

THE
CHURCHILL
CHRONICLES

Maj. Gen. Thomas B. L. Churchill

C.B., C.B.E., M.C.

£11.50



CLICKABLE TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Note page numbers in this table of contents are different from those at bottom of pages in the book as in the book the diagrams and photos are not numbered pages.

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	3
THOMAS BELL LINDSAY CHURCHILL.....	4
THE MARLBOROUGH CHURCHILLS: AUTHORS REMARKS	5
ILLUSTRATIONS:	7
ABBREVIATIONS AND FAMILY TREE DIAGRAMS:.....	8
CHAPTER ONE: THE VILLAGE OF CHURCHILL AND ORIGINS OF THE FAMILY NAME:	30
CHAPTER TWO: CHURCHILLS OF THE 13th, 14th AND 15th CENTURIES.....	33
CHAPTER THREE: THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY CHURCHILLS OF BANBURY, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF A PEDIGREE	43
CHAPTER FOUR: THE CHURCHILLS OF BANBURY (continued).....	47
CHAPTER FIVE: THE CHURCHILLS OF NORTH ASTON	51
CHAPTER SIX: THE MOVE TO DEDDINGTON AND STEEPLE CLAYDON	60
CHAPTER SEVEN: THE FIRST THREE GENERATIONS AT DEDDINGTON	71
CHAPTER EIGHT: TALLOW CHANDLERS, GROCERS AND SOLICITORS	75
CHAPTER NINE: DEDDINGTON FOLK, AND A MOVE TO LONDON	83
PLATES	86
CHAPTER TEN: CAPTAIN THOMAS CHURCHILL, THE PAYMASTER THE COLONIAL CIVIL SERVICE; THE FIRST WORLD WAR.....	110
CHAPTER ELEVEN: A VISIT FROM THE SHERIFFS.....	119
CHAPTER TWELVE: THE STEEPLE CLAYDON CHURCHILLS	123
CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THE DEDDINGTON CHURCHILLS AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR.....	137
CONCLUSION	152
LIST OF FIGURES	153
APPENDIX I: The Guild of Knowle.....	154
APPENDIX II <i>An extract from Jackson's Oxford Journal 9th January 1768 (Advertisement):</i>	155
APPENDIX III <i>Early leaves of the North Wales Gazette from April 7 to June 28 1825:</i>	155
APPENDIX IV: College of Arms discussion	156
APPENDIX V letter from author	157
APPENDIX VI Fleetwood Churchill MD.....	158

E CHURCHILL CHRONICLES,

Annals of a yeoman family

By THOMAS B. CHURCHILL

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help given to me thirty-three years ago by Dr. E. G. W. Bill, now the Librarian of Lambeth Palace Library. In those distant days Geoffrey Bill provided me with much information concerning Churchill landholdings in the Christ Church Manor of Deddington in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Equally, I am happy to thank my distant kinsman, Dr. Gerald Tibbitts, Sub-Librarian of University of London Library, for many stimulating discussions on the origins of our common ancestors.

Finally, I must record my deep indebtedness to Mr. Colin G. Harris of the Bodleian Library, who has always responded most generously from his vast store of knowledge to any of my frequent enquiries over the past ten years.

Thomas B. L. Churchill.

IN MEMORIAM PARENTUM"

THOMAS BELL LINDSAY CHURCHILL

General Tom Churchill comes of an old Oxfordshire yeoman family whose origins go back to the fifteenth century. During the days of Empire representatives of his family served in India and Ceylon as soldiers and civil engineers, and in the two World Wars they fought and died in the service of their king.

In 1926, Tom Churchill passed in 7th to the Royal Military College (as it was called then), Sandhurst, thereby gaining a prize cadetship, and he passed out sixth, winning the prize sword for Military History in the following year.

He joined The Manchester Regiment in Burma in 1927 and three years later moved to Secunderabad, Deccan, India. In 1931 the Regiment was recalled to Burma because the Burma Rebellion had broken out, and a force of brigade strength was sent to that country to quell the outbreak. Churchill commanded his platoon in an isolated village post a few miles east of Prome in the southern Irrawaddy District, and after a month of ceaseless searching in the paddy fields, villages and jungle by day and night, managed to confront a rebel gang, kill the leader and two of his confederates, and capture the remainder. Churchill was mentioned in Despatches and awarded the Military Cross for his leadership in the hunt. He was aged 24. After being made Adjutant of his Regiment (the youngest in the Army), he moved with his battalion to the Sudan, and then in 1933, returned to England.

Two years later Tom Churchill was appointed instructor in the interpretation of air photographs, and in due course became the expert in this form of intelligence. When war was imminent he ran courses to teach RAF Bomber Command intelligence officers how to estimate bomb damage to factories, railway yards and ports. Later he assisted in establishing the inter-service interpretation establishment at Medmenham, where later the German flying bombs were discovered.

He was attached to RAF Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain, but, tiring of a job on the staff, he joined the Army Commandos for the invasion of Sicily, and the landing at Salerno in Italy. When his friend Sir Robert Laycock was made Director of Combined Operations, in succession to Lord Louis Mountbatten, Tom succeeded Laycock as commander of the Commando Brigade in Italy. He led it in the landing at Anzio, and then took command of the island of Vis in the Adriatic, which he put in a state of defence, as the Germans were occupying all the other Yugoslav islands lying between Split and Dubrovnik.

In June 1944, Marshal Josip Broz Tito was chased out of Yugoslavia by a German parachute raid at Drvar in Montenegro, and was brought by British destroyer to Vis. Churchill and his Commando Brigade guaranteed his safety, and Tom came to know him well. It was also on Vis Island that he met Fitzroy

Maclean, later Sir Fitzroy, and made a lasting friend of this outstanding guerrilla leader.

In September 1944 he landed with his Commando Brigade in Albania, where, after a hard fight in appalling weather, he defeated the Germans at Sarande (Santa Quaranta), cut off their retreat to Germany, and went on to liberate the island of Corfu.

After the war, Churchill commanded the British Zone in Austria. He was then appointed as Major General in charge of administration in the Far East Command, with headquarters at Singapore, and then became Vice Quartermaster General to the Forces at the War Office. His final appointment was as Deputy Chief of Staff of the Land Forces in NATO at Fontainebleau.

In 1948 Churchill was sent a copy of General Eisenhower's book, *Crusade In Europe*. On the fly-leaf Ike had written: -

*For Brigadier T.B.L Churchill
For admiration and high esteem
to a brilliant leader in World War II.*

Dwight D Eisenhower.

THE MARLBOROUGH CHURCHILLS: AUTHORS REMARKS

The first Winston Churchill (1620 - 1688), the father of John Churchill (created 1st Duke of Marlborough) alleged (but without proof) that he was descended from **Gitto** de Leon (living in 1055) of a noble family in Normandy; and he averred that Gitte's grandson, Roger de Courcil, attended **William, Duke of Normandy** in his descent on England, being rewarded with lands in Somerset, Dorset and Devon. On the other hand, **Edward Harley** (1689 -1741) stated that the first Duke of Marlborough's great-grandfather "was a blacksmith who worked in the family of Meggs".

Winston Churchill of our day (1871 - 1965), the great World War II Prime Minister, in his MARLBOROUGH, HIS LIFE AND TIMES, describing the family descent of his ancestors as stated by the first Winston, says, "when descending these chaines" we come to the Duke of Marlborough's ancestor **Roger**, who, by the daughter of Peverell, relict of Nicholas Meggs, became the great great grandfather of John Churchill, 1st Duke, and "we enter a **rather shady phase**. As Roger married a Mrs. Meggs, the story that John Churchill was descended from a blacksmith who worked in the Meggs' family **seems very suspicions and even disquieting**".

Well, there is **nothing disquieting** about my ancestors. I show that they were yeomen who paid their Subsidy and Poll-taxes, and in the early 18th century two of them had to enter into trade and became respectively a baker and a butcher. In the 20th century the family was well integrated into the service of the Empire, serving Queen Victoria, Edward VII, George V, George VI and Elizabeth II as soldiers and civil engineers in India, Ceylon and Hong Kong.



PLATE XX **Gwendoline Janie Williams , who married the author,**
Thomas B.L. Churchill, in 1934.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Plate I The village of Churchill's 12th century church.
Philcote Street, Deddington.

Plate II The 'Mansion House' of Henry Churchill at Steeple Claydon.
Maund's Farm, Deddington.

Plate III Leadenporch House and Deddington House, Deddington.

Plate IV Holograph letter of Thomas Churchill of Park Street, Grosvenor Square, London.

Plate V Thomas the Paymaster; his elder son, Thomas; and John Fleming,
Jeannie and family in Ceylon.

Plate VI Colombo Dock Tower; and John Fleming Churchill, Director of
Public Works, Ceylon, and his headquarters' staff.

Plate VII Dr. Arthur Churchill, R.A.M.C.; and his sister, Maudie, later Mrs. Sydney Long-Price.

Plate VIII Lieut. Col. George R. D. Churchill, D.S.O., XIX Punjabis. Jandola Military
Cemetery.

Plate IX Alec Fleming Churchill; his wife, Nellie; the two of them in their garden in Hong
Kong; and Lillie Fleming Churchill.

Plate X Rosamund Mary Churchill, later Mrs. Alexander Dixie.

Plate XI Captain Alexander Dixie, R.N., later Sir Alexander Dixie, Bt.

Plate XII The Steamship Forfarshire.

Plate XIII Two first cousins eight times removed. Thomas B. L. Churchill and Charles ff.
Churchill, 1981.

Plate XIV OPERATION PEDESTAL.

Plate XV Lieut. Robert A. F. Churchill (Buster) R.N.

Plate XVI lieut. Colonel Jack M. T. Churchill, D.S.O. * , M.C.

Plate XVII Brigadier Tom Churchill conducts Marshal Josip Broz Tito to inspect No. 2 Commando on Vis Island, Yugoslavia.

Plate XVIII Brigadier Tom Churchill, the present author. A drawing done in Molfetta, Italy, 1944 by G. Cozzoli.

Plate XIX Arms of Churchill of Deddington in the county of Oxford.

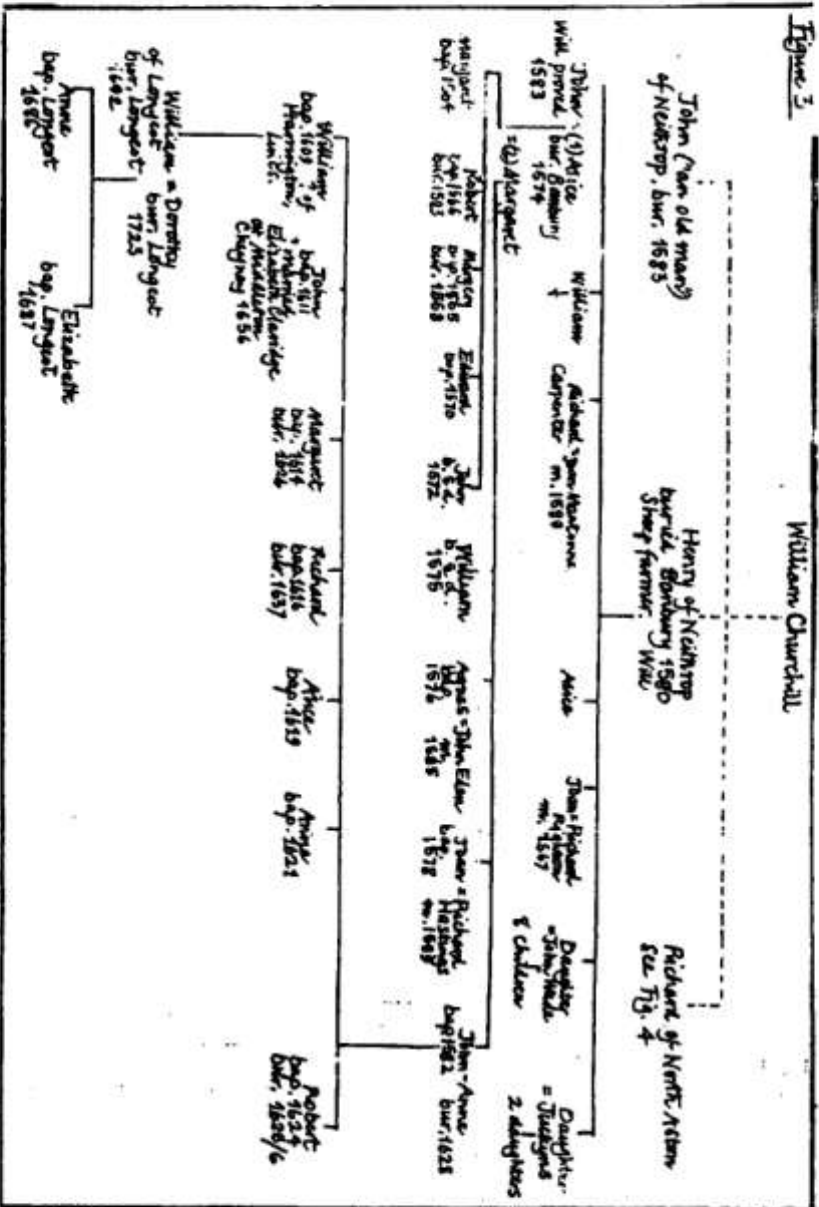
Plate XX Mrs. Gwendoline Janie Churchill, wife of Thomas B.L. Churchill.

ABBREVIATIONS AND FAMILY TREE DIAGRAMS:

CA	Churchill Archives
Ca	Cartulary
ChancPro.	Chancery Proceeding
Dep	Deposition
Doc.	Documents
Ed	Editor
Fl	Flourished
Hic	History Historical
HM	Hic (Her) Majesty's Station
HR	Hampshire County Record
JO	Jackson's Oxford Journal
J	Journal
NR	Northamptonshire County Record
NM	No mention
O	Oxford Oxfordshire
OR	Oxfordshire County Record
DO	Public Record Office
Soc	Society
Sub	Subsidy
W	Warwickshire
Wa	Warwickshire
Wh	Warwickshire County Record



Figure 3



Richard of Northampton

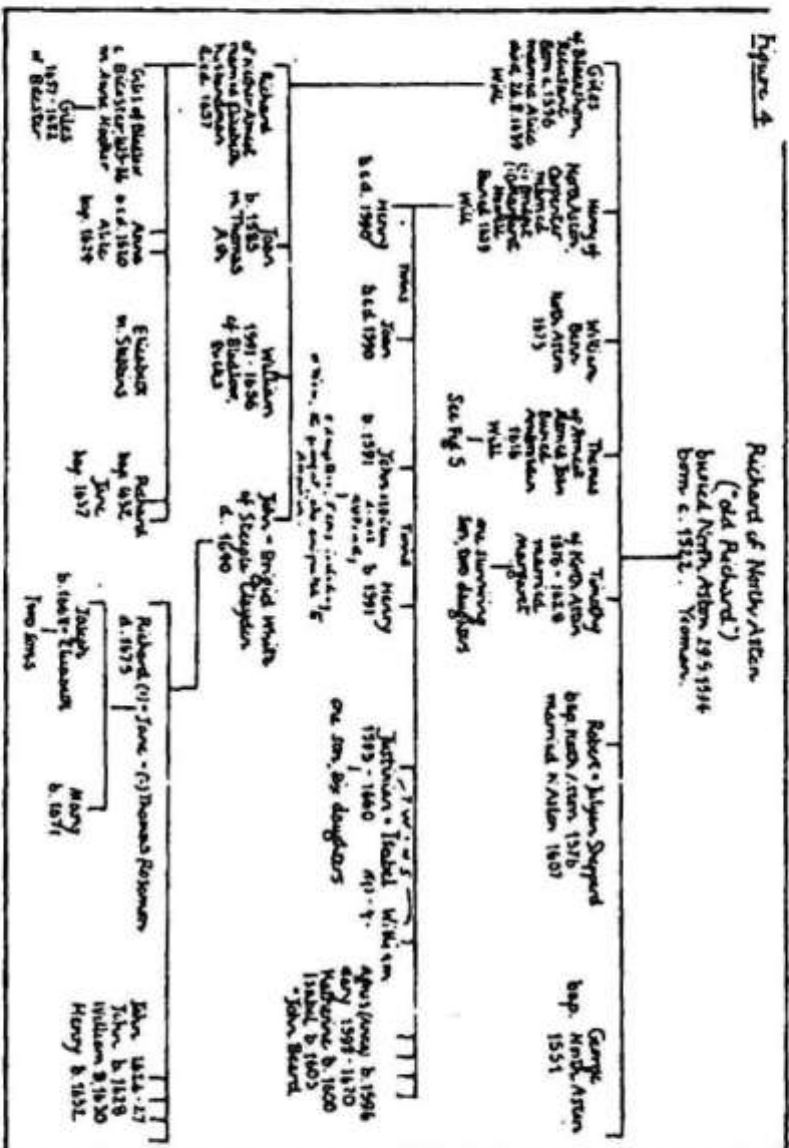
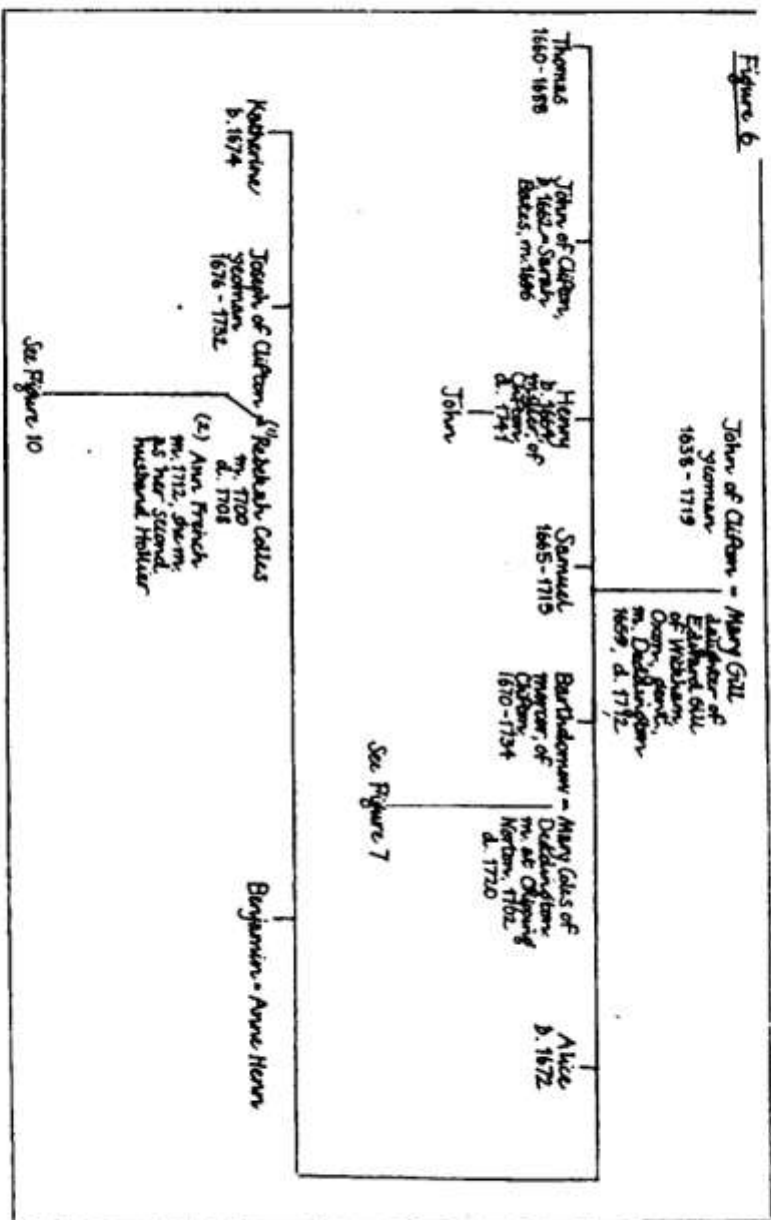


Figure 6



Bartholomew - Mary Coles
1670-1734. Mercer

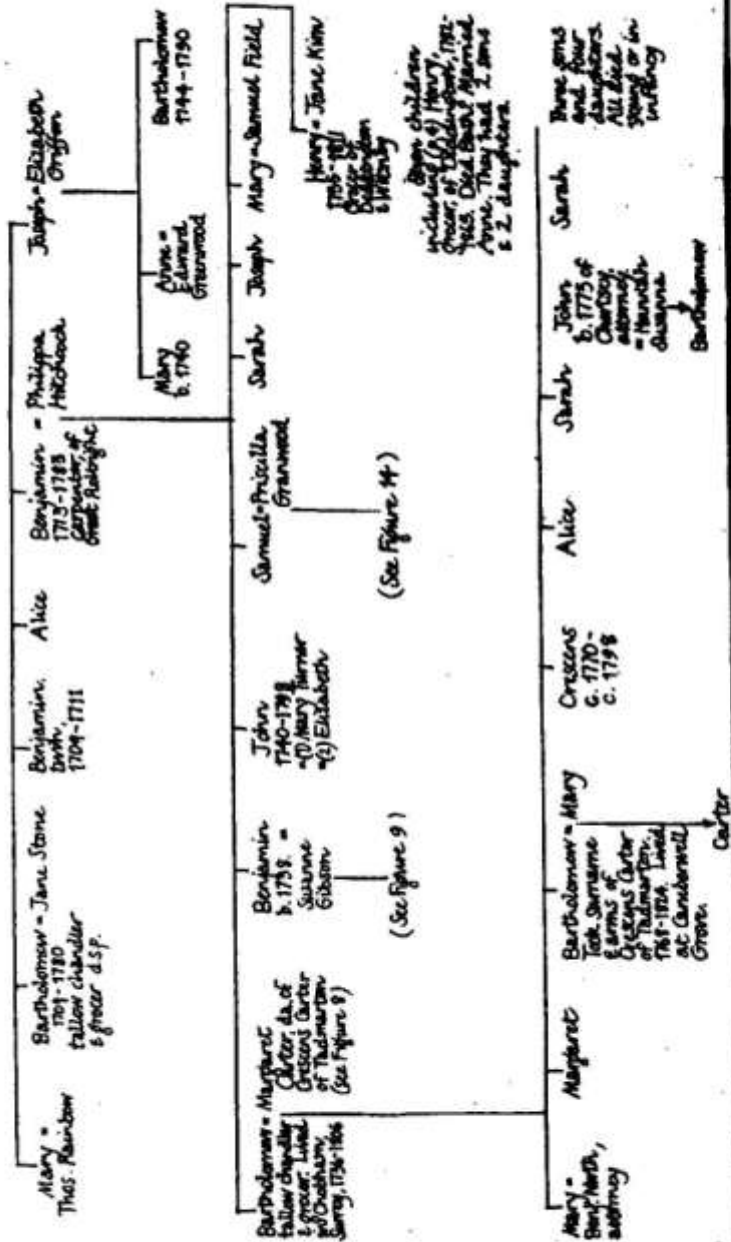


Figure 8

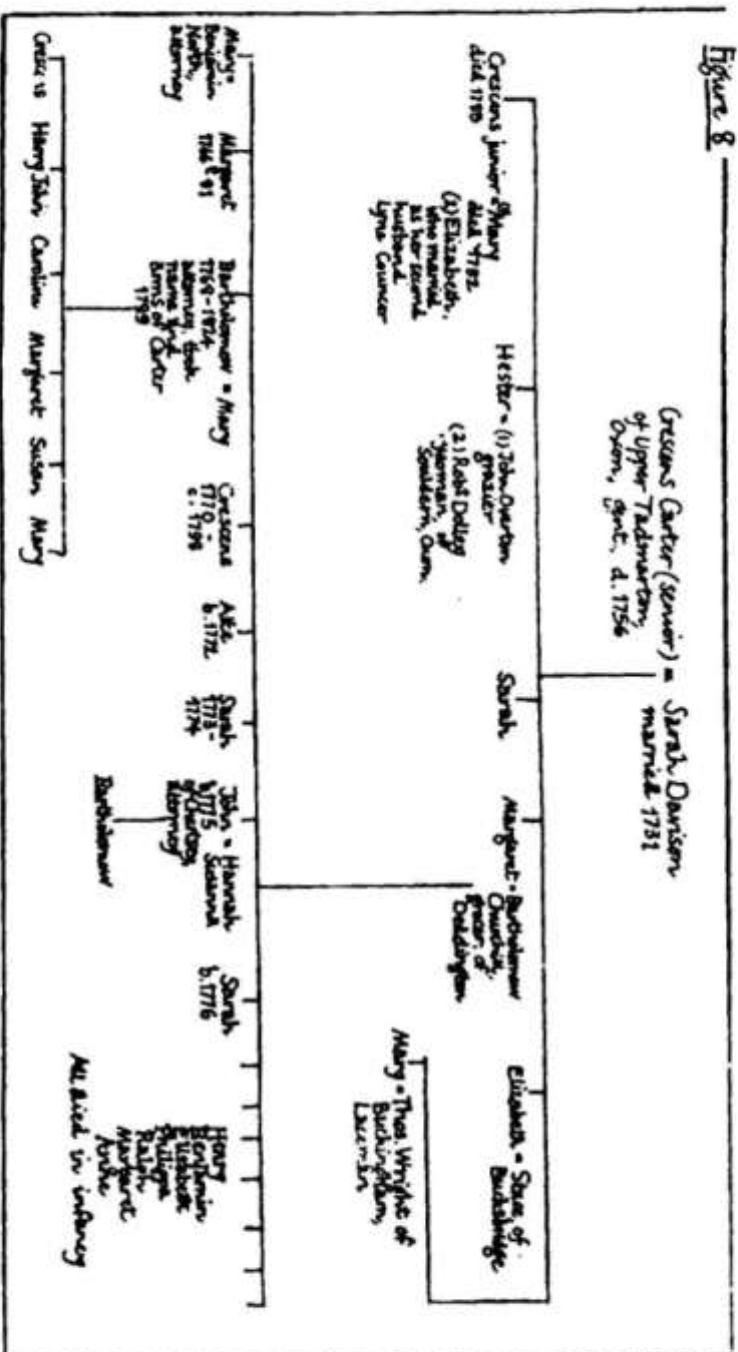


Figure 9

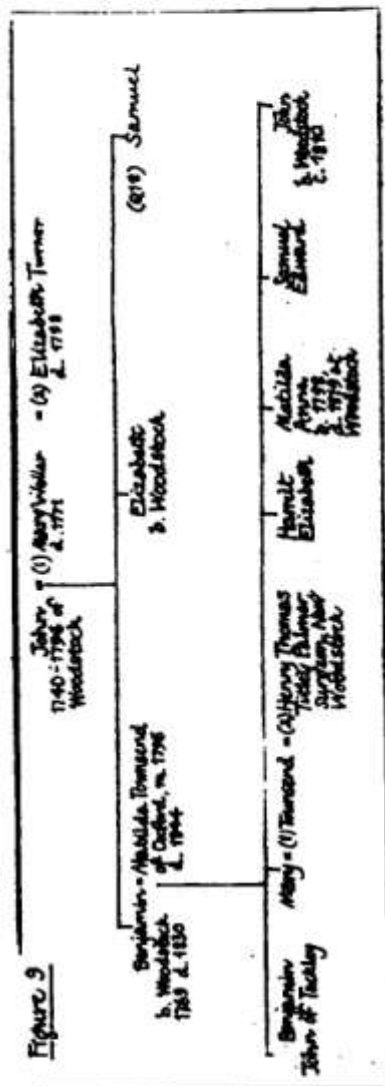


Figure 10

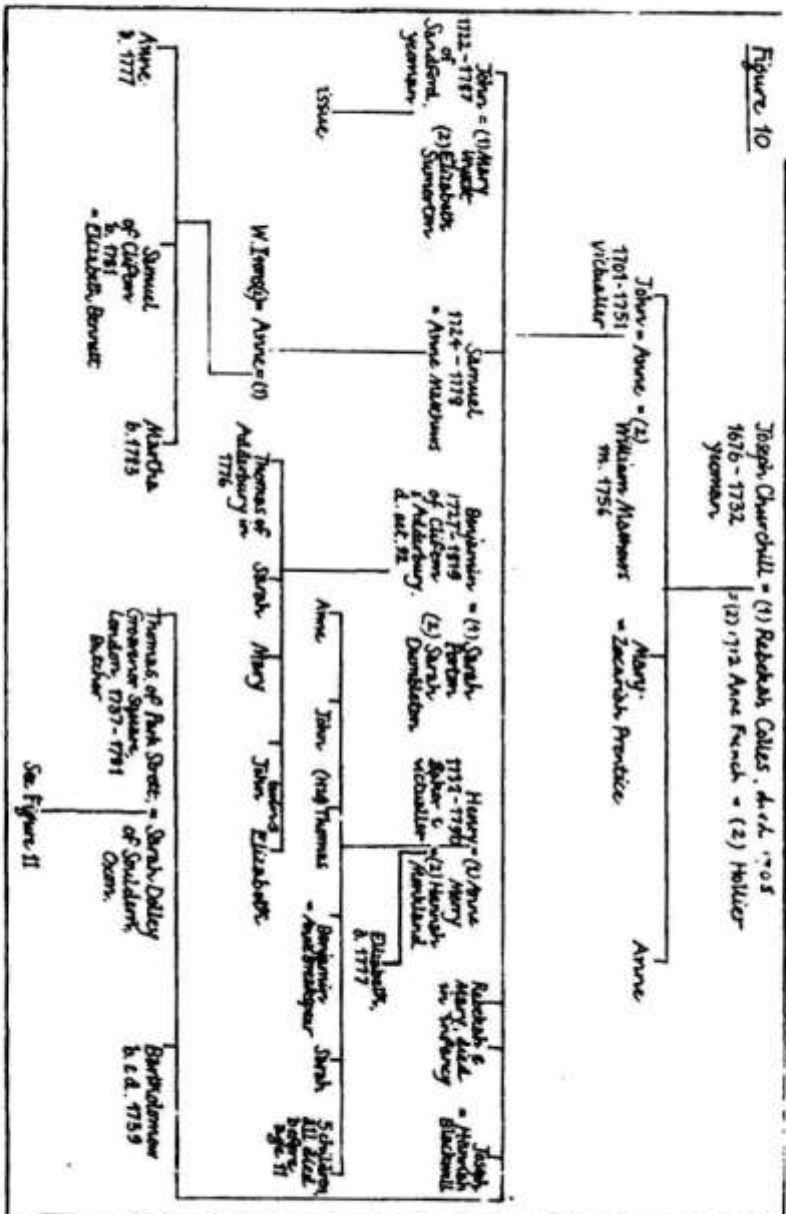


Figure 11

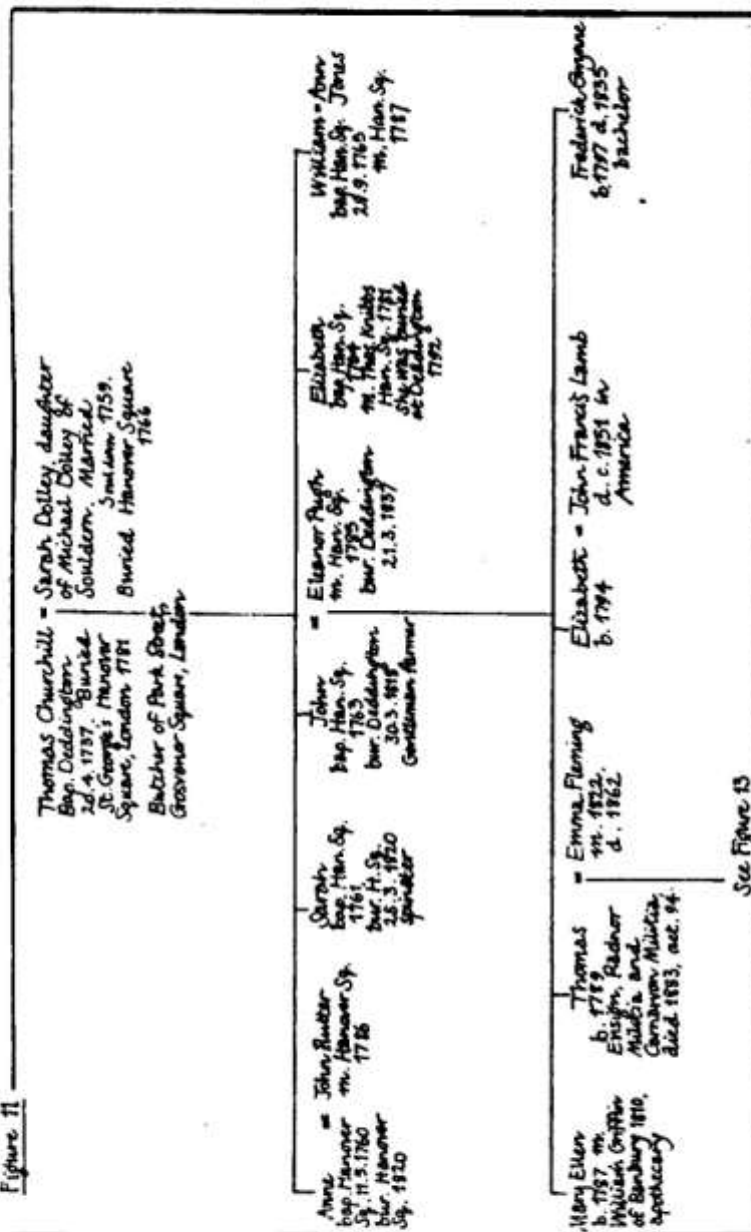


Figure 12

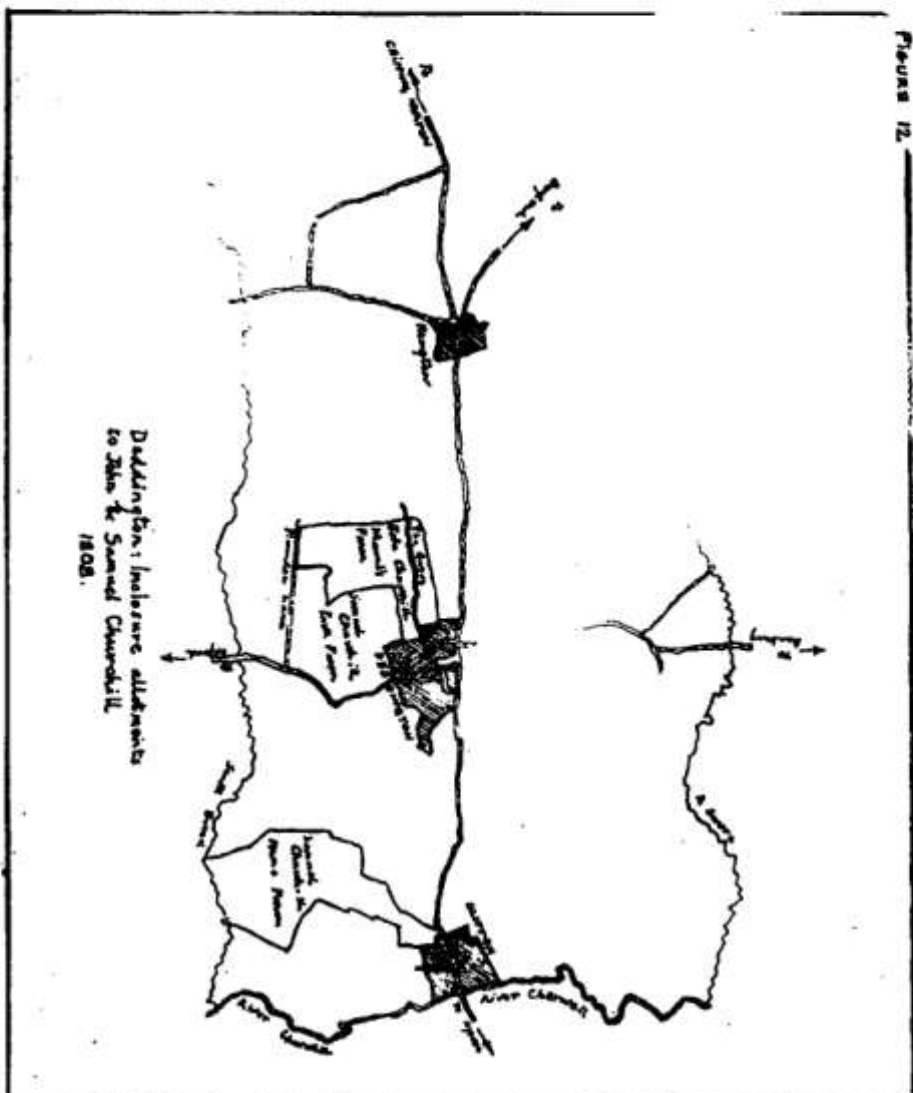


Figure 15

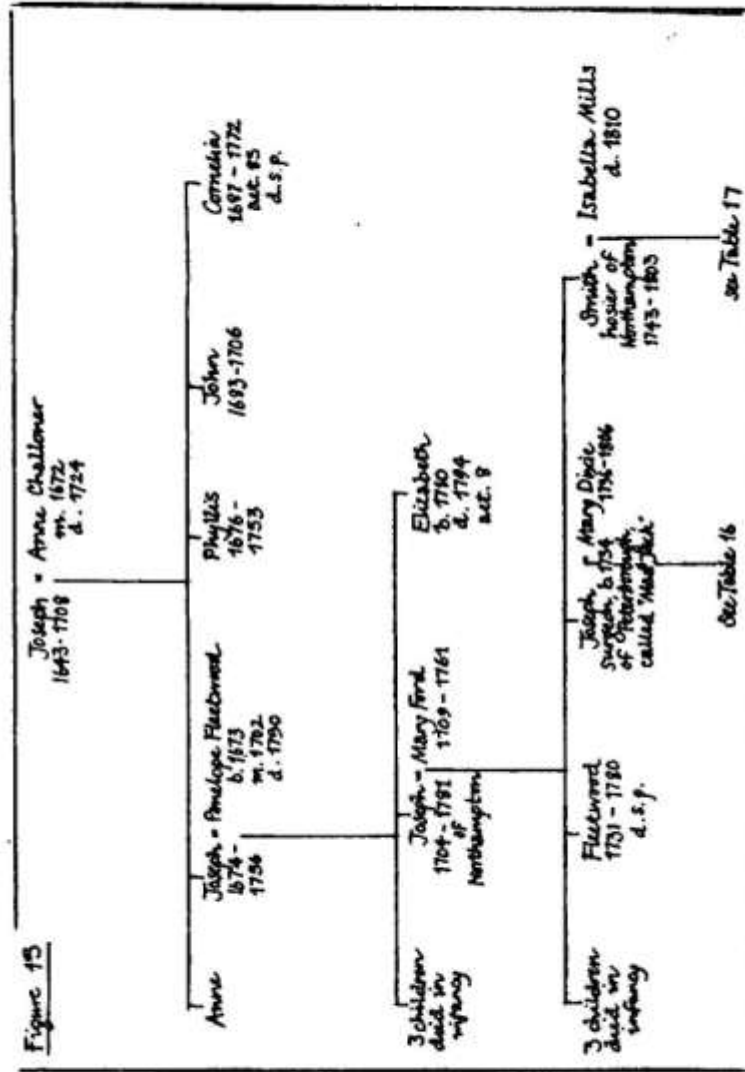
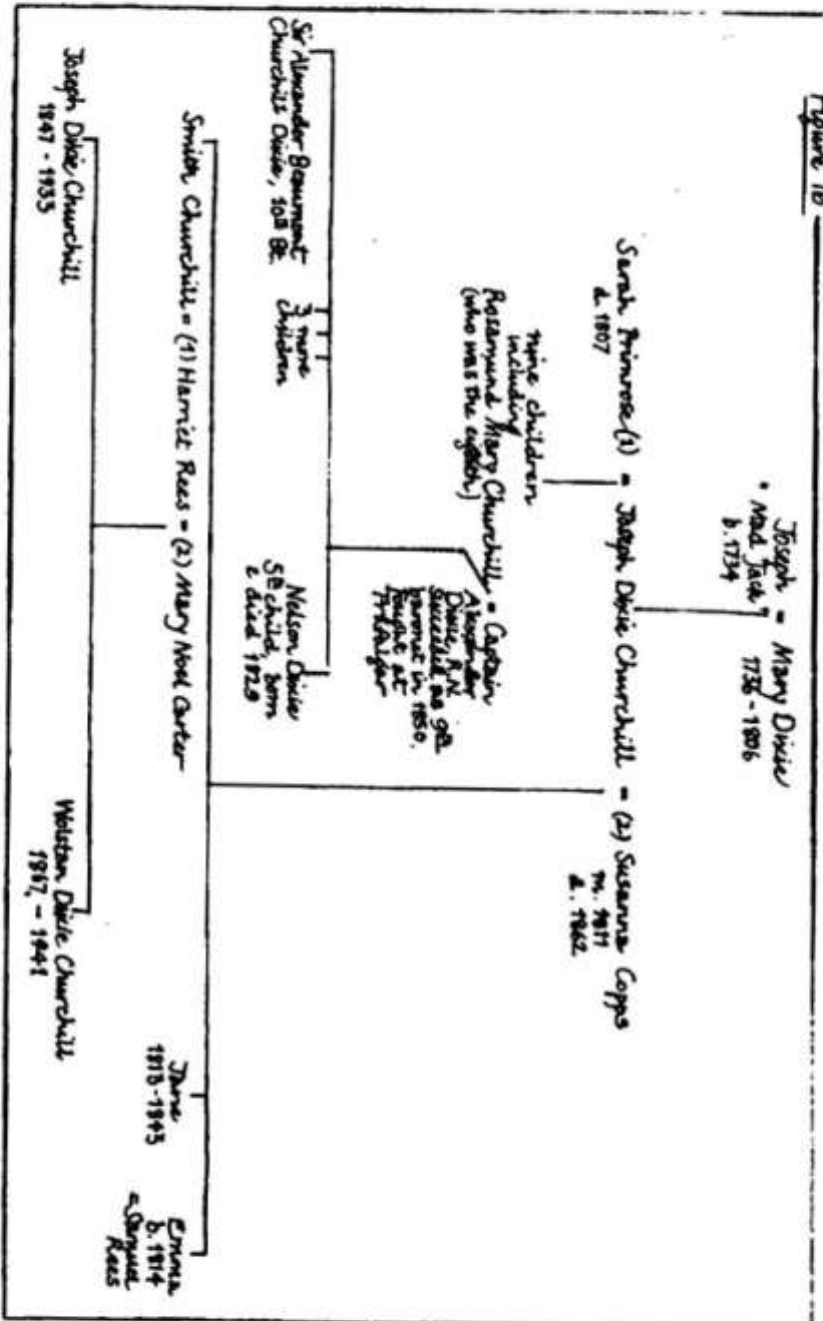
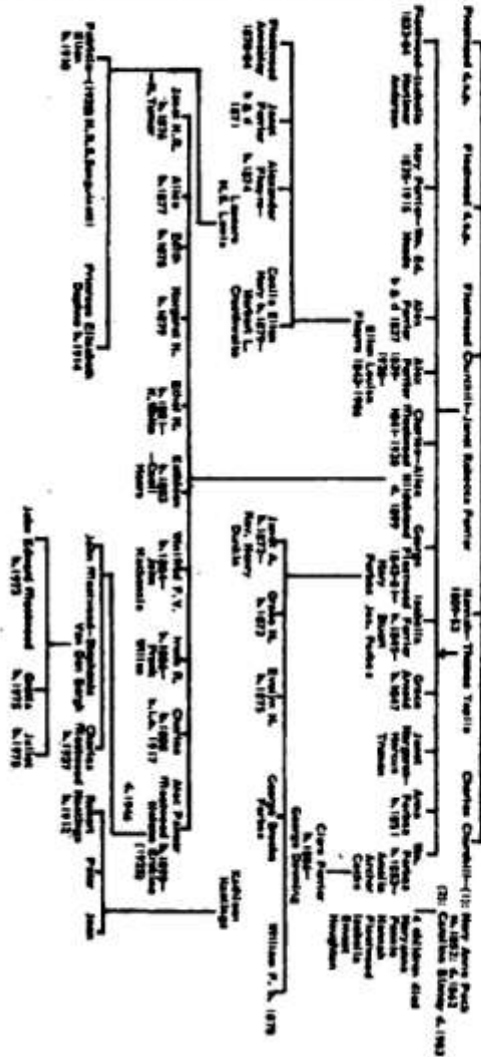


Figure 1b



Planned Parenthood
of Washington 177-1811



A lot of good news. All year. All month. All day.

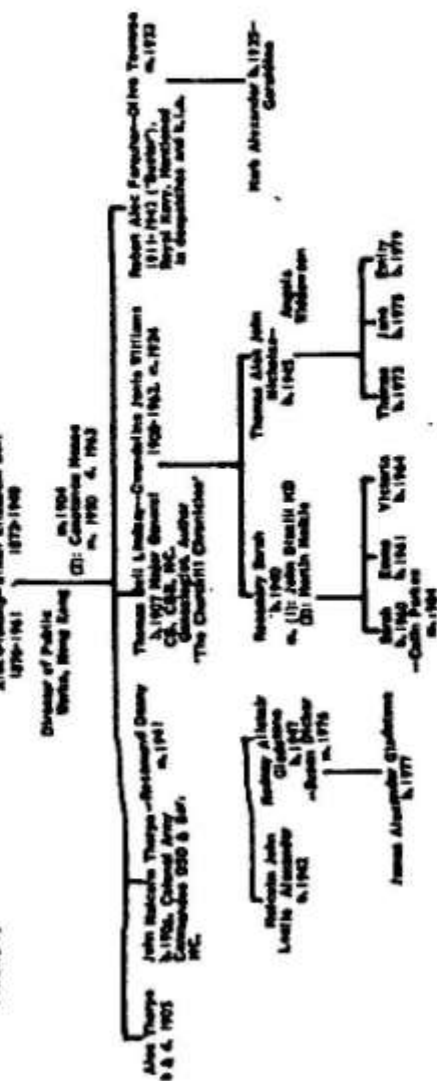




PLATE XIX

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*The author wishes to express his gratitude to all those people who
have assisted him in his researches into this family history.
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CHAPTER ONE: THE VILLAGE OF CHURCHILL AND ORIGINS OF THE FAMILY NAME:

This is the history of the Churchill family which has its origins in many towns and villages in North Oxfordshire in the fifteenth century (and very possibly in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries as well). It has been possible to trace its ancestry in the direct male line through ten generations to **Thomas of Arncot**, buried in 1615, and almost certainly through eleven generations to **Richard Churchill**, a yeoman (*See Figure 4*), who lived in the village of North Aston (seven miles south of Banbury) in the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth I, and who died there in 1594 (*See p. 19*)

Today anyone who considers the origins of a family with the name of Churchill, which comes from Oxfordshire, is sure to ask himself whether it has some connection with the Churchill family, whence came the 1st. Duke of Marlborough. But careful research has shown that the Duke of Marlborough's forbears came, not from Oxfordshire at all, but from the counties of Somerset, Dorset and Devon, and have no relationship whatsoever with the Churchills of North Oxfordshire; and the Marlborough family came to the latter county in the early eighteenth century only because Queen Anne gave Woodstock Park to the 1st. Duke of Marlborough as a reward for his military services, and his wife Sara, Duchess, engaged Vanburgh to build Blenheim Palace on the site. By the time these patrician Churchills came to Blenheim, the North Oxfordshire Churchills had already lived in Oxfordshire for over two hundred years, tilling their land as yeomen in the parishes of Banbury, North Aston and Deddington - scarcely more than nine miles distant.

So, to return to Thomas of Arncot, who is, of course, the earliest **traceable** Churchill in an unbroken male descent; obviously he must have had a wife, father,

grandfather and so on, but owing to the scarcity of records at that distant period, it has not been possible, **so far**, to link him up to his progenitors - whomsoever they were. Another reason, of course, for the difficulty of finding Churchill ancestors of this period, is their comparatively humble origins. Patricians always attract notice in contemporary documents, but yeomen and farmers can normally be found only in records such as ecclesiastical cartularies, and taxation records (including Subsidy assessments, cartularies, scutages, tallages and poll-taxes, provided they had more than the minimum quotient), and legal documents (provided they brought or were involved in litigation).

There is a village in North Oxfordshire called Churchill (near Chipping Norton) whose name in the Domesday Book was spelt Cercelle; in 1168 it was spelt Cerzhulle; in 1199 Cherchell; in 1274 Churchull and in 1537 Churchill. (*Lilian E. Rose. The History of Churchill, J. Smart and Co., Brackley, 1934*). This has sometimes tempted people to think that the name derives from 'a church on a hill'; and if one goes there today one will find the parish church, which is built on a hill. But this church was built only in 1826, replacing a much earlier one, the chancel of which still exists and is used as a mortuary chapel. This earlier church, dating back, perhaps, to the late 12th century, was built in a valley and most of the old village was situated near the church. {*See Plate 1*}.

No; so far as the family surname is concerned, it is hard to resist the supposition that the name emanated from the village, since it is less than 20 miles from the villages of North Aston, Steeple Aston, Arncot, Blackthorn, Ambrosden, Bicester, Bloxham and Deddington, whence came the majority of the 17th and 18th century Churchills. This, taken together with the mention in Oxfordshire monastic cartularies, lay statutes and archives of persons named (e.g.) John de Churchill, Richard de Churchill etc., from the 13th to the early part of the 14th centuries, postulates that the family in the earliest times came from the village of Churchill. By the late 14th century the 'de' is dropped and a Robertus Churchill and wife are shown paying poll-tax in Oxford (*/ E. Thorold Rogers (ed) O. City Docs., O. Hist. Soc. xviii, 1890 - 91*), and at the beginning of the next century a Willielmus Churchill is professed at the abbey of Eynsham in the order of acolytes (*H. E. Salter (ed) The Eynsham Cartulary, O. Hist. Soc. xlix, li, 1906 - 8*). In the 13th century Thome Churchill of Oxfordshire is mentioned as one of the 'Fuller's Worthies', and his name appears in the list near other names from Chipping Norton (*Thomas Fuller, The History of the Worthies of England, 1662, John Nichols, p. 17*); and three Churchills, two with wives, are mentioned as being enrolled in the Guild of Knowle, one from Banbury, one from Salford (a mile and a half west of Chipping Norton) and one from Chepyngdorset (since the 17th century known as Burton Dasset), eight miles north of Banbury, in 1493, 1504 and 1515 respectively (*W. B. Bickley, Register of the Guild of Knowle, 1451 -1535, Walsall 1894*).

Perhaps the best pointer to the theory that the Churchills of this period took their name from the village of Churchill is provided by the will of Henry Chircheshull, to be found in the library of the Guildhall of London. He was the rector of the church of St.

Martin Orgar in London, and made his will (*Guildhall Library M.S. 9171/1, fo. 182*) in 1389. Among his bequests is one of one hundred shillings stirring to the abbot and convent of Bruern in the county of Oxfordshire, to pray for his soul and the souls of his parents and all the faithful dead; a second bequest is his vestments for 'the serving at the altar of the church of Churchehull (*See Plate 2*) in the county of Oxfordshire aforesaid'; and he wills that he shall have two chaplains to celebrate divine service for his soul and the aforesaid souls - one in the church of St. Martin in London and the other in Oxfordshire. This, it would seem, is a significant piece of evidence that the Churchills of this period (or some of them) did actually come from the Oxfordshire village of that name. The Cistercian convent of Bruern was less than three miles from Churchill and was the closest convent to the village. It seems a near certainty that the boy Henry from the village was educated by the monks and in due course professed into the church: what more natural than that he should remember not only his convent but also his village church (where perhaps he celebrated his first Mass) in his will? At this point one could inquire whether there are any Churchills mentioned in the parish registers of the village of Churchill? The registers start in 1630 - rather late for the family of Churchill, who probably would have been resident there about a century earlier. But Churchill parish is adjacent to that of Sarsden (and the two are now ecclesiastically amalgamated). Sarsden's registers start in 1575, but no Churchills appear in them until a hundred years later, and they continue until 1746, when they disappear. It is difficult to know how to interpret these facts. If Churchills lived in Churchill in the 16th century - that is to say, before the registers commenced - then it is surprising that they do not appear in 1630 and onwards; and there is a gap of forty years before they appear in the Sarsden registers. One can only assume that they had left Churchill and had gone to dwell in Steeple Aston, North Aston and perhaps in Banbury (where they appear in the registers from 1543, 1565 and 1558 respectively). And one branch of the family must have returned to the Sarsden locality in 1670.

CHAPTER TWO: CHURCHILLS OF THE 13th, 14th AND 15th CENTURIES

The Churchills of North Oxfordshire seem to have been a yeoman family, at any rate since the late 15th century, which is the earliest period at which it is possible to formulate a pedigree (*See Figure 2*) which can be extended down the years to the present 20th century. Before that period it is possible to find records of Churchills in North Oxfordshire (and indeed, in neighbouring Warwickshire), but there is insufficient background evidence at present to enable the Churchills found to be linked together to form a pedigree.

It is proposed, therefore, to list in this second chapter the names of all the Churchills found between 1200 A.D. and about 1450, giving as much information as it has been possible to find concerning each person. Whether any of them belong to the family it is impossible to say, but at the end of each of these centuries' comments will be included in the text the likelihood or otherwise of the persons mentioned being members of the family.

The sources used to find Churchills of this early period have been mostly ecclesiastical ones, since the church was always careful to set down and preserve its records; but, in the nature of things, the majority of people recorded in monastic records were clerics who, genealogically speaking, are not always very useful, since they could not marry and so did not produce children. The most one can hope for from a recorded priest is that he might have been the son, brother, uncle or nephew of a member of the family - never a father or a husband. In the direct father-to-son descent they will always be the end of the line.

In using ecclesiastical sources the cartularies of Oxfordshire abbeys have proved useful, especially those of Osney, and Eynsham Abbeys, and the Hospital of St John

the Baptist, near Banbury. Unfortunately, the cartulary of Bruern Abbey, so near the village of Churchill in Oxfordshire, no longer exists save for one or two strips of inscribed parchment to be found in the Bodleian Library, in the Public Record Office and in the British Museum. The author has found that a widely-held belief, printed in certain published records, that this cartulary is to be found in the library of Brasenose College in Oxford, is totally unfounded.

A cartulary was usually a parchment or vellum book containing copies of charters relating to the abbey concerned at various periods. Many contain entries (in Saxon) for several centuries prior to the Norman Conquest. Other monastic records were the Leiger-Book, the Register, the Chronicle and the Necrology.

The taxation records are, perhaps, the most useful sources of genealogical information available from the reign of John until that of William and Mary. These are known as Subsidies (Exchequer K.R.) and they consist of assessments, accounts and other documents relating to the levying and collecting of subsidies granted to the king from time to time by the clergy in Convocation, or the laity in Parliament. In addition, there were other taxes, such as carucages, scutages, tallages and poll-taxes. Carucage was a levy on plough-teams (or, it may be, on plough-lands). This was not levied after 1224. Scutage was a form of early taxation which was at first regarded as merely a composition for military service, but later came to be levied as a regular assessment on Knights' Fees.

Tallage was a levy on royal demesne, and included all demesne cities and boroughs.

Subsidy Taxes did not take into account the number of plough-lands or the number of Knights' Fees that a man possessed. (An area of land held by a Knight for which he was obliged to give military service to his immediate overlord). By the 11th century it was becoming increasingly difficult to enforce the obligation and scutage was introduced as a tax by which tenants could commute the obligation. It was fixed at 20 shillings per Knights' Fee, and this was recovered by the tenant-in-chief from his tenants). Land no longer formed the only index of wealth. Instead, a tax was levied on personal property or 'movables'. From 1180 until 1332 the tax fell on each individual according to the value of his property, landed income or wages. The rate varied with the years and in many years there was one rate for those who lived in rural areas and a higher one for those who lived in towns, but from 1332 to 1623 (when the tax was abolished) the rural rate was 1/15th and the town rate 1/10th. From the year 1334 there was a change in the method of assessment. The Crown ceased to concern itself with the wealth of individuals and negotiated instead with the local communities for a payment for each vill and borough, correctly reflecting the local capacity to pay. How the vill distributed the sum among its inhabitants was not the Crown's concern. The sum for each place in 1334 was to be not less than that paid in 1332.

A minimum tax to be paid was laid down, and in 1297 this was one shilling; that is to say that no-one whose tax assessment worked out at less than one shilling was required to pay any tax. Later, minimum holdings were specified, the figures varying with the years, but generally between six shillings and 15 shillings.

There were certain movables which were exempted from taxation: In rural areas assessors were instructed not to value armour, riding horses, jewels and clothing of knights, gentlemen and their wives, or their vessels of gold, silver and brass. So far as the peasants were concerned, it seems that ploughs, harrows, spades and hoes were exempted, presumably because they were regarded as tools of trade of the peasant, farmer and artisan.

The value to the genealogist of the rolls of the Subsidy Tax is that the names of the inhabitants are listed under villis and boroughs and, until 1332, the amount of tax paid by each individual. After 1334 the amount shown was usually the total due from the vill or borough, and in the Oxfordshire rolls the names of the inhabitants are still often included, and sometimes their individual proportion of the total. The time has now come to record the Churchills who have been found in the above mentioned (and a few other) records, and this can conveniently be done under headings covering the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries respectively.

13th Century

PARTICULARS Ser. no. Date.

1 1200 The earliest Churchill of whom any record has been found is one **Wandrillus de Curcellis**, who is mentioned in the cartulary of Osney Abbey, an Augustinian foundation in Oxford, as witnessing the gift of a croft (or small enclosed field) in the parish of St. Giles. The Pipe Rolls for the 13th century also mention a Wandrillus (sometimes given as Wandrigisil) in Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire. His seal, which is circular, and one inch in diameter, shows a knight on horseback with drawn sword and the words SIGILUM WANDRILLI.

2 1268 In the same cartulary **Master John de Chishulle**, Provost of Beverley Minster is mentioned among others as witnessing a charter granting rights of free warren to the abbot and convent of Osney Abbey, in perpetuity, in all their demesne lands at Water Eaton, Hempton Gay, Mixbury, Fulwell and Little Tew, Oxon.

3 1270 The cartulary of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist records that the just-mentioned **Master John de Chishulle** also witnessed a document signed by Guy de Lusignan (the great Crusader) and by Prince Edmund, younger son of King Henry III, confirming a grant of land at Bloxham, to the hospital. This Master John de Chishulle seemed to be an eminent and responsible person - more than just a monk or even an abbot - so the present author turned to the Patent and Close Rolls to find more about him. These rolls need a little explanation. The Patent Rolls were started in 1201, and on them were entered all grants of offices, lands and particular privileges, ecclesiastical preferments, special liveries, creations of peers and many other subjects connected

with the government, the history of this country and the fortunes of the most distinguished persons of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries. They yield only to the Close Rolls in the variety and importance of their contents, the difference between the two classes of rolls being that the King's Letters Patent were delivered open, having the Great Seal attached, whereas the Close Rolls were records which were despatched closed or sealed up and were of a more private nature.

The impression gained in reading the Charter of Free Warren mentioned above, that John de Chishulle (or Churchill) was an eminent person, was more than confirmed by consulting the Patent and Close Rolls. In 59 entries in the former and 62 in the latter, it shows that he held some of the highest appointments in the kingdom:-

1263, Keeper of the Seal; 1264, Prebendary of Wells;

1265, Provost of Beverley; 1268, Dean of St. Pauls;

1270 appointed Chancellor; the same year appointed Treasurer

1274, consecrated Bishop of London. He died in 1280.

4 1279 **John Cherhulle** is mentioned in Salter's Survey of Oxford (*O. Hist.Soc. New Series xx 1969, Vol. 2, p. 56*) as holding a tenement at Osney in Oxford, which he had bought of Walter Aurifater).

5 1290 The same Survey mentions that **Johannes de** Chircehull was rector of St. Michael's Church at the South Gate and was instituted as rector of All Saints Church, Oxford on 29th Sep. He died in 1316.

6 1299 **Johs de Chyshchull** of Churchill village paid Scutage Tax of £10. 5s -a very considerable sum.

Comment on the above-mentioned Churchills of the 13th Century

It is felt that Wandrillus de Curcelles at Serial I, with his seal of a Knight on horseback and possible association with three other counties, besides Oxfordshire, is socially and historically a much more eminent figure than has ever been produced by the North Oxfordshire family, with which this book is concerned. And the same remarks apply (only more so) to **Master John de Chishulle** mentioned at Serials 2 and 3 (for the persons described in both Serials must be the same).

The North Oxfordshire Churchills of the 13th century (judging by their successors in the 14th and later centuries) would have been farmers of decidedly modest means; and such Churchills do appear in the following records in the 14th century.

The **John Cherhulle** recorded at Serial 4 above is much more the sort of person who could have been a member of the family, and it is interesting to note that there was an

Aurifaber family living in Churchill village at this time (*The History of Churchill by L. E. Rose, Op. cit.*) so it is an added probability that John Cherhulle (Churchill) came from the village of the same name, and was *the* man who bought a small tenement in Osney. He paid 8s. a year for it - 'it was not worth more'.

The difference in spelling of the surname of Walter Aurifater (in Salter's Survey of Oxford (*See Note 1, p. 7*)) and that of Willelmus Aurifaber, mentioned as being a Freeman of Churchill village in 1254 and involved, with Matilda his wife, in a lawsuit with Thomas, Abbot of Bruern, over a virgate of land in Churchill, is no doubt unimportant.

Willelmus Aurifaber was probably a gold-worker. The English were especially adept at this work, and it is said that when William I returned to Normandy, his subjects there were dazzled by the splendour of the gold embroidery and the gold work he brought back from England. Drinking vessels were made from the horns of cattle, and tipped with ornamental gold work of beautiful design. Surnames at this time still denoted the occupation of the holder and in less than fifty years the name of Aurifaber became Goldsmith (*L. E. Rose, Op. cit. pp. 20, 21*), an example of Old English modified by Norman - as a result of The Conquest - being turned into Middle English due to the passage of time.

Johannes de Chircehull, a priest mentioned in Serial 5, who became rector of All Saints Church in Oxford in 1290, might or might not have been a member of the family - one cannot in the absence of more evidence say otherwise; and finally, **Johs de Chyshchull** mentioned at Serial 6, who came from Churchill village and paid Scutage Tax, is probably a member of the family. Anyone called Churchill and known to come from the village of that name is more likely to belong than not.

14th Century

7 1312 **Willmo de Chyshchulle** of Oxford is assessed at 4s. for Tallage Tax. (*PRO. O. Subsidy Roll, E179 237/250.*)

8 1316 Four years later **the wife of a de Chyrchhull** (whose first name is not known) of Great Rollright, is assessed at a 16th for Subsidy at 2s. 6d. (*Idem 161/8*).

9 1316 In the same year **Rico Chircehull** of Little Rollright is also assessed for a 16th Subsidy (*PRO. O. Subsidy Roll, E179 161/8*) at 2s., as is **Ricto de Churchull of Burford** (*PRO. O. Subsidy Roll, E179 161/8*) but for the sum of 20d. Eleven years later he is assessed at 15d.

10 1326 . Ricardus **de Churchulle** is mentioned in the Medieval Archives of the University of Oxford as a Burgess of Oxford and as a supervisor

of the Assize Bread (*O. Hist. Soc. Vol. CXXIII, 1921*).

111327 **Thomas** Cherchulle of St. Martin, Oxford is assessed for Subsidy at 5s. (*O. Subs. Roll E 179 161/9*), **Qaenlia de Churchele** of All Saints, Oxford at 18d. (*Idem*), **Joseana Chirchchulle** of North Leigh at 18d (*Idem*), and **Ric de Cherchehull** of Burford is assessed for Subsidy at 18d. (*Idem 161/9*), and six years later at the same sum.

11a 1327 **Robto Churchehull** of Wormleighton, Warwickshire, assessed for Subsidy 12d. (*W. Subsidy Roll 192/4*).

121333 **Gitto de Chirchull** of Loxley, Warwickshire was assessed (*Idem 192/5*) at 2s.

131338 **Johannes de Chirchchull** of Shotover is mentioned as a forester, in the Boarstall Cartulary. (*The Boarstall Cartulary (ed) H. E. Salter, Clarendon Press O. for O. Hist. Soc. 1930*).

141340 **Thomas Churchehull** is appointed Keeper of the Rolls and Records of the King's Bench (Custos Rotulorum). (*Medieval Legal Records, R. F. Hunnisett and J. B. Post HMSO 1978*.)

151341 **Thomas Chchull of Wormleighton**, Warwickshire was assessed for Subsidy (*Subsidy Ro UPRO. E179192/11*) at 5s.

161348 The Cartulary of Osney Abbey Records (*Cart. Osney Abbey O. Hist. Soc. Journals 1929 - 36. No doubt Saltford should be spelt Salford*) that **Johannes de Churchehull** and four other priests benefit under the will of one Martin of Saltford, who was chaplain of St. Edward's Parish in Oxford, being left 10d. to share equally between them.

171354 **Churcchull** (first name not given) of Chadlington was assessed (*PRO. O. Sub. Roll, E179161/30*) for subsidy at 3d.

181354 **Thomas de Churchill** and John Byssshop, itinerant bailiffs (*O. Record Soc. Reports xvii Hist. of Dene and Chalfont*) are instructed by the sheriff of Oxford to give William de Shareschull Kt. immediate possession of a messuage in Dene which was the subject of a controversy between the latter and the Earl of Warwick.

19 1354 **Churhull** (first name unrecorded) of Enstone assessed for Subsidy at 3d. (*PRO. O. Subsidy Roll E 179161/30*.)

20 1377-81 **Thomas Churchill** of Idbury assessed for Poll Tax 4s. 4d. (*Idem* 161/45).

21 1377-81 **John Churchill** of Brightwell Baldwin assessed for Poll Tax 10s. (*Idem*).

22 1377-81 **Henry Chycchill** of Charlbury, Poll Tax assessment 6d. (*Idem* 161/46).

23 1377-81 **Robertus Churchehull** and his wife, of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, paid Poll Tax for an unknown sum. (*O. City Docs*, (ed) *Thorold Rogers*.)

24 1389 **Henry Chirchehull**, Rector of St. Martin Orgar Church, London bequeaths money in his will (*Guildhall Library, London Op. Cit.*) to Bruern Abbey. Oxon, and his vestments to the church in Churchill, Oxon.

Comments on the above-mentioned Churchills of the 14th Century

The first Churchill mentioned is **Willmo de Chyshchulle** who lives in Oxford and pays tallage in 1312. It is known that there was a John Churchill living in a modest cottage in Osney about 30 years previously {*See pp. 6 and 7*) and they could easily be related and members of the family.

Next, the **wife** of a **de Chyrchhull** of Great Rollright is assessed for Subsidy Tax four years later, and in the same year **Rico Chirchehull** of Little Rollright is also assessed. The two villages are adjacent and only five miles north of Churchill. Presumably the two Churchills would be related, as might **Ricto de Churchull** of Burford (14 miles to the south west).

In 1326 **Ricardus of Oxford** (the burgess) is probably one of the family; as could be **Thomas** of St. Martin, Oxford, and **Quenlia de Churchele** of All Saints, the two parishes being adjacent to the town. **Joseana Chirchchulle** of North Leigh, nine miles north west of Oxford and ten miles south east of Churchill, lived only eleven miles from Burford, where Ric could be the son of **Ricto** mentioned above, or even the same person. The amounts they paid in tax varied between 5s. and 15d., no great difference and indicative that socially they were all of the same status. Here, then is found building up what is probably a family of Churchills in the town, who could easily be relatives of Churchills living in the villages to the north west of Oxford, and never more than 20 miles distant.

It is in this 14th century that Churchills are found in Warwickshire, the county neighbouring Oxfordshire on the northern side. Thus **Robto Churchehull** of Wormleighton and **Thomas** of the same village (a mile over the county border and

seven miles from Banbury) are assessed for subsidy together with **Gitto de Chirchull** of Loxley, Warwickshire, eleven miles west of Wormleighton (*See Figure 1*).'

It is easy to assume that **Johannes de Chirchchull**, the forester of Shotover (only five miles north east of Oxford) was a member of the family, though less easy to accept **Thomas** Churchehull, who became Custos Rotulorum, because history does not relate whence he came, and there is no evidence of academic prowess in any Churchills so far discovered.

Johannes, the priest of St. Edward's parish in Oxford, and the other Churchills of Chadlington, Enstone, Idbury, Brightwell Baldwin, Charlebury and St. Mary the Virgin parish in Oxford, living in the last forty years of the century, could all fit in to the now-established pattern of the family.

But perhaps by far the most interesting Churchill so far found must be **Henry Chirchehull**, the rector of St. Martin Orgar in London, whose case has already been mentioned in Chapter One, Pages 2 and 3.

15th Century

25 1403 **Willlelmus Chyrchehyll** appears in the account of the camerarius of the Abbey of Eynsham (*The Eynsham Cartulary* (ed) H. E. Salter, *O. Hist. Soc. xlix, li 1906 - 8*) for Michaelmas 1403 and in April 1404, where permission was given by the Bishop of Lincoln for William, who was already professed at Eynsham, to be advanced by any Catholic Bishop from the order of acolytes to Holy Orders.

26 1427 **Thomas Churchehnll** of Chadlington, John Chirchull and **Waled de Chichull**, both of Woodstock, are assessed for Knights' Fees. (*PRO. O. Subsidy Roll E 179 387/5*).

27 1433 The Commons in Parliament complained that the land swarmed with robbers, oppressors of the people, felons, ravishers of women, unlawful hunters in parks, etc., etc. It was therefore ordered that, for the suppressing of present and the prevention of future mischiefs, certain Commissioners should be appointed who would be empowered to summon in every county all persons of quality to appear before them and to tender them an oath for the better keeping of the peace and the observance of the King's laws, both in themselves and their retainers. The first amongst the Commissioners was the Bishop of their diocese. There were, generally, three Commissioners, and next to the bishop was either an earl or at least a baron. Then came a knight for the shire in the

former parliament, or a knight by dubbing.

The names of the gentry of each county were listed, and under Oxfordshire appears the name of:

Thome Churchill

This name appears close to the names of people from Chipping Norton. In 1622 Thomas Fuller D.D. wrote **The History of the Worthies of England**, and the persons concerned came to be known as 'Fuller's Worthies'.

28 1481 **Thomas Churchill** of Combrook, Warwickshire, witnesses a transfer of messuage and a virgate of land called Ward, otherwise Hill, (*W.R.O. Bloom Catalogue of Cartae Antiquae at Warwick Castle, 284A*) and a property called Le Staffordys; and three years later **Richard Churchill**, also of Combrook, is required to give seizen of a premise called Le Padyse (*Idem Cupboard 4C3*).

Comments on the above-mentioned Churchills of the 15th Century

Willielmus Chyrchehyll is yet another cleric educated in one of the Oxfordshire religious houses - in this case the Benedictine abbey of Eynsham. Owing to lack of background information one cannot assess him as likely or not to have belonged to the family any more than one can decide on the three Churchills, one from Chadlington and the other two from Woodstock, who paid Knights' Fees in 1427, not knowing the amount they paid; but it is interesting to find another Churchill coming from Chadlington, where a previous one was recorded in 1354, and at least one can say that both Chadlington and Woodstock are localities north west of Oxford, near which many other Churchills have resided.

It has already been pointed out that quite a colony of Churchills has been founded in the city of Oxford, most of whom were fairly humble folk, though amongst them are two officials, one a burgess of the city (who may also have been a supervisor of the Assize of Bread), and the other an itinerant bailiff working under the sheriff. Towards the end of the first half of the 15th century is mentioned the appointment of one **Thome Churchill** as a Commissioner for Oxfordshire (one of 'Fuller's Worthies') and he seems to have followed in the steps of the other officials mentioned above, though his responsibilities and prestige were considerably higher than theirs. One of the reasons why one has the temerity to include him as a member of the family is because Fuller specifically avers that the Commissioners of the shires of Oxford and Cambridge were persons of 'meaner quality' than those from other counties. Certainly the Churchills who have been counted in the foregoing pages were none of them noble, nor socially pre-eminent in any way, and hardly to be included among the gentry of the shire. It may be that members of the family have an aptitude for

organisation and the well-ordering of affairs, and in later centuries there are many yeoman Churchills who are regularly selected as officials in the manors of which they were clients.

Finally, another Churchill of Warwickshire is recorded - one **Thomas of** Combrook who acts as a witness to the signing of two documents. There seems no reason why he or **Richard Churchill** of the same place, should not be related to the other Warwickshire Churchills already mentioned, and also be included in the family.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY CHURCHILLS OF BANBURY, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF A PEDIGREE

A number of Churchills have been found in the sixteenth century, and fortunately (genealogically speaking) they seem to have been a quarrelsome lot, for it is from two law-suits brought in 1550 and between 1570 and 1596 respectively that the names and relationships of the parties concerned are known. (*PRO. C/1/1206/23 and PRO. C.2 Eliz. I mm 6/20 and 6/23*). The easiest way to follow the development of a pedigree based on these legal proceedings is to turn to Figure 2. It is interesting to note that following the discovery of Churchills in Warwickshire (as mentioned in the previous chapter), Churchills of that county are mentioned in the second of the two law-suits quoted in the present chapter, and fairly convincingly shown as being related to the family of Banbury.

William Churchill was a draper and he lived in a house with a barn, croft and orchard in St. John's Street (otherwise South Barre Street) in Banbury. He made his will in 1504 and it was proved in the following year. (*PCC. Holgrave 28. This will is quoted in Vol. 89 of the O. Record Soc. annual series of reports Some Oxfordshire wills proved in PCC. 1393 -1570.*) In it, he left his house and garden to his kinsman, John Churchill (after the death of his widow, Alice).

He seems to have died quite well off, since he left legacies to the church of The Martyr (St. Hugh) at Lincoln; to the High Altar of the parish and prebendal church of Banbury for forgotten tythes; to the altar of the same church, and a separate legacy for the church's upkeep; for the repair and maintenance of Banbury Bridge and for the roads to Newlands, to Bodicote and for the district or quarter of St. John, where he lived. He also left a legacy to one of his maid-servants; another to his above-mentioned kinsman, John Churchill, including a plough and plough-team, and

over £6 worth of grain; money to Agnes Churchill (relationship unknown) and finally, a financial legacy to enable twenty maid-servants to get married. His legacies amounted to rather over £12, which, in modern terms would be worth just over a thousand pounds.

William's kinsman, John, was probably his first cousin since this term, at this period, was frequently used to designate this particular relationship.

Nearly fifty years after William the draper died, his great nephew, William Churchill, brought a case in the Chancery Court against John Churchill and one Steven Wygoyd, alleging that those two had illegally usurped the estate of William the draper; and he explains that he is the son of William Churchill, who was the son of Robert, **who was the brother of William the draper**. Since the latter left his estate in his will to his kinsman John, there seems no reason for William to allege that it should have come to him. And it seems possible that John, a yeoman of Banbury, could have inherited the estate in question from his father, Richard Churchill, who could have been the son of John.

At this point it again becomes necessary to refer to the contemporary Guild, known as the **Guild of Knowle**. (*For an explanation of this Guild, see Appendix I*). This Guild was founded in the early fifteenth century and was based on Knowle in Warwickshire, ten miles south east of Birmingham, and as many miles north west of Warwick. It was not a craft guild, but a fraternity professing devotion to St. John the Baptist, St Lawrence the Martyr and St Anne, and affording mutual aid, benefit and protection. In the Register of the Guild (*The original is now in the Public Reference Library, Birmingham. It has been transcribed and edited by W. B. Bickley*) covering the years 1451 - 1535, the following entries appear:-

Will Churchehyll and Alice ux de Banbyrry (8th of Henry VII) 1493. Ric Churchehyll et Isabella ux ei de Salforde (19th of Henry VII) 1504. Thomas Churchehyll de eadm (Chepyngdorset) (6th of Henry VIII) 1514.

NOTE Salford in Oxfordshire is a mile and a half west of Chipping Norton and twelve miles south west of Banbury. Chepyngdorset came to be known as Burton Dasset, and is in Warwickshire.

It seems a reasonable supposition that the Churchills who belonged to the Guild, would have been related, and this has been assumed in making the pedigree at Figure 2.

Although the result of the law-suit which William Churchill brought, is not known, it has provided genealogists with the three generations of Churchills shown on the left of the pedigree under reference.

The second law suit referred to earlier was brought by one Edward Maior in 1576. He states that John Churchill died seized of two houses in Calthrop (Parish of

Banbury) and ten acres of land at Neithrop. He remarks that these were in socage tenure (which would normally be inherited by primogeniture). He goes on to state that John left his houses and estate in his will to his niece, Agnes, who was the daughter of Robert Churchill, the brother of John, and mother of the 'Orator' (*early legal term for plaintiff*), Edward Maior, her son and heir.

The John referred to is, of course, the man against whom William brought his action, and he evidently defended the suit successfully, since he died still in possession of his Banbury estate. Edward Maior says that his mother, Agnes, being a very simple and poor woman, handed over the deeds, charters and other evidences of her ownership of the Banbury estate to one John Churchill of Chadshunt in Warwickshire, her cousin, for safekeeping for her. Maior alleged that this Churchill of Chadshunt confederated himself with four others, to defraud Agnes of her inheritance, hold her out of possession of her premises and also received and employed the profits of the estate for their own use. And when Agnes, his mother, died, John of Chadshunt and his other confederates, because they possessed the deeds, devised and contrived sundry secret estates out of the premises for their own advantage, refusing to yield the premises or the deeds.

The defendants, in their answers to Maior's deposition, say that Churchill is lawfully seized of his demesne in Calthrop and Maior's allegations are completely vague, not saying where the fields he refers to are situated, or in what streets in Banbury the houses mentioned are located, nor in whose tenure they now are. Agnes, the alleged niece is not mentioned in John Churchill's will (*This will has not been found*) - for all of which imperfections the defendants do not see that there is any case to answer. They state that the complainant is a troublesome fellow and suing **in forma pauperis** he could continue to vex the defendants and 'this honourable Court' for years.

It looks as if the defendants had their way and Maior's allegations were over-ruled; and nothing more is heard of this matter until **26 years later** when, in 1500, Maior again sues; this time alleging that John Churchill owned one tenement in St. John's Street in Banbury, together with certain lands in Neithrop and Calthrop and a second tenement in Church Land in Banbury, and died in possession of these lands and tenements and also of the relevant deeds. He had only one son, who died without issue, and the premises descended to Robert Churchill, his brother and heir. After Robert's death, the premises passed to Anne (Agnes) his daughter and sole heir. Anne (Agnes) married Edward Maior, whose son and heir was the Orator Edward Maior. He should, therefore, have inherited the premises, but one Henry Churchill of Fenny Compton, Warwickshire, cousin to Anne (Agnes) Maior and brother of John Churchill of Chadshunt, obtained, by dishonest means, possession of the premises and of the relevant deeds, to the disinheritance of the Orator.

Maior states that he does not know the dates of the above-mentioned deeds nor wherein they are contained, 'whether in bag or box or sealed or locked in a chest'; nor does he know the exact nature of the premises which belonged to his ancestor, John Churchill.

Henry Churchill of Fenny Compton replies that he does not possess any of the tenements and lands referred to in the Bill and does not, nor ever has, possessed any deeds relating to the premises in question. He therefore prays to be dismissed from the honourable Court with his charges and reasonable costs defrayed.

As usual no result is to be found in the Entry Books of Decrees and Orders at the Public Record Office; but the reference to the case quoted above enable the right-hand half of the pedigree at Figure 2 to be completed. John, Robert, Agnes (Anne) and her son Edward Maior, can all be set down with certainty. The relationship between Thomas of Burton Dasset, John of Chadshunt, Henry of Fenny Compton and Henry of Priors Marston, is less positive, but it should be noted that they all lived in Warwickshire in villages near to each other and, incidentally, only eight miles from Banbury in Oxfordshire. (*See Figure I*)

The second law-suit, just quoted, was brought by Edward Maior, first against John of Chadshunt and his confederates, and secondly (26 years later) against Henry of Fenny Compton and his associates, thus providing a strong presumption that the two were brothers and first cousins of Agnes; John possibly dying in the interval. Henry of Priors Marston is shown in a Chancery Inquisition Post Mortem (*PRO. Shelfmark C. 142 414 (53). 1619.*) to have been the son of one Henry Churchill; and Richard and Thomas both belonged to the Guild of Knowle.

Before closing this chapter, perhaps one should consider whether the Churchills of Banbury shown near the top of Figure 2 could have descended from any of the Churchills of the fifteenth century mentioned at the end of Chapter Two.

In answer to this consideration, one has to say that there is no concrete evidence that this is so. But so far as **possibilities** go, Thome Churchill could have been at least 30 years old when he was appointed a Commissioner for Oxfordshire in 1433, so he could have been born in about 1403, and he could have had a son born in 1423. And if that son was the father of William, the draper, of Banbury, the latter would have been aged 61 at the time of his death in 1504 - which would be reasonable enough. So the above hypothesis could, **chronologically speaking**, be answered in the affirmative; but there is no proof of it.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CHURCHILLS OF BANBURY (continued)

Just as the Churchill pedigree tentatively put forward in Chapter Three is based on two law-suits, so, in this chapter, the family pedigree derives from the Banbury and North Aston parish registers, and from the wills which some members of the family left. At this period there were two Churchill families living in Oxfordshire contemporaneously, one in Banbury and the other in the village of North Aston, seven miles to the south. These families will be described in some detail later in this chapter, but first it could be pointed out that the Banbury family dies out towards the end of the seventeenth century, while the descendants of the North Aston Churchills continue to flourish and will be shown to be the ancestors of the present-day Churchills living in the 1980s.

As has been said in the previous chapter (*See page 17*), the Banbury Churchills could have descended from Thome Churchill and his predecessors living in the 15th, 14th and 13th centuries. The progenitors of these two Churchill branches were Henry of Neithrop, shown to have been buried in 1580, and **probably**, Richard, of North Aston, who was buried in 1594. (*He was born c. 1522; See PRO. Town Deposition Lee v. Goodnych, Box C 24/157*). It seems likely that these two men, the first described as a husbandman and a sheep farmer, and the other as a yeoman, were brothers, and the grounds for this supposition are as follows:-

Henry of Neithrop left a will, in which he mentioned three sons and four daughters. The third son (*See Figure 3*) was Richard, a carpenter, and he entered into a bond for £40 with one Giles Churchill of Blackthorn (*PRO. C 8/85/270*), conditioned for the payment of a £24 debt which a woman called Elizabeth Kenwrick alleged that Giles owed her. Now, Giles was the eldest son of Richard of North Aston (*See Figure 4*), and

it seems unlikely that Richard Churchill would combine with Giles in a bond of this magnitude unless they were fairly closely related; and it is here contended that they must have been close kinsmen, probably first cousins. This would make Giles's father, Richard of North Aston, the brother of Richard's father, Henry of Neithrop; and this relationship is shown in the pedigree at Figure 3, using a dotted line; and as the burial register of Banbury records, 'John Churchill, an old man, of Neithrop' as dying on 28th May 1583, he has been shown in the pedigree as a third brother, but also using only a dotted line.

The time has now come to describe the Banbury pedigree, which is set out at Figure 3. As has been said, this is derived from the parish registers, and between 1558 when they start, and 1650, when the Churchills tend to fade out, there are no fewer than eighteen births of Churchills recorded, seven marriages and sixteen burials.

At the head of the pedigree under reference is Henry Churchill of Neithrop - a hamlet lying east of the Northampton - Broughton road, now part of Banbury, but, in the sixteenth century, a hamlet, with about 70 yard-lands of meadow and commons.

In the late 1560s, one Anthony Cope of Hanwell, Oxfordshire (later Sir Anthony Cope), granted the lease of a cottage and a piece of waste land in Neithrop to 14 of his tenants, among whom was this Henry Churchill, described, like 11 of the others, as a husbandman (the other two were 'gents'). (*HRO. 43 m. 48/179*). This cottage and land were given so that the tenants could provide a house for the herdsmen and hayward, for a lease of four score years, paying 12 pence a year. The hayward would have been in charge of the common lands of the manor and, therefore, an official, who performed important services for the tenants.

The Cope family were freeholders in North Oxfordshire who are known to have flourished there as early as 1450, and they continued to be Oxfordshire landholders into the nineteenth century. They also owned estates in Hampshire, and this no doubt is why many of the documents describing their Oxford holdings are now to be found in the Hampshire County Record Office at Winchester. The Copes were evidently enlightened and model landlords.

Henry, mentioned **above**, is shown (Bod.MS *Top Oxon C. 454*) to have held a tenement and four yardlands of copyhold in Neithrop and this passed, in due course, to his eldest son, John Churchill, a sheep-farmer, like his father; and, on his death, the yardlands passed to his second wife, Margaret, for her widow's estate, and then to John, their only surviving son. Although she did not die until 1611, he must have taken over the copyhold tenancy by 1604, for, in that year, Sir Anthony Cope of Hanwell (2 ½ miles north of Banbury), and John Churchill (who is described as a yeoman) signed an indenture (*HRO. 43 M. 48/183*) which stated that for £155 Sir Anthony Cope 'hath devised and granted and letten to the said Churchill all that messuage or tenement and four yardlands situate in Neithrop, as was beforehand in the tenure and occupation of one Margarett Churchill of Neithrop, widow, mother of the said John Churchill, to have and to hold from and immediately after the time of the death of the aforesaid Margarett, for, during and until, the full end and term of four score years, fully to be completed and ended if the said Churchill so long shall

live, or up after the death of the said John, the woman which the said John shall hereafter take to his first wife only, shall so long live chastely and continue widow, yielding and paying, therefore, yearly during the said term unto the said Cope, 45 shillings 2 pence on the first day of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangel, by even and equal portions, and if it shall happen that the said yearly rent be behind and unpaid in part or in all by the space of fifteen days that then it shall be lawful for the said Cope to re-enter the demised premises and repossess them'. And Churchill agrees that yearly and at his own cost he will 'bring and unload to such place as Cope shall name (within 21 miles of Hanwell or Hardwick) one reasonable cart-load of such reasonable carriage at any time between Easter and the end of August. And Churchill further agrees to appear personally, once in each year, at one of the courts held by Cope in Neithrop and consent to such reasonable orders as shall be made by the said Homage concerning such good government as shall be thought meet, and pay all ameracements and fines; and on the death of the said John Churchill it shall be lawful for the said Cope to take and seize a heriot. And John Churchill doth covenant that on Friday of Easter week he will pay yearly one couple of good and sufficient capons in the name of rent during the said term. And John Churchill agrees to set and plant five trees of oak, ash or elm on the premissis, and to preserve the trees from cattle or any other harms'.

Henry was a sheep-farmer and it is not known whom he married. In his will he mentions three sons, John, William and Richard, and four daughters. He died in 1580. It has been mentioned that the four yardlands that he held in copyhold tenure from Sir Anthony Cope passed to his eldest son John, who was also a sheep-farmer, and then (through John's second wife Margaret) to his grandson John. The latter's descendants are described on page 21.).

Henry's second son, **William's**, existence is known only because he is mentioned in his father's will - he is left the best cow that Henry has, four sheep, one quarter of barley and timber to make himself four ploughs, two harrows and four axeltrees. He is also left a platter and two pewter dishes. Each of his children is left a sheep, though it is not known how many he had nor their names and dates of birth.

Henry's third son, **Richard**, is the carpenter who is mentioned at page 18, who entered into a bond with his cousin, Giles of Blackthorn and probably supplies the link which binds the Banbury and North Aston Churchills together. He married Joan Mantonne in 1589, in Banbury, and there are no children recorded of this marriage. Richard witnessed his father's will and benefitted under it, as he did also under his brother John's will. He died between 1593 and 1624. He is described contemporaneously as a carpenter and as a yeoman.

Henry's first two daughters were called Alice and Joan. The latter married Richard Righton in 1567 in Banbury. The names of his other two daughters are not known, but the elder married John Wade and they had eight children; the younger married a man called Juckyns (Juggins?) and they had two daughters.

John married twice. His first wife was Alice and they had five children - three sons and two daughters. Two of the sons died in infancy, and the third aged 16. One of the

daughters also died in infancy, and of the other, Margaret (who was the eldest child), nothing is known, save that she was born in Banbury in 1564.

John's second wife was Margaret and she bore him two sons and two daughters. The elder son William, died in infancy, and the younger, John, who was also the youngest child, inherited the Neithrop estate. (See p. 20) The elder daughter was called Annys (Amye or Agnes) and she married John Eden at Banbury in 1595. The younger daughter, Joane (or Jane), married Richard Hastings, at Banbury, in 1599.

John Churchill inherited the four copyhold yardlands (about 72 acres) in Neithrop in the manor of which Sir Anthony Cope was the lord. He was a churchwarden and sidesman of Banbury parish church and, with four others, he signed a letter to the Worshipful Dr. Lloyd of All Souls 'presenting' various people for faults, including the vicar for not catechising the youth of the parish; the sexton for 'a bloodshed in the church'; various members of the congregation for being respectively a recusant and a drunkard; for working on the Sabbath day, and for a blasphemous of God's name and not receiving the Sacrament. (*O. Record Soc. Jl. Vol. 10: O. Peculiars*). He also had some legal status between 1624 and 1634, which required him to witness the wills of many of the citizens of Banbury, and to take the inventories of their property when they died.

_, He married Anne, who was buried at Banbury in 1628, but it is not known when or where John was buried. He and Anne had seven children, the eldest of whom was William. According to a Chancery deposition (*PRO. C. 7, 565, 31*) made in 1684 by William's son, William of Longcot, Berkshire (*In 1974 Longcot was absorbed into Oxfordshire as a result of local government reorganisation*), his father William soon left Banbury and went to live in Hornington, Lincolnshire. (*Intensive enquiries of Lincolnshire authorities have failed to locate this place*). He alleged that his grandfather, John, having great need of funds, twice mortgaged his house and land to one Mr. Archer, with the proviso that the property could be redeemed on payment of the mortgage sums and the interest thereon. However, John was never able to repay the mortgage and, accordingly, the land and premises became forfeit in law to Mr. Archer.

Of John and Anne's other children, John was born in 1611 and may have married Elizabeth Claridge of Middleton Cheney in 1656. Margaret died aged 12, and Richard aged 21. Nothing is known of Alice or of Anne, and the youngest, Robert, died in infancy.

The Orator of the Chancery deposition, William of Longcot, seems to have reckoned that because Archer received the rents and profits of the land and premises, he gained a considerable surplus which should have been regarded as payment of the mortgage sums.

The result of this case is not known, but it would seem that Archer's position was unassailable. The Churchills, therefore, would have lost their Neithrop estate.

Figure 3 shows what is known of their descendants.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE CHURCHILLS OF NORTH ASTON

Haying described the Churchills of Banbury who appear to have died out at the end of the seventeenth century, it would be logical, **now, to follow the fortunes of the North Aston branch.** It was said at Page 18 that Richard of North Aston was **probably** the progenitor of this branch, and the reason for the qualifying adverb is that, unlike Henry of Neithrop, Richard of North Aston did not leave a will (or else, if he did, it has disappeared); so mention of his children from that source, does not exist. However, it will be seen from Figure 4 that it is thought that Richard had seven sons.

The evidence upon which one assumes that these seven Churchills were brothers is contained in the relevant entries in the parish registers of North Aston and also in the wills that Giles, Henry and Thomas left. First, when Thomas of Arncot and Blackthorn made his will, Giles and Henry were appointed overseers. This is not proof that they were brothers, but in the circumstances it is highly probable. Next, both Robert and George were entered in the North Aston baptismal register as 'sons of Richard Churchill', and Robert is referred to as 'my brother' in Giles' will. And in the next generation, John of Ambrosden and Steeple Claydon, who was fourth son of Giles, refers to Henry of Steeple Claydon as his kinsman. (*See Figure 5*). This term, as pointed out previously, was much used to indicate a first cousin, thus confirming that his father, Giles, and Henry's father, Thomas, were brothers.

Of the seven, this leaves only William and Timothy unaccounted for, but since they are the first and second Churchills to occur in the North Aston baptismal register, and Robert and George are the third and fourth, there is at any rate, some probability here.

Giles is one of the most interesting members of the Churchill family. We know from a Chancery deposition (P/JO. C 8/59/11) that he was born in the reign of Queen Mary, about 1556, probably in North Aston, and went to live in Blackthorn, some eleven miles distant, where he became a prosperous yeoman. It is surprising that one knows so much about him, but he seems to have resorted to, or become involved in, legal actions on many occasions, perhaps because he became quite a substantial landowner; and also because he adhered to the old religion and so became notorious as a recusant. (Recusants were those who absented themselves from the Established Church). In 1581 recusancy became an Exchequer matter, with the introduction of a penalty of £20 per lunar month. Later acts empowered the Crown to seize all of a recusant's goods and two-thirds of his lands and tenements in lieu of a monetary fine. From 1581 to 1591 the penalties due were entered in the Pipe Rolls, but in 1592 a separate series was begun, devoted entirely to recusancy, and it is in those rolls that recusants' fines and forfeitures, as returned by the sheriffs, are recorded for the next hundred years.

It was on the 6th of August 1599 (forty-first regnal year of Elizabeth) when he was 43 years old, that Giles was convicted of recusancy for a period of six months, and of refusal to submit and conform for a further two months after conviction. {*PRO. Recusant Roll No. 5 E/377/5*). He was made liable to a fine of £160 (eight months recusancy at £20 a month). He was also excommunicated on the 7th of February 1600 in the diocese of Oxford, and remained excommunicated for more than 40 days. {*Recusant Documents from the Ellsmere Manuscripts (ed) A. G. Petti Catholic Record Soc. Journal 1968*).

The Recusant Rolls do not reveal the extent to which fines were actually imposed on convicted recusants; they are records of indebtedness, rather than of payment. Under Elizabeth I, the highest number of recusants paying the full penalty in any one year was 17; little over £6000 was received in the year 1594 - 5; the budget for 1600 puts the revenue from recusancy as not much more than £7,000. {*Oxford Arch. Soc. Journal No. 69/1924*).

Whether it is significant that Giles Churchill of Blackthorn and Ambrosden was a neighbour of Sir Thomas Mildmay of Chelmsford, who became lord of the manor of Ambrosden, is not known. Mildmay came of a staunch Roman Catholic family and he and his descendants were beggared by the Act of Uniformity which deprived him of his fortune and much of his estate. (*Catholic Missions in Oxon. Mrs. Bryan Stapleton. pp 112 - 113*). Perhaps Giles, in the end, conformed, for he continued to live in Blackthorn and the Recusant Rolls up to 1611 show that his fine of £160 was not paid, nor is there any evidence in the Calendars of State Papers, Domestic, that the fine was paid up to the time of Giles' death in 1639.

The end has not yet come of the consequences of Giles' recusancy, but chronologically, one should here mention the case that was brought against him and his brother Henry - and others - in the Chancery Court in 1609 (*PRO. C2 James 1/A2/81*). The plaintiff was one Michael Anne of London, a clerk in Holy Orders, and the defendants included Giles himself, his brother Henry, both of North

Aston, described as yeomen; Sir Basil Brooke of Madley, Salop, Knight; Mary Denton (*Widow of William Denton, Seep.25. She was buried in Ambrosden Church in 1624*) of Priory Court, Berkshire, widow; John Denton of the Middle Temple, London, gent, and John Gregory of North Aston, yeoman.

Michael Anne stated that he was descended from John Anne of North Aston, Esquire, deceased, who flourished in 1485 and who, in his lifetime, owned the manor of North Aston and much land, meadows, pastures, gardens, feeding mills, dovehouse, orchards and ponds. This John Anne could have been the same John Anne whose elegant and scarcely damaged alabaster effigy in armour lies beside that of his wife Alice (Giffard), between the chapel and the chancel in North Aston parish church. When John died, the estate descended through his son, grandsons, great grandsons and great, great grandson named Edward Anne, who died childless.

Michael Anne, the plaintiff, alleges that he should be, by right, the inheritor of the North Aston estate, as cousin and next heir male; but he says that the various 'deeds, charters, writings and evidences of script and muniments and counterparts' which prove the 'estate to be entailed unto the ancestors of the poor Orator' have, 'by casual means of late come into the hands, custody and possession of the defendants' who, he alleges, have combined themselves together and illegally entered and occupied the manor, premises and tenements of the relevant estate, and are receiving 'the rents, profits and commodities to their private gain'. Anne says that though he has many times required the defendants, or any of them, to deliver 'the afore-mentioned deeds and any other writing, charters, escripts and muniments whatsoever and likewise to restore the issues and profits, they have always refused and still do refuse, against all equity and right'. Anne admits that he 'doth not directly know the true dates, nor the number in certainty, of the said deeds, evidence and writings nor wherein they be contained, whether they be in bag, box or chest, sealed or locked, so that the said Orator is therefore without any ordinary remedy for the recovery thereof by the due course and order of the common laws of this realm, and so like to be disinherited unlawfully'.

As usual, the judgment of the Court is not known. But it is perhaps significant that the Churchills were still in North Aston thirty years later.

. A few years after this case was brought Giles and Thomas Ash, his son-in-law, acquired no less than 310 acres of land in the Arncots and Ambrosden from the Coker family, for a consideration of £120. (*Feet of Fines C 25 (2) 340 9 James I Michaelmas 1611*). This transaction would have made Giles a yeoman of considerable land holdings and would imply that the authorities were no longer treating him as a convicted recusant; but in the next year the Attorney General accused Giles of using a messuage and close in Blackthorn for 'superstitious purposes and the maintenance of a priest'. (*PRO. Exchequer Deposn. E. 134 9/10 James I. HOI 28 Oxford*).

Giles and others stoutly resisted this move, and William, Giles' second son (then aged 43) also testified; and it seems to have come to nothing. It can be remarked here that the farming of recusant land for the Crown was quite a profitable occupation. Unfortunately, there are no Oxford Quarter Sessions' records of this period, since

Oxford was a plague-spot and the records were kept and transported around by the local Justices of the Peace, and inevitably have disappeared: they do not commence until 1687.

In 1616 one Richard Blanchard of Newbury, Berkshire, brought a case (*PRO. C 8/59/H*) against Mary Denton, the widow of William Denton, and others. Denton was Blanchard's father-in-law, and Churchill, who was a friend of the Dentons, gave evidence that William accommodated and maintained Blanchard in his rooms in the Inns of Court for three years. William Denton, whose ancestors received the manor of Ambrosden from the Crown at the Dissolution, brought the rectory of Blackthorn (then worth eight score pounds per annum) as his jointure at his marriage. Blanchard was evidently hoping to acquire some or all of its value, but the result of the case is not known.

Four years later, Giles was assessed for subsidy in goods; and in 1624 he brought a case in the Court of Chancery (*PRO. C 8/85/270*) against one Elizabeth Kenwick, widow of Robert Kenwick, late of King's Sutton, Gent., who, in the previous Easter, had sued Giles for £24. Giles stated that he had never entered into any such bond, nor had had any dealings with the said Robert Kenwick and pointed out that, at the supposed time of the pretended bond (about 31 years previously), Robert was a young student of Grays Inn 'having small means and was not of any ability to lend so much money, either to Giles or to anyone else; and that in all the intervening 27 or 28 years Robert Kenwick never demanded payment, or sued for any sum'. And further Giles states that 'thanks be to God he was able to pay any debts he owed'. But he 'verily believes that Elizabeth Kenwick obtained the pretended bond by the subtile course and craftie devices of some persons ill-disposed to your Orator'. And he asks that he may be granted an injunction against Elizabeth Kenwick 'to stay and surcease' the said suit and to proceed no further in it.

In her answer Elizabeth Kenwick said that the complainant Giles Churchill and one Richard Churchill, late of Banbury, carpenter, deceased, did enter into a bond or obligation. { *See pp. 18,19, 20* }. And when the said Robert Kenwick, with bailies, went to Giles' house to deliver a warrant and arrest him, the said complainant 'suspecting, leapt down from a beanrick where he was at the coming of Kenwick's bailies, and so escaped'. Alas! as in so many other legal cases, the result of this one is also lost. Giles died on the 26th of August 1639 aged 83, and he seems to have outlived all his brothers except Robert. His inventory amounted to £474 3s. 4d. and perhaps such a large sum confirms that his recusancy fine was never levied. He asked in his will to be buried in the chancel of Ambrosden church, but there is now no sign of his grave.

It will be convenient here to follow the fortunes of his descendants. Giles and his wife Alice (of whom we know nothing except that she was buried in Ambrosden churchyard in 1633), had four children: Richard, Joan, William and John. **Richard** was a husbandman, of Nether Arcot, and married Elizabeth. He was assessed for Subsidy Tax at 2s. 10d. in 1648 and died in 1657. They had six children: Giles, Anne (who died in infancy), Alice, Elizabeth, Richard and Jane. **Giles**, the **eldest**, lived in

Bledlow, Bucks, and then in Bicester, and was discharged by poverty (as the expression went) from paying Hearth Tax in Bicester (his house had only one hearth). He married Anne Hooker, who died in childbirth in 1657, giving birth to Giles of Bicester who died a bachelor aged 25. Richard and Elizabeth, as mentioned above, had five other children, but the line dies out and a second generation is not recorded.

Joan, the daughter of Giles, married Thomas Ash, and they lived at Nether Arncot. Giles' two younger sons, William of Bledlow, Bucks, and John, of Ambrosden and Steeple Claydon, both inherited Giles' house in Nether Arncot and all the land he purchased from the Coker family in 1611. William died a bachelor, aged 65, and John, who married Bridget White of Marsh, in 1623, at St. Giles', Oxford, died at Steeple Claydon in 1640.

John and Bridget had five children, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, but the line dies out at the end of the 17th century. There are, however, two gravestones in Steeple Claydon churchyard, one commemorating one of their sons - Richard and his wife Jane, the other commemorating their grand-daughter Elizabeth and their great-grandson William, who died in 16%. Both tombstones are recorded in the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in Buckinghamshire North: HMSO1923, Vol. II, p. 272.

So much for Giles, the recusant, and his direct descendants. It is now necessary to describe his brother Henry, who was a carpenter and, unlike Giles, continued to live in North Aston all his life. He had some standing in the village, as the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire records. (*VCH Vol. XI pp 14 - 15.*).

He was several times involved in litigation - in the Court of the Star Chamber (*PRO. Stack 5/L, 10/8.*), the Court of Requests (*PRO. REQ. 81 Bundle 17/5.*) and, with his brother Giles, in the Court of Chancery (*Op. cit. PRO. C 2 James 1/A2/81.*), as is described on page 23 . A brief outline of the first two cases follows because one gets some idea of Henry's character and the sort of person he must have been from his involvement in them, and his replies to the questionnaires which he was required to answer.

In the Star Chamber, the case alleged illegal entry, and the complainant was one Elizabeth Lee of North Aston. She lived at a farmhouse there with her daughter and a number of servants. She alleged that four named individuals, two of whom were carpenters (one of them Henry Churchill) and two who were yeomen, broke into her house on 26th of May 1596 and ordered her and others in the house to leave at once, under threat of death. Some of the servants were 'lifted and forced up on cowstands' and carried out 'amid much laughing and great jollity', and the others were violently beaten and thrust out. The ruffians were then alleged to have broken into the plaintiff's bed-chamber, where she and her daughter had enclosed themselves, for fear. She was wounded in the hand, then forced down the stairs and out into the yard and there set down 'so that her bare buttocks were dumped in a puddle of water, it being a very wet and rainy day'. The intruders then returned to the bed-chamber, where the plaintiff's daughter was in bed, and terrified her by striking naked swords;

then pulled her out, unclothed, and threw her down the stairs, and then carried her by her head and heels out into the yard.

Elizabeth Lee alleges that one Denton had given authority for all this to be done **and** that there were letters and papers from him to prove it; further, that he promised to find the intruders 'harmless, unless it was a case of murder'. And it was alleged that there was talk among them that if they occupied and retained the house for Denton's use, he would reward them with a day's meat and drink, and they would be given garments.

A second incident was alleged - that 'on the night of Christmas day' a small house called Hampton's House, apparently also owned by the complainant, was taken and possessed; and finally, it was alleged that Lee's farmhouse was again broken into and possessed by intruders on 18th February in the following year, and again on the 6th of May 1597. In this last assault, the intruders were alleged to have scaled the house with, ladders, and broken into the roof by removing the slates; and papers and books, and cupboards and other household furniture were said to have been stolen.

Henry Churchill's reply to these allegations first mentions the fact that he had been born at North Aston and had lived there all his life; he therefore knew the farmhouse mentioned well. He had not been present at the taking of the house on the 26th of May 1596 when the complainant and her daughter were hurt and he therefore committed none of the offences described; nor was he at the taking of Hampton's House. But he did say that on 18th February 1597, at Mr. Denton's request, he had a meeting with four named persons to arrange the peaceful and quiet occupation of the house, promising them 20 pence a year, at Mr. Denton's expense. These men occupied the house, but as Churchill at the time was at his own house, he did not know what weapons they used, if any. The men had been told to open the doors, having occupied the house, and this they did, so that Churchill and two named neighbours of his could enter, and stay there a short time. Later Mr. Denton's man Cox came to Churchill's house and Churchill told him how the house had been occupied. Churchill did not know whether Mr. Denton had offered the men any largesse. Mr. Denton and Cox were subsequently seen to be coming from and going to the house for about a fortnight.

The judgment in this case (if it ever came to a judgment) is not known.

Supposedly one has to remember that all this happened seven years before the end of the reign of Elizabeth I, when conditions of living and behaviour, were a good deal rougher than they are today. But, even so, it would seem surprising that a fully grown man (Henry at the time was aged 30, and men grew to responsibility more quickly than they do now), and already possessing seven children, including three sets of twins, should get up to such junketings as is alleged took place on the 26th of May 1596. Henry was a well-to-do carpenter and husbandman who lived in the manor of North Aston. William Denton was a landowner who lived at Blackthorn rectory, and Edward Denton, who was William's brother, settled the manor of Ambrosden on his son-in-law, Edward Smyth in 1586 (*VCH Oxfordshire, Vol. V (Bullingdon Hundred)*)

p. 18), and it continued in the Denton family for many years. What seems possible is that William Denton had cause (perhaps as a landlord) to evict Elizabeth Lee from the farmhouse. It is known that the Churchill family at this time, and particularly Giles and Henry, were friends of the Denton's, and perhaps Denton (who lived 12 miles away) asked Churchill, who lived in North Aston, to act for him in this matter.

The Court of the Star Chamber was much used in Tudor times to protect the peasant against his landlord, and this may be why Elizabeth Lee brought her case, just recited, in this court. The next case to be quoted was brought by Henry Churchill in the **Court of Requests**. This was originally an Equity Court for poor men's suits, which were made to the King by supplication and upon which they were entitled to have right, without payment of money.

Henry brought this case against James Kydder, who was an attorney, but **was also** the **son-in-law** of none other than the just-mentioned Elizabeth Lee, and it was brought simultaneously in 1597/8.

Churchill stated that, two years previously, a quarrel grew between himself and Kydder about a parcel of hay which grew in a meadow in the parish of North Aston, which Churchill had cut and carried away, believing that it was his own. In order to end this quarrel, Churchill and Kydder submitted themselves to arbitration, the two arbitrators being a priest called Edward Gyles and Richard Appletree, gent. Churchill signed a submission to the effect that if Kydder sufficiently proved that the hay in question was his, or his mother-in-law's (Elizabeth Lee's), then Churchill would pay to Kydder whatever sum the arbitrators awarded. But Churchill alleges that when he was given a copy of the submission, it was found that certain vital words had been omitted, viz: 'so that the said James Kydder or Elizabeth Lee can sufficiently prove that the hay was his or her own'. And the arbitrators had awarded Churchill the penalty to pay Kydder forty shillings 'against all equity and good conscience'. And since Churchill had not paid the sum, Kydder sued him in the Court of Common Pleas. So Churchill asks that Kydder be hailed before the Court of Requests.

Kydder points out that, when the arbitrators met to consider the evidence, Churchill 'showed forth' a lease of the meadow where the hay grew, made by one John Brooke, Esquire, to Churchill's father, now deceased. In reply to this (as it were) Kydder 'showed forth' a writing under the hand and seal of Mr. Brooke containing a confirmation of an assignment of the meadow made by Churchill's father to Edward Lee, deceased, whose executrix was Elizabeth Lee. The Rev. Edward Gyles, in his deposition, confirmed everything that Kydder had said.

As a result of this meeting the arbitrators, Gyles and Appletree concluded that the hay was 'due and belonging' to Kydder, so they awarded a fine to Churchill of forty shillings.

If this action ever came to judgment is not known, but it would seem that Kydder had a cast-iron case. But one should; perhaps, note that Churchill refers to himself as 'a poor carpenter, altogether unlettered and having no other means of support for himself, his wife or his children than by his labour and occupation'. Certainly he makes his mark to his deposition, which would confirm that he was unable to write,

and, probably, to read. Kydder, on the other hand, as an attorney, would have been highly educated. Henry was aged about 26 when his father died, and this, case was brought three years later, so one would think that he had had plenty of time to familiarise himself with his inherited holdings and would be unlikely to forget that his father had assigned away all his interest in the meadow in question to Edward Lee.

Henry married twice, first to Bridget (whose surname is unknown) and secondly to Margaret Howell, a widow, of Marsh, Buckinghamshire. In his will he mentions three sons, John, Henry and Justinian, and three daughters, Anne, Katherine and Isobel. In fact Henry, the carpenter of North Aston, is the only member of the family known to have had three sets of twins, and, in addition, he had four other children, all of whom are shown in Figure 4. Justinian and William were the third set of twins.

Henry died in North Aston in 1629 (1630 new style) and his inventory amounted to £18519s. 4d. and this included his livestock, which was mostly of sheep and cattle. He made a gift of £10, which was called Poor's Stock. This was invested and then amalgamated with a gift of 6s. 8d. by one William Kendall, known as Poor's Plot. The interest on the combined gifts was distributed at Christmas in the form of firewood, a loaf and one pound of beef to every poor family in North Aston. (*12th Report Com. Char.*, 315; *Wing, North Aston pp 25- 6*; *O. Record Soc. Vol II, Parochial colls, of Anthony Wood and Richard Rawlinson 1920.*) In the 19th century, coal and blankets were dispensed.

Henry's second marriage to Margaret Howell was childless. William was born at North Aston in 1573 and is the first name to appear in the baptismal register. Nothing else is known of him, but it seems likely that he was the third son of Richard of North Aston and brother to Giles, Henry and **Thomas, who most now be described.**

It is not known when and where Thomas was born; his name is not in the North Aston register. Often, when a son cannot be found in the relevant baptismal register, it is worth-while to look in the register of the parish from which his mother came; but, in this case, this cannot be done, because it is not known who his mother was.

It must be assumed that he was born at North Aston, where his father lived and died, and, at some time, he must have moved to Blackthorn, as did his brother Giles and his nephew, William, (Giles' third child and second son). Thomas's wife's name was Joan, and she bore him ten children, **amongst whom were two sons Thomas and Henry, very important members of the North Oxfordshire Churchills, because they begat respectively the Deddington and the Steeple Claydon branches of the family**, the former of which persisted at Deddington into the nineteenth century, and the latter, of Steeple Claydon, remained there until the turn of the seventeenth century, and then moved to Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire and finally, to South Africa. These Churchills will be described in the next chapter.

Thomas lived in Blackthorn but owned property in Nether Arncot, both of these places, being chapelries of Ambrosden - now, alas! almost obliterated by the buildings and sheds of the Central Ordnance Depot, built here between 1941 and 1945. It covers 12^{1/2}

square miles surrounding Ambrosden and the Arncots, extending as far as

Piddington. Thomas died in 1615 and was buried at Ambrosden, leaving a will, which mentioned his ten children, who were all aged under 21. After his death, it seems that his widow went to live in Steeple Claydon, where she married again.

There are only three more brothers to describe, of the seven who were sons of Richard of North Aston. They are Timothy, Robert and George.

Timothy was born in North Aston in 1575 and died there aged 52. His wife's name was Margaret and they had four surviving children: Henry, who lived to be only four years old; Elizabeth, who married George Holioak; Brigid, who married Henry Peight in 1634, and Henry, who was born in North Aston in 1611. Margaret, Timothy's wife, died two years after the birth of her youngest child, in 1618.

Robert, the sixth brother, having been born in 1576, married Julyan Shepperd at North Aston. He was described as a husbandman of Ambrosden and Arncot, and he was assessed for Subsidy at 8d. He and Julyan had three children: two sons, Thomas and John, and a daughter, Anne. John died, aged eight, but Thomas, who was a carpenter and was assessed for Subsidy at 3s, acted as a Subsidy life-collector in 1663. (*PRO. E. 179164/503*). He married Margaret Carter at Ambrosden and they had one son, Robert, who was born in 1636.

The seventh and last son of Richard, was George who was born at North Aston in 1581, but nothing more is known of him. George is an uncommon Christian name for a North Oxfordshire Churchill, and the next one was born in 1822, nearly two hundred and fifty years later. He was George Cheetham Churchill, an attorney, who was born in Nottingham but worked in Manchester. He left his collection of 60,000 Alpine plants to Kew Gardens when he died in Bristol in 1906. (*Se p. 84*).

CHAPTER SIX: THE MOVE TO DEDDINGTON AND STEEPLE CLAYDON

It was said at Page 29 that Henry, the carpenter, of North Aston, had three sets of twins. The first set died in infancy but the second lived to marry and have children of their own. The eldest, John, married first Ellen, who died in 1622, and, secondly Dorothy, who gave birth to no fewer than ten offspring. Nothing is known of the first nine, except their names and dates of birth, but the youngest, William, born at North Aston in 1649, emigrated to America (*See Figure 4*).

The second twin, Henry, married Joan Straker, and they had one daughter, Martha.

The fifth and sixth children of Henry and Bridget Churchill were the third and last set of twins. The eldest was named Justinian, and he was born at North Aston in 1593; his twin was called William, but he died when he was only four months old. Whence Justinian got his name is not known, and he is the only Churchill to bear it. It is true that there was an exact contemporary of his in North Aston called Justinian Sheppard, who was the nephew of one John Sheppard, and John the uncle left a moiety of the manor of Christ Church in Deddington to Justinian Sheppard when he died in 1605; and perhaps it is worth noting that Justinian Churchill's uncle, Robert, married Julyan Sheppard at North Aston in 1607.

Another coincidence is that two boys were born at North Leigh (fourteen miles north west of North Aston) in 1539 and 1640; they were, respectively, Justinian, son of John Whitman, and Justinian, son of Philip **Cox**. No connection is known between the Churchills of North Aston, the Whitmans and the Coxes of North Leigh; mention of such circumstances is made only because of the comparative rarity of the name. Historically, the name seems to have come from a sixth century Roman Emperor

named Justinus, who caused the compilation of the Corpus Juris Civilis; and also from a sixth century Welsh saint who was confessor to St. David.

A word should be said here about the Deddington manors, of which there were three in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. The family, living in Clifton and Deddington, were to be clients of these manors for the next three hundred years. They were called the Windsor Manor, the Duchy Manor and the Christ Church Manor.

The **Windsor Manor** was so called because it was sold in 1364 by the de Dives family (an Anglo-Norman family who originated from Dives-sur-Mer in the Calvados district of Normandy) to the Warden and Canons of the Chapel of St. George, recently established by King Edward III in Windsor Castle (to whom the advowson of the church had already been given by William de Bohun in 1350). The de Dives family had owned the manor since the earliest years of the thirteenth century, and, because Deddington Castle stood on its acres, it had formerly been called the Castle Manor. The Windsor canons administered the manor through their own stewards throughout the 14th, 15th and early 16th centuries, but, in 1548, leased it to John Edmonds, who was also the lessee of the Christ Church Manor, for 51 years. From him the lease passed to his son-in-law, Anthony Appletree, and that family and its descendants remained in possession until 1760. It was then sold a number of times and leases became renewable at seven year intervals. After the inclosure of the parish in 1808, the four farms belonging to the Windsor Manor (i.e., The Great House Farm, Leadenporch Farm, Hazel Hedge Farm and Tomwell Farm) were let on separate leases, leaving the lessee of the Manor in control only of the copyholds. In 1866 the title to the Windsor Manor was transferred to the Ecclesiastical (now the Church) Commissioners.

The **Duchy Manor** derives its name from the fact that it came into the possession of King Henry V in 1419, as heir to his mother, Mary de Bohun, and was annexed to his Duchy of Lancaster. It formed part of the dower of his queen, Catherine de Valois, and, in due course, part of the dower of Margaret of Anjou, when she married Henry VI in 1445. In 1465 Edward IV granted it to his consort, Elizabeth Woodville. She surrendered it in exchange for an estate in Lincolnshire, and the king granted it to John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.

A series of farmers leased the land throughout the 15th and 16th centuries and, in 1604, James I, being in financial difficulties, sold the manor to Peter van Lore, a London merchant, and his associate, William Blake. In the next six years it passed rapidly by sale and purchase through the families of Sir William Sandys of Worcestershire and Thomas Chamberlain of Oxfordshire, and Thomas Mynatt, which latter purchaser established himself as a resident lord of the manor, and died in 1613. Ten years later his widow and son disposed of all their property in Deddington to Richard Cartwright, a lawyer, who had recently established himself as squire of the adjoining village of Aynho, in Northamptonshire.

This was the situation when the Churchills came on the Deddington scene, and, for the next three hundred years, the Duchy Manor was the property of the Cartwright family. But they could not avoid the financial difficulties that beset all landholders in

the nineteenth century, and they began to sell portions of their Deddington estate during the latter part of the century, the last of it being sold by Sir Fairfax Cartwright in 1925.

The **Christ Church Manor:** because Philip Basset of Wycombe, some time before his death in 1271, gave various estates to the Prior and convent of Bicester, including lands and tenements in Clifton, Hempton and Deddington, this manor was first called the Bicester Manor. As the greater part of the Priory's estate was in Clifton, it was also often referred to as the Manor of Clifton. Strictly speaking, however, the proper name of the manor at this time was the Deddington Manor.

In the 13th and 14th centuries the canons of Bicester managed the estate themselves, employing a steward to hold the Courts and a reeve to farm the demesne. But from the reign of Richard II onwards, the manor, or the demesne, or both, were frequently let to farm.

In the 15th century the bursars collected the rents of the free and customary tenants through a rent collector, while leasing the demesne and the Clifton mills by indenture, as before.

When Bicester Priory was dissolved in 1536, its estates passed to the king and Deddington was quickly secured by Sir Thomas Pope, a native of the parish, who had been appointed treasurer of the Court of Augmentations, set up to administer the revenues arising from the suppression of the monasteries. In 1538, Pope sold the capital messuage to John Edmunds, and two years later leased the manor to him for 60 years. But, in 1545, the king regained possession of the manor by exchanging it with Pope for lands elsewhere, and in 1546 he bestowed it on his new foundation of Christ Church, Oxford.

Christ Church granted leases of the manor, or portions of it, to a succession of farmers between 1546 and 1638, who held Courts Baron on behalf of the Dean and Chapter. Finally, in the latter year, John Hollins, of Oxford, assigned his lease to John Cartwright of Aynho, and in 1648 John Cartwright and John Lane of Deddington were granted a lease of the manor for 21 years by the College which was renewed at intervals until 1679 when Ursula, widow of John Cartwright (during the minority of her son Thomas) and Josiah Lane, physician, son of John Lane, were granted a further lease of 21 years. In 1693 Judith Lane, widow of Josiah Lane, sold her moiety of the lease to Sir Robert Dashwood of Kirtlington Park.

Having described the three Deddington manors, it is now time to return to Justinian Churchill who, whatever the origin of his name, became a husbandsman and a client of the Duchy Manor at Deddington. His name first appears on manorial documents in 1630, and he continues to farm land there until twenty years later. He must have left his native North Aston at some date prior to 1630, and his residence at Deddington is confirmed by his signing the relevant Protestation Return of 1640 as being of Deddington. Like his cousins, Thomas of Clifton, in Deddington parish, and Henry Churchill, later of Steeple Claydon, in Buckinghamshire, he died just before the Hearth Tax was introduced, so the size of his house is not known. Unlike his

cousin, Thomas, who was a copyholder, he seems to have been rather an unsatisfactory manorial tenant. Hardly a single View of Frankpledge (A review *held by the lord or the steward of the manor into the working of the manor and the orderliness of the tenants*) drawn up by the manorial court in the twenty years during which he was a client does not contain at least one, and often more than one, conviction by the Homage (*The jury appointed by the Court, consisting mostly of copyholders*) for some transgression of the laws and customs of the manor. There were instances of contracting and selling ale at incorrect measure; for erecting a sign-post on the Waste; for erecting a dunghill on the Waste; for breaking the Pound; for creating an affray and many others, for each of which he was fined.

Justinian married, first Isabel, and had seven children, all excepting one of whom were girls. The first four children were born at North Aston, and the remainder at Deddington. Isabel was buried there in 1651, and, in the following year, he married Elizabeth Cowper, a widow, in Banbury. This marriage was childless. He died in 1660 aged 67 and was buried at Banbury.

Henry's remaining children were all girls. Of the first, Agnes (or Anne), nothing is known. The second, Mary, died aged 21, and her death is recorded in the burial register as follows:

'Mary, ye daughter of Henry Churchill and Bridgett his wife was buried ye 16 day of August Anno dom 1620 by me Daniel Bitterton, vicar of North Aston: whose soule I trust and believe God hath in keeping'.

Nothing is known of her sister Katherine, but the youngest sister, Isabel, married John Beard.

Bitterton was the incumbent of North Aston for 20 years (1617 - 1637). His daughter married a member of the Wing family, who lived simultaneously in the village with the Churchills, and, indeed, John Wing was an overseer of Henry Churchill's will and was referred to as 'my loving neighbour'. Both John and Edward Wing signed Henry's inventory. Bitterton was given to rather prosy entries in the burial register. He also recorded, in his personal style, the deaths of Bridget, the wife, of Henry, in 1625, and of Ellen, the first wife of John, the eldest surviving twin of Henry, the Carpenter, in the same year.

Of Bridget, his entry reads:

'Bridgett wife of Henry Churchill was buried the ix day of November 1625 being of the age of 60 yeares upon the ffeast day of All Saints' last past, with a funerall Sermon by Mr. fforwarde'.

At some time in the last quarter of the sixteenth and the first quarter of the seventeenth centuries, Richard of North Aston's two sons, Giles and Thomas, moved away from their native heath, 17 miles south eastwards to Ambrosden parish; Giles' destination was Blackthorn, a hamlet in the parish; Thomas's was Arncot, another hamlet in the parish, while Henry, the carpenter, and his brothers Timothy and Robert, seem to have remained in North Aston - at any rate Thomas and Timothy were buried there.

The two sons, Giles and Thomas, remained in the Ambrosden district until they

died in 1639 and 1615 respectively. Giles' first three sons lived and died in Arncot but the youngest, John, moved to Steeple Claydon where he died in 1640.

Thomas's two sons, Thomas and Henry, moved north westward to Clifton, in the parish of Deddington, and were working on their strips of land in the Duchy Manor by 1630, as was Justinian, their cousin (*See Plate 1*).

Thomas's inventory, taken after his death, amounted to £256 11s. 8d., a considerable sum for those days. He left £10 to each of his children (he had ten: six boys and four girls) on their attaining the age of 21, and he names them as Elizabeth, Thomas, Ann, Richard, Henry, Isaac, William, Rebecca, Joan and Michael. The point that strikes one immediately is that the children include a Thomas and a Henry, and this may indicate that the Thomas whose will is being considered is the father of Thomas and Henry. His wife's Christian name was Joan, and the overseers of his will were Giles Churchill of Blackthorn, and Henry Churchill of Aston.

These moves took place in the reign of James I, a reign lasting only 22 years, during which the king was engrossed in quarrels with the Church and with his parliaments. The colonization of Ulster was initiated; the Thirty Years' War declared, and the Pilgrim Fathers sailed in the Mayflower, to found a colony at New Plymouth in America. It was, therefore, a period during which the inhabitants of the English countryside were left to their own devices, unmolested by local authorities or the national government.

What made life easy or difficult for the yeoman or small land-holder was, of course, the availability of land for cultivation. The Black Death in 1349 destroyed half the population of the kingdom (in Norwich alone, 60,000 perished) and resulted in an enormous shortage of labour, which, in turn, made land available and weighted the scales in favour of the small-holder and against the landowner. The sixteenth century saw the slow advance of the birthrate against the deathrate and eventually the ravages of the Black Death were made good; so, under the Tudors, there was again a surfeit of labour in proportion to the land available. As yet, there was no colonial and little industrial development to absorb the surplus men. Thus, the landlord was able to take advantage of the situation and raise his rents, since land was so much in demand.

In the hundred years between 1550 and 1650, the Churchill family moved rather erratically from the Banbury neighbourhood to Deddington and to Steeple Claydon in Buckinghamshire, using the villages of North Aston and Ambrosden as stepping stones. The reasons for these moves are not clear; but they were possibly the search for land, and an effort to avoid the plague.

The built-up and populous area of Banbury and its hamlets could well have caused both these reasons, and prompted a move to the deeper countryside, where there would be a greater availability of land, and a lesser danger of contracting the plague.

In 1540 there was plague in Banbury and in Oxford, and in 1577 there was a virulent outbreak in the city of Oxford, which was fostered by the narrow streets and the total lack of drains. The ancient Shire Hall was the scene of the Black Assize,

where a malignant disease known as Goal Fever caused the death within 40 days of the Lord Chief Baron, the High Sheriff of Merton and about 300 more people connected with the Assize. This malady, from the stench of the prisoners, developed itself during the trial of one Rowland Jenkes, a saucy, foul-mouthed bookseller, for scandalous words uttered against the Queen.

Six years later, there was a serious epidemic in Glympton, only 12 miles south of Banbury, in which 16 people died in three months. In 1605 the epidemic visited Rowsham, four miles from Glympton, and again in the following year.

In 1609 there was a wide outbreak of smallpox in Oxfordshire and the plague struck again in Banbury in 1603. Whether the plague claimed any victims of the Churchill family in those fell years is not known, but there are a number of people in the pedigree of whom there is no information, save of their name and date of birth, and it would be possible that they died of one or other of the many diseases that ravaged the countryside at that time. But one thing is certain: **Thomas and Henry** survived to move from North Aston, the former to Clifton (Deddington parish) and the latter to Steeple Claydon, in about 1620. It has been mentioned that Justinian also moved at about the same time, to Deddington, and John, the third son of Giles the recusant, likewise moved to Steeple Claydon. Why these destinations were chosen is not known, but perhaps there were land vacancies in the manors in these areas. (*See Plate I*)

Deddington was first described as a borough in one of the Hundred Rolls in the thirteenth century, but it quite soon declined into a decayed market town. When the Churchills settled there in the first half of the seventeenth century, there was a weekly cattle market, but the town seems to have attracted insufficient trade and, by the eighteenth century, its population was in decline and it had yielded place in agricultural prosperity to neighbouring Banbury, Adderbury, Bloxham, Woodstock and Chipping Norton. It was, however, a very attractive place, built almost entirely of golden-yellow ironstone. The parish church, dedicated to S.S. Peter and Paul, is also built of the local ironstone and parts of it date from the thirteenth century. It has a tower surmounted by eight pinnacles, each crowned with gilt iron vanes. The east windows of both the north and south aisles are late perpendicular in style, and the nave, with its two aisles, conveys a spaciousness unusual in a parish church.

Thomas, the Yeoman, of Clifton, and Henry of Steeple Claydon, were, respectively, the founders of the Churchill succession in Oxfordshire, based on Deddington, and in Buckinghamshire, based on Steeple Claydon. They are, undoubtedly, two of the pre-eminent ancestors in the pedigree of the Churchills here being recorded.

To deal with Thomas of Clifton, first; he was probably born about 1590, in the reign of Elizabeth I, a year or two after the Armada was defeated. He married Katherine, whose maiden name is not known, nor is the place whence she came. He lived in Clifton, where he possessed a house, but he also owned a cottage in Deddington, both in copyhold tenure. As he died two years before the Hearth Tax was introduced, one does not know for certain the size of his house, but, after his death,

his second and third sons, Henry and John, both lived in houses, which each had three hearths, so it is more than likely that one of these houses was lived in by Thomas, the Yeoman, until his death in 1658. His eldest son, Thomas, succeeded to his cottage in Deddington, which had two hearths.

The Hearth Tax became law in 1662 and was exceedingly unpopular. For one thing, it was of foreign origin, and it touched a new class of people, which had hitherto been practically out of reach of direct taxation. The tax was 2s annually for every hearth, to be collected half-yearly by the petty constables, high constables and sheriffs, unless the occupant were exempted on the grounds of poverty. In 1664, responsibility for the collection of the tax was transferred to a newly created set of officials, known as the Chimney Men. The inspection of his home by a stranger was keenly resented by the average man, and concealment of hearths was common. Householders adopted many stratagems to avoid payment, including stopping up their chimneys or even pulling them down. The Chimney Men were hated and local officials often refused to co-operate with them.

The more hearths a house had, the wealthier was the inhabitant. A total of fewer than three hearths usually indicated an economic situation below the comfortable level, while a total of ten or more would indicate considerable affluence.

Thomas, of Clifton, and Katherine, had six children, four boys and two girls, and they can be seen in Figure 5. They will be described at pp. 42 & 43. Thomas was succeeded in the family pedigree by his third son, John, who married Mary Gill.

Thomas, of Clifton, was clearly a respected and influential citizen and official of the manor, having been appointed a member of the jury on numerous occasions, and he also held the offices of Fieldsman (twice), Constable of Clifton (four times), Assessor, Supervisor, and Sidesman (once each). He employed a servant, called Thomas Blake, and the Views of Frank Pledge of the period testify that he (the servant) cannot have been blameless since he was fined for breaking the Pound on one occasion, and for allowing his master's pigs to escape on another. For these transgressions his fines amounted to three farthings and sixpence respectively.

Thomas's will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, in 1660 *WCC. Nabbs 167*) and it shows what a well-to-do yeoman he must have been, for he was able to leave legacies to the value of over £600, plus smaller annual sums, having already set up his eldest son and his two elder daughters. His father left him only £10 in his will, so his affluence was due to his own ability and industry as a farmer. In Deddington, there were 'Drapers, Bustards, Stilgoes and Churchills', whose stone-built houses still exist today to testify to the prosperity of the Tudor and Stuart farmer. Their rise was due, in part, to inherited assets in land and cash; in part to the expanding economy of the period, reflected in Deddington in the parish's heavy contribution to the subsidy of 1523 - 4. To this tax on personal estate (in land, goods or wages), Deddington and its hamlets contributed £62 8s. 10d, while Banbury and its hamlets yielded only £38 15s., Adderbury £25 1s., and Bloxham £23 19s. 10d. (*HM. Colvin 'A History of Deddington, Oxfordshire' S.P.C.K. 1963 p. 85 - 6*).

It was in the lifetime of Thomas that The Great Rebellion, or Civil War, broke out in 1642. The first major engagement of the war was fought at Edgehill, in Warwickshire, only 12 miles north of Deddington. Thomas would have been about 52 at the time, his eldest son, Thomas, about 16 and Justinian's eldest son 15, but no muster rolls of the period have been found.

Deddington itself was much involved in the war, and the troops of one side or the other were frequently quartered there. During the eighteen-year period, 1642 - 1660, there was much disruption of affairs in Oxfordshire, and even the parish registers were very sparsely kept. No Churchills were recorded as being baptised, only four married and only two buried. One of the marriages, Richard Churchill to Elizabeth Breden, is entered on the fly-leaf - as if to emphasize, the confusion of the times.

In 1644, shortly after the engagement at Cropredy Bridge, Charles I's army rested about Deddington on the way to Evesham, and the king, himself, spent a night or two in the Parsonage House, which today is called 'Castle House'. (*Iter Carolinum* (1660) p.9).

The Parliamentary army was made up mostly of yeoman farmers, middle class townspeople and artisans - 'poor tapsters and town apprentices, raw and untrained' - as Cromwell himself described them, and there is evidence to suppose that this part of Oxfordshire was mostly on the side of Parliament - apart, that is, from the Church. There is, however, no evidence to show that any member of the Churchill family was caught up in the war.

It should, perhaps, be recorded here that eight years before the Great Rebellion broke out, Deddington church tower collapsed and fell to the ground, causing considerable damage to the church, which was not fully repaired until many years later. This also resulted in the loss of the bells, which were removed by order of the king in 1643 'as the fall of the steeple made them unserviceable to you, till the same be rebuilt and they are refounded'. They were sent to his magazine at New College, Oxford, and the king promised 'to restore the same in materials or monies...when you have occasion to use the same'. (V. Skelton, *Antiquities of Oxfordshire* (1823), *Wooton Hundred*, p. 7; *Archaeological Journal* VI(1849)p. 179).

The Deddington registers are not always very easy to read, so it was fortunate for genealogists that a registrar, named Kempster, was appointed, in conformity with an act of Parliament, in 1653. This man had excellent handwriting and, in addition, must have been quite a character. Appointed parish clerk in 1658, he became the town schoolmaster in 1672, and was allotted a portion of the church as his classroom. He was an ardent Royalist, and his sentiments are frequently expressed, in random notes that he made in the registers. On the occasion of the restoration of the monarchy he wrote:

'His majestie Charles ye second Came into London ye 29th of May 1660 wch was ye 12th yeare of his reign wch was Brought in without Blood shedd and his ffather was put to death ye 30th of January 1648 - by the tyrranicall powers of Oliver Cromwell who dyed September ye 3.1658 and was taken up after he had

bin buried a yeare and above and was hanged at tiberne and his head was sett up at Westminster and his bodye was buried underneath Tyburne 1661 wch Oliver did governe heare some yeares in England.'

About this time, an expression one meets in the Burial Register is 'buried in woollen', incorporated in the record of the burial of a member of the parish. This referred to the practice of burying corpses in a sheep's wool shroud in compliance with an Act of Parliament of 1667 intended to help the wool trade. There was a £5 penalty for non-compliance.

To finish off the story of the bells: the tower was not completed until 1709, and application was then made to the military authorities for the Sovereign (Queen Anne) to redeem her predecessor's pledge of 1643, but to no avail, and, ultimately, the bells were cast in 1791, at the expense of the parishioners, and hung in the tower.

The pedigree set out at Figure 5 shows all ten of the children which Thomas and his wife Joan bore. Amongst them were the two outstanding progenitors of the Churchills of Deddington, and those of Steeple Claydon. Thomas of Deddington has just been described, and Henry will so be very shortly. First, the other eight children must be mentioned. The eldest was Elizabeth, who married Jeffery Shreive at Ambrosden in 1617. The second child was Thomas, mentioned above. The third was Anne, who married Mordecai Barton of Steeple Claydon in 1629. The fourth was Richard, of whom nothing is known. The fifth was Henry, who is about to be described. The remaining five children were called Isaac, William, Rebecca, Joan and Michael, but nothing else is known of them.

So the second outstanding son, Henry, must now be the subject of a biographical sketch to conclude this chapter on the family settlement in the early seventeenth century in Deddington and Steeple Claydon respectively.

Henry was probably born in Ambrosden or one of the hamlets associated with its parish, in about 1594, and he died at Steeple Claydon, aged about 58. He moved with his elder brother, Thomas, from Ambrosden to Deddington, in about 1630 and he farmed land in the Duchy Manor there for two years, with his brother and his cousin, Justinian, before moving to Steeple Claydon, in Buckinghamshire. The reasons behind the move are not known, but the Churchills of Deddington and those of Steeple Claydon always kept in touch with each other. Henry made his nephew, Henry (son of his brother Thomas), his godson, as also he made a great-nephew, Henry, grandson of Giles; and Thomas of Deddington's eldest son Thomas was, like himself, made an overseer of Henry's will. Henry became a client of the Steeple Claydon Manor, which was one of the complex of Claydon manors over which members of the Verney family presided as lords. He had been a client for about ten years when the Civil War broke out. Sir Edmund Verney, who was the lord, was also Knight Marshal to King Charles I, and in 1642 was made his Standard Bearer. One cannot help trying to see these events through the eyes of Henry Churchill, a yeoman farmer on Verney's manor. What news came down

the farming community about the great events that were taking place less than 30 miles to the north west, at Edgehill?

The king, with his army, was marching from Shrewsbury on London when, suddenly, the two armies became aware of each other. The Earl of Essex, commander-in-chief of the Parliamentary forces, took up quarters at Kineton, in Warwickshire, while the king's army, commanded by Lord Lindsey, was but a few miles distant, between Edgecot and Cropredy. The battle of Edgehill was fought on Sunday the 23rd of October, and both sides claimed it a victory. Sir Edmund Verney, the Standard Bearer, was killed and the Standard captured by the enemy, though it was subsequently recaptured by the Royalists. Henry and Thomas Churchill must have had much to discuss when they managed to meet!

Unlike his brother, Thomas of Deddington, Henry of Steeple Claydon describes himself in his will as a 'gent', and he refers to the house in which he lived as 'My Mansion - House'. Fortunately, he mentions that it adjoins his close, called 'Sande Furlong', and this enables one to identify it in Steeple Claydon, where it still stands. It is of timber, brick and wattle construction, with a thatched roof, dating from the early sixteenth century. It had a long, attic storey, under the roof, stretching the whole length of the house, and, below that, two storeys, which must each have had at least three large rooms. There is some fine linenfold panelling in the front downstairs room. Henry had the whole house to himself and his large family, but, in 1952, when the present author visited it, it was divided and occupied by two families. Henry evidently owned the freehold, but later the house must have passed into Claydon Manor, owned by the Verneys. When photographed thirty-two years ago (*See Plate 1*) the features of the house remained much as they must have been in the early seventeenth century, but a visit made twenty years later showed that contemporary tenants have made a number of alterations, removing a triple chimney, building a porch over the main entrance door, increasing the size of some of the windows, and exposing the brickwork at the northern end of the house.

Henry possessed quite a lot of land. He owned three closes in Steeple Claydon, the one adjoining his house called Sande Furlong, and two others called, respectively, Peartree Hill and Gabriel's Ground. He also possessed a stretch of pasture in Steeple Claydon, called Bushey Close, and three meadows, two of them called Cowmeade and Bourne Heads. In addition, he possessed some freehold land in Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire, called Midsomer Plot, and eleven acres of copyhold arable land in the common field there. As is usual in England, many of these field names are (at any rate) known today, even if not often used. He left £955 10s. to various members of his family in his will, which was substantially more than his elder brother, Thomas of Deddington, left, and all the land mentioned above to his five elder sons. (*See Henry's will PCC. Brent 367.*) His descendants spread to Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, and, finally, to South Africa. He married Phyllis Adnell (or Oldnell), a sister or sister-in-law of Joseph Townsend, of Princes Risborough. They had ten children, six boys and four girls; they will be described at pp. 76 and 77 et seq.

Henry and Phyllis both died in 1652, he in February and she eight months later. As

his executrix, she was unable to prove his will, so this was done by their eldest son, Tobias, early in the following year.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE FIRST THREE GENERATIONS AT DEDDINGTON

With the Churchills established in Deddington and Steeple Claydon, it will be necessary to record each branch of the family separately in the following chapters, and this chapter will cover the hundred year period following the birth of the children of Thomas Churchill and his wife Katherine. They can be seen at Figure 5.

The eldest, **Thomas**, must have been born in the mid 1620s and he succeeded to his father's copyhold cottage (*NRO. Court, Baron Duchy Manor CA. 3162.*) with tw hearths in Deddington. (*Hearth Tax Returns Oxfordshire 1662. O. Record Soc. Vol21,1940.*)

The second child was **Jane**, who married Edward Chamberlain of Sarsden, at Bicester, in 1651. Chamberlain was an overseer of his father-in-law's will. Next came another girl, **Mary**, who married Francis Wansell at Deddington in 1654, who was also an overseer of Thomas's will. Then came **Henry**, for whom there exists a firm baptismal date, since he is the first Churchill to appear in the Deddington Baptismal Register in 1631.

He lived in a house at Clifton which had three hearths (*Ibid*) and he farmed in the Duchy Manor and also possessed a virgate in the Windsor Manor(about 30 acres). He was probably a constable (perhaps Chief Constable) in the Wootton Hundred, because it is known that he wrote to the constables of Glympton, in 1664, requiring them to furnish him with a list of all persons who had paid their Hearth Tax, and another witnessed by the minister and, churchwardens, and agreed by two J.P.s, showing those who were incapable, through poverty, of paying the tax. (*O. .Record Soc's. Reports Vol 5,1923, Glympton Manor*). His wife's first name was Elizabeth and when he died in 1707 she enjoyed the Windsor Manor virgate for her widowhood, which ceased on her death in 1709. Hester

Lovedream (Lovedreene?), nee Churchill (who married at Chipping Norton in 1707) was the next tenant.

Although he lived in his own house in Clifton, he leased a house called **The Crown** in New Street, Deddington from the Christ Church Manor from 1661 for sixteen years. He had a cow common and two acres of arable land belonging. Henry and Elizabeth had five surviving children, two boys, Timothy and Henry, and three girls, Elizabeth, Mary and Anne, but nothing further is known of them. The next brother was **John Churchill** of Clifton, who was born in 1638. He, like his brother Henry, lived in a house in Clifton with three hearths, and he married Mary Gill, the daughter of Edward Gill, gent, of Wickham, near Banbury. She was 19 years older than John when they married at Deddington in 1650 and she lived to be 93 years old, though he died aged 81. She inherited considerable properties from one William Bowdle, gent, (*Bod. Lib. M.S. ch. Oxon 3582*), late of little of Barton, of whom she was a legatee and surviving executrix. All the property, which consisted of nine houses and various gardens and attached ground, lay in Banbury.

Mary Gill came of an armigerous family (or, a bend sable, on a chief of the second three martlets of the first). (*Some pedigrees from the visitation of Oxfordshire 1634. Mary Gill is shown to be aged 15 at the date of the visitation.*) John farmed land in the Duchy Manor at Deddington.

A return will be made to John Churchill and his wife Mary Gill in a short while, when their nine children will be described, but it now remains here to describe the last of the brothers, **Samuel Churchill**, who was born at Deddington in 1640 and died there in 1723. He married Frances Busby at Deddington in 1662. They had two sons, John and Thomas, and the latter (Thomas), who was born in 1667, probably had a son called Busbee, who lived at Clifton and married Elizabeth, the widow of someone called Tey. They had one surviving son, Busbee, who was born in 1716 at Deddington, and he married Catherine Wilkin, also at Deddington, in 1738. They had one son, Busbee, and three daughters, Anne, Mary and Catherine. Busbee, who was born in 1739, married Rebekah Smith in 1760 at St. Catherine Coleman (*Marriage Licences, Bishop of London's Registry*). This is the last that is known of Samuel and Frances (Busby's) descendants.

It is now time to return to the children of John Churchill and Mary Gill. As stated recently, there were nine of them and they are shown at Figure 6. They were all born at Clifton, and lived there all their lives. Two amongst them were notable, i.e., Bartholomew and Joseph. They will be described in due course, but first it must be said that the eldest son was Thomas, who died aged 28, in 1688, and the second son **John**, who was born in 1662 and married Sarah Bates in 16%. (*O. Arch: Marriage Bonds.*) He seems to have been quite well off and rented Clifton Farm, Clifton Mills and six yardlands (about 180 acres) of leasehold land in Clifton Field from Christ Church Manor, part of which he let to his brother Joseph. The manor valued the yardlands at £14 or £15 each, and he paid £5 per acre of meadowland. His lease was from 1716 for 21 years, at £7 6s. 3d. per annum, but, as was usual at this period, he

was not permitted to cut any timber or underwood. Leases included the stipulation that the lessee carried out all repairs, paid all the taxes, and paid his proportion towards entertaining the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church when visiting the manor at Deddington.

John died in 1730, and Clifton Mill and the land passed to his brother, Henry, of Clifton. John and Sarah's descendants were not particularly distinguished; they farmed mostly leasehold land in Clifton Field, in the Christ Church Manor, and they died out after four generations. (*Their names and dates are shown on Table J of the Churchill Archive pedigree sheets in the Oxfordshire County Record Office.*)

The third son, **Henry**, succeeded his brother John as the miller of Clifton Farm and Mill and he leased the six yardlands from the Christ Church Manor in 1739 for eleven years, paying a fine of £125. He had a son called John, who administered his father's estate when he died in 1743. The fourth son was **Samuel**, and he died aged 50.

The fifth son was **Bartholomew** Churchill, referred to previously as one of the two notable sons of John and Mary Gill. He appears to have been the first member of the family who went into trade, and he became a mercer (a dealer in silks, velvet and such fabrics). It is surprising that his will has not been found for he must have left a lot of money. He is described as 'notable' because he founded a family which lived at Deddington, consisted mostly of well-to-do lawyers and grocers, and ceased to farm their land, but let it, instead, to resident tenants. They described themselves as 'gents' in their wills, and were so described in the many legal documents which referred to their purchase and ownership of land.

These Churchills were cousins of the family founded by Joseph of Clifton, who also lived in Deddington for generations, but who remained on the land as farmers, and continued to describe themselves as yeomen.

At a Court Baron of Windsor Manor in 1712, Bartholomew took out a copyhold messuage in Clifton for himself and his son, Bartholomew. Bartholomew and his brother Joseph also took out a virgate (about 30 acres) in Clifton Field (Windsor Manor), which had belonged to their uncle Henry, the Constable, of Wootton and had been enjoyed for her life by his widow Elizabeth. He surrendered a half yardland in Clifton in 1713 to his nephew John Churchill, the son of his brother Joseph.

Bartholomew married Mary Coles of Clifton, at Chipping Norton in 1702, who predeceased her husband by 14 years. He was a juror of the Windsor Manor Court Baron from 1714 to 1732, and died in 1734. He is buried in a table tomb immediately to the east of the south porch of Deddington parish church, which was erected by his son Bartholomew, as an act of filial piety.

He was succeeded by his second child and eldest son, Bartholomew, to whom a return will be made later. In the meantime, details of the remaining children of John and Mary Gill will be set down. (*See Figure 6*).

The sixth child was **Alice**, born in 1672, the seventh was **Katherine**, born a year later, the eighth was **Joseph**, the other 'notable' referred to above, and the ninth, was **Benjamin**.

Nothing further is known about Alice and Katherine, and not very much about the

youngest, Benjamin, so it will be convenient to set what is known down here, before returning to his elder brother, Joseph.

Benjamin lived at Deddington and was a tallow chandler (that is to say he dealt in the sale of candles and soap made from melting down the harder kinds of fat). He married Anne Henn, the daughter of Richard Henn, of Lainton, Oxon, at Newton Purcell in 1699, but died in the following year aged 21. In his will he left his mother (Mary, nee Gill) £50, and the rest of his estate to his wife. In view of the circumstances it is hardly surprising that he and Anne had no children.

So now the time has come to set down the biography of **Joseph**, (*See Figure 10*) the second 'notable' son of John and Mary Gill. Whereas Bartholomew became the ancestor of a family of grocers, solicitors, surveyors, coroners and parsons, Joseph became the ancestor of mostly yeoman farmers, based on Clifton and Deddington, though land shortage drove some of the younger sons into the trades of bakery and butchery. The present author of this family history is descended directly from Joseph.

He was born at Clifton in 1676 and married Rebekah Coles at Deddington in 1700. She was the sister of Mary Coles, the wife of his brother Bartholomew. He leased some yardlands from his brother, John, in Clifton Field. He was a juror of the Court Baron of the Windsor Manor from 1707 -1732. He and his brother Bartholomew, took out of the hands of the lord of the manor 30 acres of copyhold land that had been enjoyed by Elizabeth, the widow of Henry their uncle and Constable of Wootton. His wife, Rebekah, died in 1708, and, four years later, he married Anne French at Chipping Norton.

In 1713, he and Anne were assaulted by two men called Joseph Jeffs of Aynho, and Samuel Baldwin, who were fined £20 and £10 respectively. (*O. Quarter Sessions Records.*) Perhaps Joseph was of a quarrelsome nature, for a few years later he was bound over in the sum of £20 for a breach of the peace with Ann Rawlins. (*Idem.*)

In 1730, and the following year, Joseph paid annual rents of one shilling and three shillings, respectively, for encroachments on the Waste at Deddington. (Waste was inferior land in a manor, used communally.)

Joseph died in 1732, but his second wife Anne, who survived him, enjoyed his 30 acres until she married one, Hollier, as her second husband in 1736 and so forfeited the land, which then passed to Joseph's only son, John Churchill, q.v. p.51.

CHAPTER EIGHT: TALLOW CHANDLERS, GROCERS AND SOLICITORS

Bartholomew Churchill, the first of what has been called the two 'notable' sons of John and Mary Gill, married Mary Coles, and they have been described on p.44. They had six children, four sons and two daughters. (*See Figure 7*)

The eldest child, **Mary**, married Thomas Rainbow of Southam, Warwickshire, at Barford St. Michael, Oxon, in 1728. The second child was **Bartholomew**, who was born at Deddington in 1709, and had a twin brother **Benjamin**, the third child who, however, survived only two years. The fourth child was **Alice**, who was born in 1711 and of whom nothing more is known. **Benjamin** was the fifth child, who married Philippa Hitchcock and they had eight children, three of them grocers and one of them, **Samuel**, a very well-to-do- attorney and surveyor. Benjamin will be described at p.47.. The sixth and last child was Joseph, who married Elizabeth Griffin.

Bartholomew was a tallow-chandler and became a grocer, the latter business including the former, and it seems that he carried on his trade both at Clifton and Deddington. In 1741, he obtained the lease of Clifton Farm and Mill from his uncle, Henry, for a fine of £45. Lands belonging to the Mill included Mill Close (which was a meadow), an orchard and gardens amounting to three acres, and, in Millenham and Valisham about three acres also. The farm had two barns, a cowhouse, a pigsty and reekyard. One close, called Long Close, adjoined the farm, as did Holt's Cose - in all six yardlands, each of which was worth £14.

Bartholomew held the mill for 34 years, paying Christ Church Manor a fine of £45 every five years. He took various apprentices to learn the trade of tallow-chandler: in 1734, one Thomas Cox, at a fee of £36 15s.; in 1743 one Henry Lamperey of Middleton; and in 1757 one John Phipps, for a fee of £45, but he 'eloped' from his master in 1761. (*Jacksons Oxford Journal*, 1 March 1761.)

Bartholomew became a brandy merchant and hop dealer in due course, and he built a new house in Deddington, in which he allowed his brother, Benjamin, to live towards the end of his life. He assigned the lease of Clifton Mill to one Nathaniel Merry in 1775, who had previously been his sub-tenant.

In 1767, Bartholomew received what was termed 'an incendiary letter' demanding ten guineas under threat of destruction of all his property. He put a notice in the local paper (*Idem 9 Jan. 1768, and See Appendix II*), promising a reward of fifty guineas to anyone giving information which would lead to the miscreant's capture and conviction. History, unfortunately, does not relate whether the illiterate rascal was caught.

Bartholomew married Jane Stone of Clifton, in 1735, at Woodstock. They had no children and Jane died in 1778, predeceasing her husband by two years. Besides the two houses at Clifton and Deddington already mentioned, Bartholomew left freehold land in Barford St. Michael, and copyhold and leasehold land in Clifton. He left houses and land and quite large pecuniary bequests to his nephews and nieces, and he directed that a table-tomb be erected over him and his wife, with the names of his 'honoured father and mother', with an inscription, which he quoted; and he further wished that the tomb 'be palisaded round with iron'.

The table-tomb can still be seen, and the inscription on it could clearly be read some thirty years ago, though it is less easily deciphered today (1986). The iron palisading no longer exists having, no doubt, been removed during World War I, to be melted down and used for making munitions. It can, however, be seen in one of Joseph Wilkin's drawings, reproduced facing p. 87, of H.M. Colvin's **A History of Deddington, Oxfordshire** (London S.P.C.K. 1963). (*Joseph Wilkins ((1820 - 91) was a self-taught local signwriter and artist, several examples of whose work can still be seen on the church walls at the western end of the south aisle (1985).*

Benjamin, one of the brothers of Bartholomew, who has just been described, has not left much mark on history. His main contribution to the family pedigree is that he was the father of eight children, three of them grocers, and one of them an attorney and surveyor, who amassed a considerable fortune.

He was a carpenter and lived at Great Rollright. He married Philippa Hitchcock, the daughter of William Hitchcock of Swalcliffe in Oxfordshire, in 1736, at All Saints, Oxford. He was admitted to the ownership of a copyhold house in Clifton on the death of his brother, Bartholomew. He put this house in the name of his son, Bartholomew, and **his** son, Bartholomew, at a yearly rent of 2s. 4d. and paying a fine of £18 7s. 6d.

Benjamin died at Deddington in 1783, two years after his wife Philippa, and their names are both recorded on the table-tomb referred to above.

Finally, in the generation now being described, the last child of Bartholomew and Mary Coles must be dealt with. He was **Joseph**, who married Elizabeth Griffen in 1739. They had three children, Mary, Anne and Bartholomew. Anne was left £800 and a cottage in Deddington by her uncle Bartholomew, and she married Edward Greenwood in 1775. (It is not known if she was any relation to Priscilla Greenwood of Haddenham, Bucks, who married Anne's cousin, Samuel, in 1772).

Coming to the generation which comprises all of Benjamin's children, the eldest was **Bartholomew**, who was born at Swalcliffe, in 1736. He took over the trade of tallow-chandler, grocer, brandy merchant and hop dealer from his uncle, Bartholomew, in Deddington (in the Horse Fair), and in the local paper he advertised for a 'shop man' in 1772. (*Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 23rd May 1772)

He married Margaret Carter, the fourth child and third daughter of Crescens Carter, of Upper and Lower Tadmarton (some four miles west-south-west of Banbury), of which manor he was the lord.

A word should be said, here, about the Carter family. (*See Figure 8*). The eldest son was often given the Christian name of Crescens, and of the two members of that family who came to prominence in the period now being dealt with, the senior was Crescens Carter (c. 1700 -1756), lord of Upper and Lower Tadmarton Manor, who married Sarah Davison of Hackney, Middlesex, at Over Worton, Oxon in 1731. In this narrative, he will be referred to as Crescens senior. The other member of the family is Crescens junior, eldest son of the former (c. 1732 • 1785), whose first wife's Christian name was Mary. She died in 1782. His second wife's name was Elizabeth, but neither of them bore him any children.

The Carters of this period lived at Tadmarton, but they were not an old Tadmarton family. Their name does not appear in the Hearth Tax Returns of 1665, nor in the earlier entries in the parish registers. An older indigenous family, called Brideoak, however, lived in Tadmarton, and Richard Brideoak was lord of the manor in 1692. The family held the manor until 1728, when Ralph Brideoak died.

The funeral cortege of one George Carter moved from London to Tadmarton in 1707 and the deceased man was buried in the Brideoak vault in the parish church, so presumably the Carters and the Brideoaks were related, and this would explain the fact that the manor of Upper and Lower Tadmarton passed to Crescens Carter senior on the death of Brideoak.

When Crescens senior died in 1756, he left the manor of Upper and Lower Tadmarton to his son, Crescens junior, and generous pecuniary legacies to all his daughters, including Margaret, who had married Bartholomew Churchill. Crescens senior is buried in the floor of Tadmarton parish church, near the font, with his coat of arms on his tomb. His successor was Crescens junior (*He is also buried in Tadmarton church in a tomb near his father's, and with his first wife Mary. It also bears his arms.*), and it is clear from his will that he greatly desired a son (or at least a . daughter) to whom he could leave the Tadmarton manor; but he stipulated that, if he had no children, then the manor and a large sum of money were to go to his sister Margaret and her husband, Bartholomew Churchill, **and on their death** to their eldest son, Bartholomew Churchill, **provided he took and used** the surname and arms of Carter. (*The arms he was granted (based on Crescens junior's) by the College of Arms were'. Vert: two lions rampant combatant within a bordure engrailed erminois; Crest', a lion's head erased per pale wavy vert and erminois.* (*College of Arms ref:*

Grants XVII, /69.) So, in due course, Bartholomew became known as Bartholomew Churchill Carter. He was an attorney and he had chambers in Staple Inn, London. His wife's first name was Mary, and they had six children. He lived at Park Place, Camberwell Grove, Surrey, and he died in 1824. He left his manor of Upper and Lower Tadmarton to trustees, with instructions to sell it and invest the money for the benefit of his widow. In letting the Tadmarton manor pass out of the ownership of the Carters, one cannot help wondering if he was betraying the trust placed in him by Crescens Carter junior, his maternal uncle.

Bartholomew's next brother was **Benjamin**, who was born at Swalcliffe, in 1738. He married Suzanne Gibson, of Northampton, at Deddington in 1759, and he died before 1780, when his uncle, Bartholomew, made his will.

The next brother, **John**, was born in 1740, and he lived in Woodstock, of which borough he became an alderman. He married Mary Weller, who died aged 23 at Woodstock, and he married, secondly, Elizabeth Turner, who also died at Woodstock, but in 1798. John died two years earlier, and he left just under £5,000 in his will. (*See Figure 9*)

John had three children by his first wife, Mary Weller, and none by his second marriage. His eldest son was **Benjamin**, who was born at Woodstock in 1769 and died in 1830. He married Matilda Townsend at St. Peter in the East, Oxford, in 1796. John's second and third children were called **Elizabeth** and **Samuel**, but nothing more is known of them.

Benjamin became an alderman of Woodstock (like his father), and he and his wife, Matilda, had six children, namely, Benjamin, Mary, Harriet Elizabeth, Matilda Anne, Samuel Edward and John.

Mention should, perhaps, be made here of the relationship between the Churchill family and the family of Townsend, who lived in Oxford. It has been remarked that Benjamin Churchill married Matilda Townsend, in 1796. Benjamin's eldest daughter, Mary, married a Townsend as her first husband, and Matilda's elder sister, Susannah Townsend, who died in 1816, made a number of thoughtful bequests in her will. She left £10 to her brother-in-law Benjamin; six dessert spoons to her nephew, Benjamin John, of Tackley (three miles north west of Woodstock); a silver coffee pot stand and two waiters, and a gold watch and seals to another nephew, Samuel Edward Churchill; and a silver gravy spoon and sugar tongs to a third nephew, John Churchill. (*Bodleian Library M.S. ch. Oxon. 2600*).

In 1871, Benjamin John, of Tackley, who has been mentioned above and is described as a gentleman, acted as party in a lease to Mary Waite, of Lower Heyford, of 32 acres. (*Idem, M.S. ch. Oxon. 3821*) Mary, who first married a husband called Townsend, married, secondly, one Henry Thomas Titley Palmer, a surgeon, of New Woodstock. Matilda Anne was born at Woodstock in 1798, and died there twenty-one years later. Finally, to end this generation, John was born at Woodstock in about 1810, and later moved to Birmingham.

The prosperous Samuel Churchill was the fourth son of Benjamin and Phillipa and

the next brother to John Churchill, who was described at Page 49 (*See Figure 9*). He was born in 1743 and became a solicitor and surveyor, and he lived in Leadenporch House in New Street, one of the oldest and certainly the most distinguished dwelling in Deddington which was known by that name even in the 15th century, and was a copyhold house of the Windsor Manor. (*See Plate III*). It is not as grand and generously situated as The Castle House (next to the church, and originally "The Old Rectory"), but is, never-the-less, the best known habitation in the parish. It exists to this day, but has now been released from the copyhold tenure of the Windsor Manor.

Samuel Churchill was appointed a Master Extraordinary in the Chancery Court, in 1769 (*Jacksons Oxford Journal 18 Nov. 1769*), and he became a clerk to the Turnpike Trustees of the various roads that were built in the vicinity of Deddington, and between 1771 and the end of the century he was steward of all three manors (Windsor, Duchy and Christ Church), in the environs of the town - in fact he seems to have had a finger in every pie! He acted as a house-agent, and advertised frequently in the local paper; and since this was a time when the Government was forever introducing new kinds of taxes, he made it his business to receive the tax and provide certificates of payment on, for instance, the users of wagons and carts, of saddle-horses, and even of hair-powder; to issue licences to persons acting as attorneys, as dealers in medicines, or as sellers of hats and gloves. He also sold stamps required under the recent Stamp Act on promissory notes, bills etc., and licences for those wishing to register christenings, marriages or burials. He was careful to point out in the newspaper notices that failure to take out a licence could result in a penalty of £5. No doubt Samuel earned a commission on all these transactions.

He enriched himself by buying and selling land and property in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, deals in which his brother, Joseph, frequently joined him. Among his many activities was to become the sponsor of a society for the preservation of property and the prosecution of felons. (*Idem. 3 Jan. 1783*)

In his solicitor's business, he was in partnership with his son, Samuel Churchill junior, and, later/from 1800 until 1808 (when he died), with Samuel Field.

He married Priscilla Greenwood, of Haddenham, Bucks, at St. Clement Danes in London in 1772. She died in 1798 and is buried in the chancel of Deddington parish church - the only member of the family to be buried inside the church.

Samuel died in 1808 aged 64. He left £8,000 to his son, the Rev. Benjamin Churchill, and a similar sum to his son John, the Coroner. All else was left to his eldest son, Samuel junior, who was also appointed sole executor. Samuel the elder's descendants are described at Page 72 et seq.

Samuel had a sister, called Sarah, of whom nothing is known, and another sister called, Mary, who married Samuel Field, a tanner of Thame and Witney, and possibly the Samuel Field who was a partner in Samuel Churchill's solicitors practice. He also had two more brothers: **Joseph**, a grocer of Watlington, and Henry, also a grocer, of Witney. **Joseph** married Elizabeth (surname unknown) and he shared in some of the land and property deals initiated by his brother Samuel. In 1782, he

appealed against the poor rate he was charged on his house in Watlington, and some years later, a labourer called Broadway, was prosecuted for stealing a bushel of wheat (value 5/-) from Joseph's house. He and Elizabeth had three children: George, who succeeded his father as a grocer in Watlington, and two daughters, Mary Anne, who died a spinster, and Caroline, who married someone called Welton, of Brighton.

The youngest brother, **Henry**, the grocer, of Witney, married Jane Kim (or King) and became a member of the Corporation of Oxford. He owned 14 acres of land in Hempton and two freehold houses in Deddington - one in Market Street and the other in New Street. Henry and Jane had nine children, seven sons and two daughters. Two of the sons died in infancy, and of the other five, only one, **Henry**, the eldest, achieved any notoriety. He, like so many of his relations, was a grocer in Deddington, and a churchwarden of the parish. He had considerable influence in the town, and the well-known vicar of Deddington at this time, the Rev. William Cotton Risley, who held the Living from 1836 to 1848, and who kept a diary in no less than 44 volumes (notebooks) - now in the Bodleian Library (*M.S. D.D. Risley c. 66-72*) - would never dream of making a major decision affecting the church and congregation without consulting 'Grocer Churchill'.

Among the subjects they discussed were: how to celebrate Queen Victoria's coronation; how to obtain coal for the poor; the question of feoffees; mending the chancel and the roof; the paving of the church; the tunes for hymns; the formation of a new choir; how to replace the policeman, who was convicted of stealing; and what arrangements should be made for painting the church door before the bishop's visit.

Henry married Anne and they spent nearly 50 years of their married life in Deddington, where all their four children were born. When the time came for retirement, he and Anne moved to Bath. Anne died in 1863 aged 84, and Henry died in 1865 aged 82. They are buried in the same grave in St. Mary's cemetery, Taunton, and they are commemorated in a stained glass window in the north wall of the north aisle of Deddington parish church.

The time has now come to consider the descendants of Joseph, yeoman, of Clifton, who married Rebekah Coles, in 1700, as his first wife. He was described at Page 45 and he and Rebekah had three children: **John of Clifton**, Mary, who married a farmer called Zachariah Prentice (of Clifton), and Anne, who was born in 1705, but of whom nothing more is known. (*See Figure 10*)

John was born in Clifton in 1701 and was a yeoman, who probably worked on his father's acres in Clifton Field. He inherited some of them on his father's death and also some on the remarriage of his step-mother Anne (French) with one, Hollier, in about 1734. Around this time he took over an additional 15 acres, which this uncle, Bartholomew, surrendered, so he was farming about 45 acres. He also inherited several cottages in Deddington from his step-mother when she died two years later, and also his father's house in the town, when he died in 1732.

By 1749, he had become a licensed victualler (*O. Quarter Sessions Rolls 1749.*), working at the King's Arms in Deddington. In the same year, he was involved in a

case of assault with George and Samuel Wilkin, both butchers, against one William Knib, but only George Wilkin was 'presented' by the jury. (*Idem*)

His wife's first name was Anne and their first child was born in 1722. They had nine children altogether, seven sons and two daughters, but both the latter died in infancy. It will have been seen that John did not have much land to leave to his children, and this would account for the fact that two of his sons went into trade, Henry as a baker, and Thomas as a butcher.

John died in 1751, and his wife, Anne, married William Mathews, five years later, as her second husband.

The eldest of John and Anne's surviving children was **John** and he inherited 15 acres copyhold in Clifton Field from his father, and a freehold estate in Deddington. He also took over eight acres copyhold, from Thomas Hanwell, in the Christ Church Manor in Clifton, and a similar number of copyhold acres from the widow of Thomas Makepiece, in the same manor. He became a licensed victualler in Clifton when he was aged 31 but he held the licence for only a year. (*O.R.O. Victuallers' Register 1753.*)

In 1742, he married Mary Wyatt, of Water Eaton, at Barford St. Michael and, about this time, he moved to Ledwell, a hamlet in the parish of Sandford St. Martin and five miles south west of Clifton. The family that he founded continued for six generations, some of them remaining in Ledwell and Sandford St. Martin, some returning to Deddington, and some, in the third generation, settling in Bladon, near Woodstock.

It is not proposed to chronicle all these descendants, whose biographies can be found in Table 'K' of the Churchill Archives at the Oxford Record Office. It is sufficient, here, to say that when John's wife Mary died in 1761, she was buried in Sandford St. Martin's churchyard, and, on her tombstone, is engraved the touching sentence:

'Here lie by me
My infants three'

these words recording the deaths of her second child Rebecca, her sixth child Thomas, and her seventh child, whose name is not known, all of whom died in infancy.

In the year after Mary's death, John married Elizabeth, the daughter of John Buckingham of Sandford, as his second wife. She was the widow of John Sumerton.

One of John's descendants by his first wife, was his great grandson, John, who was born on 27th August 1813 and married Ann Nixon, the daughter of a yeoman, of Bladon. He is notable in the Churchill pedigree because he and his wife, with their first three children, emigrated to Australia in the eighteen-forties and founded a family which still exists in New South Wales.

The eldest child was Sarah, who was born at Woodstock in 1837 and died at Telegraph Point, New South Wales. The second child was Henry, born at Bladon. The third, Charles, was born in the same place in 1841, and the fourth child was born

and died there, an infant. Then, after arriving in New South Wales, Ann gave birth to four children, the eldest being Mary Ann, born in Maitland, N.S.W. in 1845. Then to Joseph, who was born in 1848, at Lake Enis, Port Macquarie, N.S.W: Then William, born 1849, at the same place, and finally, Frederick, who was born in 1855 and died eleven years later.

Among the six generations of descendants of John there were no fewer than seven carpenters, two grocers, two blacksmiths and one innkeeper. His great, great grand-daughter, Fanny Churchill, a much respected and loved Sunday-school teacher and organist for 32 years, died at Deddington, in 1909, aged 59, and there is a tablet to her memory on the south wall of the south aisle in Deddington church.

The Clifton land, some of which John inherited and some of which he acquired, descended through the six generations and the last recorded owner was **William Churchill**, a grocer and provision merchant, of the Household Stores in Deddington, who was born in 1848 and died in 1899, leaving only three daughters. This was the land which had been in the family in copyhold tenure since Henry acquired 'un virgat terre' in the Clifton Field, from the Windsor Manor, in about 1650 (or earlier) - about 230 years.

A male descendant, **Henry George Churchill**, was killed in World War I and his name appears on the Deddington War Memorial, which is in a rather remote part of the churchyard, but it is also on the brass plate memorial in the church.

CHAPTER NINE: DEDDINGTON FOLK, AND A MOVE TO LONDON

It will have been seen from the closing pages of the last chapter, that the descendants of John Churchill finally reached into the twentieth century. It now becomes necessary to go back to the beginning of the eighteenth century in order to follow the fortunes of John and Anne's remaining eight children, the eldest John and his descendants, having been described at Pages 52 and 53.

The second son was Samuel, who was born in 1724 (*See Figure 10*). He acquired about eight acres in the Christ Church Manor and as many acres in the Duchy Manor, in Clifton, as had his elder brother, John. He married Anne Matthews, in 1756, at Deddington, and she died in 1792, having outlived her husband by 14 years. She left £50 in her will to her nephew, Thomas, and a silver spoon marked with the letters S.C. to each of her four brothers-in-law: John, Henry, Benjamin and Thomas Churchill. Samuel and Anne had only one child, **Anne**, who married twice, her first husband being her first cousin, **Thomas** Churchill, of Adderbury. He died in 1787 and she married, secondly, W. Irons, in 1790. Anne and Thomas had three children, namely **Anne; Samuel**, who was born in 1781 and who married Elizabeth Bennett in 1801, and **Martha**. Nothing further is known of them.

The third son of John and Anne was **Benjamin**, who was a yeoman of Clifton and of Adderbury, the latter village being three miles north of Deddington. When his father, John, died in 1751, the next life in his half yardland in Clifton was his fifth son, Joseph, but this land soon passed to his brothers, Samuel and Benjamin. The latter also inherited a half yardland in Clifton, which his mother Anne had been enjoying (after her husband's death) as her widow's portion. When she married her second husband, William Matthews in 1756, the land passed to Benjamin, who thus had 23 acres altogether, to farm. He married, as his first wife, Sarah Porton, at Chipping

Norton, in 1753. They had two sons and three daughters. The first son, **Thomas**, married his first cousin, Anne, in 1776 (See p. 54). The second child was **Sarah** (died about 1792), unmarried. The third was Mary, and the fourth and fifth were twins, **John** and **Elizabeth**. Nothing more is known of them.

Sarah (Porton) died in 1785, and Benjamin married, secondly, Sarah Dumbleton, of Adderbury. He was then aged 66 and must have moved to Adderbury about this time. He and his second wife had no children. Benjamin died in 1819 aged 92. He, and Lillie Churchill, who died in 1971, both attained this age. But they are not the longest livers of all the Churchills in the pedigree. That distinction belongs to Thomas Churchill, Captain and Paymaster of the Carnarvon Militia, who died in 1883 aged 94. (*See pp. 61 to 64*).

Henry was the fourth son of John and Anne, and he was born at Deddington in 1732. He did not inherit any land and this was probably why he took up the profession of bakery, being apprenticed to learn the trade in Brackley, Northants, eight miles north east of Deddington. While an apprentice, he married Anne Merry at Croughton, Northants, in 1755. He carried on his trade in the bakehouse in Deddington and he also acquired and used a windmill there, some cottages and some freehold land in Great Barford and Clifton.

His wife died in 1777 and two years later he married Hannah Monkland, the widow of Richard Monkland, who had been a victualler and had kept the King's Arms at Deddington. On her husband's death, Hannah had taken over his licence until her second marriage to Henry Churchill, whereupon he took over the licence of the King's Arms and held it until 1787, living in a house which adjoined the inn. He made his will in May 1778, and two years later he inexplicably committed suicide by hanging himself. His second wife died seven years later.

Henry and Anne Merry had ten children, but the five youngest all died before reaching the age of eleven. Their eldest child, Anne, was born in 1756. Their second child, **John**, who was born in 1760, was evidently mentally or physically handicapped. His father left him six shillings a week for life, to be paid by Thomas, his brother. John died at the age of 38.

Thomas inherited his father's bakehouse and windmill and himself took on the same trade. Later, he moved to Marylebone, London. His aunt, Anne Churchill, widow of Samuel, left him £50 and his cousin, Samuel Churchill, of Steeple Claydon, left him five guineas.

The fourth child was **Benjamin**, born in Deddington in 1769. He married Anne Breakspear, at Chipping Norton, in 1794, and they had five children, the eldest of whom was **Henry**, who became a baker, like his uncle, Thomas. He married Elizabeth Hawkins, at Ardley, and they had two children, **Martha** and **Benjamin Richard**.

Benjamin and Anne (Breakspear's) second child was **Anne**, who married Joseph Harrison. The third child was **William**, who died unmarried, aged 35. The fourth child was **Sarah**, who married Mathew Smith. The last child was **Elizabeth**, who died aged 29. There are tombstones to Benjamin and Anne, William and Elizabeth, in Deddington churchyard.

The fifth child of Henry and Anne was **Sarah**, born in 1775, and then came the five children mentioned above, who all died under eleven years of age.

Henry had one daughter by his second wife, Hannah Monkland: she was called **Elizabeth** and was born in 1779.

Going back to John and Anne, their next two children were girls, who were born and died respectively in 1734 and 1735. Next came **Joseph**, who was born in 1743, and married Hanna Blackwell, in 1777, at Broughton, in Oxfordshire, but alas - she died in childbirth in September of the same year.

Finally, John and Anne's youngest surviving child, **Thomas Churchill**, was born at Deddington, in 1737. He became something of an enigma to family genealogists because his name did not appear in the Deddington marriage or burial registers and he disappeared from the Deddington records altogether. An awkward gap, therefore, occurred in the pedigree and the puzzle was not solved until a search for Churchill wills in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, in Somerset House, produced the will of one Thomas Churchill, made in 1766, who referred to himself as a butcher, of Park Street, in the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, in the county of Middlesex. From the children he mentioned and the brothers who were named as executors, it became clear that he was **Thomas**, who was born in Deddington in 1737. (*See Figure 11*).

He married Sarah Dolley, the daughter of Michael Dolley, yeoman, of Souldern (a few miles from Deddington) at Souldern parish church, in 1759, and the register describes Thomas as a bachelor, of St. George's, Hanover Square, London. So he must have left Deddington prior to his marriage. As he would have been aged 22 at the time of his marriage, it would be reasonable to suppose that he left Deddington about 1755. His father, John, died in 1751 and his mother married for a second time in 1756. If he was to become a butcher, he would have been apprenticed to someone practising that trade, but his name does not occur amongst the apprentices named Churchill in the Apprentices Records preserved at the PRO at Kew. (*Class I.R. 17*).

Where he lived in St. George's parish between his arrival in London and 1763 is not known, but, at the latter date, he is shown as living in Park Street (northern end), Grosvenor Square. (*Victoria Library, 160 Buckingham Palace Road, London S. W.1. Poor Rate Books 1763*).

Unfortunately, no record can be found of when he took up his trade or where he practised it; but he was certainly a butcher in 1766, when he made his will, and presumably his butcher's shop was in Park Street.

The prospect for a young son of an Oxfordshire yeoman setting out to learn, and then practise, his trade, must have been somewhat daunting, but it is known that he had no chance of inheriting any land; and, presumably, he had little or no money with which to buy himself into some leasehold or copyhold acres in one of the Deddington manors. One of his brothers, in a similar position, had become a baker, and he evidently decided, no doubt with advice from his family and friends in Deddington, to try his luck in London. There he had some relations by marriage; his wife Sarah had

PLATES

Plate I The village of Churchill's 12th century church.
Philcote Street, Deddington.

Plate II The 'Mansion House' of Henry Churchill at Steeple Claydon.
Maund's Farm, Deddington.

Plate III Leadenporch House and Deddington House, Deddington

Plate IV Holograph letter of Thomas Churchill of Park Street, Grosvenor Square, London.

Plate V Thomas the Paymaster; his elder son, Thomas; and John Fleming,
Jeannie and family in Ceylon.

Plate VI Colombo Dock Tower; and John Fleming Churchill, Director of
Public Works, Ceylon, and his headquarters' staff.

Plate VII Dr. Arthur Churchill, R.A.M.C.; and his sister, Maudie, later Mrs. Sydney Long-Price.

Plate VIII Lieut. Col. George R. D. Churchill, D.S.O., XIX Punjabis. Jandola Military
Cemetery.

Plate IX Alec Fleming Churchill; his wife, Nellie; the two of them in their garden in Hong
Kong; and Lillie Fleming Churchill.

Plate X Rosamund Mary Churchill, later Mrs. Alexander Dixie.

Plate XI Captain Alexander Dixie, R.N., later Sir Alexander Dixie, Bt.

Plate XII The Steamship Forfarshire.

Plate XIII Two first cousins eight times removed. Thomas B. L. Churchill and Charles ff.
Churchill, 1981.

Plate XIV OPERATION PEDESTAL.

Plate XV Lieut. Robert A. F. Churchill (Buster) R.N.

Plate XVI lieut. Colonel Jack M. T. Churchill, D.S.O. * , M.C.

Plate XVII .Brigadier Tom Churchill conducts Marshal Josip Broz Tito to inspect No. 2 Commando on Vis Island, Yugoslavia.

Plate XVIII Brigadier Tom Churchill, the present author. A drawing done in Molfetta, Italy, 1944 by G. Cozzoli. (On back cover of book)

Plate XIX Arms of Churchill of Deddington in the county of Oxford.(Before first chapter of book)

Plate XX Mrs. Gwendoline Janie Churchill, wife of Thomas B.L. Churchill. (Before first chapter of book)

PLATES I to XVII

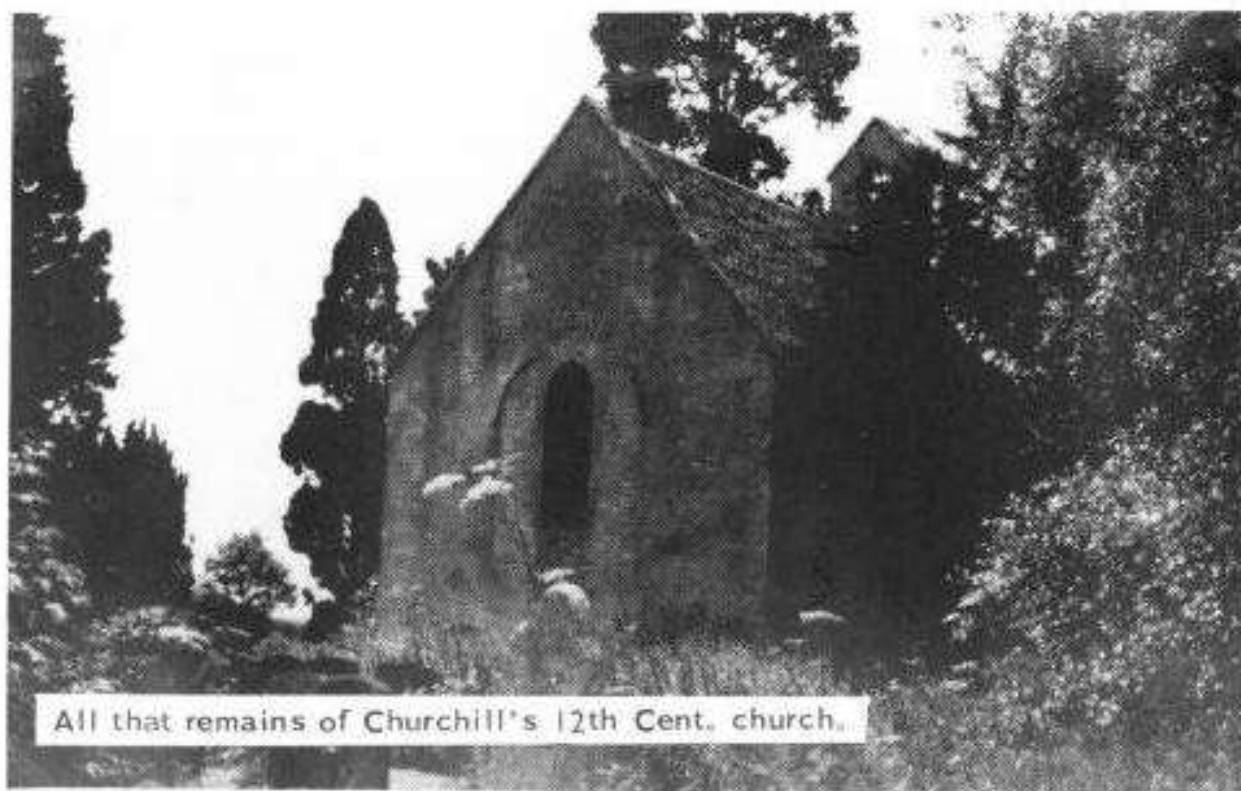


PLATE I



PLATE II



PLATE III

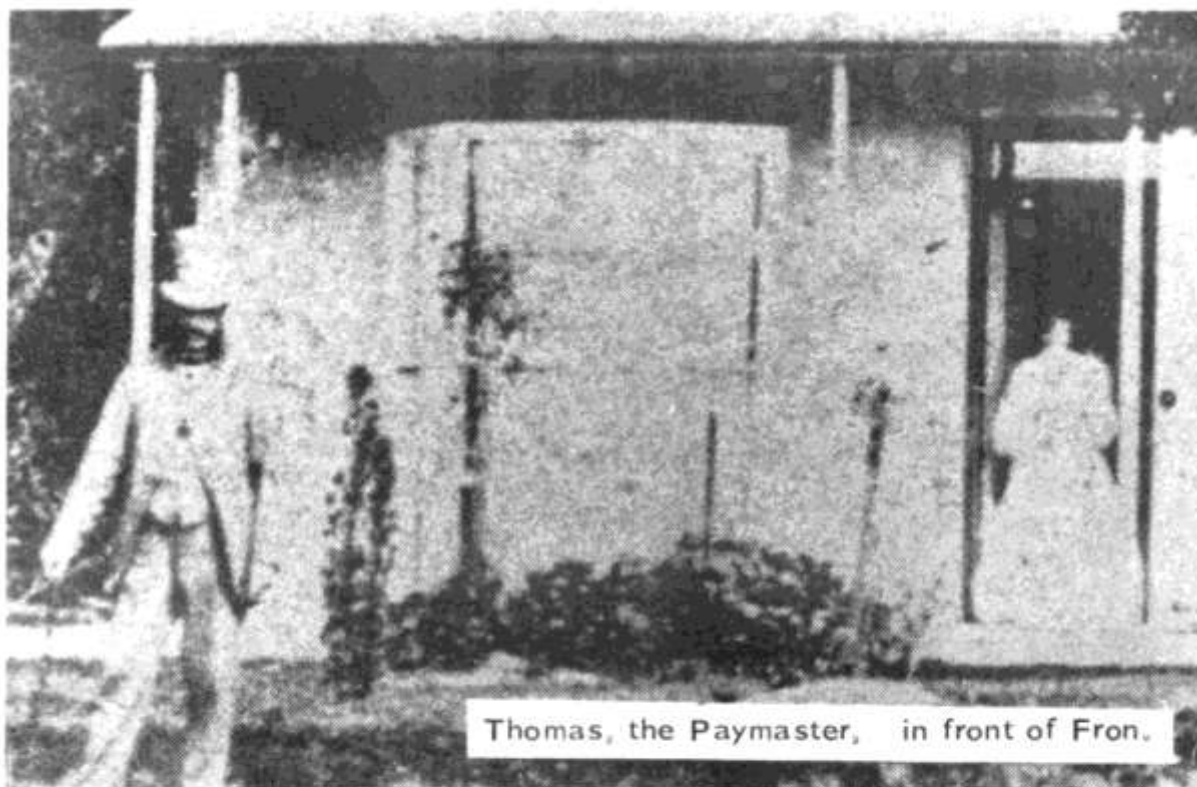
Young Sir,

I have been very much
pleased to hear of your
success in your journey and I hope you will
be a bit of salt fish which I hope you will
accept and I am most oblig'd to you for being so
kind as to let me know for me and I will
shall often be a great favour and if you I hope
I may be able to serve you after with a deal
of pleasure I hope to see the horse and a letter
by all the changes I hope to pay the Person home
you send the horse by and I send me and how
I shall send you the money so to conduct
We all say I love to you and all friends
from your ever loving brother

Thos Churchill

Photocopy of letter of Thomas Churchill, of Park Street,
Grosvenor Square, London (1761)

London Febry 12th 1761



Son, Thomas, in Post Office Rifles uniform



PLATE V



PLATE VI



Lieut. Arthur Churchill,
R.A.M.C and, below,
his sister Maud, later
Mrs Sydney Long-Price





Lieut. Col. George
R.D.Churchill DSO &
below, Jandola
military cemetery

PLATE VIII





Alec Fleming Churchill



His wife, Nellie



Alec & Nellie in Hongkong



Lillie F. Churchill

PLATE IX



PLATE X



PLATE XI

The steamship Forfarshire on her maiden voyage

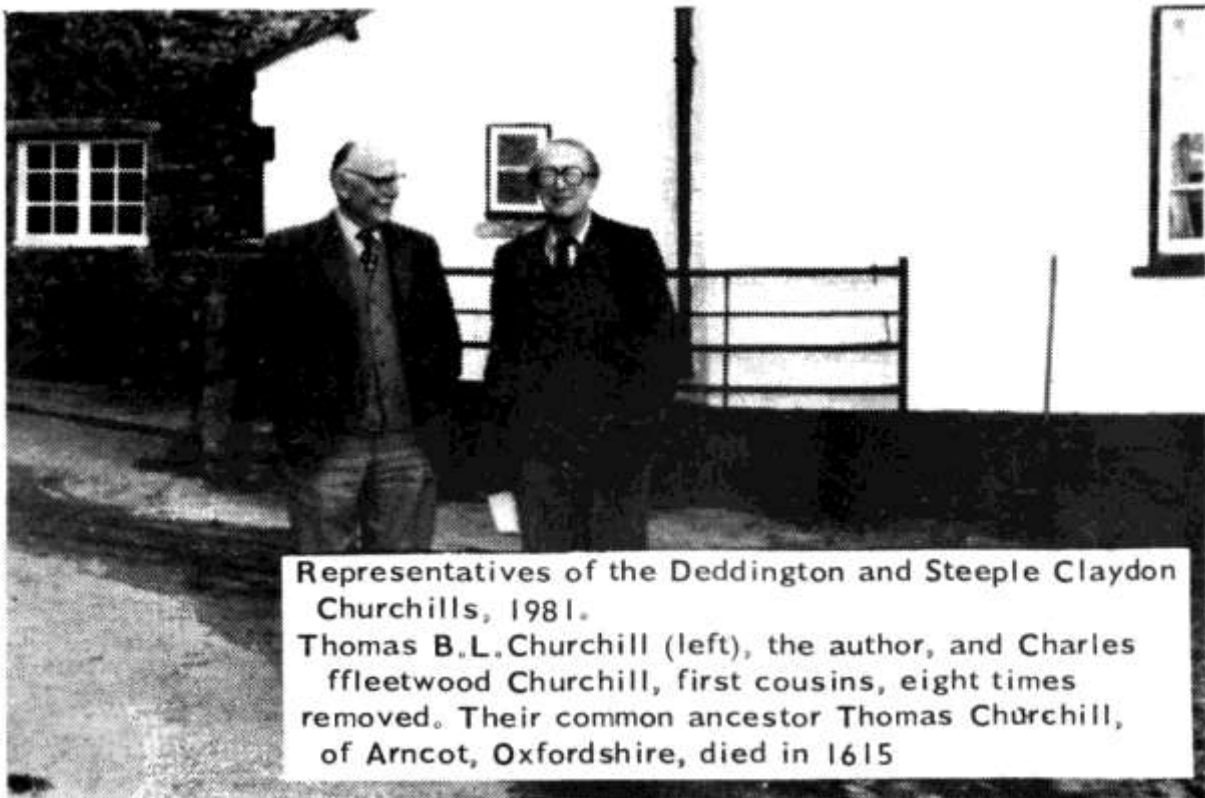
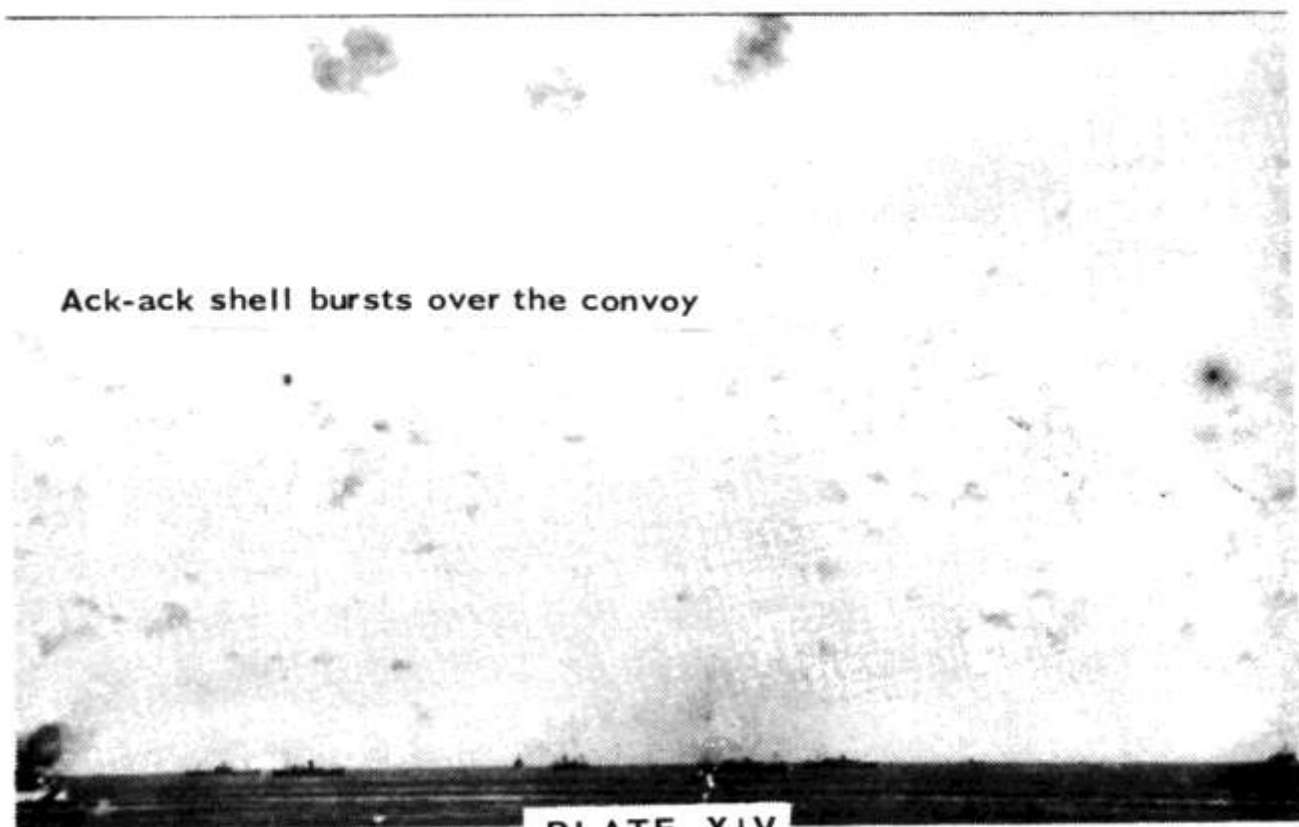


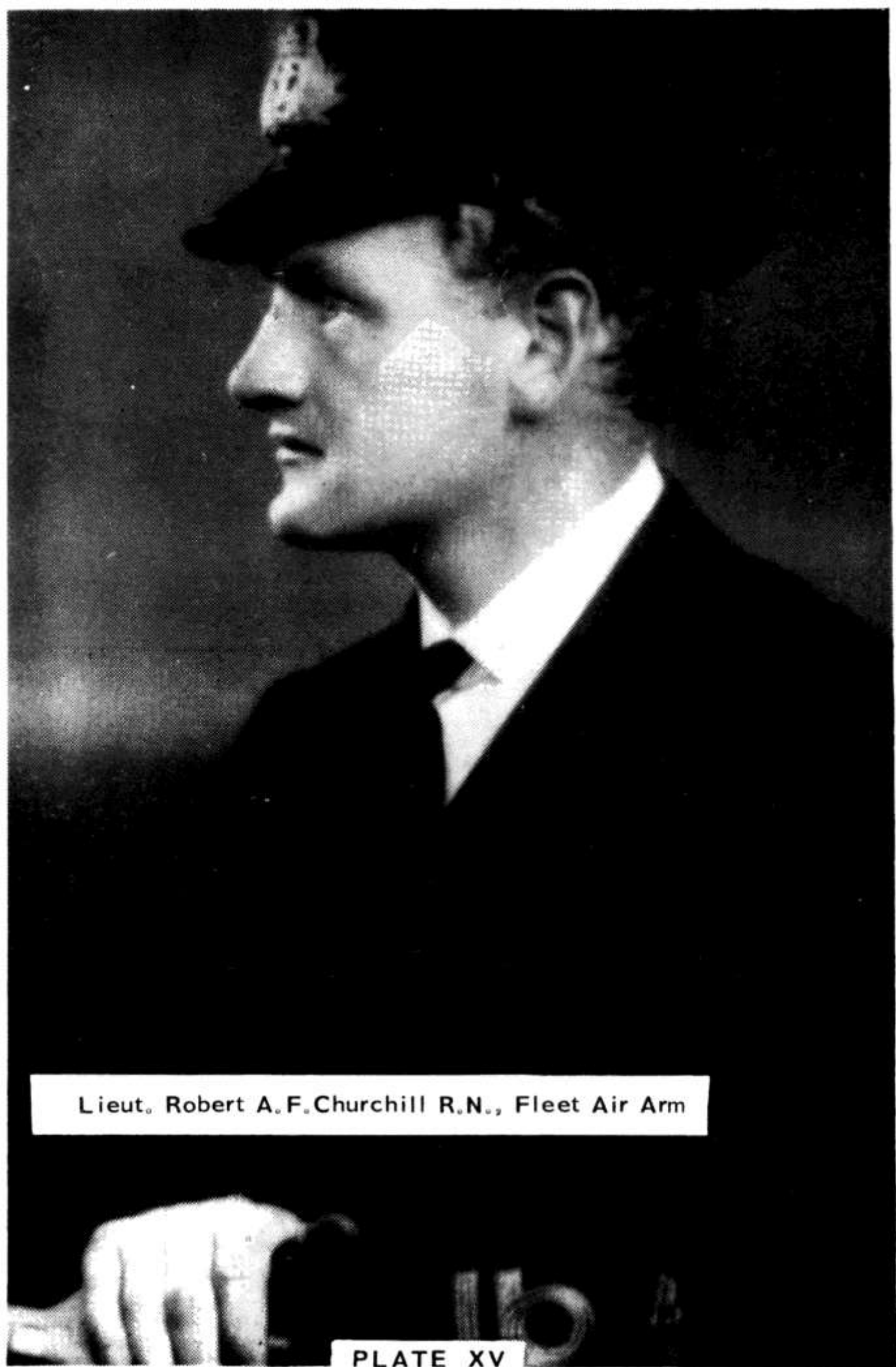
PLATE XIII



OPERATION PEDESTAL: Photo taken from HMS Victorious,
leading HMS Indomitable and Eagle



Ack-ack shell bursts over the convoy



Lieut. Robert A.F. Churchill R.N., Fleet Air Arm



PLATE XVI



Brig. Tom Churchill conducts Marshal Josip Broz Tito to inspect No. 2 Commando on Vis Island.

PLATE XVII

an uncle John Dolley, who lived in London; and her elder brother, Robert Dolley, had married Hester Carter, whose uncle, John Carter, was a well-to-do pastry-cook in St George's parish, Hanover Square (in his will this uncle left Hester one hundred pounds). No doubt some of these relations could give Thomas good advice, and, perhaps, put him up in their houses.

During all the 33 or 34 years that the Churchills lived in London, they resided in the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, and their parish church, in which they were baptised and married, and in which their burial services were held, was the beautiful early eighteenth century church of St. George's - which, of course, still stands (1986) at the junction of Maddox Street and George Street, just off Hanover Square. It was a 'fashionable' church (as it still is), but, in those days, its congregation included many nobles and gentry, who lived in the large houses in the parish, as well as the labouring residents and tradesmen, who earned their livings in the neighbourhood. When the Churchills first arrived, perhaps the best known parishioner was the great composer, George Frederick Handel, who lived in Brook Street, nearby, and always attended services in St. George's, even towards the end of his life, though blind and crippled with arthritis.

Thomas and Sarah had five children, three girls and two boys. The youngest child, William, was born in September 1765 and Sarah died in March 1766, after only nine years of married life. This was evidently a great shock to Thomas, who made his will only two days after her burial. In fact, he was not to die until fifteen years later, but he never married again.

To get some idea of Thomas's standing, vis-a-vis his neighbours, it can be said that about 42 people lived in Park Street at this time, or, to speak more accurately, 42 people rented houses there. The average rent paid per house was £15 per annum, and Thomas paid £16. The highest rents were about £30, paid by three residents, and eighteen residents paid a rent of £12 or less.

Thomas's rent remained at £16 during his lifetime but, when his eldest son, John, left Park Street, in 1789, the rent had gone up to £20. The rates Thomas paid when he first rented the house in Park Street were one shilling and five pence in the pound; this being broken down to one shilling and two pence in the pound poor relief, one penny for repairing the highways and two pence in the pound for cleansing the streets. This rate increased to two shillings and three pence in the pound by the time that John left London.

It should, perhaps, be noted here that **THE Complete Guide To London**, dated 1763 (*Victoria Library, 160 Buckingham Palace Road, London S.W.1.*) records that a certain Thomas Churchill was a warehouseman at 10 Cannon Street (*It runs from St Paul's Cathedral to The Monument, London E.C.4.*) from 1763 to 1781. It hardly seems likely that Thomas would take on the job of warehouseman, in addition to his butcher's trade, at a location which was ten miles east of his home in Park Street, particularly in view of the fact that transport at the time was based on the horse, the

horse-cart or the horse-drawn omnibus; but the years between which the Cannon Street premises were occupied (1763 • 1789) were exactly those between which Thomas first rented Park Street, and the year he died. In the absence of any other information on this subject, this fact must be regarded as a coincidence, and nothing more.

Speaking of horse transport, it is known that Thomas received from his wife's eldest brother, Robert Dolley, of Souldern, in 1761, a horse, which Thomas had asked Robert to buy for him. It was sent up to London by Robert's 'man' and it arrived safely and was much approved by Thomas, who sent his brother-in-law a present of some salt fish. Two letters written by Thomas to Robert referring to this transaction are preserved in the Churchill archive of original letters, one of which is reproduced at Plate IV. They show that Thomas was reasonably well educated and wrote clearly, though as was the common case, his spelling was largely phonetic.

In 1771,. the Court Baron of Christ Church manor, at Deddington, under date 28 of May, records that William and Zachariah Stilgoe surrendered one and three-quarter yardlands, in copyhold tenure, in Clifton, in order that they may be granted to Thomas Churchill, of Park Street, Grosvenor Square, London, butcher, and his eldest son for life. (*Land records (Deddington) at Christ Church College, Oxford.*) The rent was 14/- and the fine £42. The fact that Thomas took this step, although he was living in London, seems to confirm the supposition that he took up the trade of butchery and practised it in London in order to raise enough money to enable his descendants to continue as farmers in his native Deddington. This land was handed down from father to son for 150 years, until the copyhold land was surrendered to the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church, Oxford, by Jeannie Lindsay Churchill, the widow of John Fleming Churchill, and the grandmother of the present author, in return for an annuity of £60 during her lifetime. (*See p. 67*).

Thomas died in London, in 1781, and was buried in the same grave as his wife, Sarah, in St. George's burial ground, in Bayswater Road. (When Alec Fleming Churchill, father of the present author, visited the Bayswater Road cemetery in 1907 he found the gravestone barely legible, so he arranged to have the inscription re-led. When the present author visited the cemetery in 1930 he found that all the tombstones had been removed from the graves and had been placed against the walls, the burial ground itself having been levelled during the 1914 - 1918 war. The gravestones were all numbered and a list of them was available in St. George's. Thomas and Sarah's was No. 1289. This number was roughly painted on the stone in tar, and all signs of the re-leading had disappeared. In 1930, the ground was being used by the Royal Toxophilite Society as a practice and competition pitch for bow-and-arrow matches. Since that time the ground (which lies between the Bayswater Road and Connaught Street and is bounded on the west side by Albion Street), has been completely built over with blocks of flats, but there is a small wired enclosure, in which the tombstones have been stacked).

On his father's death, John continued to live at Park Street until 1789. He rented a

small house at Ham Yard, in 1786 and 1787, in addition to Park Street, though where exactly it was and what it was used for is not known, Ham Yard no longer appearing in modern street directories. He had three sisters and one brother. His eldest sister Anne, was born in London in 1760 and married John Rutter at St George's. She died aged 69 in London. The next sister was Sarah, who lived and died a spinster in London, aged 59. Elizabeth, the third sister, was younger than John and she married Thomas Knibbs at St George's, but died at Deddington, aged only 28. The last child, a brother called William (who has been mentioned previously), married Anne Jones at St George's.

John married Eleanor Pugh, at St. George's, in 1788. She was the daughter of M. F. Pugh, of Herefordshire, who was host of the Oxford Arms at Kington (*Emma Fleming Williams in conversation with John M. T. Churchill at Chester, 1933.*) - (it still exists in 1986 - and his wife, Eleanor Gwynne. John left London for Deddington about 1786 and two years later he was assigned Sarah Gardner's lease of Maunds Farm by the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church. Called Maunds Farm (*See Plate I*) at the time, after a sixteenth century tenant, it was earlier called Grove Farm and now, in 1986, it is known as Grove Lane Farm, taking this name from the lane (*Grove Lane was sometimes called The Grove*) to the west from New Street, on which the house stands. It is a late seventeenth century house, with a symmetrical front of five bays and unusual windows, with stone mullions and latticed lights, the interior containing a fine staircase, of about 1700. It had two front rooms, a kitchen, four bedrooms, a dairy and a back kitchen, with a granary over the dairy. There was a stone barn and a gig house; a stable with one stall and a horse box. There was a stone barn, a fine dove-house, a small house adjoining the street, with a sitting room, a butcher's shop and three bedrooms; and a malt house, with a coke house, next to the street; a grinding room, a kiln, and two wetting floors. All in all, it was a very substantial building and the Churchills were to occupy it for the next sixty years.

It will be remembered that John's father acquired, from Christ Church, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ yardlands of copyhold, in Clifton, in 1771. It was this land that John now proceeded to farm, and he also rented, from Christ Church, three yardlands, leasehold, so that he was farming, in total, 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ yardlands, in the Clifton Field.

The outgoings on John's land and house were considerable. The Dean and Chapter charged a fine of £57 in 1792 for a seven year lease of Maunds Farm, and, seven years later, in 1799, the fine had gone up to £80 5s. Fourteen years later it was £96 6s. The rent John paid the College was £4 7s. 9d. per annum. He had also to agree to pay 9s. 5d. towards the entertainment of the lessors (the Dean and Chapter), as often as they came to Deddington.

The Land Tax was fixed at 4s in the pound, based on the value of the land, not (paradoxically) at the time, but in 1692, the date when the tax was first introduced. He had to pay £512s. annually for his land in Deddington and £5 4s. annually for the three yardlands he leased in Clifton Field. He also had to pay heavy parochial rates, which were £20 5s.

In 1808 (nineteen years after John arrived in Deddington from London), an

Inclosure Act was passed, enclosing the land in the manors and parishes of Deddington and Great Barford (or Barford St. Michael). Enclosure of land had been going on in various forms for centuries. Waste and forest were enclosed for agricultural purposes; open field strips were enclosed into a smaller number of hedged fields, to obtain easier access, more concentration, and so promote better tillage. Village commons, as well as arable land, were enclosed for pasture. All these forms of enclosure increased wealth, though, admittedly, the enclosure of commons deprived the small-holders and drove some of them away from the land and into trade in the towns.

John's land-holding at Deddington and Clifton was:-

(a) One yardland and a half, copyhold (*There is some confusion in the Christ Church land records as to whether the Churchill copyhold land was 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ yardlands, or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ yardlands*), of Christ Church Manor; this was converted by the Inclosure Commissioners to 29 acres 3 roods and 13 perches;

(b) Three yardlands, leasehold, of Christ Church Manor, converted to 56 acres 1 rood and 19 perches;

(c) A homestead (Maunds Farm) and a close, amounting to 2 acres 2 roods and 13 perches;

- making a total of 88 acres 3 roods and 5 perches, and this was the size of the farm that John worked at Deddington. For record purposes, the names of the fields that comprised the allotment granted in lieu of the copyhold land were Grove Lane and Andrew's Hedge Furlong; the fields in lieu of 3 yardlands, leasehold, were Hayford Hill and Prickets Hedge Furlong, Warnbrook and The Downs. John's land was thus continuous from the close behind Maunds Farm, up to the edge of Savages Farm, and then turning south and running down to Plumdon Lane (*See Figure 12*). His land was divided into several plots of arable and grass land.

The Inclosure Commissioners tried to create increased farms which could be worked conveniently from existing farm houses. So far as Churchill was concerned, Inclosure did exactly that. In Deddington, the Inclosure caused no immediate decrease in the number of small-holders. The real problem for Deddington farmers, in the early nineteenth century, was the falling price of grain, coming after heavy expenditure on fencing the new farms.

John was faced with considerable expense when he took up the farm at Deddington. First, he had to buy his stock and his farm implements and carts; then he had to pay the Land Tax and the Parochial rates as already described. And then, in 1908, the Inclosure took place, which involved heavy expense in enclosing the land with permanent planted hedges. In addition, he had, of course, to furnish Maunds Farm, in which he and his family lived.

John and Eleanor had four children - two girls and two boys. The eldest was Mary Ellen, who was born in 1787, at Deddington, and married William Griffin, an apothecary, of Banbury. Then came Thomas, who was born in 1789 and lived to be 94 (*See p. 63 and Plate V.*) The next child was Elizabeth, who married John Francis

Lamb, a solicitor, in Deddington (*See p. 62*) and finally a son, Frederick Gwynne, who was born in 1797.

Thomas wanted to be a soldier but his mother feared that he might be killed in action if he joined the Regulars, so she obtained for him a commission in the Radnor Militia, in 1806, through the influence of her cousin, Colonel Walsham, of Knill Court, Hereford. The militia, though embodied and on a war footing, was nevertheless employed only on home defence, defending the Martello Towers on the coast (and later stationed in Scotland, and then used to put down the illicit distilling trade in Ireland). He joined the regiment at Knighton.

John took out of the hands of the lord of Christ Church Manor, in 1807, a cottage at Castle End, Deddington, into which he put his youngest son, Frederick Gwynne, as the second life. The fine was £30. It was to this cottage that his widow retired after his death and after she had disposed of the lease of Maunds Farm to her son-in-law John Francis Lamb in 1833.

Just after enclosure, John Churchill asked Christ Church to provide a new barn floor, but one, Davis, the Christ Church steward, prevaricated, saying the Inclosure Commissioners might build a new barn in the field and so make the new floor unnecessary. This was not done and Churchill was still kept waiting; and owing to absence of timber on his new allotment could not make the floor himself. What finally happened is not recorded.

In 1815, three years before his death, John obtained a loan of £1,700 from Joseph Preedy of Steeple Aston (*See Bond in Churchill Original Documents at ORO*), at £5 per cent annual interest. Preedy may have been the first cousin of John Churchill, possibly being the son of James and Anne Preedy and grandson of John Churchill and Mary (Wyatt), his wife. Preedy was buried in Sandford, but lived for much of his life in Steeple Aston.

John died in 1818, aged 55, leaving his copyhold land and leases of Maunds Farm and of his leasehold land to his widow, Eleanor. The stock and farm implements that John possessed, at the time of his death were:-

60 ewes, 22t tegs and 1 ram;

7 cows, 6 heifers and 2 calves;

14 pigs;

3 waggons; 2 dung carts; 2 pairs of harrows;

9 horses and 1 donkey.

The stock and farm implements, plus his growing crops; were valued, at his death, for the purpose of calculating death duty by the before-mentioned Joseph Preedy (who must have been a qualified valuer), at £650.

The household furniture, carpets, beds, linen, china, knives and forks, fire irons and fenders were valued at £145; while the value of the unexpired lease of Maunds Farm (15 ½ years) was £2,170.

Eleanor, on her husband's death, had to pay £2,435 debts on the estate and, as John left only £3,017 6s. 6d., Eleanor actually received no more than £581 7s. lid. (*See*

Stamp Office Form No. 3 in Churchill Archives (Original Documents) dated 10.7.1822.) The Inland Revenue charged her £60 on Death Duty so, later in 1822, she made a claim for £40, as she reckoned that she had been overcharged by that amount. Again one does not know whether or not her claim was successful.

In 1827, Eleanor tried to obtain time for the payment to Christ Church of the fine on Maunds Farm, which had now gone up to £190 4s., and later appealed for an abatement in terms of lease, but the College declined. In 1833, Eleanor sold the lease of the house, and leasehold land, to her son-in-law, John Francis Lamb, at the gross annual value of £229 5s., including land tax at £5 9s. 6d., parochial rates at £29 2s. 6d. and Repairs at £15. At this time, the College reported that the farm was in a good state of cultivation and the buildings were in a decent state of repair.

The fine for renewal of the lease for ten years had gone up to £441 5s. 3d. and Lamb requested extension of time in which to pay, but it is not known what the College replied. Shortly afterwards, Lamb was arranged for non-payment of debts, and his brother-in-law, Thomas, went bail for him; but Lamb then absconded to the U.S.A. and 'dropped down dead in New York on the way to the bank', circa. 1851. (*Emma Fleming Williams in conversation with John M. T. Churchill, Chester, 1933.*) In order to gain time to raise the money, for which he was now liable, Thomas had to flee the country, to France. He mortgaged his copyhold land, which he had inherited on his mother Eleanor's death in 1837, 'and repaid every cent'.

For her last years, and after she had sold the lease of Maunds Farm to Lamb, Eleanor lived in the copyhold cottage at Castle End, Deddington, which her husband had acquired in 1807. The Rev. Cotton Risley, the new vicar of Deddington, records in his diary that he went to sit with 'old Mrs. Churchill, Mrs. Lamb's mother' in October 1836, and he buried her in March of the following year.

CHAPTER TEN: CAPTAIN THOMAS CHURCHILL, THE PAYMASTER THE COLONIAL CIVIL SERVICE; THE FIRST WORLD WAR

To return to Thomas, in the Radnor Militia, he was promoted Lieutenant and went into camp with his regiments and others at Bexhill. He was quartered with the Royal Caernarvon Militia as the Radnor were all married men and had no mess. He so liked his new brother officers that in due course he transferred to the Caernarvon Militia, and their officers were, for the rest of his life, his closest friends. He was one of the R. Caernarvon Militia officers who signed a petition in 1812, addressed to the Prince Regent, signifying their willingness to serve with Wellington's army in Spain, Portugal or any part of Europe, but the offer was regretfully declined on 23rd December 1813 (*PRO. 10652/11247 CVED. dated 13.7.1954 and WO 66/215.*)

When peace was declared in 1814, the regiment returned to Caernarvon, and Thomas remained with them, being appointed Adjutant and Paymaster. In 1821, he married Emma Fleming at Llanbeblig, the parish church of Caernarvon. She was the daughter of Mathew Fleming, of Castle Hill, Renfrew, Scotland, a linen manufacturer, and Emma Jones of Caernarvon. She brought a house called Fron (pronounced Vron) (*A Welsh word meaning an upland site or place*) at Llanfaglan, near Caernarvon, into the family, by her marriage settlement, signed in 1822. Thomas and Emma lived there until her death in 1862. (*See Plate V.*)

Thomas took part in one of the last duels to be fought in North Wales when he acted as Second to a brother officer and great friend, Captain Sewell. (*See Appendix III*)

The name of Thomas Churchill is the first to appear in a list of votes admitted for Owen Jones Ellis Nanney esquire at the election of a Member of Parliament for the borough of Caernarvon, in December 1832, which votes were objected to on behalf of

Sir Charles Paget, the sitting member. 'Mr. Churchill was not an inhabitant paying Scot and Lot (*To pay Scot and Lot; to contribute to municipal expenses*) in the town and borough of Caernarvon'. (Nanney was a major in the Caernarvonshire Militia).

After his regiment was disembodied, Thomas was employed on the army staff and did not retire until 1852.

Thomas and Emma had three children, Emma, the first, who was born in 1823 and married Robert Williams. (*See Figure 13.*) He was a solicitor, of Caernarvon, and they had one child, a daughter called Emma Fleming (Williams), who supplied much of the information here related. She died unmarried. In writing of Thomas, she referred to him as 'my much loved grandfather, the handsomest, wittiest and best of men'. There is no doubt that he must have been a great character. He was very popular with his regiment, and, indeed, in Caernarvon generally. His grandsons, Arthur and George, used to spend their holidays from school with him at Fron, where, when bedtime came, he used to chase them up the stairs with a stick. Emma Williams possessed Thomas's red tunic and shako, and when she died she is believed to have arranged that the tunic and shako went to some friend or relation in Canada.

When Thomas's wife died, he left Fron and went to live with his daughter, Emma, and her child, Emma Fleming - Emma, by that time, being a widow, at Pendref House, on Bangor Street, Caernarvon.

Thomas and Emma's other two children were Thomas, born 1826, and John Fleming, who was born in 1829. (*See below and Page 65.*)

When Richard Jones, of Dinas (*The Jones' of Dinas were the family from which Anthony Armstrong-Jones, first Lord Snowdon, descends*), near Bontnewydd, in the county of Caernarvon, a rich landowner, who had served in the Caernarvon Militia, died, he appointed, in his will, Captain Thomas Churchill to be the Agent and Procurer of his devised property and estates, to work with the Trustees of his will (which was signed in 1832). He also left Thomas a legacy of £50.

In 1836, one H. D. Owen agreed to advance to Thomas the sum of £550, secured by a mortgage on Fron and another property which Thomas owned, called Tynylone. (*Churchill papers, Caernarvon County Record Office.*)

Thomas died in 1883, in his 95th year, and he has the distinction of being the longest-lived member of the Churchill family of North Oxfordshire. He was buried in the churchyard of Llanbeblig, but that cemetery is so grossly overgrown with brambles and tall grass that it is quite impossible to find his grave. His estate amounted to £1,62314s. (gross), and £390 1s. 4d. (net).

Thomas and Emma's second child was Thomas, who was born in 1826 and baptised at Llanfaglan parish church. He married Margaret Habgood and they had two sons and five daughters. The eldest child was Lloyd; then came the five daughters, and finally the second son, called Tom, who died without issue.

Thomas served in the Home Civil Service, in the department of the Post Office. (*See Plate V.*)

Lloyd kept in touch with the family fitfully until the death of Jeannie Lindsay, the widow of John

Fleming, his uncle, whose funeral he attended, but then lost touch. He had one son

The third and last child of Thomas, the Paymaster and his wife, Emma, was John Fleming (*See Plates V and VI*), who was born on 3rd October 1829 and baptised at Llanfaglan parish church. He was educated at a private school in Caernarvon and then placed as a pupil with a civil engineer, a Mr. Haslam. On the termination of his pupilage he gained employment in the office of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewage under a Mr. Frank Forster. In 1851, on the nomination of a Colonel Dawson R.E., John Fleming was appointed to the Ceylon Civil Service as a member of the Survey Department. Three years later, he was induced to embark on coffe-planting operations in Ceylon.

While in the Civil Service, however, he had attracted the attention of Sir Henry Ward, then Governor of Ceylon, who, Colombo

recognising the valuable qualities possessed by Mr. Churchill, requested him to return to the public service, at an increased salary. In March 1856, he was gazetted Assistant Civil Engineer and Commissioner of Roads in Galle. (*Minutes of Proceedings of The Institute of Civil Engineers, Vol. XII p. 157.*) In 1859, he was appointed to act temporarily as the head of the Southern Province, which he continued to do until July 1861, when he returned to England on leave. During this leave, John was engaged on full pay for nine months on duties connected with the Ceylon. Railway. (*Minutes of Proceedings of The Institute of Civil Engineers, Vol. XII p. 157.*)

It is interesting to note that John was staying with his aunt, Mary Ellen Griffin, at Deddington, where he had gone while on leave to see to the letting of the copyhold Churchill land on behalf of his father (who was, by this time, aged 73) when he first met Jeannie Lindsay Deas, whom he later married, as she was a friend of the Griffins and was also staying with them.

John Fleming married Jeannie Lindsay, only daughter of Mathew Ross Deas of Kirkieatham, Redcar, County Yorks, M.D. of St Andrews University, on 1st January 1863, at Kirkieatham. (*See Plate V.*)

He returned to Ceylon with his wife in 1863 and, in 1866, he was promoted to the charge of the Southern Province, and a few months later he assumed the acting charge of the Central Province. In 1877, he was appointed Acting Director of Public Works, which appointment was confirmed in 1882, and he remained in charge of the Public Works of the Island until his retirement, on pension, in 1885. He will be remembered for the construction of the Colombo Clock Tower in the centre of the town, designed by Lady Ward, who was something of an amateur architect, and which originally served as a lighthouse as well, but was later superseded in the latter role by the construction of a new lighthouse on the coast. Sir Henry Ward, in his address to the Legislative Council of the Island on July 30th 1857 on this subject, said "The Clock Tower has given to the inhabitants of Colombo an advantage which they ought to have enjoyed forty-two years ago, that being the time during which a clock, that cost originally £1,200, was allowed to remain in the Commissariat Stores, to avoid the expense of putting it up. It is highly creditable to those who had charge of it that the

works have not been injured during this long period, though they have cost £280 for cleaning and oil. The Clock Tower, which is 96 feet high, was completed by Mr. Churchill, and the clock is now both a convenience and an ornament to the town". (*See Plate VI*).

'During his service in Ceylon Mr. Churchill was associated with many important works of irrigation and general engineering, and his aid and advice was always sought in the consideration of questions of public interest, as in the case of the several railways constructed in the Island. (He) was an able and energetic engineer. In private life he was esteemed as a man possessed of amiable and endearing qualities.' (*History of the Public Works Dept Ceylon by P. M. Bingham (3 Vols.) 1918, Government Printer, Colombo.*)

When John retired from Ceylon he went to live at The Dower House (or, 'Ford Cottage') at Ford Manor, Dormansland, Surrey. In 1887, the family moved to Rockland Valley Road, Streatham, until 1893, when they moved to a flat, No. 3 Morpeth Terrace, Westminster. In 1894, they moved to a temporary house at Church Crookham, Winchfield, Hampshire, on medical advice, as John had contracted an illness and it was considered that country air would do him good, but he died there on 6th August of that year, and was buried in the parish churchyard.

For the five years that John had been Acting Director of Public Works, Ceylon, and the three years during which he was Director, he drew a salary of £1,500 per annum, and when he retired he drew a pension of £950 p.a. In his will John left £2,263 4s. 3d., and this sum was put into a trust for the benefit of his widow, Jeannie Lindsay, during her lifetime, and then to be divided into 13 parts, of which four were to go to his daughter Maud, four to his daughter Lillie, two to his son George, two to his son Alec and one to his son Arthur. The boys all decided to pass their shares to Lillie, after Maud's death in 1906.

On John's death, Jeannie, his widow, took a flat in Kensington and remained there until 1903, when she and her two daughters returned to Ceylon. Maud was married to Sydney Long-Price (whose family came from Tally House, Tally, Llandilo, S. Wales) and who was a tea-planter in Ceylon. They were married at Karunegala, but, sadly, Maud died in 1906, after the birth of her only child, Betty Maud Long-Price. (*See Plate VII.*)

Jeannie and her surviving daughter, Lillie, and Betty, returned to England, and Betty was informally adopted by Jeannie and her daughter Lillie - with the agreement of Sydney Long-Price. They went to live at Haleswell House, Paignton, perhaps to be near. Jeannie's brother, Dr. Peter Maurey Deas who, at this time, was Medical Superintendent of Wonford House Hospital for the Insane, at Heavitree, Exeter. (Deas was a distinguished doctor, who specialised in the care of the insane and mentally ill. A story, which has been preserved in the family, relates how, on one occasion, he was standing outside Wonford House Hospital when one of his patients, a lunatic, appeared on the roof of the building and shouted down, 'Look at me, Dr. Deas, I'm going to jump down'. Deas looked up and called back in a matter-of-fact voice, 'Oh! Anybody can do that; You come down here and **try to jump up!**.) In 1909

they moved to 16 Norham Road, Oxford.

On her husband's death, Jeannie was admitted to the copyhold land at Deddington, for her life, as her 'widow's portion'. This land brought in a rent of £50 per annum from the tenant, on which no income tax was paid, but Jeannie had to pay Land Tax of £1 12s. 4d. on the tenement, as well as the quit rent of 14s. per annum. The copyhold was due to terminate on the death of Jeannie, as Christ Church College had refused to allow John Fleming to admit his son to the land on the death of Captain Thomas, the Paymaster (his father), since it held that the copyhold permitted it to do so; in other words, it was treating the copyhold as if it was a copyhold for one life only. Such copyholds, though not unknown, are extremely rare, and the Churchill family considered contesting the College's claim, but, in the end, and on legal advice, decided that the value of the land did not warrant a contest. The present author, however, found in 1951 a document in the Christ Church Land Records dated 1847, which bears directly on this matter: -1847. Ch. Ch. 28.81.

The copyholders of the manor of Deddington are for two lives and a widowhood. The copyholder in possession has the right to put in the life of a lineal descendant for a fine of two years value, but cannot put in the life of a stranger without the consent of the Lord, and upon other terms. The Lord can change the lives on the surrender of the copy at any time, and so by agreement with the copyholder in possession, the Lord can, on the eve of the expiry of the least, grant out two new lives, and they may hold the Dean and Chapter at bay for 70 years if the copyholder should marry a young widow.

It would seem, in the light of this document, that the College was unjustified in taking the view it did, but, at that time, Jeannie and her son, Alec, who was acting for her - and their lawyers - were unaware of the information contained in the quoted document; the College alone knew of it, but kept the information to itself.

During World War I, the parish council of Deddington tried to force Jeannie to sell or lease six acres of the best of the copyhold land at an unfair price, or rent, in order to turn it into allotments for returning soldiers. Christ Church, not wishing this to happen, offered to accept a surrender of the copyhold in return for an annuity of £50 during Jeannie's lifetime. Alec insisted on an annuity for his mother of £60, and, in the end, the College yielded the point, but grudgingly.

So ended the Churchill family land-holding in Clifton and Deddington, after one hundred and forty-nine years; Jeannie assigned her interest in the copyhold, described as No. 5, to the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church, on 20th September 1920. She died on 7th February 1926 at Oxford, and was buried in her late husband's grave in the churchyard, at Church Crookham. It is sad to have to record that the vicar (or rector) of the church some fifty years-later, pulled down the marble cross marking Jeannie's grave (and her husband's) in order to build a church hall on that part of the churchyard, informed no member of the family that he was doing so, and left the cross in pieces, mouldering in the hedgerow which borders the churchyard.

Coming now to the remaining grandchildren of Thomas, the Paymaster, and his wife, Emma, they are, of course, the children of John Fleming Churchill and Jeannie, his wife, and there were four boys and two girls. The eldest child was **John Fleming** (always called Fleming by the family), who was born in Ceylon in 1863 and died there ten years later.

The next child was **Arthur Lindsay Maurey**, born in 1865, also in Ceylon. In due course he qualified as a Bachelor of Medicine and went as assistant medical officer in about 1890, to his maternal uncle, Dr. Peter Maurey Deas, who was (as has been said previously), the Medical Superintendent of the Wonford House Hospital for the insane at Heavitree, Exeter. A few years later, he acquired the practice at Mevagissey, in Cornwall, and married Kate Cousins at Kelmscot, in Oxon, in 1907. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps just before the First World War. (*See Plate VII*). In due course he was appointed Medical Officer to one of the London Territorial Regiments, and was serving with them in 1917 in Salonika when he was afflicted by gas poisoning in action there, and evacuated to Egypt, where he died in June of the same year and is buried at Ismailia. His name appears on the War Memorial at Mevagissey. He and his wife Kate had no children, and she died in April 1944.

The third child was **George Ross Deas Churchill**, who was born at Redcar, Yorkshire, in 1870. He went to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and was commissioned to the Indian Army in 1891, being attached to the East Surrey Regiment for one year in India before joining the XIX Punjabis. He took part in the Younghusband Expedition to Tibet in 1903 - 4, gaining the rare medal and clasp for that operation. In 1912, he was seconded to the Australian Army and made great friends with an Australian officer called Julius Bruche, who later became Chief of the Australian General Staff, being made a Companion of the British Empire and a Knight of the Bath.

George raised the Second Battalion of his Regiment at the XIX Punjabis' Depot at Hyderabad, Scind, in 1916, and was appointed to command the 2/XIX on 12th January 1917. He took part in Allenby's campaign in Palestine, fighting for the capture of Gaza and finally advancing and capturing Jerusalem. (*See Plate VIII*). For these services, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

Returning to India, in 1918, he took some leave in Gulmarg (Kashmir), and was due to take home leave early in the new year, but fighting broke out on the North West Frontier and George remained with his battalion, advancing with the 68th Brigade to Jandola. Three companies of the 2/XIX were detached from the brigade and sent to reinforce the 67th brigade, which was advancing in Waziristan as part of the Derajat Column, their first task being to capture a ridge of hills which overlooked the Palosina plain from the south, where a camp for the column was to be established. This was done successfully on 18th December 1917, but the route to the north to which the column was committed, was itself overlooked and commanded by high hills immediately to the west of the Tank Zam river, whose course formed the axis of advance. It was necessary, therefore, to capture the summits of this high ground and establish a permanent picquet on a feature known as Mandanna Hill.

On 19th December, a brigade of four battalions was deployed on this high ground and spent the day trying to capture the main features commanding the approaches to Mandanna Hill, but the accurate sniping fire of unprecedentedly strong Wazir and Mahsud tribesmen (including groups of as many as 800 and 900 men) proved too much for them; the brigade suffering no fewer than three British officers (including one commanding officer) killed and two wounded; 95 other ranks killed and 140 wounded; and, in the face of such casualties, the battalions had to withdraw, under heavy fire, to Palosina camp, their mission unaccomplished. In the course of the day, the tribesmen managed to capture 131 rifles and 10 Lewis Guns.

On the next day, 20th December, the attack was resumed by a fresh force of three battalions, under the command of Lieut. Colonel G. R. D. Churchill, who was, thus, acting as a brigade commander. The units deployed from Palosina Camp, crossed the Tank Zam river, and climbed the khud on the west bank to attack Sandbag Hill, a hill lying 11,000 yards to the south of Mandanna Hill and a feature which dominated the line of advance to the ultimate objective.

While Churchill was making a personal reconnaissance, he was hit by a bullet which severed the femoral artery; and, though no time was lost in bandaging the wound, he died before reaching Palosina Camp. (*Operations in Waziristan 1919 -1920, compiled by the General Staff, Army Headquarters, India, 1921.*) Some accounts say that George was killed by a spent bullet fired by a Mahsud tribesman over a mile away. He was buried at Jandola military cemetery, some two and a half miles from Palosina Camp, on the following day, and his grave is the right-hand one of the five shown in Plate VIII. It is probable that he never knew that he had been awarded the D.S.O. for services in Palestine.

Some idea of the difficulties of fighting in the Waziristan hills can be gained from the fact that the Dejerat Column was advancing and fighting for five months to gain its final objectives, the village areas of Makin and Kanigurum, which lie, **as the crow flies**, no more than 30 miles from its starting point at Jandola.

Lieut. Colonel G. R. D. Churchill, D.S.O.'s name appears on the Indian Army War Memorial, which is behind the altar of the R.M. A. Sandhurst Memorial Chapel.

The next child of John Fleming and Jeannie was **Maud Fleming** (always called Maudie), whose marriage to Sydney Long-Price and her premature death was noted on Page 66

Alec Fleming Churchill was the fifth child (*See Plate D.C*), and he was born on 12th April 1876 at Kandy, Ceylon, where his father was Provincial Engineer of the Central Province. As a boy, he was delicate and he contracted rheumatic fever at an early age, which permanently impaired his eyesight. He was educated at a school in Streatham, to which suburb of London his father had retired. He sat for, and passed, the army entrance examination, qualifying to be admitted to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, but at the subsequent medical examination he was failed on account of his eyesight.

He continued his education at London University and was then articled to a

borough surveyor at Ealing until 1897, when he joined his father's old service, the Public Works Department of Ceylon, and sailed to that Island.

As a District Engineer (Second Grade) he was stationed at Chilaw (on the west coast), in the North West Province, from 1899 to 1903, and, during this time, he was engaged in building the iron bridge over the Battulu Oya (river). 'It was of lattice girder type with an iron and concrete platform, and consisted of four spans, each of 80 feet. The shore spans were carried on brickwork and concrete abutments and the river spans on cast iron cylinders, forming each pier. The width of the road-way was 14 feet. The actual work on the site was commenced in March 1900. The abutments having been erected, temporary staging was erected suitable for carrying a 5-ton travelling crane, to be used in sinking the cylinders and, afterwards, in the erection of the iron work. The cylinder sinking was commenced in October. The cylinders were founded in boulder clay, being sunk in depths varying from 14 feet to 16 feet. The work, including approaches, which was supervised by the District Engineer, Mr. Churchill, throughout, was satisfactorily completed at the close of 1902.' (*History of the Public Works Department, Ceylon, Op. cit.*)

Alec was posted to Karunegala (pronounced as if it was spelt Korn-i-gaul) • also in the North West Province - in 1903, and in the same year was seconded for service under the Resident Engineer, Colombo Drainage Works, and was soon appointed Chief Assistant Engineer.

In June 1904, he married Elinor Elizabeth Bell (*See Plate IX*), daughter of John Alexander and Margaret Bell (nee Crowe), at All Saints Church, Galle. Elinor came of a long line of Bell ancestors, who had settled in counties Cavan and Longford in Ireland, probably in the early eighteenth century. They lived at Kelnahard (since called Kelnahard Castle), County Cavan, on the banks of Lough Sheilan, and Creevy House, County Longford, and three Bell ancestor portraits are in the possession of the present author.

Alec built the Madampitya Pumping Station and laid out the sewage system for Colombo. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Ceylon Light Infantry in 1909.

A son, Alec Thorpe, was born in 1905 but died, aged only three weeks. Another son, John Malcolm Thorpe, was born on 16th September 1906, and Thomas Bell Lindsay (the present author), was born on 1st November 1907, while Alec and Nellie were on leave in Dormansland, Surrey. (*See p. 89 et seq.*)

In 1910, Alec was recommended, on promotion at the early age of 34, for the appointment of Assistant Director of Public Works, Hong Kong, with the expressed intention that he would succeed the Director in 1914. Alec and his family sailed for Hong Kong in December 1910.

Churchill quickly took charge of the public works, and one of the chief projects was the construction of the dam to make the Pokfulam Reservoir - the largest in the colony. He joined the Hong Kong Volunteer Corps as a Captain, and, as the First World War was imminent, the Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Henry May, brought Alec on to the Executive and Legislative Councils of the Island, because of his high

qualities of judgment, organisation and man-management. Alec and Nellie's third surviving son, Robert Alec Farquhar, was born in Hong Kong in 1911. (*See p. 89. et. seq.*)

Unfortunately, at about the time Alec was due to take over the Directorship, his eyesight started to fail, and, at the same time, World War I broke out. This meant that passenger ships to England were prohibited from sailing, owing to the presence in the Indian Ocean of German sea raiders, and it was not until 1917 that Churchill was able to return to England to consult an efficient eye surgeon. Alas! on examination of his condition, it was found that it was impossible to save his sight and he had no alternative but to retire from the Public Works Department of Hong Kong at the early age of 41. The family went to live in Crick Road, Oxford, in which town Alec's mother and sister Lillie also lived. His sons went to the Dragon School, the elder two on a school bursary. To eke out their financial position (which was critical, owing to Alec's meagre pension) they took in paying guests, and also provided a home for delicate boys who, because of their health, were not strong enough to join the Dragon School as boarders. Alec's wife, Nellie, had been trained as a nurse at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in London, in the 1890s and was, therefore, eminently suited to take charge of delicate children.

Alec Churchill was a keen genealogist and, when on leave in England from Ceylon, he had been able to do some research on the Churchill family in the parish registers of Deddington, and on the Churchill wills, which were filed at Somerset House. He was also interested in heraldry, and he established that the crest and coat of arms, which certain members of the family had used from time to time were, in fact, those belonging to a Dorset family of the same name but who were in no way ancestors of the Churchills of North Oxfordshire. (*See (heraldic) Visitation of the County of Dorset taken in 1623. Harleian Society Vol. XX mentioning William Churchill of Muston, Dorset, Esq.*) He therefore decided to take out arms for himself and his family, and did so in 1950. (*See Appendix IV.*)

Nellie died in St. Bartholomew's Hospital in 1948. Alec married Constance Mease, daughter and only child of the Rev. R. Mease of Armagh, Northern Ireland, as his second wife, in 1950. Alec died in 1961 at Hove, Sussex, and Constance died in 1963.

The last child of John Fleming and Jeannie was Lillie Fleming Churchill, who was born in 1879 and who never married. She lived with her mother all her life, and took charge of Betty, her sister Maud's child, when Maud died in Ceylon in 1906. During World War I she joined the Red Cross and worked at hospitals and convalescent homes in Oxford and, later, she worked for the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, frequently speaking at meetings of the Society all over the country. She died, aged 92, at Hove, as the result of an accident, in which she was struck by a heavy vehicle at a street crossing. (*See Plate IX.*)

CHAPTER ELEVEN: A VISIT FROM THE SHERIFFS

The time has now come to turn back to the prosperous Samuel Churchill, the solicitor and land-owner, who was described at pp. 49- 51. Incidentally, he was typical of the men who formed the aristocracy of their urban society in a town which had had no resident lord since Thomas de Dive, in 1364, sold his reversionary rights in the Castle or Windsor Manor to the Warden and Canons of the Chapel of St. George, recently established by King Edward III in Windsor Castle, and were correspondingly more important. By the Tudor period they were calling themselves gentlemen. Such were 'the Drapers, Bustards, Stilgoes and Churchills, whose stone-built houses still exist today to testify to the prosperity of the Tudor and Stuart farmers. Their rise was due, in part, to inherited assets in land or cash'. (*A History of Deddington by H.M.CohinOp.cit.*)

Samuel died in 1808 and he and his wife, Priscilla, left four surviving children, namely Priscilla, Samuel, Benjamin and John. A glance at the pedigree at Figure 11 will clarify the descent.

Priscilla, born 1776, the eldest surviving child, married the Rev. Edward Marshall in 1803, but died in 1804 without issue.

Samuel was the second surviving child, and was born about 1777. He must have had ability, for he became a partner in his father's solicitors firm, being a notary, and he also was a felt manufacturer, dealer and chapman (pedlar). He lived in one of the finest houses in Deddington, called Deddington House (*See Plate HI*) opposite Leadenporch House, where his father lived, in New Street. The Churchills, by this time, were an influential family and little could go forward in Deddington without the 'say-so' of one or other of them.

Samuel inherited £8,000 from his father and he engaged in every sort of activity in Deddington and its neighbourhood. His wife's name was Elizabeth Bennett and they had four children: Priscilla Charlotte, Samuel Field, Richard and Isabella Philippa, between 1810 and 1820. They lived in high style and Deddington House contained an Entrance Hall, a Breakfast Parlour, a Dining Room, a Drawing Room, a Servants' Hall, two Kitchens, 11 Bedrooms, a Conservatory, a Water closet, a Laundry, a Brewhouse, a 4-stall Stable and a Hunter's Box. Outside, there was a kitchen garden, surrounded by walls and well-stocked with fruit trees, running altogether to 3 acres 1 rood and 15 perches. A pew in the church was attached to the house.

They sent their two daughters to the Misses Maria, Sophie and Louisa Day of Gloucester Place, New Road, Middlesex, for board and tuition, and they sent their two sons to the Rev. John Topham of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, similarly for board and tuition.

Samuel carried on business in partnership as solicitors with Mr. Samuel Field, who had been in partnership with his father in the same business. Their offices were in The Hermitage, at the corner of the Market Place and The Tchure in Deddington.

By 1825, Samuel was continually in debt, and some of his creditors adopted a threatening attitude; and this situation continued for the next two years. Advised by his brothers and by Mr. James James, his solicitor, he executed, in July 1826, a deed conveying some of his estate to Trustees, and money was raised under the Trust deed, with which some of the creditors were paid.

Churchill instructed his personal servant, Joseph Buckingham, to inform creditors, who called at his house, that he was away from home. In March 1826, a meeting had been called at the Fox Inn, at North Aston, at which Samuel Churchill, as executor under a Mrs. Henshall's will, was due to meet beneficiaries or their solicitors, but Churchill did not turn up.

In October 1826, Mr. Pearson (the solicitor acting for the beneficiaries under the will of Mrs. Henshall) came in a post chaise with two sheriffs officers. Mr. Pearson said he was come to take Mr. Churchill to Oxford gaol, and the officers produced a warrant for £500. Mr. John Churchill, Samuel Churchill's cousin, who was present, said that his cousin was ill in bed upstairs and instructed Buckingham to prepare luncheon for the gentlemen. He then wrote two notes, one to the surgeon, Mr. Turner, asking him to come to Samuel Churchill's house, and one to Churchill's wife, telling her to get her husband out of the county to Aynho as speedily as possible; and he then offered the men refreshment.

Samuel Churchill and his wife escaped out of the garden door before the surgeon arrived and, when his cousin got a signal that Samuel was out of the house, he told the servant, Buckingham, 'supply my place for as long as possible and see that the visitors want for nothing'. Buckingham did so for one and a half hours. Meanwhile, the cousin joined Samuel on the road and walked with him to Aynho, where the latter took the mail to Aylesbury, and the cousin returned to Deddington. The visitors left that evening, but Churchill did not return for several weeks.

At the end of February 1827, Churchill left his house in Deddington to try to

procure funds and came to London, where he met his cousin, John Churchill, on 17th March and told him that 'his endeavours were vain'. Samuel Churchill surrendered himself to the Commissioners in Bankruptcy on 26th March 1827. (*Extracts from a file preserved at the High Court of Justice, Bankruptcy Buildings, Carey Street, London.*)

The amount Churchill owed, after taking into account such assets as he possessed (including Deddington House, his furniture, horses, carriages and carts and his landed property) amounted to about £77,000. Five interest payments were made to creditors, which amounted in total to. about 5/- in the pound. The last payment was made in 1865, 38 years after his surrender to the Bankruptcy Commissioners.

Churchill died on 10th August 1840, in London, and his widow died, also in London, in 1855. On the day of Churchill's funeral in London, his brother, John, asked the Rev. Cotton Risley, the vicar, if the Deddington church bell might be tolled, and Risley (perhaps a little surprisingly, but certainly charitably) agreed. As for his four children, nothing is known except their names.

Many of his liabilities were debts owed to tradesmen, and to friends in Oxfordshire - many of them women, and some of them spinsters and widows. His house was bought by the Rev. Cotton Risley for £8,900.

Samuel Churchill's second son was Benjamin, who was born in 1778. He went to Queen's College, Oxford, whence he obtained his B.A. in 1798 and his M.A. in 1801. He became a Fellow of his College until 1812, and he married Eliza Harriet Frome, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Frome, in Salisbury Cathedral in 1809. He was inducted to North Leigh, Oxon, as vicar, in 1810, and he remained there until 1837. He died at Honfleur, France, in the following year.

The last son of Samuel Churchill was John, who was born in 1785 and became a solicitor. He married Mary Anne Stratford, daughter of the Rev. W. Stratford. They had thirteen children, but four of them, namely William, Emma, Elizabeth and Priscilla died aged 25, 15, 13 and 19 respectively, of consumption (tuberculosis) in a period of only two years (1839 - 40). There is a tablet to their memory on the north wall of the north aisle in Deddington church.

In 1838 and 1839, John Churchill was a candidate for one of Oxfordshire's coronerships in the room of Mr. Gough who had recently died. Mr. Cotton Risley strongly recommended him to Mr. Cartwright M.P. for Aynho. There were six candidates: Mr. B. W. Aplin, and Mr. G. Moore, both solicitors of Banbury; Mr. Perry, surgeon, and Mr. W. Wing, Auctioneer, of Steeple Aston. Lord Villiers proposed Aplin, seconded by Mr. Pretymann. The sixth candidate was Mr. Duffell Faulkner. Captain Hamilton M.P. proposed Mr. Churchill, pointing out that he had been bred to the Law, and Mr. Goff of Banbury, seconded him. Wing, Perry and Duffell Faulkner withdrew before, the election in 1840. 1331 people voted over two days, and Churchill gained a majority by 409 votes. (*George Coggins' scrapbooks, Bodleian Library GA. Oxon. 4° 785- 787.*)

John earned a considerable reputation as the coroner, a post that he held for 23

years, and he was much lamented when he died, aged 78. His wife died two years later, in 1865. He and Mary Anne had 13 children, four of whom (as previously mentioned) died of consumption, and another child lived for only a fortnight. Of the surviving children, John was born in 1812. He became a parson and was rector of Crowell, in Oxfordshire, and a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford. In due course, he sailed to India and became a chaplain in His Excellency's Indian Civil Service. He married Dorothea Stokes, who died in Belgaum, Southern India, in 1863 (See 'Times' Newspaper of 15th Sep. 1863). John returned to England and died in 1879.

Samuel was the third surviving son, who was born in 1814 and became a Doctor of Medicine. He lived at Fawley, in Hampshire, and married a wife whose first name was Harriet.

Benjamin was born in 1815 and became a parson, being vicar of Wolverington in Worcestershire and of Snitterfield in Warwickshire. He died a bachelor in 1871.

Harriet Elizabeth was born in 1817. She became companion to Miss Lee of Swalcliffe, and died a spinster.

Mary Anne was born in 1819 and nothing more is known of her.

Henry, who was born in 1821, became a solicitor. He was also a Lieutenant in the Deddington Volunteer Corps. When his father died, in 1863, he put himself forward as successor to him as Coroner and, such was his father's reputation, that he was elected without contest. It is sad, therefore, to have to record that, notwithstanding his being clerk to the magistrates of North Wootton Division of Oxon, agent for the estates of W. O. Cartwright M.P., clerk to several public boards, Treasurer to Deddington Penny Bank and to the Friendly Society, joint clerk to the magistrates of Banbury and Bloxham Division, and having a large and lucrative practice as a solicitor, he absconded without notice to America. He was declared a bankrupt in 1870 and he died in the U.S.A. in 1878, or earlier. His debts were set at £10,443, and his assets amounted to £2,645. A dividend of 1/6d. in the pound was paid to his creditors in 1872. His wife, Elizabeth (nee Field), went to live in Thame, Oxon, until her death in 1881. She left £2,221.

John and Mary Anne had two more surviving daughters; Caroline, born in 1827, and Matilda Frances (Fanny), born in 1830, but nothing more is known of them.

The family had a benefactress in one Miss Martha Lichfield, daughter of the Rev. Alexander and Martha Lichfield of Noke, Oxon. She was of Streatley, Berks, and latterly of Islip, Oxon, and she died in 1854. She left over £15,000, of which she bequeathed legacies of £600 to each of John Churchill's surviving children, except Samuel Churchill M.D., of Fawley, to whom she left her newly-built house at Islip, on condition that he paid to his surviving sisters the sum of £100 each. She left her household effects, plate etc. and £500 to John's wife, Mary Anne, and she made John himself her residuary Legatee. It is not known if she was a relation of the family.

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE STEEPLE CLAYDON CHURCHILLS

It will be remembered that the Churchills moved to Deddington and to Steeple Claydon in about 1630. Thomas was the progenitor of the Deddington branch of the family, which has been described at pages 34 to 79.

Henry, the founder of the Steeple Claydon branch, was described at pages 39 and 40 and it is now necessary to record his and his wife, Phyllis's, ten children and their descendants. (*See Figure 5*).

The eldest child was **Tobias**. It is not known when he was born, or who his wife was, but he had six sons and one daughter. First came **Tobias**, then **Henry**, a shoe-maker, who died in 1725.:Then **Edward**, born in 1668; **Joseph** (1670); **John** (1671); **Benjamin** (1672); and then **Damaris**, who was born in 1684 and died a spinster in 1759.

Henry, of Steeple Claydon, and Phyllis's next three children were **Anne**, who married the Rev. Edward Hargrave; **Maria** who married someone called Watson; and **Henry**, born in 1637, a yeoman and grazier of Denham, Quainton and Fleetmarston, Bucks, who died a bachelor in 1707.

The next three children were: **John**, born in 1639, and who had a son, **Tobias**, who was born in 1666 and matriculated at Oriel College, Oxford, aged 16; **Thomas**, born 1641, of Steeple Claydon, who married Damaris Savage in 1665 at Edgcott, Bucks. They had a daughter, **Mary**. Damaris died in 1731.

Then came **Joseph**, born in 1643, who married Anne Challoner at Islip, Oxford, in 1672. Joseph died in 1708 and his wife in 1724, both at Steeple Claydon. Joseph was. a yeoman but was described contemporaneously as a gentleman. Anne may have been a member of the Challoner family, originally of Steeple Claydon Manor House, and could have been a daughter of Edward Challoner, who, with his brother, Thomas,

signed the death-warrant of King Charles I. (*See Figure 15*).

The next child of Henry and Phyllis was **Phyllis**, who was born in 1646. She died a spinster in 1670, at Fleetmarston, and since that is where her bachelor brother Henry, lived and died, it may be that they shared an establishment there. She left a will proved in the Bucks Archdeaconry Court in 1670.

The next child was **William**, who lived at Pounden, Bucks, and who was born in 1648. When his wife was ill, and indeed dying, he allowed one Elizabeth Humphrey of the city of London, and her son, Edward, to live in his house to help to tend his wife. This Elizabeth Humphrey was given all the keys of the boxes and chests belonging to the Churchills, and had under her custody 'money, plate a great quantity of linen, several pairs of shoes, table cloths, napkins, pillow cases, woollen and household goods to the value of £500'.

In a case brought in the Court of Chancery in 1693 (*PRO. C8/353/125*), William Churchill alleged that the said Elizabeth Humphrey 'did so insinuate herself with his wife, that she was totally trusted with several sums of money and many of the Churchill possessions. After Churchill's wife's death, he alleged that Elizabeth Humphrey and her son got hold of linen, etc., to the value of £50, packed them up and conveyed them to London so that 'the Orator cannot discover what is become of them', and asks that Elizabeth and Edward be brought before 'the High and Honourable Court of Chancery'. The result of the case is not known.

The youngest child of Henry and Phyllis was called **Frances** and was born in 1650; she married Edward Cope, but nothing more is known of her.

Joseph and Anne Challoner had five surviving children, namely **Anne, Joseph, Phyllis, John and Cornelia**. Phyllis died, apparently a spinster, aged 77. John died aged 23, and Cornelia, another spinster, died in 1772, aged 85. (*See Figure 15*).

Joseph, born 1674, married **Penelope Fleetwood**, the second daughter of Charles Fleetwood esquire of Northampton, and **late of** Woodstock Lodge, Oxon, in 1702, at St. Sepulchre's church, Northampton. Her father's descent can be traced direct from William Fleetwood who flourished in the reign of Edward III. The Fleetwoods of The Vache, of Aldwinckle and of Sweeden, were an old and distinguished family, and Penelope's grandfather, **Sir William Fleetwood**, of Aldwinckle and of Woodstock **Park**, was Receiver of the Court of Wards and Cup-Bearer to King Charles I. But his younger brother, Charles Fleetwood, embraced the Parliamentary cause and became a Lieutenant General in Cromwell's army, and was present at Naseby, Dunbar and Worcester. He married, first , Frances, daughter of Thomas Smith of Winston, Norfolk, and secondly, Bridget, eldest daughter of Oliver Cromwell and formerly wife (then widow) of Henry Ireton, another of Cromwell's generals. Charles had to retire from public life at the Restoration, and he died at Stoke Newington in 1692.

On the accession of Charles II, Sir William Fleetwood was appointed Ranger of Woodstock Park, where he resided at High Lodge. He died in 1673/4 and is buried at Aldwinckle.

Returning to Joseph Churchill who married Penelope Fleetwood, they had three

children, who died in infancy; then came **Joseph**, of Northampton, who married Mary Ford, and a younger daughter **Elizabeth**, who was born in 1710, and died a spinster aged 83. It is recorded of her that she was esteemed by her friends as a woman of character and fond of genealogy.

Joseph moved to Northampton from Steeple Claydon and he died in 1756, aged 82, and was buried at St Sepulchre's, at Northampton. His wife, Penelope, predeceased him in 1750 and was also buried in St. Sepulchre's church. Joseph, in his will, left financial legacies to his sister, Cornelia, to his daughter, Elizabeth, to his son, Joseph and to his grandsons, Fleetwood and Smith Churchill.

From Joseph's death in 1757 and for the following forty-three years, until after his grandson Smith Churchill's death, all members of this branch of the Churchill family were buried in St. Sepulchre's church, Northampton, many of them commemorated in 'The Soldier's Aisle'. At the restoration of the church, sometime in the nineteenth century, Joseph's tomb and that of his son, Joseph, were, unfortunately, covered up. However, Fleetwood Churchill's monument has been placed against the south wall of The Soldier's Aisle.

Before leaving the record of the Churchills and the Fleetwoods in St. Sepulchre's church, it should be mentioned here that there are, unfortunately, two reproductions of a coat of arms in **A History of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton**, by Cox and Sergeantson attributed to the Churchills buried in the church; but this coat of arms (Sable, a lion rampant argent debruised by a bendlet gules) has no relevance to the Churchills concerned. **This** coat was granted to William Churchill of Muston, Dorset (See Page 71), who was in no way related to the Churchills of North Oxfordshire. Eighteenth and Nineteenth century Churchills, domiciled in Steeple Claydon, tended to adopt this coat of arms simply because it was the only Churchill arms mentioned in any of the records of the visitations of the Heralds to the counties of England. The fact is that the Steeple Claydon and Northampton Churchills had no right to a coat of arms. (*There is much about the Fleetwood and the Churchill families in A History of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton by J. Charles Cox and R. M. Sergeantson, published William Mark, Northampton, 1897.*)

The Fleetwoods were a family of such distinction that the Churchill descendants formed the habit of giving their offspring as one of their Christian (or first) names, that of Fleetwood, and this has been continued even into the twentieth century; and because the name Fleetwood in the 17th and 18th centuries was frequently spelt with a double f (lower case) as the initial letter (ffleetwood), they often continue this conceit).

Mention is made earlier on this page of Joseph Churchill, the only surviving son of Joseph and Penelope Churchill. He was born in 1704, and he inherited the manor of Bolnhurst, Beds, from his maternal uncle, Smith Fleetwood, and, in due course, sold it in 1780. He was a Justice of the Peace and he was buried in St. Sepulchre's Church in 1781. He married Mary Ford, who died in 1761, and is buried in the same church as her husband.

Joseph Churchill and Mary had three surviving sons: **Fleetwood**, born in 1731, who became a Fellow of Clare College, and a Doctor of Divinity in 1773. He died, without issue, in 1780.

Their next son was **Joseph**, who became a surgeon. He was born in 1734, and apprenticed to John Whitfield, a surgeon at Salop in 1751 (premium £200). He practised in Peterborough, and died from a fall from his horse in middle life. He was called 'Mad Jack', though history does not record what form his madness took; he is buried in Peterborough Cathedral. He married Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Beaumont Dixie, rector of Market Bosworth, second son of Sir Wolstan Dixie, third baronet. She died at Bath in 1806, where she had lived with her daughters after the death of her husband.

Joseph and Mary's third son was **Smith Churchill**, who was born in 1743 and sent to learn the business of hosiery, in Nottingham. He became sheriff of Nottingham in 1776, and City Chamberlain. He moved to Sheepshead, Leicestershire, in 1780. He married Isabella, daughter of Benjamin Mills, of Spitalfields, London, a silk merchant. Smith died at Northampton, in 1803, and is the last of the Churchills to be buried at St. Sepulchre's Church. In his will he left under £10,000. His widow lived with her son, Joseph, in Nottingham, until her death in 1810.

This branch of the Churchills was to be sustained by the descendants of Joseph for four generations, but were then to die out; but **Smith Churchill's** descendants were to continue the line to the present day (1986). First, this history will follow the descendants of Joseph. (*See Figures 15 and 16*).

Joseph, or Mad Jack as he was called, and his wife Mary, had only one child, **Joseph Dixie Churchill**, who was born in 1761 at Lichfield, Staffordshire, and educated at Christ's Hospital, where he was an exhibitioner. He went up to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he gained a B.A. in 1784 and an M.A. in 1787. He was ordained a priest, in Norwich, in 1785. He became a curate of Wrentham, Suffolk; rector of Willingham St. Mary in 1799; rector of Colby, Norfolk 1799 - 1802, and rector of Blickling, Norfolk 1811 - 1836, and died in the last-mentioned year. He married, first, Sarah Primrose, by whom he had nine children, seven daughters and two sons. The names of the children were **Mary**, who married R. Woolmer Cubitt; **Joseph**, who entered the Royal Navy and died in 1810; **Sarah**, who married W. M. Holworthy and flourished 1790 - 1818; **Fleetwood**, who was born in 1792, educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge and was ordained in 1816. He became vicar of Roughton, Norfolk from 1817 - 1855. He died of apoplexy in 1855. (*See Gentleman's Magazine 1855, L. p.435.*)

The next child of Joseph and Sarah, his wife, was **Eleonora**, who lived from 1793 to 1862. Then came **Elizabeth**, 1795 - 1823, who married George Warren; then **Sophia**, born in 1797 and married R. W. Parmiter. **Rosamond Mary** was the eighth child, who lived 1798 - 1831 and married Captain Alexander Dixie R.N. in 1818. He fought at Trafalgar, in the frigate Pheobe (36 guns), as a 3rd Lieutenant, and later had a distinguished career in the navy, being promoted to the rank of Captain.

Rosamund Mary (Churchill) and Alexander Dixie had five children, the eldest of whom, **Alexander Beaumont Churchill Dixie**, succeeded to the family baronetcy as 10th Baronet in 1857, his father, Captain Alexander Dixie R.N. having become the 9th Baronet in 1850 (nineteen years after Rosamund Mary's death). Portraits of Rosamund Mary (nee Churchill) and of her husband, Captain Alexander Dixie, exist (*See Plates X and XI*) and they are, in 1986, in the possession of a descendant of the family which Sir Alexander Dixie founded by his second wife, Rebecca Barnham (or Barnjam), of Middlesex, whom he married in 1840. He died in 1857, and his second wife in 1887, aged 94 years. The youngest child of Rosamund and Alexander Dixie was born in 1829 and was appropriately named **Nelson**, but, alas! he died in infancy.

The Rev. Joseph Dixie Churchill and Sarah (nee Primrose) had one more child, Emily, who was born in 1800 and married Samuel Parmiter. (It is not known if he was related to her sister's husband, R.W. Parmiter mentioned on the previous page).

On his first wife's death, the Rev. Joseph Dixie Churchill married, en seconde noce, Susanna Copp, in 1811, and they had three children; **Smith Churchill**, who married, first, Harriet Rees, who died without issue, and, secondly, Mary Noel Carter; and they had two children, **Joseph Dixie Churchill, born 1847, who went to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, became a Bachelor and Master of Arts and a Fellow of the College in 1872. He was ordained in 1870 and died in 1933.**

The second child was Wolstan Dixie Churchill, who also went to Emmanuel College, obtained his degree and was ordained in 1893. He was rector of a number of parishes, including North Benfleet, Essex 1921-1941. He died in 1941.

The descent of the Churchills from Joseph having died out in the fourth generation, with the deaths of Joseph Dixie Churchill and Wolstan Dixie Churchill, it is necessary to go back to the descendants of **Smith Churchill**, the brother of Joseph (Mad Jack), who was described at Page 79. As stated, he married Isabella, daughter of Benjamin Mills, and they had four sons. (*See Figure 17*).

The first son was **Smith Churchill**, of Sheepshead, Leicestershire, who lived from 1766 to 1840 and married Elizabeth Wild, who died in 1850. Their line lasted for only two more generations, and then died out. Those two generations were, first, four daughters and three sons, namely Eliza 1793 - 1829; Isabella 1797 - 1813; Elizabeth 1807 - 1829 (*Her death is recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine 1829, xlix, Vol. 11, p. 380*) and Anna Maria 1808 - 1838, who married T. Oastler.

Smith and Elizabeth's three sons were :**William Wild Churchill**, a hosier 1794 - 1844, who married Anne Spencer and had a son> **Smith Wild Churchill**, born in 1838. He was, so far as the present author knows, the last of Smith Churchill's descendants. The latter's second son was called **Smith Churchill** 1801 - 1842, and his third and last son was **Benjamin Fleetwood Churchill**, who was born in 1803. Neither of them had any offspring.

Smith Churchill and his wife, Isabella's, second son was **Joseph**, who was born in 1767 and christened at the Castlegate Chapel, in Sheepshead, Leicestershire, where he was to live until his removal to Nottingham. Then he lived in the High Pavement, with a warehouse on Garner's Hill, practising the trade of hosier (like his father) and that of lace-maker. He married, in 1792, his first wife, Charlotte, in St. Mary's Church, Nottingham. She was the daughter of William Smith, of Mount Street, Nottingham, Sheriff in 1766 and Mayor in 1789. He was the son of William Smith, of Yorkshire, and Mary Daft, his wife.

Joseph and his first wife, Charlotte, lived at Sneinton, near Nottingham, and had a son, Edmund, who died aged 12; a daughter, who died in infancy, and **Daft Smith Churchill**, who will be described shortly. Joseph officiated as Pastor of the Inghamite Branch of the Methodist Church, in Marygate, Nottingham. The Inghamites were followers of Benjamin Ingham (1712 - 1772), the Yorkshire evangelist, and friend of the Wesley brothers, who constituted themselves into churches throughout the country, but mostly in Yorkshire, Lancashire and the Midland counties.

Three years after his first wife's death, Joseph married Mary, the daughter of Thomas Cartwright, of the Old Horse Green, near Congleton, Glasgow. She and Joseph had two daughters: Mary, who married Andrew Perston, and Elizabeth Cartwright Churchill.

Joseph's son, **Daft Smith Churchill**, was born in Nottingham in 1793 and continued his father's lace and hosiery business in St. Marygate, also living, like his father, at Sneinton, near Nottingham. His extraordinary Christian names derive from the surname of his maternal great grandmother and great grandfather. He also became an Elder, and later Minister, of the Independent chapel of St. Marygate.

In December 1837, Joseph made his will and left to his son, Daft Smith Churchill, £5,500, his property and stocks, and money owing to him in Buenos Aires, as well as his estate at Sheepshead, Leicestershire. He also left money, stocks, shares and property to his two daughters by his second wife. In total, it was a large amount of money but, nine months later, disaster struck, when his son, Daft Smith, was drowned in the wreck of the ss Forfarshire on the Fame Islands. He had, therefore, to add a codicil to his will: 'Whereas Divine Providence hath suddenly removed my son from this life, I hereby leave and bequeath what I have left by this will to my son, to my grandchildren, his children, share and share alike, at the age of 21, the interest to accumulate'.

The story of his son, Daft Smith's drowning is a dramatic one. It seems, from contemporary accounts, that Daft took passage in the Steamship Forfarshire at Hull, bound for Edinburgh and Dundee, on the evening of the 5th September, 1838. There were on board 20 cabin passengers, 19 steerage passengers and 24 crew, including the captain and his wife (total 63). Daft was probably making the voyage because it was the custom at this time for people travelling to Scotland to take ship to Edinburgh in order to bypass the unreliable roads across the frontier. Daft was in company with two more cabin passengers, who seem to have been visiting him in Nottingham, and were

travelling with him, bound for Glasgow; on arrival at Edinburgh, they would have taken the coach for Glasgow. Much of the Forfarshire's cargo consisted of 'superfine cloths' and it may well be that Daft was doing a deal with these two Glasgow men to sell his lace and other produce in Scotland.

The Forfarshire was a luxury paddle steamer, only four years old, capable of a speed of 9 knots. Her cabins and saloons were elegantly furnished and she had several private state rooms with marble mantelpieces. The ship had no passenger lists and no system of advanced booking. Cabin passengers would have dealt with the master direct, each striking his own bargain on the basis of the accommodation required and baggage carried. (*See Plate XII.*)

The voyage met increasingly bad weather, and one of the two boilers started to leak. At about midnight, on the 6/7th September, the wind began to blow very hard and the sea rose considerably until it was soon blowing a full hurricane. When the ship was off Berwick, the wind backed to north-north-east and rose to gale force. The leak in the boiler increased and the deck pumps were unable to clear the boiling water. At every roll, great waves of the hot water were dashed against the firemen. When the ship was off St. Abbs Head, at 1 a.m., on Friday 7th, the engines stopped completely. To make matters worse, the tidal stream turned and ran southward, causing the Forfarshire to wallow uncontrollably. Rain was falling in torrents, the wind was tremendous and the ship refused the guidance of her helm.

The captain ordered the hoisting of the stay-sails and jibs and decided to double back through the channel, which separated the Northumbrian coast from the Farn Islands, into the lee of the islands, intending to anchor and ride out the storm. But, with the wind screaming out of the north, the sea steep and short and wildly confused, the air full of spray and black rain squalls driving horizontally through it, visibility was practically nil; and when the captain saw what he thought was the Longstone Light, he confused it with the Inner Farn Light, and steered to pass just east of it. This fatal mistake led to the shipwreck, which occurred at about 4 a.m. on the 7th September, when the ship struck the Harkers Rock and split behind the paddle-boxes, so that the whole after-end of the Forfarshire was swept away, leaving the forepart high on the Rock with nine members of the crew.

Grace Darling, the daughter of William Darling, the lighthouse keeper of the Longstone light, was on watch by the lantern and saw, through the storm, the Forfarshire strike the Rock at about 4.45 a.m. on the 7th. She immediately called to her father, who was sleeping below in his room, and he, with his daughter's help, launched the lighthouse's open rowing boat, and, with the two of them at the oars, in the appalling storm and wind, managed to row the boat to the Harkers Rock (several miles to the west of the Longstone). There they found the smashed forepart of the Forfarshire, with nine people trying to shelter from the storm among the rocks; one was a woman, badly hurt, and one of the men was also in a bad way. Darling took the woman and the wounded man and managed to lay them in the bottom of the boat, under the seats, and also three men to man the oars, with himself on the fourth. He also brought Grace back, she tending the two injured people. Four men were left on the Rock to await the return of the rowing boat.

At Longstone, the injured man and woman were taken into the lighthouse, with Grace Darling, and William Darling and the three other men on the oars rowed back to the Rock and picked up the last of the survivors. All these men and women were either steerage passengers or members of the crew. (*See Nottingham Journal, 1838, September 14th, October 12th, 19th and 26th; Nottingham Review, 1838, September 21st.*)

Just before the *Forfarshire* struck, eight members of the crew had launched the ship's quarterboat and leaped into it, to be joined by the only cabin passenger who survived the shipwreck. He had rushed up on deck, clad only in his trousers, in the pockets of which was his total wealth, in sovereigns. He was a youth, who was travelling to Glasgow, and when he saw the quarterboat, nearly five feet away from the gunwale, in the churned up sea, he hurled himself into it and made his escape from the doomed steamer. He and the eight crewmen with him eventually reached the mainland the following evening, having been given a tow by a passing boat, after dawn. Forty-five souls were drowned, including Daft Smith Churchill, the captain of the *Forfarshire*, and his wife.

Daft's body was washed ashore, at North Shields, over a month later. He was identified by the markings on his linen. He was wearing, in addition, his shirt, trousers and boots.

As he and his father had been concerned, to a considerable extent, in the establishment of the New General Cemetery, at Nottingham, it was here that Daft Smith Churchill was buried, and the directors of the cemetery erected an obelisk to his memory, near the entrance, which can still be seen.

The inhabitants of Sneinton, where Daft Smith and his father dwelt, raised a subscription and presented Grace Darling with a richly bound pictorial bible, enclosed in a silk cover printed in gold letters; for William Darling, they gave a silver cup, embossed with his initials; and, for Mrs. Darling, they sent a silver cream jug, inscribed 'To the mother of Grace Darling'. Grace wrote a humble and modest letter in acknowledgement.

Grace's heroism attracted every sort of tribute from the people of Britain: gold and silver medals, gifts of substantial sums of money (placed to her credit in numerous accounts); poems were written, artists thronged to paint her; there were endless requests for locks of hair. No woman can ever have been so extensively and uniquely honoured. Her name was coupled with 'The Ladies' at Mayoral banquets, and her likeness was depicted in woodcuts, engravings, mezzotints and lithographs. The clothing she was wearing on the day of her apotheosis passed out of her possession and, cut to threads, was dispersed to the four corners of the kingdom and beyond.

It is sad to have to record that Grace, who was 23 years old at the time of the shipwreck, died three years later. She was utterly unable to adapt herself to her changed position, believed that she was unworthy of such universal adulation, and allowed herself literally to be pestered to death by her innumerable admirers.

Daft Smith Churchill had married Esther, daughter of George Cheetham, of Stalybridge, Cheshire, a cotton spinner, at Ashton Old Church in 1817. They had nine children, who will now be described, but it is interesting that all except one of his sons (and he had five), died without issue, and the one son who **had** issue, Joseph. Fleetwood, of Durban, himself only had one son, who also died childless. So this Churchill line died out.

Daft Smith Churchill's eldest child was **Charlotte Anne**, born in 1819 and died, unmarried, in 1837. The next was a son, **Joseph Fleetwood Churchill**, who died aged three years. Then came **George Cheetham Churchill**, an attorney, who was born in 1822. He practised in Manchester and became a Fellow of both the Geographical Society and the Linnean Society. He married three times, but had no children. When George died in 1906, in Bristol, he left his collection of 60,000 alpine plants to Kew Gardens.

The fourth child of Daft Smith Churchill and Esther was **Sarah**, who was born in 1823 and died unmarried, in 1900. The fifth child was **William Smith Churchill**, who was born in 1826, at Nottingham, and became a cotton spinner, in Manchester. He died, unmarried, aged 88, and left 30,000 coins to the museum of Manchester University, and a collection of coins to the museum of Durban, Natal. He was a great family genealogist and accumulated most of the information concerning the descendants of Henry Churchill of Steeple Claydon, which has been here recorded by the present author. He is buried in the Churchill vault of the General Cemetery, in Nottingham.

The sixth child of Daft Smith Churchill was **Joseph Fleetwood**, who was born in Nottingham in 1827 and went to Durban in 1850 and founded the firm of Evans and Churchill, Merchants, there. He became a member of the Legislative Council of Natal. He married Emma, daughter of John Petty Gillespie, of Camberwell, in 1857. They had five children, one son and four daughters (who will be described shortly) but the son, although married, died without issue.

The seventh child of Daft Smith Churchill was **Isabella**, who was born, and died, at Stalybridge, Manchester, unmarried, aged 33. The penultimate child of Daft Smith Churchill was **Marian**, who was born in 1831 and married Hugh Gillespie, in Durban, in 1858. He was the brother of Emma Gillespie, who married Joseph Fleetwood. He was drowned, while bathing, in 1869, and Marian died, in Durban, in 1912.

The last child of Daft Smith Churchill was **Frank**, who was born at Nottingham, in 1835, and emigrated to Natal, in 1854. He died in Maritzberg, in the same year, without issue.

Joseph, the **father** of Daft Smith Churchill, died in 1837, two years after Daft was drowned in the Farne Islands shipwreck. He is buried in Sneinton churchyard, beside his first wife, Charlotte. Portraits of him in crayon and oils were in existence in 1930, but their whereabouts now are not known to the present author.

Finally, the children of Joseph Fleetwood Churchill and Emma (Gillespie) must be recorded, to end the Churchill descent of Joseph. There were five children, one son

and four daughters. The eldest was the son, **Frank Oliver Fleetwood Churchill**, who was born in Durban, in 1861, and became an attorney. He served, on active service, in the South African War with the Natal Mounted Rifles. He was elected a member of the Natal Parliament in 1901, and was elected to the Senate in 1910 and in 1921. He retired in 1929. He was always known as 'The Senator' in the family, and he had a family pedigree printed, based on his father's researches. Copies of this printed pedigree were given to members of his family, and the present author was shown a copy, by Alexander Phayre Churchill, in 1935.

Frank O. F. Churchill married Marion Mason in 1913. He died, without issue, at Chalfont, Capetown, in 1934. His four sisters were, first, **Maria Penelope Fleetwood**, born in London in 1863 and served in the First World War, in the Y.M.C.A., in Boulogne and in Cologne; second, **Isabel Prout**, born 1865, in Durban, who married first, Edmund Thomas Bently, a chemist, of Durban. He died in Eastbourne in England in 1916. She married, secondly, Sir Arthur Weir Mason, Judge President of the Supreme Court, Transvaal, knight. The third sister was **Cornelia Fleetwood**, who married Ralph H. Grey, captain in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, who died at Mayfield, Sussex in 1909; and the last daughter was **Esther Emmeline**, who was born in Durban in 1873, and married William Alvera Humphrey Ph.D. of York, England, a geologist. She died, at Capetown, in 1920.

At Page 80 it was said that Smith Churchill and his wife, Isabella (Mills), had four sons (*See Figure 17*) and the first two sons, Smith and Joseph and their descendants, were described at Pages 80, 81 and 84, 85. It now becomes necessary to record the other two sons, namely, **Benjamin Fleetwood** and **Fleetwood**, and **their** descendants.

Benjamin, though married twice, had no male descendants, so his Churchill line died out. He was born in 1770 and baptised in Castlegate Chapel. He joined his brother, Smith, in business, in Sheepshead. He died in 1862, aged 92 (*The third member of the family to attain this age, the other members being Benjamin, and Lillie Fleming, the daughter of John Fleming Churchill*), and is buried in the General Cemetery at Nottingham. He remembered his grandfather Joseph's carriage having a coat of arms on the panels (though Joseph had no right to arms!) He also wrote his recollections for his great nephew, William Smith Churchill, who was the family historian of the descendants of Henry Churchill, of Steeple Claydon. What happened to these 'Recollections' is not known. His first wife was Hannah Rainsford, of Bristol, whom he married in 1795, and who died the following year. His second wife was Sarah, the widow of the Rev. Alliston, whom he married in 1802 and who died in 1836. He had a daughter, Hannah, by his first wife, who married someone called Babington, and they had a son, Churchill Babington D.D. (1821 -1880), who became Disney Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge, and rector of Cockfield, Suffolk. He published works on numismatics, botany, and ornithology, and edited 'Orations of Hyperides' 1850 - 1853. (*See Concise Dictionary of National Biography, Part I, O. U.P.*). By his second wife, he had a daughter, Sarah, who was twice married.

The last child of Smith Churchill and his wife, Isabella, was **Fleetwood Churchill**, who deserves to be remembered, since by his first wife, Hannah Page, he fathered five

generations of Churchills, the latest being a son, John Edward Fleetwood Churchill, born in 1973 (and aged 13 in 1986) who could, if he survives, in due course continue the Steeple Claydon Churchill line into the future.

Fleetwood was born in Nottingham, in 1772, and went into business as a mercer, in the Long Row. He was another member of the family who became a pastor of an Inghamite church, this time at Balwell. He died at Nottingham, in 1811, by all much-esteemed and loved. His death was reported in *The Gentleman's Magazine* Number LXXXI (1811) p. 669. After his death his wife, Hannah, went to live in Dublin with their son, Dr. Fleetwood Churchill, and died there in 1841.

Fleetwood and Hannah Page (See *Figure 18*) had three surviving children, namely, **Fleetwood Churchill**, **Hannah Churchill**, who married Thomas Toplis and had issue, and **Charles Churchill**. Fleetwood was born in Nottingham, in 1808, and was apprenticed to a Nottingham physician in 1822. He studied in London, Dublin, Paris and Edinburgh and became a M.D. (Edinburgh) in 1831. He practised in Dublin and lectured on obstetrics from 1856 to 1864. He wrote on midwifery and he became a strong supporter of the Episcopal church in Ireland. (*See Concise Dictionary of National Biography, Part 1, O:U:P*)(*His books were published in 20 languages and he was president of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland in Dublin, where a portrait of him hangs on the main staircase. See Appendix V for further details. Ed 2014*). He married Janet Rebecca Ferrier, daughter of Alex. Ferrier of Knockmaroon, Dublin, at Castle Knock, in 1852. He retired in 1875, and they went to live with their daughter, Mary, who had married William Edward Meade, rector of Ardrea, Co. Tyrone (later Bishop of Cork). Fleetwood died in 1878 and is buried at Ardrea. Janet Rebecca died in 1896 and was buried at Harold's Cross.

Charles Churchill) the third surviving child of Fleetwood and Hannah, was born in 1810 and became a draper and silk mercer on The Long Row, in Nottingham. Later, he became a Wesleyan minister and practised first in Canada, and then in England. He married, first, Mary Anne Peck, in 1852, who died in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1862. His second wife was Mrs. Caroline Binney (nee Derry), who had been a missionary in the Fiji Islands. She died in 1903, aged 84. They had four surviving daughters and three sons: Fleetwood, Ernest and Houghton. Nothing more is known of them.

Fleetwood Churchill and Janet Rebecca (Ferrier) had no fewer than eleven children, but only three of them had Churchill descendants. The first three children were: **Fleetwood Churchill**, born in 1832 and died in 1884, who married Isabella Mortimer Anderson, daughter of William Anderson of Cape Town; the second child was **Mary Ferrier Churchill** born 1835, who married William Edward Meade and lived in Ireland, and with whom her father and mother lived (as mentioned previously). Then came **Alex. Ferrier Churchill**, who was born in 1837 and died, and was buried, at Harold's Cross, in the same year. The fourth child was also called Alex. Ferrier Churchill, retired as Surgeon General of the Army Medical Service (India) and died in 1928. He married Ellen Louisa Phayre, the daughter of Frederick Phayre, in 1869. They had four children and two grandchildren, who will be described shortly. The fifth child was **Charles Fleetwood Churchill**, who was born in 1841 and became a Colonel in the Army Medical Service and died in 1920. He married Alice Hildebrand and

they had ten children, who will be described in the next page. The sixth child of Fleetwood and Janet Rebecca was **George Fleetwood Churchill**, born in 1843. like his two elder brothers, he went into the Army Medical Service and married Mary I. Forbes, daughter of the Rev. William Forbes, rector of Mandeville, Jamaica and sister of Stuart Jos. Forbes, who married her sister Isabella. George Fleetwood and Mary (nee Forbes) had five children and three grandchildren. (*See p. 88*).

The eighth child was **Grace Arnold Churchill**, born in 1847, and the ninth was **Janet Margaret**, born in 1849, who married Marcus Joseph Truman, vicar of Arnold, and they had issue. The penultimate child was **Anna Forbes Churchill**, born in 1851, and the eleventh and last child was **William Forbes Churchill**, who was born in 1853 and married Amelia Archer Cock of Virginia, U.S.A. They had one daughter, **Claire Ferrier Churchill**, born in 1886, who married George Downing, in 1914, in the U.S.A., and they had issue.

It is now necessary to record the four children of Alex. Ferrier Churchill and his wife, Ellen Louisa Phayre. The eldest was **Fleetwood Annesley Churchill**, who was born in 1870 and died, aged 14, at Atherstone. The next child was **Janet Ferrier Churchill**, who was born, and died, in Cape Colony, in 1871. **Alexander Phayre Churchill**, the third child, was born in 1874, at King Williamstown, Cape Colony, and became a Colonel, late of the Essex Regiment. He married Leonora M. Sillitoe Lewis, in 1908, and, when he retired, he lived in Brentwood, Essex, where the present author visited him in January 1935. He was a keen family genealogist and had copies of the pedigrees which had been made as a result of William Smith Churchill's (1826 -1914) researches and those of Frank Oliver Fleetwood Churchill (1861 - 1934). (*See Figure 17*). Alexander Phayre Churchill and his wife Leonora, had two very attractive daughters, **Patricia Ellen**, born 1910, who married H.R.S. Sanguinetti, of the Essex Regiment, who later became a Colonel in the Royal Army Pay Corps; and **Primrose Elizabeth Daphne**, born in 1914.

The last child of Alex. Ferrier Churchill and his wife, Ellen, was **Cecile Ellen Mary**, born in 1879, who married Colonel Herbert L. Crosthwaite CIE of the Royal Engineers.

Going back, now, to Charles Fleetwood Churchill, a regimental doctor in the Indian Army, who married Alice Hildebrand, from South Africa. (*See p. 86*), they had ten children: eight daughters and two sons, the latter being the youngest.

The eldest daughter was **Janet M. R. Churchill**, who was born in 1876 and married Colonel H. Turner R.E., and they had issue. Then, in succession, came **Alice, Edith F., Margaret H. and Ethel M.**, who was born in 1881 and married Colonel H. White, Indian Infantry, and they also had issue. **Kathleen**, the next sister, was born in 1883 and married Cecil Mears, a Colonel of Indian Cavalry, and they had issue. Then came **Winifred F.V.**, born in 1884, who married John Mackenzie. The last sister was **Irene R**, born in 1886, who married Frank Willes, who was killed in action, in France, in World War I. They had one daughter.

Then came the two boys, **Charles**, born in 1888, who was killed in action in

Mesopotamia in the First World War, and **Alec Palmer ffleetwood**, born in 1895, who joined the 17th Dogras, and married Helena Erskine. The present author, when a subaltern, serving in the Burma Rebellion, met Captain Alec P. ff. Churchill on operations in the Prome area of Burma. They compared notes on their family origins and realised that they were related. Captain Churchill advised the author to write to Colonel Alexander Phayre Churchill, who lived at Brentwood, Essex, as he was a keen family genealogist. Thomas Churchill did just this in 1935 (*See previous page*) and, as a result, obtained all the information here recorded of the descendants of Henry Churchill, of Steeple Claydon.

Captain Alec P. ff. Churchill became a Colonel on the staff at Army H.Q., India, after the conclusion of World War II, but contracted an illness, which required his retirement to England, where he died, in 1946. (In fact he became a Brigadier with command of the Ambala Brigade until he contracted an illness related to having been gassed early in WW1 in France, before he transferred to the Indian Army in Mesopotamia in 1916: 2014 edit by his son John ff Churchill). He had two sons, who are described below, and they are contemporary survivors (1986) of the Steeple Claydon Churchills.

The five children of George Fleetwood and Mary (nee Forbes) (*See p. 87*) were: **Janet A.**, who married the Rev. Henry Dunkin, and they had issue. The next child was **Grace M.**, who was born in 1873. The third child was **Evelyn M.**, born 1875. The fourth, **George Brooks Forbes**, became a Colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corps and married Kathleen Hastings. They had three children: Robert Hastings, born 1912, Peter, and a daughter Joan.

The last of George Fleetwood and Mary (Forbes)'s children was **William F. Churchill**, who was born in 1878 and of whom nothing more is known. The last two generations of the Steeple Claydon Churchills to be covered in this book are the two sons of Alec Palmer ffleetwood Churchill and his wife, Helena, who were mentioned above. They are **John ffleetwood Churchill**, born 1934, and **Charles ffleetwood Churchill**, who was born in 1937. John ffleetwood became a company director and married Stephanie van Den Bergh. They have three children: **John Edward ffleetwood**, born in 1973; **Gratia**, born in 1975, and **Juliet**, born in 1978. Incidentally, the two brothers, John and Charles, both got Blues at Cambridge for golf. (Incidentally in later life they were individually Captain of Sunningdale Golf Club, and President of Royal North Devon Golf Club, both extremely well known institutions)

So **John Edward ffleetwood**, now, in 1986, aged 13 years, is the youngest and latest descendant of the Steeple Claydon branch of the Churchills to be born. Like his father, his uncle, Charles ffleetwood Churchill, still flourishes and is (in 1986) a schoolmaster at Summerfields Preparatory School, Oxford, but is unmarried. (*See Plate XIII*)

External Editors note. John ffleetwood Churchill; 2014; *Stephanie Van den Bergh, from Holland, had a mother, Gratia Baroness Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, who was an international Skier of great renown in pre-war days, winning several Alpine downhill races, the only person from a “flat” country ever to do so. She Skied with Colonel Erwin Rommel and his wife Lucy when Rommel commanded*

an alpine warfare school in the Austrian Alps in around 1937-8. Rommel provided her with a phone number to call if in the future her Jewish husband should be threatened, proof indeed that the Werhmacht well knew what could happen. When the Gestapo put him on an Auschwitz train in 1942 the Baroness was able to use this phone number, in fact that of Rommel’s brother in Berlin, to allow the now Field Marshall Rommel, then commanding the Afrika Korps in Libya to have the train stopped and her husband returned to Holland, apparently in a Staff Car. Stephanie was conceived after this event so all her descendents owe their existence to Erwin Rommel.

Rommel’s action, though involving some personal risk, could have been affected and eased by his unique status in Germany, and the fact that he knew that the Skiing Baroness was a member of a family which had sold an estate, Huis Doorn, near Doorn in Holland, to Kaiser Wilhelm to accommodate The Kaiser in comfort after he was exiled from Germany by the Allies after WWI. This was from where the Kaiser telegraphed to Hitler with his congratulations after the victories in Poland and France. Furthermore Rommel knew that her father Baron Alphert Schimmelpenninck van der Oye was a serving member of the IOC, an organisation that Hitler wished to cultivate, and that she had been a Lady in Waiting to Queen Wilhelmina and a friend of the Queen’s family.

After his safe return and concealment in a small underground hovel near the estate, the SS did approach the Baroness to take her family jewels, which were considerable, as payment, but this was par for the course and the fact that Rommel’s son Manfred, later Mayor of Stuttgart, remained a friend of the Baroness until his death does give certainty to the conviction that Rommel was not a party to, and ignorant of this subsequent extortion.

Curiously, Rommel’s Chief of Staff in the desert war and on D Day was Gen. Hans Speidel, to whom General Tom Churchill, the author of this book, was Deputy Chief of Staff in NATO in the 1950s. (private letter from General Tom Churchill to John ffleetwood Churchill see Appendix V)

John Edward ffleetwood married Nicola Elizabeth Trudel in 2000 and lives in Boston Ma, and is reading for his Doctorate in Psychology. He has two Children, Trinity Maitreya, born in 2007 and Bohdi John ffleetwood, born 2009. Gratia has had three children: Ioho Blue 1998-2001, Iona Gratia (2001) and Lalita Gratia (2011). She lives in Brighton. Julia is a publisher’s agent and lives in London.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THE DEDDINGTON CHURCHILLS AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The end of this rather long family history is now approaching, and it remains only to record the final generations of the Deddington branch of the Churchills, starting with the children of Alec Fleming and Elinor (Bell), and ending with Thomas III, born 1973, and James Alexander Gladstone, born 1977, the sons, respectively, of Thomas Alec John Nicholas, who married Angela Widdowson in 1970, and Rodney Alistair Gladstone, who married Susan Dicker in 1976. (*See Figure 19*).

Alec Fleming and Elinor Elizabeth (Bell) had four children, the eldest of whom was called Alec Thorpe, who was born and died in Ceylon in 1905. **John Malcolm Thorpe**, the next child, was born in Colombo in 1906, and was always called Jack. **Thomas Bell Lindsay** was the second surviving child and was born in 1907 in Dormansland, Surrey (while his parents were on leave in England); and **Robert Alec Farquhar**, nicknamed Buster, was the youngest child and was born in 1911 in Hong Kong.

After Alec and Elinor's retirement to England (owing to the failure of Alec's sight), the family went to live in Oxford, where Alec's mother and his sister, Lillie, were already established. They took a house in the Bardwell Road for a few months and then moved to No. 4 Crick Road, where they were to dwell for the next ten years, thus making a base from which their three boys could be educated at the Dragon School - at this period sometimes still known as Lynam's, after the name of the headmaster, C. C. Lynam.

Alec and Nellie were very keen that their sons should enter either the army or the navy, and, in fact, the two eldest did join the army, in 1926 and 1927 respectively, while Buster joined the Royal Navy in the latter year.

Jack was commissioned to the Manchester Regiment (63rd Foot), as the regiments

for which he had applied had no vacancies when he passed out from Sandhurst. The Regiment was stationed in Rangoon.

Tom passed 7th into the Royal Military College, thereby gaining a scholarship. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant in his last term and he passed out sixth, winning the prize for military history. He had applied for the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire light Infantry but, as they had no vacancies when his last term commenced, he took his name off their list - much to their Colonel's annoyance. As his brother wrote from Rangoon to say that Burma was a wonderful country, and advised Tom that if he joined the Manchester they would have a splendid time together, Tom applied and was successful.

Jack had joined the 2nd Battalion of the Regiment in 1926, and Tom in 1927. The Regiment then moved to Maymyo a year later, moving by river steamer up the Irrawaddy as far as Mandalay, and thence by train into the hills, to its station at Maymyo. The reason for moving by river was in order to enable the battalion to carry out 'flag marches' through the villages at which they stopped to demonstrate a military presence in face of the tendency to disorder, and even rebellion, then being manifested by some of the Burmese inhabitants. This sensitivity to coming events showed the perspicacity of the Burmese Government, for, only three years later, rebellion did, in fact, break out, partly due to the failure of the rice crop; but chiefly due to the animosity of the Burmese for the Indian settlers, who practised usury on a large scale.

The Burman has been called the 'Irishman of the East'. He was a keen gambler and a great participant in any race meetings that were organised in Rangoon. It was, perhaps, inevitable that he should frequently run into debt, and when he did he borrowed money at a high interest rate from the Indian moneylenders. In due course the latter would foreclose and try to bring the debtors to the local courts; but the Burmese soon forestalled them and attacked them with their dahs, or jungle knives, four feet long and with a razor-sharp edge. Many Indian moneylenders suffered amputations of the legs or arms, and finally the government was forced to bring in troops to put a stop to what was fast becoming a breakdown of law and order. . In 1929, the Regiment came to the end of its tour of duty in Burma and moved by boat to Madras and thence by train to Secunderabad, in the Deccan; but eighteen months later, in the middle of the hot weather season, it was suddenly ordered to mobilize and return to Burma. There, the inhabitants had indeed broken out in open rebellion and a force of infantry of brigade strength was rapidly raised in India and sent to Burma to reinforce the garrison of Burma Independent District (as the country was called in those days, Burma still being a part of the Indian Empire).

Both Jack and Tom accompanied their companies to Burma, and both took part in operations in the jungle to try to capture bands of rebels, who were terrorising the remoter villages:. Jack with 'B' Company, operating from Meiktila, and Tom with 'C' Company, in the Prome area of the lower Irrawaddy. After a few months, Jack was posted home to the regimental Depot at Ashton-under-Lyne, near Manchester, but

Tom remained in Burma and was soon on the heels of a gang, who were led by a Burman, called Po-Hla-Gyi. The gang was well armed with rifles and shotguns and, of course, their dahs. They would arrive at night at a village, summon the headman, and demand food, on pain of instant death. Few headmen felt able to resist these rascals who, having obtained their requirements, would always depart before dawn to hide up in the paddy-fields or hills, before making another descent on a village.

Churchill spent endless nights following up information which was given him by local police and by inhabitants, but nearly always found that the news was stale and the gang had left a night or two previously. But, on one lucky occasion, having surrounded a village at night, Tom and his platoon surprised a gang about 2 o'clock in the morning, having a meal in the village. The rebels took fright and ran for it, dashing across the open paddy-fields in the half-light and making for a wooded area a mile distant. The platoon opened fire and killed one of the gang, wounding another. Unfortunately, Po-Hla-Gyi himself got away with four of his companions; but the platoon followed them from hiding-place to hiding-place and, on the third night, caught up with them near the first village they had surrounded, and killed Po-Hla-Gyi.

About two months later, the rebellion was put down and the Regiment returned to Secunderabad, spending a further year there before moving on to Khartoum, in the Sudan. By this time, Tom was adjutant and he was on his way to the Orderly Room early one morning when a signal was brought to him, informing him that he had been awarded the Military Cross for his services in the Burma Rebellion.

Jack decided to retire from the army after ten years' service, finding peacetime soldiering dull and hardly to his taste. In the meantime, Buster had completed his time at the Royal Naval College, at Dartmouth, having been made a Cadet Captain and gaining 'blues' for rugby, hockey and swimming. He joined the old Emperor of India, a pre-1914 battleship, as a midshipman, and was then commissioned to H.M.S. Valiant, and, it was in this ship that he had the traumatic experience of witnessing the mutiny in the Fleet at Invergordon.

It began on Sunday, 13th September 1931, when the naval ratings learned that their pay was to suffer a substantial cut which, for senior men, was to be as much as 25 per cent. The Board of Admiralty had failed to prepare the navy for this cut and there had been inadequate communication with the lower deck. Furthermore, the men were annoyed that the announcement, when it came, had been delayed until the ships of the Atlantic Fleet had left their home ports and were anchored at an isolated place like Invergordon. The men surmised that this was done because the Admiralty feared that unrest might be caused if the announcement were made in the home ports, which were, in fact, industrial towns, with large numbers of unemployed.

Buster wrote a long and interesting letter to his parents on 15th September describing how the men had a meeting in the canteen ashore and some drunken sailors had beaten up the shore patrol:- 'Then about a hundred marines from the Warspite were landed under a commander who also got 'a thick ear'. Things, however, quietened down and all the sailors were sent back on board.

'On the following day double patrols were landed and another meeting was held, but no violence took place, the sailors returning on board, singing 'Rule Britannia'. But, on the 15th September, when the hands were piped to fall in, **only three** turned up. Valiant was due to proceed to sea at 0800 hours. So the commander ordered the midshipmen and cadets on to the fo'c'sle to unmoor the ship, but the sailors refused to work. The midshipmen and cadets were then put on the main derrick guys, port side, and the Royal Marines on the guys on the starboard side, to hoist in the boats. But the sailors threatened to 'knock the marines' blocks off if they did not join the strike. Boats were not hoisted, and hands were piped to clear lower deck and muster aft, but only about a third of the ship's company did, and the Captain addressed them. Then the strikers refused to take the ship to sea. There is no routine at present, as no sailors are working and the petty officers dare not, and are not ordered to, because if they did they would in all probability be beaten up by the sailors, who number some 800 odd, counting the stokers.

'At 1100 hours, the midshipmen and cadets were ordered on to the fo'c'sle by the Commander and five petty officers also came and the cable officers, and we moored the ship again.

'The gunroom and the wardroom staff have not mutinied yet and we get meals all right. The fans and lights are still working. There seems to be a large organisation behind all this, as there is no actual open mutineering against us, but their slogan is 'no pay, no work'.

'No-one is in any danger at the moment, as everything is at a stand-still. It is really the most extraordinary situation. Malaya, Warspite and Repulse went to sea early this morning, and the Rear Admiral Battle Cruiser Squadron has ordered them back to Invergordon.

'It is about twenty past three in the afternoon at the moment and there is a beastly air of inactivity about. I am in the gunroom with Kenney, and the rest of the midshipmen and cadets are doing navigation with the Instructor Lieut. Commander in the school flat. The Captain of the Fleet has flown to London, and we are awaiting the decision of the Admiralty.

'Wednesday, 16th September: at sea.

'When I left off writing yesterday I went on watch, but nothing happened. Today, things have happened pretty quickly.'

Buster enclosed a copy of a signal from the Admiralty which was posted on the board. It was addressed to Atlantic Fleet ships in company:

The Board of Admiralty is fully alive to the fact that amongst certain classes of ratings special hardships will result from reduction of pay ordered by H.M. Government. It is their direction that ships of the A.F. are to proceed to their Home ports forthwith to enable personal investigations to be made by C-in-Cs and representatives of Admiralty with a view to necessary alleviation being made.

Any further repetition of refusal of individuals to carry out orders will be dealt with under Naval Discipline Act. This order is to be promulgated to the fleet forthwith.

1445

T.O.R. 154516th Sept.

"The Captain had 'Clear Lower Deck' 'Muster Aft' piped, and the marines, Petty Officers, Engineer Room Artificers, a certain number of Leading Seamen and the ship's officers all mustered on the Q.D. numbering about 350 in all. The remainder of the seamen and stokers refused to.

"The Captain addressed us and read a special message from the Admiralty, stating that we were to return to our Home ports and that the questions of reduction of pay were to be gone into.

"The number of men who had mustered aft were amply enough to take the ship to sea, but four ratings went forward and demanded what security they would have, should the mutinous sailors attack them or do them bodily harm while they were in the execution of their duty, pointing out in each of the four cases that they had a number of relations, either parents or families, to support. This was the general feeling.

"The Captain rather evaded the question, but answered somehow (I forget actually what he said). Then he withdrew to his cabin with the Commander and the four senior Lieut. Commanders, while we all waited in suspense on the Q.D. Then he appeared again and went forward with the Commander and was there about half an hour, evidently addressing the mutineers. When he came aft he again had 'Clear Lower Deck' piped, and by degrees the mutineers (or perhaps 'strikers' is a better word to use, since one connects the word mutiny more with acts of violence against the officers, although by the Naval Discipline Acts, they are mutineers) came aft. He again addressed the ship's company, but in rather a different manner, and pointed out that in future any action on the part of the men to disobey orders would be treated in the normal way, but that their actions during the past two days could stand over.

'By this time the crisis had passed, and we were dismissed and immediately sent to Divisions and mustered, and then they went to supper. The whole thing took about two hours, and it was a pretty thrilling two hours! At one point, before the strikers came aft, it seemed very probable that the only course to have taken would have been to arm the officers and place them in the vital parts of the ship, to defend the non-strikers from the others while they worked the ship. But luckily it seems to have worked itself out for the present.

'After supper the hands were piped to fall in, and they did. The ship was prepared for sea, and we got under way at 2230 hours. It is now 0115, Sept. 17th. I am in the gunroom; every ten minutes or so I stroll out on to the half deck and Q.D. and see if everything is quiet. I have instructions to take any action I consider necessary should anything unusual occur, and call the duty commanding officer; but I don't think anything will. We are now on passage to Sheerness so I will not be able to post this

until we get there, but I will add anything of importance that may happen between now and then.

'Thursday, 17th September.

I learned this morning that yesterday the Captain ordered the captain of the Royal Marines to take what loyal troops he had found, **and to fire on the mutineers** if they refused to muster aft and obey orders. But Captain Field R.M. is no fool, and he asked for his orders in writing. So. the Captain sent a boat with Lieut. Fenton R.N. to Rear Admiral French to get permission, but it was not granted.'

Buster's letter ended there. Perhaps it is of interest to add that a certain Leonard Wincott, an able seamen in the Atlantic Fleet, claimed to have organised the mutiny. He was later discharged from the Navy, together with 996 other men, though, curiously, only 108 of them were from the Atlantic Fleet. He became a communist and went to live in Russia, and died in 1983.

The Board of Admiralty was criticized for having failed to prepare the Navy for this cut. The National Government, led by Ramsey MacDonald, had decided on the cuts as part of Philip Snowden's efforts to balance his budget. The harassed government was now beset by news of the mutiny, and there followed a run on the Bank of England., A witch-hunt ensued, which wrecked some personal careers in the Navy. In the long run, paradoxically, the affair was considered to have benefitted the Navy, in the sense that it helped that arm of the services to adjust and prepare for the crucial demands the coming war would bring.

Robert Alec Farquhar Churchill (Buster) married Olive Townroe, the daughter of A. Townroe M.D., in May 1933, at Cuckfield, in Sussex, and a son, Mark Alexander, was born in 1935. Soon afterwards, he left the Navy. (*See Figure 19*).

Thomas B. L. Churchill married Gwendoline Janie Williams, daughter of Lewis Williams M.D. of Ferryside, Carmarthenshire, in September 1934, in London, and in May, 1940, a daughter, Rosemary Sarah, was born. (*See Figure 19*).

On the impending outbreak of war, Jack and Buster both instantly rejoined the Colours so that, when war came, all three brothers were once more in uniform. Jack served in France, with the Manchester, and won the Military Cross for distinguished service during the retreat to Dunkirk. Tom also went to France with his regiment, in 1939, but was at once appointed to the intelligence staff at Lord Gort's general headquarters, British Expeditionary Force, which was at Arras, in order to establish an air photographic interpretation section. This was because he had been the instructor in photo-interpretation at the R.A.F. School of Photography from 1934 -1938 and, was, therefore, the recognised expert in this form of intelligence. , Just before the German advance in the Low Countries began, Tom was recalled to England to attend the Staff College Course at Camberley, Surrey, for which he had qualified by examination, in 1939. During this course (which lasted only four months), the German invasion commenced and Tom was posted to join Headquarters, British Air Forces in France at Coulommiers, east of Paris, which was commanded by

Air Marshal Barrett. It was giving air support to the B.E.F. but, after Dunkirk, it remained in France to support the French army, until the latter ceased to fight and concluded an armistice with the Germans. Churchill retired with the intelligence branch of B.A.F. to Nantes.

Then information came in that there was a British ship at Brest, which was to sail in twelve hours time; so the R.A.F. I Branch motored the 200 miles through the night and through a certain amount of bombing to reach Brest in the early morning, Churchill and some of the R.A.F. officers driving 3-ton vehicles full of airmen as all the troops were by this time very weary.

The ship, which turned out to be an Isle of Man ferry, was crowded with British soldiers from one of the armoured divisions which had been fighting with the French. After more bombing, and some mine-laying in the Brest estuary, a channel was swept and the ship sailed to England and finally landed at Plymouth.

Jack joined the Army Commandos in 1940, and, at the end of 1941, took part in the raid on Vaagso, Norway. Tom served in the Air Ministry and the War Office in appointments concerned with the training of officers in the interpretation of air photographs, until he was able to escape from Whitehall and join his brother in the Commandos. Meanwhile, Buster, in the Navy, was serving in a mine-layer, engaged in laying mines in the North Sea. His base was in Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands, and on 19th November, 1940, he was returning thither, after a few days leave, when he had to change trains at Birmingham (New Street) station, late at night. He was in charge of a draft of men, who were to join his ship, and, at about midnight, the Luftwaffe dropped a stick of incendiary bombs which straddled the station and set fire to a number of buildings, including the roof of the refreshment room standing on No. 7 platform. Buster at once climbed up to the roof, where he joined Parcel Inspector Cooke and Parcels Porter Wyatt on the flat roof, trying to put out the fires, and they were thus engaged when a high explosive bomb hit the girders of the station room towards No. 6 platform, killing Cooke, wounding Wyatt, and breaking one of Buster's legs. The station master, Hewitt by name, later sent a report to the Admiralty commending Buster for his work that night, but nothing more was heard of it.

Buster did not consider work in a mine-layer or a mine-sweeper was particularly glamorous, and, early in 1941, when he had recovered from his wounds, he joined the Fleet Air Arm and was trained as a pilot at Lee-on-Solent. He was near the age limit for training, but was accepted, much to his delight. But at times, such as when he executed a tight turn, he would tend to black out for a second or two, and this was naturally an anxiety to him when flying. In due course he joined No. 884 Squadron of the Fleet Air Arm.

In August, 1942, he took part in **Operation Pedestal**, the most severe of all the Malta convoy operations. It was mounted from England in order to bring supplies but, above all, oil to the beleaguered garrison, which was in grave danger of having to capitulate. Buster's squadron was still flying Fulmars, although these aircraft had long been out-dated by Hurricanes and Spitfires, which the R.A.F. had been flying for months

The huge fleet sailed well into the Atlantic to minimise the danger of air attack, and then turned to concentrate in the passage through the Straits of Gibraltar. Again it spread out in the Mediterranean, the carriers in the rear of the convoy behind the merchantmen, which they could see ahead. Victorious was in company with Indomitable, her sister-ship, and the Eagle. The first action was on Tuesday, 11th August, when the fleet ran into a nest of U-boats, and Eagle was sunk. Her aircraft, which were airborne at the time, landed on the Indomitable. That evening they were bombed for the first time, and the Fulmars, from the Victorious, took off and went into action.

The next day was one of continual attacks by aircraft. The Indomitable was hit twice by large bombs, one of which hit the flight deck forward and the other aft near the aircraft lift, buckling all the lifting gear. The former bomb penetrated four decks and then burst outwards, luckily, but, nevertheless, 9 officers and 40 ratings were killed. This incident occurred at the height of the action, and Indomitable's aircraft, which were airborne at the time, landed on Victorious. The flight deck was consequently crowded with aircraft, and to permit any airborne aircraft to land, planes which were partially damaged had to be tipped off the deck into the sea.

Buster took part in two sorties from the Victorious on 12th August, shooting down an Italian four-engined bomber, called a Cant 1007, on his first sortie. There was a broadcast system in the ship and the names of successful pilots were announced when they downed an enemy aircraft. When Buster landed, all the men on deck gave him the 'thumbs up' signal (*See Plate XIV*). Victorious was hit once by a bomb, from an Italian fighter, on the flight deck, but it bounced off into the sea and did not explode. A second Italian fighter, in company with the first, also dropped a bomb, which exploded in the sea near the Victorious. The ship was not otherwise hit, though there were innumerable near-misses throughout the Wednesday.

On Buster's second sortie he again engaged an Italian aircraft at close range, but was either wounded himself from the enemy's rear-facing guns, or his aircraft sustained serious damage, as it was seen to tilt over and slowly plunge into the sea. Three months later his widow was sent a certificate of a Mention in Despatches awarded to lieutenant Robert Alec Farquhar Churchill, R.N., H.M.S. Victorious 'for outstanding service in the action in which he lost his life.' (*See Plate XV*). In 1980 Tom Churchill (in conjunction with Jack) arranged for a tablet to be erected in Deddington parish church, to the memory of their father and mother, and younger brother, Buster. It is beside the altar, at the east end of the south aisle, and below a memorial to John Churchill, his wife Eleanor, and their son Frederick Gwynne Churchill.

In March 1943, the Commando Brigade to which Tom was now posted, was moved from Scotland to Sherborne, Dorset, with headquarters established in Sherborne Castle. The brigade was to sail in three month's time for the assault on Sicily, and Tom devised a number of exercises in the neighbouring countryside to practise the commando units in the tasks they would be required to undertake in Sicily.

Life at Sherborne was enlivened by the presence of Evelyn Waugh, the novelist, and friend of Brigadier Bob Laycock, a greatly respected commander of the Commando Brigade, and much liked by the present author who had known him since their days at Sandhurst. Unfortunately, Bob had a weakness for employing persons in minor staff roles, who were eminent in their professions or members of the nobility. Waugh at the time, was brigade intelligence officer. Churchill had never met him before, but devised an exercise intended to test the commando intelligence sections in their duties in action. He informed Waugh, since the Brigade I.O. would naturally have much to do with running such an exercise. Slightly to Churchill's surprise, Waugh replied that he regarded commando intelligence sections as totally useless and therefore felt that there was no object to be served in holding the exercise.

As Churchill knew that the only reason that Waugh was at the commando headquarters was because he was a friend of Laycock, he told Waugh that if he held those views he was surprised that he was content to hold the appointment he did and, deciding to leave it at that, dismissed him. But, in due course, Churchill told Bob Laycock what had transpired and also took the opportunity of saying that, in the commando units, Waugh was much disliked and looked down upon because he never did a hands-turn to justify his existence on the brigade staff.

Laycock (who had obtained a transfer for Waugh from the Royal Marines to his own regiment, The Royal Horse Guards), did not say much at the time, but he was far too good a soldier to overlook the matter. A month later, when the personnel to fill the brigade staff appointments for the assault on Sicily was announced, Waugh's name was not included. This evidently infuriated him, and much later, when his diaries were published (in 1973) the following passage occurs:

'23rd March 1943. Two sharp blows to professional pride in finding Churchill sent to Shetlands to brief Fynn for the operations (*Captain Fynn of 12 Commando was training in the Shetlands for an operation against a German outpost in Norway*), and John Selwyn appointed assistant brigade major

Later in the morning Bdb explained to me that I was so unpopular as to be unemployable. My future very uncertain. The first seed of the trouble was my telling Churchill weeks ago that I did not think there was any function for

intelligence officers in the brigade '

When the Commando Brigade sailed for Sicily, Waugh was appointed to the staff of Combined Operations headquarters in Whitehall. He wrote some facetious remarks in the margin of a staff paper which was passed up to General Charles Hayden, the Director. Now Hayden was a Guardsman, and not inclined to suffer amateur soldiers lightly. He sent for Waugh and told him that he was useless as a staff officer and would, therefore, leave the headquarters at once, on posting to the Royal Horse Guards Depot, at Windsor. 'There' said Heydon, sarcastically, 'you will no doubt be able to display your knowledge of horses.' 'My recent experience with mules' replied Waugh 'should stand me in good stead!' In June, 1943, Tom Churchill sailed with the U.K.-mounted convoy of the force which was to land and capture the island of Sicily, together with

the force mounted in the U.S.A., consisting entirely of American troops, and that mounted in Egypt, containing the 13th British Corps. Although a 'Force 8 gale' was blowing a few hours before the landing-craft of these three forces were due to be released, the weather moderated and by 2.30 a.m., when the craft touched down on the Sicily beaches, the sea was not worse than choppy.

The island of Sicily was captured in three months, and an expeditionary force under General Bernard Montgomery was organised to invade Italy as quickly as possible. The Commando Brigade on the island was joined by No. 2 Commando from Gibraltar, whose commanding officer was now Lieut. Colonel Jack Churchill. This force carried out a landing in the south west of Italy at Salerno, in September 1943, and Jack and Tom Churchill were together again in action, the latter now second in command to Brigadier Laycock, who commanded the brigade.

A fierce battle resulted, in the course of which No. 2 Commando bore the brunt of the fighting, and Jack Churchill was recommended for the Victoria Cross, though ultimately he was awarded only the D.S.O. By this time he had acquired the sobriquet of 'Mad Jack' as a result of his many exploits, a nickname which, strangely, an ancestor, Joseph, had earned about a century and a half earlier. (*See Page 79.*) As soon as the battle was over, Brigadier Laycock was recalled to England to take over the appointment of Chief of Combined Operations from Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, and Tom Churchill was promoted to command the Commando Brigade.

Tom led his brigade in a number of actions in Italy, including the Anzio Landing and the capture of Mount Ornito, in the central highlands. Jack took his commando over the Adriatic to the Yugoslav island of Vis and quickly garrisoned it and put it in a state of defence, as the Germans on the Yugoslav mainland were threatening to attack and capture it, as they had all the other islands of the Adriatic archipelago. The brigade carried out a number of raids on the neighbouring German-held islands, and Jack was awarded a bar to his D.S.O. for his successful leadership.

The Germans carried out a daring raid on the headquarters of Marshal Josip Broz Tito at Drvar, in central Bosnia, and very, nearly captured him; consequently all Yugoslav forces were required to mount attacks on the German forces, in order to relieve the pressure on Tito's army. Units of the Commando Brigade on Vis, together with Partisan forces, accordingly invaded the strongly held island of Brac about 20 miles distant from Vis, on 1st June, 1944.

Brigadier Tom Churchill had been recalled to England to discuss questions of reinforcement and replacement of the Marine Commandos with General Hunton, the R.M. Commandant General, and so was absent from his brigade when the Drvar crisis occurred. Lieut. Colonel Jack was put in command of a force consisting of 43 *RM.* Commando, a company of the Highland Light Infantry, eight 25-pounder guns of 111 Field Regiment R.A. and a battery of the Raiding Support Regiment. Their task was to attack the headquarters of the German garrison on Brac which was

situated on very high ground, south-east of the village of Nerezisce, and to cause maximum damage to the enemy positions and equipment and to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy. The British force was to be accompanied by a Partisan Division, part of which was to attack the enemy at the eastern end of the island in the vicinity of Sveti Toma and the port of Sumartin, and part to co-operate with the commandos in attacking the main German position.

There was a strong enemy artillery control and communication centre situated on a precipitous hill, called Vidova Gora, over 2,500 feet high and immediately overlooking the port of Bol, on the south coast of the island. It was necessary for this centre to be taken out, or at least masked, before the main British and Partisan forces landed from Vis, on the beaches, as, otherwise, the enemy artillery could have heavily-blasted the landing places. The company of H.L.I., who were mountain troops, was, therefore, ordered to land on the night of 31st May and to lie up during daylight on the 1st June, then attacking the enemy signals centre on Vidova Gora about midnight on 1st/2nd June, while the main force was landing on the beaches at the south-western end of the island.

The planning and mounting of this operation was, to say the least, far too hasty and, because of the insistence of the authorities that speed was of the essence, there was no time to make the usual reconnaissances.

The H.L.I. company (70 men) attacked Vidova Gora, as planned, during the night of 1st/2nd June and cut all signal wires leading from the position. Partisan information had indicated that the position was defended by about 30 men, but when the Highlanders put in their attack it was found that their most serious obstacles were dense mine-fields and fences of barbed and dannert wire that protected the long, concrete position. The surrounding ground consisted of rough, stony out-crops, which restricted access, and such approaches that were available were not only mined, but covered by fixed lines of machine-gun fire.

The H.L.I. suffered severe casualties from mines and automatic fire, and although the attack was repeated twice after the initial assault, the enemy position could not be taken. In the end, Captain Brotherhood, the company commander, himself severely wounded in both legs from mines, had to call off the attack and direct his surviving Highlanders to make their way, as best they could, down the precipitous slopes to the coastal track, far below, along the southern shore of the island. One officer, one sergeant and one corporal were killed, and three officers, one sergeant and ten Highlanders were wounded.

Meanwhile, however, the main forces of British and Partisan troops landed without difficulty on the beaches, the H.L.I. attack ensuring that no enemy artillery fire could be directed against them. They moved forward up the ravine, passing through groves of pine and between dry-stone walls and mounds, built by generations of peasants, in an effort to clear terraces for the cultivation of vineyards and olive trees.

43 Marine Commando attacked the northern end of the German position from the west, and, meeting fierce resistance, transferred their attack round the enemy northern flank, and attacked again southwards at about 4 p.m. For this attack, the Partisan division had agreed to participate

by simultaneously attacking the enemy from the south. But the Partisans failed to carry out their part in the attack.

On the morning of 3rd June, the Partisans attacked Vidova Gora and found resistance much weakened, thanks to the H.L.I. attack and to R.A.F. bombing raids, which the British headquarters had called for, on the enemy communication centre. The post was captured in the afternoon, and British and Partisan signal stations were established there, thus making direction of allied artillery fire much easier.

On the 2nd and 3rd of June, the Partisans attacked the German positions in the south-east of the island, about Selca and Sumartin, with some success, and, on the evening of the 3rd, the Commandos planned an attack from the west. Lieut. Colonel Jack had ordered 40 Marine Commando over from Vis to strengthen the attack, but, once again, a failure in communication resulted in 40 Commando not receiving the order until after 9 p.m., when 43 Commando actually commenced their attack.

Lieut. Colonel. Jack left his headquarters and joined 40 Commando about a mile and a half distant, and led them up onto their objective, which was the right or southern end of the position. The night was dark and visibility was minimal. The enemy resisted strongly, and both commandos suffered heavy casualties, particularly in troop leaders, who were leading the assaults. Churchill and the CO. of 40 Commando, together with a staff officer from brigade H.Q., managed to penetrate right up to the top of the hill, which was the centre of the enemy position, but Jack's two brother officers were killed, and he himself was slightly wounded and captured. (*See Plate XVI*). The remains of the commandos withdrew and reorganised, as best they could, in the area which had originally been their starting line. The CO. of 43 Commando, on whom the command of the force had now devolved, called a conference of surviving troop leaders, the naval and artillery commanders and the Partisans, and decided to withdraw and re-embark and return to Vis.

Churchill was held for 48 hours in the enemy position, and then was moved to the northern coast of the island, in a sidecar of a motor cycle, accompanied and guarded by a light tank. He asked for a piece of paper, which one of his guards supplied, and wrote a note to the commander of the German Garrison. It read:

'Dear Captain,

Just a note to thank you and your men down here, for our correct treatment during our stay with you. The food was rather short and less than we are used to, but that could not be helped under the circumstances. I hope that, after the war, we shall meet again, and in any case, should you at any time find yourself in England or Scotland, do ring up HELENSBURGH 222 or GERRARDS CROSS 2120, where you will find me, and I hope will dine

with my wife and I.

Farewell,

Jack Churchill

The letter was taken to Captain Hans Thorner, the CO. of 3rd Battalion 738 Jaeger

Regiment, and it was to save his life three years later! (*See Page 103*).

Jack was embarked, near Supetar, in a small open boat, which had machine guns at bow and stern, in sandbagged emplacements, and he was closely guarded. The Germans were obviously terrified of the British Navy and Air Force and hugged the coast for eighteen miles, until nearly opposite Markaska, when they darted across the Bracki Channel, only six miles wide, and disembarked at that port.

Jack was then taken, by car, to the headquarters of 118 Jaeger Division, where he was interviewed by commanding general, General Kuebler. Next, he was flown to Berlin in a Fieseler Storch and then a Heinkel III aircraft, and, after numerous interrogations, he was imprisoned in Sachsenhausen concentration camp, near Berlin. Other prisoners in the camp were the Austrian ex-Chancellor, Schuschnigg, the German ex-Finance Minister, Hjalmar Schacht; the industrialist, von Thyssen, and an R.A.F. Officer, Flight Lieut. James, who had taken part in the mass escape from Stalag Luft III but, when recaptured, had not been shot, like so many of his colleagues. The Germans were puzzled by Jack's identity, partly because they assumed (wrongly) that he was related to Winston Churchill, and partly because he had served in the Commandos, a force which Hitler had proscribed.

Three months later, Jack and Jimmy James constructed a tunnel and they managed to get away to the Baltic coast where, alas! due to exhaustion and hunger, they were recaptured and returned to Sachsenhausen, this time being incarcerated in solitary confinement and chained to the floor.

When the end of the war was approaching, the Germans started to evacuate their prisoner-of-war camps, and moved the British from Sachsenhausen southwards, by road, to the vicinity of the Brenner Pass. Jack again made an escape, and this time he was successful. He managed to join an American convoy, which was advancing towards Austria, and they evacuated him, in stages, to one of their rest camps at Sorento, in Italy. His ankles were very sore from his adventures but, ultimately, the Americans restored him to health and had him flown home to England.

Jack has two sons, the elder, **Malcolm John Leslie Alexander**, born in 1942, and the younger, **Rodney Alistair Gladstone**, born in 1947. Rodney married Susan Dicker in 1946, and has a son, **James Alexander Gladstone**, born in 1977. (*See Figure 19*).

Returning to Brac: the battle ended at dawn on 6th June, 1944, and the commando forces and the Partisans were transported back to Vis, partly by naval craft and partly by Partisan schooners. The losses sustained by both sides were heavy, those of the British being nine officers and 19 other ranks killed; two officers and 12 other ranks captured; seven officers and 51 other ranks wounded and hospitalised, and 43 of all ranks lightly wounded - a grand total of 143 casualties. There were about 700 all ranks taking part in the battle, so the British casualties represented about 20 per cent of the force. As the battle of Brac had been fought to ease the German pressure on Marshal Tito's forces, it was, perhaps, fitting that the Marshal himself should take refuge on Vis

island, after quitting Yugoslavia by air. He landed at Bari, in southern Italy, and the British, realising that if Hitler learned that Tito had abandoned his Partisans, he would propagate valuable Axis propaganda, offered to take him by destroyer to Vis, where, at least, he could continue to operate from Yugoslav soil.

The local Partisans had prepared a cave for his accommodation on Mount Hum, the highest mountain on the island. Tom Churchill called on him shortly after he arrived and had a long talk with him, telling him about the defences of the island and the considerable British equipment, including heavy anti-aircraft guns, Bofors guns, 17-pounder anti-tank guns, and, of course, several flotillas of naval motor-gunboats, torpedo-boats and motor launches, which contributed to the island's defence.

He invited the Marshal to inspect No. 2 Commando, the unit recently in action on Brac and the one which had by far the greatest experience in fighting the Germans in the Adriatic. (*See Plate XVII*). After the parade, Tito made a speech which was translated, sentence by sentence, and which is notable because it praises and expresses gratitude for the assistance the British armed forces were giving to the Partisan cause, the only occasion when he expressed such sentiments. Later, as the Allies swept the Germans northwards through Italy and the Russians advanced from the east, Tito tended to take this assistance for granted and always insisted that the Yugoslav people had defeated the Axis forces entirely by their own efforts.

Churchill had frequent meetings and discussions with Tito during the next six months, and, as Tito realised that he was very well protected on Vis, thanks to the Allied defences, he increasingly used it as a base from which to plan the liberation of Belgrade and the formation of his post-war government.

Brigadier Tom continued to command the Commando Brigade, .but, when he returned from England, he found their morale somewhat low, as a result of their losses in the Brac battle. Replacements had to be found for the commanding officers of No. 2 Commando and for No. 40 (R.M.) Commando, and reinforcements had to be called forward, to take the place of the men who had been killed or severely wounded. Churchill instituted a vigorous training programme, and organised a number of sporting events, including football and swimming matches, against the other Commandos in the Brigade and against the Partisans; and, two months later, he moved his brigade from Vis to Italy, since the Germans were evacuating their positions in the Yugoslav islands and attempting to retreat northwards, thereby no longer offering worthwhile targets for attack. Instead, he trained his units in Italy for an assault on the enemy-held port of Sarande in Albania, through which the Germans were attempting to evacuate their garrison on Corfu. As in all battles against the Germans, the fighting was hard and exhausting, but the enemy, after more than a week's fighting in appalling weather, was defeated and no fewer than 650 prisoners were taken, while the Albanian partisans, on the right flank, captured a further 250. A siebel ferry, many landing craft and schooners were captured, and Corfu was freed of the German yoke. Unfortunately, some fine troop leaders were among the casualties sustained by the commandos.

The Albanian battle was the last of Brigadier Tom's actions in the Mediterranean. He was recalled to England to command an infantry brigade in Kent, which was due to proceed to the Far East for the attack on Honshu Island, Japan, but the dropping of the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki put an end to the necessity for such a project. Instead, he was given command of the 11th Brigade, in 78 Division, in Wolfsberg, Austria, and spent four golden years with his wife and family in that delightful country. His second child was born in December 1945, a boy called **Thomas Alec John Nicholas**. Tom was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire for his services in Austria, where his chief duties involved the reparation of the effects of war on the civil population and the local industries. (*See Plate XVIII*).

In 1949, he was ordered back to the War Office to take up the appointment of Assistant Director of Personal Services, and, in 1952, he attended the year's course at the Imperial Defence College in London. From 1953 to 1955 he was on the staff of Headquarters, Western Command, at Chester, and he was then promoted and posted, as Major General, in charge of Administration at Far East Land Forces in Singapore. While there, he took a major part in the military arrangements being made for the granting of independence to Malaya, and at the conclusion of his time in the Far East, he was made a Commander of the Order of the Bath for his services to this end.

After the war, Jack commanded a battalion, in a parachute brigade, in Palestine. It was a troublesome time, with the Arabs and the Jews at each other's throats, and the latter also attempting to bring in, illegally, as many refugees as they could from Russia, Germany and other European countries.

Meanwhile, the German battalion commander, who had captured Jack in the Brac battle, Hans Thorner by name, had himself been captured by the American forces near Vienna. The Yugoslav Partisans at once demanded that he be turned over to them for trial as a war criminal. Thorner not only told the Americans that, in capturing Churchill and sparing his life, he disregarded a standing order of Hitler's that all commandos were to be executed; but, in addition, produced the letter which Jack had written after his capture, thanking Thorner for his **correct treatment**. A number of Germans, including Thorner's wife, wrote to Jack, asking his help, and Jack went to the War Office (Judge Advocate General's Department) and offered to appear in Thorner's defence. Thanks to Churchill's timely intervention, Thorner was not handed over to the Yugoslavs, but was released to Germany by the Americans.

Tom's next appointment was as Vice Quartermaster General to the Forces at the War Office in 1958, and his final post in the army was as Assistant Chief of Staff to Headquarters, Land Forces Central Europe in N.A.T.O. at Fontainebleau, France, and he retired in 1962. (*See Plate XVIII*).

CONCLUSION

So this is the present (1986) state of the Churchill family, who came from North Oxfordshire and are known to have been established in Banbury in Oxfordshire and in the neighbouring county of Warwickshire in the early sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century, as has been recorded, the family separated into two branches, one based on Deddington, in Oxfordshire, and the other based on Steeple Claydon, in Buckinghamshire. Today (1986) there are six adult male Churchills and two male children living, who derive from the Deddington branch: John M. T. Churchill, Thomas B. L. Churchill, Mark A. F. Churchill, Malcolm J. L. A. Churchill, Rodney A. G. Churchill and Thomas A. J. N. Churchill are the adult descendants of the Deddington Churchills, and Thomas Churchill and James A. G. Churchill are the juniors. (*See Figure 13*). And the adult male descendants of the Steeple Claydon Churchills are: John ff. Churchill and Charles ff. Churchill, while the junior descendant is John E. ff. Churchill (*See Figure 18*). So there are living eleven male Churchills in all. It is to be hoped that, among them, they will keep the family going into the future. (*See Figure 19 and Figure 18*).

Of course, there are Churchills of the same descent living in New South Wales, Australia (*See Page 7*), and, possibly, some descendants in the U.S.A. whose ancestor would have been William, the youngest son of John and Dorothy (*See Figure 4*); William having emigrated there in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, but the present author has not been able to verify the contemporary position in those countries.

John M. T. Churchill lives in retirement, with his wife, Rosamund, near Woking, in Surrey, and indulges in his hobby of acquiring Thames river launches, repairing their engines and hulls, and exchanging them for other and more exotic craft, preferably furnished with brass funnels.

Thomas B. L. Churchill's wife, Gwendoline Janie, died in 1962, at the time he retired from the army. For the last twelve years he has lived with his daughter Rosemary, and her husband, Martin Meikle, on their farm in Devon, and has passed his leisure moments since he retired, researching and -writing this family history.

External editor's note: Thomas Alec John Nicholas Churchill (known as Toby) October 2014.

*Tom Churchill died in 1990 and his ashes are interred with Janie in Brackley churchyard. Toby and Angela Churchill have three children, **Thomas William Joseph**, born 1973, **Jane Sarah**, born 1975, and **Emily Rose** born 1979. Jane's son **Lewis Joseph** was born in 1993, and Thomas's children, with **Peta Revel** are **Alec Thomas Fleming**, born 2002, and **Eva Joan Peta** born 2003. Toby was a civil servant until his retirement in 2005, and he lives in SW Scotland, where the MoD posted him for the last years of his service. Thomas (Tom) works in IT and lives in Mytchett, Surrey. Jane is assistant Director of a voluntary sector health organisation, and lives in Glasgow. Lewis moved south to work for IBM. Emily has worked as an archivist in various theatrical and artistic institutions and lives in Ash Vale, Surrey.*

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1 Map showing towns and villages in Oxfordshire and Warwickshire from which the Churchill family has come.
- Fig. 2 Pedigree: Thome Churchill of Oxford c. 1400.
- Fig. 3 Pedigree: William Churchill of Banbury c. 1500.
- Fig. 4 Pedigree: Richard Churchill of North Aston c. 1520.
- Fig. 5 Pedigree: Thomas Churchill of Arncot c. 1590.
- Fig. 6 Pedigree: John Churchill of Clifton c. 1680.
- Fig. 7 Pedigree: Bartholomew Churchill of Deddington c. 1700.
- Fig. 8 Pedigree: Crescens Carter of Tadmarton c. 1700.
- Fig. 9 Pedigree: John Churchill of Woodstock c. 1760.
- Fig. 10 Pedigree: Joseph Churchill of Deddington c. 1700.
- Fig. 11 Thomas Churchill of Park St: Grosvenor Square, London c. 1760.
- Fig. 12 Map showing Churchill land holdings in Deddington and Clifton as result of Inclosure 1808.
- Fig. 13 Pedigree: Thomas Churchill of Caernarvon c. 1840.
- Fig. 14 Pedigree: Samuel Churchill of Deddington c. 1775.
- Fig. 15 Pedigree: Joseph Churchill of Steeple Claydon. 1670.
- Fig. 16 Pedigree: Joseph (Mad Jack) Churchill of Peterborough c. 1750.
- Fig. 17 Pedigree: Smith Churchill of Nottingham c. 1770.
- Fig. 18 Pedigree: Fleetwood Churchill of Nottingham c. 1790.
- Fig. 19 Pedigree: Alec Fleming Churchill 1876.

APPENDIX I: The Guild of Knowle.

Knowle is an ecclesiastical parish, founded in 1859 out of the parish of Hampton-in-Arden. It is two miles south of Solihull, ten miles north west of Warwick, and ten miles south-east from Birmingham. There was a chapel of Knowle in the XIII century. About the end of Richard II's reign, Walter Cook, a canon of Lincoln, bearing a special affection for this place, erected a fair chapel with tower-steeple and bells, to the honour of St. John the Baptist, St. Lawrence the Martyr, and St. Anne, and did this at his own expense for the health of his own and his parents' souls. He obtained a special Bull from Pope Boniface IX to endow the chapel with maintenance sufficient for one secular priest to celebrate the Divine Office therein. In a special patent made by King Henry IV dated 18th November in the fourth year of his reign (1402-3), licence was granted to Walter Cook and Adam Cook, his father, to found a chantry of one or two priests to celebrate Divine Service perpetually therein. In the next year, Walter granted the advowson and patronage of this chantry to the monks of Westminster and their successors. He obtained a licence in 14, Henry IV (1412-3) that he might found (with others) a fraternity and guild in the same chapel for themselves and others who, out of devotion, would be content to join them. He obtained another licence in 4, Henry V (1416-17) that he, with the Lady Elizabeth, widow of John, Lord Clinton, might found a college of ten chantry priests to pray for their souls after death and also for those of his parents and friends and all the faithful departed.

A multitude of persons mostly of good quality, and some of great nobility, were admitted to the Guild, the chief members having their arms or inscriptions to their memory in the windows of the chapel, most of whom were neighbours.

At one time there must have been over 3,000 members. They were mostly the ordinary people of Warwickshire and districts adjoining. The more influential people began to join about the beginning of the XVI century; names of such personages as the Marquis of Dorset, the Earl of Kent, the Abbots of Evesham, Pershore and Bordesley, Sir Richard Empson and wife, and the Russells of Strencham occur, all of whom joined in the year 1506.

The small and uncertain tributes hitherto paid to Rome by monastic and religious houses in 26, Henry VIII (1534-5), changed into fixed and greatly increased charges payable to the Crown. The Knowle Guild Register ends in the year 27, Henry VIII (1535-6), but the Guild continued to exist for at least 13 more years.

The chantries and guilds, though brought under the power of the king, were not immediately dissolved; but when he died, in the first year of his successor, Edward VI (1547), a bill for the confiscation of chantries, guilds etc. was brought in the House of Lords. It was much opposed, but was passed down to the House of Commons, where it also met with much opposition, but finally was passed with certain amendments. It

was enacted that all colleges, chantries, guilds, etc. existing within five years preceding that present Parliament, and not in the actual possession of the late or present king, should thereafter be in the possession of the king, his heirs etc. All brotherhoods and guilds, and their possessions, were to be vested in the king. Yearly pensions were to be assigned for life to deans, priests or poor persons dependant upon dissolved colleges.

APPENDIX II *An extract from Jackson's Oxford Journal 9th January 1768 (Advertisement):*

"For Mouster Chirhill deddington groser"

Mouster Chirhill you must poot teenn ginis in a paper and poot it in the further most bunt hol in teas gate way on the left and side if you do not do it al that you have shal be Deatroid in a short time and if ane whon watches they shal loos there lives and if you shew this or lit be known it shal be the worse for you and we will be revenged of you there wil be more that shal be served so for if the we most and we wil have what we want you poot ther no wensday and let it be until fetch."

APPENDIX III *Early leaves of the North Wales Gazette from April 7 to June 28 1825:*

"A Duel was fought at Plas Newydd Park on Tuesday se'night between Captain Sewell of the Caernarvon Corps and Trygan Griffith Esqre of Canegllwyd, Anglesey; the former seconded by Mr. Churchill and the latter by Captain Boileau of Caernarvon. Mr. Owen Snow attended as surgeon. Captain Sewell fired first, and the other into the air when the Seconds interfered and the parties were reconciled."

APPENDIX IV: College of Arms discussion

When he applied to the College of Arms in 1950 for a grant of arms, Alec Fleming Churchill based his suggested design on the arms granted to Bartholomew Churchill Carter in 1789, since, the latter had been born a Churchill of Deddington. His arms were: vert, two lions rampant combatant within a bordure engrailed erminois; and crest: a lion's head erased per pale wavy vert and erminois.

Alec also asked that he be allowed to bear his wife's family arms since she, Elinor Elizabeth, nee Bell, was the eldest daughter and co-heiress in heraldry (with her sister, Margaret May) of her father, John Alexander Bond Bell, of Kelnahard, Co. Cavan, in Ireland, and of Dimbula, Ceylon.

In due course, Windsor Herald sent Alec Churchill a proposed design, and confirmed that the Bell arms would be included in the grant, and would be borne and used as a Quartering by Elinor Elizabeth's descendants (*See Plate IX*). The changes introduced from Bartholomew's arms were that the field was gules instead of erminois and the bordure instead of being engrailed erminois was plain, and coloured gold, and charged with four scarlet fleur de lys and four daisies alternately and in their proper colours.

Windsor explained that the fleur de lys had been introduced in allusion to Fleming, Alec's second Christian name, and because the foundation coat of this family which; according to Lyon Office, was Or, a chevron within a double tressure flory counter flory gules. The daisies which had been introduced as a difference were from the Deas crest - also registered in Scotland - as "a bee feeding on a daisy all proper" (of course, in canting allusion to the name), Deas being the name of Alec's mother's family.

Alec accepted the design, and the patent was signed by Garter Principal King of Arms and Clarenceux King of Arms on 10th July 1950. A short pedigree of two or three generations was registered at the College of Arms at the same time, and its reference in the College's records is **Surrey 19, page 81**.

The arms granted are: Gules, two lions combatant within a bordure or, thereon four fleur de lys of the first and as many daisies alternately proper; and for the Crest: On a wreath of the colours a lion's head erased or gorged with a collar gules thereon a daisy proper between two fleur de lys gold.

Arms granted for Bell: Azure a fesse ermine between two bells in chief and an annulet in base or, a bell between two annulets of the field, to be borne and used as a Quartering by Elinor Elizabeth Bell's descendants.

APPENDIX V letter from author

Lower Malsbrough Farm, Black Dog, Crediton, Devon EX17 4QX
Tel. Thurston (0884) 840 474

Thurs. 16th October 1986.

Dear John,

Thank you so much for your letter of 7th September, and I am sorry to be so long in answering it, partly due to illness, & partly to other work.

I'm also for buying copies of my book, & for sending me the Flatwood pictures, which I am glad to have. I do have a Flatwood picture, which shows a little more of the area you want.

I was very interested to read of your

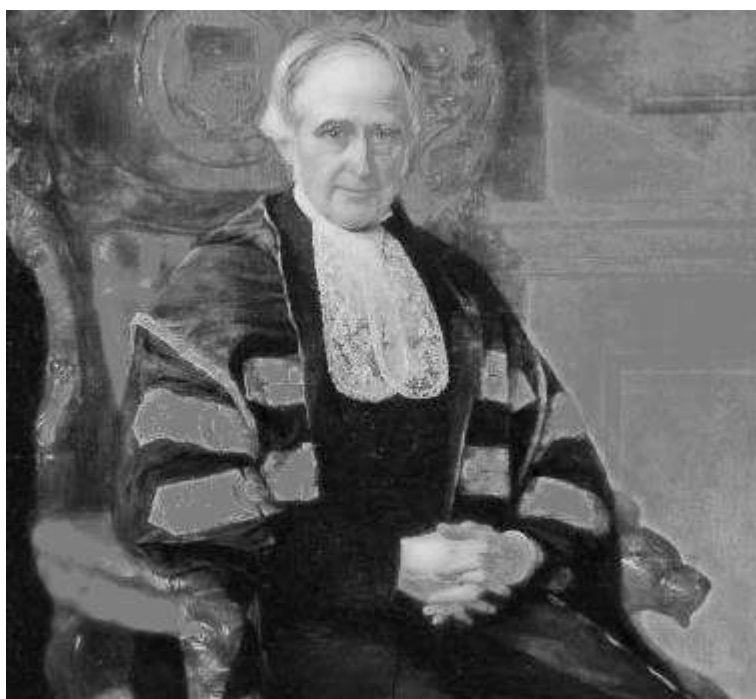
work in the area, the Devonian Silurian boundary, and the significance of the F.M. boundary. In my own job in 1950 I was deeply involved in the work of the Devonian Silurian boundary, and had been close to the boundary at D. Day. The work was very good to find Round & his son after Hitler's return Round's execution. Should be about 2 years ago.

It was very good to hear from you,

Yours ever

Tom Chubb

APPENDIX VI Fleetwood Churchill MD



FLEETWOOD CHURCHILL

From [A Compendium of Irish Biography](#), 1878

[« Richard Castle, Architect | Index | Colonel David Collins »](#)

Churchill, Fleetwood, M.D., an eminent obstetrician, was born at Nottingham in 1808. He took his first medical degree at Edinburgh in 1831, and in 1851 had the honorary degree of M.D. conferred upon him by the University of Dublin. In conjunction with Dr. Speedy, he founded the Western Lying-in Hospital, which for many years did much for the poor of Dublin. For eight years he was Professor of Midwifery to the School of Physic in Ireland, was twice President of the Obstetrical Society, and in 1867 and 1868 was President of the King and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland. For a lengthened period he was the foremost obstetric practitioner in Ireland; and both at home and abroad he enjoyed a wide reputation as the author of treatises on *The Diseases of Women*, *The Diseases of Infants and Children*, and other works which for a quarter of a century have been standard text-books. Some of them have been republished in the United States, and translated into foreign languages. Dr. Churchill was a man of great refinement and considerable literary attainments. He retired from the profession on account of ill-health in 1875 (presenting his fine library to the College of Physicians), and died at his son-in-law's rectory at Ardrea, near Stewartstown, 31st January 1878, aged 69.

Brigadier Tom Churchill a drawing by G. Cozzoli,
drawn in Molfetta, Italy, in 1944



Major-General 'Tom' Churchill's involvement with the writing of his family history is a 'history' in itself...it has been nearly a hundred years in the writing. The task was begun by Tom's father, who undertook painstaking archival research and recording of this proud yeoman family's history during spells of leave from the Colonial Civil Service. But encroaching blindness made the job increasingly difficult and Tom was seconded to the task when he was only EIGHT years old He has been writing it ever since: over seventy years. It is a fascinating story, giving an important insight to the developing English nation.