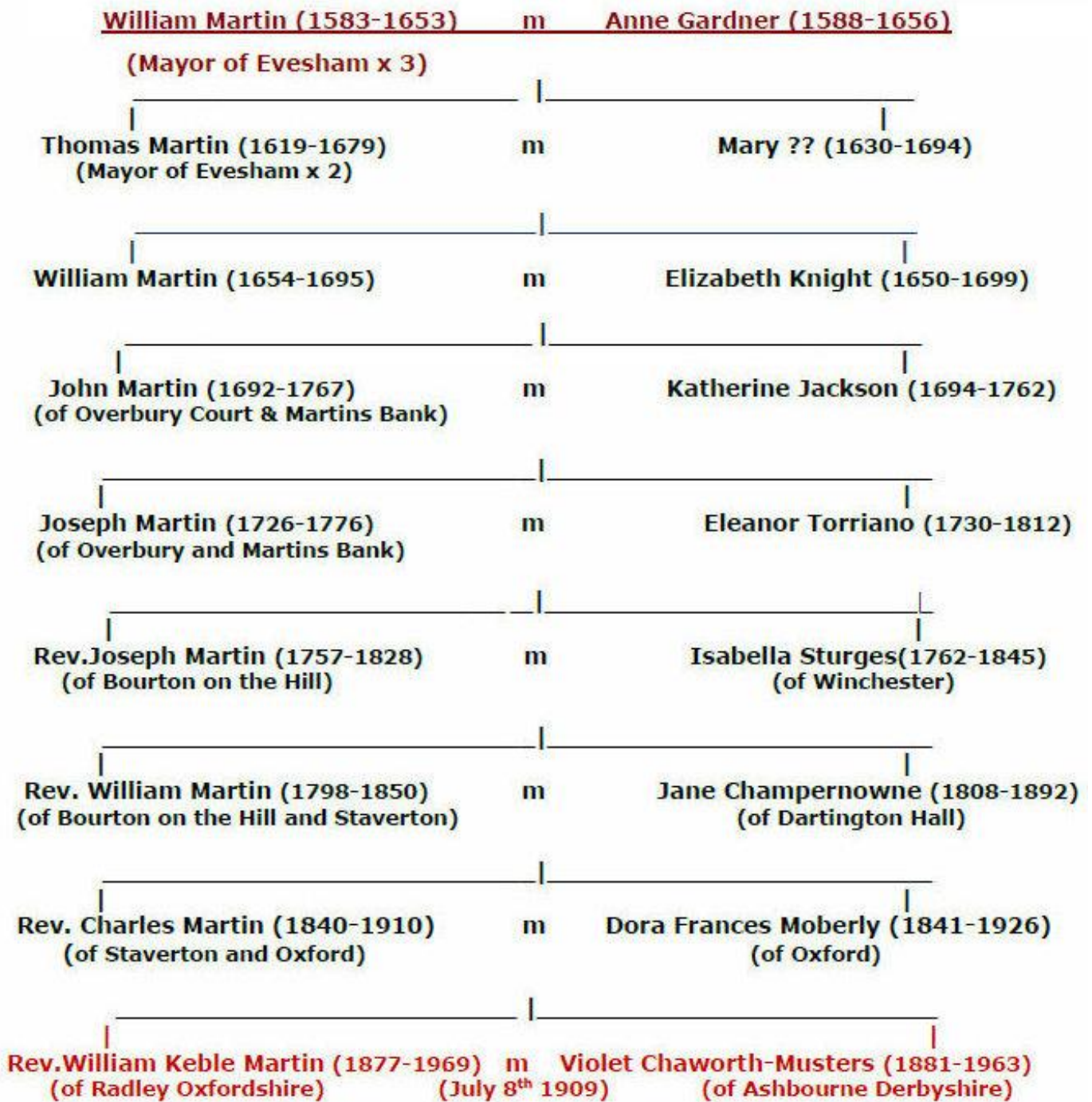
**Part of Evesham Abbey**

Thomas Martin b.1619 (Fifth great grandfather) Thomas followed in his father's tradition and served as town mayor twice, in 1652 and 1677 and was also a Justice of the Peace. He married Mary (surname unknown) and between 1649 and 1663 they had eight children. Thomas died in 1679 aged 60 but Mary went on to live until 1694.



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To assist readers follow the line of descent in this somewhat complex story I have created some charts. I think that now is the appropriate time to introduce the first chart which is that relating to the Martin family



**William Martin b.1654 (Fourth great grandfather)**

One of Thomas and Mary's sons, William, continued to reside at Evesham and married Elizabeth Knight in July 1678. Over the following 14 years they had ten known children, of whom six were sons but only four survived infancy. Of their four surviving sons, three in particular went on to establish themselves, and their families, in the world of Parliament and banking. These were Thomas b.1680, John b.1692 and James b.1693.

### **John Martin b 1692 of Overbury Court (Third great grandfather)**

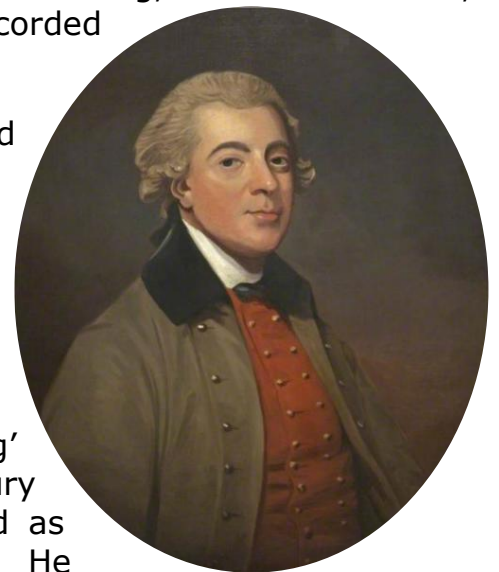
Of the three brothers mentioned it is John who continues the line of Keble Martin's ancestry. He married Katherine Jackson of Sneyd Park at Bourton on the Hill, Gloucestershire. In 1723 John bought Overbury Court and, after a disastrous fire in 1738, he rebuilt the Elizabethan manor house in the Georgian style. He also joined his brother Thomas at what was by then the family bank, Martins Bank in Lombard Street. In 1744 he succeeded his younger brother James as senior partner.



**Overbury village and the entrance to Overbury Court**

In 1734, at the age of 42, John stood for Parliament at Tewkesbury but was defeated. He stood again in the 1741 general election as a Whig, and was returned, unopposed. He voted with the administration in all recorded divisions but did not stand again in the 1747 election.

In May 1762 John's wife Katherine died and was buried at Overbury but the following year he remarried to Anna Kinloch, a widow from the Cotswold market town of Chipping Norton. John died aged 75 on 7th March 1767. His sons, John, Joseph and James were also elected to represent Tewkesbury as members of Parliament. Of these it is perhaps James who stands out as an MP. He was regarded as a scrupulous parliamentarian, gaining the nickname of 'Starling' Martin. During his three decades as MP for Tewkesbury he was a frequent speaker and generally recognized as one of the most independent Members of the House. He passionately advocated abolition of the slave trade. In 1786 James paid 20 guineas to George Romney to paint his



**James Martin 1738-1810  
by George Romney**



his portrait which was captured during seven sittings for the artist”.

The last member of the family to represent Tewkesbury as an MP was Sir Richard Biddulph Martin, 1st Baronet. He was the elder son of Robert Martin (1808–1897) of Overbury Court who was a partner of Martins Bank. Born in 1838, Sir Richard married Mary Ann who was the

daughter of John Biddulph of the banking firm of Cocks, Biddulph & Co. He was elected as MP for Tewkesbury in 1880 until it was abolished as a Parliamentary Borough under the Reform Act 1885. He returned to Parliament as MP for the Droitwich division of Worcestershire in 1892 then finally stood down at the 1906 general election.



**Overbury Court**

Vicar of Evesham, married into the family the surname of this branch of the family has become Holland-Martin.

Overbury Court has stayed in the ownership of the Martin family right up to the present day (2018). However, since the Rev. Frederick Holland,

### **Martins Bank and the sign of the Grasshopper**

At this point I feel that I should relate some of the history of this famous bank with which several members of the Martin family were so involved.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Sir Thomas Gresham, became involved in financing trade as well as arranging funding for both Henry VIII and Elizabeth I and he was the trusted agent of Elizabeth in the Low Countries. He has always been considered the first English banker to understand the working of the Foreign Exchange and from him is derived the sign of the Grasshopper. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the houses in a street were distinguished by signs. The houses in Lombard Street were not numbered until 1770 and Gresham used his family Crest of a grasshopper to mark his residence in the City. The exact date of his acquiring this site is not certain. Lombard Street is so called as Italian Merchants, or Lombards, were the chief rivals of the Jews in transacting the financial affairs of Europe. The head of a Lombard wearing the traditional cap of his race was carved on the



**The Sign of the Grasshopper on the bank at Lombard Street**

keystone of the centre window of the third floor. Today Lombard Street denotes the London Money Market.



### A Lombard

In 1558 one Richard Martin was called to the livery of the Goldsmiths Company. In 1588, the year of the Spanish Armada, he served as Lord Mayor and was knighted by Elizabeth I. He was also Master of the Mint from 1572 until his death in 1617. Without doubt he had frequent transactions with Sir Thomas Gresham, which was the beginning of the association of the Martin family with the Grasshopper. Richard Martin was an investor in Sir Francis Drake's 1577–1580 voyage of circumnavigation and also in Drake's 1585–1586 expedition to harass the Spanish ports in the New World. Additionally, Captain John Martin, Richard's son, commanded the the '*Benjamin*' on this same expedition. Sir Richard's family were from Long Melford in Suffolk, over 150 miles from Evesham. Although I have been unable to establish that Sir Richard was actually related to those members of the Martin family that later joined the bank, there does seem to be a likelihood, despite there being a gap of 86 years before Thomas Martin became a partner.

In 1703 Thomas (born 1680, the brother of John) became the first of the Evesham family to join the bank, which at that time was named '*Smith and Stone at the sign of the Grasshopper*'. By 1711 he had become the sole partner then three years later he was joined by his younger brother, James. At that time they only *rented* the premises, which was then just known as '*The Grasshopper*'. It was not until 1741 that James Martin of Quy Hall purchased the freehold, together with that of the adjoining property, *The Three Crossed Daggers*. From this time until 1852, when Mr George Stone left the firm, the business at the Grasshopper, was mainly conducted by members of these two families.



The Martin family continued to be **68 Lombard Street before the 1930 rebuild** involved with the bank, situated at 68 Lombard Street for the next 200 years. The firm merged with the larger Bank of Liverpool in 1918 and in 1930 the old building at Lombard Street was demolished to make way for a new building. The bank was finally swallowed up by Barclays Bank in 1969. Many of Martins' forms, and some procedures, were retained or later adopted by Barclays as they were more advanced than their own.



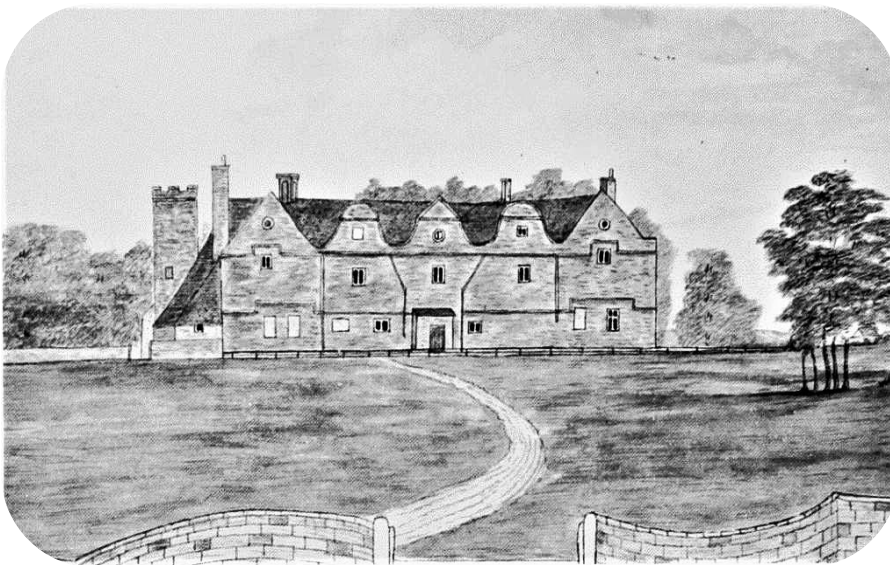


**A Martins Bank cheque of 1905**

The sign of the Grasshopper lives on at Overbury; it can be seen on the village cricket club's kit and the estate signs marking the permissive paths on Bredon Hill, as well as on the Nursery School's name.

### Quy Hall

This is an English Country House at Stow cum Quy, Cambridgeshire. Originally dating from the late 15th century it is now a Grade II listed building. In the 17th century the hall was occupied by the Whichcote baronets, a title created in 1660 to reward Jeremy Whichcote for his services to the exiled King Charles II.



**Quy Hall prior to alterations**

Francis, a Cambridge solicitor, who carried out a substantial rebuild

Sir Francis Whichcote the 3rd Baronet sold Quy Hall around 1720 to James Martin MP (1693-1744), the London banker and son of the second William Martin. In 1854 the Martins sold it on to Clement

### Ham Court

Ham Court is mentioned by Keble Martin as the home of Joseph (his grandfather's brother) which he said was near Tewkesbury. In fact it was nearer to Upton upon Severn (five miles from Tewkesbury). It was a mansion house which belonged formerly to the Bromley family and passed by marriage to the Martin family.

In December 1761, John Martin (the elder brother of Joseph and James the bankers

and parliamentarians) married Judith Bromley at Tewkesbury. As Judith was the heiress to Ham Court John therefore became the owner. There is not a lot of information available about the house but it would seem that John Martin had many alterations and additions made. A reference I found in an archaeological survey by Worcestershire County Council states: *"The main house, probably built in the 17th century, underwent a number of alterations and enlargements, principally in the late 18th century when Anthony Keck, considered to be the foremost architect in the Three Counties, was commissioned to design a neoclassical mansion to be joined to the existing house"* John and Judith had no children so when he died in 1794 the house passed to the Reverend George Martin (the son of John's brother Joseph) but George didn't live long enough to really enjoy it as he died in 1796.

Other members of the Martin family continued to live at Ham Court but I am unable to say for how long it remained in the ownership of the family. The house was demolished in 1926 and a rather upmarket housing estate has been built in its place.

### **Joseph Martin 1726 – 1776 (Second great grandfather)**

Joseph, already referred to several times in the previous paragraphs, was born at Overbury on 17th January 1726, the son of John Martin and Katherine Jackson. On 6th February 1748 at Mercers Hall Chapel, Cheapside, London, he married Eleanor Torriano who was aged 19 at the time. She was the daughter of Sir John Torriano b.1702, a London based merchant tailor and his wife Eleanor Mann. Joseph joined the family bank in 1746 and in 1760 succeeded his father as head partner of the bank. As well as holding a large amount of Bank of England stock he also speculated in Government funds. At some time, or maybe for much of it, Joseph must have resided at Lombard Street, the home of the family bank, although he died at Ham Court, his elder brother's house on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1776.



**The chapel of Mercers Hall Cheapside**

### **Reverend Joseph Martin 1757 - 1828 (Great grandfather)**

Joseph was born at Lombard Street on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1757, the fifth son of Joseph and Eleanor. It would seem that he had two younger brothers, both named Joseph who died in their first year. In fact this was something that had happened with many of Keble Martin's ancestors and whilst it is well known that infant mortality was high in earlier times it must nevertheless have been very stressful for the parents.

On 22nd May 1786, at the age of 29, Joseph married Isabella Margaret Sturges at St Swithun's over Kingsgate, Winchester. Isabella, born at Winchester in April 1762, was the daughter of the Rev Dr John Sturges the Prebendary of Winchester.





**St Swithuns-upon-Kingsgate Winchester**

*of the Manor of Cheshunt, Herts was rector of Bourton on the Hill, Gloucestershire and canon-residentiary of Exeter.*” Information from British History Online states that the Manor of Cheshunt was in fact the Rectory Manor which had been sold to Thomas Martin (Joseph’s great great uncle) prior to 1728. Thomas died in 1765 so presumably the manor had come into Joseph’s possession via his father who died in 1776. The Manor remained in the hands of the Martin family until 1814. The archives of Exeter Cathedral also confirm that Joseph had been appointed as Canon Residentiary on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1796.

Between 1790 and 1805 Joseph and Isabella went on to have seven sons and four daughters. Sadly their first three daughters died in infancy and one son at age 11. Joseph died at Ham Court aged 71 on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1828 and Isabella at Torquay 16 years later, aged 82.

### **Reverend William Martin 1798 – 1850 (Paternal Grandfather)**

William was born at Bourton on the Hill, on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1798, the fourth son of Joseph and Isabella. Joseph had been appointed as the residentiary Canon at Exeter in 1796 but how much of his time was actually spent at Exeter is unknown. However, two of William’s brothers, Francis and Richard were both born there, in 1799 and 1802, suggesting that William was probably also residing there in his early



**Bourton on the Hill birthplace of William Martin**

Possibly that is where they met, maybe whilst he was studying or visiting for some other purpose. The marriage record shows that Joseph’s place of residence was Bourton on the Hill, a pretty Cotswold village, where he was the Rector of St Lawrence’s Church.

Joseph, it would seem, was also Lord of the Manor of Cheshunt which I confirmed by further research. Burkes Genealogy 1847–49 Vol 2 states that: “*The Rev. Joseph Martin of Ham Court, co Worcester Lord*



years. By 1803 he may have been back in the Bourton on the Hill area as his

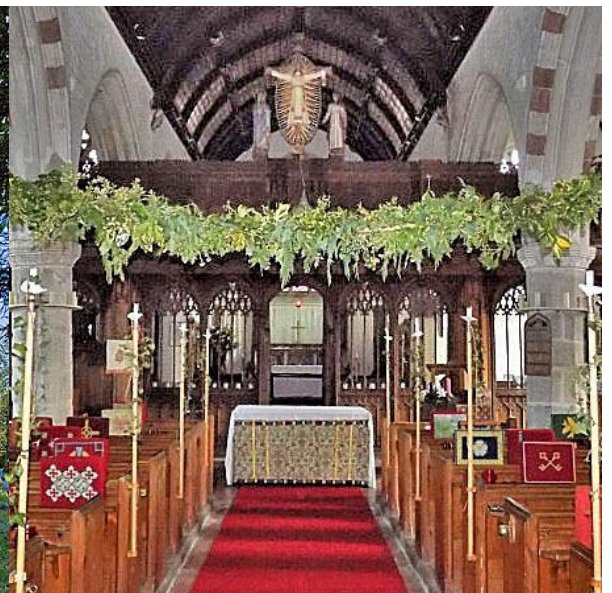
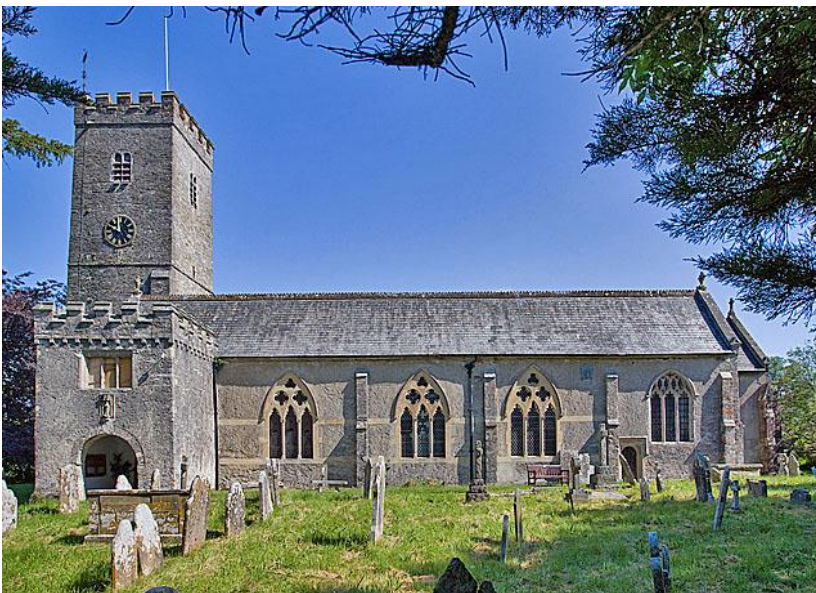
brother, John, was born at nearby Moreton in the Marsh and in 1805 his sister Frances was born at Bourton on the Hill



**Merton College Oxford early 19<sup>th</sup> century**

On 13<sup>th</sup> August 1828 he married Jane at Dartington which was just over a month after Joseph, his father, died at Ham Court.

In 1816 William commenced his studies at Merton College, the oldest of Oxford's colleges. In 1819 he became a BA and later an MA. By 1825 he was the Rector at Staverton beside the River Dart near Dartington Hall. At sometime during the following three years he met Jane Champernowne, the daughter of Arthur and Louisa of Dartington Hall.



**Parish church of St Paul de Leon Staverton**

Over the following 19 years Jane and William had five daughters and eight sons, of whom Charles, their fifth son was born on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1840. William continued as Rector at Staverton until he died on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1850. In 1851 Jane was living at Paignton with some of her children and her mother, Louisa, but Charles was at a boarding school at 11 Louisa Terrace (coincidence), Littleham, Exmouth. Jane continued to live at various locations in Devon until 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1892 when she died at West Buckland, Devon. Whilst at Winchester College as Head boy Charles met Dora Moberly, a daughter of the headmaster Dr George Moberly, and he went on to marry her in 1869. Their fourth son was William Keble Martin, which in effect brings us to the end of the Martin part of his ancestry.



## 11 THE CHAMPERNOWNES

Not wishing to detract from the exceptional story of the Martin family, it has to be said that the story of the Champernownes is really quite extraordinary.

The family originated from a small town/region in Normandy named Cambernon. In 1096 Jordan De Campo Ernulfi moved to Umberleigh near South Molton, Devon and around 1118 married Mabel Fitzrobert, the daughter of Robert of Gloucester. It would seem that the name evolved through "Campernulfe", "Champernon" and "Champernoun" before eventually becoming "Champernowne" although there seems to be some confusion about where and when these changes took place.



**Eglise de Cambernon, Normandy**

From there some of the family moved south to the Clyst valley area (then spelt Clist), in particular Clyst St George which was then known as *Clist Champernowne*. The family was known to be living there in the time of Henry II. I wonder what Keble Martin would have thought if he had known that when he took services at Clyst St George, or maybe he did know? Over the following 200 years the family acquired land and estates in Devon, as far apart as Bere Ferrers in the west, Plympton in the south, and Ilfracombe in the North. The Champernownes married into some notable and powerful Devon families, including the Courtenays, Carews, Gilberts and Bonvilles to name but a few.

### **The Manor of Modbury**

Modbury is a small market town in the South Hams district of Devon with origins going back to Saxon times. Nowadays most of the houses lining the steep main

street are 18th or 19th century, formerly the homes of prosperous wool merchants. The Manor of Modbury is mentioned in the Domesday Book and in 1086 the principal part was held as one of the 79 Devonshire holdings of Robert, Count of Mortain, a half brother of William the Conqueror. Robert's tenants at Modbury were the Norman Vautort family who held other manors in Devon and founded the priory there in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. The priory was staffed with a Prior, William Benselyn, plus just two monks and was administered by the Norman Abbey, St Mary of St Pierre sur Dives but was later dissolved in 1467. By the early 13<sup>th</sup> century Modbury had passed to the Okeston family.

Richard Champernowne, second son of Sir Henry Champernowne of Clist Champernowne (Clyst St George), married Joan Okeston, heiress of Sir Alexander Okeston of Modbury. Sir Richard Champernowne, the son of Richard, eventually inherited Modbury by command of King Edward II. Sir Richard's family resided at Modbury Manor, living in great splendour and several members of the family



**St Georges Church, Modbury**

were knighted for military services. The building was castellated in 1334 by royal license and as time went on it became known as *Champernowne Manor*.

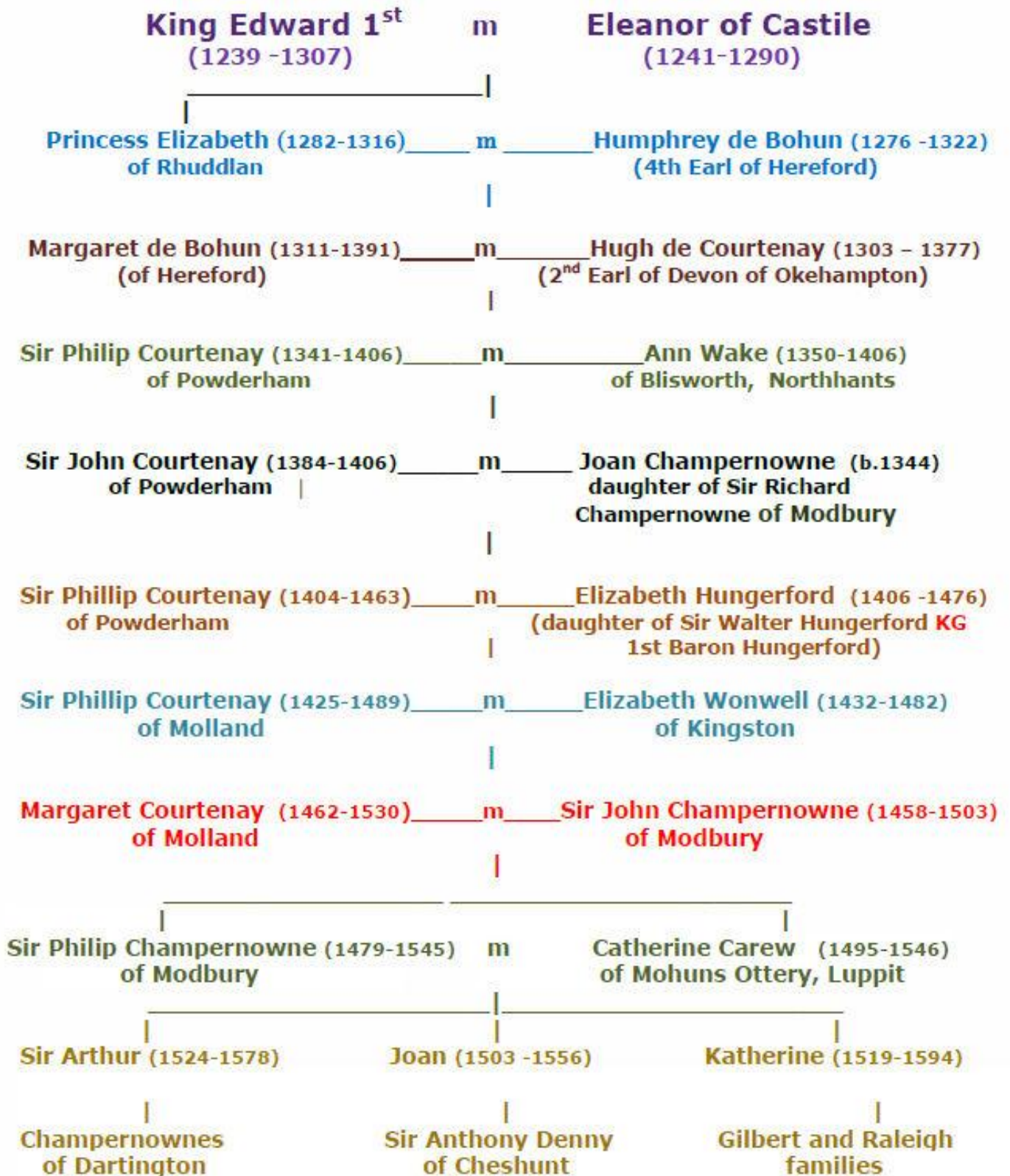
It is said that the family kept a very fine band of singers and musicians during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. There is a story I have read in two different 19<sup>th</sup> century accounts that Queen Elizabeth, having heard about their performance at Windsor Castle during Henry VIII's time, wrote to Henry Champernowne bidding him to "*bring up to court his consort of fine musicke, for that she desired greatly to hear it*". Apparently he tactlessly replied that the previous visit to Windsor had proved so expensive that it had caused his grandfather, Sir Philip, to sell two of his manors to recover his costs. The Queen, it would seem, was somewhat incensed and "*found occasion to mulct him of four or five manors as a lesson not to return such an answer to a royal mistress again*". Both accounts vary considerably but it's a good story anyway and there is probably an element of truth in it.

Whatever the cause, it was during the last part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that the fortunes of the Champernowne family at Modbury began to decline and the manor was largely destroyed during the Civil War during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. St George's Church at Modbury is rather unusual for the county of Devon in that it has a medieval spire. It was rebuilt in approximately 1300 on the site of an early Saxon Church. Within the south transept are effigies of the Champernowne family.



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At this stage I will introduce the next chart which shows the family's connections with the famous Courtenay family of Devon going right back to King Edward I.



It is at Modbury that Keble Martin's Champernowne heritage really commenced. In 1437, following a succession of Champernownes who lived at the Manor (which was

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then known as "Court House") William, the son of Hugh Champernowne and Alice Moore was born. In 1457, (when Henry VI was on the throne) William married Elizabeth Chuderlegh (some sources give the name as Chiderlegh). She was the daughter and heiress of John Chuderlegh, of the manor of Chuderlegh (believed to be the original name for Chudleigh). William and Elizabeth had at least one known son John, born 1458 and one daughter, Katharine. William died young at around 25 years old.

William's son John married Margaret Courtenay the daughter of Sir Phillip Courtenay of Molland. This is where the story becomes even more interesting as Margaret was a member of the important and famous Courtney family of Devon.



**Effigy of William Champernowne in St Georges Church, Modbury**

## The Courtenays

It is necessary at this point to leave the Champernowne family for awhile but I will return to them as the story continues. The Courtenay family originated from the small town of Courtenay in the Loiret region of France, which is south of Paris and some way from Normandy. The first to arrive was Reynard de Courtenay in 1173 when he became the owner of Okehampton Castle by virtue of marriage. His son Robert married the daughter of William de Redvers, the Earl of Devon and as a result the



**Church of St Peter and St Paul, Courtenay, Loiret**

Courtenays also became the owners of Tiverton Castle both of which continued to be the main seats of the family in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Sir Hugh de Courtenay (1303-1377) 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Devon**

**(16<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

The title of Earl of Devon was created several times in the English peerage, and was first possessed by the de Redvers family then later by the Courtenays. Sir Hugh was resident at Okehampton Castle, his



**The ruined Okehampton Castle**



main seat in 1325 when he married Margaret de Bohun. Aged only 14 at the time, she was the granddaughter of King Edward I and Queen Eleanor of Castile. Margaret's parents were Humphrey de Bohun, fourth Earl of Hereford and Elizabeth of Rhuddlan, Countess of Hereford. Amongst many other holdings the Earl owned was the manor of Powderham and he gave it to Margaret as part of her dowry.

### **The Royal Connection – King Edward I (18<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather to Keble Martin)**

Edward I came to the throne in 1272. He was, as many are probably aware, a pretty formidable king. Known as 'Longshanks' on account of his long limbs and height, his first task was to quell the second Barons Revolt which had started during his father, Henry III's reign. He did this by defeating Simon de Montfort at the Battle of Evesham. (Perhaps some of Keble Martin's ancestors on his Martin side were living there then?) Although known as the 'Hammer of the Scots' he also did a pretty effective job of subduing any resistance in Wales by building a series of massive stone castles at strategic points. One of these was at Rhuddlan in Denbighshire where Elizabeth, his eighth and youngest daughter was born on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1282.



**King Edward I – National Portrait Gallery**

Elizabeth's first marriage was to John, Count of Holland, to whom she was betrothed in 1285 at the age of three. The marriage, which took place at Ipswich in January 1297 was attended by the King. Also in attendance along with other guests was Humphrey de Bohun. Following the marriage Elizabeth should have travelled with her husband to Holland but she but didn't wish to go, leaving her husband to go alone. Apparently, so the story goes, the King, in an outburst, threw his daughter's coronet into the fire. A great ruby and a great emerald supplied by Adam the Goldsmith were lost as a result. The King was well known for being extremely temperamental so perhaps this wasn't such a surprise.

Eventually, in 1298/1299, after travelling with her father through Holland to Ghent in Belgium, Elizabeth did join her husband John. However, on 10 November 1299



**Rhuddlan Castle North Wales, Elizabeth's birthplace**



**Humphrey de Bohun**  
**4th Earl Hereford**

he died of dysentery, although there were rumours of his murder! When Elizabeth arrived back in England, she met her stepmother Margaret, who King Edward had married while she was in Holland (her mother Queen Eleanor having died in 1290). On 14 November 1302, then aged 20, Elizabeth was married at Westminster Abbey to Humphrey de Bohun, 4th Earl of Hereford, 3rd of Essex, and also Constable of England. Later in Edward's reign, he and the Earl were in serious dispute regarding the King's unreasonable taxation demands.

### **The Courtenay family - continued**

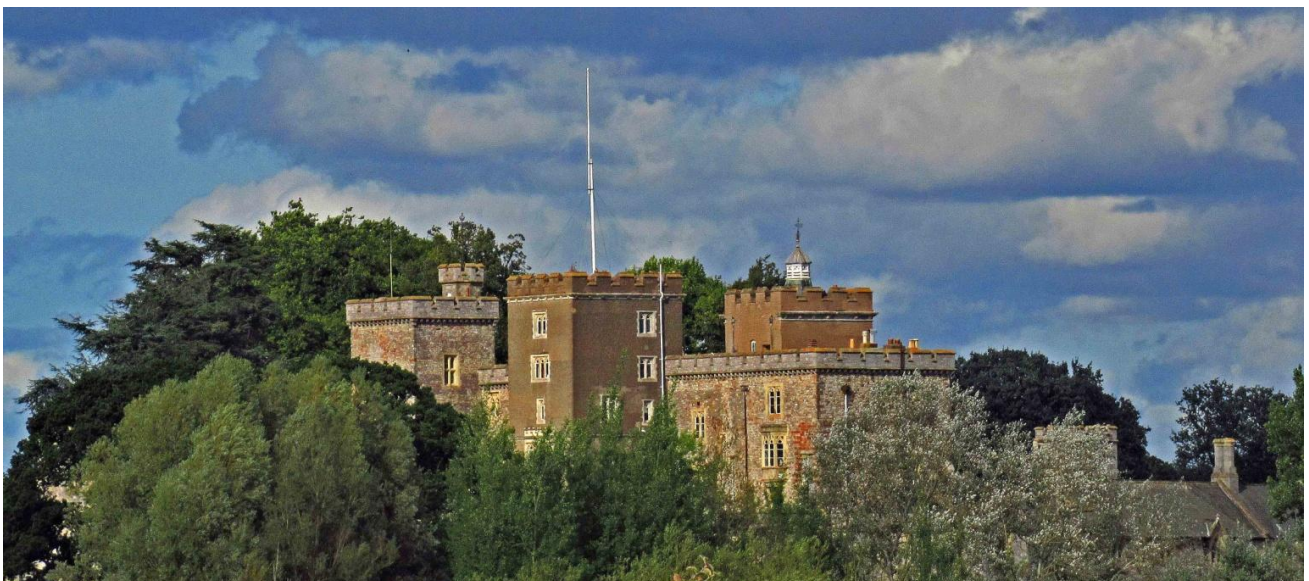
As a result of Margaret de Bohun's marriage to Sir Hugh de Courtenay she became the Countess of Devon. They had eight sons and seven daughters most of whom reached adulthood. Their descendants include members of the British royal family and Sir Winston Churchill. Margaret died on 16 December 1391, aged 80 and is buried in Exeter Cathedral. She bequeathed the manor of Powderham to her fifth son, Sir Phillip Courtenay.

### **Sir Philip Courtenay 1341–1406 (15<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

Sir Phillip became the founder of the Powderham branch of the Courtenays. He died in July 1406 after a colourful career during which time he was involved in many battles, made Admiral of the West and later Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He fell in and out with, both Richard II and Henry IV and acquired many manors and smaller properties in Devon, Somerset and Dorset. It was said of him that he was a man of much energy and ability in national and



**Effigies of Hugh de Courtenay, 2nd Earl of Devon, and his wife, Margaret de Bohun, south transept, Exeter Cathedral.**



**Powderham Castle as it is now**



local affairs but whose predilection for violence and thuggery was extreme, even by medieval standards!

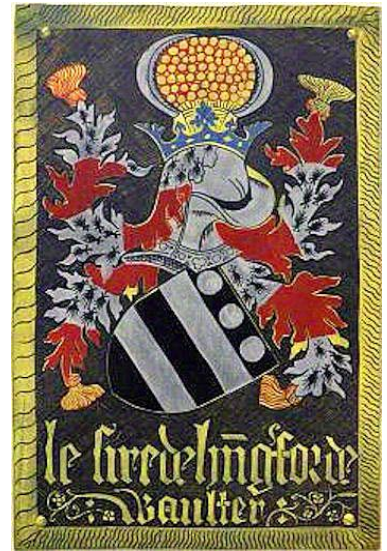
### **Sir John Courtenay 1384-1406 (14<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

The powerful Courtenay family first linked up with the Champernownes when Sir John Courtenay (1384-1419) married Joan Champernowne of Modbury. Their eldest son was named Phillip, born on 18 January 1404

### **Sir Phillip 1404-1463 (13<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

In 1426 Sir Phillip married Elizabeth Hungerford, daughter of Sir Walter Hungerford KG, the 1st Baron Hungerford.

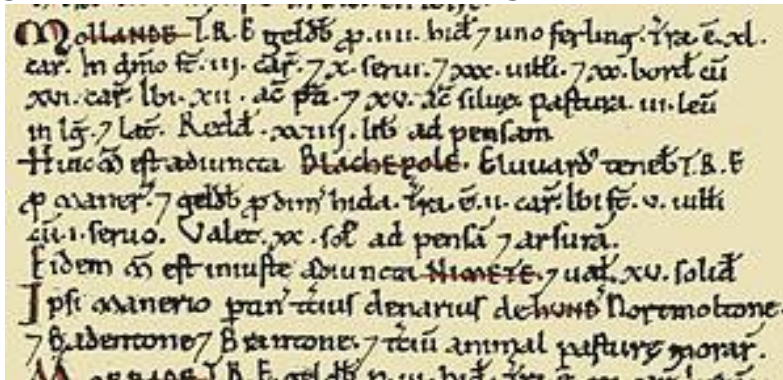
*\*NB Sir Walter Hungerford was the Knight of the Garter from whom Keble Martin had descended*



**Sir Walter Hungerford's Garter  
Stall Plate at Windsor Castle**

### **The Manor of Molland**

Situated a few miles to the north east of South Molton in North Devon, the manor goes back to the time of King Edward the Confessor. It was mentioned in the



**Exeter Copy of the Domesday Book entry re Molland**

Exeter Domesday Book of 1086 and was given to a Norman knight named *de Botreaux*, probably from Les Bottereaux Upper Normandy. The manor became known as "Molland-Bottreaux" and also included the Manor of Knowstone (between South Molton and Tiverton). These grants were confirmed

by King Richard I (the Lionheart) after he became king in 1189.

In the earlier part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, on the death of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron de Botreaux, the male line died out and the sole heiress, was his daughter Margaret. She married the 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Hungerford, Robert, the son and heir of the first Baron, Walter Hungerford. When Robert's sister, Elizabeth, married Sir Phillip she brought with her the Manor of Molland as her dowry. Sir Phillip and Elizabeth's eldest son was also named Phillip.



**The village of Molland North Devon**

### **Sir Phillip Courtenay of Molland 1425-1489 (12<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

Phillip was born around 1425. He married Elizabeth Wonwell, a widow and the daughter and heiress of John Wonwell of Wonwell in the parish of Kingston, Devon.



Philip received as his marriage portion (wedding present!) from his mother, the Manor of Molland where he carried on to establish a separate branch of the Courtney family. They continued to live there until 1732. Sir Phillip spent some of his time as an MP and in 1471 was Sheriff of Devon. He and Elizabeth had three sons and two daughters. The youngest of these was Margaret who married Sir John Champernowne thus creating the second link between the families. Sir Phillip Courtenay died in 1489.

**Fragment from demolished chest tomb c.1488 in Molland Church, Devon. It is probably that of Sir Phillip Courtenay (d.1489) of Molland and denotes the joining of the Courtenay and Hungerford families.**

### **The Champernowne family (continued)**

#### **Sir John Champernowne. (11<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

When Sir John married Margaret Courtenay he effectively linked his descendants to King Edward I who was Margaret's fifth great grandfather. The line had descended through the Powderham branch, as indicated on the family tree (page 13). Many references referred to him as Sir John Champernowne of Dartington but I have been unable to confirm any connection with Dartington. If so then it was not Dartington Hall as this didn't come into the possession of the Champernownes until 1554. John had however inherited an estate at Aston Rowant (originally named *Aston Rohant*) in Oxfordshire and this is where he died in 1503, aged 45. He was brought back to Modbury and buried at St George's Church burial ground where his father, William, son Phillip and other members of the family are also buried.

#### **Kat Astley/Ashley (1502-1565)**

Whilst resident at Modbury, Sir John and Margaret had at least two children. One of these was Phillip, born in 1479 and the other was believed to be named Katherine. Whilst there is little doubt about Phillip and his descendants, Katharine (or Catharine) is somewhat of a conundrum. Numerous sources state that Katherine was Kat Astley (or Ashley) the governess and companion to Queen Elizabeth 1st, and that she was the daughter of Sir John Champernowne. A few even suggest that she was Phillip's daughter! There seems little doubt that Kat was a Champernowne, who in 1545 married John Astley, a courtier, and Master of Henry VIII's Jewel House. My own research indicates that it is by no means clear who her parents were. Most sources say that she was believed to have been born around 1503. If she had been the daughter of Sir John, who died the same year, then there would have been a 24 year age gap between her and her brother Phillip and her mother would have been aged around 41 at the time



**Portrait most commonly thought to be of Kat Astley**



of her birth. Neither of these facts are particularly unusual, in view of the large families that most people had in those days, but in this case I haven't found any verifiable evidence that there were other children of the marriage. There is another, more compelling reason, to doubt that Kat Astley was Sir John Champernowne's daughter. This is the existence of a letter written in 1536 by Kat to Thomas Cromwell \* (her patron) in which she asks for funds to care for Elizabeth and in which she states that she would ask her father for financial help except that: *"he has as much to do with the little living he has as any man."* The implication is that her father was still alive and was not very well off, neither of which applied to Sir John. It seems more than likely that she was a member of another branch of the Champernowne family and people have just come to the wrong conclusion. There is no doubt that she came from Devon, where at least three branches of the Champernowne family existed at that time all of which were related to the original member who came over from Normandy. It therefore seems very unlikely that Kat Astley was a direct member of Keble Martin's line of ancestry.

\* *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII vol. 11, p. 253, letter of October 10, 1536*  
<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/vol11/pp221-257>

**To follow the relationships of this next section please see the chart on page 33.**

### **Sir Phillip Champernowne (1479 – 1545) (10<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

Phillip inherited the family manor at Modbury and married Catherine Carew, born around 1490. She was the daughter of Sir Edmund Carew and Catherine Huddesfield of the manor of Mohuns Ottery, Luppitt in East Devon. The Carews



**The outer gatehouse of the manor at Mohuns Ottery which is all that is left of the original building after the old manor house burnt down in 1868. It was rebuilt as a farm house using some of the original stone.**

were a famous Devon family and Sir Edmund, was knighted by King Henry VII at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. He was killed in 1513 at the Siege of Therouanne near Calais.

Sir Phillip and Catherine had at least six known children; two sons, John and Arthur and four daughters, Jane, Joan, Katherine and Elizabeth. Some sources also mention another daughter, Frances but I haven't managed to establish that as a fact. Sir Phillip died on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1545 at Modbury, his estate being probated on 5th February 1546.

John, the elder son (b.1518) married Katherine Blount, a daughter of William Blount, the 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Mountjoy. John died in 1541, predeceasing his father so the Manor of Modbury was inherited by John's son Henry when Sir Phillip died 1545. Jane (b.1518) married Robert Gamage of Glamorgan but for some reason various sources give her name as Joan. This has resulted in her being confused with her older sister Joan. Elizabeth (b.1521) married William Cole of Slade, Devon.

It is however, Sir Phillip's other three children who I have termed the "*famous three*" that are of particular note: Of these it is Arthur to who Keble Martin is directly related but I will deal first with his very interesting siblings.

### Joan Champernowne (Denny)

Joan, born around 1512-1513 was described by a writer as "*a lady of great beauty and parts, a favourer of the Reformed religion when the times were most dangerous*" Around 1528 she came to court to join the household of Katherine of Aragon as a maid-of-honor, being sponsored by her uncle, Sir Gawin Carew. This same Gawin may have been the husband of another lady in Katherine of Aragon's household, the former Mary Wotton, widow of Sir Henry Guildford. It was also in the household of Katherine of Aragon that Joan met Lady Maud Parr, mother of the future queen.



**Portrait of Joan Denny in the V & A collection**

In 1538 Joan married Sir Anthony Denny, privy councillor and royal favourite of Henry VIII. The couple had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. In 1539, Anthony and Joan were part of the welcoming party that met Anne of Cleves. Between 1535 and 1545 he became the most intimate of Henry VIII's few friends. As keeper of Westminster palace and of the royal household there, he acted as receiver and paymaster of the King's personal spending money, much of which was kept in the jewel house in the palace. His own income from offices has been estimated at some £200 but royal grants of land were the chief source



**Portrait of Sir Anthony Denny in the National Portrait Gallery**



of his wealth. In 1542, Anthony Denny was appointed Keeper of the Royal Mansion of Hatfield. He was present at Henry VIII's marriage to Katherine Parr in July 1543 and he served with the expedition which resulted in the capture of Boulogne in 1544, receiving a knighthood for his services. In the last two years of the King's life he was one of the three men who regularly witnessed the signing of bills and documents with the King's stamp. A witness and an executor of Henry VIII's will, he received a legacy of £300.

Joan held a position at court in the household of Queen Katherine Parr. Joan was a Protestant and is said to have protected persecuted reformers in Devon. In 1546, she was implicated in the persecutions at court by the Catholic faction. Most of the ladies of Queen Katherine Parr were interrogated and mistreated by those wanting to get rid of the Queen due to her religious beliefs and practices. The Queen was never tried, but an arrest warrant was drawn up. Luckily for Katherine, she talked her way out of it. Henry accepted Katherine's pleas and the two made up. After the death of King Henry, Joan retired from court service.



**Church of St Mary – Cheshunt This would have been the parish church in 1536**

was here that she was tutored by English scholar, Roger Ascham. It seems that there is nothing left of the priory now but it is a coincidence (nothing more) that at one time some members of the Martin family were Lords of the Manor of Cheshunt.

Sir Anthony died at Cheshunt on 10th Sept. 1549. He was described by the imperial ambassador in 1547 as the most trusted of all the gentlemen of the chamber. He rode with the Queen's brother-in-law in the carriage with Henry VIII's body at his funeral.



**Remains of Original gateway Waltham Abbey The abbey was owned by Joan Denny in 1553**

In 1541 King Henry had leased Waltham Manor to Sir Anthony. When he died in 1549, his estates passed to Joan

and in 1553 she bought the manor of Waltham outright. Sadly she didn't live to enjoy it as she died in the same year aged around 40.

*With reference to the painting of Joan on page 20; it was painted in the 18<sup>th</sup> century probably a copy of a 16th century likeness of Joan. It was gifted to the Victoria and Albert museum by Sir Edward Denny in 1889.*

### **Katherine Champernowne (Gilbert/Raleigh)**

Katherine was the third daughter to be born to Sir Phillip and his wife, believed to be in 1519 which the majority of sources give as her year of birth. Katherine married Otho (or Otes) Gilbert of Compton and Greenway at some time around 1534/35.



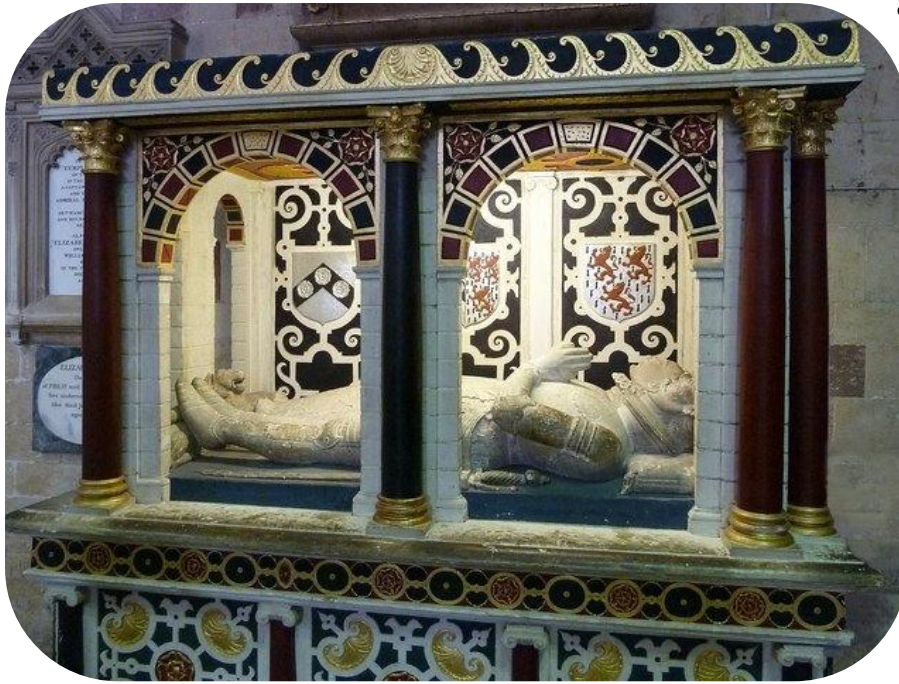
**Compton Castle Devon – home of the Gilbert family since 1329**

**Otho Gilbert** was the son of Thomas and Isabell and was born at Compton Castle in 1513. The Gilbert family had been in possession of the Manor of Compton since 1329 when Joan de Compton had married Geoffrey Gilbert. Compton Castle is a fortified manor house and although now owned and managed by the National Trust there are still members of the Gilbert family living there today.

Their first child, a son who they named John, was born early in 1536 at the nearby Manor of Greenway which Otho also owned. (Greenway eventually became the home of Agatha Christie). Numerous sources give John's year of birth as 1533 which would have made his mother about 14 at the time. Whilst by no means impossible it is unlikely, as although medieval members of the nobility betrothed their children at an early age, the marriage generally wasn't consummated before the age of 15. However, when the inquisition into Otho's death was held on 13th October 1547 (Otho having died in February that year) John's age was recorded as being 11¾ years which confirmed his birth year as 1536. Otho's will also named his other children as Humphrey, Adrian, Otho and Katherine.

**Sir John Gilbert** went on to play an important role in the defence of the country at the time of the Spanish Armada in 1588. He became Sheriff and Deputy Lieutenant of Devonshire and Vice-Admiral of the Western Coast of England. His wife was Elizabeth Chudley (or Chudleigh) the daughter of Sir Richard Chudleigh. She was born in about 1535 at Ashton in Devon and they married on 10th November 1566





**The splendid tomb of Sir John Gilbert and his wife, Elizabeth in Exeter Cathedral**

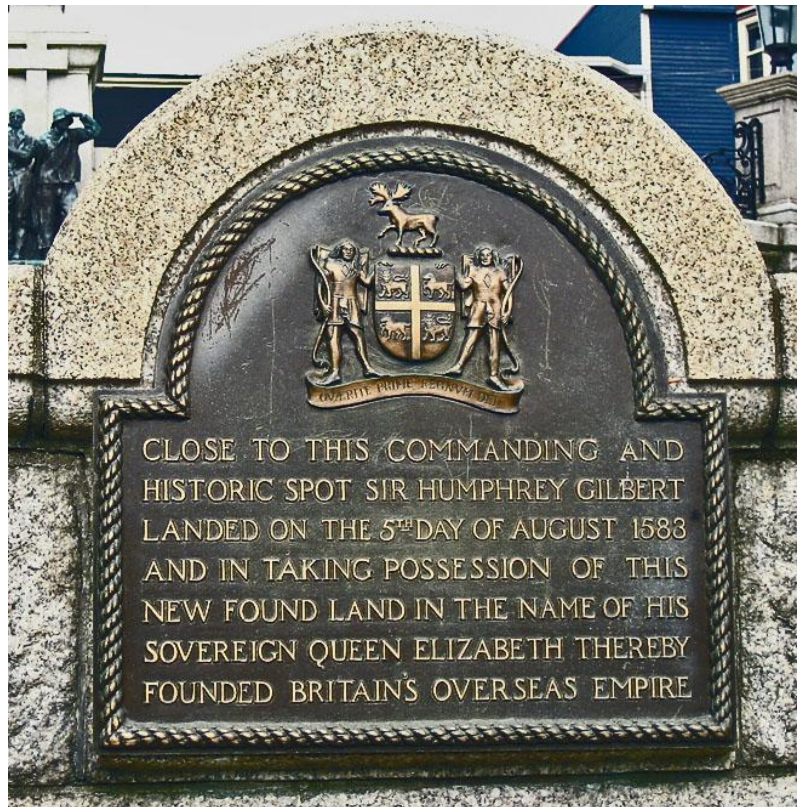
and Oxford, where he learned to speak French and Spanish and studied the arts of war and navigation, Humphrey went to London and from there to a life of adventure; the siege of Newhaven at le Havre, where he was wounded in June 1563, then to Ireland where he quelled a revolution for which he was knighted in 1570. In 1572 he commanded 1,500 English volunteers sent to assist the revolt of the Netherlands against Spain. He was also MP for Plymouth and Queenborough in Kent. He married Anne Aucher with who he had six sons and a daughter. He was also involved in several ventures with his half brother, Sir Walter Raleigh (see later) who was a great friend.

In 1578 Sir Humphrey sailed for North America, intending to found a colony there in the name of the Queen, but had to turn back because of tremendous storms in the English Channel. On June 11, 1583 he sailed again, arriving on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at St. John's, Newfoundland, which he claimed in the name of the Queen. Moving southward with three ships, he lost the largest of them on August 29. After two days he was last seen near the Azores during a great storm in the Atlantic

at Compton, where Sir John held the castle from 1547 until his death on 8th September 1596. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1571 and is buried in Exeter Cathedral in a magnificent tomb.

**Sir Humphrey Gilbert:**

Of Katherine and Otho's children it was her son, Humphrey, who was perhaps the most famous. Most sources give his year of birth as 1539 but it may well have been as early as 1537. He became a famous explorer and adventurer. Educated at Eton



**Commemorative plaque re Sir Humphrey Gilbert's landing at Newfoundland**





**Canadian stamp to celebrate Sir Humphrey's achievement**

shouting to his companion vessel, (The Golden Hind) "We are as near heaven by sea as by land." His ship was then swallowed by the sea. He had previously been advised that his ship was over-gunned and unsuitable for the voyage but he had a reputation for ignoring the advice of more experienced mariners!

### **Adrian Gilbert**

Whilst not perhaps as famous as his two older brothers Adrian Gilbert, who was born in 1541, became very involved with his seafaring brother Humphrey and also with his half brother, Sir Walter Raleigh, for whom he acted as an agent for over 30 years. He also owned a ship, "*The Elizabeth*", of 70 tons and was involved with operating a silver mine at Combe Martin, North Devon, from which he reaped £8,000 profit in a few years. He continued the search for the North West Passage after Sir Humphrey's death and was instrumental, along with Grenville, Drake and Raleigh, in establishing the first British colony in the New World at Roanoke Island, Virginia.



**The above picture is the frontispiece of a book which I have so far been unable to identify. The artist's name is H Johnson and here he has depicted Adrian Gilbert (centre) with Dr John Dee, mathematician/astronomer and advisor to Queen Elizabeth I (on left), John Davis explorer who lived near Adrian at Sandridge (2<sup>nd</sup> left) and Sir Francis Walsingham (on right). They are discussing the possible location of the fabled North West Passage**

Adrian also had some reputation as an alchemist, farmer, and, especially, as a landscape gardener. His garden commissions included Wilton, for the Earl of Pembroke and Sherborne for Raleigh. He was also employed by Robert Cecil to construct a water course at Theobalds Manor. In 1597 he was elected as Member of Parliament for Bridport in 1597. His estate at Sandridge, Dartmouth came to him



through his wife. Eleanor Markham the widow of Sir John Fulford. She died in 1598 and Adrian died in 1628 aged 87, a pretty good age for those days.

### The Gilbert Spoon

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter has in its collection one of the most important examples of Elizabethan silver. Known as the Gilbert Spoon it is considered, by its uniqueness of design, quality of craftsmanship and historical significance to be one of the finest early English spoons.

The Museum's account of its history is; *"it was probably made as one of a set for Sir John Gilbert and on his death in 1596 passed to Adrian Gilbert, his youngest and only surviving brother. The inscribed date and initials probably therefore commemorate Adrian's inheritance. The finial in the form of a squirrel is a design unknown in any other early English spoon"* It goes on to suggest that it might have been made of silver from the family's gold mine in North Devon.



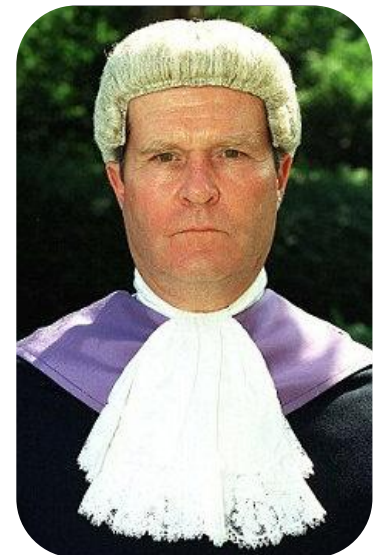
**The Gilbert Spoon**

**and its squirrel finial**

The spoon is engraved on the reverse of the bowl with the arms of the Gilberts and inscribed on the inside of the bowl "IV" and on the stem "DEVON. AG. 1596". It was made by John Edes of Exeter between 1580 and 1590.

### Judge Francis Gilbert

Just as a point of interest, to conclude this section, I did actually know one of the Gilbert family. Back in 1990 when I was working at the Exeter Crown Court as the Police Liaison Officer, Francis Gilbert was one of the senior barristers with whom I came into regular contact to discuss cases. However, I doubt very much he would remember me! It was common knowledge that he was related to the Gilbert family of Compton Castle and to Sir Walter Raleigh although I'm not sure whether he lived there at the time. He was appointed as an Assistant Recorder that year and became a QC in 1992 (after I had left). He went on to become resident Judge at Exeter in 2012 and retired in January 2016. His full name is Francis Humphrey Shubrick Gilbert. His father was named Walter Raleigh Gilbert and was a Commander in the Royal Navy and Sherriff of Devon in 1957. A family tree I have found, "The Gilberts of Compton" goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This shows that most, if not all, of the male members of the family since



Otho Gilbert and Katherine Champernowne have been named after Sir Humphrey or Sir John or Sir Walter Raleigh.

## The Raleighs

Within two years of Otho's death Katherine had remarried to Walter Raleigh. He was born at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century at his family home, Fardel Manor near Ivybridge, West Devon. Fardel was a Saxon estate and a Domesday manor and the Raleighs of Smallridge in East Devon obtained it by marriage to an heiress early in the 14th century. The name was not spelt Raleigh until the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and almost certainly was pronounced Rawley but from hereon I will use the spelling which most people know. Walter was the son and heir of Wymond (or Wimond) who had first been married to Joan Grenville of the famous Grenville family. Later he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir Richard Edgecumbe of Cotehele, Cornwall. It is generally accepted that Joan (or Jane as she is also referred to) was Walter's mother although one or two sources name Elizabeth as his mother. Wymond died when Walter was only seven years old and he inherited Fardel Manor and its lands. These were held by Sir Nicholas Vaux and Sir Peter Edgecumbe on behalf of Walter until he reached his majority. Walter also became the owner of the manors of Colaton Raleigh and Withycombe Raleigh. He lived at Hayes Barton, East Budleigh, a large farm property on which he had a long lease and where he set up as a gentleman farmer. From here he ran his growing business and the Raleighs soon owned the grazing rights on both Lympstone and Woodbury Commons. In 1528 Walter married Joan Drake of Exmouth (a distant relative of Sir Francis Drake). They had two sons before Joan died in 1530 or thereabouts. Joan is buried at East Budleigh Church. Walter later entered into a short-lived marriage, believed to the daughter of a Genoese merchant in London, but there is very little information about this marriage except that there had been a daughter named Mary.



**Fardel Manor near Ivybridge, home of Walter Raleigh senior**



**All Saints Church  
East Budleigh**



During the reign of King Henry VIII Katherine had become an ardent protestant and she refused to give up her beliefs when Mary Tudor was queen. She sat with the martyr, Agnes Prest, the night before her execution. John Foxe, (1518-1587) an English historian, and the author of 'Acts and Monuments' wrote at the time;

***“Agnes Prest, before she was brought to the stake in 1557 at Southernhay had been comforted in Exeter gaol by the visits of the wife of Walter Raleigh, a woman of noble wit and of good and goodly opinion”***

Katherine was not, it would seem, prosecuted herself for her views and acts.



**Hayes Barton East Budleigh – the home of the Raleigh family in the md 16<sup>th</sup> century**

In August 1557 Walter's ship the *Katherine Raleigh* of Exmouth captured a Portuguese vessel which he pretended was a prize from the French, a ruse which did not deceive the admiralty officers. Since 1544 he had been actively, (if not personally) engaged in privateering and piracy. Early in 1554 he aided the rebel Sir Peter Carew by providing him with a boat in which to escape from England. In 1558 Walter was elected as Member of Parliament for the Wareham constituency but after only three weeks an arrest warrant was issued against him for returning a prize to its owner, thus depriving the crown of £200. He was later found guilty, although he had been ordered by the Privy Council to return it, but apparently no further action was taken.

By 1569 Walter had left Hayes Barton and was living mainly at his house in Exeter. However, he died at Colaton Raleigh (presumably at his manor there) on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1581 and was buried at Exeter four days later. His eldest son by Joan Drake inherited the manors of Fardel and Withycombe Raleigh; the two other manors which Raleigh had inherited from his father, he had left to Katherine with the remainder to his other sons.

After Walter died Katherine continued to live in Exeter, believed in the vicinity of Palace Gate. She kept liveried servants and a waiting woman, but she was in debt

when she died. She made her will on 18 Apr 1594 and died later that year. She also was buried in Exeter.

Katherine and Walter's marriage produced three children. The first was Margaret, born in 1548. Not a lot is known about her except that she first married Lawrence Radford of Rockbeare and subsequently, George Hull of Larkbeare.

**Sir Carew Raleigh**, was the second born, in 1550 and named after his maternal grandmother. Although he never achieved the fame of his younger brother (Walter) he nevertheless had a very successful career. Carew's three Gilbert half-brothers influenced his young manhood. He didn't go to either university or inn of court but sought early adventure and was taken by Sir Humphrey Gilbert on his first expedition of discovery in 1578.

Carew married Lady Dorothy Thynne, the widow of Sir John Thynne of Longleat. He sold his Devon lands and moved his home to Downton House in Wiltshire. Their second son, named Walter and born in 1586, became the Dean of Wells. By 1582 Carew was a JP in the county. Despite this he was still heavily involved in seafaring activities in the English Channel. In 1585 his name appeared with



**Downton House Wiltshire – home of Carew Raleigh**

Sir Walter's on a list of captains drawn up under the threat of war with Spain. At the time of the Armada in 1588 he was the commander of Portland Castle.

During the 1590s he engaged in privateering expeditions, frequently with his brother Sir Walter who remained a lifelong friend. The Raleigh brothers were also involved with their half brothers from their father's first marriage to Joan Drake and in 1591 their fleet was augmented by four of the Queen's ships. There was occasional conflict with the Privy Council for failing to return prize goods to the French, from whom they feared reprisals, and later over Dutch ships in which Sir John Gilbert was also involved. His largest windfall came in January 1593 when he was awarded £900 out of the £1,000 he claimed as his share of the *Madre de Dios*, the carrack (a large sailing ship) brought in by the galleon "*Raleigh*". In 1594 he was employed in the provisioning of Brest, and three years later he was made vice-admiral of Dorset.

Apart from all these activities Carew was elected to Parliament on no less than six occasions; Wiltshire in 1584 and 1586, Ludgershall 1589, Fowey 1601 and Downton in 1604 and 1621. Carew Raleigh's career, reached its peak, in terms of public





**Basing House, (now a ruin) where Carew was knighted in 1601**

men of the Elizabethan era. In a BBC 2 poll held in 2002 to determine the 100 most famous persons both living and dead, Sir Walter is listed at 93<sup>rd</sup> (just above Edward 1<sup>st</sup>). Apart from the known facts there are also a few myths, including the one about him laying his cloak down to enable the Queen to avoid getting her feet wet. This story never appeared in his lifetime and the first account was not written until 50 years after his death, although it has to be said, that from what is known of him it is just the sort of thing he might have done. It would seem that he spent most of his early

recognition, by the time he was 50 when in 1601 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth at Basing House, Hampshire. He died in 1625

**Sir Walter Raleigh** was born at Hayes Barton between 1552 and 1554 but his actual date of birth is uncertain. What can be said of Sir Walter that isn't already known? It is not my intention to try and give a detailed account of his life here as anyone can easily find this with the several biographies and mass

of information on the internet. Suffice to say that he is one of the most famous



**Vicars Mead East Budleigh**

life in the East Budleigh area and some of his education took place at Vicars Mead, a large cottage style house opposite the church, which at that time was the vicarage.

Some accounts say that he spent part of his time at Compton and Greenway with his half brothers but because of the age gap between them (11 years between him and his youngest half brother Adrian) he would not have really seen much of them during his teens, particularly John and Humphrey who had already started their careers. East Budleigh is very proud of their association with Sir Walter which can be easily seen on a stroll through the village.



**Statue of Sir Walter Raleigh at East Budleigh**

Sir Walter was brought up as a devout protestant and at the age of 17 he left England for France to fight on the side of the Huguenots in their struggle against the Catholics. In 1572, he attended Oriel College, Oxford, and studied law at the Middle Temple law college. During this time, he began his life-long interest in writing poetry and in 1576 he saw his poems go into print. He was popular with other poets of the Renaissance, a time of great cultural change led by the works of great artists and writers. Certainly the Queen couldn't resist his poetry: In his famous 'Cynthia' poem, (being a pun on her nickname for him, 'Water') he refers to her as the goddess Cynthia who, as the moon, has complete power over the tide – or water! He undoubtedly had a very charismatic personality so it was not surprising that he became popular at Court and a favourite of the Queen. He became one of her advisors, in particular on Ireland, where in 1580 he had conducted a very successful campaign against the rebellion of the Earl of Desmond and his followers. He received royal favours including a house in London and two estates in Oxford.



**Sir Water Raleigh**  
**National Portrait Gallery**



**Sir Richard Grenville age 29 -National Portrait Gallery - 17<sup>th</sup> century, based on a work of 1571 by unknown artist**

In fact the rewards showered on him were out of all proportion to his services in Ireland, which had not been more distinguished than those of many others. He was knighted by the Queen at Greenwich on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1585. In Parliament, he was unique in representing three counties. He was junior Member for Devon in 1584 and by the following year he was warden of the stannaries, vice-admiral of the west and he occupied the senior Devon parliamentary seat. To the annoyance of his rivals at Court, including Robert Devereaux, Earl of Essex, in 1587 the Queen made Sir Walter Captain of the Queen's guard. In 1593 he was MP for Mitchell (a village in Cornwall a so called 'rotten borough') then in 1597 he became MP for Dorset and in 1601 Cornwall.

Many sources refer to Sir Richard Grenville as being a cousin of Sir Walter (through his grandmother Joan Grenville) in which case another famous Elizabethan is added to Keble Martin's ancestry, although somewhat distant!



It was as a seafarer, explorer and adventurer that Sir Walter really made his name and in particular for his ventures to North America. After Sir Humphrey Gilbert's death, whilst returning from Newfoundland, Sir Walter was given a charter from the Queen to "occupy and enjoy" new lands. He reached the Carolina shore of America, claiming the land for himself. The threat of the Spanish Armada required those involved, which included Drake and Grenville to return home.

When they returned in 1586 Sir Walter is supposed to have brought two items not previously known in Europe, namely tobacco and potatoes. However it is believed



that Hernández de Boncalo brought tobacco seeds to Spain in 1559, nearly three decades before Raleigh's expeditions. The seeds were planted in an area outside Toledo known as Los Cigarrales for its many *cigarras* (cicadas). Although Raleigh did not bring tobacco seeds or the plant to Europe, either personally or by proxy, he more than likely popularized its use. A widespread legend also

**"Raleigh's First Pipe in England," illustration in Frederick William Fairholt's "Tobacco, Its History and Associations"** tells of the time his manservant saw him smoking a pipe and, alarmed that his master was on fire, fetched water to pour on him.

The history of the potato is also uncertain. Many Europeans planted potatoes in the 1600s, but they were thought to be poisonous and fed only to animals. One tradition credits Sir Francis Drake with bringing them and a large bronze statue of him in Offenburg, Germany praises him for having done so "*in the Year of Our Lord 1586.*" They are known to have arrived before the end of the 16th century via two different ports of entry: the first in Spain around 1570, and the second in the British Isles between 1588 and 1593. However, there is no hard evidence as to who *actually* brought the potato to Europe.



**Sherborne Castle – Dorset**

Wanting to settle and found a family, in 1592 Sir Walter acquired the manor of

Sherborne in Dorset. His marriage to Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, possibly as early as 1588, had



**Elizabeth Throckmorton, 1595**  
by Sir William Segar

been kept a secret from the jealous queen. In 1592 the birth of a son betrayed him, and he and his wife, who was one of Queen's 'Maid of Honour' were both imprisoned in the Tower of London. Raleigh bought his release with profits from a privateering voyage in which he had invested, but he never regained his ascendancy at court. The child, named Damerei did not survive; a second son, Walter, was born in 1593 and a third son, Carew, in 1604 or 1605.

On his release, in an attempt to find favour with the queen, he set off on an unsuccessful expedition to find El Dorado, the fabled 'Golden Land', rumoured to be situated somewhere beyond the mouth of the Orinoco river in Guiana (now Venezuela). In 1596,

together with the Earl of Essex, Robert Devereux, (another of the Queen's favourites) he sailed on another unsuccessful expedition to the Spanish city of Cádiz. In 1597 he was rear admiral for the Earl of Essex on the 'Islands Voyage', an expedition to the Azores.

In March 1603 Queen Elizabeth died. Her successor, James I of England and VI of Scotland, disliked Sir Walter and in 1603 he was accused of plotting against the King and sentenced to death. This was reduced to life imprisonment and Sir Walter spent the next 12 years in the Tower of London, where he wrote the first volume of his 'History of the World' (1614).

In 1616, Sir Walter was released to lead a second expedition to search for El Dorado. The expedition was a failure, and he also defied the King's instructions by attacking the Spanish. On his return to England, the death sentence was reinstated and Sir Walter's execution took place on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1618.

To end on a happier note I can hardly leave this section about Sir Walter Raleigh without mentioning the famous painting by Sir John Everett Millais. The painting depicts the young, wide

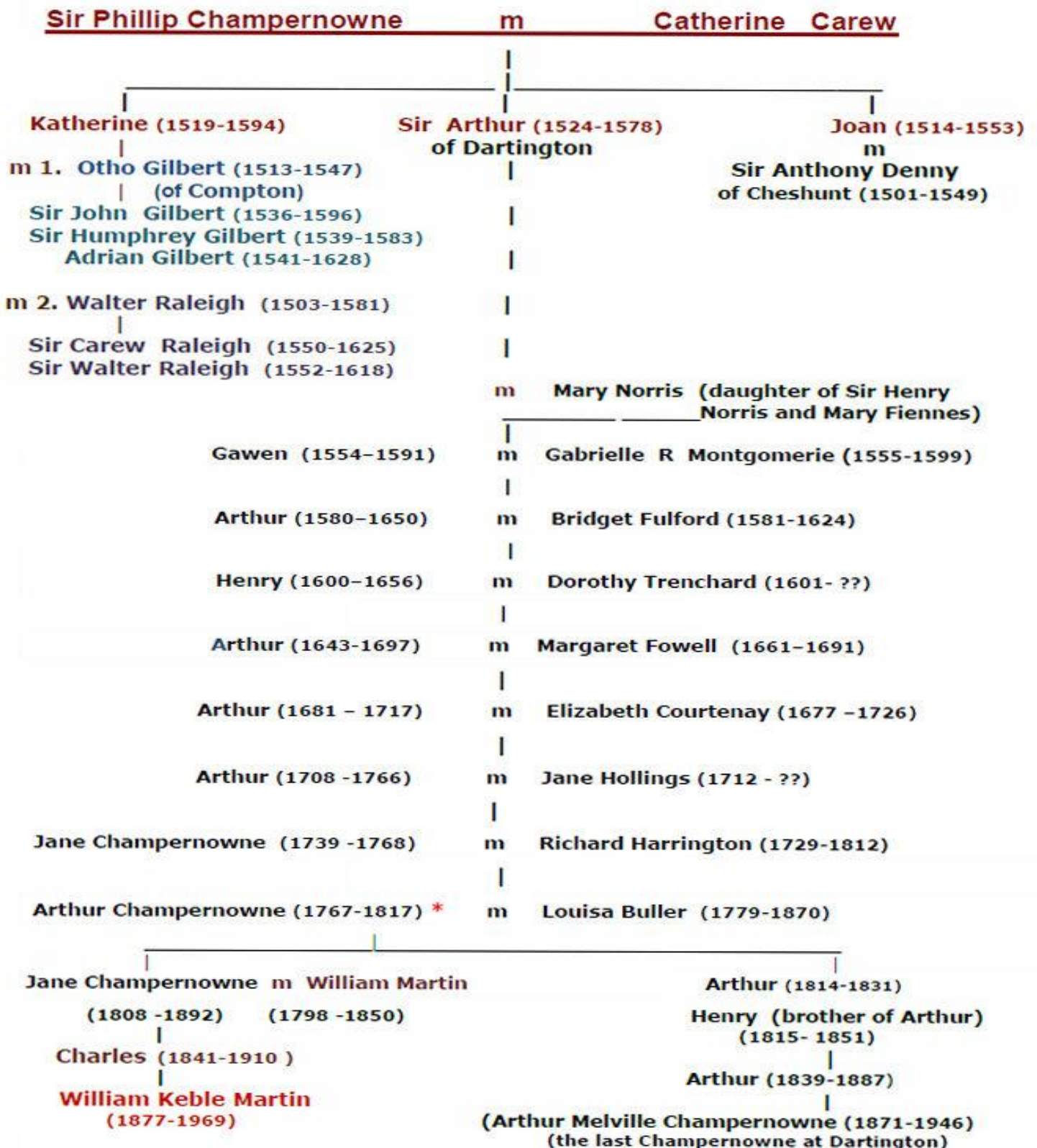


**The Boyhood of Raleigh by Sir John Everett Millais**



Walter Raleigh and his brother Carew, sitting on the beach at Budleigh Salterton listening to a story of life on the seas, told by an experienced sailor who points out to the sea. Millais's sons Everett and George modelled for the boys and the sailor was a professional model. The painting which was painted in 1870 is in the Tate's London collection. It has been loaned at least twice to the Fairylynch Museum at Budleigh, where I have seen it myself.

## Back to the Champernownes



\* Changed name to Champernowne in accordance with will of grandfather

**Sir Arthur Champernowne 1524-1578 (9<sup>th</sup> Great grandfather)**

The third of the famous three, as I have termed them, was in his time a very significant figure in the Elizabethan period.

When England was alerted to a possible invasion in 1544 he served in the English army at the Siege of Boulougne until 1546, in which year he married Mary Norreys. She was the widow of Admiral Sir George Carew who died in the sinking of the Mary Rose during the Battle of the Solent in 1545. Mary was born in 1526, the daughter of Sir Henry Norreys (Norris) who had been beheaded for his involvement in the fall of Anne Boleyn. Her mother was Mary Fiennes daughter of Thomas Fiennes 8<sup>th</sup> Lord Dacre and Anne Bouchier who was herself a cousin of Anne Boleyn and also of Katherine Howard. (You could say that they liked to keep it in the family!)



**Polslow Priory (Manor) as it is today**

In 1548 Arthur was knighted by Edward VI and in 1549 he helped subdue the rebellion against the English language Bible which had started amongst the Cornish. He was an ardent protestant and flirted with the conspiracy of his cousin, Sir Peter Carew, to support the claim of Lady Jane Grey, but wisely settled for accepting Mary Tudor. In early 1554, during the unrest

which accompanied Queen Mary's marriage to Felipe of Spain, he spent a short period in the Tower, but was released on recognizance of a fine of £1000, and allowed to return to Devon. The same year he exchanged his mansion house at Polsoe, Exeter for the medieval Dartington Hall with Thomas Aylworth, Lord of Dartington. Polslow Manor was in fact Polslow Priory (also known as St Katharine's Priory) which had been dissolved in Henry VIII's dissolution of monasteries in 1538 (despite the nuns having paid a £400 fine) Initially it had passed to Sir John Carew, and then to John Petre, an Exeter merchant, before coming into Sir Arthur's possession.

From that time onwards Dartington Hall became the seat of Sir Arthur's branch of the Champernowne family. Sir Arthur and Mary had six known children, the first being Gawine (Gawen) born in 1554, followed by Elizabeth in 1555, Phillip 1556, Charles 1560, George 1562 and Edward 1564. However, apart from Gawine and Elizabeth I could find no other information about their siblings.

In 1555, although excluded from office by the Marian regime, (the Catholic regime of Mary Tudor) Sir Arthur was chosen as a local JP and elected as Member of



Parliament for Plympton Erle. Following the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558 Sir Arthur developed his maritime interests and in 1559 became MP for Plymouth and Sherriff of Devon. In 1563 he was appointed as Vice-Admiral of the West and in the same year was also elected as MP for Totnes. He was on good terms with Cecil (Lord Burghley) and Sir Francis Walsingham, the Queen's spymaster (a relative by marriage). Numbered among his friends were representatives from most of the leading West Country families. From time to time he co-operated with the privateers of Jeanne d'Albet, Queen of Navarre, against Catholic Spain. In December 1568, many of these ships were driven up the channel and into Southampton and Portsmouth to be received by Sir Arthur and Edward Horsey in the name of the Queen of England. In 1568 he had organised the robbery of the Spanish treasure fleet which was taking money to the Duke of Alva, Regent of the Netherlands. Sir Arthur personally delivered 64 boxes of treasure weighing some eight tonnes safely to the Tower of London, worth some two million *reales* (the Spanish currency at that time). Over half of the money was used by Queen Elizabeth to fund her navy and the remainder she sent on to Amsterdam.

### **Gabriel de l'Orge, Count of Montgomerie**

In 1569 Sir Arthur visited Gabriel de l'Orge, Count of Montgomerie, to arrange a



marriage between his son Gawine and the Count's daughter, Gabrielle Roberta. Gabriel, a French nobleman, was a captain of the Scots Guards of King Henri II of France (*Garde Écossaise*, not to be confused with the Scots guards of the British Army). The Count had mortally injured King Henri in a jousting accident. He subsequently converted to Protestantism, the faith that the Scots Guards sought to suppress.

Gawine's marriage took place in 1572 at Ducey, Normandy, the home of the Count. It was attended by Sir Arthur who reported back to Lord Burley on the conditions in France. Following the St Bartholomew's Eve massacre in August 1572 the Count escaped to England and was given refuge at Dartington Hall. Whilst there, at Sir Arthur's request, he was received by, and dined with, the mayor of Exeter. In February 1573

### **Gabriel de l'Orge**

Queen Elizabeth agreed to Count Gabriel sailing with seven ships to relieve La Rochelle, which was under siege from the Catholic army. Although joined by a larger fleet they were forced to turn back by the French Navy. By March 1574 Count Gabriel was back in Normandy with an army of 5,000 men. It is believed he was accompanied by his son in law, Gawine (Champernowne) but eventually the Count surrendered after a long siege at Domfront (not far from Ducey). He was taken to Paris where, following torture, he was executed on Catharine de Medici's orders. She had never forgiven the Count for *accidentally* causing the death of her husband King Henri II.

On the 19th September 1576, Elizabeth, Sir Arthur's only daughter, married Sir Edward Seymour MP, first Baronet of Berry Pomeroy near Totnes. He was the

son of Sir Edward Seymour the Lord Protector to Edward VI who was beheaded for treason in 1552. He had to fight a long legal battle to obtain the title to the castle



**A reconstruction of Berry Pomeroy Castle as it may have appeared in about 1600–10, showing the great new north wing (top centre) © Historic England (illustration by Terry Ball and Richard Lea)**

which had been forfeited by his father, who had originally bought it from Sir Thomas Pomeroy in 1547. Sir Edward went on to become an important landowner as well as High Sherriff of Devon in 1583 and Justice of the Peace in 1591. He also carried out considerable rebuilding to the castle by removing the earlier Pomeroy buildings inside the castle walls. He erected a new four-storey house in the fashionable style of the period at the north end of the courtyard, the shell of which survives mostly to its original height.

Elizabeth and Sir Edward had at least five children and when he died in 1593 his lands passed to his eldest son, also name Edward.

To conclude this part of the story about Sir Arthur Champernowne I discovered this very interesting little story, and ballad about him. It is entitled a Devonshire Ballad but I have been unable to determine its origin. However it has a ring of authenticity and I think is worth recounting here. It is about how Sir Arthur risked losing Dartington Hall in a wager with Sir George Carew, Earl of Totnes.

### **A Devonshire Ballad**

Sir Arthur he raised the bowl on high  
 And prayed to the Giver of Victory;  
 Then drank success to himself in the course,  
 And the sops of the wine he gave to his horse.



Away they rode from the Abbey of Tor  
 Till they reached the inlet's curving shore;  
 The earl plunged first in the foaming wave,  
 And was followed straight by Sir Arthur the brave.

The wind blew hard and the waves beat high,  
 And the horses strove for the mastery;  
 Till Sir Arthur cried "Help, thou bold Carew!  
 Help, if thou art a Christian true!"

"O save for the sake of that lady of mine -  
 Good Earl of Totnes, the manor is thine!  
 The Barbary courser must yield to the roan,  
 And thou art the Lord of Dartington."

The Earl his steed began to restrain,  
 And he seized Sir Arthur's horse by the rein;  
 He cheered him by words and gave him his hand,  
 And brought Sir Arthur safe to land.

Then Sir Arthur, with sickness and grief opprest,  
 Lay down in the abbey chambers to rest;  
 But the earl he rode from the Abbey of Tor  
 Straight forward to Haccombe chapel door.

And there he fell on his knees and preyed  
 And many an "Ave Maria" said;  
 Bread and money he gave to the poor,  
 And he nailed the roan's shoes to the chapel door

The reference to Haccombe is another interesting coincidence. In view of Keble Martin's connections with Haccombe, I wonder if he knew of the ballad?

Sir Arthur Champernowne died on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1578. He was described by Richard Carew as a "perfectly accomplished gentleman". The following is a short extract from his will:

*Arthur Champernowne, of Dartington Knight; 29 March, 1578, proved 19 April, 1578; to Sir John Gilbert, knight, Edward Semore, Philip Cole and John Heale, esquires, in Trust to pay debts, &c., and to the use of 'Gawine Champernowne my sone and heir apparent'; next Philip, then Charles, then George, then Edward Champernowne, my sons, then to my heirs, &c. [Langley, L. 16.]*

## The Champernownes of Dartington

### Dartington Hall

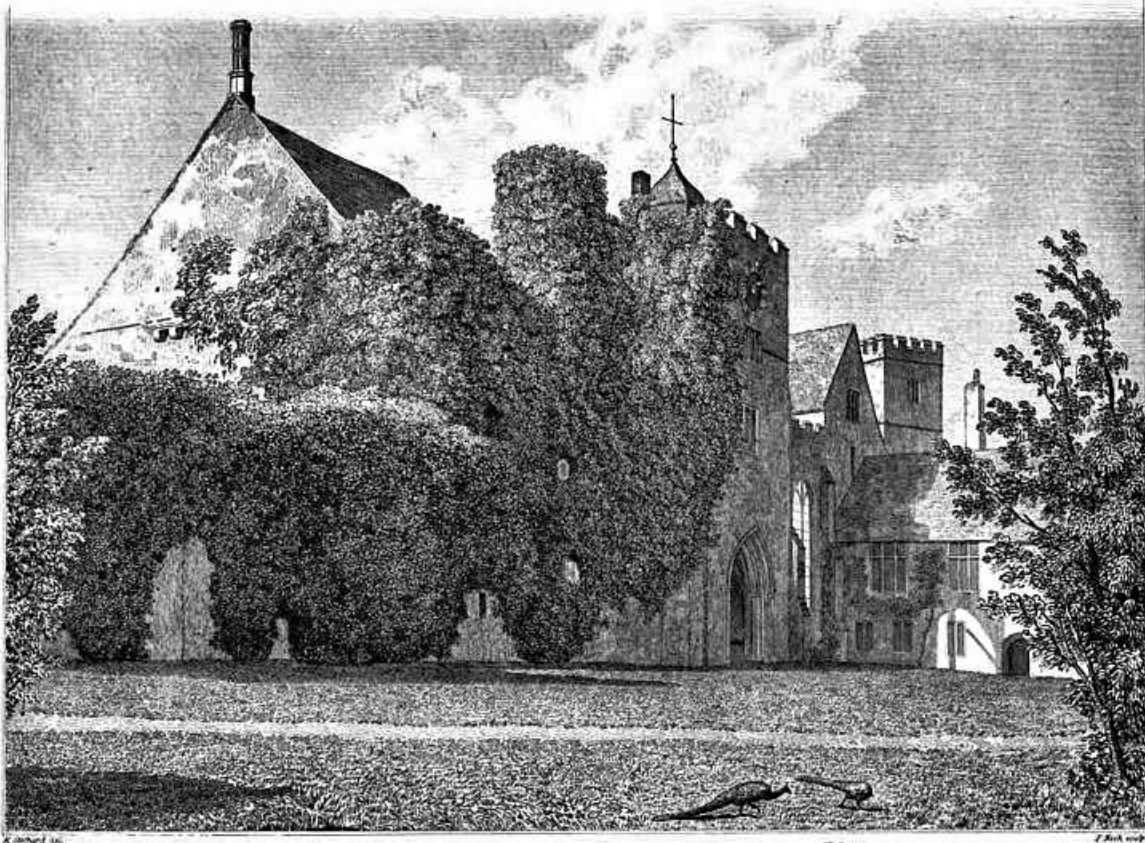
Before continuing I think it is worth giving a short history of the Dartington estate. There is a mass of information about Dartington to be found online and whilst the following account has several sources I believe it to be reasonably accurate.

The earliest recorded mention of what is now known as Dartington was in 833 AD in the records of King Egbert of Wessex. By then, the area had been successfully occupied by the Anglo-Saxons and the region between Plymouth and the Dart was already known as the Hams – a region of farm settlements in the valley bottoms. Although Dartington was still probably subject to marauding visits from the Danes, it prospered and grew rich. By the time of the Norman Conquest Dartington was one of the most prosperous settlements in the county although there has never been an actual *village* of Dartington.

At the time of the Domesday survey Dartington belonged to William de Falesia who had been given it by William the Conqueror but shortly after it passed to the baronial family of Fitz Martin, or Martyn, (not a relative of Keble Martin but just a coincidence!) who continued to possess and reside at Dartington for six generations. It then passed to the Audley family but on the death of Nicholas, Lord Audley, who had no male heir, it went to the Crown (King Richard II). In due course he gave it to his half-brother, John Holland, first Duke of Exeter and Earl of Huntingdon. He is said to have built most of the present buildings and the great hall between 1388 and 1399.



**An illustration of John Holland  
1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Exeter**



*View of Dartington Hall.*

**Dartington Hall in late 18<sup>th</sup> century from the Magna Britannia 6<sup>th</sup> edition**



The building of Dartington Hall was designed to reflect the position and wealth of its owner, the Lord of the Manor of Dartington. In due course it came to Henry Holland the third Duke of Exeter but on his death in 1475 it returned to the Crown again (Edward IV). Eventually Thomas Aylworth became Lord of the Manor Dartington until in 1554 he exchanged it with Sir Arthur Champernowne for Polsloe Priory. By 1560 the construction of a new Elizabethan front on the foundation of the older buildings was under-way and this continued for several years. Dartington Hall then remained in the possession of the Champernownes until 1925. However it is known that by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Dartington had become an agricultural estate, with the medieval structures partly serving as farm buildings (as noted in the Tithe map and apportionment of 1840).

### **Gawine Champernowne (1554 – 1591) (8<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

Following Sir Arthur's death Gawine inherited Dartington and continued his father's struggle against international Catholicism. He was known to be a friend of Sir Francis Drake and he provided one of the ships that sailed against the Spanish Armada, though his prominent role in Devon's defence prevented him from joining the fleet.

Apparently Gawine's relationship with his wife, Gabrielle Roberta, was of a rather stormy nature, nearly ending in divorce in 1582. Despite that they had 10 children. Their first son, Alexander died when 12 years old and their second son, Phillip was only two when he died. However, their third son, Arthur born on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1580, was just 11 when his father, Gawine, died on 25th Mar 1591 aged 38.

The following is a brief extract from his will:

*Will of Gawin Champernowne Esq., of Dartington Dated May 20, 1588 to my daughters Elizabeth, Marie, Katherine, Ursula, Frances, Jane, and Susan 300 marks and all my marriage money, from the Count and Countess Montgomery, to be divided among them. The residue of all my goods and chattels I give and bequeath to Arthur Champernowne my son, whom I make and ordain my sole Executor of this my last will and testament.*

*Proved by Lady Roberta Montgomery, to administer during the minority of her son Arthur. - Apr 3, 1592.*

Arthur's wardship was acquired by his mother, who subsequently married Thomas Horner from Somerset.

### **Arthur Champernowne 1580 -1650 (7<sup>th</sup> Great grandfather)**



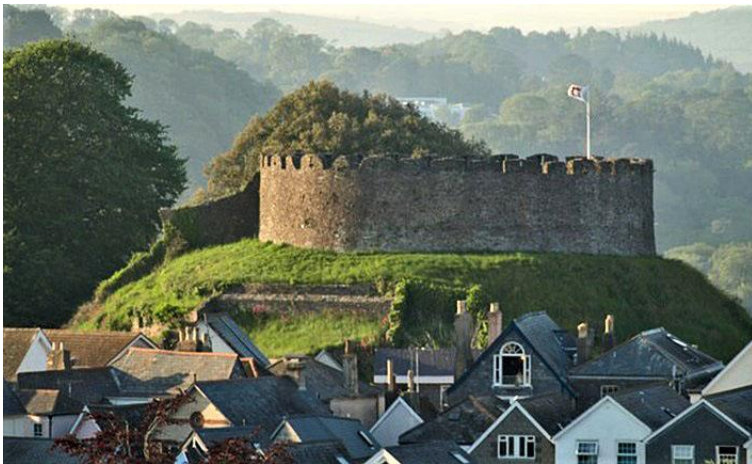
**Great Fulford House – home of Bridget, wife of Arthur**

When he came of age, by his own estimate, Arthur inherited personal goods, leases and ships worth about £4000 with an annual income of perhaps £400. The estate was small in comparison to the standards of

of most Devon gentry, a fact which probably explains his rather late appointment as a local magistrate. Keen to boost his income, he engaged in money lending and exploiting mortgage arrangements to his own advantage.

On 17 June 1598 Arthur married Bridget, daughter of Sir Thomas Fulford (1553–1610) of Great Fulford House, Dunsford, Devon. The present mansion house is Tudor (16th century) refurbished from the late 17th century. Sir Thomas was a member of one of Devon's distinguished families. They were first recorded as residents at Fulford during the reign of King Richard I. The inscription on Sir Thomas' monument in Dunsford Church refers to the marriage of Arthur and Bridget as well as his other children's marriages.

Over the following 26 years Arthur and Bridget had 13 children, seven girls and six boys. The first born was Henry on 15th April 1600 and Francis in 1614. One son named Arthur died within his first year, 1609/10.



**Totnes, where Arthur was twice a member of Parliament. Shown here are the castle, above and High Street, right.**



In 1622 Arthur was participating in the New England fisheries then in 1624 he became Member of Parliament for Totnes. In 1626 he was again MP for Totnes but didn't stand again.

The renewed war with Catholic Europe, apparently stirred him to emulate the military exploits of his father and grandfather. He was recorded as the owner, or part owner, of eight merchant ships licensed as privateers between 1626 and 1630, though their operations may not have been financially lucrative.

Once peace was restored, Arthur resumed his normal commercial activities, trading out of Dartmouth with both France and Spain. He also renewed his interest in the American colonies, negotiating a mortgage of £1,118 in 1635 to fund a New England settlement under his younger son Francis. However, his finances were now under considerable strain and by 1633 he already owed £2,590 to the Totnes merchant Richard Rodd.

During the Civil War, Arthur's eldest sons fought for the King but apparently Arthur



himself remained on the sidelines, merely donating one old horse towards a local royalist levy. He died intestate, administration of his estate being granted in 1650.

### **Henry Champernowne 1600 – 1656 (6<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

I have found two possible dates for Henry's year of birth, 1600 and 1608 but for various reasons the more probable is the former. Really very little is known about Henry except that on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1628 he married Dorothy Trenchard, the daughter of Sir George Trenchard of Wolveton (also known as Wolfeston) at nearby Charminster, Dorset. The Trenchards were one of the most influential families in Dorset. In 1593 Sir George was host to Sir Walter Raleigh, Carew Raleigh and Ralph Horsey at a famous dinner party at Wolveton which led to a commission of inquiry into Sir Walter's alleged 'atheism'.



**Wolveton House, Charminster, Dorset home of Dorothy Trenchard, wife of Henry**

Henry and at least one brother, possibly Amias, and maybe Edward too, fought on the Royalist side during the Civil War. One source states that Henry held the rank of Colonel. Although I have found no confirmation for this, in view of his family history I would think it to be quite likely. Their younger brother, Francis, had



had been living in New England for some time when the Civil War commenced.

Henry and Dorothy had at least one son who, in accordance with family tradition, was named Arthur. Many records show that he was born in 1643, not long after the start of the Civil War but there are a couple that give it as 1629 which I would think was the more likely i.e. a year after their wedding. If it was 1643 then it would mean that it was 15 years before their first child was born. There may of course have been other children born earlier who did not reach maturity but whatever the reason, Arthur was Henry's only son and heir. Henry died in 1656 but there is no further information about his wife, Dorothy.

### **Arthur Champernowne 1643 – 1697 (5<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

It would seem that Arthur initially married Joan Treville of Buckland Monachorum but very little is known about her, either her birth date or her parents. One record shows that the marriage took place in 1657 which if so would have made Arthur only 14 at the time, if he had been born in 1643. There are no records of any children of this marriage and, although there is no record of her death, Joan must have died prior to 1678 as in that year Arthur remarried to Margaret Fowell at Dartington. Margaret was the daughter of Sir John Fowell, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baronet of Fowelscombe Manor in the parish of Ugborough, Devon.

Arthur and Margaret had three known children, all sons. The first was Richard born in 1680 followed by Arthur in November 1681 and John in 1682. Richard died in 1696 aged 16, and John became the Vicar of Paignton whilst Arthur became heir to Dartington, inheriting in 1697 on the death of his father. Their mother, Margaret had died in 1691.

### **Arthur Champernowne 1681 – 1717 (4<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather)**

Part of the reason for the lack of reliable information about the family at this time is that their political influence and military activities had declined considerably by the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and this continued to be the case throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, the line continued, just about, and Arthur teamed up with a



**Another view of Powderham Castle – home of the Courtenay family**



cousin when he married Elizabeth Courtenay of Powderham who was born at Powderham in October 1677. She was a descendant of the Earls of Devon and therefore shared the same ancestry from King Edward I as Arthur, so you could say their children had a double dose.

Their marriage produced two sons, Arthur, born 1708 and Francis born 1711. Arthur was baptised at Dartington on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1708. They also had one daughter, Elizabeth born 1712.

Arthur stood for parliament for the Totnes constituency in 1715 but failed to get any votes at all, indicating the family's decline in the political arena. Two years later he died at the relatively young age of 36. His wife Elizabeth died at Powderham in 1726 aged only 39. Their son Arthur inherited Dartington when he came of age.

### **Arthur Champernowne 1708 – 1766 (3<sup>rd</sup> Great Grandfather)**

Arthur continued to live at Dartington Hall. In 1732 and 1734 he stood for Parliament in the Totnes constituency but, like his father he failed to win the seat being heavily defeated with only six and three votes respectively.

On 13<sup>th</sup> December 1735 at St George's Bloomsbury, Middlesex, Arthur married Jane Hollings who was aged 23 at the time. Jane's father was John Hollings MD, physician to King George II. The marriage record shows that Jane was a resident of St James, Westminster, but there is no mention of her mother. Arthur and Jane had only one child, a daughter named Jane, born 6<sup>th</sup> September 1739, and baptised on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1739 at St Anne's Church, Soho, Westminster.

Arthur died in September 1766, having made an incredibly complex will. The most significant element of the will was the requirement, that should his daughter Jane marry and have a male heir, that he would change his name to Champernowne to ensure the continuation of the family name at Dartington. There is a suggestion that Rawlin Champernowne, son of the Reverend



**St Anne's Church, Soho, the location of Jane Champernowne's baptism**

of the family name at Dartington. There is a suggestion that Rawlin Champernowne, son of the Reverend

John Champernowne of Paignton, was the rightful heir but Arthur's will made it very clear that Jane was to be his heir.

### **Jane Champernowne 1739 – 1768 (2nd Great grandmother)**

With no male heir to continue the Champernowne name at Dartington it was now left to Jane to ensure this happened. The fact that she managed to was down to sheer chance. Around 1765/1767 she married the Reverend Richard Harington who at the time was the Rector of Powderham. Richard was born on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1729 at Merton, Oxfordshire, the son of Sir James Harington, 6th Baronet.

Jane and Richard had only one child, a son born on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1767 who they named Arthur. Sadly, Jane died only two weeks after Arthur's birth, believed of child bed fever and was buried at Powderham. Although at birth their son was given the name of Arthur Harington, on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1774 he "*assumed, in compliance with the testamentary injunction of his maternal grandfather, the surname and arms of Champernowne*".

Richard married twice more during his life, first to Hannah Hussey of Truro then to Elizabeth Chambers but where he resided or whether he continued as Rector of Powderham, is unknown. It is to be assumed he would have taken responsibility for his son's care until he came of age unless this was taken on by another member of the family. It is believed that Richard died in June 1812 aged 83.

### **Arthur Harington Champernowne 1767 – 1819 – (Great grandfather)**

In 1790 Arthur is recorded as having been a Lieutenant in the East Devon Militia which suggests that at that time he was not residing at Dartington as it is rather far away. By 1792 he had reached the rank of Captain.



**St Marys Church, St Marylebone,  
venue of Arthur and Louisa's wedding**

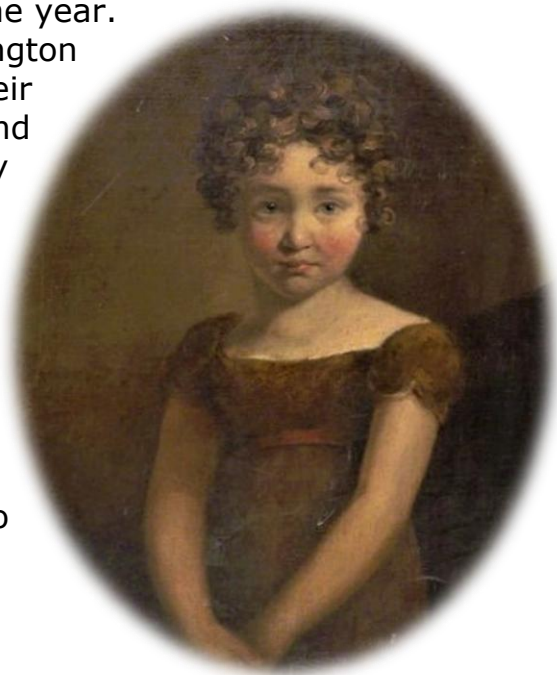
On the 11 September 1806 Arthur married Louisa, the daughter of John and Anne Buller of Morval, Cornwall. The wedding took place at Saint Mary, St Marylebone, London. A month later, backed by his brother in law James Buller II, he was elected to Parliament for Saltash, Cornwall but on 19 Feb. 1807 he and his colleague were unseated on petition. This was his one and only experience of Parliament.

Their first child a daughter, named Jane was born in 1807 in Middlesex London, probably at Montagu Square. This fact is evidenced by later census records. However, Jane was baptised at Dartington on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1807 for which there is a certified copy of the baptism. Their second child, also a daughter, named Louisa was born at Marylebone. Their next two children, again girls, were both born at Dartington, Caroline in 1810 and Maria in 1811.



Arthur became Sherriff of Devon, serving for one year. In 1813 his son and heir was born at Dartington and named Arthur. (What else would a male heir to Dartington be called?) In 1815 Arthur and Louisa had a second son who they named Henry – sounds familiar too! Two further sons were born, Richard in 1817 and John in 1819.

Arthur died on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1819. Louisa however, lived on until 30<sup>th</sup> December 1870 making her 91 when she died. Their son, Arthur inherited Dartington at the age of four, whilst still a minor, but unfortunately he died himself in 1831 aged 18, so it was his brother Henry who subsequently inherited.



Richard became the Rector of Dartington and in 1848, at Stroud, Gloucestershire he married Elizabeth Keble. the daughter of Thomas Keble.

**Louisa Champernowne, aged about 5 or 6. She was Jane's younger sister and Keble Martin's great aunt**

Thomas was the younger brother of John Keble the close friend of Keble Martin's grandfather Dr George Moberly. (See later)



Richard and Elizabeth had 13 children between 1850 and 1870 when Elizabeth died aged 42, the day after giving birth to their last child, John Edward. Richard himself lived until 1890 when he was 72. Their first son, was named Richard Keble Champernowne who died in South Africa in 1888, preceding his father by two years. Their fourth son, Francis Gawayne, is clearly the "Frank" referred to by Keble Martin in his autobiography, who lost his right hand in an accident at Dartington. Frank was much admired by Keble Martin and something that impressed him was how Frank trained his left hand to make beautiful paintings of flowers on wooden panels.

**Richard Champernowne brother of Jane and Rector of Dartington. He was Keble Martin's great uncle.**

MARRIAGES solemnized in the Parish of Dartington  
in the County of Devon in the Year 1828

Rev<sup>d</sup> William Martin B.A. Vicar of Staverton of the Parish  
of Staverton bachelor

and Jane Champernowne of this Parish  
spinster eldest daughter of the late Arthur Champernowne Esq

were married in this Church by license with Consent of  
Whopark this seventeenth Day of  
August in the Year One thousand eight hundred and twenty eight

By me R H Froude Rector

This Marriage was solemnized between us William Martin  
Jane Champernowne

In the Prefence of Wm Buller

No. 56.

On 13<sup>th</sup> August 1828 Jane Champernowne, Arthur and Louisa Buller's first born, married William Martin so we have now gone full circle. Jane was Keble Martin's paternal grandmother

**Marriage record of Jane Champernowne and William Martin**



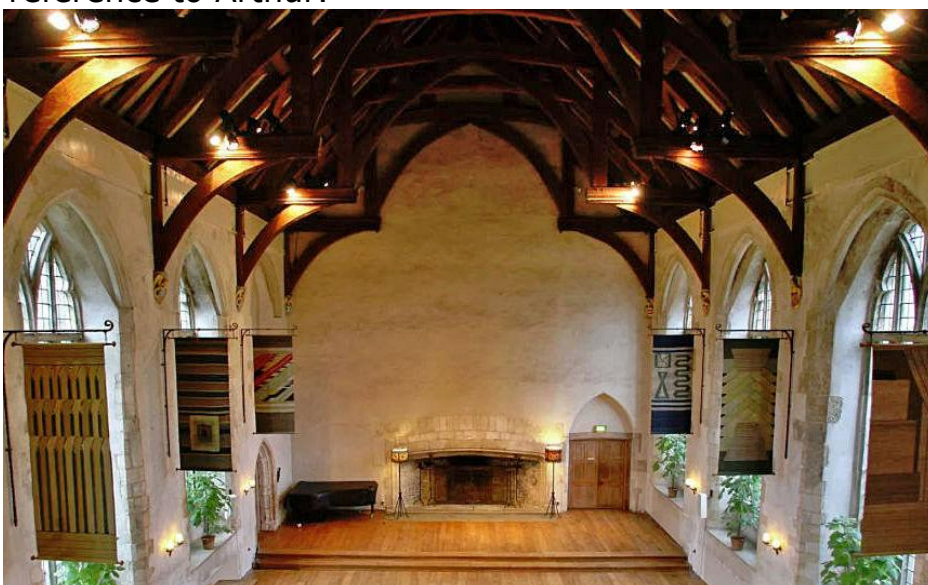
### The last of the Dartington Champernownes

To conclude the inheritance of Dartington, three further generations lived there. Arthur, the eldest son of Arthur and Louisa, died aged 18 and his younger brother Henry inherited Dartington. In 1838 Henry married Charlotte Buller who, as far as I can determine, was the daughter of his mother's brother (in other words his uncle) meaning that she was his first cousin! They had six children, the eldest a boy named Arthur and their second eldest was also a boy, named Henry (sounds familiar!).

Henry died on 24 May 1851 and Arthur inherited Dartington whilst still only 12 years old. Presumably the estate was held in trust and managed for him until he came of age. On 11 Oct 1870 at St George, Hanover Square, Arthur married Helen Melville at Pimlico, London. They went on to have 10 children. Their first a son, born in 1871, they named Arthur Melville Champernowne and their second, again a son born in 1872, was given the name Henry Harington Champernowne. No surprises so far perhaps but something that really seals the family's link to Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Humphrey Gilbert was that they named their fifth son, born in 1884, Gilbert Raleigh Champernowne. I should also mention their third son, named Amyas, and who Keble Martin mentions in his autobiography. He was four years older than Keble and used to accompany him on some of his ventures in search of wild life in tricky locations. Keble also makes reference to Arthur.



**Dartington Hall – Courtyard entrance**



**The restored Great Hall at Dartington**

In 1887 Arthur Melville Champernowne was the last of his line to inherit Dartington Hall. He married Helen Iris Walker in 1907 who was born at Woolwich, Kent in 1880. A son, who they named Arthur Gawen was born in 1909. The census of 1911 shows that they had ten servants which included, a butler, a nurse, a cook and a laundress so at that

time the family must still have been fairly wealthy. They also had a daughter born in 1912 and named Katherine Iris.



The next we hear of the family is in 1925 when they sold Dartington Hall to Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst. The Elmhirsts undertook a major programme of restoration under the supervision of William Weir from 1927 to 1938, while at the same time establishing The Dartington Hall Trust in 1932. The Trust is a charity specialising in arts, social justice and sustainability. The old medieval hall has now been returned to its former state.



**The headstone of Gilbert Raleigh Champernowne's grave at Dartington**

To conclude this section on the Champernowne family I thought it was worth mentioning that Gilbert Raleigh Champernowne, who I referred to earlier, was living at Countess Wear in Exeter where he died in November 1859 aged 75. He left over £10,000 to his wife and was buried at Dartington where he has a memorial headstone.

## The Moberly family

The story now returns to Keble Martin's nearer family and his maternal grandparents. In his autobiography Keble Martin makes only brief mention of them and their background, in particular his grandfather. To follow the relationships in this section please see the family tree chart on page 61.

### The Right Reverend George Moberly

He was born on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1803 at St Petersburg, Russia. He was the seventh son of Edward Moberly of St. Petersburg, a merchant. His mother was Sarah, daughter of John Cayley the British consul-general in Russia. Edward was born in 1759 at Knutsford, Cheshire, the son of Richard Moberly and Jane Adams. When war endangered St Petersburg, the family returned to live in England, but in 1814 things seemed safer, so Edward and Sarah and their daughters returned to Russia, leaving the boys at school in England. Later Edward became the British Consul in St Petersburg.



**The entrance to Winchester College**

George was educated, first at Winchester College and then at Balliol College Oxford, where he matriculated with a scholarship on 13 March 1822. He graduated B.A. in 1825 with a first class in literæ humaniores (the study of the literature, history, philosophy, languages and archaeology of the ancient Greek and Roman Worlds.

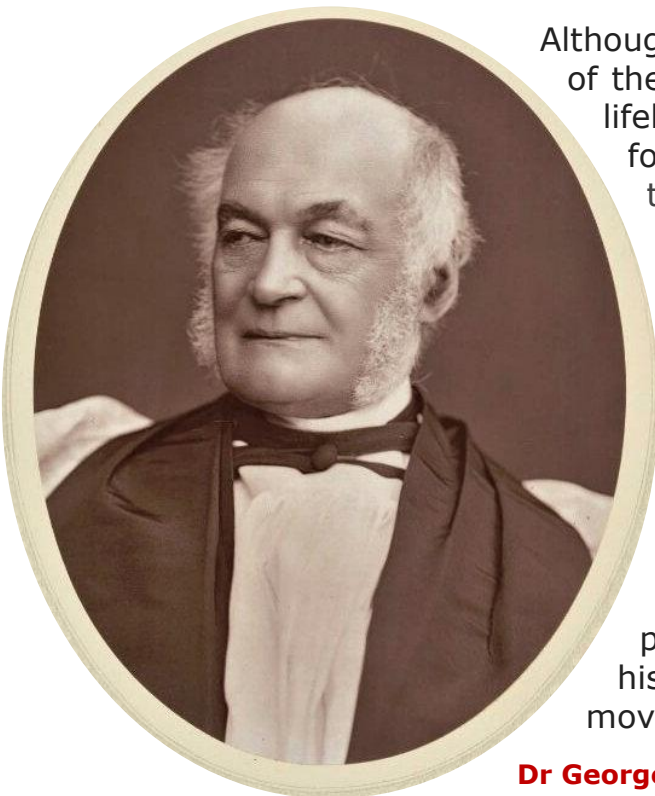
He went on to become an MA in 1828 and a DCL (Doctor of Civil Law) in 1836. He was the select preacher before the university in 1833 and in 1826 he was elected to a fellowship at Balliol College. For some years he was one of the most brilliant and successful of the tutors who assisted Dr. Jenkyns to make Balliol the foremost college in Oxford.

On 22 December 1834, at Cadbury, Somerset, (not at Oxford as some sources say) George married Mary Anne Crokot, the daughter of Thomas Crokot. The marriage took place at the parish church of St Thomas a Becket. At the time of his marriage he vacated his fellowship at Oxford and in 1835 he was appointed headmaster of Winchester College, a post which he held for thirty years. As a schoolmaster he exerted much personal influence over his boys. He approved the 'fagging' system, supported all the school traditions and was conservative in his modes of teaching.



**Balliol College Oxford**

Mary Anne Crokot was born at South Lambeth in September 1812. She was the first of six children born to Thomas and Elspet Crokot. Her father was a merchant who originated from Leith, Scotland. George and Mary went on to have a large family of 14 children (eight girls and six boys) all of whom lived to maturity, which was unusual for the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their fifth child named Dora Frances, born on 18<sup>th</sup> December 1841 at Winchester, went on to marry Charles Martin and become Keble Martin's mother.



Although George had left Oxford at the beginning of the Oxford Movement he formed a close and lifelong friendship with John Keble, one of its founders. The families spent much time together over the years. I will return to John Keble later in this narrative.

George resigned his post at Winchester College in 1866, and retired to the Rectory of St Mary's Church, Brighthelmston, Isle of Wight at which time he was also a Canon of Chester Cathedral. In 1869 the Prime Minister, William Gladstone, requested him to become the Bishop of Salisbury which he accepted. Although he initially maintained the traditions of his predecessors, in 1872 he astonished his High Church friends by joining in the movement for the disuse of the damnable

**Dr George Moberly (National Portrait Gallery)**



clauses in the Athanasian Creed. These clauses are the part of the creed, in use since the sixth century, that states that anyone who disagrees with the principal that God is three persons of the same substance (i.e. "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit") would be condemned to eternal damnation.

The Right Reverend George Moberly died on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1885 at the Bishops Palace, Salisbury. Probate was proved on 14<sup>th</sup> August when his personal estate was valued at just under £30,000. His wife, Mary, lived on at The Hall in Salisbury until 6<sup>th</sup> February 1990.

### **The Moberly–Jourdain incident**

Before moving on to John Keble, an interesting little story I found about Keble Martin's aunt, Charlotte Anne Moberly is well worth recounting. Charlotte was a younger sister of Keble's mother Dora and in 1886 Charlotte, aged 40 at the time, became the first Principal of a hall of residence for young women, St Hugh's College in Oxford. Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Charlotte needed someone to help run the college and she asked Eleanor Jourdain to become the assistant. Eleanor, who was born in 1863, was the daughter of the Reverend Francis Jourdain, the vicar of Ashbourne in Derbyshire (where coincidentally Keble Martin met his wife Violet in 1908).

Eleanor owned an apartment in Paris where she tutored English children and Charlotte went to stay with her in order to get to know her better. Whilst staying there they visited various locations in Paris then on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1901 they went to visit the Palace of Versailles. The following is a summarised account of what they experienced on their visit:

After visiting the Palace they went for a walk in the grounds looking for the *Petit Trianon*, (the small chateaux which King Louis XVI gave to his 19-year-old Queen, Marie Antoinette, for her exclusive use and enjoyment). Somewhere, they took a wrong turning and got lost. They then started to see various people dressed in clothes of an earlier period, some looking like gardeners and some like officials in long coats and three cornered hats. The air seemed very still and they experienced feelings of oppression and dreariness. They came across a man on a seat with a pock marked face who they thought looked



**The Petit Trianon 2005**

very sinister and were then guided to the *Petit Trianon* by a "tall man with large dark eyes and crisp curling black hair under a large sombrero hat" Charlotte said that on the grass she "noticed a lady sketching who looked at them after they crossed a bridge to reach the palace gardens". She later described the lady as wearing a light summer dress and a shady white hat with lots of fair hair. At first she thought she might be a tourist but the dress appeared to be old-fashioned.

Charlotte believed that she had seen Marie Antoinette but Eleanor did not see this person herself.



**Charlotte Anne Moberly**

Apparently, following their experience neither woman mentioned it to each other until a week after Charlotte returned home. Eventually both women agreed that they thought the area was haunted. Later, when they compared notes they decided to write separate accounts and also research the history of the location. They decided they had witnessed events that took place on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1792, the day that the National Guard and a mob of Parisians invaded the residence of the royal family, the Tuileries in Paris.

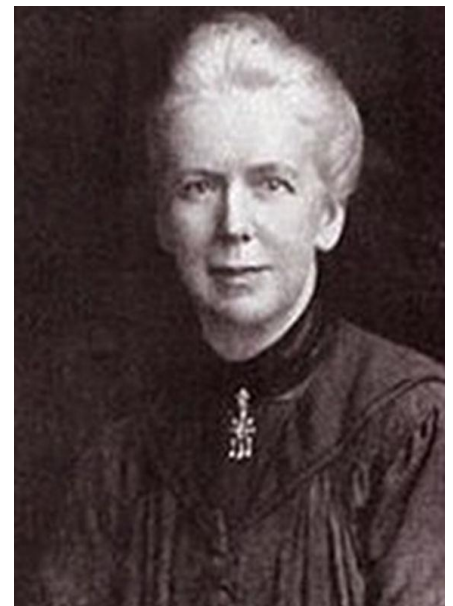
Charlotte and Eleanor visited the location several more times but were unable to locate any of the

landmarks encountered in their experience, such as the bridge. They believed that they had stumbled upon some kind of private party but found nothing to support this. They also thought that one of the men they had seen could have been the Comte de Vaudreueull, a friend of Marie Antoinette.

Convinced that the grounds were haunted, they decided to publish their story in a book "*An Adventure*" (1911) under the pseudonyms of Elizabeth Morison (Charlotte) and Frances Lamont (Eleanor). Many critics did not take it seriously on the grounds of the implausibilities and inconsistencies that it contained. The Society for Psychical Research suggested that the women had misinterpreted normal events that they had experienced. In 1903, an old map of the Trianon gardens was found and showed a bridge that the two women had claimed to have crossed that had not been on any other map. The identity of the authors of *An Adventure* was not made public until 1931. Both Charlotte and Eleanor claimed many paranormal experiences before and after their adventure.

Whatever the merits of their story in 1981 the story of the adventure was made into a Television film, by Anglia Television, entitled *Miss Morison's Ghosts*. Dame Wendy Hiller played Charlotte and Hannah Gordon was Eleanor. Additionally the BBC broadcast a 90-minute radio dramatisation in 2004 and again in 2015.

An explanation of the events was proposed by Philippe Jullian in his 1965 biography of the aristocratic decadent French poet Robert de Montesquieu. At the time of Charlotte and Eleanor's excursion to Versailles, Montesquieu lived nearby and reportedly gave parties in the grounds where his friends dressed in period costume and performed tableaux vivants (*a silent and motionless group of people arranged to represent a scene or incident*) as part of the party entertainments. Charlotte and



**Eleanor Jordain**



Eleanor may have inadvertently gate crashed such a party which they confused for a haunting. The Marie Antoinette figure could well have been a society lady. Numerous other critics and commentators analysed the story with a variety of



**Portrait of Marie Antoinette by Wertmuller. The figure seen by Charlotte near the Petit Trianon was claimed to resemble the Queen as depicted in this painting**

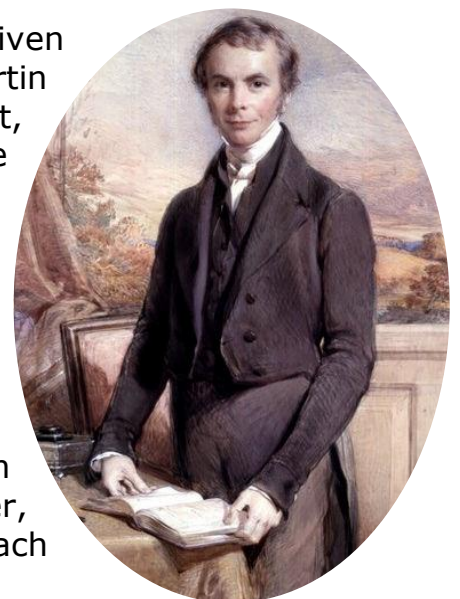
opinions and interpretations. Nevertheless, historian Roy Strong has noted that although the Moberly-Jourdain story has been debunked it retained its hold on the public imagination for half a century.

Dame Joan Evans, who owned the copyright to *"An Adventure"*, accepted the Jullian explanation and forbade any further editions. However, in 1988 after the work came out of copyright, it was republished under various titles by different publishers.

I wonder whether Keble Martin knew about the story? He makes only brief references to his Moberly relatives but he would have been aged 50 when Charlotte died. I feel sure he would have known her or about her, based at Oxford as she was. Also, as it gave her an element of notoriety it would surely have been a matter discussed by members of the family. Keble's mother had nine siblings younger than herself, most of whom were alive well into his lifetime. It would be interesting to have known his own thoughts about the story.

### **The Reverend John Keble**

So who exactly was John Keble whose name had been given to members of both the Champernowne and Martin families? Well, he was an English churchman and poet, one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement and Keble College, Oxford was named after him. John Keble was born on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1792 at Fairford, Gloucestershire where his father, the Rev. John Keble, was Vicar of Coln St. Aldwyns. He attended Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and, after a brilliant academic performance there, became a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. For some years he was a tutor and examiner in the University. While still at Oxford he took Holy Orders in 1815, and became, first a curate to his father and later, curate of St Michael and St Martin's Church, Eastleach Martin in Gloucestershire.



**John Keble as a young man**

His first claim to fame was a book, published anonymously in 1827, under the title "The Christian Year" It is a little volume of poetry which provided a poem for

every Sunday of the Church Year. It was the most popular book of verse in the nineteenth century and went through 95 editions in Keble's life time! Some of its poems, for example '*New Every Morning is the Love*' have become well known hymns. Its authorship soon became known, with the result that John Keble was, in 1831, appointed as Chair of Poetry at Oxford, which he held until 1841. Victorian scholar, Michael Wheeler calls '*The Christian Year*' simply "the most popular volume of verse in the nineteenth century".

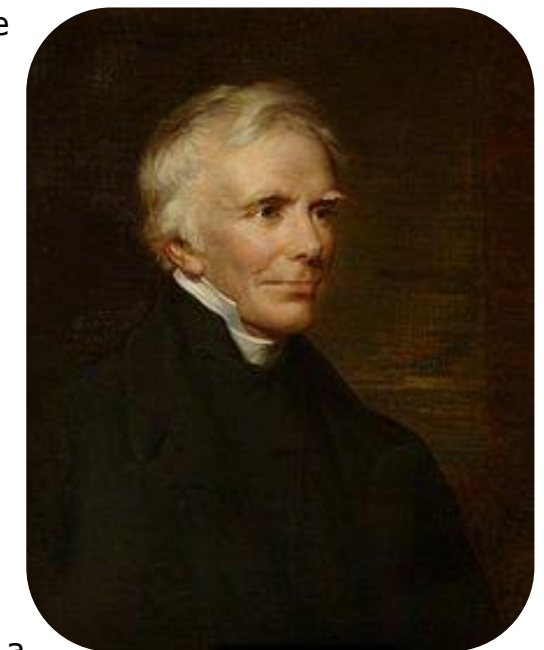


**Keble House, Fairford, birthplace of John Keble.  
It is a Grade 2 listed house still occupied by  
members of the Keble family**

in the establishment of Anglican religious orders, both of men and of women and with ideas and practices relating to the practice of liturgy. In effect it introduced ceremony incorporating more powerful and emotional symbolism in the church.

In October 1835 John Keble married Charlotte Clarke at Maisey Hampton, Nr. Fairford. It would seem that they had no children. Following the marriage he left Oxford and in 1836 settled in Hursley where he remained for the rest of his life as a parish priest at All Saints Church. He had a profound influence on a near neighbour, the author Charlotte Mary Yonge. She lived at Otterbourne House in the adjacent village of Otterborne where he was responsible for building a new church. In 1841 she compiled '*The Child's Christian Year: Hymns for every Sunday and Holy-Day*' to which John Keble contributed four poems, including '*Bethlehem, Above all Cities Blest*'

As previously mentioned, George Moberly became a lifelong and intimate friend of John Keble often visiting



**John Keble in 1863**



him at Hursley. Keble Martin says in his book, that his grandfather and his family stayed at Field House in Hursley during the school holidays and the children, including, his mother Dora, often played at the Rectory during those visits.



**Keeble College - Oxford**

John Keble was a frequent visitor to Sidmouth, in particular to Bulverton Hill where it is thought that the view inspired some of his best loved work. The hill commands a panoramic view of the Lower Otter Valley and Dartmoor in the distance. Folklore suggests that his favourite spot was where a wooden bench, known as Keble's Seat, has been in place for many years.

John Keble died at Bournemouth in March 1866 at the Hermitage Hotel. He had been visiting the area to try and recover from a long term illness, as he believed the sea air had therapeutic qualities. He is buried in All Saints' churchyard, Hursley.

It was said of him that he was absolutely without ambition, with no care for the possession of power or influence, hating show and excitement, and distrustful of his own abilities. In the Church of England, Keble's feast day is celebrated on 14<sup>th</sup> July (the anniversary of his Assize Sermon). Elsewhere in the Anglican Communion, a commemoration is observed on 29<sup>th</sup> March (the anniversary of his death).



**Keble's Seat Bulverton Hill Sidmouth**

## The Last Chapter

Whilst that just about completes the story of Keble Martin's own ancestry, and those connected with it, there is yet another tale to be told. Although it is not about Keble's own ancestors, it is about his descendant's ancestors. Not content with having a remarkable ancestry of his own, he married someone who also had a quite famous ancestry herself. Whilst curate at St Oswald's, Ashbourne, he became attracted to Violet Chaworth-Musters who lived at Dove House. Despite some resistance from her somewhat erratic father Henry, a widower.





**Dove House Ashbourne - home of Violet**



**St Oswald's Church Ashbourne**

Keble became engaged to Violet on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1908 and they were married at Ashbourne on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1909.

### **The Chaworth-Musters family and the Byron connection**

In his book "Over the Hills" Keble Martin mentioned that Violet's father had been brought up in a big house, Colwick Hall, near Nottingham. This intrigued me as it sounded as though this was an amalgamation of two distinguished families somewhere along the line.

The earliest references to the estate occurs on the death of William de Colwick in 1362, when it passed by the marriage of his daughter Joan to Sir Richard Byron, into the Byron family. The Byrons lived there for over 150 years until about 1660, when they moved to Newstead Abbey. Colwick Hall then came into the ownership of the Musters family. John Musters replaced all of the older buildings with the present Hall in 1775-6. It was enclosed with a moat, crossed by a drawbridge on the north side.

The Chaworth family were descendents of the Chaources family, of Maine in northern France, who came to Britain at the time of the Norman Conquest. The Annesley line can trace their descent to two brothers. Patricius Chaworth married the heiress of Kidwelly, South Wales. His brother Robert de Chaworth settled in Nottinghamshire and married the daughter



**Colwick Hall, Nottinghamshire – original home of the Chaworth, Byron and Musters families and now a sumptuous hotel**



of William de Walchville, lord of Marnham, in the time of Henry I (1100-1135). He became the ancestor of the Chaworth family later of Annesley. Dating to the middle of the 13th century, Annesley Hall is a historic country estate. The decrepit stately home on the edge of Sherwood Forest is reputedly one of England's most haunted places. It has a ruined church, a history of bold seafaring adventurers, ghosts and unrequited love. Sadly two devastating fires have left the historic building in a precarious state.

Advantageous marriage alliances extended the Chaworth family's properties in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

Alfreton and Edwalton were acquired through the 13th century marriage of William de Chaworth and Alice de Alfreton.

In 1440 Sir Thomas's third son Sir George Chaworth, married Alice, only daughter of John Annesley. She brought with her the estate of Annesley where her family had lived for over 300 years. In 1590 the estates passed to a cousin, George Chaworth, who was raised to the peerage in 1628 by Charles I, as Viscount Chaworth.



**Annesley Hall, Nottinghamshire  
(now mostly ruined)**

The Chaworth estates passed eventually to Patricius Chaworth (1700-1731) and then to his great-grandson William (1726-1765). This William was killed in a duel with his cousin and neighbour, Lord Byron of Newstead Abbey. William was unmarried and left his property to his first cousin, William Chaworth (died 1771). It then passed to the duellist's uncle Captain William Chaworth, of the Royal Navy, who lived at Annesley until his death in 1784. Finally it became the home of Captain Chaworth's younger son, George Chaworth.

### **The joining of the Chaworth and Musters families**

George Chaworth married his housekeeper, Anne Bainbridge. They had one daughter, Mary Ann Chaworth in 1786, who was heiress to the Chaworth estates in Annesley, Edwalton and Wiverton. George died in 1791 when Mary Ann was only five years old. In 1794, his widow, Anne, married the Rev. William Clarke, rector of Gonalston who took over the administration of the estates during Mary Ann's minority. Anne Clarke's niece, Anne Radford, was brought up at Annesley with Mary Ann.

### **Mary Ann Chaworth and Lord Byron**

The Annesley estate adjoined the Newstead estate which was the family seat of the

Byrons. Newstead Abbey, an Augustinian Priory, had been presented to the Byrons by Henry VIII following the dissolution of the monasteries. At the time of Mary Ann's birth William, the fifth Lord Byron, lived there. As a result of a number of stories that arose after a duel, and then because of his financial difficulties, he became known as "the Wicked Lord" and "the Devil Byron".

The background to the duel is that on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1765, Byron killed his cousin and neighbour, William Chaworth in a duel at the Stars and Garters Tavern in London. The fight resulted from an argument that the two had been engaged in over cups of wine, with both insisting they had more game on their estates. Lord Byron and his cousin retired to a dim room to resolve their disagreement and it was there that Lord Byron thrust his sword through William's stomach. He lived until the following day, expressing his disgust that he had not been of sound enough mind to insist they fight in a location with better lighting, before finally succumbing to his injury. Lord Byron was tried for Chaworth's death, but was found guilty only of manslaughter. He claimed the benefit of the statute of Edward VI and so instead of being "burned in the hand" was forced to pay a small fine. It may also have helped him that he was a very influential man in many other ways.



**Newstead Abbey – the seat of the Byrons family**

### **The 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Byron**

George Gordon Noel Byron was born in London on 22 January 1788, the son of Catherine Gordon, an impoverished Scots heiress, and Captain John ("Mad Jack") Byron, a fortune-hunting widower with a daughter from a previous marriage, Augusta. The profligate captain squandered his wife's inheritance, was absent for the birth of his only son, and eventually decamped for France, an exile from English creditors, where he died in 1791 at thirty-six.

In the summer of 1789 Byron moved with his mother to Aberdeen. Emotionally unstable, Catherine Byron raised her son in an atmosphere variously coloured by her excessive tenderness, fierce temper, insensitivity, and pride. Early schooling instilled in him a devotion to reading, and especially a "grand passion" for history that influenced much of his later writing.



In 1798 his great-uncle, the fifth Lord Byron died and George became the sixth Lord Byron, heir to Newstead Abbey at the age of 10. He enjoyed the role of landed nobleman, proud of his coat of arms with its mermaid and chestnut horses surmounting the motto "Crede Byron" ("Trust Byron"). In 1801 his mother sent him to Harrow School where he excelled in oratory, wrote verse, and played sports, including cricket.



**Painting of Lord Byron, Newstead Abbey Collection  
by Thomas Phillips 1813**

In 1803, at the age of 15, he fell deeply in love with Mary Ann Chaworth, who was also his distant cousin. There are variable accounts of their relationship to be found, some of which say she was already engaged to be married to John (Jack) Musters, the heir to Colwick Hall. Other accounts indicate this occurred after she met Byron. There are two accounts which give a good insight into what happened. The first relates to a visit made by Washington Irving (1783-1859) to Newstead Abbey and Annesley Hall in 1824, shortly after Byron's death. (Washington Irving was an American author of short stories, "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" to name but two). He had made a study of Lord Byron and his journals and poems. In his account Irving says that at the time of his visit, Annesley Hall was "shut up, neglected, and almost

in a state of desolation". An elderly caretaker, 'Nanny Marsden' admitted him and in the course of his visit, whilst she showed him around the house, he asked her if she recalled Lord Byron visiting Annesley. She replied:

*"Ah, bless him!, that I do! He used to ride over here and stay three days at a time, and sleep in the blue room. Ah! poor fellow! He was very much taken with my young mistress; he used to walk about the garden and the terraces with her, and seemed to love the very ground she trod on. He used to call her his bright morning star of Annesley".*

Irving said to her "You appear to like the memory of Lord Byron". She responded

*"Ah, sir! why should not I! He was always main good to me when he came here. Well, they say it is a pity he and my young lady did not make a match. Her mother would have liked it. He was always a welcome guest, and some think it would have been well for him to have had her; but it*

*was not to be! He went away to school, and then Mr. Musters saw her, and so things took their course."*

Irving was later shown into a room which Nanny Marsden said, was the favourite sitting-room of Miss Chaworth, with a small flower-garden under the windows, in which she had delighted. She told Irving that it was where Byron used to sit and listen to her as she played and sang. There was a little Welsh air, call "Mary Ann," which, from bearing her own name, he associated with herself, and often persuaded her to sing it over and over for him.

The above is only a very small part of Washington Irving's account but it is the most relevant to this part of the story and is also contemporary.

The second account is from an article about Byron's youth in the New York Times of February 1898 which describes what happened when he failed to return to Harrow school, following a six week summer vacation in 1803 which he spent at Newstead.

Although Lord Carlisle was Byron's guardian, he stayed sometimes with the family lawyer, a Mr Hanson and his Sons. The following is a copy of a letter Byron's mother wrote to him about his refusal to return to Harrow.

*"You may well be surprised and so may Dr Drury" (headmaster of Harrow) "that Byron is not returned to Harrow. But the truth is that I cannot get him to return to school, though I have done all in my power for six weeks past. He has no indisposition that I know of but love, desperate love, the worst of all maladies in my opinion. In short the boy is distractedly in love with Miss Chaworth, and he has not been with me three weeks all the time he has been in the country, but spent all his time at Annesley.*

*If my son was of a proper age, and the lady disengaged it is the last of all connections that I would wish to take place; it has given me much uneasiness. To prevent all trouble in future I am determined he shall not come here again till Easter; therefore I beg you will find some proper situation for him at the next holidays. I don't care what I pay. I wish Dr Drury would keep him.*

*I shall go over to Newstead to-morrow and make a last effort to get him to town"*

The reference made to "the lady disengaged" seems to imply that Mary Ann was already spoken for at the time. However, Nanny Marsden's account suggests that she met Jack Musters after Byron had returned to Harrow. Whatever the truth of it Byron had no choice but to accept the situation and his unrequited passion found expression in some of his poems, in particular "The Dream" (written in 1816). Years later he told Thomas Medwin\* that all his "fables about the celestial nature of women" originated from "the perfection" his imagination created in Mary Ann



**Mary Ann Chaworth  
aged about 20 by  
John Hazlitt 1805**



Chaworth. She was described by him as 'the last of a time-honoured race'. Byron himself later wrote, "Had I married Miss Chaworth perhaps the whole tenor of my life would have been different"

*\*Thomas Medwin was the English poet and translator, known chiefly for his biography of his cousin, Percy Bysshe Shelley and for recollections of his close friend, Lord Byron*

Lord Byron addressed the following poem to Mary Ann just before her marriage and it was found written in her handwriting, in an album belonging to a daughter of the then Duke of Rutland.

### To My Dear Mary Anne

1.

Adieu to sweet Mary forever –  
 From her I must quickly depart;  
 Though the fates us from each other sever,  
 Still her image will dwell in my heart.

2.

The flame that within my breast burns,  
 Is unlike what in lovers' hearts glows;  
 The love which for Mary I feel,  
 Is far purer than Cupid bestows.

3.

I wish not your peace to disturb,  
 I wish not your joys to molest;  
 Mistake not my passion for love –  
 'Tis your friendship alone I request.

4.

Not ten thousand Lovers could feel  
 The friendship my bosom contains;  
 It will ever within my Heart dwell,  
 While the warm blood flows through my veins.

5.

May the Ruler of Heaven look down,  
 And my Mary from evil defend;  
 May she ne'er know Adversity's frown,  
 May her Happiness ne'er have an end.

6.

Once more my sweet Girl, Adieu!  
 Farewell, I with anguish repeat,  
 For ever I'll think upon you,  
 While the Heart in my bosom shall beat.

---

### Mary Ann Chaworth and John (Jack) Musters



**A later portrait of Mary Ann Chaworth from the Newstead Abbey Collection**

In 1805 Mary Ann married John ('Jack') Musters who was born in 1777. He was heir to the Musters estates at Colwick, Sneinton and West Bridgford. In 1806 Jack took the surname Chaworth by Royal Licence but reverted to Musters in 1823.

Following the marriage Lord Byron wrote a poem of farewell to Mary:

Hills of Annesley, Bleak and Barren,  
Where my thoughtless Childhood strayed,  
How the northern Tempests, warring,  
Howl above thy tufted Shade!

Now no more, the Hours beguiling,  
Former favourite Haunts I see;  
Now no more my Mary smiling  
Makes ye seem Heaven to Me.

Although Mary Chaworth had married John Musters, she still had some affection for Lord Byron, and her husband was aware of this and not very pleased. Once while bathing in the River Trent with Byron, he saw that he was wearing a ring belonging to Mary Chaworth, and he seized it from him. In July 1824, Mary drove into Nottingham from Colwick, and observed that the town was in general mourning. By coincidence, she stopped her carriage in Pelham Street, opposite the Byron's town house, to enquire what was to do. On hearing of Byron's death, she turned deathly pale and burst into tears. Immediately after this, the funeral procession went past her carriage as she sat in it with the blinds down.

Jack Musters and Mary separated for a time between 1813 and 1816, initiated by Mary Ann, in protest at Jack's infidelities. During this period she lived for a while with Anne Radford at Edwalton. The couple's main residences were Annesley Hall and Wiverton Hall, but in 1827 Jack inherited Colwick Hall from his father, which became their principal house.

The Musters were an established Nottinghamshire family, tracing their history back to Sir John Musters of Hornsey, Middlesex, who bought the manors of Over and Nether Colwick from the Byron family in the mid-17th century. In consequence of his marriage, Jack took the surname Chaworth, and his eight children were baptised with the name Chaworth. However, the family reverted to Musters by Royal Licence in 1823.

On 10 October 1831 Colwick Hall was sacked by rioters, enraged at the failure of

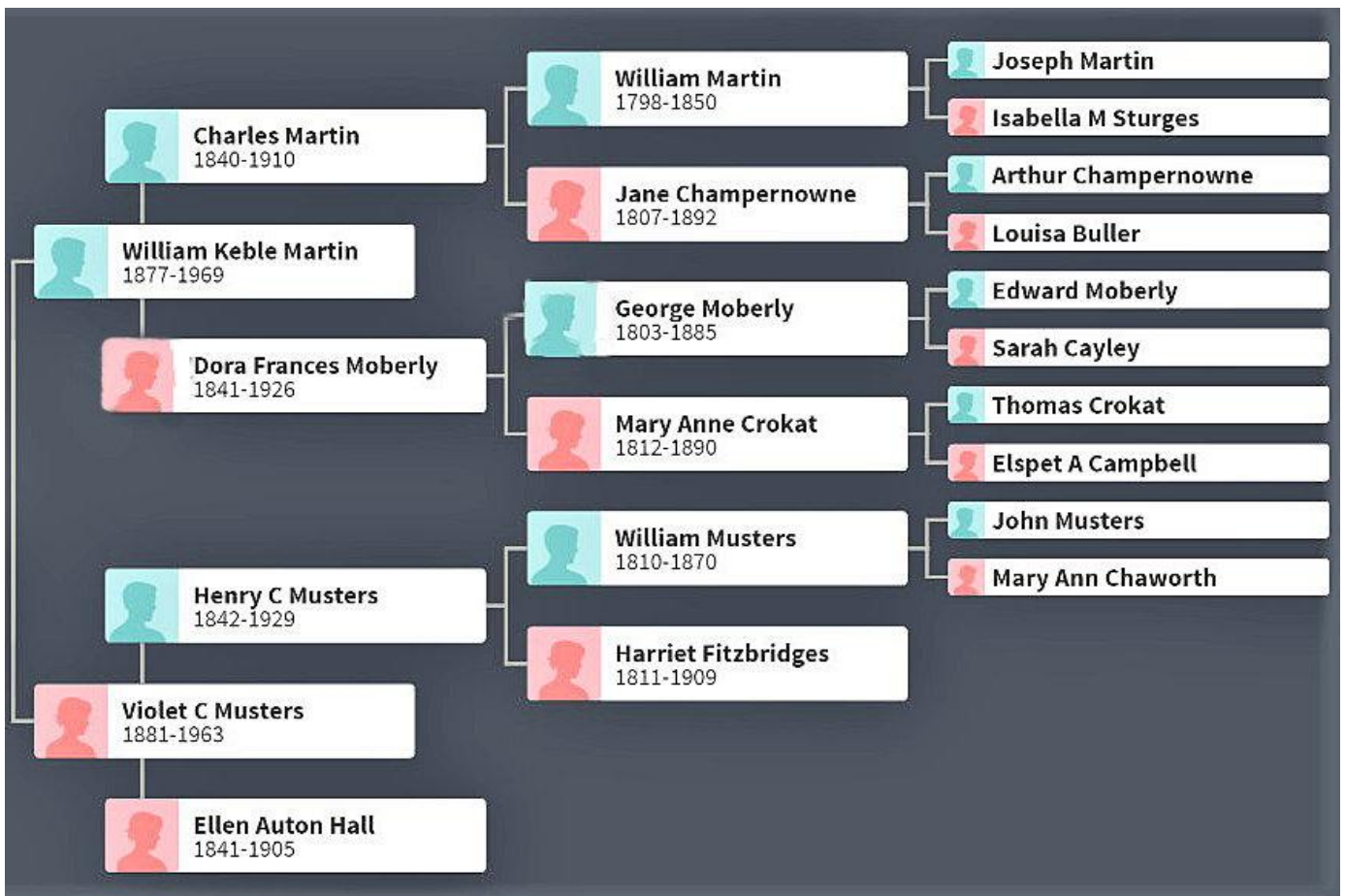


the Second Reform Bill. Furniture was smashed and the building was set on fire. Mary Ann, whose health was already poor, hid outside in the rain with her daughter Sophia, overnight. She is said never to have recovered from the shock and died at Wiverton on 6 February 1832. After Mary Ann's death Jack lived mainly at Colwick, and died in 1849.

Mary Ann and Jack Musters had eight children of whom their second son, William Musters Chaworth, was born in 1809. After 1823 he was known as William Musters when the family got a licence to drop the Chaworth part of their name. He became the Rector of Colwick and West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire and married Harriet Fitzbridges born in 1810, the illegitimate daughter of the Rev. Robert Hamond. William and Harriet had ten children and they named their second son, born in 1843, Henry Chaworth Chaworth Musters.

Henry married Ellen Anton Hall at Otley, Yorkshire in July 1863 and over the following 17 years they had seven children. The last of these was Violet, born in 1881 at Risley, Derbyshire. By 1891 the family had moved to Ashbourne. As already mentioned, Violet's mother had died in November 1905 but Henry continued to live at Dove House until Violet married Keble Martin in July 1909 at Ashbourne.

**The chart below shows the relationships between the Martins, Champernownes, Moberlys, and Chaworth-Musters going back three generations from Keble Martin.**



Where Henry went after the marriage of Keble and Violet is a bit of mystery. I have been unable to find any further record of him until his death at Wonford, Exeter on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1929. His probate record shows his address at the time

was in Teignmouth Devon and that he left his very modest estate of £286 to his eldest son Arthur Henry, a retired Army captain. It is odd that he had not completed any census returns after 1891 so he might have left the country although, somehow I don't think it likely. Unfortunately Keble Martin himself makes no *further* mention of his father in law, or for that matter any of his wife's relations, in his book. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that Violet would have been unaware of the feelings Lord Byron had towards her great grandmother. It carried no shame and was in fact a very romantic story.



**Violet in 1912 with Patrick and Barbara (from Keble Martin's autobiography "Over the Hills")**

## CONCLUSION

So there it is – the story of William Keble Martin's remarkable ancestry, or should I call it his incredible ancestry? When I started out on this investigation I had no idea where it was going to lead me and right from the start, the more I looked the more I found. I don't doubt I could still find some more interesting twists and turns if I continued but I have to stop somewhere and here I think is the appropriate place. However, I have to say that I have quite enjoyed the journey it took me on. It was also very satisfying to discover the Knight of the Garter from whom Keble Martin was descended, namely Sir Walter Hungerford KG the 1st Baron Hungerford. I shall be informing the archives department of St George's Chapel Windsor so that they can get their records up to date!

I have not included anything that I haven't found verifiable evidence to substantiate it or, in a very few instances, strong circumstantial evidence. In compiling this account I have mostly used the internet, but as I found when I was exploring my own family history, it is full of erroneous information. It is no use relying on what other people have put in their own family trees as much of it is incorrect. People tend to jump to conclusions and see what they want to see. Wikipedia was a useful source but here again I found a lot of errors. It's a question of sorting out 'the wheat from the chaff' so to speak. The fact that I was researching mostly famous names helped quite a bit.



**Sources**

Some of the sources I used, and which I found to be fairly reliable were:

Historic England  
British History Online  
Ancestry.co  
History of Parliament  
Burke's Peerage  
The Peerage  
Magna Britannia Devon  
Wikipedia  
Geni Genealogy  
My Heritage UK  
Wikitree  
Family Search

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