

Worthington Families of the Seventeenth Century - part 2.

The county of Leicestershire - an overview.

There has been a place named Worthington in Leicestershire since Saxon times. But it is not known exactly when the first Worthington family arrived in the county. *The Worthington Families of Medieval England* by Philip M Worthington states that the earliest reference to a Worthington in Leicestershire was Peter de Worthington about the middle of the thirteenth century. But thereafter there was little or nothing about the family name until the sixteenth century when several branches of Worthingtons existed in Leicestershire. One of these lived in Belton, just two and a half miles from Worthington.

We know that by the seventeenth century there were at least five Worthington family groups living in the county: in Lockington (LO); Leicester St Margaret's (V); Newbold, Worthington and Coleorton (NE); Norton Juxta Twycross (NO) and Orton on the Hill (O). Each has, or will have, its own narrative and pedigree in this series.

Coleorton

There were possibly two other families who were resident in Coleorton at the time but it has not been possible to link them to a family in pedigree NE. They were both named William. One married Mary (surname unknown) and had two daughters who died as infants: Mary (b1696 - d1696) and Susannah (b1702 - d1702). The other married Ann (surname unknown) and had daughters Mary (b1705) and Elizabeth (b1707). There is also a son William b1700 but the register does not record his parents. He could be the son of either of these couples.

Where did the two Williams come from - and indeed were there two or is it just one person who married twice?

Lockington

Did the Worthington line die out in Lockington?

The last entry in the registers at St Nicholas Lockington which mentions a Worthington is that of Edward's LO4 widow Elizabeth to John Cook. A search until that register ends in 1686 has no other record of a Worthington. Either the family moved away from Lockington or it died out there.

Of the known sons of Edward and Isabel, only two survived to adulthood and only one, Edward, married and had just one son Robert, who lived long enough to have his own children. After 1626 there is no trace of Robert either.

Keyham

Just to the east of Leicester lies the township/chapelry of Keyham (or Keame) in the parish of Rothley. The church, dedicated to All Saints, has registers dating from 1574. Its burial ground is about a mile to the east of the church. There were two groups of Worthingtons around Keyham in the late sixteenth and during the seventeenth centuries:

William Worthington and Marie Burdett

Documents from the Leicestershire Record Office relating to the *manor and soke of Rothley*, record the granting of land from John Burdett to William Worthington as part of a settlement on the marriage between William and Burdett's daughter Marie. The

grant of land was dated 1605, but there is no trace of either a marriage licence or register recording the event.

The baptism register at All Saints Keyham however shows the following four children of William and Marie/Mary:

Isabel - baptised 1595
Ann - baptised 24 July 1608
Joane - baptised 18 August 1611
Peter - baptised 24 September 1619

It is worthy of note that Isabel was baptised in 1595 yet the grant of land was some 10 years later. Was Isabel not the legitimate daughter of William? Or did the land transaction only get completed many years after the marriage? Was Isabel the daughter of another William Worthington?

William Worthington of Keyham wrote a will in 1628 which was proved the same year. He mentions his wife Marie (Mary) and children William, Peter, Anne and Joane. There appears to be no baptismal record for William junior. Isabel had presumably either married or died. William senior was buried at Keyham on 8 June 1628. Mary, his widow, was buried at Keyham on 1 February 1648.

There is a further entry regarding an inventory and bond in the name of William Worthington in 1664. Could this be William junior from the same family?

Further back in the registers are the baptisms of William 1573, Ann 1574 and Mary 1575 of parents Richard Worthington and Ann. But all three died as infants (see below) ruling out that Richard was the father of William above.

Peter Worthington and Ann

Another family group in Keyham may have been Peter Worthington and his wife Ann. They had two known children: Thomas baptised 1563 and Ann baptised 1571. There is a burial at Keyham of Peter Worthington on 2 January 1613. The entry gives no indication of his age or status.

The following may have been Peter and Thomas (father and son) above. Thomas would have been about 40 years old and perhaps taking over his father's estate prior to the latter's death?

Item 03.06.22 in 17 C Volume 4 of the *Register of Worthington References*, dated 22 June 1603 records: "*Gift from Peter Worthington of Keyham, co. Leicester, husbandman, to his son Thomas Worthington of Keyham, husbandman: half a messuage and tenement with the appurtenances in Keyham: half the garden, orchard, crofts, tofts etc belonging to the above messuage, and half the lands, tenements, meadow, pasture etc, all now in the tenure of Peter Worthington*".

Couples with connections to Keyham and Rothley: (Source: All C Vol1 1580.2)

1582-3 Thomas Worthington of Keyham, husbandman and Jane his wife
1582-3 William Worthington, the eldest son of Thomas and Jane.
1597 Peter Worthington of Keyham, husbandman and his sister Alice (marriage of Alice to Rector William Keye)
1597 Henry Worthington of Rothley, husbandman and Elizabeth his wife.

Marriages Keyham

Ann Worthington and Edward Huffen 30 July 1621

Ann Worthington and William Persgrave 16 Apr 1638

Burials Keyham

All Worthington.....

1573	10 May	William	parents Richard & Ann (baptised 26 Apr 1573)
1574	29 Jun	Ann	father Richard (baptised 18 Jun 1574)
1575	19 Jul	Richard	
1576	17 Sep	Mary	father Richard (baptised 6 Nov 1575)
1601	14 Oct	Dorotie	
1603	17 Apr	Mary	
1613	2 Jan	Peter	
1622	2 Mar	Alse	
1626	28 Sep	Jane	
1626	29 Sep	Thomas	
1628	8 Jun	William	
1648	1 Feb	Mary	

Evington

Evington is situated just four miles to the east of Leicester St Margaret's.

No pedigree has been compiled for Evington as there was insufficient information to do so from the *Register of Worthington References*. However it is probably worthy of note that there are two entries of interest in the London Apprenticeship Abstracts 1442-1850 listed under item AllC Vol2 1594.2

3 October 1594 - Thomas Worthington, born in Leicestershire, son of Brian of Evington, husbandman, deceased, apprenticed to Thomas Brickwood of Brewers' Company to train as a brewer.

18 February 1607-8 - Thomas Atkins, born in Leicestershire, son of William of Evington, husbandman, apprenticed to Thomas Worthington of Brewers' Company to train as a brewer.

The apprentice in 1594 appears to have become a master in 1607. Were these the founders of, or at least linked to, the Worthington Brewers of Burton, still in existence in 2021?

Further connections outside Leicestershire

There is some compelling, but as yet unproven evidence that the Worthingtons who settled in and around the village of Worthington during the seventeenth century, specifically Newbold, arrived from Staffordshire, and in particular, Hopwas and Tamworth. It includes some speculation (from online, and other, as yet unproved sources) that **Michael NE1** was from Tamworth, Staffordshire and the son of a brother of John b1545 and Hugh b1550 Worthington of Hoppas, near to Tamworth. The name of that brother (Michael's alleged father) is not known. But there was a third named brother, Christopher b1555. The same source records a brother to Michael called John b1590 and Michael's birth as 1600. This would fit with **John NE4** and **Michael NE1** in this pedigree, but remains unproven for the time being.

The same source develops the line from Michael bap 1676 (the eldest child of **John NE3**). It shows Michael and his family living in Markfield, some 10 miles to the south east towards Leicester.

Furthermore, there are other credible connections between Staffordshire and Leicestershire, specifically between Tamworth and Orton on the Hill. Council member William C (Bill) Worthington in the US has a collection of his grandfather's journals and transcriptions which contain a lot of information about this area and the families living in it. Work is ongoing to produce a document summarising these particular connections and when completed will be uploaded onto this site.

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