

Christopher & Thomas of Sherington  
by Anne Holmes

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I shall study what you have sent already. A quick glance indicates that the line from John to Thomas to Christopher (d 1589) is a strong possibility. Now Christopher (1589) had a son named Thomas, and our American Christopher, if indeed from Bedford which is near Sherington, had a father named Thomas.

I do not know any Holymans from Cuddington. We have done DNA tests here in the States and yes, I am descended from Christopher Holyman, Sr. (1618-1691) who arrived in Jamestown, Virginia in 1650.

Could I employ you to find a male descendant from any Holyman clan in Buckinghamshire area? Is this a difficult task? Ideally two or three as somewhere along the line one might have been born on the wrong side of the bed.

Let me study this, and I shall see you soon. We sail on the QM2 October 28th, and will be in the Cotswolds by Nov. 4th. I shall have email contact and will be in touch confirming again our meeting when we get closer.

Please give me your DNA advice.

Many Thanks,  
Glenn

Dear Glenn

Lunch on the 8th would be good. I look forward to it.

I have had a closer look at the Wills photographed last week and also a couple of others I downloaded from the National Archive website at the weekend. The PCC Wills from the National Archives have thrown up some interesting findings.

Firstly, back to the *Will of Christopher HOLLYMAN of Sherington*: Christopher singles out his daughter Usselly or Ursula. He bequests £33 - 6s - 8d to her, the same amount as the bequests to his other two daughters. However, Christopher states that the bequest to Ursula is made ...*Provided that my daughter Usselly shall not make any claime of any portion of mony or goodes that was given unto her by her Grandmother..*

Q; Why was Usselly / Ursula singled out by her grandmother? Was Usselly the eldest daughter, named after her grandmother, and did the grandmother die before the other daughters were born, hence this single bequest to Usselly by her grandmother?

Christopher named his 'Brother' Mr Thomas LEE as Overseer of his Will. This statement suggests Thomas LEE was either his wife's brother or perhaps the husband of one of his sisters.

I looked at the Will of Thomas LEE of Dinton (ref: PROB 11/54) who died c1572. Dinton is very close to Cuddington. This Thomas LEE was also connected to the later LEE family of Hartwell House. The beneficiaries of the Will of this Thomas LEE were as follows:

Wife: Ursula

Son : Thomas

Daughters: Margaret, Barbara, Mary and Elizabeth (all unmarried at that date-1572).

Did Margaret LEE, daughter of Thomas LEE, marry Christopher HOLLYMAN shortly after her father's death? If so, this would have made Ursula LEE, the grandmother of Usselly (Ursula) HOLLYMAN and Thomas LEE jr. Christopher's brother in law..

I also looked at the Will of John HOLLYMAN of London (ref: PROB 11/60) who died c 1578. This turned out to be the Will of the brother of Christopher HOLLYMAN of Sherington. John did not marry, or perhaps any wife and children had not survived. The beneficiaries of the Will of this John HOLLYMAN were as follows:

Brother: George HOLLYMAN (lands in Haddenham, Bucks bequeathed to George)

Sister: Katherine GREEN

Nephew: John HOLLYMAN, son of brother Christopher HOLLYMAN

Also mentioned is Elizabeth LEE, although no relationship to John HOLLYMAN is stated.

The nephew of John HOLLYMAN mentioned here is obviously John the eldest son of Christopher HOLLYMAN as named in Christopher's Will. This indicates, with the other evidence found, that siblings Christopher, George and John HOLLYMAN, Katherine GREEN and perhaps Elizabeth LEE also, were the children of the Thomas HOLLYMAN of Cuddington who died c 1558.

The evidence may also indicate that John HOLLYMAN, eldest son of Christopher, was born sometime between 1572 and 1578 (i.e. if Christopher did marry Margaret LEE). Thomas HOLLYMAN, son of Christopher, was probably born after 1578, and his Uncle's death, not to be mentioned in his Uncle's Will. I note, from your HOLLIMAN blog you are looking for a John HOLLYMAN, born c1572. John HOLLYMAN, eldest son of Christopher, is a possible candidate.

In addition, I have had a closer look at the Wikipedia article on the LEE family of Hartwell House. I note it states there General Robert E. LEE is connected to the LEE family of Hartwell. However, other information on the Internet suggest Robert E. LEE is connected to a different LEE family. It is interesting though that the first American ancestor of General LEE settled in Virginia as did your ancestor Christopher HOLLYMAN. I think these facts may warrant further investigation as it appears a positive ancestry for Robert E. LEE has not been fully confirmed.

The previous client I researched the HOLLYMAN family for was female, so can be ruled out regarding a DNA test. I will do a bit of background research to ascertain the possibility of tracing a living direct male descendant of the Cuddington HOLLYMANS. I also note a HOLLIMAN DNA

- Green  
in  
London?

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John of  
Terry



Any other queries about the Wills or the transcripts or other information provided, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Anne

P.S. I had another look at the National Burials Index again yesterday afternoon and found the burial of a Thomas HOLEMAN, 20 April 1627, at Woburn St. Mary, Bedford. This may be the Thomas, son of John HOLEMAN, who was baptised in Woburn, Beds in 1576.

*Important*

Anne,

In reviewing the materials I note a John Holeman, a shoemaker, died 1618 from Newport Pagnell. His father is listed as William. Hmm...could this John be a distant relative of our Thomas Holyman of Bedford? As Thomas's father, Christopher of Sherington, located a few miles from Newport Pagnell, died in 1588, could Thomas, after schooling, have learned a trade from John Holeman?

Then our Thomas moved on to Bedford to work his trade and marry Ellen Poynard? Or was Thomas of Bedford a son of this John Holeman?! Do you have any further information on this John of Newport Pagnell? Thomas the shoemaker, the son of John the shoemaker? That works....

Glenn

Reply Forward

Anne Good Morning Glenn It was lovely to meet you and Barbara Holmes yesterday. We were s... 6:53 AM (22 hours ago)

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Anne 6:53 AM (22 hours ago)

Holmes

Loading...

Anne Holmes 6:53 AM (22 hours ago)

to me

Good Morning Glenn

Feb 20 13

Thomas HOLYMAN  
of F Bedford  
& Sherington

Dear Glenn

Thank you for the pictures.

We have lost all the snow here for now. I must admit I do love the snow when it has just fallen. It has a stillness and beauty about it. We get more here, when it does come, in the Chiltern Hills, as we are further above sea level than the surrounding countryside. It is quite strange when we have snow here in the village, to put on our snow boots, go down the valley in to the nearest town and find little or no snow in the town at all. We arrive, therefore, sometimes, decidedly overdressed! And it is always nice to see the first crocuses, a reminder Spring is just around the corner.

In answer to your question about sons who did not inherit land from their father: the Church or the Army would have been respectable career choices for such sons. Alternatively, they may have chosen to become Yeoman farmers, perhaps like their fathers, seeking out the tenancy of a farm from a neighbouring landowner. The other choice, if they were educated may have been some kind of civil service role or perhaps the Law. A tradesman's occupation may not have been the first choice, but even so trade occupations can vary in social status. Inn holder too varied regarding social class. There were the high status inns, the big coaching inns that were held by landowners or there were the more lowly ale houses with perhaps just one or two rooms for boarders.

Thomas HOLYMAN did not own the Blue Boar Inn. The inn was itself was owned by Caldwell Priory until the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s. Caldwell Priory and its land and properties were sold into private ownership sometime in the 1560s, therefore who ever owned the Priory in the mid sixteenth century owned the Blue Boar Inn. I believe the Inn was bought by a brewery company in the nineteenth century. Thomas HOLYMAN would have bought the lease of the Boar Boar Inn for a terms of years. In 1640, it looks as though Thomas is relinquishing this lease for the sum of £40 to Richard BROWNE and his wife. Whilst lessee of the Blue Boar Inn Thomas may have had to pay an annual rent to the landowner, that is the owner of Caldwell Priory. His occupation as Cordwainer may have been a second trade to generate more income for his family.

Primogeniture, that is the law or custom that the firstborn son inherits the entire estate, was inevitably unfair on the younger children in the family. Going back to the Will of Thomas HOLYMAN d 1558, the adult sons living at the time of Thomas' death all appear to have inherited some land. The younger children, including Christopher, did not receive such financially beneficial bequests, most likely because they were under the age of twenty one years. Therefore, Christopher was already at a disadvantage financially and possibly why he joined the Queens Guard. He had to earn a living in some way and the army, especially the Queen's Guard would have been a respectable choice. When Christopher himself died all his children were under twenty one and were left just modest financial bequests, so you can see that if an individual was a younger son or a daughter (unless she made a good marriage) the system was not advantageous to you. We have a prime example here in the UK regarding the descendants related to Richard III.

I do not know if you have been following the Richard III story in Leicester but one of the only living descendants that could be found of Richard's sister was a Cabinet Maker living in London. Many more generations in between, I know, but as the generations passed the connection to aristocracy had been lost.



I have been trying to find out a little about the status of the Queen's Guard in the Tudor period. In 1587 Sir Walter RALEIGH was made Captain of the Queen's Guard therefore the Queen's Guard possibly a more prestigious group than the usual soldier's unit. They were close to the monarch and therefore possibly part of her personal bodyguard. Christopher's family connections may have enabled him to enrol in the Queen's Guard. When you visit the UK next you may want to look through the Tudor Muster Rolls at the National Archives to see if there is additional information about Christopher HOLYMAN of Sherington. I think the fact that you picked up Christopher died in the year of the battle of the Spanish Armada is intriguing. More information about Tudor Muster Rolls can be found at

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/armed-forces-1522-1914.htm>

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Anne