

CRT190/238/2

THE GERY FAMILY OF BUSHMEAD

The Gery pedigree made about the year 1634 and printed in the Bedfordshire Heraldic Visitations, gives the ancestor of the Bedfordshire family as a Thomas Gery of Royston, Herts., and the 1871 Landed Gentry says that he was sheriff of Cambridgeshire in 1509. The Gerys were of importance in Royston both before and after the Reformation, and in the C16 owned land (much of it ex-monastic) in Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

William Gery I (d. 1592), given in the Visitations as the son of Thomas Royston, lived on his estate at Over in Cambridgeshire. He invested in the lands of the lately dissolved Priory of Bushmead in Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire, and also in the adjoining manor of Little Staughton which had belonged to the Preceptory of Melchbourne.

The original grant from the Crown of the Bushmead Priory property (charged with a yearly payment to the Crown of £20 5s for tenths) was in September 1537 to Sir William Gascoigne of Cardington, in spite of a request for the property from Sir John St. John, who lived nearby at Melchbourne, and who had asked for Bushmead because it could be his main seat if he decided to leave Melchbourne. In the event St. John had to make do with a 21 year lease from the Crown (issued earlier in the year 1537) of the Priory buildings and some land nearby (GY1/1). In 1545 Gascoigne conveyed the house and the greater part of the land to Anthony Cokett of London (GY2/2), who in 1546/7 bought the manor of Little Staughton which had belonged to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem at Melchbourne. On 25 March 1552 (WG509) both estates were conveyed to William Gery of Over, in return for an annual rent charge of £80 (WG509-10, WG517).

It may be that William had a brother named Richard Gery who also had an interest in Little Staughton, for there is a will of an Isobel Gery, widow of Richard Gery, made in 1579, and she wished to be buried in the chancel of Little Staughton church, and she left her property to a Thomas Gery and Ann his wife.

William Gery I (d.1592) had a son William Gery II (d. 1596), and by his last marriage to Barbara Hyde of Throcking, Herts., who survived him, had a second son Richard, later described as of Over in Cambridgeshire. There was also a daughter, Thomazine, who seems to have married a Cartwright.

It would appear that William Gery I remained at Over, but he used the Eaton Socon and Little Staughton property to endow his two sons. The evidence here is occasionally contradictory, and mortgages obscure the picture, but the later history of both family and property is tentatively outlined below.

William II (d. 1596) was married at Haynes to Rebecca Snow, daughter of Richard Snow of Chicksands by Elizabeth Cavendish, a relation of the Countess of Shrewsbury, and gentlewoman of the Privy chamber to Queen Elizabeth. The marriage settlement was signed on 16 June 1574, and the marriage solemnised on 1 September in the same year. The manor of Little Staughton was settled on them and

their heirs. On 20 June 1585 his father granted to William for 300 years the house called Bushmead, with all buildings and lands in Eaton Socon in Bedfordshire and in Great Staughton in Huntingdonshire, and all other messuages and lands in Roxton, Colmworth, Great Barford, Keysoe and Bolnhurst (once of Bushmead Priory), paying his father 40s to William Gery I; £20 5s to the Crown; £80 to Anthony Cokett and his heirs.

William Gery I (the father) made his will 17 Oct 1592, and died 12 December 1592. He asked to be buried in Over church, and he left the Bushmead Priory manor and mansion house and lands (by which he must have meant merely the reversion after the 300 years lease as well as the 20s annual rent) to his wife Barbara for life, then to his son Richard Gerye and his heirs, in default to his son William and his heirs. In February 1593 the widow and the two sons seem to have made a division of the Bushmead estate (WG722) by which William kept the Mansion House and buildings adjoining, and certain lands and woods, whereas his brother Richard Gery (described then as of Over, gent.) received land in Honydon and elsewhere in Eaton Socon, with two messuages in Eaton Socon, and property in Barford, Chawston in Roxton, Bedford, and elsewhere in the county, all once of Bushmead Priory.

About the year 1608 Richard Gery (the brother) married Elizabeth the daughter of William Forthe of Newington Green, Islington, Mddx., esq. (marriage settlement WG772 16 April 1608), when a certain amount of land in Eaton Socon was settled on the couple. It is not clear if this property ever rejoined the main Bushmead estate. However, in 1635 there is an interesting group of documents in which the parties were a Richard Gery the elder of Bushmead, esq. (Richard Gery I below); Richard Gery the younger, Eaton Socon, gent.; and the latter's eldest son William Gery, who joined to levy a fine on the manors of Little Staughton and Bushmead, and on lands and messuages in Beds. and Hunts., to the use of Richard Gery the elder (GY3/1; WG511-3). WG783 states that a Richard Gery, junior, gent. of Eaton Socon in 1625 was the uncle of William Gery of Grays Inn and so of Richard Gery I. This evidence suggests that Richard, the brother of William Gery I, moved from Over to Eaton Socon, and though possibly of much the same age, was known as Richard Gery, junior, gent., to distinguish him from his much wealthier nephew Richard Gery of Bushmead. Both had elder sons named William. It does, however, seem likely that about the year 1635 the junior branch of the family conveyed at least some of their Beds. estates back to the senior branch, and that these documents were part of this transaction. WG775 also seems to relate to this branch.

William Gery II died at Eaton Socon 12 May 1596 (i. e. 1 September 1596), when both his sons were still under age. He had in 1592 transferred his interest in Bushmead to his elder son Richard (GY2/3). His will mentioned his neighbour and good friend, George Francklin of Bolnhurst, whose daughter Richard was in due course to marry. In the will he confirmed the grant of Bushmead to his son Richard, and allowed £200 to each of his daughters for a marriage portion. We will see the provision for the younger son William below. William II's widow Rebecca soon married Thomas Poyle, but was again a widow at the time of her death on 29 July 1600.

The children of William Gery II by Rebecca Snow were:

A) Richard Gery I, born about the year 1582, for whom see below.

B) William, the second son, who was admitted to Grays Inn 12 March 1603, and to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in the same year. He became a counsellor at law, and under his father's will was to be given two houses and farms in Little Staughton, in which Elizabeth Snow (mother of Rebecca) had a life interest. Rebecca Gery, the widow, made a demise of them for 1000 years to William on 28 September 1596, immediately after the father's death, possibly because she wanted the property secured before her own remarriage. No doubt this patrimony supported him while he was being educated, but he conveyed the property back to his brother Richard in 1611 for £900 (WG774). It would seem that this William Gery married at Little Staughton on November 10 1613 Elizabeth Nevell, and a George Gery, son of William, was baptised at Eaton Socon on 24 June 1616, who may have come from this marriage.

C) a daughter Katherine who married John Grey of Pertenhall, but died without issue.

D) a daughter Elizabeth who married James Tabor at Little Staughton 15 September 1603.

E) a daughter, unnamed, who married Dr. Nicholls, and had children Anne, Joseph and Henry Nicholls.

To return to the eldest son, Richard Gery I was born about the year 1582, for he was said in his father's i.p.m to have been about 14 at the time of his father's death. We do not know where he went to school, and his further education was that ordinarily given to a country gentleman who would be expected to help as a justice of the peace in the administration of his county. On 5 May 1597 he was admitted Fellow-Commoner of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and after two years moved on to Gray's Inn in London in January 1600 to read law. We are told that he was a gentleman of the Privy Chamber to both James I and Charles I. He it was who employed Evans Mouse (of the household of the St. John family) in 1624 to map and survey the Bushmead estate (GY4/1,2). At this time Richard Gery had 713a. 3r. in Beds., and 355a. in Hunts., 1068. 3r in all. Towards the end of his life, in 1636, he was unexpectedly made sheriff of Bedfordshire, and was immediately caught up in the difficult task of extracting the payment of Ship Money from his reluctant Bedfordshire neighbours." My predecessor having gathered up what was willingly paid, the residue left to collect had to be compelled, or is not to be had, making it a work of time and difficulty." This letter to the Privy Council was from 'Sir' Richard Gery but we do not know when he was knighted, and later documents continue to describe him as 'Esquire'.

He had married by January 1607 (FN 907) Ann Francklin, daughter of his father's and neighbour George Francklin of Mavorne in Bolnhurst. The post-nuptial marriage settlement is dated 16 June 1607 (FN908). Ann's brother Nicholas Francklin, the third son in the family, and of the Inns of Court, was to be the Gery Family's main support in their financial troubles which began well before the Civil War.

Sir Richard was fortunate enough to die on 14 May 1638, before the outbreak of the Civil War, and was buried there is recorded on 16 December 1630. He left a large family, and many legacies. His own sisters had had £200 each as their marriage portion; his two daughters were to get 2000 marks (£1333 6s 8d) each. £3000 was to

be divided between the four younger sons, and all of this was to come out of an estate that was apparently much the same in extent as in the time of his father. The younger sons were each granted in addition to a lump sum a perpetual rent charge of £40 p.a. charged on the estate. His fortunate heir, William III, had before his father's death already entered into two bonds of £4000 each to ensure the payments under the will, especially the marriage portions. Richard also left money for the poor of Little Staughton - £5 to be distributed by the minister and churchwardens amongst the most honest, aged, impotent poor people of the parish - and £10 similarly to the poor of Eaton Socon, £2 to Great Staughton, and £4 to Eynesbury. "To Richard Robins my auncient servant a Rent charge of 40 shillings a year during his natural life" charged on the manors, and William Gery, the eldest son, was to provide for Robins a house to live in during the rest of his life, rent free, and give him two good suits of apparel. The few surviving accounts show that Richard Robins was being paid his pension in 1648 "For Annuity to Rich: Roberts £2" (WG891/5).

It is difficult to find what additions were made by Sir Richard to the original Bushmead estate which could have helped his heir to meet the very heavy charge under the will. Sir Richard mentions leasehold land in Northamptonshire recently bought of Sir Richard Wingfield, which was to be sold to help pay his debts. He had purchased Eynesbury Ferrers manor in 1633, which William sold the year after his father's death to Sir Sidney Montagu, and he had bought also the next presentation of Eynesbury Rectory for his second son Richard. However, it is clear that the family's financial difficulties had already begun.

Sir Richard's children by Ann Francklin were:

A) William Gery III baptised Little Staughton 15 August 1613, for whom see below.

B) Richard, second son, baptised Little Staughton 23 April 1615. He educated at Herford Grammar School and at Westminster, and in 1631 was entered at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, moving to Sidney Sussex College in 1634, where he remained for the rest of his life. In 1638 his father had purchased for him the next presentation to the rectory of Eynesbury (WG820). Under his father's will he was to receive £400 at the age of 26 (until then interest at 6%) and also a perpetual rent charge of £40 charged on all his father's manors. WG777 shows that his elder brother charged in October 1639 the manor of Little Staughton with the £40 rent charge. He made his will 22 March 1642/3, and mentions that his books and goods were in the hands of Theophilus Dillingham, of the Dean family. He left his £40 rent charge to his two sisters for their lives, and then to revert to his elder brother William. He left small sums for mourning rings to his brother William and to William's two sons William and Richard, and William's daughters Ann and Elizabeth were also mentioned. His uncle and aunt, William and Elizabeth Gery, were left £50 each for their "better support", and his uncles Doctor Nichols and James Tabor both received 50s. for a mourning ring. He mentioned a bond for £350 due from his brother William, so William had so far been able to pay only £50 of the £400 under their father's will. His sisters were his executors. The will was proved 22 May 1652 in London, and he is, presumably, buried at Cambridge.

C) George, the third son, was baptised at Little Staughton 18 December 1616. We do not know of his earlier education, but he was admitted to Grays Inn 10 February 1635.

He followed his elder brother William in being a strong supporter of the King in the Civil War. Under his father's will he was to receive £900 at the age of 26, and until then interest at 6%, and he was to have a perpetual rent charge of £40 charged on the manors. WG781 suggests that his brother William conveyed to him Cadbury Wood and land making in all 80 acres in lieu of the £900. He married at St. Bartholomew's or Christ Church, London, on 23 January 1642/3 Elizabeth, the widow of Thomas Stonor, but she must have predeceased him, and there is no evidence here of any children. We know that he was captured at the Battle of Naseby. However, while a prisoner in 1645 he took the Negative Oath, and was allowed to compound for his delinquency in December 1646, and his annuity charged on Little Staughton manor was discharged from sequestration in 1648.

After an abortive royalist rising in 1655 four royalists (including George Gery of Bushmead) were mentioned as suspicious persons, and in August 1659 after the rising when George Booth held Chester for a short time the Protectorate Council of State ordered a group of Bedfordshire royalists (most of them kin of the Gery family, and including George) to be removed to the Gatehouse at Lambeth for examination.

His will was probably made shortly before his death in 1683, and he was then described as of Grayes Inn, Middlesex, gentleman, though he seems to have had an interest in Felmersham. He asked to be buried in the chancel of Little Staughton "in the same place or near as possibly and conveniently as may be where my father Richard Gery Esquire and my mother Anne Gery were buried". Possibly the financial straits endured by his father's executor had meant that there had been no money for a proper tombstone, and so George "strictly charge and enjoyne my Executor William Gery Esquire that within the space of twelve monethes after my decease hee cause to be laid upon my place of Buriall in Little Staughton Chauncell one very good Black Marble stone of about five foote broad and Seaven foote long with a white marble stone in the chancell wall of two foote square with a cornish of plaine black marble about it with an engarveing of my father's and my mother's and my name with the severall times of our dieing". He mentions the two youngest brothers, Oliver and Sir Thomas Gery, both then living. He mentions also his kinsmen Sir William Francklin and John Francklin, leaves the residue of his estate to his executor and nephew William Gery Esquire.

D) Oliver Gery, the fourth son, was baptised at Eaton Socon 26 December 1621. In his father's will he was left £900 at the age of 21 (with the interest at 6% until that time) together with a perpetual rent charge of £40 p.a. charged on the manors. He seems to have a favourite of his sister Anne, who in 1643 left £50 each to her brothers Richard, George and Thomas, but £200 to Oliver. He apparently survived his brother George. We know no more of him.

E) Thomas Gery, fifth son, baptised at Little Staughton 4 September 1625. He was admitted to Grays Inn 6 November 1647, and was of Isleworth, Middlesex in 1658. Later he was knighted, and was (as Thomas Gery of Lincolns Inn) made a knight bachelor on 10 November 1666.

He was bequeathed £800 by his father, and a perpetual rent charge of £40, as his brothers. He seemed much involved in the post-Restoration financial transactions of

the estate which sought to deal with the many charges on the property. He was still living in 1683.

F) Anne, elder daughter, baptised Eaton Socon 1 January 1618/9. In her father's will she was bequeathed 2000 marks (£1333 6s 8d) at the age of 22 or day of marriage, until which she was to have a pension of £40 a year. She made her will in 1643, about the same time as her brother Richard of Sidney Sussex College, but seems to have predeceased him. She asked to be buried in chancel of Little Staughton, near her father and mother. She left £500 to her sister Elizabeth, and smaller legacies to her brothers. She mentions "my kind uncle William and Aunt Gery", and other aunts, who were probably on the Francklin side of the family. It is likely that at least part of the leasehold lands in Northamptonshire, mentioned in her father's will, had come to her in lieu of her money legacy from her father, for she requested the lease to be sold. To her eldest brother William's eldest daughter Katherine "That litle parte of silver plate which was left me by my father". Her will was proved 23 July 1646.

G) Elizabeth, the younger daughter, baptised Eaton Socon 23 November 1620. She too was left 2000 marks by her father. She married Sir Richard Stone of Ridgmont as his second wife, by whom we hear of two children, Thomas and Katherine.

William Gery III, eldest son of Sir Richard, seems to have been under great financial embarrassments for the whole of his relatively short life. He was baptised at Little Staughton 15 August 1613, and followed the same course of education as his father, so as to prepare him for his future position in the county. He entered Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, at Easter 1628, and proceeded to Lincolns Inn 10 May 1630. On 19 February 1632/3 (marriage settlement 20 February 1633, WG514, 516) he married at St Sepulchre's in London, Anna Dyer, the daughter of Sir William Dyer of Great Staughton knight, which family had an estate in neighbouring Colmworth, and was royalist in sympathy. Her marriage portion was £1500, and she survived her husband and was buried at Colmworth 17 October 1684.

Before his father's death William had been required to enter into two bonds of £4000 each to ensure the payments to be made under Sir Richard's will, especially as regards the 2000 marks apiece for his sisters Anne and Elizabeth. Even if his father had left no debts (and this we do not know), William inherited in 1638 a heavily burdened estate at the age of 25. He fairly soon charged the manor of Little Staughton with the £40 rent charges left to each of his brothers (WG777), and Oliver and Thomas were dealing with this manor in 1648 (WG1665-7).

On 1 October 1641 he conveyed to his uncle, the long-suffering Nicholas Francklin of Lincolns Inn, all his woods and underwoods and timber trees, and also "all his Jewells, Plate, Household stufte, Implements of Household and Husbandry goods", upon trust to use all the money raised by the sale of the baove "Towards the satisfaction and payement of such debts of the said William gery being his own proper debts as are conteyned specified and sett down in a schedule Indented bearing date with these presents and also his said debts beinge payed and satisfied, all such Legacyes given and bequeathed by the last will and Testament of Richard Gery late Bushmeade aforesaid Esquire his Father deceased unto his younger Children" (WG807). The schedule does not survive. However a document (WG891/4),

an order of the 15 March 1643/4 from the County Sequestration Committee, mentions another deed "bearinge date the first of October Anno Domini 1641" by which he "did grant assigne, and appoynte Nicholas Francklin Esquire to receive the sayd Rentes and Proffittes of the sayd Pryorye beinge of the yearly vallew of Foure hundred powndes per annum or there aboutes, as wee are Informed, and to pay three hundred powndes per annum thereof for the mayntaynace of the wife and Children of the sayd Willyam Geery, and the Residue of the sayd yearly Rentes to be ymployed towards the payment of Mr. Geery's debtes which amounte to £2566 as doth apeere by a schedule thereof produced". Thus William had conveyed both the saleable property (woods and husbandry tools) to be sold to raise money for his debts, and also assigned the landed estate, for the rents to be used to the same end, and it is obvious that he was financially out of his depth well before the beginning of the Civil War.

At the outbreak of the war he took his father's party, and was wholeheartedly on the side of Charles I, and we are told that he raised a troop horse. He certainly suffered for his loyalty, but the burden of debt thenceforth on the estate cannot be put down to this alone. In the Letters and Papers Domestic of Charles II is a petition by his daughter Anne for a place at Court, which was accompanied by a certificate of the Earl of Cleveland, Lord Bruce, and others, about William's conduct during the Civil War. They said that William did eminent service to the late King as captain of horse for the county of Huntingdon, warning the King of the approach of the enemy's horse to Cambridgeshire in 1642, and raising troops by a commission of array to oppose them. He was captured and forced to pay a heavy ransom. He was back with the King at Oxford until its surrender, was taken prisoner at the surrender of Colchester, his wife parting with the rest of her jewels to release him, and he had lost in all £12,000.

Nicholas Francklin had taken over the Bushmead property on 1 October 1641 (WG807; WG891). He obviously tried to increase the income, e.g., on 2nd February 1650 he made an agreement with a Staploe hopdresser to turn four acres of lately grubbed up woodland into a hopgarden, and to share the profits (WG809). It is difficult to know how successful he was. WG891 f. 4 is the Order of the County Sequestration Committee of 15 March 1643/4 that all but one fifth of the £300 per annum to be given by Nicholas Francklin to William's wife and children should be sequestered "by reason of the Delinquencie of Mr. Geery". Records of the central Committee for Compounding suggest that on 6 March 1647 William Gery compounded for £740, and after this date (up to 12 June 1655) the entries show Nicholas Francklin defending the estate (and the £300 p.a. to the wife and children) fairly successfully against any move by the County Committee to re-sequester. However, any repayment of debts must have gone very slowly. Some fragmentary accounts in WG891 show that in 1641 and in 1643 the rental for Eaton Socon, Little Staughton and Great Staughton brought in about £384, but taxes, local and national, and various levies in the year 1643 came to over £153. In 1648 a covenant designed to provide satisfaction for one particular group of his creditors mentions a total indebtedness to them of £1610 (WG808) The accounts in WG891 show that in 1648 Nicholas Francklin received from rents £423 1s 8d., but the charges on the estate were about £470, of which £300 was the allowance to Mrs. Gery and the children; £35.18s the charges over Sequestration of the estate; and about £43 other legal charges. However, he raised what he could from sale of wood - £942 2s 8d between 1649 and 1651 - though this may well have left the state denuded of saleable timber.

On 25 January 1658/9 William III together with his eldest son William (aged by now about 22), assigned the whole estate to his brother Thomas, then of Isleworth, Middlesex, on trust to pay debts and to pay specified portions for his younger children. The total charges added up to £4635, but of this £2400 was for portions of £600 each to his younger son Richard and his daughters Katherine, Anne and Mary, and another £100 was for a Mr. Wales to take his son Richard as apprentice, besides £200 to his wife after his death, so the other debts were now £1935 (WG514). This deed meant that he had no need to make a will, and though we have no date or place of burial, he had died before 9 July 1659.

William Gery III's children by Anna Dyer were:

A) William Gery IV, baptised Eaton Socon 12 July 1636, for whom see below.

B) Richard Gery, date of birth unknown, though he was mentioned in the will of his grandfather Sir Richard made 1638 (£20 to buy a piece of plate). His father gave him a portion of £600, and £100 was to be paid to Mr. Wales for his apprenticeship.

C) Katherine, baptised at Eaton Socon 4 November 1634. She was remembered in the will of her grandfather Sir Richard (£20 to provide a piece of plate) and her aunt Anne Gery (made 1643) £20 and "that little parte of silver plate which was left me by my Father". She married before January 1658 Nicholas, the third son of Sir John Hare of Stow Bardolph.

D) Ann, date of baptism not known. She is mentioned in the will of her uncle Richard made 1642/3, and in the family settlement of January 1659 made by her father and elder brother. She married one Dartingnave a Frenchman who had served in Sir George Booth's rising, no doubt with her brother, and she petitioned for a Customs post for him in 1660, and for herself for the post of Dresser to the Queen in May 1662.

E) Mary, date of baptism not known. She is mentioned in the will of her uncle Richard dated 1642/3 and in the family settlement made by her father and elder brother in January 1659.

William Gery was baptised at Eaton Socon 12 July 1636. He too followed the royalist cause. In 1660 he petitioned Charles II for a place as Commissioner of Excise. He said that his father had lost his whole estate by adhering to the late King; he was himself plundered to his shirt, and imprisoned, for following Sir George Booth in the 1659 August risings, and he was recommended to his Majesty by General Montague at Breda. This implies that he went to the continent with Montague. The records of the Commonwealth Council of State for 11 August 1659 give the names of a group of Bedfordshire royalists: Richard Taylor, George Blundell, George Gery (presumably William's uncle), Doyly Dyer (another uncle), Richard Stone (husband of his sister Elizabeth), William Cheney and Daniel Clerke, who were to be removed to the Gatehouse, Lambeth, for examination, after Sir George Booth's rising in Chester.

He married twice:

(i) 23 July 1661 at St. Peter, Paul's Wharf, London, to Mary Salmon. The Marriage Settlement of 18, 19 July 1661 is recited in the Private Act of 1678 and also in GY3/10. Her portion was £3,250. Mary Salmon was born c. 1638, but we have no knowledge of her death and burial. William IV's two surviving children were by this marriage, for whom see below.

(ii) 3 August 1675 at Bushmead [presumably Eaton Socon unless there was a licensed chapel in the house] to Katherine , widow of Richard Taylor of Clapham (another Royalist family, and associated with William Gery in the Council of State order of 11 August 1659 mentioned above) and the daughter of Edmond Bosdon. There is no record of this marriage settlement. After William's death we find her living at Felmersham (January 1687) and at Goldington in June 1691.

William attempted to free the estate so as to be able to sell and pay off mortgages and other debts by a Private Act of Parliament "An Act for the Setling certaine lands belonging to William Gery of Bushmead in the County of Bedford esquire upon Trustees to be sold for the payment of debts" in 1678 (WG1276; GY3/7). However, he mortgaged the state for £6000 (WG312).

Katherine Taylor was entitled under the will of her husband to live in the mansion house at Clapham until her eldest son came of age, and William Gery moved to Clapham, where we find him in 1686 (S/AM20). Possibly Bushmead was left for his mother, who did not die until October 1684.

We have no record of William's death and burial. We last hear of him in May 1686 (S/AM20), and Katherine is again described as a widow on 27 January 1687 (S/AM37), and thus he died in the latter part of the year 1686. WG535-6 suggests that the estate now came to about 940 acres, 519a. in Bedfordshire and 421a. in Hunts.

Two surviving children by Mary Salmon were:

A) Charles Gery, b.c. 1665, for whom see below.

B) Elizabeth Gery, b.c. 1669 (recited in 1678 Act WG1276). Under the act she should have received a portion of £2000, but in 1689 when she is described as of London, spinster, she agreed with Charles that she should have only £1000, and Wood End Farm, Bolnhurst, was settled on her to secure this. (GY3/10). Witnesses to this agreement were Thomas Gery and Hester Gery. Could these have been relations through Sir Thomas of Bloomsbury?

Charles Gery, b.c. 1665 (1678 Act, WG1276) seems to have inherited an estate still burdened with debt (WG516-534, WG854). We have little information about his life. As his father had lived at the end of his life at Clapham, so Charles is found in 1704 living at Great Staughton (WG792). Possibly Bushmead was expensive to keep up.

Charles married twice, and both marriages seem to have been to women who brought property into the family.

(i) about the year 1696 (marriage settlement 20 January 1697 WG812; see also WG792, 871, 1277-8) to Ann Sawyer one of the three daughters and eventual heiresses of James Sawyer of Caldicott, Northamptonshire, esq. She was buried at Little Staughton on 18 November 1706. Of her £3050 portion, £2000 was to help pay off mortgages. In 1704 Charles and Mary were possessed of messuages and land in Newton Bromswold and Raunds and in Wyboston.

(ii) 1710/11 (marriage settlement WG813, 1710/1) Hester Benyon, daughter of Thomas Benyon of Ely, clerk. She brought a farm and about 200 acres at Littleport near Ely (WG819). Her receipt book is GY7/3; and she buried, as a widow, at Little Staughton on 9 May 1728.

There is an undated particular of Charles' property in Beds., Hunts. and Northants (time of Queen Anne) when the income from the Beds. and Hunts. Bushmead estate comes to £628 9s 4d, and from lands in Northants. and Beds (presumably once Sawyer property) to £76 18s 8d. (WG891).

Probably the family's financial position began to improve as the result of two prudent marriages, and a family which consisted (as far as one can see) of one surviving son only. Charles was buried at Little Staughton 21 April 1714.

Charles Gery's son and heir (date of birth not known, but as he is likely to have been older than his wife Eleanor Welby b. 1711, one might suppose his mother was Ann Sawyer and that he was born c. 1700.

A) William Gery V b [? c. 1700] bur. Little Staughton 21 October 1755.

There is little evidence for the life of William Gery V. He was still trying to pay off the mortgage and other charges on the estate dating from 1583 (WG1279), but it would seem that the burden of debt was less than in the last century. In 1744 he was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for Hunts. (WG860); in 1747 Sheriff of Bedfordshire (WG890) The family began to buy property again (WG699 1753 etc.). There are a few bills for cloth bought by him from Edward Audley (WG891/33 1727).

A manuscript book of his survives with fragmentary accounts and notes made between 1734 and 1753 (GY5/2). He sells pigs, wheat and wood, and bought fish, rabbits, asparagus, and a hamper of spa water, among other goods. Obviously he took care of his library, and bought Grotius' War and Peace and a History of the Donatists. In August 1741 "Pd Wainwright for Mending 2 Watches and a Tankard". He noted small amounts lost at backgammon and cards. He paid for repairs to the house and furniture, and for weeding the garden and courts. "Paid Mr. Jones the Painter for 2 Landscapes 3 guineas". He seemed also to be paying for some items for the house at Welbourne. He liked curiosities: June 20 1741 "To Wittington for a Queen Eliz: sixpence found amongst the Rubbish in making the stable court".

He married about April 1738 (marriage settlement of 13 April 1738 recited in WG1279) Eleanor Welby. The children of this marriage are recorded on the inside of the front cover GY5/2.

"Eleanor Gery Daughter of Richard Welby Esquire of Denton in the County of Lincoln was brought to Bed at Bushmead April the 27th 1739 of a Son Named William which was Christen'd in Little Stoughton Church by Richard Reynolds Lord Bishop of Lincoln.

On October 16th 1740 she was brought to Bed again, at her Mothers House at Welbourn in the aforesaid County of Lincoln of three Children Mary [inserted later who died at Welbourn April 9th 1743] Charles and Eleanor, at present all Living April 6th 1741".

Eleanor Welby survived her husband and lived to a great old age at Bushmead, being buried at Little Staughton 17th March 1796, aged 86 (her will WG869). We are told that William was in the process of employing Isaac Ware (d. 1766) to Gothicise his house (a model of the house as it survives at Bushmead) but this came to nothing on William's unexpected death. Family tradition has it that he returned from a coach journey and when the coach pulled up at the door at Bushmead, and the footman went to open it, William Gery was dead inside. He was buried at Little Staughton 21 October 1755.

William Gery V's children by Eleanor Welby were:

A) William Gery VI born at Bushmead 27 April 1739; privately baptised there 27 April; publicity received into the church at Little Staughton by the Bishop of Lincoln 20 May 1739. For his later life see below.

B) Charles (a triplet) born Welbourne Lincs., 16 Oct 1740. He was ordained and held various living, including the rectory of Haceby, Lincs., 1764 (WG865). He seems to have married but did not leave surviving children. He joined with his brother William in various transactions (e.g. WG816, WG830) and his will is dated 14 October 1817, when he left most of his property back to his brother's descendants (WG1289).

C) Mary (a triplet) born Welbourne Lincs., 16 Oct 1740, died Welbourne, Lincs., 9 April 1743.

D) Eleanor (a triplet) born Welbourne Lincs., 16 Oct 1740, buried, a spinster, at Little Staughton 22 February 1765 (her will dated 1765 WG866). She was at Bath when her will was made.

William Gery VI, born 1739, seems to have been in happier financial circumstances than any of his ancestors since Richard Gery I. He made a very fortunate marriage on 20 November 1763 at St. Mary's Church, Bedford, to Mary, daughter and heiress of Richard Bell of Bedford, esquire, and so gained considerable landed estate, about 700 acres, mainly in Bedfordshire. From that time onwards he made frequent purchases of property in the neighbourhood of Bushmead. He joined in local schemes and was made a trustee of the Stevenage to Biggleswade Turnpike road in 1761 (WG864), and possibly had similar involvement in bodies in Huntingdonshire. Through Mary Bell's mother, born Mary daughter of William Carter of Turvey, the Gerys became linked with the Williamsons, the Carter-Mitchells, the Rogers and Goodhalls, and other local families. The family was now comfortable, if not prosperous.

An account book survives from July 1788 to February 1793 which records all expenditure, household and estate, and is kept (apparently) by Mary Gery, born Mary Bell. (GY5/3). Inside the front cover is a receipt "to stain wood Mahongy Colour", and inside the back cover: "Mary Bell Daughter of Richard Bell Esq. of Bedford was born Monday December the 7th 1741 at half an hour past ten in the morning."

The children of William Gery VI by Mary Bell were:

A) William baptised Little Staughton 23 November 1764 buried Little Staughton 28 June 1768.

B) Mary Selina, baptised Little Staughton 11 March 1766, married at Eaton Socon 5th January 1796 (marriage settlement 23 December 1795 WG797-8, 1283) John Milnes of Newark, esq.

C) Eleanor, baptised Little Staughton 31 July 1767, married at Eaton Socon 10 October 1796, Thomas Milnes of Tansor, Northants, esq.

D) Hester, baptised Little Staughton 18 July 1769, married at Eaton Socon 28 July 1792 the Reverend Hugh Wade, fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge (marriage settlement dated 17 July 1792 WG1280).