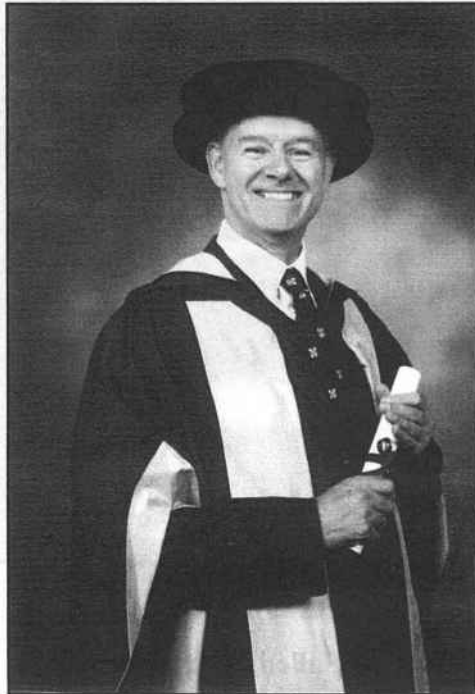


The Grede Family's Early History

(and a bit from later)

by
John A Greed
1937 - 2010





Edgar Ewart Gisby (1916)

Killed in Action

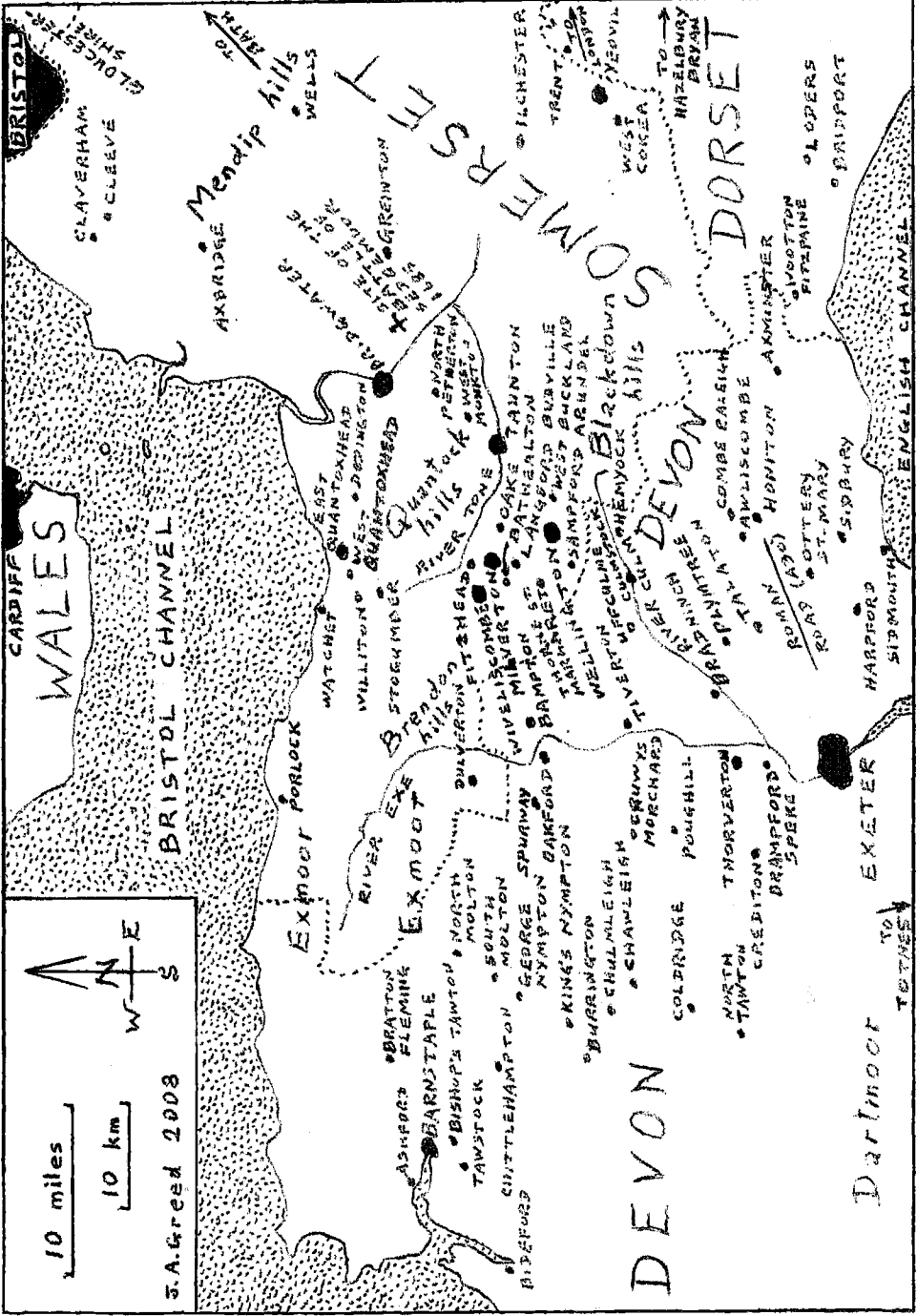
aged 36

The Grede Family's Early History

(and a bit from later)



*Spurway Barton, Devon, photographed in the 1980's.
Robert Grede owned this land until his death in 1242.*



The Grede Family's Early History

(and a bit from later)

Yorkshire

The earliest reference we have to anyone with the surname Grede (or Greed, Greedy, Gread, Gready, or any other spelling) is dated 1185. The records state that in that year, **Willelmus Grede** of Everwich'scira (i.e. *Yorkshire*) owed half a marc (which would be 33p in today's money) to the Exchequer. In the following year, there is a reference to say that the debt had been settled.¹

His name *Willelmus* looks like a Latinised form of the German name *Wilhelm*, which suggests that he or his ancestors may have come to England from across the North Sea. If this is so, then Grede would probably have been pronounced the German way, sounding the final "e" to sound something like Gred-uh. (Compare it to the German four-syllable phrase "schöne Beine" which means "lovely legs"!) This may have contributed to a confusion, which seems to have gone on for centuries, as to whether the name was Greed or Greedy.

In 1209, a reference under "City of Lincoln", which is just a few miles south of Yorkshire, says that **Matildis Gredi** gave the Exchequer satisfaction for one marc (66p, but it appears that she had paid 22p and still owed 44p).² We know nothing else about her.

- - -

Spurway in Devonshire

We next find the name Grede appearing in 1242. In that year, there are two references, and they are both in the south-west of England, more than 250 miles from Yorkshire. One of them tells us that "the heir of **Robert Grede** holds in Spreweye half a fee".³ This tells us quite a lot. First: if the heir was holding the property, Robert was dead. Secondly: "half a fee" (or "half a knight's fee") was probably between 250 and 300 acres. - Great landowners had to provide knights (i.e. armed horsemen) to fight in the king's army for forty days each year. The powerful Courtenay family from near Exeter had to provide 93 knights per year. **Robert Grede** had to provide just half a knight - i.e. one knight (or a payment for hiring a mercenary soldier) every two years. This puts him into the aristocracy - although in the absolute bottom layer of the aristocracy. Look out for the Courtenays in these notes: we shall see several occasions when, where there is a Courtenay, there is also a Grede in the background. - Thirdly, "Spreweye" has been identified as Spurway Barton,⁴ which is a mile or more west of Oakford in Devon, on an exposed and lonely hill 750 feet

¹ The references are in the *Pipe Rolls*, vol. 34, page 70 and vol. 36, page 91. There is a printed copy of these rolls in the Somerset County Record Office at Obridge Road, Taunton.

² *Pipe Rolls* new series, vol. 24, page 54.

³ *Book of Fees*, vol. ii, page 773. There is a printed copy of this document in the West Country Studies Library, which is adjacent to the Devon County Record Office in Exeter.

⁴ On page 8 of the *Testa de Nevill* tax roll in *Reprints of the Devonshire Association* (late Victorian) by Rev. T. W. Whale. There is a copy in the West Country Studies Library.

above sea level. Its reference on the Ordnance Survey map is 892211. (Though in Devon, it is within two miles of the Somerset county boundary.) It is now uninhabited: the farmhouse there (built in the mid-to-late eighteenth century to replace an earlier house that had been burnt down)⁵ is now derelict and part of the roof has fallen in. It is shown in the photograph on the front page of these notes.

One further piece of information is given: Robert's heir was holding the land as vassal of Willelmo (William) de Tracy, who held it as vassal of Henrico (Henry) de Tracy as part of his Honour of Barnstaple.⁶ (An "Honour" was a large area of land.) We shall see two Greeds who become Mayors of Barnstaple, later in these notes.⁷

How did the Grede family (or at least a branch of it) come to be in Devonshire, which in those days would have been several days' journey from Yorkshire? I have a theory which is pure speculation, with no evidence. In 1170, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, was slain in Canterbury Cathedral by four knights. Two of these knights (fitz Urse and de Brett) came from Somerset, the third (de Tracy) came from the Barnstaple area in Devon, and the fourth (de Morville) was from Yorkshire. Was Grede a vassal of de Morville? And, if so, did he move to Devonshire as a result of some arrangement made between de Morville and his friend de Tracy? Maybe. It's just a guess - but it seems possible, although I do not really want to think of one of my ancestors as having been connected in any way - even indirectly - with the Archbishop's murder. (The fitz Urses, the de Bretts and the de Tracys, by the way, were all related by marriage or otherwise to the de Courtenays.)

Incidentally, there was a Helyas (Elias?) le Gredie in Leicester in 1269,⁸ so we must not assume that *all* the Greedes left the north.

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West Coker in Somersetshire

Our other reference in the year 1242 is a Somerset one, but it appears to refer to the same Robert Grede, despite the difference in spelling:- **Robert de Gredehe** (and William Burel and several others) failed to attend the King's Court at Ilchester. (This failure on Robert's part is understandable if - as appears above - he was dead.) The reference shows that Robert had land in the Hundred (district) of Coker.⁹

In 1315 there was a grant of land which was probably in West Coker (three miles from Yeovil) by William Burel (a descendant of the William Burel mentioned above)

⁵ E. W. Bentley, *Oakford: the History of a Devon Parish* (1982) published by E. W. Bentley, ISBN 0 9507942 0 1, page 40.

⁶ This information comes from *Testa de Nevill* - a list of landownings for the period 1198-1242 which appears to have been compiled for tax purposes in 1282. It was printed by H.M.S.O. in three volumes as *Book of Fees* between 1920 and 1931. - *Testa de Nevill* no. 59, page 157b, and no. 1,134, *Book of Fees* vol. ii, page 759. Reichel, *Doomsday Hundreds of Devon*, page 403. Copies of these are in the West Country Studies Library.

⁷ On pages 13 and 14 below.

⁸ *Records of the Borough of Leicester* (1905) three volumes, published in London.

⁹ Sir Matthew Nathan, *The Annals of West Coker* (1957) Cambridge University Press, page 70. He gives the reference, Roll no. 756. m. 21, Somerset Pleas (I). Somerset Record Society vol. XI page 289.

to Walter and Alice de Monte Alto (or Mohaut) with a proviso that if they had no children, the land should pass to William Burel's heirs - i.e. Alice Burel who later married **William Grede**.¹⁰ She must have been newly born at that time, for we find in a 1335 reference¹¹ that John de Furneaux (who had property at West Coker as vassal of Sir Hugh de Courtenay) had died in about 1317, and his relative **Alice, wife of William Grede**, was his heir, her age being given in 1335 as "19 or more". (Being this age and married, she was entitled to receive property which had been held on her behalf.) She was John de Furneaux's neice, and granddaughter of Sir Matthew de Furneaux: Sir Matthew's daughter Dionisia (William Burel's wife)¹² was her mother.¹³

Burel and de Furneaux were the two principal landowners in West Coker: and Alice Grede (as de Furneaux's neice and Burel's daughter) inherited from both of them. Certain de Furneaux property was held as vassal of de Courtenay, Earl of Devon: but other land that she inherited was held directly from the king, and not as anyone's vassal: and **William Grede** swore faithfulness to the king in respect of this land.¹⁴

In 1338-39 William and Alice sold property at West Coker and at Honiton (Devon) to Roger Forel. (*sic* - but is it bad recording of a sale to Roger Burel? We cannot tell.)¹⁵ (The Honiton property was subject to a tenancy for life, for Philip le Doo and his brother John.) But in June 1339, William Grede is dead and Alice has sworn faithfulness to the king on her own behalf.¹⁶

There is a Grede-and-Courtenay connection here. When Philip le Doo, parish priest of West Coker, left West Coker, he was appointed as parish priest for Honiton, where the advowson (the right to appoint the priest) belonged to Hugh de Courtenay - and William and Alice Grede provided a house for Philip and his brother there.

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Devonshire again - Spurway, Thorverton and Exeter

Now let us return to Spurway. We shall see that the Grede family in Spurway came to adopt the surname Spurway instead of Grede. The pedigree of the family of

¹⁰ Nathan *op. cit.* page 130; and *Somerset Feet of Fines*, Somerset Record Society vol. XII, page 48, of which there is a copy in Bristol City Reference Library. (Transfers of land by fine - meaning finalisation - were written on a parchment in triplicate. The parchment was then divided into three pieces, one for the transferor and one for the transferee, and the third - the foot of the fine - was deposited in the mediaeval equivalent of a registry.)

¹¹ Calendar of *Inquisitions post mortem* no. 663: vol. 7, page 453: Inquisition of 18th. December in the ninth year of King Edward III. Printed copy at Somerset County Record Office.

¹² Nathan, *op. cit.* page 119. (Nathan adds that Burel and de Furneaux were the principal landowners in West Coker. - *ibid.*)

¹³ Information from card in card-index at West Country Studies Library, Exeter, also *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica* (copies in Bristol University Library and Somerset County Record Office, Taunton) *Inquisitions post mortem (Somerset)* vol. iv. page 441a and *Calendar of Inquisitions, Edw. III*, page 38: file 49 (9) no.66 (copies in Somerset County Record Office) and *Harleian* 6126 fo. 8.

¹⁴ Calendar of *Close Rolls*, page 590. Printed copy at Somerset County Record Office. And see also page 7 below as to other lands which Alice Grede inherited.

¹⁵ *Somerset Feet of Fines*, Somerset Record Society, vol. 12.

¹⁶ Calendar of *Close Rolls* 1330-41, page 145

"Spurway of Spurway" as printed in *The Visitations of the County of Devon* begins with

Ricardo de Greda de Spurwaye married _____ (*unknown*)

|
Roberto de Spurwaye
 son and heir, living 1296

The pedigree has no further mention of the name Greda (by that or any other spelling) until Charles Spurway (alive in 1895 when *The Visitations* was published) named his daughter Margaretta Greda Spurway.¹⁷

Our next Spurway record is in 1302. We are told that in that year in East Spurway a quarter of a fee, of the Honour of Braneys, is held by **Robert Gredeten**.¹⁸ This looks like sheer bad recording: Braneys is an error for Barnstaple, and Robert Gredeten seems to be a mis-reading of Robert Grede *tenet* - i.e. **Robert Grede** holds the land.

The following year we are told (in Latin) "**Robertus Grede** holds in Spurway one third of a fee, and by the Rolls of the Exchequer half a fee" - whatever that may mean.¹⁹

In 1331, lands at East Spurway and elsewhere were sold by John and Joan de Bracton to Roger le Marchaunt, together with the homages and whole services of thirteen persons, one of whom was **John Grede**.²⁰ So it seems that by this time the lordship (to which **John Grede** and the others were vassals) had passed from the de Tracys to the de Bractons, and now went to Roger le Marchaunt.

Bentley (see footnote 5 above) confirms that Robert, son of Richard, was the father of John, and points out that after 1339 John is always called John de Spurway, so the former surname was dropped. He says the family left Oakford (Spurway is in the parish of Oakford) in the fifteenth century but returned in the sixteenth.²¹ The Spurway family is still in Oakford village (though not in Spurway Barton) today.

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If we follow the valley of the River Exe from Oakford down towards Exeter, we pass Thorverton, where in 1323 a bed of a ditch(!) was sold to **Thomas Grede**.²² And in 1332, when Lay Subsidy (a tax) was imposed, Thomas Grede of Thorverton paid 16d. (*7p in today's money*) and **William Grede** of Thorverton paid 12d. (*5p*).

In 1335 we have an entry for "the hamlet of Childeton" (identified in *Phillimore* as Chilton in the parish of Thorverton).²³ It says that John de Furneaux had held half

¹⁷ J. L. Vivian, *The Visitations of the County of Devon* (1895) comprising the Heralds' Visitations of 1531, 1564 and 1620, page 635. The pedigree is from the 1620 Visitation, with additions from the pedigree in the possession of William Spurway Esq. of Oakford. There is a copy in Bristol City Reference Library, ref. 929.726 (cross-ref. 942.35) 16838.

¹⁸ From a list of landholdings by Burton, referred to in Reichel *op. cit.* at page 403.

¹⁹ *Feudal Aids*, vol. 1, page 363. (Printed copy in West Country Studies Library.)

²⁰ *Devon Feet of Fines II*, no. 1,253, page 282.

²¹ Bentley *op. cit.* pages 36-37.

²² The original deed is at the Devon County Record Office in Exeter, ref. 2530M/T3/6/1.

²³ Phillimore's reprint of *Domesday Book* for Devonshire, vol. 2, general note 1.7.

of the hamlet, directly from the king, as one sixth of a knight's fee. He had died in about 1317, and Alice, aged 19 or more in 1335, wife of William Grede, was his heir.²⁴ We have met these people before, in West Coker. So we have confirmation that the Grede of Thorverton are the same as those of West Coker, even though the places are nearly forty miles apart.

A generation later, in 1378 and again in 1380, John Grede had dealings with a piece of land known as "La Bertonland" in Bradninch, five miles east of Thorverton. On the second occasion, Thomas Grede appears to have acted as surety for him. A further reference, in 1382, is about other lands in Bradninch, of which John Grede was one of the five tenants.²⁵

Also in 1382, but up in north Devon, at Ashford, near Barnstaple, Walter Grede, aged 50 or more, makes a declaration that a young man known to him has reached the age of 21, the age at which he could inherit property which had been left to him.²⁶

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Continuing down the Exe valley, we reach the city of Exeter, where there is just one person named Grede in the fourteenth century - but this person first appears in the south-east of England in 1395 in a very odd record:- "Pardon, at the supplication of William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, to John Grede, late clerk of said Archbishop's Chapel, for stealing, along with Richard Tryst, 'squier' in the Archbishop's household, his mitre at St. Albans, in the county of Hertfordshire ... and, along with the said Richard and William Nethercote, two silver dishes in his house at Croydon, in the county of Surrey".²⁷ - Here we see a Grede in attendance upon a Courtenay: but John appears to have been sent back in disgrace to Devon, as our next entries show.

In September 1396, John Grede is included in the Index of Ordinations - letters dismissory (i.e. sending someone to a new post) - in the Bishop of Exeter's Register. In December 1396, John Grede is in the Index of Ordinations (of acolytes) by the Archdeacon; and in December 1397, John Grede of Berlinch Priory (an Augustinian Priory, O.S. ref. 929290, on the River Exe a mile north of Dulverton and six miles from Spurway) is in the Index of Ordinations (presbyters).²⁸ So it seems that his background (assuming it is the same John Grede) was no bar to his progress in the church. Then in 1412-13 John Grede was instituted as Rector of Poughill,²⁹ five miles north-west of Thorverton; in 1418-19 he exchanged livings with Walter Bury, Vicar of

²⁴ Calendar of *Inquisitions post mortem*: same reference as in footnote 11. - This clarifies something that we saw on page 5 above. Property which Alice inherited from her uncle (de Furneaux) in West Coker was held as vassal of de Courtenay; but land that she inherited from him in Thorverton, and all the property that she inherited from her father (Burel) in West Coker, were held directly from the king.

²⁵ Calendar of *Fine Rolls* 1377-83, pages 110, 200 and 289: copy in Exeter City Reference Library. A card in the West Country Studies Library says that "La Bertonland" was Bradninch Barton.

²⁶ Calendar of *Inquisitions post mortem*, vol. XV, page 349, no. 888.

²⁷ Calendar of *Patent Rolls*, 1395, page 597. Copy in Somerset County Record Office.

²⁸ Register of Bishop Stafford (Bishop of Exeter 1395-1419) pages 469 (ref. i, 9) 440 (ref. 250b) and 461. Copy in West Country Studies Library.

²⁹ I believe it is pronounced "Puff". "Tough" rhymes with "rough" and "trough".

Harpford (where Toplady, who wrote the hymn "Rock of Ages", had once been Vicar for a short time) and he died in Harpford (which is near Sidmouth) in 1425-26.³⁰

I know of no more "Grede" records in Exeter until the marriage of **Susanna Grayde** (*sic*) in 1570.

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Returning to Thorverton, we find entries in May and August 1413 concerning lands at Chilton Furnyaux (the hamlet of Chilton in Thorverton parish). **John Grede** or Crede, otherwise Symme, cousin and heir of **Thomas Grede** Esq. (cousin, *sic*, in both documents: but the second document also says that Thomas was John's uncle) released property at Chilton Furnyaux (otherwise known as Chilton Avenill). In the May document he released to Edward de Courtenay (knight, son of Edward the Earl of Devon) and to three other persons, property which they held from Philip de Courtenay (knight) and he held from **Thomas Grede**. (So again we see a Grede-and-Courtenay connection. Thomas Grede had granted the property to Philip de Courtenay, who had sub-granted it to Edward and the three others: and now that Thomas had died, John released his rights to Edward and the others.) - In the August document John released, to six other persons, other property in the same hamlet which had belonged to Thomas. Another Thomas, **Thomas Grede of Lynch** (Lynch being another hamlet in Thorverton parish) was one of the witnesses to the second document.³¹

The next entry is rather surprising: in 1425-26 **Thomas Grede** of Thorverton and **his wife Agnes** sold 13 houses, 4 tofts (homesteads, but probably in ruins) 2 ponds, 44 acres of (*arable?*) land, 15 acres of meadow, 10 acres of woodland and 12 acres of pasture to William Vyell, subject to certain rights which Henry and Alice Vyell had for their lifetimes.³² But where was all this property? It was in the parishes of Wells, Axbridge, Claverham and Cleeve, up near the Mendip hills in Somerset - and a long, long way from Thorverton. (See map on page 2 above.)

From Exeter in the Middle Ages, there was a road (if you can call it that) to London, which probably ran through West Coker, as the main Exeter-to-London road (the A30) does today. There would also have been some sort of a road up the valley of the River Culm, and over the county boundary and the watershed to Wellington, in the gap between the Brendon and Blackdown hills. (Today, the A38 Exeter-to-Bristol main road, the M5 motorway, the Exeter-to-Bristol railway and an old canal all go through this gap.) If we follow the A38, we go on to Taunton and Bridgwater, and then (beyond the Somerset lowlands which are known as Sedgemoor) we go over the Mendip hills at Shute Shelve, a mile west of Axbridge, and on to Bristol. Or, from Bridgwater, we could take the A39 which runs further east, through Wells to Bath. But in the fifteenth century, the journey from Thorverton to these parts of Somerset would probably have taken more than a day. Wellington would be a good half-way halt.

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³⁰ Register of Bishop Stafford, refs. ii 147b, i 213, ii 197, and Register of Bishop Lacy (Bishop of Exeter 1420-55) vol. i page 85. Also F. C. Hingeston-Randolph, *Register of Institutions* (1909) page 85.

³¹ Calendar of *Close Rolls*, 1413-19, pages 72 and 95.

³² *Somerset Feet of Fines*. Somerset Record Society vol. 22. Copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

Wellington in Somersetshire

There is a very early reference to the Grede family in Wellington. In 1277, in respect of the Manorial Court held by the Lord of the Manor, it is recorded: "The men of the tithing of Forde in Wellington Manor have come, except **John Grede** (dead)".³³

At the Manorial Courts of 1343-44, 1382, 1421 and 1424, there is mention of a piece of land in Wellington known as **Gredeheigh** or **Gredehey** or **Gredhey**.³⁴

At the 1353 Manorial Court, it was alleged that William Dounlonde levied a hue (i.e. made an outcry, calling on people to chase a wrongdoer) upon **William Grede**.³⁵ It seems that Dounlonde was not justified, as the Court fined him 6d. (2½p) - and fined William Grede 2d. for not prosecuting him.

In the Manorial Court in 1383, a licence was granted to **John Gredhey** to transfer three acres of land called Alremanneslond to Philip atte Broke for six years.³⁶

Our next reference is fifty years later: in 1439-40 in the Hundred Court (i.e. the local Court for the Wellington district) there were pleas of debt and trespass brought against many persons, including **Thomas Gredehay** and **his wife Agnes**.³⁷ (Aren't they the wealthy couple from Thorverton? Someone brought a complaint against them!)

A couple of generations later, in 1513, at the election of town officers at the Halmote (Manorial Court) **Adam Gredy** was one of four persons nominated for the post of ripreeve, which seems to mean the person in charge of the reapers,³⁷ so, although was not the one chosen, he must have been a well-respected person.

In 1543 in Wellington, **John Gredy** witnesses a Will; in 1552 **Agnes Gredy** (of Nynehead, a mile from Wellington) received a legacy under a Will; and in a 1555 Will, **John Gredye** left his son **Thomas Gredye** a pair of looms - so we see that he took part in the Wellington cloth manufacturing which has continued to the present day. John's wife was **Johan** and they had a daughter, **Christian**.³⁸

Then in 1557, still in Wellington, we have Probates of the Wills of **John Gredye** and of **Thomas Gredie** who left his property to his son **John Gredy**, and in 1558 there is a legacy to **Jone Gredy**, daughter of **John Gredy**. But then there is a gap until 1616 when **Elizabeth** daughter of a later **John Gredy** is baptised, and 1618 when Thomas Parson's Will gives legacies to **Henry Gredye** and **Elizabeth Gredye**, and to **Alice, Johane** and **Dorothy Gredy** (three daughters of Thomas' sister **Agnes Gredy**). The same Will mentions also **Henry Gredye the elder** and his daughter **Isabell Gredye**.³⁹

³³ A. L. Humphreys, *History of Wellington*, Part II: "Manorial Court Rolls" (1910). Copy in Somerset County Record Office.

³⁴ Humphreys *op. cit.* pages 172-192.

³⁵ Humphreys *op. cit.* page 173.

³⁶ Humphreys *op. cit.* page 184. This would have been copyhold land, held from the Lord of the Manor and requiring his licence to transfer it.

³⁷ Humphreys *op. cit.* pages 197 and 200.

³⁸ Humphreys *op. cit.* Part I, "Wills of Wellington and West Buckland".

³⁹ *ibid.*

By the 1640s the name seems to have settled as (usually) Greedy. There are lots more entries for Greedy in the Wellington records, and there are still members of the Greedy family in Wellington today. And there is a road called Greedy Close in Wellington today. But let us return now to Devon.

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Devonshire - North Molton, Thorverton and elsewhere

In 1429-30 there was a court case. The Prior of Pilton Priory had been dispossessed (i.e. thrown out) of some freehold property, consisting of three houses and maybe 200 acres of land, at North Molton (a dozen miles north-west of Oakford) by eight persons, two of them being **John Grede** and **Thomas Grede**. The Prior took them to the Court of Assizes. **John Grede** alleged that the Prior held the property as a subordinate of the Abbot of Malmesbury and could be dispossessed at the Abbot's command; but the Prior claimed that since time immemorial the property was granted to the Bishop of Exeter, who had put the Prior into the property in perpetuity and so he could not be removed. The Bishop of Exeter (Bishop Lacy) confirmed that this was so, so the Gredes lost the case.⁴⁰

In April 1441 there is a deed in which **Walter Grede**, eldest son of **Thomas** and **Agnes Grede**, seems to have confirmed a transfer of ownership of land in Thorverton to his father; and in the following month there is a lease of property at Lynch (in Thorverton parish) to **Thomas Grede** and his wife **Agnes Grede** for forty years.⁴¹

Ten years later (April 1451) another deed of confirmation confirms property at Thorverton to **Thomas Grede**, his wife **Elizabeth Grede** and son **John Grede**.⁴² Is that a different Thomas? Or has Agnes died and Thomas remarried? We do not know.

In 1481, the Dean and Chapter of Exeter Cathedral granted lands at Thorverton to **Walter Grede** and **William Grede**, by deed.⁴³

There is one more entry for Thorverton: in 1524 **Joan Grede** had to pay Lay Subsidy tax. The tax was levied at a shilling in the pound on lands, 6d. in the pound on wages and goods, and 4d. in the pound on other items. Joan was rated at "goods £2"⁴⁴ so she would have had to pay 12d. (*a shilling - or 5p in today's money*) and it looks as if she did not have any land, or at least, not enough to attract a tax liability. But that is the last we see of a Grede in Thorverton. The name does not occur in the parish's registers of baptisms, marriages and burials.

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Meanwhile at Talaton, which is nine miles east of Thorverton, but is only a mile and a half off the Roman road which ran from Exeter to Honiton (and which now forms part of the A30 main road which goes on beyond Honiton through West Coker

⁴⁰ Bishop Lacy's Register, vol. I, page 227. Copies in the West Country Studies Library and the Bristol City Reference Library.

⁴¹ The two original deeds are at Devon County Record Office, refs 2530M/T3/4/1 and 2530M/T3/4/2.

⁴² The deed was in duplicate. Both parts are at Devon County Record Office, refs 2530M/T3/4/3 and 2530M/T3/4/4.

⁴³ The original of this deed is at Devon County Record Office, ref. 2530M/T3/4/5.

⁴⁴ Devon *Subsidy Rolls*.

and eventually to London) there was a Grede. A record dated 1485-87 tells us that **William Grede** had a house and 300 acres of land at Talaton, which he held from John Fraunces (in earlier times, we would have said, as vassal of John Fraunces) who in turn held it from Peter, the Bishop of Exeter:⁴⁵ ⁴⁶ and John Fraunces had died.⁴⁷

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all over the south-west

In this section we see an early Somerset item that doesn't seem to fit in with anything anywhere: and other items from Dorset, Bristol, Wiltshire and Somerset. But the fourteenth-century "Sir John Creedy of Creedy"⁴⁸ (Creedy being adjacent to Crediton seven miles north-west of Exeter) has no place in these notes. Creedy is a separate family altogether - though sometimes the clerks' handwriting makes it difficult to tell Creedy from Greedy.

First, the early Somerset item:- In 1327, **Rogero Gredheye** (sometimes erroneously called **Robert Gredheye**) of Northeperton (*sic*) in the Hundred of Northpetherton paid Lay Subsidy tax of 12d. (5p).⁴⁹ North Petherton is between Taunton and Bridgwater on the road from Exeter to Bristol.

Next, a Dorset entry, from Hazelbury Bryan (twelve miles east-south-east of Yeovil) where Roger Speke and his wife Alice, and **Thomas Grede** and his sister **Lucy** and **Alice the sister of Lucy** (*sic*) sold a house and about four hundred acres of land in Hazelbury Bryan, Stoketurberville and Crokkerstoke, and some other rights as to rent, etc., to Guy de Brene and Richard de Acton in 1370.⁵⁰ Stoketurberville (d'Urberville?) is unidentified but is believed to be somewhere in the Blackmore Vale, the setting for Thomas Hardy's novel, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Crokkerstoke, also unidentified, is thought to be in Dorset.⁵¹

Here is a more distant one, at Westrop in the parish of Highworth, five miles north of Swindon in Wiltshire. It is a Pardon in 1387 from the king to Peter Courtenay, knight, for acquiring the Manor of Westrop without licence; and a grant to him of the premises, with further licence to grant them to **Thomas Grede** and seven other persons.⁵² And so, yet again, we see a Grede-and-Courtenay connection.

⁴⁵ These sub-grants or "subinfeudations" were normal until the statute *quia emptores* in 1290 forbade the making of any more new ones (though those already existing were to continue, generation after generation) but today in England and Wales they have nearly all faded into history. Very few indeed are still known. In Scotland, however, where the statute of 1290 did not apply, they were still common in the second half of the twentieth century.

⁴⁶ The record says that the Bishop held the land as part of the Manor of Crediton - but Talaton is fifteen miles from Crediton.

⁴⁷ Calendar of *Inquisitions post mortem*, page 50, no. 125: printed copy in Somerset County Record Office.

⁴⁸ Poole, *Historic Heraldic Families* (1975, published by David and Charles) page 107. This may be the "Credy of Devon" listed in Burke's *General Armory*.

⁴⁹ *Kirby's Quest* page 244. Also in *Exchequer Lay Subsidy for Somerset* (1889) Somerset Record Society: copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

⁵⁰ *Dorset Feet of Fines*, II, page 122.

⁵¹ *Oxford Dictionary of Place Names*.

⁵² Calendar of *Pardon Rolls*, 200. Printed copy in Somerset County Record Office. VISION PDFCompressor

Now to Bristol. In April 1387, John Deye granted property to Agnes Bierdene for her life, and appointed **Thomas Grede** and two others to put her into possession of it.⁵³

There is also an undated petition (details unknown) by **Thomas Grede of Bristol**.⁵⁴

1388 takes us back to Hazelbury Bryan. **John Grede** sued Guy de Brene in that year over a matter concerning the Manor of Haselbere (i.e. Hazelbury Bryan) and to defend himself Guy looked for his deeds of the Manor and could not find them: but, suspecting that they had been taken away by his son William and put in a chest at his inn in London, Guy went to London, found and broke open the chest, and found the documents he needed in it, mixed up with William's deeds and documents.⁵⁵

Then in 1520 we have the Probate of the Will of **John Grede** (not the same John Grede, evidently!) of Lothor - unidentified and just possibly Lothersdale south of Skipton in Yorkshire, but probably Lodors near Bridport in Dorset.⁵⁶

In 1524, Lay Subsidy tax was demanded. (See the paragraph on Joan Grede on page 10 above, for the rates of payment.) Devon records⁵⁷ reveal that the tax was demanded from the following:-

John Grede	Bideford (7 miles south-west of Barnstaple) goods £2
John Gred (sic)	Burrington, Devon (12 miles south-east of Barnstaple) goods £2
Richard Grede	Chittlehampton (7 miles south-east of Barnstaple) goods £3
John Gerde (sic)	Crediton (7 miles north-west of Exeter) goods £4
Thomas Grede	Hemyock (<i>Devon, but only 5 miles south of Wellington</i>) wages £1
Philip Gredde (sic)	King's Nympton (12 miles south-east of Barnstaple) goods £2
Robert Grede	North Molton (12 miles east-south-east of Barnstaple) wages £1
Joan Grede	Thorverton (5 miles north of Exeter) goods £2
John Credy (sic)	Uffculme (7 miles south-west of Wellington) goods £2

One thing that this tells us is that there was a clutch of Gredees in the Barnstaple area, of which the previous records gave us no hint. Let us digress into Barnstaple for a few moments.

In Barnstaple town itself, in the following century, the career of **John Gread** is worth noting. We first see him on the occasion of his marriage to Suzanna Cornishe in April 1612, followed by baptism of his children **John** (June 1612) **Suzanna** (March 1614) **Gilberte** (May 1615) **Mary** (May 1616, but buried in August 1616) **Johane** (March 1617) **Christyan** (Christine?) (July 1617 - the speed of reproduction is remarkable unless it is a mistake for 1618) and **Elizabeth** (January 1620).⁵⁸

⁵³ *Great Red Book of Bristol*, Text I page 210 - copy in Bristol City Central Lending Library.

⁵⁴ Public Record Office, Lists and Indexes vol. I - Ancient Petitions - page 145, no. 5,623.

⁵⁵ *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 1388 page 593.

⁵⁶ *Prerogative Court of Canterbury*: British Record Society, vol. 10.

⁵⁷ *Devon Subsidy Rolls*.

⁵⁸ Parish registers, and Mormon microfiche. (For details of this microfiche, see page 15 below.)

Then in the Barnstaple town accounts we find, for 1621-22, "Received of **John Greade**, for rent of the new prison for three-quarters of a year ended at Michaelmas last: £7 10s. 0d."⁵⁹ No explanation of why he rented the prison is given.

In 1629-30 the accounts show: "Paid £2 to **John Gread** as a guift from the towne when he went to Bath".⁶⁰ Presumably he went to take the spa waters, for the sake of his health.

In 1633, various Barnstaple town officials were sworn into office, including "Sergeant at Mace, Richard Horwood and **John Gread**; Supervisor of Strangers, **John Gread**".⁶¹

In 1648 John's wife Suzanna died, and he married **Phillippa Baker** in Barnstaple later that year.⁶²

In 1660 (probably - though the date is uncertain) Owen Feltham and his wife Mary brought a case against **John Gread** and his wife **Phillippa** in the Chancery Court. The case seems to have had something to do with a right of way.⁶³

In 1666 (year of the great fire of London) **John Gread** was Mayor of Barnstaple.⁶⁴ And it was said: "Mr. **John Greade**, Mayor. Greade was Sergeant of Mace many years, and now the Sergeant sits in the Mayor's place, and is this not Topsy Turvey".⁶⁵

The following year, Francis Tacharman, servant of **Mr. John Gread**, was buried.⁶⁶

And in the year after that (i.e. 1668), we see a fine example of seventeenth-century social concern: **John Greade** was dismissed from his office as alderman "because he is so weake he cannot be present".⁶⁷ He died in May 1670.⁶⁸

But at this point, as we look at his Will, we discover his occupation:- September 1669: "**John Greade** of Barnestaple, Beere Brewer," made his Will as follows:- "To the poor of Barnstaple £10 ... To my dear and loving wife **Phillippa** the dwellinghouse lately erected by me in Boutport in Barnstaple" for her life, and then to John's son **Gilbert** and then to Gilbert's sons **John** and **William Gread**. - There are numerous

⁵⁹ "Accounts of the Receiver & other Officials of Barnstaple 1389-1649", in *Reprint of Barnstaple Records* (1900) published by J. Chanter and T. Wainwright, vol. II page 92. Copy in West Country Studies Library.

⁶⁰ "Accounts of the Receiver and other Officials of Barnstaple 1389-1649" in *Reprint of the Barnstaple Records*, vol II, page 150.

⁶¹ *Reprint of the Barnstaple Records*, vol. I, pages 35-36.

⁶² Parish registers and Mormon microfiche.

⁶³ *Feltham v. Gread* 491/5 491-5 Cal 1 2nd. Chancery Depositions before 1714. The original manuscript report is in the Public Record Office, now or formerly at Chancery Lane, London WC2.

⁶⁴ From the list of mayors from 1303 published in *The Borough of a Thousand Years 930-1930: Barnstaple Millennium Official Brochure*. Copy in West Country Studies Library.

⁶⁵ A quote from Philip Wyot's Journal, in *Reprint of the Barnstaple Records* vol. II, page 248.

⁶⁶ Parish registers.

⁶⁷ *Reprint of the Barnstaple Records* vol. I, pages 39-40.

⁶⁸ Parish registers.

other gifts, including the gift of a house to Ann and Philippa Fairchild, daughters of "my good friend John Fairchild, my son-in-law", and he left everything else to his widow **Phillippa**, whom he made executrix of his Will.⁶⁹

In 1682 **Phillippa Gread** died. She left £5,286 - and she left nearly all of it to the Fairchilds and made her son-in-law John Fairchilde her executor. **Gilbert Gread** (described in her Will as her "son-in-law", but in fact her step-son) was let off debts of £28 which he owed to her, and got a gold ring.⁷⁰ (But under his father's Will he would now get the house, as we saw above. But - alas! - Gilbert died just fifteen months after Phillippa, so his sons young John and William became entitled to the house - except that William had died, six months before Phillippa.⁷¹)

In 1709-10, **Robert Gread** was Mayor of Barnstaple.⁷² It seems likely that he was old John's nephew, born 1634, the son of John's brother **Thomas Gread**. And in 1710, Barnstaple ships were trading across the Atlantic. A letter has survived:- "31 January 1710. Mayor of Barnstaple to Mr. Poppo. The merchants here that trade to Newfoundland, intend to send 4 ships, this year, to fish there; they humbly conceive 6 convoys will be necessary for the protection of the severall harbours and trade there, and desire that convoy may be as timely ready as possible, for that late going thither hath heretofore proved not only a great hindrance but prejudice to the traders. Signed: **Richard (sic) Gread.**" - *Endorsed*: "received 3rd, read 7th."⁷³

But let us now leave this long digression and return to where we were on page 12.

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Here is some further information about that **John Gred** (or **Grede**) in Burrington, which was in the Hundred of North Tawton. (North Tawton is ten miles south of Burrington, so the Hundred extended over quite a large area.) 1524. "Barnepole in Burrington, Devon:- **John Grede (sic)** holds one tenement by allowance from John Fitzharberd, to which belongs one close containing 18 acres of which 5 are arable worth each yearly 12d. (5p) and 11 are pasture worth yearly 18d. (7½p) & 2 are meadow worth yearly 10s. 0d. (50p) & he pays yearly for all 12s. 6d. (62½p)."⁷⁴

In December 1532 in Oake (a village five miles west of Taunton, Somerset) **Elizabeth Gredye** made a Will in which she left "three acres of wheat growing in the

⁶⁹ *Prerogative Court of Canterbury*, ref. 75 Penn. O.M.Coll. 10/36. From book of typed copies of Wills in West Country Studies Library. Also *Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills Index* in Public Record Office, London, ref. 75 7335.

⁷⁰ *Devonshire Wills* vol. 1 - copy in Bristol City Reference Library. Also nos 3007-3010 (a and b) in the book of typed copies of Wills at West Country Studies Library.

⁷¹ Parish registers.

⁷² From the list of mayors from 1303 published in *The Borough of a Thousand Years 930-1930: Barnstaple Millennium Official Brochure*. Copy in West Country Studies Library.

⁷³ [C.O. 194, 4 no.121] from 1710-11 Calendar of *State Papers, colonial (America and West Indies)* pages 24-25. Copy in Exeter City Reference Library.

⁷⁴ *A Survey of West Country Manors 1525: the lands of Cecily Marchioness of Dorset Lady Harrington & Bonville in Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset & Wilts*, page 115. Printed copy in Dorset County Record Office, Blandford. Also ref. 1524 in *Early Records for the Mayors of Barnstaple* entry for John Gred.

field" to the Oake parish church, and ten shillings (*50p*) to the parson to sing thirty masses for her. She died just over a year later.

Also in Oake, a dispute in 1534 ended up in court. William Comer complained that a house and 21 acres of land at Oake had been granted to him by Edward Waldegrave Esq. and others for his life, but Raff Martin and half-a-dozen others "with force and armes in ryotouse wyse against your peasse and the ordre of your lawes of this your realme, that is to witte, with bowes, arrowes, swyrdes and other weapons invasive at Oke afforesaid then and ther assemblyd them selves together after the forme and maner of warr, and then and ther entred into the said mease and other the premysses, and forcybly and ryotously in most creull maner expellyd and put out your complaynant, and sore bett hym and putt hym in jeopardy of his lyffe and hys poor servantes..." - In reply to this allegation, it was stated that about eight years previously, when **John Gredy** had been the tenant of the property, John Walgrave (son of Edward Walgrave or Waldegrave) had sold the right to receive the property on John Gredy's death to Raff Martin, and on the strength of this, Raff had taken possession of the property upon John Gredy's death. - We are not told the verdict.⁷⁵

And in 1538 in Moreton Cruse (now known - I think - as Cruwys Morton, which is a dozen miles north of Exeter) **William Greedy**, son and heir of **William Greedy senior**, mortgaged some land.⁷⁶

Further general items of this nature, but after 1538, will appear on page 27 below.

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1538

In 1538, the keeping of parish registers of baptisms, marriages and burials became a legal requirement. At this point, the whole character of this research changes. Though many of the sixteenth-century registers have not survived, many have, and there are far more entries than can appear in these notes. The Mormons have a vast collection. On the basis of their belief that they can be baptised by total immersion on behalf of previous generations who did not receive such baptism, they have collected the entries from a very large number of parish registers, throughout the country, into a microfiched index.⁷⁷ There are more than 800 entries for the name Grede (in various spellings) in this index. Over 400 of these are in Devon, more than 300 are in Somerset (245 of them being in the town of Wiveliscombe,⁷⁸ ten miles west of Taunton) and 85 are in London, leaving just 37 for the whole of the rest of the country. Of these, 4 are in Yorkshire (all of them dated between 1804 and 1809) and 3 (all between 1651 and 1656) are in Lincolnshire.⁷⁹ In Leicestershire (where we saw

⁷⁵ *Star Chamber Proceedings*, vol. X, nos 137-9, date 1534 - printed copy in Somerset Record Society vol. 24 pages 126-8. Copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

⁷⁶ From a card in a card index at West Country Studies Library, bearing a reference "Tingley, Cal 153f ff 17, 18".

⁷⁷ This index is available to historians as the International Genealogical Index.

⁷⁸ In case these notes come into the hands of anyone not familiar with Somerset, I will mention that this name is pronounced with the stress on the *third* syllable - Wiveliscombbe.

⁷⁹ This information comes from an examination of the Index which I and my wife made in the 1980s. It is likely that the Mormons have added many more entries since then.

Helyas le Gredie in 1269) there are none. But in Devon and Somerset the problem can be described as, "We can't see the wood for the trees".

So from this point on, I shall limit these notes to matters which seem to have some connection with my own personal ancestry - with a few digressions here and there into wider points which seem particularly interesting.

But first, one general comment needs to be made. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Gredes seem to have lost their wealth and their social standing. There seems to be a gap. Except for the 1485 Talaton item (page 11 above) we have not seen a single record between 1481 and 1513, the 1481 entry (page 10) being a Thorverton one, and the 1513 entry (page 9) being in Wellington. In Thorverton, up to 1481, we were looking at affluent landowners, but in the Wellington entry of 1513 we are looking for a man to take charge of the reapers - hardly the task of an affluent and influential gentleman. Even the name changes: we shall seldom see the name Grede after this.⁸⁰ Why? - In 1483, Sir Edward Courtenay (later Earl of Devon) and Peter Courtenay (Bishop of Exeter) and others conspired against King Richard III and were outlawed until 1485. As Shakespeare says:

"Sir Edward Courtney and the haughty prelate,
Bishop of Exeter, his elder brother,
With many more confederates, are in arms".⁸¹

Was one of those confederates called **Grede**? It seems likely. So: did the Gredes sink with the Courtenays and (unlike the Courtenays) not come up again? We do not know. But from this point onwards, the family takes on a much humbler role. Some of them are farmers, but the majority are craftsmen, particularly carpenters. And we shall not see any more Grede-and-Courtenay connections.

The first record of a Greedie as a carpenter (so here comes the first of my promised digressions!) is in Awliscombe (just outside Honiton in Devon) where in 1589 **William** (or **Robert**) **Greedie** left "2 borriers (*borers or drills*) one ynch borrier and one of $\frac{3}{4}$ and 2 ynche chissells and 2 planes" to his brother **Marke Greedie** in his Will. "Residue to **Richard Greedie** my son who is to be my executor." He adds, "The parishioners of Sidbury (*six miles south, between Honiton and Sidmouth*) owe me for mending the belcaidge 26s. 8d." He left property valued at £20 14s. 1d.⁸²

A much more recent record of a Greedy as a carpenter is in September-October 1968, at the opening of the new Wiveliscombe Evangelical Church in the former Lion Hotel. Acknowledgments (in the church magazine) for work done include "Mr. J. Vile (carpenter)" and "Mr. A. Greedy (carpenter)". - If their names describe their natures, they *need* an evangelical church! But it is interesting to see those two unusual surnames together. We have seen them together before - in 1425-26.⁸³ and shall see them together again on page 31 below.

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⁸⁰ In north Devon there are numerous later entries for Gread and Greade and very occasionally Grede.

⁸¹ W. Shakespeare, *King Richard the Third*, Act 4, scene 4, lines 502-4.

⁸² Court of Archdeacon of Exeter, folio 505, no. 3,012 - from the book of typed copies of Wills in the West Country Studies Library.

⁸³ Sale by Thomas and Agnes Grede of property in Somerset to William Vyell: page 8 above

The quest for the ancestral line in Milverton and Wiveliscombe

Returning now to our main theme: four miles north of Wellington (where we saw that there were lots of Greedys) is Milverton. And in 1505 we find that there was a Gredy - **John Gredy** - in Milverton. He may quite easily have walked there from Wellington. He witnessed a deed of grant of land,⁸⁴ so he would probably have been a respected person. There is a possibility (which cannot be proved) that he is my great-great-great-great - great-great-great-great - great-great-great-great grandfather. (My great *times 12* or great *x 12* grandfather. Or let's be drastic with our abbreviations and simply call him **g.12.**) - I know from the 1851 census that my ancestors came from Wiveliscombe; and I shall show that the Wiveliscombe Greedys came in the seventeenth century from Milverton: and here is the first Milverton Gredy.

g.12 John Gredy. So here he is. He must have been born in the latter part of the fifteenth century, as he was old enough to witness a deed in 1505. My ancestor? It's just a guess. We shall not get onto firmer ground until we reach 1538 and the Parish Registers. We are lucky, in that all the Milverton Parish Registers from 1538 onwards have survived.

Let us try to trace a line from **g.12** down to my great grandfather **g.1**, who was **George Greed** or **Greedy**, who died in 1914. - When I did this research I worked from the twentieth century back to the sixteenth, but in this account of what I found, the narrative will flow more smoothly if I work from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. But please be patient with me with regard to the next paragraph.

g.11 another John Gredie? This is speculation based on a severe lack of evidence - but only for one paragraph. When we get to the next paragraph, we shall move onto firmer ground. - Here is the evidence we have. In the registers, we can trace a line back from modern times to **Edwarde Gredie**, whose wife apparently had twins (Ambrose and Florence) in 1560. So Edwarde would have been born in the 1520s or 1530s - but before 1538 which is when the keeping of parish registers began. The first two entries for the name Gredie in the Milverton records are for the baptisms of **Marion, daughter of John Gredie**, in 1539 and **Elinor, daughter of John Gredie**, in 1541-2. *Assuming* (and it is an assumption without evidence, and is not necessarily correct) that Edwarde was their older brother, **Edwarde's father would have been John**, who would have been born about 1500. And the John who witnessed a deed in 1505 could have been this John's father. It is not necessarily so,⁸⁵ but it may be so.

g.10 Edwarde Gredie (or **Edward Greedy**) is our **g.10**. He died in Milverton in 1579, probably fairly young, as his youngest son was then aged only fourteen. We have no details of Edwarde's baptism - probably it was before 1538, as mentioned in the paragraph above. We have no record of his marriage, but we know that his wife's name was **Johan**. A lease dated 1575 granted a house known as "northern tenement" in Lyght in the parish of Milverton to **Edward Greedy** yeoman for the lives of his

⁸⁴ The original deed is at Somerset County Record Office, ref. DD/SF 1,623.

⁸⁵ There must have been other Gredie families (of whom we have no record) in Milverton at that time, because thirteen Gredies were baptised in Milverton in the twenty-year period from 1538 to 1558.

wife **Johan Gredye**, his son **Christopher Gredye** and **Agnes Fursey** of **Fuffet (Fitzhead, near Milverton)**.^{86 87} And we have evidence that he and his wife had five children. **John** son of **Edwarde Gredie** was baptised in 1548, and **Christopher** in 1552, and **Ambrose** and **Florence** (twins, probably) in 1560; but their next (their youngest) child, **Robert**, baptised in 1565,⁸⁸ is our **g.9**. (We know that the children were born in lawful wedlock. If they had not been, the clerk would have said so - as he did for "Robert, bastard son of Margarett Gredie" baptised in 1594.)

The early entries are in clear handwriting, but in 1579, after a change of writer, the writing becomes very difficult to read.

g.9 Robert or Roberte Gredie (baptised 1565). We have no record of the marriage of **Robert**, so we must presume that he married outside the parish, but we are told that his wife **Johan**⁸⁹ was buried in April of 1604 or 1605⁹⁰ leaving Robert with two young daughters, **Dorothie** (1593) and **Marie** (1596). He married again, to **Pascha**,⁹¹ and five more children followed: **Johane** (1607) **Robert** (1608) **Elinor** (1611 - the year the Authorised Version of the Bible was published) **William** (1613) and **John** (1616). Of these, **William** is our **g.8**.

g.8 William Gredy or Greedy (baptised 1613). William's burial does not appear in the Milverton Registers, and the reason is that he walked over the parish boundary and settled in Wiveliscombe. And what was the attraction in Wiveliscombe? We find out in 1637: **William Greedy** and **Elizabeth Hoyle** married. Their first child, **John**, who is our **g.7**, was baptised in 1639 in Wiveliscombe. A second child, **William**, was born in 1648, but in November of 1652, little William and his mother

⁸⁶ This item comes from a collection of manuscripts and deeds which were formerly stored at Nynehead Court, and at Chipley, Somerset (where they were apparently thrown into a hay-loft) for the Sanford family, and which were presented to the Somerset County Council in 1936. Between 1925 and 1930, Lt. Col. H. R. Phipps made abstracts of many of the deeds, and a typescript of these abstracts is in the Library of the Society of Genealogists in London. The original document is at the Somerset Record Office, ref. DD/SF 1,628. There is a further document there showing that Edward Gredye paid 1d. (some sort of tax) for Patmoor (? - it is illegible) and house: ref. DD/SF 1,629.

⁸⁷ Further deeds of Lease and of Mortgage, drawn up in 1627-30 (after Christopher's death in 1627) describe the "northern tenement" first as "Poule Cross and Callenhaie, High Haye, The Grove, Beelfurland, and 6 acres 'Stoneyland", 3 acres The Broome, Bonnymeade, the Wester and Easter 9 acres Whitmore, Longley, late in the tenure of Christofer Greedy deceased", secondly as "closes Callenhaid, land Pondescrofte, close High Hay, The Groves, Belfurland, Broomeclose, Bonnymeade, Western Nyneacres", and thirdly as "Callenhay, Poule Crosse, High Hay, The Grove, Belfurland, The Broome Close, Bonne Mead, Wester and Easter Nyne Acres, Long Leye, Whitmore". - Reference to the Milverton tithe map in the Somerset County Record Office would probably identify at least the general area.

⁸⁸ All references to baptisms, marriages and burials from here on are from the parish registers and/or the Mormon microfiche, unless otherwise stated.

⁸⁹ The same name as his mother's, just to confuse us: but the register specifies that it was "Johan, wife of Robert Gredie" who was buried.

⁹⁰ The date is unclear.

⁹¹ This appears to be her name, but the handwriting for the period 1600-25 (and also 1640-81) is very difficult to read.

both died. - Between 1637 and 1652 the name appears in the registers as Greedy, Gredy, Greedy, Gredey and Greedey. Clerks had difficulty with the name. And in the Milverton baptisms in 1641 we have Goride. I think I can imagine the father (he was named James; he is not one of our direct family line) telling the clerk, "Look: the name isn't Greedy, it's Grrr-eee-duh!" - and the clerk obediently does his best and writes down Goride. In another register⁹² we find it written in 1694 as Gorreda.

In 1670, a licence was granted for John Southey and Elizabeth Walland to marry. Sureties (that there were no impediments to the marriage) were apparently given by Edward Collins of Wiveliscombe, yeoman, who signed his name, and **William Greedy** of Wiveliscombe, carpenter, who signed by making his mark.⁹³ So William is the first in our three-hundred-year line of Greedys who were Wiveliscombe carpenters. (At the other end of this line, we have seen "Mr. A. Greedy, carpenter" in Wiveliscombe in 1968, on page 16 above.)

g.7 John Greedy or Greedy (baptised 1639). It is worth our while to take a close look at this interesting fellow. A carpenter with his eye to business. His wife's name was **Rodigon**,⁹⁴ and their first child, **John Greedy junior**, who will be our **g.6**, was baptised in March, 1661-2. Being a Quaker, John would not worship at the Wiveliscombe parish church (though Rodigon would) but that did not stop him from doing carpentry work there.

"A true Presentment according to the Book of Articles of the things presentable in the parish of Wiveliscombe for the year 1669:" [*Presentments were for drawing attention to matters which were not as they should be.*] "We present ... **John Greedy** [*and fifteen others*] for absenting themselves from the church." - Signed by the churchwardens.^{95 96}

We have handwriting problems again: the Parish Registers show **William** son of **John Greedy** (or Gurdey?) baptised in 1673, and **James** son of **John Gride** (or Cride?) in 1674, but in 1677 **William**, son of **John** and **Rodigon Greedy**, was buried. (Rodigon attended church and had the babies baptised. It seems to have become a bone of contention between her and her husband.)

Wiveliscombe Presentments again: - "The Presentment of the Constables, Tithingmen, Churchwardens and overseers of the poor of the Parish of Wiveliscombe at the Petty Sessions to be held at the Hare and Hounds situate in the Parish of Langford Budville [*a couple of miles south of Milverton*] the 23rd. day of August 1677:- We present ...

⁹² Parish of Stogumber, Somerset: burial of Grace Gorreda.

⁹³ The document is partly in Latin (in which William is called Julielmus Greedy) and partly in English (in which he is called William Greedy).

⁹⁴ We know nothing of her background, but we know that a Radigond Smith was named in the Wiveliscombe records of 1656 for having an illegitimate child. - H. L. Maynard, *The Crown Manor and Burgh of Milverton (sic)* (1939) page 140: copy in Taunton Local History Library.

⁹⁵ The original document is at Somerset County Record Office, ref. D/D/Ppb Box 11.

⁹⁶ By the Conventicle Acts, 1664 and 1670, there were penalties for attending a nonconformist service. By the Act of Uniformity, 1662, the Puritans had lost power: Rev. Day of Wiveliscombe was one of about 2,000 Puritan ministers who lost their livings as a result of this statute.

John Greedy [*and nineteen others*] for their not coming to their Parish Church to hear Divine Service and sermon for the space of three weeks last past.⁹⁷

And again:- "A True Presentment according to the Book of Articles of the crimes and misdemeanours committed in the Parish of Wiveliscombe since the last visitation which was in the year of our Lord God 1676 (*sic*) made by David Slade and William Davis, churchwardens, the fourteenth day of May in the year of our Lord God 1680 as follows:- We present ... **John Greedy** [*and thirteen others*] for absenting themselves from their Parish Church."⁹⁸

But the following year, the Wiveliscombe churchwardens are paying John money:- "**John Greedy** for a new bell wheele and work done about the Church House: £1 7s. 0d."⁹⁹

7th. October 1681, Wiveliscombe: **William** son of **John** and **Redigun Greedy** born.^{100 101} That looks like a victory for John: this is a Quaker record, and as far as we know, the baby has not been baptised.¹⁰²

In January 1681-82, another Presentment, presenting **John Greedy** and twenty-one others for absenting themselves from the Parish Church. - And then, two months later, **John Greedy**, carpenter, attended the Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends (*i.e. the Quakers*) held at Taunton.¹⁰³ (Attendance at the Quarterly Meeting was only for those who were of good standing in the Society. John took his faith seriously. We shall see below that he was willing to suffer for it. Would *we* be prepared to do that?)

And in August 1682, another Presentment: of **John Greedy** and ten others because "they refuse to come into the publique Essemblies, prayers, and services of the Church". They also present all these and a further seven, for "not coming to the Parish Church and for not receiving the Sacramente".

In September 1683, Wiveliscombe: **Mary** daughter of **William** (*sic*) **Greedy** was buried. On 1st. October a declaration was made on oath that the body had been "wrapt up and buried in woollen according to a late Act of Parliament".¹⁰⁴

The following month, "**John Greedy**, of Wivelscomb, was sent to Prison the 27th. of October, on an Attachment at the Suit of John Wyne, Counsellor at Law, being a

⁹⁷ The original document is at Somerset County Record Office, ref. DD/SF 4,001.

⁹⁸ Original at Somerset County Record Office, ref. D/D/Ppb Box 11. (This reference also applies to all further Presentments, over the next few pages.)

⁹⁹ The original account book for the period 1681 - 1741 is at Somerset County Record Office, ref. DP/wiv.

¹⁰⁰ Quaker records (Book 150, page 24) at Quaker Library, Friends' House, Euston Rd., London NW1 2BJ.

¹⁰¹ Did this William go away to London? It looks as if he did, because on 6th. May 1711, Radigon daughter of William and Elizabeth Greedy was baptised at St. Andrew's Church in Holborn, London.

¹⁰² There is a gap in the Wiveliscombe baptismal records from June to November 1681, as part of the page has been torn off.

¹⁰³ *The Somersetshire Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends (1668-99)* Somerset Record Society vol. 75. Copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹⁰⁴ Parish registers. The Act had been passed in 1678 to help the woollen industry, requiring that burials must be in woollen shrouds.

malicious prosecution, being set on by his wife, because the said J. G's wife, could not nurse his child, which died". This is a Quaker record,¹⁰⁵ the inference being that little Mary had died unbaptised, so Rodigon took revenge by setting the Law on her husband.

There is a mystery here, for Mary is described (at least in my transcript of the register) as "daughter of William". Surely it must be a mistake for "daughter of John", for two reasons. First, what Rodigon did seems to make no sense if Mary was not the daughter of herself and John. Secondly, there wasn't a William Greedy in Wiveliscombe - except old grandfather William (g.8) who at that time was seventy years old. But was the mistake deliberate? Was John held in such low esteem in the church that Mary was entered in the register as the child (i.e. grandchild) of William, as if John did not exist? We do not know.

5th. June 1684: another Presentment by the Wiveliscombe churchwardens and sidesmen, of persons that refuse to come unto the public assemblies prayers and services of the Church: **John Greedy** (and eight others) and also for not Receiving of Sacrament. "We also present **John Greedy junior** and **Mary his pretended wife** for being married without Banns or Licence." - That last presentment is unexplained. Had John talked his son into having a Quaker marriage, or had they just failed to comply with something in the required formalities? We do not know. We need to take note of John junior (aged 23 at this point) as he is our next generation, g.6.

But on the very same day, in the Wiveliscombe churchwardens' accounts, "**Paid John Greedy** for work & boards & timber about the Church and doors: £2 11s. 8d., Thomas Collard for work, lime & stones upon the Church 7s. 2d., **William Greedy** 3d."¹⁰⁶ Was old William still doing a bit of carpentry work, or was this a gift to a respected senior parishioner? In 1685 we shall see an "allowance" to William. That sounds more like charity than wages.

A month later:- "Priscilla Ward, a servant maid, James Salter, an apprentice boy under the age of 16 years, Joseph Pearce and Thomas Langwell, two very poor men having wives and children, and **John Greedy** of Wivelscomb, carpenter, a poor man also - beeing mett together to wait upon and worship God in spirit and truth in their meeting house in the parish of Milverton [*i.e. at the house of Thomas Upham*] on the 6th. of the 5th. month [*July, by the calendar of those days*] 1684 (early, before the rest of the Friends came) were shut up in the Meeting-house under a guard, and next day committed to prison¹⁰⁷ by Ferrars Grisley, who was very rude, and threatened to

¹⁰⁵ *Persecution Exposed, in some Memoirs relating to the Sufferings of John Whiting and many others of the People called Quakers* (published 1715) page 96. Copy in the Quaker Library (address as above). Mentioned by Rev. F. W. Hancock in *Wifela's Combe* (1911) pages 44-45 - copies of this book are in the Historical Library for Somerset, in Taunton Castle, Castle Green Taunton, and in Somerset County Library (reference section) in Bridgwater. Mentioned also in *Sufferings of the Quakers*, page 202.

¹⁰⁶ The original account book for the period 1681 - 1741 is at Somerset County Record Office, ref. DP/wiv. (This footnote also applies to all other items from the Wiveliscombe churchwardens' accounts that we shall see on the next few pages.)

¹⁰⁷ Whether John went to prison twice (here and in the previous October) or whether the record at the top of this page refers to this imprisonment (in which case, the date in that record, on the last two lines of page 20 above, is inaccurate) is unclear. The former seems the more likely, as John gave bail to get out of prison on this second occasion.

handbolt them; but (*only*) four (*were*) of age, and so not contrary to the Act." [*The Conventicle Act applied if five or more persons over the age of sixteen were gathered together for nonconformist worship. Here there were only four such persons and a boy.*] "John Greedy put in Bail to appear at Sessions, the rest (*were*) brought to prison the 9th., and (*were*) had to Bridgwater Sessions the 15th. instant, and (*were*) there discharged."¹⁰⁸

7th. July, 1684, Somerset Sessions: *Mittimus* (i.e. sending) of several Persons to Prison for Meeting:-

"To the Constables and Tithing-men of Milverton, and to the Keeper of His Majesty's Gaol at Ilchester, or to his sufficient Deputy there, These to execute."

("To execute" only means "to do these things" - i.e. the things set out below. It does not mean anything more drastic!)

"Forasmuch as it appears to me by the oaths of several Persons, viz. George Ferris and Abraham Rutley, of Milverton aforesaid, Constable and Tithing-man there, together with the Constable of the Hundred of Milverton aforesaid, that they did on Sunday last find the several Persons, herein under-named, unlawfully and riotously [*sic - for a Quaker meeting!*] assembled together, in the House of Thomas Upham of Milverton aforesaid, under Pretence of religious worship, contrary to a late Act of Parliament, intituled, An Act to prevent and suppress seditious Conventicles: and forasmuch as they refuse to give good Security for their personal Appearance at the next General Sessions of the Peace for the said County.

These (*writings*) are therefore, in his Majesty's name, to will and require you the said Constable and Tithing-man, or some of you, on sight hereof, to take the Bodies of the Persons here under-named, and them safely convey to the Common Gaol of Ilchester aforesaid, and them there deliver to the Keeper of the same, together with this Precept [*i.e. this document*] commanding also you the said Keeper to receive them into your Custody, and them therein safely to keep, until they be from thence delivered by due Course and Order of Law: and hereof fail not at your Perils.

Given under my Hand and Seal this 7th. day of July Anno Regis Caroli secundi 36th. Annoque domini 1684.

Names

John Greedy, of Wivelscomb in the said County, Carpenter:

James Salter, apprentice to John Alloway of the same:

Joseph Pearce, of Milverton aforesaid, Hosier:

Thomas Langwell, of Bathealton in the said County, wool-comber.

N.B. **John Greedy** hath put in Bail to appear at Sessions."

(The other three were conveyed to Prison, where they were discharged at the Sessions on the 15th. of the same month: but one of them, Joseph Pearce, was again sent to Gaol about a Fortnight after, by the same Justice, for being absent from the National Worship.)¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Hancock *op. cit.* page 45, which quotes from *Persecution Exposed*. The account is also in the manuscript *Great Book of Sufferings* vol. 6 (1681-90) part 1 page 150 in the Quaker Library, and in *Suffering of the Quakers*, page 233.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers* (published 1753) vol. 1, 638. Copies in the Quaker Library and the Somerset County Record Office.

William Ruscomb, Thomas Pierce and Robert Combe were publicly executed in 1685 in Wiveliscombe after being sentenced to death by Judge Jeffreys following the Battle of Sedgemoor. We are not told which carpenter was ordered to build the gallows.¹¹⁰

August 1685: **John Greedy** and nineteen others were presented for not coming to church and not receiving the sacrament.

But, the following month, the churchwardens' accounts show further payments:-

Year ending 24th. September 1685: **John Greedy** for 6 days work about the Church House & timber: 17s. 1d., Thomas Collard £2 1s. 11d., **John Greedy** for 5 bell stocks & 20 clamps & 3 days work on the same: 16s. 6d., **John Greedy** for a gate for Parish Choues [? - Close?] & locks & twist [key] 6s. 10d. **William Greedy** allowance 9d.

On 3rd. June 1686, **John Greedy senior** and eighteen others were presented for not attending church and not receiving the sacrament. Evidently it has become necessary by this time to distinguish between John and his son, since the son was now grown up and working as a carpenter.

A fortnight later, **John Greedy** attended the Quakers' Quarterly Meeting, held at Greinton (twelve miles north-east of Taunton, so a journey of more than twenty miles from Wiveliscombe).¹¹¹

And in the following month, old **William** died (he would have been 73) and was buried, in woollen.

Further payments by the churchwardens:- for the year ending 10th. July 1686: **John Greedy senior** for worke: £1 14s. 8d. **John Greedy junior** for several pieces of timber, boards, & worke about the Church House: 11s. 9d.

At this point we need to bring in details of young John, though we have certainly not finished with old John yet.

g.6 John Greedy or Greedy (baptised 1661-2). **John Greedy** (junior) who was baptised on 7th. March 1661-2,¹¹² married a girl called **Mary**. (We do not have the date of the wedding, but we saw above that they were presented in June 1684 for marrying without observing the prescribed legal formalities.) On 4th. April 1687, "**Rodygon** daughter of **John Greedy junior**" (named after her grandmother) was baptised, but just six days later, little Rodygon and her mother **Mary** were buried (in woollen).

John married again. In January 1696-7, **William** son of **John** and **Anne Greedy** is baptised; but in August 1699, "**William**, son of **John Greedy** a carpenter", is buried.

¹¹⁰ The only Greedy on the official list of rebels is Robert Greedy of Buckland, near Wellington. As he is not on the lists of those executed, transported, pardoned, whipped etc., we must assume that either he escaped (and possibly changed his name) or was killed in the battle.

¹¹¹ *The Somersetshire Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends (1668-99)* Somerset Record Society vol. 75. Copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹¹² The reason for the double date is that until the reform of the calendar in 1752, New Year's Day was celebrated on 25th. March each year. So this 7th. March was in the last month of 1661 by the calendar in use at that time, but is in the third month of 1662 according to our present calendar.

October of the next year sees "**Mary** daughter of **John** and **Anne Greedy** carpenter" baptised, but in June 1702 "**Anne** wife of **John Greedy**" is buried. John is alone again, with a twenty-month-old daughter.

John married a third time. On 3rd. October 1705, **John Greedy** and **Anne Collard** were married, and on 10th. February 1705-6 **William** son of **John** and **Anny Greedy** was baptised. (Whoops! That was a near one.) This **William** will be g.5, the next link in our chain. John and Anne went on to have **Elizabeth** (1708) **Thomas** (1711) **Joan** (1715) and perhaps others, but in 1715 we encounter a problem. Look at these two items from the Wiveliscombe registers:-

17th. April 1715 **Joan** daughter of **John** and **Anne Greedy** baptised,
 11th. September 1715 **Mary** daughter of **John** and **Anne Greedy** baptised (*memo:*
 the child was born within a month of their marriage).

Evidently there were *two* John-and-Anne Greedys from this time on. But this does not upset our family line: little **William** who is our g.5 was nine years old by this time.

John Greedy senior and junior (g.7 and g.6)

Having thus introduced ourselves to **John Greedy junior** (born in 1661-2) we still have a bit more to see about his father, **John Greedy senior**, but from this point onwards both of them are working as carpenters, and sometimes it is impossible to distinguish between them.

There is one more Presentment of old John, and it's an odd one. Dated 21st. June 1688, it is for "all the Crimes and misdemeanours committed in the Parish of Wiveliscombe since August anno dom 1682". Why does it look back for six years? **John Greedy** and nine others are presented for refusing to attend church: but then the document states, "We present **John Greedy** for not suffering his child to be baptized and **also his wife** for using the office of a Midwife without Licence". So it seems that somebody was still getting at John over the matter of little **Mary** (who died in September 1683) not being baptised. But this time, John's wife **Rodigon** has been presented too.

In 1689 the Toleration Act was passed, giving freedom to nonconformists to worship as they wished. We shall not see John Greedy presented again.

More Wiveliscombe churchwardens' accounts:- *Paid*

4th. July 1690 **John Greedy** for timber and works about the Church House: 17s. 8d.
 19th June 1693 **John Greedy** for work & necessaries about the Church Tower & Church House: £11 11s. 5d. by his bill as appeareth. John Collard £10 7s. 4d.
 1697-8 **John Greedy** for timber and worke done about the Church & house of Church: £2 13s. 0d.
 1698 **John Greedy** for worke & for timber about the Church & house of Church: 11s. 9d. John Collard £3 7s. 4d.
 1699 **John Greedy** for work about the bells for which we have his bill: 13s. 6d.
 1701-2 **John Greedy** his several bills: £31 8s. 9d. **John Greedy** for worke & timber on righting seats: 10s. 0d.
 1703 **John Greedy** for carpentry work: £4 2s. 11d.

In 1705, the minstrels' gallery was erected in Wiveliscombe parish church.¹¹³ Here is lots of work for carpenters:-

- 1705 **Mr. Greedy the carpenter:** 10s. 0d. towards his bill; & 3s. 9d., & 5s. 0d., & 13s. 0d., & 5s. 0d., & 11s. 0d., & 3s. 0d.
 1705-6 **John Greedy** for worke: 6s. 8d., & 5s. 0d., & 10s. 0d.
 John Greedy more for worke: 14s. 0d.
 John Greedy more: £1 0s. 0d.

Why do we read, "Mr. Greedy the carpenter" and then "John Greedy" in these accounts? Could it be that "Mr. Greedy the carpenter" was the old leather-jacketed Quaker whose manner of worship was now perfectly legal and for whom the churchwarden writing the account had a lot of respect, whereas "John Greedy" was John junior who had just put Anne Collard in the family way (the baby arriving only four months after the wedding) and for whom the churchwarden had far less respect?

And still more accounts: working for the church which he would not attend was evidently profitable!

- to 4th. January 1707-8 **John Greedy:** bill: 13s. 5d., John Collard 6s. 6d.
 1709-10 **John Greedy's** bill: 11s. 10d.
 (In 1710, John Collard was one of the churchwardens.)
 1712-3 **John Greedy's** bills: £2 6s. 3d.
 1714 **John Greedy's** bills: 18s. 7d.
 1715-6 **John Greedy junior** by bill: £1 18s. 5d.
 1719-20 **John Greedy** by bill: 10s. 10d.
 1721-2 **John Greedy** by bill: 5s. 0d.
 (But after that, nothing until 1732-3.)

In July 1720, old **Radegunde** (or **Rodigon**) **Greedy** was buried. She must have been nearly 80, as her son John was 58. In her final years she had probably told her grandchildren stories of how when she was a little girl the King's Cavaliers had laid siege to Taunton in 1645 after the Roundheads had captured it, and how in 1684 her husband had been put in prison, and how people had been hanged in Wiveliscombe in 1685 by order of Judge Jeffreys after a great battle which had been fought on Sedgemoor, only half a dozen miles from Bridgwater - and probably the grandchildren looked at her in this peaceful Georgian era and wondered what on earth she was rambling on about.

She is described as a widow, but we do not know when her husband, old John (g.7) died. It is likely that he had a Quaker burial. Their son John (g.6) was then 58 - and this raises the question of who was "John Greedy junior" in the churchwardens' accounts for 1715-16. Old John g.7, if he were still alive in 1715, would have been 76, so it is unlikely that he would still have been doing extensive carpentry work. Possibly 1715-6 marks the cut-off point, where "young" John took over from his father: but it may be more likely that there was *another* John Greedy doing carpentry work by this time. (We saw that there *was* another John Greedy, who married in 1715, but we do not know if he was a carpenter.)

¹¹³ The old church, demolished and rebuilt in 1820

- There are just a few more entries in the Wiveliscombe churchwardens' accounts:-
- 1732-3 **John Greedy** as by his bill appears to be: 10s. 6d.
 John Greedy for a new ladder and tub 3s. 8d.
- 1736-7 Here we see a rival, Roger Thorne, who was paid 15s. 0d. "for work & timber on the Tower windows, by bill, and the frame which the Degrees of Marriage is put in".
- 1738-9 **John Greedy**: bill of timber & work done about the Church House: 14s. 6d.
- 1739-40 **John Greedy's** bill: 7s. 6d. (Roger Thorne got 11s. 3d.)

This is the last entry for Greedy in this account-book, which ends in 1741. The next book has apparently not survived.

There is an entry in the Burials Register for 4th. April 1733: "**John Greedy senior** buried". We know that this is not Rodigon's husband, as she was described in 1720 as a widow. It is likely that this is "young" John (then aged 72) and so the carpentry work after that was by "third" John, who is from a different branch of the Greedy family. But we cannot be sure. Let us let them rest in peace while we move on to the next generation of our line.

g.5 William Greedy (baptised 1705-6). We don't know much about this one. We know that on 23rd. Feb. 1733-4 he married **Elizabeth Collard** in Wiveliscombe, and they had children **Thomas** (March 1734-5, but buried, May 1735) **Elizabeth** (1738-9) **Joan** (1740) **James** (1743) **Thomas** (1746) **Joseph** (1749 - he will be our g.4) and **William** (1754). We are not even told that he was a carpenter - though it is fairly obvious that he was, because his father was and his sons Joseph and James are both described as carpenters in the Marriage Register when they get married in 1771 and 1773 respectively. (Joseph married before his older brother, but he was in a hurry: a baby was on the way!) Joseph and James were both able to sign their names in the Marriage Register, and so was young William who witnessed James' signature.

Old father William died in Wiveliscombe in either 1755 or 1777 - or possibly in 1780. No attempt is made to distinguish one William Greedy from another in the Burial Register. But we know that in April of 1767 William's son Thomas was buried, just eight months before he was due to have his 21st. birthday. Being under 21, he is described in the Burial Register as "Thomas son of William and Elizabeth Greedy" as if he were a child. What happened? Was he taken ill or was there an accident during carpentry work? We do not know.

g.4 Joseph Greedy (baptised 1749). (The name Joseph has not appeared in the family before, but he appears to have been named after his grandfather Joseph Collard.) Our Joseph married on 17th. November 1771. By that time, marriage registers were being kept in much more detail. The register shows Joseph and his bride as "**Joseph Greedy** carpenter and **Ann Lerway** spinster, both of this Parish". Joseph signed his name on the register; Ann put her mark. And "**Charlotte**, daughter of Joseph & Ann Greedy" was baptised on 19th. April 1772. Charlotte was followed by **James** (1774) **Thomas** (1777) **William** (February 1780 - but was buried a week later) **Joseph** (13th. March 1781, who will be our g.3) another **William** (1785) and finally **Sarah** (1793).

Digressing along some other branches of the family tree

Before we look at Joseph g.3, who moved from Wiveliscombe to East Quantoxhead, let us explore along some other branches of the family tree and pick a few plums. These items will be in date order (except where a group of them is gathered into a local list or a subject-list) but geographically they will be all over the place.

1545. A grant to William Chapleyn and John Selwood of lands in and near Taunton (in the parishes of St. Mary Magdalene, St. James, and West Monkton) tenanted by about 100 tenants, one of whom was **John Greedy**.¹¹⁴

21st. January 1554-5, **William Greedy** was baptised at St. Mary's, Reading, Berkshire.¹¹⁵

1554-6 (*sic*) Probate of the Will of **Thomas Grede** of Asterby, Lincolnshire.¹¹⁶

1555-8, nearly three hundred Protestants, including Thomas Cranmer the Archbishop of Canterbury (who was formerly Archdeacon of Taunton) were burnt at the stake.

15th. April 1567, **Willelmus Greede** and Alicia Roose married at Wootton Wawen in Warwickshire.¹¹⁵

13th. March 1596-7, **Danielle** (*sic*) son of **Robert Grede**, baptised at St. Katherine's by the Tower, London.¹¹⁵

5th. January 1612-3, **Anthony Greed** and Sarah King married at Great Hornead in Hertfordshire.¹¹⁵

4th. February 1625-6, **Richard Gread** and Elizabeth Collens married at St. Giles' in Cripplegate, London.¹¹⁵

16th. February 1651-2, **Richardus** son of **Richardi Greadye** was baptised at Haxe, Lincolnshire.¹¹⁵

16th. January 1655-6, **John** son of **Thomas Greedy** was baptised at St. Mary Coslany, Norwich.¹¹⁵

1555. In his Will, **John Greдые** of Pynxmore in the parish of Wellington left his son a pair of looms, so we know he was active in the West of England cloth industry. John's daughter got 6s. 8d. and wife **Johan** who was his executrix got everything else.¹¹⁷

1559, **William Greдыer** alias **Gardmaker** late of Totnes, Devon, tinker, was included in a list of persons pardoned by the new Queen (Elizabeth I) for "all treasons, felonies and other offences (except murder, highway robbery and robbery in dwelling houses, etc.)".¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ 36th. year of Henry VIII *Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic*, vol. XX, part 1 page 211, no. 21 in column 1. Printed copy at Somerset County Record Office.

¹¹⁵ Mormon microfiche.

¹¹⁶ Consistory Court of Lincoln, no. 97. British Record Society vol. 28: copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹¹⁷ Humphreys *op. cit.* (as in footnote 33 above) Part I, "Wills of Wellington and West Buckland".

¹¹⁸ Calendar of *Patent Rolls (Pardon Roll)* 1st. year of Elizabeth, page 156. Copy in Somerset County Record Office.

1561, **John Grede** was Vicar of North Molton, Devon, "not a graduate, unmarried,¹¹⁹ does not preach. Also Rector of" (illegible).¹²⁰

1569 Certificates of Musters (in preparation for possible invasion by the Spaniards: the Spanish Armada came in 1588) -

In Devon:- In Tawstock (near Barnstaple) **John Greade** and **Peter Greade**, archers; in Bishop's Tawton **Nicholas Greade**, harquebusier (soldier with a hand-gun). In King's Nympton: five sworn presenters, including **Thomas Greade**, present the following: (there follows a list of all able-bodied men in the parish, including **Thomas Greade**, harquebusier). In George Nymett, **Richard Greade**, archer; in Combe Raleigh, **William Gredeye** and **Mark Gredeye**, pikemen; in Culmstock, **John Gredeye**, harquebusier; in Uffculme, **John Grede**, gunner.¹²¹

In Somerset:- In Sampford Arundel in the Hundred of Milverton: **Thomas Gredey** shall provide a corslet (leather or metal body-armour) and **Nicholas Gredey** and others shall provide one pair of almain rivets (light armour of a German riveted type).¹²² In Milverton, **Jasper Gredey** is named as one of sixteen "shot-men".¹²³

1581-2 Lay Subsidy (for Somerset) was payable by **Johane (?) Greedy** widow, of Bathealton, **Christopher Gredeye**, **William Gredey**, **Thomas Gredey** and **Ellen Gredeye** widow, of Sampford Arundel and Thorne, and **John Greddy** (? - illegible) of the Hundred of Milverton (document damaged: name of village torn off).¹²⁴

Robert Greedy was one of the collectors of this tax.¹²⁵

20th. December 1584: an Assignment of a Lease mentions land at Axminster, Devon, of which **John Greedy**, tailor, was the tenant.¹²⁶

1592, in Trent (formerly in Somerset but transferred to Dorset in 1895) **Edith** the wife of **Tristram Greedy** (or **Credie** or **Crede**) and **Edith Greedy** spinster were recusants (nonconformists - or, more likely, Roman Catholics).¹²⁷

1599 **Edward Grede** witnessed a deed of lease of property in Langford Budville.¹²⁸

1609, Coldridge (Coleridge) in Devon: **Nicholas Greedy** became Vicar.¹²⁸ He died there in February 1629-30.¹²⁸

¹¹⁹ The Reformation had taken place: this Vicar was a Protestant. Married priests were permitted, but he was unmarried.

¹²⁰ Card in card-index of West Country Studies Library, bearing the ref. "Wm. Alley's Report, trans. fo. 56".

¹²¹ Devon *Muster Roll* for 1569. A copy is in *either* Devon County Record Office *or* the West Country Studies Library adjacent to it.

¹²² Somerset *Certificates of Musters*, 1569. Somerset Record Society vol. 20: copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹²³ E. Green, *Somerset and the Armada* (1888) - copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹²⁴ Lay Subsidy tax list preserved at Somerset County Record Office under ref. DD/SF 4008.

¹²⁵ ref. as in footnote 86 above.

¹²⁶ The original deed is at Devon County Record Office under ref. 123M/TP218.

¹²⁷ A. L. Humphreys, *Somerset Parishes* (1905) - copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹²⁸ Parish registers.

12th. January 1609-10 **Markes Greedie**, carpenter, was buried at Ottery St. Mary.¹²⁹

1613 in the Court of Quarter Sessions in Taunton:- "Petition of Frances Fursey to the Justices that whereas **James Greedy** and **Joane his wife** of Milverton, people of lewd conversation and naughty demeanour, have cunningly and by their wicked persuasions enticed and drawn one Valentine Fursey, a very simple and plain fellow, from his dwellinghouse: and have conveyed him to live in some place unknown to any of his friends, and before his departure have seized upon all the goods that he had..." The Court's decision is not recorded.¹³⁰

1623-4: Petitions to East India Company of Persons soliciting Employment, Increase of Wages, or Payment of Wages due to their Relatives, etc. in the Company's service:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of Petitioner</u>	<u>Subject of Petition</u>	<u>Reference</u>
1st. August 1623	Bruite Gread carpenter	Wages for his boy	Ct. Min. Bk. VI page 52
1st. December 1624	Margaret Newton	Maintenance of child of John Fipenny from Brute Gread ¹³¹	Bk. VII page 278

(The meaning is unclear. Is Fipenny the boy's name, or is she claiming 5d. payment?)

Brute Greade (in service of East India Company) died abroad. His Will was proved by his widow **Dorothy** on 13th. July 1631.¹³²

1641 and 1642, Lay Subsidy was paid by **Henry Greedy** of Milverton town, **James Greedy** of Preston Bowyer in the parish of Milverton, **Grace Greedie**, **Jasper Greedie**, **Henry Greedie** and (in 1641 only) **Isotta Greedie** of Sandford & Thorne (i.e. Sampford Arundel and Thorne St. Margaret) **Grace Greedie** widow of Wellington, **Robert Greedy** of Buckland, and **John Greedie** (place not stated).¹³³

1642: the Protestation Act. (This was a declaration of allegiance which Parliament required all men between the ages 18 and 65 to sign.)

In Somerset:- In Wellington, **John Greedy**; in Milverton, **Ambrose Greedy**, **George Greedy**, **Humphrey Greedy**, **Nicholas Greedy senior**, **Nicholas Greedy junior** and **Thomas Greedy**; in Sampford Arundel, **Jasper Greedy**; in Thorne St. Margaret, **George Greedy**, **John Greedy senior** and **John Greedy junior**; in West Buckland, **Robert Greedy**; in Langford Budville, **Andrew Gredie**, **Edward Gredie**, **John Gredie** and **William Gredie**; and in Taunton, **Leonard Greedy** all signed it.¹³³

In Devon:- In Bideford, **Richard Greade**; in Bratton Fleming, **John Gread**; in Chawleigh, **John Greade** and **Richard Greade**; in Chittlehampton, **Anthony Gread**,

¹²⁹ Parish registers.

¹³⁰ Somerset Record Society, vol. 23. Copies in Bristol City Reference Library, the Historical Library for Somerset in Taunton Castle, and Somerset County Record Office.

¹³¹ Calendar of State Papers - colonial - East Indies 1622-4, pages 219 and 486. Copy in Somerset County Record Office.

¹³² From Year Book of Probates in Bristol City Reference Library. (The year is uncertain, due to a copying error in which it is shown as 1361.)

¹³³ Somerset Protestation Returns (copy in Bristol City Reference Library) gives a list of those who signed and also those who paid the 1641 and 1642 Lay Subsidies.

Lewis Gread and Thomas Gread; in Chulmleigh, **Robert Gread**; in Nympton Saint George (also known as George Nymett) **Philip Gread**; in Bramford Speke, **Jeremy Greedy, John Greedy and Richard Greedy**; in Crediton, **Thomas Greade**; in Plymtree, **Edward Greedy, John Greedy and Nicholas Greedy**; and in South Molton, **John Greade and Nathaniel Greade**, all signed it.¹³⁴

1642-6, the Civil War. In 1644, the Roundheads captured Taunton. In 1645, the Cavaliers besieged the town but failed to take it.

Exeter surrendered to the Cavaliers (Royalists) in 1644, but the Roundheads (Parliamentarians - Puritans) recaptured the city in 1646. They burnt down the Guildhall, ransacked the Cathedral, turning it into an ammunition-store; they broke up the Cathedral organ, blew the organ-pipes in the streets, and told some of the choristers, "Boyes, we have spoyled your trade; you must goe and sing hot pudding-pies!"¹³⁵ In 1655, two Royalists were beheaded and several hanged, in Exeter.

1652: *Pye v. Greedy*: a case was heard in the Chancery Court in London against **Grace Greedy**, widow of **Thomas Greedy** who died in 1640, about land called Sampford Wood, with between 200 and 300 oak trees, in the parish of Sampford Arundel.¹³⁶

In Exeter in 1660 a Poll Tax was levied. - In the parish of St. Lawrence, **John Greedy senior & wife, John Greedy junior, Daniel Greedy, Beaten Greedy, and Philip Greedy & wife** all paid a shilling (5p). In St. Mary Major, **Ruth Greedy**, in Cathedral Close **Richard Greedy & wife**, in Holy Trinity **Thomas Greedy & wife**, and in St. David **Digory Greedy¹³⁷ & wife** all paid a shilling, while in St. Stephen, **Philip Greedy & wife** paid half a crown (12½p).¹³⁸

1667. William Prowse of Axbridge, yeoman, left £200 in his Will to his cousin **Alexander Greedy**.¹³⁹

1671. Hearth tax - charged according to the number of hearths. Exemption for those who had not more than two chimneys and little other property. Exemptions were granted to **John Greedy** of Langford Budville and **Mary Greedy** of Wellington. Charged again in 1674: exemptions to **Mary Greedy** of Wellington and **John Greedy** of Stogumber.¹⁴⁰ - In Exeter, **Widow Greedy** (who had six hearths) of St. Lawrence,

¹³⁴ Typed copy of *Devon Protestation Returns* in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹³⁵ T. J. Northy, *A Popular History of Exeter* (1886) pages 97-101.

¹³⁶ Original document (four double-sided skins of parchment) is at the Public Record Office (London) under ref. *Pye v. Greedy* 1652, 813/24 of Chancery Depositions before 1714.

¹³⁷ Digory Greedy's occupation in February 1668-9 is given in the Court of Quarter Sessions records as weaver: ref. 2129M/Q31. Why he is mentioned in the Court's records is unclear.

¹³⁸ *Exeter in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. II, Devon and Cornwall Record Society. Copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹³⁹ *Somerset Wills*, 1st. series (1887) page 83, copied from original manuscript collections of Rev. Frederick Brown - copy in Somerset County Library (reference section) in Bridgwater.

¹⁴⁰ Dwelly's list of persons exempted from this tax: copies in Bristol City Reference Library and the Historical Library for Somerset. The latter also has a copy of Dwelly's *Hearth Tax for Somerset* which contains a list of those who paid. It includes no Greedys but the list is known to be incomplete.

Philipp Greedy, one of the poore of St. Lawrence, **Mrs. Greedy** and **Richard Greedy** of The Close, **Digory Greedy** of St. David, and **John Greedy** of St. Mary the Moores, paid it.¹⁴¹ - In Dorset, **Alexander Greedy** of Wootton Fitzpaine paid 2d. (He was the only Greedy in Dorset to pay this tax.)¹⁴²

Philip Greedye carpenter (apprentice of **Philip Greedye**) became a Freeman of the City of Exeter in 1673; so did **James Greedy** carpenter, (apprentice of **Richard Greedy**) and **Ambrose Greedy** carpenter (son of **Richard Greedy**) both of them in 1681, and also **Richard Greedy**, carpenter (Apprentice of **Ambrose Greedy**) in 1695. Also **Ambrose Greedy**, joiner (son of **Richard Greedy**) in 1761 by succession.¹⁴³

1682: Three women were executed in Exeter for witchcraft.¹⁴⁴

11 April 1705, **Ann Gread** married Thomas Vile in Barnstaple - here is another Gread-and-Vile connection to add to the ones we saw on pages 8 and 16 above.

1722. Wellington. **George Greedy junior** was apprenticed to a soapboiler.¹⁴⁵

1736-91, John Wesley was preaching. In 1739 he preached in Exeter. But he was not without opposition: in 1745 in Exeter, "A mob pelted the Wesleyans with potatoes, mud and dung ... many fled without their hats and wigs ... others were stripped naked and rolled most indecently in the kennel, [i.e. the gutter] their faces besmeared with lampblack, flour and dirt ... and the disturbance was continued till midnight".¹⁴⁶

Records of Wellington Baptist Church:- 1738, **Robert** son of **Robert Greedy** born. 1740, **John** son of **Robert Greedy** born (but **Thomas** son of **Thomas Greedy** was baptised that year in Wellington parish church). 1742-4 **Elizabeth** and **Ann** daughters of **Robert Greedy**, and 1746 **Mary** daughter of **Robert** and **Elizabeth Greedy** born. 1788, **Betty** daughter of **Edward** and **Jane Greedy** born (but buried in 1789). 1793, **Sarah** daughter of **John** and **Elizabeth Greedy** born. 1814 and 1817 **Mary** and **John**, daughter and son of **Robert** and **Anne Greedy** born. 1825, 1826 and 1828 **Edward**, **Elizabeth** and **Mary**, son and daughters of **William** and **Mary Greedy** born.¹⁴⁷

1828, Wellington: **Caroline** daughter of **James** (cordwainer) and **Elizabeth Greedy** baptised. (This is the *only* Greedy baptised at Wellington parish church between 1813 and 1831.)

1793, Fox's weaving factory opened in Wellington.

28th. October 1853, Manor of Wellington Borough, Court Leet & Court Baron: **John Greedy** was appointed Portreeve (equivalent to Mayor).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴¹ *Exeter in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. II, Devon & Cornwall Record Society. Copy in Bristol City Reference Library.

¹⁴² *Dorset Hearth Tax* - copy in Public Record Office in London.

¹⁴³ From *Exeter in the Seventeenth Century* (as in footnote 141 above).

¹⁴⁴ Northy *op. cit.* page 107.

¹⁴⁵ ref. 47/177 in Apprentices' Index at Society of Genealogists, London.

¹⁴⁶ Northy *op. cit.* page 125.

¹⁴⁷ A. L. Humphreys, *History of Wellington* Part IV - "The Baptists" (1914) which contains extracts from the Wellington Baptist Church Register of Births, 1714 - 1837: copy in Somerset County Record Office.

¹⁴⁸ Humphreys *op. cit.* Part II, page 231

Undated: Wellington Baptists (Rockwell Green chapel) **John Greedy** is on the list of former Sunday School Superintendents.¹⁴⁷ - 1906 **Arthur and Caroline Greedy** were members of Wellington Baptist Church, and **A. Greedy** (Arthur, probably) was Treasurer of the Rockwell Green Young People's Society for Christian Endeavour whose 43 active members had held nine open-air meetings and distributed 400 tracts in Rockwell Green and its neighbourhood.¹⁴⁹

1742: first performance of Handel's "Messiah".

12th. April 1776 **John** son of **Edward** and **Mary Greedy** baptised at Bishop's Hull (near Taunton) Independent Chapel.¹⁵⁰

6th. November 1785, **Gul** (*sic*) son of **Annae Greedy** baptised at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Bristol.¹⁵⁰

1789-1799, **Sarah, John, Elizabeth, Abraham** and **Mary Ann**, the children of **John and Elizabeth Greedy** or **Greedy** or **Greedy**, were baptised at St. Martin's Church, Birmingham.¹⁵⁰

12th. June 1800, **Elizabeth** daughter of **Zechariah and Elizabeth Greedy** baptised at Horningsham (Wilts) Independent Chapel.¹⁵⁰

3rd. March 1804, **Thomas Greedy** and Catherine Karghen married at Kirk German, Isle of Man.¹⁵⁰

9th. December 1804, **Ann**, daughter of **Michael and Mary Greedy**, was baptised at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, York Rd., Leeds, Yorkshire.¹⁵⁰

13th. August 1806, **James**, son of **James and Eleanor Greedy**, was baptised at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, York Rd., Leeds, Yorkshire.¹⁵⁰

19th. July 1809, **Henry**, son of **James and Elizabeth Greedy**, was baptised at All Saints' Church, Wakefield, Yorkshire.¹⁵⁰

28th. November 1809, **James**, son of **James and Leonora or Honora Greedy**, was baptised at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, York Rd., Leeds, Yorkshire.¹⁵⁰

16th. June 1610, **Francis Edwin Griddy**, son of **John and Ann Griddy**, was baptised at St. Phillip's Church, Birmingham.¹⁵⁰

21st. January 1812, **Janet**, daughter of **James and Mary Grade or Gread**, was baptised at the High Street Independent Chapel, Gosport, Hampshire.¹⁵⁰

24th. May 1822 (*no place specified*) **Joseph Greed**, Captain in the 52nd. Foot Regiment, died.¹⁵¹

31st. August 1856, **William Perry Greedy**, son of **John Perry Greedy** and **Martha Greedy**, was baptised at St. John's Church in Cardiff.¹⁵⁰

8th. April 1860, **John**, son of **John and Martha Greedy**, was baptised at St. John's Church in Cardiff.¹⁵⁰

26th. July 1870, **Henry Charles Greedy**, son of **Henry** (labourer) and **Elizabeth Greedy**, of Cardiff, was baptised at Wiveliscombe.¹⁵² *Here we have a Greedy living in Cardiff returning to Wiveliscombe to baptise his son.*

¹⁴⁹ *History of Wellington Baptist Church* (1906) - copy in Historical Library for Somerset, Taunton Castle.

¹⁵⁰ Mormon microfiche.

¹⁵¹ Public Record Office at Kew, London: ref. WO42/19, 279 page 68.

¹⁵² Wiveliscombe parish register of baptism.

And finally a Scottish one: 1st. January 1872, **Patrick Greedy** and Margaret Thomson married at Stirling Kilsyth, Scotland.¹⁵⁰

From Wiveliscombe to East Quantoxhead

g.3 Joseph Greedy (baptised 1781). This is **Joseph son of Joseph**. *Or is it?* Identification here is a tiny bit awkward. Let us begin with what we know for certain.

First, what is the connection between Wiveliscombe and East Quantoxhead?

My grandfather (who lived from 1879 to the early 1960s, so I knew him quite well) was born in East Quantoxhead. I have been to the house "Hill View" where he lived. (The house remained in our family for several generations, right up to the 1980s.) His father **George** (my great grandfather, so he is **g.1** on our list) was also born there, and so was George's father **Charles**, who is our **g.2**.

Charles' father Joseph (who is our **g.3**) lived there after he got married in East Quantoxhead in 1805, but he was not born in East Quantoxhead. But **Joseph g.3** lived until 1853, so he appears in East Quantoxhead in the 1851 census, which gives his birthplace as Wiveliscombe. So the Wiveliscombe-and-East-Quantoxhead connection is certain. The Wiveliscombe Registers show him as baptised there in 1781.

But this is where we run into difficulty, because there were *two* Joseph Greedys who were baptised in Wiveliscombe in 1781, within two months of each other. The Wiveliscombe register shows:-

13th. March 1781 Joseph son of Joseph and Ann Greedy baptised.

13th. May 1781 Joseph son of Matthew and Ann Greedy baptised.

Which of these is our young Joseph who moved to East Quantoxhead? If he is the March one, our line is correct, because his father, in that case, is old Joseph the carpenter whom we have seen as our **g.4** on page 26 above. But how do we know that our young Joseph is not the May one? This the problem which we must now tackle.

By 1781 there were just too many Wiveliscombe Greedys for us to be easily able to form a clear picture - and later it becomes even more difficult, because by the time of the 1851 census there were 79 Greedys in Wiveliscombe, of whom eight were called John and seven were called William. But only two of the 79 (namely a John aged 22 in 1851 and a William aged 51¹⁵³) were described as carpenters.¹⁵⁴ Most of the other men were agricultural labourers - other than Joseph Greedy aged 70, innkeeper, who appears to be the *other* Joseph baptised in 1781 - the one who did not move to East Quantoxhead. This other Joseph married a girl called Anne Burge in Wiveliscombe in 1805, and the innkeeper's wife's name is given in the census as Ann. They had a son, John, born in 1805.

So if Joseph the son of Matthew is the one who went to East Quantoxhead, and if Joseph the son of Joseph is the one who married Anne Burge, there is just a ghost of a chance that I am descended from Matthew and not Joseph **g.4** the carpenter. (If this

¹⁵³ This William was a nephew of Joseph g.3 - he was the eldest son of Joseph's brother James.

¹⁵⁴ To be exact, William is described as joiner master.

is so, we can take our line no further back, because Matthew seems to have come to Wiveliscombe from somewhere else, so we know nothing of his background or his occupation.) But I don't think this is the case. There are three clues, one in East Quantoxhead and the other two in Wiveliscombe, which lead me to conclude that our young Joseph who went to East Quantoxhead is the March one, the son of old Joseph g.4 the carpenter.

The **first clue** is in young Joseph's occupation in East Quantoxhead. Although he is described as a labourer in the East Quantoxhead parish registers, he was associated with Samuel Lockyear the East Quantoxhead village carpenter and shared a piece of land with him. Young Joseph knew carpentry. Here is the evidence:-

Luttrell Estate Papers - book headed "*Quantoxhead*".¹⁵⁵ (It has no other heading but appears to be a list of all tenants' holdings. The document is undated but was presumably drawn up after the Tithe Act of 1836, which said that tithe had to be paid in money instead of in goods. Most parishes drew up a list like this, together with a Tithe Map, between 1837 and 1840.)

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>roods</u>	<u>perches</u>	Rentcharge payable to <u>Rector</u>
Joseph Greedy, occupier:-				
221- Two (<i>sic</i>) dwellings ¹⁵⁶				
222 and garden		1	8 ¹⁵⁷	
Plot from common			<u>36</u>	
		<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	2s. 6d.
Joseph Greedy & Samuel Lockyear, occupiers:-				
391 Plot from common	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>12</u>	4s. 7d.

A two-page sheet of paper inserted into the above item and headed, "Summary of East Quantoxhead Tithe Rentcharges", says,

<u>Landowner</u>	<u>Occupier</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>roods</u>	<u>perches</u>	Rentcharge payable to <u>Rector</u>
John F. Luttrell Esq. ¹⁵⁸	{ Joseph Greedy & Samuel Lockyear }	1	1	12	4s. 7d.
	Joseph Greedy			36	9d.
			1	8	1s. 9d.

That is half of our first clue. Now for the second half, which comes from an earlier document than what we have just seen:-

¹⁵⁵ Luttrell Estate Papers at the Somerset County Record Office, ref. DD/L shelf 15 no. 81.

¹⁵⁶ Possibly the second, adjacent to the first, may have been for his son Charles, who married in 1839.

¹⁵⁷ There are 40 perches in a rood, and 4 roods in an acre. In modern measurements, there are 2.47 acres in a hectare.

¹⁵⁸ The Luttrell family owned (and still owns) the whole of East Quantoxhead parish. It has been in their family for more than nine hundred years. Their ancestor Ralph Pagnell is shown as proprietor of this land in the *Domesday Book* (1086) (Text 1311 in the Phillimore edition of the Somerset Domesday).

The *East Quantoxhead Churchwardens' Accounts*¹⁵⁹ contain the following entries (and here is the evidence that Lockyear was a carpenter):-

Lady Day

- 1821-2 Paid Samuel Lockyear 6s. 8d. (33p) for putting in 4 posses (*posts*) and making the wicket (*gate*)
- 1824-5 Paid Samuel Lockyear £1 1s. 8d. (£1 08p) for making new gates and posts.
- 1825-6 Paid **Joseph Greedy** bill 14s. 10d. (74p). (*It doesn't say what for! So this may be a spurious connection. But there is no doubt that Greedy and the carpenter Lockyear shared a piece of land, as we have just seen.*)

This entry is the only reference to Greedy in the East Quantoxhead Churchwardens' Accounts.

The **second clue** - a Wiveliscombe one - comes to us thanks to the Emperor Napoleon. In 1805, Britain was in fear of an invasion by the French. (The Battle of Trafalgar was in October 1805.) And there is a record, dated 1803-5, of the Wiveliscombe "Corps of Volunteer Infantry" preparing for the threatened invasion by Napoleon's troops. It has two lists:-¹⁶⁰

In the first list, the list of Pioneers (*i.e. labourers*) it includes

James Greedy, carpenter of Ford,
Joseph Greedy, carpenter of Ford,
William Greedy, carpenter of Ford.

(Ford is a hamlet in the northern part of Wiveliscombe parish.)

These appear to be three of old Joseph's four sons.¹⁶¹ Also on the list we find

Thomas Greedy, husbandman of Cuckold's Corner, Wiveliscombe. who may *possibly* be old g.4 Joseph's other son.

It is not clear whether the second list was made at the same time as the first, or later. Both are dated 1803-5. The second list is the list of Infantry. Confusingly, this list has *three* Thomas Greedys (a carpenter, a weaver and a labourer) but the individuals of particular relevance to us on this list are these:-

William Greedy, carpenter of Ford,
James Greedy, carpenter of Ford,
Thomas Greedy, carpenter of Church Street, Wiveliscombe.

Why is our young Joseph not on this second list, although his brothers are? I suggest that the reason may be that he has gone off to East Quantoxhead, where he married Sarah White in October 1805.

As a teenager, Sarah had probably seen the two strange men who used to walk over the Quantock hills in 1797. They were widely suspected of being French agents, spying for Napoleon: but in fact they were the poets Coleridge and Wordsworth. But she could not have read their poems, and nor could young Joseph - because instead of

¹⁵⁹ The account book is at the Somerset County Record Office, ref. D/P/qua. e. 4/1/5 (C/3146).

¹⁶⁰ Both lists appear to come from a document (or possibly two separate documents) at the Somerset County Record Office, but the details of the reference (or references) have been lost.

¹⁶¹ See page 26 above or page 36 below for the list of old Joseph g.4's children.

signing the Marriage Register, both of them made a mark: so it seems that this line of the Greedy family ceased to be literate, just at the time when education was becoming more widely available. Probably they could not afford to pay for the lessons.

There were too many carpenters and not enough work. We saw that young Joseph's grandfather William g.5 had seven children:- **Thomas** (1734-5, but he died, one year old) **Elizabeth** (1738-9) **Joan** (1740) **James** (1743) another **Thomas** (1746, but he died aged twenty) **Joseph** (1749 - he is our g.4) and **William** (1754). We saw, on page 26 above, that James and Joseph g.4 were carpenters.

Joseph g.4 also had seven children:- **Charlotte** (1772) **James** (1774) **Thomas** (1777) **William** (February 1780, but he was buried a week later) **Joseph** (1781, who is our g.3) another **William** (1785) and **Sarah** (1793), and the 1803-5 "Volunteers" lists (above) show James, Joseph and William (and a Thomas in Church Street who may or may not be our Thomas) as carpenters.

So this was the problem that young **Joseph** our g.3 had to face. He was a carpenter. His father was a carpenter. His brothers James and William and probably Thomas were carpenters. His uncle James was a carpenter. And in Wiveliscombe there was no work for them. Just at the time when the Enclosure Acts were resulting in the village labourers losing their rights over vast amounts of common land, the Industrial Revolution meant that the labourers' wives were losing a major source of income as the woollen cloth industry moved from Somerset to Yorkshire, where there was coal to power the steam engines driving the machines for the new factories. Wiveliscombe was financially in dire straits. Hardly anyone among the ordinary people (as distinct from the gentry) could afford to employ carpenters for anything at all.

So what was to be done? One answer seemed to be to walk the ten miles to the harbour at Watchet and embark on a ship for South Wales, to find work there in Cardiff docks or in the South Wales coalfield. Years later, one of young Joseph's great nephews (John Perry Greedy) apparently did just that (along with others, which may help to explain why today there are more Greedys in the phone book under "Cardiff" than under "Wiveliscombe"). Here are the details:- Young Joseph's brother James married in 1796 and had three daughters and two sons. James' eldest son William (baptised in 1799) married Sarah Perry in 1827. William and Sarah remained in Wiveliscombe, and William appears in the Wiveliscombe Marriage Register and also in the 1851 census as a carpenter:¹⁶² but their eldest son John Perry Greedy went to Cardiff, and *his* two sons were baptised at St. John's church in Cardiff in 1856 and 1860, as we saw on page 32 above.

If young Joseph went to Watchet, the ship sailed without him. He found work as a farm labourer in East Quantoxhead (four miles east of Watchet) and married a girl from that village named **Sarah White**.¹⁶³

¹⁶² Carpenter in the Marriage Register; joiner master in the census.

¹⁶³ The Vicar entered the bride's name in the register as Mary (which was her mother's name) although the mark which the bride made as her signature is stated to be "the mark of Sarah White". As both Sarah and Joseph signed by making a mark, it seems that neither of them could read well enough to know that the Vicar had made a mistake.

Returning for a moment to Ford, to young Joseph's two brothers (James and William) who remained there, we find both of them receiving "legacy money" (8s. 6d. each) in 1824. (This was their share in a £20 legacy given to "the oldest people in Wiveliscombe Parish who had not received Parish Relief for the past two years".)¹⁶⁴ We can note that Joseph is not there. - There are further intermittent payments to James and William, from various charities, but nothing to James after 1835, so he may have died then. - The later position regarding William becomes confused because the records do not adequately distinguish between the three William Greedys who received payments.¹⁶⁵

There is one further clue as to young Joseph's identity, but it must be admitted that this **third clue** is a weak one. It is the name John, which we have not seen among the carpenter Greedys¹⁶⁶ for a couple of generations. (We last saw it with Joseph g.4's grandfather, John g.6, who appears to have died in 1733, so Joseph g.4 who was born in 1749 would not have known him.) - Trying to show a family connection by comparison of names can take us into deep water. To start with, in 1777 when old Joseph g.4 and Ann had their son Thomas, Matthew and Ann also produced a son and called him Thomas. But a pattern (of a sort) *does* emerge:-

Matthew and Ann eventually had five children: Thomas (1777) John (1779) Joseph and Benjamin (1781 - probably twins) and Robert (1785). Now think about this Joseph of 1781. His brother John was just two years older than he, so Joseph may have felt closer to John than he did to Thomas (who was four years older) or to Robert (who was four years younger). - Next, think about the Joseph of 1781 whom we saw as an innkeeper on page 33 above - the Joseph who did not move away to East Quantoxhead but married Anne Burge in Wiveliscombe in 1805. Is this the same Joseph? This Joseph and Anne had one son - and they called him John. The name fits the Matthew-and-Ann family pattern - they named him after his uncle - and does not fit the Joseph-and-Ann family pattern. So, if this 1781 Joseph who did not go to East Quantoxhead is the son of Matthew, the other 1781 Joseph - the son of Joseph g.4 the carpenter - is the one who went to East Quantoxhead.

There is no conclusive proof: but all three clues point in the same direction.

Joseph and Sarah married in East Quantoxhead on 16th. October 1805 (it was just five days before the Battle of Trafalgar) and their first child, **Ann**, was baptised the following August. Next they had a son, **Charles Greedy**, who was baptised in October 1808 - he is our g.2 - and then **Sarah** (1812), **Charlotte** (1815) and **Mary** (1818).

Joseph died on 20th. January in 1853, which was a bad year for the East Quantoxhead Greedys. On 6th. June of the same year, Joseph's widow Sarah died, and just six weeks later their son **Charles** (our g.2) died, as we shall see in our next paragraph.

¹⁶⁴ From records of the Wiveliscombe "Overseers of Gift Money" at the Somerset County Record Office.

¹⁶⁵ One of these was the William Greedy who married Sarah Perry. He is described as a carpenter until 1871, when his name is crossed out and Sarah's is written in, so presumably he had just died.

¹⁶⁶ "The carpenter Greedys" is an awkward phrase, but is it not preferable to "the Greedy carpenters"?

g.2 Charles Greedy (baptised 1808 in East Quantoxhead) got married to **Mary Saunders** in East Quantoxhead on 31st. December 1839. The Marriage Register describes him as a labourer. Their son **George Greedy** (our g.1) was baptised on 17th. May 1840 - another quick gestation! - but on 19th. July 1853 Charles died (of typhus) aged 44, just twenty-seven days after he and Mary had their second child, **Sarah Ann**. (Mary later had another daughter, Emma, in 1856.)

How the names Charles and George came into the family line, I do not know. Perhaps in each case the child was named after one of the wife's relatives. Or perhaps the tradition of naming children after members of the family was fading away.¹⁶⁷

g.1 George Greedy or Greed (baptised 1840). (He is Greedy in the Parish Burials Register but Greed on his gravestone: they never did sort it out!) This is my great grandfather. He was never a carpenter. He worked for the West Quantoxhead baker,¹⁶⁸ but his apprenticeship (assuming he had one) came to a sudden end when his father died in 1853. So thirteen-year-old George went to work as a labourer at Court Farm in East Quantoxhead, and he continued to work there for fifty-five years. On 29th. September 1866 he married **Mary Griffith Winter** at Dodington, a tiny village between East Quantoxhead and Bridgwater, and they had three sons, **Arthur Greed** (1871) **Ernest Greed** (1876) and **Joseph Greedy** (1879) and four daughters, **Rosanna** (August 1867 but she died aged ten months) a second **Rosanna** (1869) **Annie** (1873, known as Nance) and **Ellen** (1883, known as Nell). (I have been told that if George registered the birth himself, the child was registered as Greedy; but if his wife **Mary** made the registration, she said the name was Greed.)

In September 1908, the thatched roof of their cottage "Hill View" caught fire. Mr. Geoffrey Luttrell (their landlord) summoned the villagers: and under the direction of his son Captain Luttrell one team of villagers fought the fire, while another stripped thatch from the roof to make a "firebreak" between the burning portion and the rest of the roof. A message was sent to Williton asking for the services of the fire engine, which arrived within the hour¹⁶⁹ but the villagers had put the fire out by the time it arrived. Mr. Luttrell gave the family temporary accommodation in another cottage which happened to be vacant, in the village. It is believed that the fire was caused by a spark from the chimney of a passing traction engine.¹⁷⁰ - As can be seen in the photograph on page 40 below, "Hill View" today has a tiled roof.

¹⁶⁷ My grandparents tried to keep the tradition alive by using *second* names for my father and his three brothers. Thus, my father was Clifford *Charles* Greed, his first brother was Francis *Joseph* Greed, and the next was Ronald *George* Greed. For the fourth son they had run out of names (not knowing the family history as far back as William g.5) and so the baby became Norman *Bowtell* Greed, Bowtell being his mother's maiden name. - Ronald was baptised in East Quantoxhead. The other three were baptised in Porlock, where my grandfather was the police constable at that time, and in each of their three cases, the surname was given in the Register of Baptisms as Greedy, but the "y" was later crossed out in a different colour ink.

¹⁶⁸ Information from 1851 census.

¹⁶⁹ Today it would be regarded as a poor turnout if Williton fire brigade were not on the scene (four miles from the fire station) within about ten minutes.

¹⁷⁰ From the report in the *West Somerset Free Press* newspaper, 19th. September 1908.

George was buried in East Quantoxhead churchyard in November 1914; Mary lived until 1928. - All three of their sons (**Arthur**, **Ernest** and **Joseph**) were Somerset police constables, and Joseph was promoted to sergeant after he was awarded the King's Police Medal for arresting an armed murderer in 1913.

Ernest had one son, **Reginald**, who became the Director of Bristol Zoo, and **Reginald** had one son, **Geoffrey** who also became Director of Bristol Zoo. **Geoffrey** is now retired. He is married but has no children.

Joseph had four sons, **Clifford** (my father) **Francis**, **Ronald** and **Norman**. **Clifford** followed in his father's footsteps in becoming a police sergeant; and from 1945 to 1946 he was the sergeant stationed at Wiveliscombe - returning to our historical roots, though at that time we did not realise it. Later, he was sergeant at **Williton**, so East Quantoxhead was within the section for which he was responsible.

All four of **Joseph's** sons were married - and the only offspring they managed to produce was **John** (1937) that is to say, myself! **Joseph** had four sons and yet he had only one grandchild. And, like **Geoffrey**, I am married (and retired) but have no children.

Arthur had one son, **Percy**, who became a headmaster and was the Mayor of **Devizes** in **Wiltshire**. He had one son, **Peter** who was a schoolmaster until his retirement. **Peter** has two daughters (**Petra** and **Paula**) and a son, **Glenn Greed PhD**, who works for the Meteorological Office in **Exeter**. **Glenn** and his wife have a daughter, and are expecting another child this November. If it is a son, the name of **Greed** in this branch of the family will continue. So the last line of this paragraph is still unwritten.

Nov. 2008: it's a boy! - to be named Edward.

And whether the child is a son or a daughter, he or she will be able to look back on 440 years of family history (right back to **Robert Greedie** in 1565, and probably longer)¹⁷¹ in which every generation has been born in lawful wedlock.

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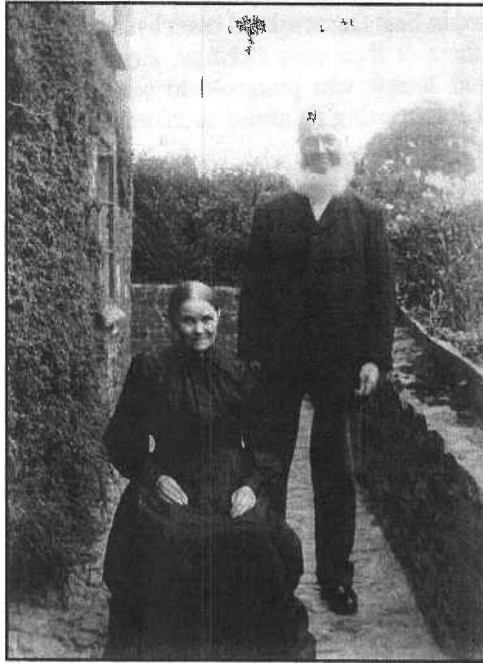
John Greed PhD,
September 2008.

A final note, to anyone named **Greed** or **Greedie** into whose hands these notes may come:- Unless you are descended from my great grandfather (in which case we already know each other) you are a very distant relative indeed. My great grandfather **George g.1** had no brothers, and his father **Charles g.2** had no brothers. So the nearest you can be is a descendant of one of **Joseph g.3's** brothers. It is likely that (for example) there are **Greedys** in **Cardiff** who come into this category.

Further copies of these notes may be obtained from **John Greed** at "St. Trillo", 92, Hillside Road, Redcliffe Bay, Portishead, Bristol BS20 8LJ. - A donation of £1 to cover the cost of postage etc. would be appreciated.

Grede.003

¹⁷¹ It is a full 500 years if the assumptions made on page 17 above are correct.



My great grandparents George and Mary Greedy in the garden of their cottage "Hill View" in East Quantoxhead.

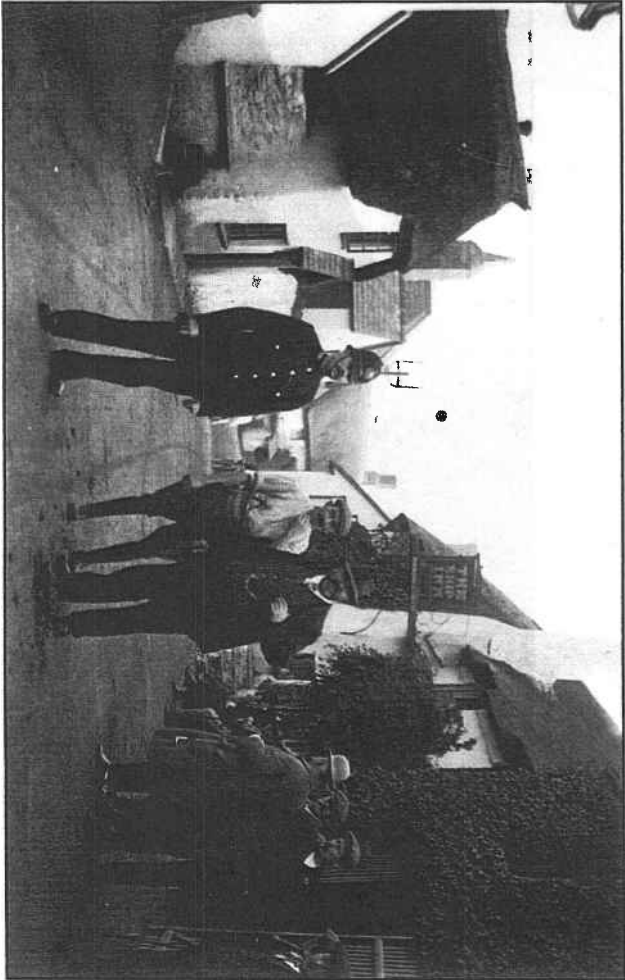


John Greed with his parents walking along the sea front



Joseph Greedy (1914)

Kings Police Medal



Sergeant Joseph Greed at East Quantoxhead 1913