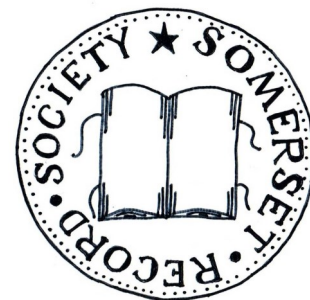


# OFF THE RECORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOMERSET RECORD SOCIETY

ISSUE 3: SUMMER 2021



## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the third edition of Off the Record. As the country slowly emerges from the lockdowns of the past year I am pleased to say that volume 99, *Somerset Remedies & Recipes in the 17th and 18th centuries*, is at the printers and should be with you by the end of July. It promises to be an interesting volume drawing on household records. A taste of what to expect from the volume can be found overleaf.

Council met again virtually at the end of March to discuss progress toward the publication of next volumes, including Volume 99 and 100. They also decided that as we have not been able to meet in person over the last year it would be fitting to organise an official launch for Volume 99, which will be held at Wellington School on Saturday 24th July. More details of the launch are opposite.

The website continues to go from strength to strength. Over the next few months we will be developing the site to include the function to order and purchase publications direct from the website as well as the option to sign up as a member online. To keep an eye out for these updates please visit the website at [somersetrecordsociety.org.uk](http://somersetrecordsociety.org.uk) and click on 'Publications' or 'Membership'.

Also, over the next year we hope to make more of our Society's earlier publications available online to make the study of Somerset's history more widely available. Currently the first 35 volumes are available on [archive.org](http://archive.org) which can also be accessed through the publications page on our website.

As well as volume 99, we also hope to bring you volume 100 *Somerset Records: Past, Present, & Future*, this Autumn, of which there will be more information in the next issue of *Off the Record*, as well as details of the AGM.

I look forward to seeing you at the launch of Volume 99 on Saturday 24th July.

*Emma Down, Off the Record Editor*

## LAUNCH OF VOLUME 99 *SOMERSET REMEDIES & RECIPES IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES*

Volume 99 will be officially launched at the ARC Hall at Wellington School on Saturday 24th July. Doors will be open from 2pm with the launch beginning at 2.30pm. There is free parking next to the ARC Hall. The address is:

The Alan Rogers Centre (ARC), Wellington School, South Street, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 8NT.



*The ARC Hall, Wellington School*

During the launch Andrew Butcher will give a presentation of the background to the volume, discussing how the original manuscripts fitted into the transformation of scientific thinking taking place in the late 17th century, as well as day-to-day life in contemporary households.

Members will be able to collect their copies of Volume 99 at the launch and there will also be the opportunity to purchase additional copies of the volume, as well as other Record Society publications.

All are welcome to the launch for which there is no charge. If you would like to attend please email us at [secretary@somersetrecordsociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@somersetrecordsociety.org.uk) by Monday 19th July so we can ensure that our covid safety measures are in place.

## FORTHCOMING VOLUME – SRS 99

Our editor, Andrew F Butcher, gives us an insight into what we can expect in Volume 99 which will be out later this month.

The next volume of the Somerset Record Society to be published is number 99, entitled *Somerset Remedies & Recipes in the 17th and 18th centuries*. This volume contains transcripts of four manuscripts and commentary on them and their historical significance:

1) 'Elizabeth Clarke her booke, 1665' (SHC DD\SF/9/4/1); 2) 'Maddam Mrs Cole Her Receipt Booke' (SHC DD\SF/9/4/6); 3) 'Book of Recipes, c.1700' (Harbin) SHC DD\HN/3/2/2); and 'Recipes & Remedies Miscellaneous' (SHC DD\SF/9/4/2) .

Unlike any other previous SRS volumes, *Remedies and Recipes* contains a combination of materials not otherwise found together: based upon surviving household documents, on scientific medical materials and methods on culinary preparations, collected and organised by women in the Clarke (Chipleigh Park), Cole, and Harbin (Newton Surmaville) volumes, and, probably, similarly the work of women in the *Recipes & Remedies Miscellaneous*. The Cole and Harbin collections are deliberate and substantial, consisting of 77 medical remedies and 7 culinary (Cole) and 220 medical and 22 culinary (Harbin). As for the *Recipes & Remedies Miscellaneous*, they are significantly comprised of 252 culinary and only 21 medical items. But by far the most substantial and important is Elizabeth Clarke's, containing 310 carefully organised, classified, and even indexed medical remedies (see accompanying image), as well as 13 culinary recipes interleaved later.

To emphasize the importance of the role of women in their households in the production of these documents is undoubtedly correct but it is also useful

understand the remedies and recipes as being part of a network of specialised knowledge transmitted by oral and literate means. Each of the collections includes the known names of particular remedies (e.g. Gaskin's Powder, Captain Greene's Water, Doctor Gwins devise, Lady Rutland's pomatum, the cure of consumption by the Phisitions in London, my Lady Rochesters cordial for the Rickets, Paracelsus Plaister good for any wound, and D. Paris's Pultis for swelling of knees, etc.). Collectively, remedies and recipes included special concoctions by contemporary apothecaries, doctors, Lords and Ladies of the aristocracy, and aunts, uncles, cousins and other kin, as well as those chosen from contemporary, historic and ancient printed works, and many of the remedies and recipes went borrowed but unattributed, often recommended through letters received from friends and relations.

At the same time, it is critical to recognise that these manuscript books were in part the product of a mid to late 17th century scientific revolution which was transforming medical and other scientific knowledge and practice (see C. Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform, 1626-1660*, 2nd edition, 2002). Examination of the remedies in Clarke, Cole, and Harbin shows a detailed knowledge of the ethnobotany of British plants and of their chemical properties as well as techniques of medical preparation and application, a knowledge based on analytical experimentation and empirical observation (a knowledge included in SRS99 in a detailed 'Glossary'). Side by side with quasi-magical and traditional folk practices (see "An Oyntment of Swallows" in Cole) the practical applications in Clarke, Cole, Harbin, and *Remedies and Recipes* provide a vivid social history of 17th and early 18th century Somerset.

Andrew F Butcher, Editor



Extract from "Elizabeth Clarke her booke, 1665" (SHC DD/SF/9/4/1) with remedies for Aches, Agues, bruises, Balms, Belly, Back, Brest, Cramp, Collicke, Canker, Dropsy, Eyes, Fundament and Fever.

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(Image not be reproduced without the permission of the South West Heritage Trust)

## THE WILL OF EDWARD FRIPP, 1680

*Colin Brett transcribes the will of Edward Fripp which appeared in a Chancery court case over leased lands in Norton St Philip.*

Edward Fripp came from a Wiltshire family and was born in Chitterne before 1616. He married Mary Mereweather there in about 1647 (International Genealogical Index) and had children, of which Benjamin, Mary, Dorothy, Richard, Elizabeth and Edward survived to adulthood. On 5 June 1665 an indenture was drawn up by Sir Edward Hungerford of Farleigh Hungerford Castle for the lease of a major part of Norton Grange in Norton St. Philip for 99 years to Richard Crouch of Titherington, Wilts. and John Fry of Tilshead, Wilts. The lease was to start on Lady Day 1666 and was in the names of Benjamine, Richard and Edward who were described as the sons of Edward Fripp the elder of Boreham, Wilts. (The National Archives, Chancery Proceedings, C 5/320/1 sheet 3).

The Fripp family moved to Norton St. Philip where they would have lived in the 'Capital Messuage & Farmhouse belonging to the Farme of Norton St Phillips'. Edward's wife Mary died and was buried at Norton St. Philip on 17 March 1674/5 (Somerset Heritage Centre, D/P/n.ph 2/1/1, parish register) and on 4 November 1680 Edward made his last will and testament, nominating Benjamine as executor. Edward died shortly after and was buried on 3 December 1680 at Norton St. Philip. (SHC, D/P/n.ph 2/1/2, parish register). Benjamine, described as a clothier, together with a John Hodges, became embroiled as defendants in a dispute with Joseph Hodges the elder and Joseph Hodges the younger, over a part of the leased lands. The case was heard in Chancery in January 1704/5 and amongst the voluminous recording of the answer of John Hodges and Benjamine Fripp to the Bill of Joseph Hodges the elder and Joseph Hodges the younger, Edward's will was quoted verbatim. (TNA, C 5/320/1 sheet 3).

The Last Will and Testament of Edward Fripp the elder dated 4 November 1680 is transcribed below. Editorial punctuation and bequest numerals have been added. The use of synoptical **bold** type will enable the reader to assimilate the essence of the will.

**I Edward Fripp the elder of Norton St Phillips** in the county of Somerett being att the present through the mercy of the Lord of sound and perfect minde and memory **doe make** ordaine **this my last will and Testament** in manner following,

**1. first I give and bequeath** All that ground called **Sheepe house meade with the Barne** theron standing. **And** all that part of the ground called **Chatley furlong that is sowne with French grass** with all rights, members, appurtenances **parcell of the**

**Farme which I hold by Lease from Sir Edward Hungerford and others in Norton** aforesaid **unto my** Trusty and loveing freind and **brother in law Christopher Meriweather** of Warminster in the County of Wiltes Gent, and to my Trusty and loveing freind Mr **Robert Sloper** of Norton aforesaid, Mr **Joseph Houlton** and Mr **Richard Skinner** of Trowbridge in the said County of Wiltes., their Executors, Administrators and assignes **for** and dureing all **such** Estate and **terme as I shall have** therein to come &unexpired **at the time of my decease**. Nevertheless upon Trust and confidence and to the uses, interests and purposes herein after expressed, mencioned and declared, and to and for noe other use, Trust, intent or purpose whatsoever, (that is to say) **upon trust** and confidence **that they** the said Christopher Meriweather, Robert Sloper, Joseph Houlton and Richard Skinner, and the Survivors of them **shall** from and imediatly after my decease **permitt** and suffer **my daughter Dorothy to hold and enjoy the two grounds** before mencioned **and to receive** and take **the rents, Issues and profitts thereof to her owne use dureing her natural life** if my estate and terme shall so long continue. But in case my said daughter Dorothy shall happen to die and my Estate and Terme therein undetermined and unexpired, Then upon trust and confidence that they the said Christopher Mereweather, Robert Sloper, Joseph Houlton and Richard Skinner, and the Survivors, and survivors of them shall permitt or suffer such Child or Children begotten on the body of my said daughter Dorothy as she shall leave behind her at the time of her decease, to hold and enjoy the said Two groundes, and to receive and take the rents, Issues and profittes thereof, for and dureing the continuance of all such Estate and terme as shall be then to come and unexpired at the time of the death of my said daughter Dorothy, in such manner and in such proporcion to each Child of hers as my said daughter Dorothy shall direct and appoint. And for want of such direcion and appointment, then the said two grounds to be held and enjoyed from the time of her death jointly by all such Children as she shall leave behind her att the time of her decease, one as far forth as the other dureing the whole Terme and Estate as shall then to come and unexpired.

**2. Item I give and bequeath unto** the said **Christopher Meriweather, Robert Sloper, Joseph Houlton and Richard Skinner**, their executors, Administrators and assignes, All those two grounds called **the two Sand furlongs** and all that ground called **the Sand feild** thereunto **adjoining** with all the rights, members and appurtenances parcell of the Farme **which I hold by Lease from Sir Edward Hungerford & others in Norton** aforesaid, for and dureing all such Estate and Terme as I shall have therein, to come and unexpired at the time of my





decease; nevertheless upon Trust and confidence and to the uses, intentes and purposes herein after expressed expressed, mencioned and declared, and to and for noe other use, trust, intent or purpose whatsoever (that is to say) **upon trust** and confidence, **that they** the said Christopher Meriweather, Robert Sloper, Joseph Houlton and Richard Skinner, and the survivor and survivors of them **shall immediatly after my decease permitt and suffer my daughter Elizabeth to hold and enjoy the three grounds** last before mencioned and **and to receive and take the rents, Issues and profittes thereof to her own use** dureing her naturall life if my Estate and Terme therein shall soe long continue. But in Case my said daughter Elizabeth shall happen to die and my Estate and Terme therein undetermined and unexpired, Then upon Trust and Confidence that they the said Christopher Mereweather, Robert Sloper, Joseph Houlton and Richard Skinner, and the survivors and survivor of them shall permitt and suffer such Child or Children begotten on the body of my said daughter Elizabeth, as she shall leave behind her at the time of her decease, to hold and enjoy the said three grounds and to receive and take the rents, Issues and profittes thereof, for and during the continuance of all such Estate and Terme as shall be then to come and unexpired at the time of the death of my said daughter Elizabeth, in such manner, and in such proportion to each Child of hers as my said daughter Elizabeth shall direct and appoint. And for want of such direcion and appointment then the said three grounds to be held and enjoyed from the time of her decease jointly by all such children as she shall leave behind her att the time of her decease, one as far forth as the other, dureing the whole Terme and Estate as shall be then to come and unexpired. But in case it shall happen that either or both my daughters Dorothy and Elizabeth shall die haveing no Child or Children, or her or their bodied respectively begotten living att the time of their respective deaths, Then my will is that what is herein before limitted and appointed, to be held and enjoyed by the Child or Children as my said daughters or either of them shall leave behind them shall, from and immediatly after the death of my said daughters Dorothy & Elizabeth respectively dyeing without either Child or Children then living as aforesaid shall be and remain unto the Executors and Administrators and assignes of such any said daughters respectively as shall soe dye without Child or Children as aforesaid.

**3. Item I give and bequeath unto my daughter Dorothy the summe of three hundred pounds to be paid within three yeares after my decease.** Provided that in Case she doth marry within that time, it be by and with the consent & approbacion of my Trustees before named, and of my sister

Mereweather and daughter Cooper or the Major part of them.

**4. Item I give and bequeath unto my daughter Elizabeth the summe of Two hundred pounds to be paid unto her when she shall accomplish the Age of two and twenty years.** Provided that in Case she doth marry within that time, it be by, and with, the consent & approbacion of my Trustees before named, and of my sister Mereweather and daughter Cooper or the Major part of them.

**5. Item I give and bequeath unto my sonne Richard** All that my ground called **Horse Dolbridge and horse Croft and a little feild together with the two little Parrockes** thereunto **adjoining** with all its rights, members and appurtenances for and during all the Estate and Terme I shall have therein to come and unexpired att the time of my decease. **Item I give unto my said sonne Richard the summe of Two hundred pounds to be paid unto him within one year next after my decease. Item I give unto my said sonne Richard all my Clothes and wareing Apparell. I give unto my said sonne Richard the summe of Tenn pounde per Annum** to be paid unto him yearly, for and during the Terme of his naturall life.

**6. I give unto my Grandsonne Edward sonne of my sonne Edward the summe of fifty pounds to be paid unto him when he shall be bound an Apprentice** for the binding of him.

**7. Item my will is that my Executor** hereafter named **shall** from time to time hereafter **dispose of the summe of Tenn pounds** by and **with the consent of my daughter Mary Cooper**, and to and **for the use and benefitt of my said daughter Mary and her children** as she shall thinke fitt and direct.

**8. Item I give unto all my Grand Children** as are then living att the time of my decease **the summe of forty shillings to each, to be paid to each of them att the Age of of one and twenty years.**

**9. Item I give unto my servant John Francis soe much money as to make up what I have already of his in my hands the summe of Twenty pounds,** which shall be paid unto him within one yeare next after my decease.

**10. Item I give unto my sonne Edward the summe of Fifty pounds, for and towards the discharge of a debt of one hundred pounds for which I stand bound as surety** for my said sonne Edward unto one [blank] Sheppard, which fifty pounds is to be paid by my said Executor, when my said sonne Edward shall provide and procure the other Fifty pounds, together with all the interest of the one hundred pounds to be paid, together with that Fifty pounds which my said Executor shall pay soe as the said Bond may be taken

up and cancelled and my said Executor wholly freed and discharged therefrom, upon his paying only the Fifty pounds aforesaid.

**11. Item I give unto my daughter Dorothy the Black Colt.**

**12. All the rest of my goods and chattles** of what nature, sort or kinde soever **I give to my sonne Benjamine whome I doe hereby** ordaine, constitute, and **appoint** whole and **sole Executor of this my last will & Testament.**

**13. In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand & seale this fourth day of November** [in] the Two and thirtieth yeare of the Reigne of our Sovereign Lord King Charles the second over England &c Annoque Domini **1680, Edward Fripp**, signed, sealed, published and declared by the said Edward Fripp to be his last will & Testament **in the presence of us Will: Keyse** signum **James Fussell** signum **Anthony Combe** signum **Anne May**

The land and fields mentioned in Edward Fripp's will may be identified by Appendix 5 and the inset map at the end of C.J. Brett *The Manors of Norton St. Philip and Hinton Charterhouse 1535 - 1691*, Somerset Record Society, Vol. 93, 2007.

*Colin J. Brett*

## GOING ONLINE

*Our Marketing Manager, David Victor, considers what online services we can offer our members in the light of events over the last year.*

Over the past year, most of us have become used to working, talking to our friends and relations and buying our goods and services through a mixture of online facilities. We would like to build on this experience by developing more and better ways of engaging with you, our members. One of these developments has already become a reality, our new web site. We will be developing this further over the next few years. If you have not seen the new site yet, please try it at:

[somesetrecordsociety.org.uk/](http://somesetrecordsociety.org.uk/)



Recently, we have been considering what other online services we might offer members. One that we can offer quickly, easily and cost-effectively is an email service. We believe that we could use such a service to keep you up to date with what we are doing, such as the publication of a new volumes or the dates and places of Society events.

If you are interested in this service, we will need to know your email address. Your details will not be shared with any third parties and will be kept secure. The Society's privacy policy is available online here [somesetrecordsociety.org.uk/membership](http://somesetrecordsociety.org.uk/membership).

If you would be happy for us to contact you via email in future, please send an email to David Victor, at the following address:  
[membership@somesetrecordsociety.org](mailto:membership@somesetrecordsociety.org).

*David Victor, Marketing Manager*

## CORRECTIONS TO ISSUE 2

*Please see below two corrections to 'The Mells Archive' and 'Two Somerset Tax Rolls 1327 and 1332' articles published in Off the Record Issue 2: Summer 2020.*

### **The Mells Archive by John d'Arcy**

Page 3, left hand column, paragraph 1, line 14: 'Stoke Lane in Stoke St. Mary' should have read 'Stoke Lane in Stoke St. Michael'.

Some eagle-eyed readers may also have noticed that the image of Mells Manor painted by William Nicholson illustrating the same article on page 3 was printed the wrong way around. Please find it here, printed correctly.

### **Two Somerset Tax Rolls 1327 and 1332**

Page 7, left hand column, paragraph 5, lines 3-4: '1d to one-twelfth of a penny' should have read '1d to one-twelfth of a shilling'.

## COPIES OF VOLUMES

Members are reminded that the Society has a number of its volumes which are for sale, and are available to order online or from David Bromwich at the Somerset Heritage Centre.

Highlights include cartularies of Glastonbury and Forde Abbey, The Monmouth Rebels, Somerset Wills, John Carter's Architectural Records of Wells Cathedral, Charts and Surveys of the Somerset Coast c.1350-1824 and of course our most recent publications: A handlist of Somerset Probate Inventories and Somerset Remedies & Recipes in the 17th and 18th centuries. A full list of available volumes is available on the SRS website:

[www.somersetrecordsociety.org.uk/publications-in-print](http://www.somersetrecordsociety.org.uk/publications-in-print)



*Mells Manor painted by William Nicholson*

*Images reproduced by kind permission of Lord Oxford*

## SOMERSET INQUISITIONS POST MORTEM IN THE REIGN OF RICHARD III

*Michael Hicks highlights the Somerset entries in the most recent edition of the Calendars of Inquisitions Post Mortem.*

Somerset's historians are indebted to the publications of the Somerset Record Society, past, ongoing and yet to materialise, and also to a multitude of texts that have been edited elsewhere. High on this list are the 29 volumes of the *Calendars of Inquisition post mortem* (CIPM) for 1236-1447 and 1445-1509,<sup>1</sup> all now available on line:<sup>2</sup> truly 'a Great Historical Enterprise'.<sup>3</sup> Inquisitions *post mortem* (IPMs) itemize systematically the lands of feudal lay landowners on their deaths and contribute to history of almost every place in England, the pedigrees of almost every family, and much else. Sadly, there remain gaps in coverage. One such gap filled this year is *Calendar of Inquisition post mortem volume xxxv* for 1483-5.<sup>4</sup> This article explores the fifteen inquisitions for Somerset that it contains. (See table overleaf). All except Robert Stening held at least one manor.

IPMs tracked the fiefs of the tenants-in-chief and ensured the king of his feudal incidents. After two centuries most lands had descended from generation to generation; others were amalgamated by inheritance (e.g. the Brian, FitzPaine, Percy and Poynings inheritances); and many manors had been partitioned among coheirs, so that Philip Dodington had only quarter shares of manors of Wolmerston, Harford and Jurston. There had evolved many minor landowners whose possessions fell below the £10 a year of income needed to qualify to be a gentleman. William Chalcote of Ashbrittle and Agnes, widow of Roger Norman, of Crofton are examples. Robert Stening was a mere gentleman. Philip Dodington of Wode, William Montagu esquire of Henley, and Thomas St Barbe esquire of Ashington barely qualified. There were two knights, the judge Sir Richard Chok at Long Ashton by Bristol, where his tomb survives, and the Cornishman Sir John Colshill who held outlying property in Stogursey. Four more substantial Somerset esquires were John Bonville of Dillington, William Gunter of Knoll, the Dorset man John Newburgh, and Richard Wykes of Nynehead.

Agnes Norman was the poorest of four widows, the others being a countess, the wealthy Isabel Seymour of Hatch Beauchamp, and Margaret widow of Sir Richard Chok. Only Isabel Seymour is recorded as having dower, which theoretically was assigned by the heir and need not be specified in IPMs. Margaret Chok had lands in lieu of dower and on condition that she did not remarry. Historians have generally thought inquisitions valuations unduly low, but they recently have been rehabilitated.<sup>5</sup> A defining feature of this volume is the prevalence of trusts (enfeoffment to use), against which Richard III

himself was to legislate.

Much the most extensive estate is that of Eleanor, Countess of Northumberland, who died on 11 February 1484 [42-5]. The wife of Henry Percy, 3<sup>rd</sup> earl of Northumberland, who was slain at Towton in 1461 and suffered forfeiture, she was entitled to dower but in right of her own Poynings and Brian/ FitzPaine inheritances, she held lands in Dorset, Somerset, Surrey, and Sussex valued at £212. The Somerset properties totalled £198, comprising the ten manors of Bridgehampton, Cary Fitzpaine, Charlton Mackerel, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Lydde, Radway, Spekington, Staple Fitzpaine, Stogursey, Wyke Champflower and Cannington hundred. Stogursey Castle was the *caput*: it was there that her inquisition was held. The heir was her son, Henry, 4<sup>th</sup> earl of Northumberland.<sup>6</sup> These fifteen inquisitions chanced to consist of property located in the south and west of Somerset and inquisitions were held at Bedminster (2), Bridgewater, Crewkerne, Ilchester (3), Ilminster (3), Stogursey, and Taunton (4). Unfortunately, the documents do not state precisely where: at Taunton and Stogursey castles, for instance? Escheators, unlike sheriff and quarter sessions, were peripatetic, meeting wherever most convenient for jurors to IPMs, inquisitions miscellaneous, and proofs of age. The third of the presiding escheators was William Bracher, who was to be executed on the battlefield of Bosworth. The jurors who participated at each event are listed; if researched, they would probably prove not just to be local but the leaders of local society.

*Michael Hicks*

1. *Calendar of Inquisitions post mortem and other analogous documents preserved in the Public Record Office* i-xx; (H.M.S.O. 1904-92); 2<sup>nd</sup> ser. I-iii (H.M.S.O., London, 1895-1955); xx-xxvi (Woodbridge, 2002-10).
2. [www.British-history.ac.uk/inquisitions-post-mortem](http://www.British-history.ac.uk/inquisitions-post-mortem) and the *Mapping of Medieval Countryside* website ([www.inquisitionspostmortem.ac.uk](http://www.inquisitionspostmortem.ac.uk))
3. Sean Cunningham, 'Great Historical Enterprise: The Public Record Office and the Calendars of the Inquisitions *Post Mortem*', in Hicks, M.A. (ed) *The Fifteenth-century Inquisitions post mortem: A Companion*, ed. M. Hicks (Woodbridge, 2012).
4. *Calendar of Inquisitions post mortem and other analogous documents in the National Archives*, xxxv, 1483-5, ed. Gordon McKelvie (Boydell and Brewer, Woodbridge, 2021).
5. Matthew Holford, 'Notoriously Unreliable: The Valuations and the Extents', in Hicks, *Companion*.
6. J.M.W. Bean, *The Estates of the Percy Family 1416-1537* (London, 1958), 155-126.



| No  | Name                               | Rank    | IPMs / counties                              | Places/ Manors                                                                                                                                                                          | Values in Somerset | Total value |
|-----|------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 6   | William Chalcote                   |         | 2: Dorset                                    | Ashbottle                                                                                                                                                                               | £3/6s/8d           | £7/6s/8d    |
| 13  | Philip Dodyngton                   |         | 1                                            | Wode<br>¼ Wolmerston<br>¼ Harford<br>½ Jurston                                                                                                                                          | £10/13s/4d         | 10/13s/4d   |
| 14  | Thomas St Barbe                    | esquire | 1                                            | Ashington<br>Ford                                                                                                                                                                       |                    | £15         |
| 23  | William Montagu                    | esquire | 2: Dorset                                    | Henley                                                                                                                                                                                  |                    | £10         |
| 25  | John Bonville of Dillington        | esquire | 2: Dorset                                    | Clapton<br>Dillington<br>In Crewkern                                                                                                                                                    | £21                | £25         |
| 31  | Richard Wykes                      |         | 1                                            | Nynehead<br>Wheathill<br>Uphill<br>Christon                                                                                                                                             | £20/13s/4d         | £20/13/4d   |
| 43  | Eleanor Countess of Northumberland | widow   | 4: Dorset<br>Surrey<br>Sussex                | Bridgehampton<br>Cary Fitzpaine<br>Charlton Mackerell<br>Cheddon Fitzpaine<br>Lydde<br>Radway<br>Spekington<br>Staple Fitzpaine<br>Stogursey<br>Wyke Champfl<br>Hundred of<br>Conington | £198/13/4d         | £212/13/4d  |
| 78  | Sir Richard Chok                   | knight  | 2: Dorset                                    | Long Ashton<br>Templecombe<br>In Bridgwater<br>In Langport<br>In Buckland<br>In Carswell<br>Templecombe                                                                                 | £70/10s.           | £83/3s/4d   |
| 80  | John Newburgh                      | esquire | 2: Wilts.                                    | Northall                                                                                                                                                                                | Not given          | £6/13s/4d   |
| 83  | Sir John Colshill                  | knight  | 3: Corn.<br>Devon                            | In Stogursey                                                                                                                                                                            | £6/13/4d           | £34/10s.    |
| 100 | Robert Stenyng                     | Gent.   | 1                                            | None found                                                                                                                                                                              |                    |             |
| 102 | William Gunter                     |         | 1                                            | Knoll<br>Pyttney Lortey                                                                                                                                                                 | £48                | £48         |
| 145 | Agnes widow of Roger Norman        | widow   | 1                                            | Crofton                                                                                                                                                                                 | 6/13/4             | 6/13/4      |
| 162 | Isabel Seymour                     | widow   | 5:Bristol<br>Hampshire<br>Hereford<br>Wilts. | Hatch Beauchamp                                                                                                                                                                         | £13/6s/4d          | £88         |
| 168 | Margaret Chok                      | widow   | 1                                            | Long Ashton                                                                                                                                                                             | £20/10s            | £20/10s     |

## TWO SOMERSET WILLS

*Robert Dunning describes two Somerset wills not previously included in any SRS volume.*

The recent publication of the register of Archbishop Simon Sudbury (archbishop 1375-81)<sup>1</sup> reveals that the editor of the Somerset Record Society's volume xix (*Somerset Medieval Wills, 1501-30, with some Somerset Wills preserved at Lambeth*) either did not consult it or failed to recognise two wills of Somerset interest. In fact, the new publication suggests three Somerset wills.<sup>2</sup> The other two wills are of Master Thomas Yong, clerk (no. 444), and Theobald de Gorgis (no. 473).

Gorgis, in his will dated 20 November 1380, referred to his 'consort' Agnes and requested burial in the church of the Dominican friars at Winchester; not at first an obvious Somerset man. The appointment of Thomas Mount, rector of Wraxall, as one of his executors,<sup>3</sup> however, identifies him as the third son of Sir Theobald Russell of Wraxall who assumed the name and arms of Gorges on inheriting family property through his mother. He served as sheriff of Somerset from April 1361 and died having just taken on the office again in November 1380.<sup>4</sup> Gorges left the arrangements for his funeral and his month's mind to the discretion of his executors, gave 40 marks for the fabric of the Dominican church and the rest of his goods 'not assigned' to Agnes. William Cook, rector of St Laurence's, Winchester, Robert of Aston, knight, and Agnes were made administrators of the will, though Edmund Barnabe had been named as executor along with Agnes and Thomas Mount. The will was proved before Archbishop Sudbury at Lambeth on 22 December 1380 and the administrators were acquitted at Lambeth on 20 May 1381. Less than a month later Sudbury himself was executed by rebels on Tower Hill.

The will of Master Thomas Yong is altogether more interesting. It was dated 1 July 1375 and was proved on 23 May 1377. The executors were acquitted on 12 May 1379. Yong was a distinguished ecclesiastical lawyer and administrator who had served Archbishop Islip as an advocate in his provincial court in London (the Court of Arches) for ten years before becoming Official (presiding judge) there. He also served Sudbury as vicar-general when Sudbury was bishop of London and remained Official of the Court of Arches under Sudbury as archbishop until his death. He also served William of Wykeham in Winchester diocese and as a royal ambassador negotiating with the Genoese and with the king and queen of Portugal.

Which university Yong attended is not certain,<sup>5</sup> but he had graduated by 1348, and in the following year, as rector of St Stephen's, Bristol, he was ordained sub-deacon. Among his many livings were two in Somerset, the rectory of Butleigh (by 1361) and a canonry of Wells from 1363, and he showed surprising concern, both for his many church livings and for his

parishioners by leaving half his current income from glebe and tithes for the repair of chancels and other buildings, and half for poor parishioners and neighbours in return for prayers for his family.

Many lines of the will cover gifts of plate and law books to family, friends and colleagues. Two books in particular may hint at Yong's education. One was a canon law text *Joannes Andree in Additionibus*, which was to be returned to the friars minor at Bridgwater, where perhaps he had first studied it; the other his 'small old *decreta* and book of decretals' which he 'studied laboriously'. That volume, worth about 40s, was to be sold, the money to be given to the poor for the soul of its former owner, 'Robert, formerly of the church of Milverton'. That is probably Robert de Espeney or Espele, instituted vicar of Milverton in 1313 and still vicar in 1338.<sup>6</sup> Was he, perhaps, Yong's first serious teacher?

But what mattered most to Yong were prayers for his own soul, for the souls of his parents and benefactors, and the souls of all the faithful. A quarter of his goods was to pay for 7,000 masses within a month of his death and prayers at the London Charterhouse; another quarter was for 'the poor faithful for their souls'; a third quarter for 'the poor religious and oppressed monks, canons, nuns and mendicant friars' also to pray for 'the said souls'. The purpose of the fourth quarter further proves Yong's Somerset connections, for half was to be given to priests to celebrate in Shapwick church 'where my father is buried'. The phrase must refer to the church in current use when the will was made, that is the new church erected in 1330-32 to replace the original one finally abandoned on the old village site in the fields.<sup>7</sup>

And then follow bequests to family. His 'second best beaker' was to go to his sister Alice, 'lady of Catcott'. To his brother 'Master Robert' he left his 'very beautiful gilded cup' worth £5; to his sister Joan his 'best standing beaker of silver'. Joan had once given him a 'great silver beaker', which he now passed on to a clerical friend. The final family member was Joan's son Thomas. Should he decide to study civil law, Yong's five volumes of Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis*,<sup>8</sup> left in the hands of his 'heirs of the lord of Catcott', might be lent to him 'until such time as he can buy other books, and then they shall be restored to the lord of Catcott for other sons and sons of sons to use in the same way'.

Alice, whom Yong describes as his sister, is presumably the Alice of Catcott in possession of part of Catcott in 1362 and heir to John Whiting, lord at the time of Yong's birth.<sup>9</sup> Alice was still in possession in 1372, three years before he made his will, and her ownership may now be extended to 1375. Walter of Catcott was also described as lord



in 1372; he was, perhaps, the lord of Catcott to whom the Justinian lawbooks were entrusted, and may have been Alice's husband. Master Robert, Yong's brother, cannot be further identified, but might be presumed to have been a half-brother to Alice. That Joan had no share in the Catcott land suggests she, too, was illegitimate. And what of Yong himself? He clearly had very strong feelings for his family, though his professional life had been spent far from Somerset, involving not only working as a lawyer in London but as a property-dealer in Kent.<sup>10</sup> The surname by which he is known might, perhaps, have been that of his mother; it might denote he was his father's youngest son.

*Robert Dunning, Chairman*

#### Notes:

1. *The Register of Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1375-81*, ed. F. Donald Logan (Canterbury and York Society cx, The Boydell Press, 2020).
2. The will of Sir Edward le Despenser (no. 433) mentions a bequest to 'Nicolle, abbess of Worminster (Somerset) or Warminster (Wilts)' which is a misreading for Nicholas, abbot of Westminster.
3. Curiously identified as 'near Frome' and not indexed.
4. *The Sheriffs of Somerset*, ed. Sophia W. Rawlins (Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, 1968), 15-16.
5. Assumed to be Oxford: A.B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to 1500* (Oxford 1959, iii. 2231-2).
6. *Calendar of the Register of John de Droghensford*, ed. Bishop Hobhouse (Somerset Record Society, i. 1887), 2, 152; *The Register of Ralph of Shrewsbury*, ed. T.S. Holmes (Somerset Record Society, ix. 1896), no. 928; *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter of Wells*, i (Historical Manuscripts Commission 1907), 184, 195, 549.
7. *A History of the County of Somerset*, viii, *The Poldens and the Levels*, ed. R.W. Dunning (Boydell & Brewer, 2004), 164, 177-8.
8. Which he had bought for 22 marks from Ralph and Thomas Ryngrstede: A.B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500* (Cambridge University Press, 1963), 499.
9. *The Poldens and the Levels*, 28.
10. In Ripple and Newington, and with the canons of Lesnes.

## THOMAS KYTSON'S 'BOKE OF REMEMBRANCE' 1529-1540

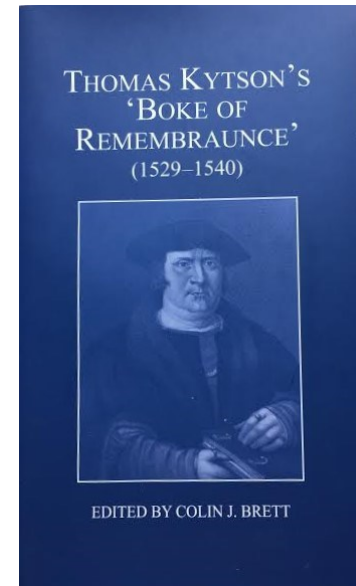
*Colin Brett gives an introduction to his latest book published by London Record Society on Thomas Kytson who not only owned Somerset manors but also traded in Somerset cloth.*

Thomas Kytson's 'Boke of Remembraunce' 1529-1540  
London Record Society, Volume 54 (2020).

ISBN: 978-0-900952-59-3

Ed. Colin J. Brett

502p



Thomas Kytson was born in 1485 in Lancashire and after serving his London apprenticeship became a freeman of the Mercers' Company in 1507. He was a member of the Merchant Adventurers Company and dealt extensively in cloth and became one of the wealthiest London citizens of his time. In 1533 he was elected to serve as sheriff of London and was knighted at an investiture celebrating the coronation of Anne Boleyn.

The 'Boke of Remembraunce', which is held in Cambridge University Library, primarily records Kytson's purchases of cloth and the shipments of these to the four Flemish annual marts held in Antwerp or Bergen-op-Zoom between 1529 and his death in 1540. Kytson's main interest was in the quality undyed broadcloths or 'whites' obtained predominantly from Wiltshire and Somerset which were eagerly sought on the Continent. He also bought significant quantities of other less expensive cloths from Lancashire, Cheshire, Kent and Gloucestershire. He occasionally dealt in Cornish and Devonshire tin which he sold to London pewterers, or to Continental purchasers, when he characteristically spotted an opportunity to make a quick profit. Kytson bought and exported the white broadcloths from forty-four clothiers in Somerset, mainly in the east of the county, from sixty-six suppliers in west Wiltshire and from four in Dorset. The cloths were usually purchased in packs of ten from

his main suppliers but sometimes in smaller quantities from lesser producers. His main supplier was John Clevelode of Beckington who sent 3,340 'whites' to Kytson in London in eight years. He also bought small quantities of kersies, a coarser and less valuable cloth, from Somerset and Dorset.

The 'Boke' also records his sales of expensive fabrics, woad, spices, sugar, wine, glass and other goods imported on the returning ships. There are also many memoranda relating to materials delivered to his wife or friends, or to his own personal dealings in property. The names of hundreds of suppliers, fellow merchants, customers, and ships' masters are revealed from his dealings.

Kytson had an interest in our two counties having bought the manors of Downhead with Stoke Michael in Somerset, and Okeford Fitzpaine, and Durweston with Knighton in Dorset in 1529 from the earl of Northumberland.

The 'Boke' is written by five or six of Kytson's clerks mainly in English, but also with a smattering of French and Latin. There are also a few entries written by Kytson himself in his characteristic scrawl. An added complication in presenting the source in a readable form is that the purchase prices of his cloths were written in code for confidential reasons and to comply with the law. The English words have been transcribed retaining all their idiosyncrasies of spelling, the French and Latin translated and the numerals decoded.

Kytson's 'Boke' is collated with extracts from a separate record of exports to the Flemish marts kept by his clerks, and supplemented by an account of transactions at the 'Synxten Mart' held at Antwerp in 1536 written by Thomas's nephew, Thomas Washington. The material is complemented with extensive annotation and a comprehensive glossary, an introduction and substantial indices.

Transcript from an extract in Kytson's 'Boke':

Acchatt de Willm Style de baythe in  
Som'settshire le 19 io' de m'che a° 1531

Item *n* whites de *fml* *I/s* *sd*

le packe Sm<sup>a</sup> xvj<sup>li</sup> vjs 8<sup>d</sup>

Rs le 21 oi<sup>r</sup> de m'che v whites

at iij li vjs viijd le clothe Sm<sup>a</sup> xvj<sup>li</sup> vjs 8<sup>d</sup>

Purchase from William Style of Bathe in  
Somersetshire the 19 day of Marche a° 1531

Item 5 whites of £32 13s 4d

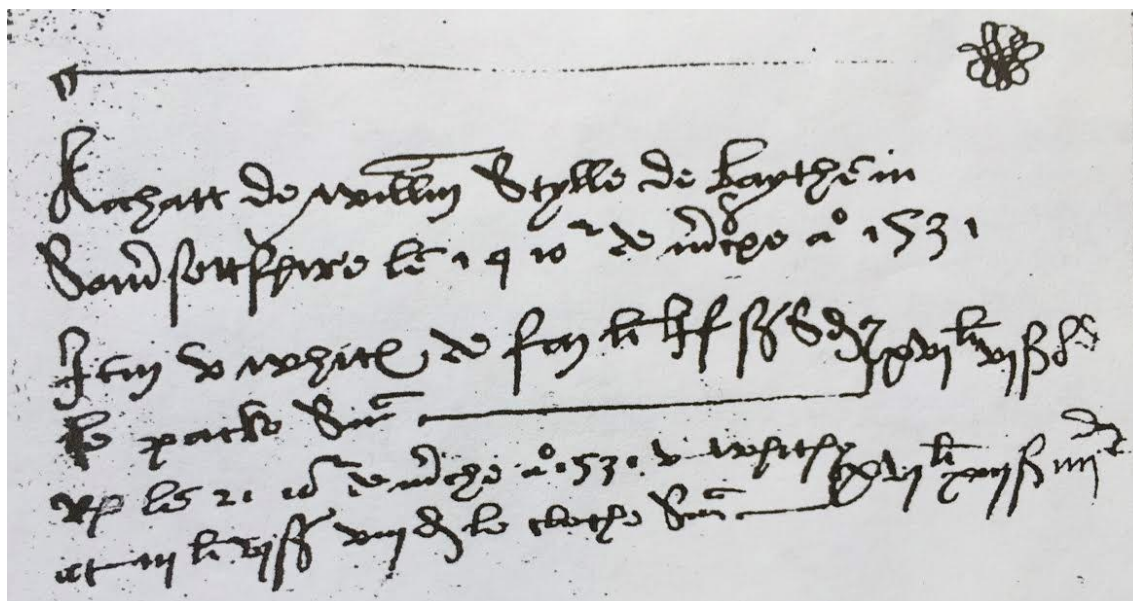
the packe Sum £16 6s 8d

Rs the 21 day of Marche a° 1531 5 whites

at £3 6s 8d the cloth Sum £16 13s 4d

Notes. The abbreviations Rs = received and a° are retained to give a flavour of the original text. Numerals in Kytson's code and their decoded equivalents are in *italics*.

Colin J. Brett



*An entry from one the many hundreds in Kytson's 'Boke',  
folio 63v on page 119. It is transcribed and translated  
above.*

## SOMERSET DAY

*Emma Down takes a look at two SRS volumes which feature records of historical events which are now associated with Somerset Day.*

Last month, 11th May marked Somerset Day, a celebration of all things Somerset. Events were held across the county by local businesses, schools and community groups. We, too, at the Somerset Record Society have been flying the flag for Somerset day and highlighting the rich heritage that our county has to offer.



*The Somerset Flag*

May 11th was chosen as Somerset Day due to its significance to the county's history. It falls in early May when it is thought that Alfred the Great took refuge at Athelney in 878 before mounting his campaign with the people of Somerset, Wiltshire and Hampshire against an invading Viking army. This was the same time that the famous legends around Alfred developed, including the one describing him burning the cakes at Athelney. Also on this day in 973, St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, led the coronation of King Edgar at Bath Abbey. Elements of the ceremony are still used in coronations today. Lastly, 11th May 1645 saw the end of the second siege of Taunton when the Royalist forces withdrew, and marked a watershed in the English Civil War.

Two volumes published by the Somerset Record Society detail other events around the time of the first and leading up to the last episodes described above. The first is volume 14 *Two Cartularies of the Benedictine abbeys of Muchelney and Athelney in the county of Somerset*, edited by E H Bates in 1899. The volume gives English transcripts of certain charters. The original Athelney cartulary has been lost, the transcript in volume 14 being taken from a copy made by Dr George Harbin in 1735. However, even this transcript is not complete, beginning on folio 43 of the original cartulary: Attestation clause of a charter of King Alfred dated post 892. Despite this, the transcript provides a detailed insight into the administration of Athelney Abbey between the late 9th century and early 15th century.

The first three entries relate to King Alfred: Attestation clause of a charter of King Alfred, Coronation oath of King Alfred and Charter of King Alfred gifting the manor of Sutton to the church of St Saviour at Athelney in 852. Given that Alfred founded Athelney Abbey in 888, the date of this charter is likely to be much later. Also included in the transcript are grants of land, notices to tenants, charters for markets and fairs, details on the use of common land, notes on royal gifts and perambulations of forests to name a few.

The second volume to give light to some events which led up to 11th May 1645 is volume 18, *Bellum Civile Hopton's Narrative of his Campaign in the West (1642-1644)* edited by Charles Chadwyck Healey in 1902. Sir Ralph Hopton was the son of Robert Hopton of Witham in Somerset, and served as a Royalist commander throughout much of the west country during the Civil War. The volume details many of the events prior to the second siege of Taunton in 1645.

Hopton was meticulous in recoding his movements as part of the Royalist campaign. His narrative is split into three papers. The first covers events from September 1642 to June 1643, the second continues from June 1643 and includes the taking of Bristol by Prince Rupert on 26 July 1643, and the last paper continues the account concluding with the battle of Alresford on 29 March 1644. Hopton's narrative is supplemented by other contemporary sources including the accounts of Colonel Slingsby on the battles of Lansdown, Roundway Down, the siege of Bristol and the battle of Alresford; as well as the Thomasson tracts or King's Pamphlets.

Although no longer in print, Somerset Record Society volumes 14 and 18 can both be found in full online at [archive.org](http://archive.org).

For more information about Somerset Day visit [www.somersetday.com](http://www.somersetday.com)

*Emma Down*

## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

This year *Off the Record* is expanding and producing two editions. As always we are keen to receive articles from members and non-members about their research or any interesting items you have found relating to the rich history of Somerset.

If you would like to contribute an article to the next newsletter please email submissions to the editor at [offtherecord@somersetrecordsociety.org.uk](mailto:offtherecord@somersetrecordsociety.org.uk) or post contributions to Miss Emma Down, 28 Gale Way, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 5FB.

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