HONEYCOMBE

The Origins and History of the Early Honeycombes

by

Gordon Honeycombe

Though much is taken, much abides
Ulysses, Lord Tennyson

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre . . .

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure.
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.
Extracts from
Elegy written in a Country Churchyard
by Thomas Gray

1. WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In the beginning was a word, and that word was Honyacombe.
It appears in an Assession Roll for the manor of Calstock in Cornwall in 1333, and continues as such in the subsequent Assession Rolls, for 1340, 1347 and 1356.
The first mention says that John of Honyacombe, native, had a messuage, or dwelling, and 32 acres, in a rented property called Honyacombe, both the dwelling and the acreage being part of the tenement or parcel of land known as Honyacombe.
The Assession Rolls are kept in the offices of the Duchy of Cornwall in London. Like every official document at that time, they were written in abbreviated and rather imperfect Latin. John's name in Latin, Johannes, is shortened to Johes. He is described (in Latin) as "Johes de Honyacombe", the "de" simply meaning "of". It doesn't indicate that John had any aristocratic or gentrified origins. It isn't a surname and merely indicates that he was the John in the manor of Calstock whose family rented Honyacombe.
Surnames hardly existed as such at that time, most surnames not developing until after 1275. As the population increased, the extensive repetition of a few Christian names, like John, William, Richard and Robert, necessitated some further means of identification. These additional names, called surnames, though neither fixed at first, nor hereditary, developed from patronymics, people's occupations, personal descriptions or nicknames, and place names.

Thus John, son of John, became John John's son, or John Johnson, and John, son of Richard, became John Richard's son or John Richardson; John the Butcher, John the Chandler, John the Weaver, etc, became John Butcher, John Chandler, John Weaver; and John the Wise, John the Short, the Black-haired (or swarthy), the Brown-haired (or Brown-faced), became John Wise, John Short, John Black, and John Brown. Some personal descriptions could have been humourous, a very large man being called Little John and the village idiot John Wise. Other names transformed themselves in the Middle Ages from Rogerson, Rogers, Roger, and Rudge, to remote rhyming names like Hodge and Dodge, Hodgson and Dodgson. And then there are the generalised place names, like Church, Field, Green, Hill, House or Brook, or urban and county names, like Bolton and York, Kent and Cornwall, and local names like Honeycombe.

The second part of the surname Honeycombe ("combe") is a common element of places names in the southwest of England, like Babbacombe and Ilfracombe. It derives from the Celtic word for a valley - the Welsh word is "cwm". Some suggest that the first element of the name derives from an Anglo-Saxon warrior called Huna, his name being memorialised in such place names as Honeychurch (Huna's Church), Honeywick (Huna's dwelling), and Honiton (Huna's homestead). But the original spelling of the name in the Assession Rolls - Honyacombe - and its probable pronunciation clearly indicate that that the first element in the name derives from "honiga", an Anglo-Saxon adjective that translates as "honeyed" or "sweet" or "fruitful". The "g" in "honiga" wasn't a hard "g". It was pronounced as a "y". Thus "honya-combe".
The valley, which opens onto the River Tamar just below Calstock, may have contained some beehives and produced some honey, but it was locally well-known for its market gardens, orchards and fruit. In the nineteenth century, Calstock and the villages further south were highly regarded in Plymouth and elsewhere for their strawberries and dark red cherries called mazzards, some cherry trees growing to a height of 50 feet. The area was a market garden long before the mining industry invaded its woods and hills, and regularly supplied Plymouth and the Navy with vegetables and fruit. To this day the valley at whose head Honeycombe stands is lush, densely wooded and fertile.
Although Calstock was a river quay in Saxon times, according to a local author and historian, Frank Booker, it had no market charter and therefore no merchants. This meant, in the Middle Ages, that it had no trading ships to send to sea. However, its barges traded up and down the broad and winding river, exchanging local produce for other goods. In 1462/63 Calstock barges carried sand,

lime and granite down-river for the repair of Trematon Mill at Saltash. Tin and other minerals would also have been transported.
Booker also writes, in *Industrial Archaeology of the Tamar Valley*: "The mineral field on the Tamar Valley has been especially rich in copper and arsenic, only slightly less so in tin, while silver, lead, wolfram and manganese have all been mined in quantity. The source of this mineral field . . . is the granite intrusion pushed up through older slates between Kit Hill and Gunnislake . . . The tin and copper veins are densely bunched through a belt four miles wide and 12 miles long between Tavistock and Callington, while the lead lodes trend in sharp contrast in thick solid lines due south . . . Almost all of them were deposited at comparatively shallow depths." In the 16th century one of the Honeycombes was a tin miner. So may others have been.
The first part of Calstock is said to have been derived from the Cornish word for a wood – "Kelly" - the "stock" element being Anglo-Saxon for "place". So "Calystock" or "Kellistock" might have meant "wooded place".
The lower slopes of Honeycombe, the honeyed valley, are called Danescombe. One of the copper mines dug into the valley in the nineteenth century was called the Danescombe Valley Mine, and the Ashburton Hotel, built in 1859 where the valley joined the River Tamar, was renamed as the Danescombe Valley Hotel the following century. The Ashburton, originally named after a mining magnate, used to provide refreshment for trippers on pleasure steamers, which became popular after a river-trip up the Tamar was taken by Queen Victoria and her family. The hotel is now a private residence called Danescombe House.
The name, Danescombe, has, however, to do (as some suppose) with the Battle of Hingston Down in 838, when invading Danes were defeated by a British coalition. The name probably derives from the early English Duna-combe - the combe or valley among the down
But Honeycombe House, once so-called, which has stood at the head of the valley since 1300 at least, without doubt took its ancient name from the very nature of the fruitful valley below; and the families who lived there, at least since 1325, took their name from the house, whose foundations may be even older than its name. The original walls of the old hall (when it was being destructively restored in the 1970s), seemed to this writer to be of great antiquity, being about six feet thick. The property would, however, postdate the Saxon and Early English strip field systems around Metherell and Harrowbarrow, which had been superseded by the 1300s.
It has always been called Honeycombe, though the house and the family name have been variously spelt over the years as Honeycomb, Honicombe, Honycombe, Honycome, Hunnicomb, Hunicum, even Unicombe and Unicum.
The latter spelling occurs in Kent between 1685 and 1834, and can be found in Australia today as Unicomb and Unicume. These "U" versions probably derive from the original Cornish pronunciation of the name, when the "H" would have been dropped in the speech of uneducated country people. Clerks or vicars would have written down what they heard - they were wasting their time if they asked how a surname was spelt, as most villagers before the 18th century couldn't read or write. Thus "Honeycombe", when spoken, would sound like "Hunnicum" or "Unnicum".
Most Honeycombes, consciously or not, adopted the spelling "Honicombe" until the 18th century, when "Honeycombe" became the standard spelling of the name. The "Honicombe" spelling seems to have been a vainglorious attempt, by clerks or family members, to Normanise the name, to make it seem more noble or antique. But "Honi", as in the royal Order of the Garter motto "Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense", isn't a noun, nor the Norman-French for "Evil". It's the past tense of a verb, "honir", which means "to shame" or "dishonour". "Honi Soit" means "Shamed be he" or "Dishonoured be he who thinks evil of this" - as King Edward III is supposed to have said when he retrieved a lady's fallen garter at some festivity in France, later allegedly commemorating the event when he instituted the Order of the Garter in England in 1348.
John Symons Honeycombe, whose *Brief Abstract of the ancient Cornish surname Honeycombe* was printed in America in 1907, also misinterpreted "Honi". He claimed that the family and the name were founded by a noble companion of William the Conqueror, who fought so well at the Battle of Hastings that he was granted many acres of land in Devon and Cornwall. This Norman-French

warrior was, he says, nicknamed “Honi a Combat”, which meant, according to the elderly American Honeycombe, “Evil or bad man in a fight, or a hard man to buck up against”.
John Symons continued: “In 1068 (he) went with William to Exeter and the west country, to subdue and chastise the Saxons who refused his authority . . . Honi a Combat received his reward of lands and a wife, and remained in the west as a great lordly landowner with the Saxons and Celts of Devon and Cornwall. Here he and his family held almost undisputed sway, because of the respect or terror of his name, which preserved its form till the fall of the Plantagenets.”
Alas, seductive as all this is, it is utter nonsense. Honi a Combat, if anything, means “Dishonoured in Battle” - an unlikely name for a Norman noble to adopt, let alone perpetuate. In any event, no family in the UK today can irrefutably prove their descent from any Norman who fought at the Battle of Hastings.
No, Honeycombe means more or less what it says - Honey-valley, or Honeyed Valley.

The John of Honyacombe who appears in the Assession Roll for Calstock in 1333 is not the first person to be recorded with that name. Another John Honycome (sic) appears a few years earlier, in a Lay Subsidy for Calstock in 1327. The two Johns are almost certainly the same man. The Lay Subsidy was a tax list of 35 men who were living in the manor or parish of Calstock that year. They were taxed according to what they were worth. John Honycome - and here the place name is given as a surname - was taxed at 12 pence, a sum that puts him among the most affluent men in the manor, the highest payment being 18 pence and the lowest two pence. Only five other men paid more than John.
Now as his entry in the Assession Roll for 1333 says that he held the same dwelling and 32 acres from the Earl of Cornwall seven years or more before this, we can be virtually certain that John was living in Honeycombe in 1326. And as he was also taxed more heavily than most of the other villagers in the Lay Subsidy of 1327, we may presume that he had some standing in the parish and had lived there for some time. In which case he and his family may have occupied Honeycombe throughout the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) and, by stretching possibilities, we may suppose that his ancestors may indeed have been there since William, Duke of Normandy, invaded England in 1066 and made himself king.
William’s half-brother, Robert, Count of Mortain, was the largest landholder in the country after the king, with land in 19 counties, including Cornwall, where he was the Earl of Cornwall in all but name. In William’s Domesday Book, completed in 1087, it is written that a man named Reginald held the manor of Calstock from the Count of Mortain. Though Reginald is a Norse or Anglo-Saxon name, his full name (Reginald de Valletort) sounds as if he might have come from Normandy. The Honeycombes, who are (and were) generally of Cornish or Celtic appearance, being short and dark, are unlikely to have been *his* descendants. But whether they were supplanted first by Anglo-Saxon and then by Norman overlords, they were probably there before all these invaders - and outlasted them in the parish of Calstock for a thousand years.

2. OTHER HONEYCOMBES

One other Honeycombe has been found who predates John of Honyacombe.
In a document called the Somerset Fines, written in the eleventh year of the reign of Edward II (1318), we find Henry of Bendevill, and his wife, Alice, seeking to establish their rights to some dwellings and a piece of land in the manor of Backwell in Somerset.
The particular passage, translated, reads: “At Westminster, in three weeks of Easter, between Henry of Bendevill and Alice his wife, asking, by Philip Payn in the place of Alice, and William of Honycombe, denying, for three dwellings, a virgate and a half of land (a virgate was a quarter of a hide, and a hide was about 120 acres), and 3s2d in Backwell. Henry acknowledged the right of William. For this, William granted the same to Henry and Alice and the heirs of their bodies, and if it happens they die without such heirs then to the rightful heirs of Henry.”

Backwell was an ancient village some ten miles southwest of Bristol. The manor of Backwell is listed in the Domesday Book, when it was held by two Normans, Fulcran and Nigel, who had received it from the Norman Bishop of Coutances. They are believed to have been part of the bishop's household or staff. Backwell was one of a large number of manors that had been conferred upon the bishop by William the Conqueror.

The Domesday Book records: "The arable is 14 carucates (a Danish measure of plough-land equivalent to a hide), which was occupied by 32 villeins, and 21 cottagers, and two servants." There was a mill, 24 acres of meadow, a mile-long pasture half a mile wide, a mile-long wood two furlongs wide, and it was worth eight pounds. After the bishop's death, the manor of Backwell passed to the Empress Maud, who divided it into two and gave one part to Walter de Rodney and the other to William le Sor. The manor-house was near the church, and its 140 acre park contained much fine timber and many deer. The house was eventually destroyed by fire and nothing now remains of the house or the park.

The Le Sors faded away, though their original dwelling still survives, in part, as Sores Court. The Rodneys, however, continued living at Backwell until 1601, when Sir George Rodney, hopelessly in love with a young widow, Frances Howard, pursued her to Amesbury in Wiltshire, and there, in the village inn, he painfully wrote a poem of 140 verses to her in his own blood and then killed himself with his sword.

But who was this William of Honycombe of Backwell? And is the Robert of Honicombe who appears nine years later in the Somerset Subsidy Rolls for 1327, and also in the Exchequer Lay Subsidies for 1347, William's son?

This Robert of Honicombe, who was called on to pay three shillings in tax in 1347, was one of the principal inhabitants of the manor of Backwell, of whom 27 are listed. It seems indisputable that they lived in Backwell and weren't absentee tenants. But did they take their name from a honeyed valley in Backwell, or bring their name with them from Cornwall?

An old parochial history of Backwell says that "Honicombe is the name of the field crossed by a footpath or right of way at Farleigh", a path that leads to the church. Lillian Pearce, who wrote *The Story of Backwell* in 1975, says that in the nineteenth century the field was known as Honicombe's Field and that it was probably so-named after a house that once stood there. "It could have been where Farleigh Combe now stands, a lovely small manor-house built by Ernest Evans, with a magnificent view over Wraxall and 50 acres to keep it private."

She also says that in an old tithe map of 1800 can be found a Hunicombe Pasture, which was owned by the Marquess of Bath. It was adjacent to Coles Farm and the old Poorhouse and the National School.

Of Honicombe's Field, she adds: "There was an enquiry following a dispute over the Honicombe right-of-way path, and I pointed out to the inspector the historic importance of the pathway used by the old folk going up the hill to the church. He stopped any further building, but several houses had already been built, so it was agreed that the small and quiet private estate be called Uncombe, a corruption of Honeycombe and used locally for many centuries. It is still called Uncombe, and has not taken up much of the field. Most of the building was on Coles Farm land."

If a form of the name is commemorated in Backwell to this day, a family of Honeycombes must have lived in Backwell for many years - for a generation or two at least before Robert of Honicombe is recorded as being in Backwell in 1327 and 1347.

The name lingers on as a place name thereafter, but no Honeycombes are recorded as being in Backwell after 1347, nor anywhere else in Somerset. Why and when did they die out and vanish from the scene?

Their disappearance could well have been caused by the Black Death, the bubonic plague that, arriving in England in 1348, wiped out as much as half of the population of the British Isles within a year.

But where, one wonders, did the Somerset Honeycombes come from?

It seems likely, seeing that they were not far removed from East Cornwall and were of similar social position to John of Honyacombe in Calstock, that William and Robert were related in some way to the Cornish Honeycombes. Perhaps an ancestor of William married a Somerset heiress, or

was given land there after acquitting himself well in some Plantagenet war or in the service of some Norman bishop or noble lord.
They appear briefly in Somerset, between 1318 and 1347, and then they vanish, leaving their name to a field. The Honeycombes in Cornwall, on the other hand, proliferated, and their names are scattered for over six hundred years through various lists, registers, deeds and documents relating to Cornwall, and to nowhere else in England.
Although some young male Honeycombes must have moved out of the manor of Calstock, and indeed have left Cornwall for other counties and even countries - following a trade, becoming a monk or a priest, a sailor or a soldier, or seeking a wife or adventure elsewhere B the fact remains that no Honeycombes are recorded anywhere other than in Calstock and in Cornwall from 1348 to 1600.

Honeycombe or Honeycomb also features as a place name in Dorset, in Gloucestershire and elsewhere in Cornwall - as well as in Queensland, Australia.
The Honeycomb in Dorset is shown on an old Ordnance Survey Map as a building on the road going westwards out of Beaminster towards Broadwindsor, not far from the borders of both Devon and Somerset. As this Honeycomb is surrounded by many other villages and houses whose names end in Combe or Comb (like Bettescomb, Halscomb, Ashcomb, Luccomb, Corscombe and Shalcombe, not to mention Lower Combe, Upper Combe, Combe and Coomb), the name is probably no more than descriptive. Certainly no Honeycombes have ever been recorded as living in Dorset, not until the nineteenth century.
Curiously, across the border with Somerset, a small corner shop in Hendford, Yeovil, was run for many years, in the first half of the twentieth century, by a widow, Eliza Honeycombe. Above the shop window, and above a sign advertising Fry's Chocolate, she boldly displayed her married surname, HONEYCOMBE.
In May 1979 a Honeycombe Farm was advertised as being up for auction at St Allen, near Truro in Cornwall. It was described as "An attractive and very well positioned 4-bedroom Country House with useful traditional outbuildings and 13 and a half acres of productive pasture bordered to the north-east by a stream". It was also said to be secluded and south-facing, and to have been "traditionally constructed of stone and slate at the turn of the century".
There were indeed Honeycombes living in St Allen, Kenwyn and Truro from about 1600 to 1768. Their occupations are unknown, but the names of some of the men and women they married (Lancelot Cowlyn, Honnor Lukey, Mary Trout, Auguston Streebly, Richard Whale, and Stepson Buckingham) suggest that the spouses had bucolic antecedents and occupations. Most of the offspring, over five generations, were girls, and the last of five generations of John Honeycombes in that area disappeared and died out well before 1768.
The Honeycombe Farm in Gloucestershire is apparently of some antiquity, as in the Victoria History of Gloucestershire we find this reference: "Honeycombe Farm, where there was probably a habitation belonging to William Honicombe in 1327, lies in the Holybrook valley about one mile west of Miserden village."   Miserden is a few miles north of both Stroud and Cirencester. The farmhouse itself, situated above a small valley, seems to be very old. In World War Two it possessed 102 acres, which had been increased to 260 by 1991.
Whether the William Honicombe in Gloucestershire in 1327 is the same man as the earlier William of Honycombe in Backwell in 1318, we will never know. But as with Backwell, after the Black Death no Honeycombe appears in Gloucestershire records for over 600 years.

There are three places called Honeycomb in Australia - and a Honeycombe Street.
In Queensland, in the Big Bend country bounded by the Mackenzie River, there is a homestead called Honeycomb, which was built by a low-level crossing in the river some 70 km north of Dingo. It is one of the oldest properties in the area. But no Honeycombe ever lived there. It bears the name of the homestead of the bee. For across the river is not only Honeycomb Creek, but Bee Creek, and off to the right is Apis Creek. Apis is the Latin for a bee.

About 120 km west of Honeycomb is a gold reef called the Honeycomb Lead. Was it named by one of the gold-mining Honeycombes? None that we know of were miners there. Besides, some three km to the north are Busy Bee Gully and the Busy Bee Lead, and beyond Clermont was a goldmine called Native Bee.
In Western Australia there is a small Honeycomb property, north of Gingin. A signpost on the Brand Highway points towards it, and on its ironwork gate is the legend HONEYCOMB. Again, there is a Bee Creek not far away and no Honeycombes have ever lived there. The place merely commemorates the product of the bee and not some ancestral territory won and named and then for ever lost.
You will need a magnifying glass and a detailed map of the town of Ayr in North Queensland to find a place called Honeycombe Street. But there it is, on Rossiter's Hill, a little road on the edge of the land that was once owned by Len Honeycombe. The Shire Council, in the 1970s, recognising the part that the Honeycombe family had played in the prosperous development of Ayr, named a new road Honeycombe Street. In doing so they linked the family's future to its past.

Honeycombe House in Cornwall gave its name to the family who lived there many centuries ago. Fifteen generations later the family's name was given to a street, a hyphen of land, on the other side of the world.

3. 1066 AND ALL THAT

There is little doubt that a settlement of some sort existed at Calstock well before the Norman Conquest in 1066.
Patrick Coleman in *A Guide to Calstock* says: "There is also a chance that it existed well before the Romans, or even the Phoenicians, came to Cornwall in their search for tin. Following the retreat of the Romans from these islands, Cornwall was one of the last strongholds of the original Celts or Britons as the Saxons pushed westwards in their conquest of England."
It was in 838 AD that a fleet of Danish longships is said to have sailed up the Tamar as far as Calstock, their services having been enlisted by the Cornish king to fight the Saxons. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says: "A great raiding ship-army came to Cornwall, and they turned into one (with the Britons) and were fighting against Egbert, King of Wessex. Then he heard this and travelled with the army and fought against them at Hingston, and there put to flight both the Britons and the Danish."
Hingston, which in Anglo-Saxon translates as Stallion's Hill, is the modern Hingston Down, situated on the high ground a mile or so north of what is now St Ann's Chapel and Honeycombe. Though Egbert died the following year, from then on Cornwall ceased to be a separate kingdom - although the Saxons never settled in great numbers in the land west of the River Tamar, which was formally established as the boundary between the Cornish and the Saxons by King Athelstan in 936 AD. Nonetheless, the fact that nearly all the place names in the parish are Anglo-Saxon in origin indicates that the area was largely taken over by them, though the River Tamar retained its Celtic name, Tam Meur, the Big Water.
The present-day name of Danescombe, attached to the valley below Honeycombe, also to a house and once to a mine, has nothing to do with the Danish invasion. It's probably derived from "Duna-combe", which translates as "valley in the downs".
Anglo-Saxon infiltration of Cornish land and villages in the east of Cornwall continued over the next 150 years, and in 1066 what had become the manor of Calstock was held by an Anglo-Saxon called Asgar. He was replaced, as we have seen, by Reginald de Valletort, who had presumably found favour with King William's half-brother, Robert, Count of Mortain. Robert in turn had replaced Cadoc (or Cadorus), the last Cornish Earl of Cornwall, the title thereafter being bestowed on the favoured adherents of the Norman and Plantagenet kings. One of them was Reginald of Dunstanville, a bastard son of Henry I.

Work on the compilation of the Domesday Book began in 1086.
The entry for Calstock is as follows: "The Count has one manor which is called Kalestoc (Calstock), which Asgar held TRE (in the time of King Edward the Confessor); therein are two and a half hides (a hide consisted of 120 acres, or more), and it rendered geld for one hide; 12 teams can plough these. Reginald holds this from the Count; thereof Reginald has in demesne one virgate and two ploughs, and the villeins have two hides and one virgate and six ploughs. There Reginald has 30 villeins and 30 borders and 12 serfs and three swine; and 100 acres of woodland and of pasture, three leagues in length and one in breadth. And it is worth three pounds yearly, and when the Count received it (it was worth) six pounds."
The original manorial lands were clearly much smaller than the later manor of Calstock and were concentrated in one holding. For it has been calculated that there were over 5,800 acres of tithe land in the later and larger manor of Calstock, of which 1,000 acres were arable, 2,500 were meadow and pasture, 1475 commons and waste, 400 orchards and gardens, and 320 woodland. These were the acres that the Honeycombes farmed and whereon they lived for centuries.

Reginald de Valletort was man of some significance. In all, he held 39 manors from the Count of Mortain, not all in Cornwall. They included the newly built castle of Trematon, which was south of Saltash and situated above a creek that led into the St Germans River; Trematon was worth eight pounds. It also had 24 ploughs, and the nearby village had a market, which rendered three shillings yearly. The so-called Honour of Trematon contained 33 estates or manors, including the manor of Calstock.
It remained in the possession of the Valletorts until 1270, when Roger de Valletort gave the Honour of Trematon to Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the main Valletort line becoming extinct when Roger died in 1289 - although a Hugh de Valletort saw service in the wars of Edward I against the French and the Scots, dying without male heirs in 1314 - a decade before the Honeycombes appear on the scene.
In the Public Record Office in London there are two interesting entries in a Book of Fees for 1275 and 1282 (a fee was a hereditary estate, a fief or feudal benefice).
The first lists the tenants of the barony of Hurberton, once the property of Reginald de Valletort and of Ralph and Roger de Valletort. These tenants include Andrew of Trelosk and his wife Joan. Coincidentally, Trelosk Water Cottage near St Cleer is where John Symons Honeycombe was born. But there's more. The second list tells us that Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, had the barony of Trematon, that Reginald de Ferrers held the manor of Callington, and that Andrew of Trelosk and his wife held the manor of Calstock.
Can it be that a son of Andrew of Trelosk occupied the holding at Honeycombe and accordingly became known as John of Honeycombe?

Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who took over the Honour of Trematon in 1270 just before he died, had an unusually lengthy, lusty and active life. He was the second son of King John and was born in 1209. He married three times, his wives being of assorted origin - Isabella of Gloucester, who died in childbirth in Berkhamsted; Sanchia of Provence; and Beatrice of Falkenberg, whom he married in 1269 when he was 62. His eldest son was murdered by the sons of Simon de Montfort. He also had at least two bastard sons, one of them, Walter, being born to the wife of one of Roger de Valletort's brothers or sons. Along the way Richard found time to go on a Crusade and for a time was King of the Romans. He died in 1272.
Richard's successor as Earl of Cornwall was one of his sons, Edmund (1249-1300), who is mentioned in the Book of Fees. One of Edmund's knights or military supporters was a certain Walter de Huntercombe. It can't be possible that Huntercombe could turn into Honeycombe - can it? Well, no.
But if we recall how "Honi" has persistently been interpreted as meaning "Evil", and that "Honi-combe" could consequently, apart from "Evil in Battle", mean "Evil Valley", a curious connection emerges with the Valletorts. For Valletort translates as Twisted, Crooked or Evil Valley.

Is it possible that the original Honeycombe was a bastard son of a Valletort? Or a bastard son of one of the Cornish Earls?
Or even a descendant of Andrew of Trelosk, lord of the manor of Calstock in 1282?

4. THE MANOR OF CALSTOCK, 1327-1347

Let us return to the known facts - and these are that a John Honycome was taxed in a Lay Subsidy in 1327 and that a man with the same name was in possession of Honyacombe in the manor of Calstock in 1333.
What follows is pieced together from the documents, lists and registers that have survived the depradations of time and other agencies, of accident, fire and loss. Some of it is speculation, based on the evidence of whatever records are available from a particular place and time. Unfortunately, relationships aren't indicated in any documents for another 200 years, and baptisms, marriages and burials (not births, marriages and deaths) aren't recorded in parish registers until 1538, though even after that there are huge gaps in the extant early registers, and the Calstock ones, alas, don't form a continuous sequence until 1684.
The first Honeycombe of whom we know anything, John, named in the Lay Subsidy of 1327 and in the Assession Roll of 1333, was also named in a Duchy list in 1337, when King Edward III created the Duchy of Cornwall for his eldest son, Edward, then aged seven. In doing so King Edward transferred the manor of Calstock, one of the 17 ancient manors that had been part of the Earldom of Cornwall, to the Duchy of Cornwall, which remains part of the Duke of Cornwall's inheritance to this day. By 1640 the Duchy would consist of 78 manors, not all in Cornwall itself. Don Steel, in *Discovering Your Family History*, published by the BBC in 1980, tells us that these 17 ancient manors were known as Assessional Manors - for the tenements and parcels of land within the manor were held, according to a convention or agreement, by tenants who paid an assessed rent. Such tenants were called conventioners or conventionary tenants and their rents were re-assessed every seven years or so. In addition to these tenants, there were freehold tenements and a diminishing number of ordinary tenancies in villeinage, the tenants being villeins (or serfs).
Steel says: "We are back to the very beginning of the system by which the Honeycombes held their first land for centuries."
This system, known as Conventionary Tenure, was introduced by John of Eltham, Earl of Cornwall, in 1333, and its seven-year rent assessments marked an improvement in the status of villeins, who couldn't move from their piece of land without their lord's permission and forfeited their chattels to the lord when they died. Steel continues: "Conventionary tenants, however, were of two kinds. There were 'free' conventioners, whose heirs made a payment known as a 'heriot' on their death (usually their best beast, like a horse or cow) . . . and 'villein' conventioneers (conventionarii native*)*, who forfeited all their goods." It seems clear, says Steel, that John of Honyacombe, who had previously been an ordinary villein conventioner with 32 acres of land, became a native conventioner in 1333 with the same amount of land.
A Cornish furlong, by the way, was the same as half an English acre, and an acre is the equivalent of 70 yards square.
Honyacombe was originally just the official name of a messuage, or dwelling, and the 32 acres of land that went with it. The Assession Roll for 1333 says of Honyacombe: "John of Honyacombe took one dwelling, 32 acres of English land in one Cornish furlong, which the same held before at Honyacombe, to be held for the aforesaid time at the Lord's will." For this privilege John paid 3s 10d a year to the new Duke of Cornwall.
A detailed list of the Duke of Cornwall's properties, made in 1337 and called the Caption of Seisin, expands on the above, saying: "John of Honyacombe, native, holds of the Lord Duke one dwelling, 32 acres of English land in one furlong of Cornish land at Honycomb, which he took of the aforesaid Earl, to be held in native convention for the time aforesaid, rendering therefore yearly, at the four usual terms, 3s.10d and two days work at the Hatches, and does suit and all other

services as the aforesaid William of Newton; and he does fealty and claims to hold the tenement in native convention by the aforesaid services during the terms aforesaid."
The services performed by William of Newton were two days of work at the Hatches, attendance at the manorial court every three weeks or so, where he might be appointed as reeve, tithing-man or beadle, and the transfer of all his chattels to the Lord Duke when he died.
The Hatches was the name of a weir across the River Tamar where salmon were trapped for the Duke.

In 1337 King Edward III was 25. He and the royal court, as well as his top officials and most of his nobles, spoke French - as all the rulers of the nation had done since the Conquest.
Edward had been crowned ten years earlier, in 1327, following the brutal murder of his father, Edward II in Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire. So that Edward's body would be unmarked (and to cruelly accord with a supposed predilection for sodomy), a red-hot poker was thrust through a metal tube up his rectum until he died.
The ruthless teenage King, after banishing his mother, Isabella, and executing her chief adviser and lover, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, became actively involved in various campaigns against the Scots and a lengthy war in France. Edward III's eldest son, another Edward and much loved by his father, was born in 1330. He was later known, because he wore black armour, as the Black Prince. He it was who was made by his father Duke of Cornwall in 1337 and later Prince of Wales.

The Caption of Seisin of 1337 tells us several things about the people who lived in the manor of Calstock and something about its hierarchy and the tenants' way of life.
It tells us that there were 11 free tenants, 26 free conventionaries, and 50 native conventionaries, of whom John of Honyacombe was one.
If we assume that the 87 male tenants were matched, and in most cases married, to as many women; and if 50 of these couples had two surviving children and two surviving grandparents, there would have been well over 300 people living in the manor of Calstock B a sizeable number for a rural community at that time. And of course they would all have known each other and have been on nodding acquaintance at least.
The manor of Calstock, corresponding to the present-day parish, was situated in the ancient Hundred of East and came under the religious jurisdiction of the Deanery of Exeter. It included six hamlets, apart from Calstock village. These were Harrowbarrow, Metherell, Gunnislake, Albaston, and the more exposed and windswept northern hamlets at Chilsworthy and Latchley. There were five small but substantial houses in the manor which were probably built of stone and centred on a hall - at Honeycombe, Todworthy, Newton, Hill, and Harewood. On high wooded ground overlooking Calstock village and the river, and not included in the manor, stood Cotehele, freehold home of the local gentry, a family called Edgecumbe, who had originated in Devon.
There was never a manor-house in the manor of Calstock, which was a Duchy of Cornwall manor owned by the Duke of Cornwall and administered by his land agents. Cotehele was just one of the farm estates in the manor. Harewood House, on the site of the original demesne land of the Duchy, may be the location of the household of the area's original Celtic chief.
John Honyacombe was apparently of some standing locally, as few other people in the manor rented more acres and not many paid as much rent. Those who had more land than John were the lord of the manor and the rector of Calstock (who happened to be the same man), Sir William of Kesteven. Richard of Backhampton and the Harewood family were the other tenants of note.
The Caption of Seisin also says that the Duke's possessions included a park near Liskeard in which was a herd of 200 deer, that Calstock's church was one of the poorest of the many churches and priories belonging to the Duke of Cornwall, and that Sir William of Kesteven, who lived in the manor house (possibly where present-day Harewood House now stands) held 172 acres of land, 20 acres of salt marsh, nine and a half acres of meadow, a pool below the manor, and a granary called Hele that included 10 acres and a house. The rent for all this was four pounds. The Caption continues, referring to Sir William: "And he will maintain all the houses, etc, and the said granary without waste and destruction, etc, and compost the land throughout. And at the end of the term

he shall render again, etc, in as good a state, etc." Earlier, Sir William had also been rector of the Calstock parish church, St Andrews, from 1326 for three years.
Kesteven is a place in Lincolnshire, so it seems as if the lord of the manor was not a local man. Two rectors who succeeded him were granted several year-long leaves of absence, so that they could study elsewhere, and Sir William Kesteven apparently stood in for them more than once. There were other absentee rectors later on, who employed other clerics to perform their duties. It seems that Sir William was a bachelor, as he had "three companions" (servants, relatives or dependants) living with him, and his proxy was his brother. If he needed a proxy, was he ill?
Besides Sir William, the other significant figure in the manor was Richard of Backhampton. He and his wife, Eleanor, had at least two dwellings in different parts of the manor, whose combined acreage, including a meadow and some wasteland, amounted to 65 acres, with rents totalling 7s.11d. He had to serve for three days at the Hatches.
These entries are expanded by a later entry, which says: "Richard of Backhampton holds for the term of his life by the charter of John, late Earl of Cornwall, which the Lord King has confirmed by recital in a charter of his, four dwellings, 90 and a half acres of arable land, one and a half acres of meadow and nine acres of waste with their appurtenances." Again, it seems as if Richard was not of Cornish origin - Backhampton being a place in Oxfordshire - and had been rewarded for some special services by the former Earl of Cornwall.
18 men in the manor paid a higher rent than John, though their acreage was less. Presumably the Honyacombe acres were heavily wooded or steeply inclined and were awkward to plough. The highest single rent, of 5s 9d, was paid by Edward Jeol, Jule or Geel (probably our Jewel). Names that appear more than once in the Caption are Harewood, Lewis, Prout, White, Cotehele, Facy, French, Clerk (father and son, they were called Hugo the Clerk and William the Clerk) and William at the Hatches.
William of Harewood rented a watermill, where the tenants' corn was ground (at a cost), as well as a fulling mill, where cloth was cleansed and thickened. For both mills he paid the large sum of four pounds 15s 8d. William at the Hatches, who had a dwelling and 25 acres there, as well as half a meadow and 32 acres of waste (probably marshland), ran a ferry service across the river – "the passage of the water of Tamar next to the weir of Calstock, with one boat for the said passage, which he took from the said Earl . . . Rent 4s 6d".
Michael Godrich, who was a "native of stock" with a dwelling and 30 acres, had some very particular tasks. Like most tenants he had to work for two days at the Hatches. But, says the Caption, "whenever the weir is damaged by the foundation giving way, (he and his family or serfs) are held to raise the same above the water from the place where such damage took place, so that no timber remains in the foundation, and this at their own cost. And he shall carry with his fellows millstones to the mill of the Lord whenever it is necessary, at their own expense."
John of Honyacombe's easterly neighbours at Todworthy included William, son of Hugo the Clerk, William Prout, Edward Roger, John Geoffrey and Richard Arable. Westerly neighbours, at Harrowbarrow, were William and John Harewood, Nicholas Dale, Reginald Lewis, William Crabbe and Edward Harrowbarrow. One of his other neighbours was another "native", Michael Burgess, who had four acres of waste beside the Honeycombe acres.
Wasteland might mean marshland or moorland or land that was for some reason incapable of cultivation. Woodland was separate from waste land, and three extensive woods are named in the Caption - Harewood, Northwood and Grimscombe.
In the river, which was tidal and marshy for about a mile upstream beyond Calstock, twisting and turning until it reached Harewood Wood, there was a variety of fish, including lampreys, trout and salmon. The salmon weir, the Hatches, was a few hundred yards downriver from where the New Bridge spans the river today at Gunnislake. Some of the barges and small sail-boats that plied up and down the river, would have been built at Calstock itself.
The ferry at the Hatches, a flat-bottomed boat large enough to carry farm animals was the first crossing between Cornwall and Devon north of Plymouth until a ford, further up the river at Luckett, was reached. It must have been a very busy crossing, as it was the most direct route

between the major market towns of Tavistock in Devon and Callington and Liskeard in eastern Cornwall.

The New Bridge, small and narrow, seven-arched and made of granite, which spans the river by Gunnislake, wasn't built until some 200 years later (c1525). It was the only bridge across the lower reaches of the Tamar until the road suspension bridge between Plymouth and Saltash was built in 1961, beside Brunel's railway bridge that dates from 1859.

The various manorial fields held by the tenants, divided by hedges and ditches, would have been dotted with sheep and cattle, or have been green or golden with barley, wheat and rye, and brown when they were fallow. Teams of oxen would have drawn the ploughs. The fields in this part of Cornwall were fertilised with manure mixed with limestone, the latter being brought upriver from Plymouth and burnt with culm (stalks and stem of grasses and sedges). Peas, beans, onions and some herbs would have been grown in a few cramped cottage gardens, and chickens would have clucked and fussed around the low stone-walled or wooden homes, which had thatched roofs and few if any windows. A hole in the roof would have served as a chimney. Some tenants might have had a few ducks or geese, and the occasional pig would have rooted about in an orchard or the farmyard. Horses and oxen would have been rare and valuable beasts and were very likely jointly owned by some families.

Some of the silver and lead mines in the area were already being worked for their ore, though to no great depth, and there would have been local carpenters and masons, tinners, thatchers, weavers, blacksmiths, and brewers of ale. Cottage industries like spinning and weaving must have been the main occupations other than the manifold agricultural activities of manorial life.

The homes of most of the tenants would have been much smaller versions of the ancient longhouse, or were perhaps more like a Scottish crofter's cottage - mostly small and dark and made of stone and wood, topped with thatch or brushwood. The smoky interiors, which were shared with the animals - unless these were sheltered in outhouses or sheds - were partitioned by wattle or wooden walls. Furniture consisted mainly of benches, trestle tables and stools. Beds were mattresses stuffed with hay, and treasured possessions, like rings and brooches, scissors and pins, coins, metal plates and perhaps a dagger, would have been kept in a wooden chest, along with Sunday best sets of clothes suitable for weddings and church festivities.

The parish church of St Andrew, the focus of village life, was not in Calstock but atop the high ground north of the village, 335 feet above sea level. It was a long and steep walk for those going to church from the village of Calstock and especially for those carrying the dead up the hill to the lych-gate at the entrance of the churchyard. The original church on the site, dating from about 590, would have been box-like and made of wood. A larger stone church is said to have been consecrated about 1290, and it was probably still in construction in 1337, as the earliest remaining stonework, some pillars and arches, date from about 1310. The south aisle was added in 1420, as was a new roof, and each of the three aisles had what's called a "wagon" roof. The granite blocks of the present three-stage battlemented tower, and the porch, are mainly 15th century.

In the 14th century the whitewashed walls of the interior, smelling strongly of the incense burnt at Catholic masses intoned in Latin, and gloomily lit by candles and oil-lamps, would have been decorated with gaudy scenes from the lives of saints and Jesus, as well as lurid visions of the Last Judgement, Heaven and Hell. Dim traces of a fresco picturing St George and the Dragon can be seen today above the north aisle. Other images would have been portrayed in crude stained glass windows, and painted wooden emblems and statues of Mary, of the crucifixion and St Andrew, as well as other objects of veneration, would have been positioned around the walls. Pulpits didn't become a fixture until the reign of Elizabeth I and services were conducted partly out of sight behind a rood screen. Worshippers stood or knelt, though benches were provided for the infirm and old. The nave was also used for village gatherings and as a meeting-place.

No rectory existed as such in 1337. Eventually a rectory was established at a distance north of the church, overlooking Harewood Wood and a bend in the river below. That rectory is now a private residence and the present rector lives in a fine square Georgian house in Sand Lane, looking down on the village and the river and shadowed by the impressive railway viaduct, completed in 1908.

It was not just the church that smelled strongly in those days, everything did - the countryside, the animals and the villagers themselves. Sanitation and personal hygiene were virtually unknown. The villagers, who seldom bathed (apart from washing their hands and faces) and hardly changed their clothes from year to year (and they had no underwear), would have been shielded from other odours by the miasma of wood-smoke, work smells and cooking odours that clung to their garments, hands, hair and skin. They used rags or tooth-picks to clean their teeth, and urinated and defecated by some wall or behind a bush or tree. Inevitably, their teeth would have rotted and their eyesight deteriorated as they aged.

Nonetheless, although they lived with animals, they did not live like animals. Most of them would have kept their homes and themselves as clean as they could, sweeping the floors, tidying up, disposing of rubbish, and washing their clothes in streams or in the river when it was dry and sunny and there was a good drying wind.

Hardy and enduring as they were, coughs and colds would, however, have been commonplace, and the hard labour of the fields, of their outdoor lives, toiling in driving rain and bitter winds, living in wintry conditions and in cold and draughty homes, would have stricken them with rheumatism and arthritis. Cancer, heart disease, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, smallpox, pneumonia, various fevers and other ailments had few if any cures, other than herbal remedies. Childbirth complications killed not a few mothers, and only the healthiest babies survived. Those villagers who lived to be 60 - and more lived to that age in the manor than is generally supposed - must have been very hardy, with strong constitutions. Perhaps all the outdoor exercise helped. They certainly did a lot of walking, and in the manor of Calstock most of that was up hill and down dale. Very few rode a horse. Horses were beasts of burden - pack-horses being used to carry every sort of load. It is hard to believe that the first wheeled wagon didn't make its appearance in the Liskeard district until 1790. There were no roads as such - only pack-horse tracks and deep and narrow hedge-lined lanes. People walked for miles, to other villages and market towns and when regularly attending church. Tradesmen, manorial officials, pilgrims, monks and pedlars might travel far afield, but most village people seldom ventured outside the manor. As Calstock was on a river they may have journeyed on some barge or boat downriver to Plymouth. But most would probably never have even seen the sea.

The passing of the seasons, the ever-changing weather, ever-evolving relationships, religious festivities, holy days and fast days, the births and deaths of their animals, of their own family members and of their neighbours, would have shaped their lives. Most could neither read nor write, and what was happening across the Tamar, in Devon and even further east, as far as the faraway and unimaginable metropolis called London, impinged very little on their laborious, sequestered lives.

There were rumours of royal events and wars, but the business of staying alive and paying their dues engrossed them. The manor was the world to them, a little world, but all they knew, or, for the most part, wanted to know.

According to the Assession Rolls, John was still living at Honeycombe in 1340 and 1347, and if he was born about 1297 he would now be 50. In his lifetime altered circumstances had affected the lives and lands of some of his neighbours in various ways and in 1347 there was a new lord of the manor. Indeed the first four decades of the century had been beset with bad harvests, famine, cattle murrain and sheep disease and increased burdens of taxation. Villagers hoped, and prayed, for better times.

But unknown to them all, another and terrible circumstance was about to alter irrevocably the careful lives of every one of them and of England itself.

5. BLACK DEATH, 1348

On the Eve of St John, 23 June 1348, while villagers throughout England were celebrating a summer festival of fertility and maidens danced around a maypole with flowers in their hair, the first English men and women were dying of the plague.

At a small sheltered harbour in Dorset called Melcombe Regis, near Weymouth, black rats had come ashore from a trading ship from Gascony, where the plague was already spreading. In less than two years almost half the population of the British Isles would be dead.

The Black Death originated in China and spread slowly westwards in a series of increasingly powerful epidemics, passing from Asia into Europe and hastened by a Mongol army invading the Crimea - they catapulted bodies of their own people who had died of plague into a city under siege. In 1347, cities with seaports, like Venice and Genoa, were especially vulnerable, and after Italy had been depopulated, the plague crossed the Alps, invading France and Germany in the spring of 1348 and spreading in a widening, unstoppable fatal flood towards the Channel.

The disease, carried as bacteria in the stomachs of rat and human fleas, was transmitted by flea-bites or the inhalation of infected droplets from a victim's breath. There were various symptoms, mainly violent and painful. Infected swellings called buboes, in the groin, in the arm-pits and in the neck, gave the bubonic plague its medical name and its vilest manifestation. Bacteria would flood the bloodstream and disfiguring and frightful death would follow in a few days. Villagers collapsed and died in their homes, in fields and bodies lay in the street. Soon there were few to bury them and as fear seized those who still lived, bodies were piled in churchyard pits or left to rot where they lay. As the plague flowed inland from the coastal areas of England, King Edward III and his eldest son, Edward, the Black Prince, with 24 of the nation's best knights, attended the founding ceremonies of the Order of the Garter on 10 August, in the gloriously adorned, shining white newness of St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. The King would learn in September that his daughter, Joan, in Bordeaux on her way to marry a Spanish prince, had died there of the plague. The Archbishop of Canterbury died in Kent two weeks after the Garter ceremonies; the dioceses of Rochester and Winchester were overwhelmed. In Hampshire, over 160 died in the Bishop of Winchester's manor and palace at Bishop's Waltham; a third died in his manor of Farnham; a hamlet called Quob ceased to exist when all its occupants died. In the abbey at Ely in Cambridgeshire 15 of the 43 monks there perished; of the 42 monks in the abbey of Meaux in Yorkshire, only 10 survived. In Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk more than half the townspeople perished, while in Norfolk two-thirds of the population died.

The Black Death invaded Cornwall in the spring of 1349. In Bodmin Priory the prior and all the canons except two perished, and the town itself was brought to its knees again in another outbreak in 1351, when 1,500 people are believed to have died.

In big cities like London and Bristol, where 15 of the city's 52 councillors died within six months, hundreds died every day.

A chronicler, Henry of Knighton, said of Leicester, where 700 died in a single parish, "It was as if sudden death had marked them down beforehand, for few lay sick for more than two or three days." Before long the plague had reached Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Its ferocity diminished over the winter, but with the warmer weather the plague's assault was renewed.

It was mostly the young, the sick, the infirm and the old who were taken. The death rate among the priests and clergy in Devon and Cornwall was also particularly high. Before the plague the average number of livings that were vacant annually was 36. In 1349 there were 382 vacancies. Out of the four million or so people who inhabited the British Isles in 1348-49, as many as two million may have died.

Henry of Knighton wrote: "Sheep and cattle went wandering over fields and through crops, and there was no one to go and drive or gather them, for there was such a lack of serfs that no on knew what he should do, wherefore many crops perished in the fields . . . For want of watching, animals died in uncountable numbers in the byways, hedges and field . . . After the pestilence, many buildings, great and small, fell into ruins in every city for lack of inhabitants. Likewise many villages and hamlets became desolate all having died who dwelt there."

And then, in 1350, the plague returned, as it did eleven years later, continuing to ravish successive generations of townsfolk and villagers, though with diminishing vigour, for over 350 years.

6. BLACK PRINCE, 1351-1364

Nine years after the Assession Roll of 1347, the various holdings of the tenants in the manor of Calstock who had survived the Black Death were re-assessed. There were fewer tenants and as a result some moved up a notch in the social scale. Such a one was William Honyacombe of Honyacombe, who ceased to be a villein and became a free conventioner.
The Assession Roll for 1356, written in the 29th year of the reign of Edward III, says that William Honyacombe, a free conventioner, took one dwelling and 32 acres in Cornish half acres, which John Honyacombe took in native convention at the last assession. The rent was 3s 10d, the same amount as that which John had paid. William also paid a fine of 16 shillings for taking over the land from John. It seems likely that William was John's son. Had John died with other members of the family in 1348, or in yet another visitation of the plague in 1351?
Don Steel says: "When tenants in the Duchy of Cornwall were everywhere at a premium, the only way to keep a villein from running away was to give him his freedom. The Black Death undoubtedly speeded up the process of manumission - the grant of freedom - which was already in train. In 1355 a Commission was appointed to lease and rent all lands in Cornwall, whether held by tenants or landowners . . . and to convert fines or tenements leased for life into fixed yearly rents. It would seem very probable that William received his freedom as a result of the rationalisation that resulted from the work of the Commission."
Another economic effect of the depopulation of the country was a general rise in the wages of tradesmen like carpenters, tilers, masons, miners and smiths, followed by a strenuous attempt on the part of a land-owning Parliament to keep wages down to the rates which were in force before 1348. The Statutes of Labourers of 1350 and 1360 ordered labourers not to leave the land to which they were attached or to ask for wages higher than those they had received before the plague. But no paper regulations could check the inevitable, and a rise in wages after 1350 can be traced in all classes of employment and in every part of the country, amounting to an increase, in Cornwall, of about a penny a day.
A picture of what the manor of Calstock was like (and what William Honeycombe would have heard or known about) can be gleaned from the Register of the Black Prince, 1351-1364. Carefully maintained by the Prince's Council in London, it is known as the White Book of Cornwall and deals with all his Cornish possessions.

In 1350 Edward, the charismatic, vigorous Duke of Cornwall and Prince of Wales, was 20. As a teenager, wearing his conspicuous black armour, he had already distinguished himself in his father's French campaign in 1346 at the Battle of Crecy and at the Siege of Calais. He had also taken part in a naval battle with the Spaniards off Winchelsea.
His principal officials in Cornwall were John Dabernon, who was steward and sheriff, as well as keeper of the Prince's fees of Devon and Cornwall; John Kendal, receiver of Cornwall; and John Skirbeek, controller of the stannary of Cornwall - an administrative department dealing with all matters concerning tin mines and miners. It would seem that John Dabernon was a descendant of the Sir John d'Abernon, whose death in 1277 at Stoke d'Abernon in Surrey is commemorated by the oldest memorial brass in Britain.
An entry in the Prince's Register for 1351 tells us more about the Prince's steward and sheriff.
"Although the Prince lately granted and demised to his yeoman, John Dabernon of Bradford, his manor of Calstock, 172 acres of arable land, nine and a half acres of meadow, his fishery there called "La Pool" extending from Okel Tor as far as Halton Pool, his wood called "Le Outwood", his moor of Calstock, and the pannage and pasture of Hergarth, with all the other appurtenances thereof, to hold the same for life . . . Nevertheless, wishing to do a more abundant favour to John, and (for his sake) to Joan, his present wife, on account of past and future good service, he by these

presents has granted and demised the premises to them in survivorship on the terms and conditions aforesaid."
So John Dabernon, a yeoman, was in effect the lord of the manor of Calstock in 1351, presumably elevated above his station because of some exceptional service during the young prince's military activities in France or in the management of his household - and to fill a vacancy caused by the Black Death. In 1351 the rector was Sir John of Plymstock.
In the years of recovery after the Black Death's fatal invasion, it appears from the Register that the matter regarding Calstock that mostly concerned the Prince's Council was the salmon weir at the Hatches.
In November 1351 the abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Tavistock was censured by the Prince's Council (Tavistock was a market town in Devon nearest the border with Cornwall). The Register says: "Whereas the water of Tamar is the Prince's several water and is held of his castle of Trematon for one and a half knights' fees: and whereas the Abbot of Tavistock has made a weir called "Overhatch" in the said water within the Prince's Manor of Calstock and takes great abundance of salmon there B they are to distrain the Abbot to show by what title he claims the fishery and certify the Prince thereof, and if he has nothing to say for himself, but has it by encroachment, they are to remove him utterly."
Elsewhere in the Register the Prince complained about the grass in his park adjacent to one of his castles, Restormel Castle, saying the park was "overgrown with moss because the lawns have long lain uncultivated." Restormel Castle, a few miles south of Bodmin, was begun by the Normans as the main residence of the Earls of Cornwall and became pre-eminent when the administrative HQ of the Crown was moved from Launceston to Lostwithiel about 1260. It degerated after the Black Prince's death and was derelict by 1620.
In May 1352 the abbot of Tavistock managed to prove his right to the weir at Overhatch by producing a charter "whereby Roger de Vautort (Valletort), late Lord of the Manor . . . granted leave to the Abbot and convent and their successors so to fix the said weir." The charter was sufficient for the prince to cancel his previous order "as the sages of the Prince's Council . . . are of the opinion that the Prince ought not to deny the right of the Abbot and the convent in this matter."
The Duchy's weir, at the Hatches, was given by the Black Prince to William Stacy in November 1353.
Stacy, who was a Devonian, offered the Prince eight pounds a year for seven years for the privilege, which was two pounds more than what the previous lessor had paid. The Prince's sages had reservations but thought it an "apparently profitable" arrangement, "provided no damage to the Prince can arise from the said lease." The deal was ratified in February 1354, as follows – "Grant and lease at farm to William Stacy of Tavistock of the weir of Calstock with all the profits and advantages pertaining thereto, to hold the same from Christmas last for seven years . . . provided always that he maintain the weir in as good a state as he received it in, or better, and leave it thus at the end of his term."
In June that year Stacy was further favoured with a grant "of all those lands in Calstock which William, son of Richard of Backhampton, held of the Prince by charter for life in free conventionary tenure . . . rendering to the Prince and his heirs all the services due and accustomed, except the offices of reeve and beadle." A note was added to the grant saying that John Dabernon was to personally deliver the premises to Stacy.

But something went wrong. Either Stacy mismanaged the weir or himself, and in October he was instructed "to remove himself utterly from the said weir and fishery." Calstock weir and the fishery were then added to the weir and the stretch of the Tamar River already managed by the abbot and convent of Tavistock - "to hold the same to them and their successors as their several fisheries for ever, rendering to the Prince and his heirs 10 pounds yearly."
There were stipulations - "If perchance by flood or otherwise the said weir be torn up, broken or removed, wholly or in part, then the Abbot and convent and their successors may repair and lengthen it on the Prince's soil as often as necessary, and also fix stakes and dig turves in the same

soil at their pleasure for the construction of the weir, and fix nets and other devices for catching fish in the river. The Abbot and convent may also fish and draw nets along the riverbank on the Prince's soil, and dry fish there, at their pleasure.
John Skirbeek, constable of Launceston Castle, was instructed to effect the necessary transfer.
That wasn't the end of it, however, as the abbot's monks apparently over-reached themselves, depriving the rector of Calstock Church, Sir John of Plymstock, of his long-established right to position four fish-traps in the river. He complained, and in December 1354, Robert of Elford (now steward and sheriff of Cornwall) was asked to investigate "as the Prince desires that all that is right and reasonable be done to Holy Church, and especially to this church, which is of his patronage."
Meanwhile, as a side-effect of the Black Death, several properties had deteriorated and needed repair. William Stacy was in trouble again with the prince's council as the houses, walls, hedges and ditches on his tenements (previously held by Richard of Backhampton) were in a ruinous condition. He was ordered to maintain them properly.
Elsewhere, the Black Prince's mill at Liskeard was reported to have fallen down, as had the little hall in the prince's manor of Liskeard, and the prince's council reported that the bridge connecting Launceston Castle with its park needed repairing, that 102 of the great oak-beams in the roof of Restormel Castle had to be replaced, and that the chimney of the castle's great chamber had to be rebuilt.
These renovations to the Prince's properties were initiated when he returned to England in 1356 after a triumphant series of military expeditions in France, during which his father's possessions were extended, the Battle of Poitiers won, and the French King captured and brought to London.
All was not well, however, in Calstock. William Honeycombe would have been among the tenants who complained in July 1357 to the Black Prince, along with the tenants of two other Cornish manors, about excessive rents. They said that at the time of the last assessions of the Prince's properties in Cornwall the auditors, the steward and the receiver had compelled them to take their lands at higher rents than they had been wont to pay – "on pain of being utterly removed from the lands and their houses." Because of the "many mishaps and losses" they had suffered within a short time in respect of their crops and beasts, they said they would have to leave the prince's lands and become beggars, unless the Prince reduced their fines.
The Prince's council in London was not unsympathetic. A survey was ordered to be made "of the defects of the said assessions, if there be any, and of the amounts of the fines and rents and the value of the lands, and a reasonable mitigation made to the complainants, so that they may be able to hold and enjoy the lands which they have taken without being ruined."

Licences and largesse were also bestowed by the Black Prince's council on certain individuals at this time. John, son of Roger Facy, of Latchley in the manor of Calstock, was one of several young men who were licensed by letter "to enter Holy Church and receive Holy Orders, minor and major, notwithstanding that he was begotten and born of bondfolk." Vacancies caused by the Black Death among the priests and clergy had to be filled, even if it meant lowering the standards of entry. A similar licence was given to Robert Prout, another Calstock bondman, in September 1362.
One of the Black Prince's knights, Sir Neil de Lorraine, who had fought with him in Gascony, most notably at the Battle of Poitiers, was rewarded in 1358 with an annual portion of the rents of four manors, including Calstock, amounting to 55 pounds 13s 8d. This he was to receive for life. The sum was increased to 80 pounds two years later.
Another knight, Sir John de Sully – "in consideration of his good service to the Prince and the great position he held on the day of the Battle of Poitiers" - was granted 20 pounds yearly from the monies collected by the mayor and burgesses of Exeter, in addition to the 40 pounds he received from the manor of Bradninch in Devon, a village some 10 miles northeast of Exeter. Clearly, one way of advancing the family fortunes was to do well as a soldier and be rewarded by a grateful knight, lord or king.
Meanwhile, John Dabernon, presumably still living in the manor of Calstock, resumed the offices of steward and sheriff in 1358. Robert Elford must have either retired or been disgraced or died.

An interesting aspect of the sea-trade with other countries at that time is contained in an instruction from the prince's council to John Dabernon in September 1359.
The Register says that a small trading vessel (a cog) from Bruges in Flanders was boarded and captured at sea by an English raider and its cargo purloined. As a consequence, Cornish merchants feared to pursue their trade with Flanders, expecting some sort of retaliation. The Black Prince tried to ease the situation by writing to the burgomasters of Bruges and others, "praying them, notwithstanding the said capture, to allow the said merchants with their tin and other wares to cross safely to France and return without hindrance or disturbance." John Dabernon was instructed by the prince's council "to make public proclamation throughout his bailiwick . . . that no diggers or workers of tin cease from digging or making their workings because of the said capture, but proceed with their work, without any fear that anything will come of it." The flow of money from the Prince's possessions in Cornwall had to be maintained.
That same year the Black Prince was campaigning in France again and secured the Peace of Calais in 1360. The following year he married his cousin, Joan, Countess of Kent, and in 1362 he was made Duke of Aquitaine, where he ruled as a vassal sovereign. He led his army into Spain in 1367, coming to the aid of the deposed King of Castile. But his health and resources were ruined by this venture and after a revolt by his French barons, he lost or abandoned some of his conquests and was forced in 1370 to retire to England, where he died six years later at the age of 46.
As his father, Edward III, died aged 65 the following year, in 1377, after a reign of 50 years, the succession passed to the Black Prince's sturdy, fair-haired son, Richard, who was crowned King in Westminster Abbey at the age of ten.
One of the first acts of Richard II's reign was the institution of a new money-making concept, direct taxation, necessitated by the series of increasingly expensive campaigns in France (later known as the Hundred Years War), which had been embarked on and sustained by his bellicose grandfather and father. In 1377 a poll tax was imposed on the population - everyone over the age of 14 had to pay four pence to the government. This was upped in 1381 to 12 pence, which everyone aged 15 and over, regardless of income, had to pay. This led in turn to mass evasion and the Peasants Revolt. Richard himself, now aged 14, negotiated with the rebel leaders about the inequalities of the feudal system, but before long the instigators of the revolt were killed or executed and the rebels faded away.

By this time Willam Honyacombe had also vanished from the scene. The last entry in the Assession Rolls that mentions him is in 1364, when it was recorded that Honyacombe was now held by John, son of John Clerk, a freeman – "which Willam Honyacombe held in the last assession."
There is no record of any other Honeycombe renting land in Calstock that year. Calstock doesn't appear in the Assession Roll for 1371, and there is no mention of Calstock in the few surviving Assession Rolls until 1500.

What happened to Willam and his family? Did he, and they, remain in the manor or move elsewhere? We don't know. The Honeycombe name disappears from Cornish records for over 130 years - though this doesn't mean that they stopped living in Calstock. They were, however, not important enough to be among the ten principal land-owners in Calstock, including Sir John Cornwall, Sir Thomas Arundel, Peter Edgecumbe and David Clark, listed in a Calendar of Inquisitions in 1428.
But in the Assession Roll for 1500 the Honeycombes are back - and they may never have been away. For *five* Honeycombes appear in the Roll as tenants, and the social status and acreage rented by two of them are a slight but significant improvement on William's in 1364.
There are, however, *other* records that predate this particular Assession Roll. Honeycombes are to be found in Court Rolls referring to Calstock in 1470 and perhaps in 1398.

7. CALSTOCK, 1470-1500

Court Rolls, kept in the Public Record Office in London, are the written accounts, in indifferent abbreviated Latin, of the various offences committed by tenants in the manor of Calstock. The manorial courts, at which the Duchy steward or the lord of the manor officiated, attended by the tithing-man, the beadle and reeve, were held irregularly each year, but generally once a month (though less so in winter when the weather was bad). Usually 12 senior or responsible tenants acted as jurors. Those accused of various offences, as well as the complainants, assembled with the all-male court officials and jurors at differing places within the manor, possibly sometimes in barns rather than in people's homes. Fines were a useful way of boosting the manor's income, apart from the money the tenants paid to rent their holdings. It was a system of legalised oppression, of keeping the villagers under control.
Justin Pollard, in *Seven Ages of Britain,* writes, "There were fines for not turning up in court, fines for not providing service to your lord, fines for grubbing-up hedges, fines for digging illegal ditches, and fines for not paying fines." In some manors the tenantry had to pay for a licence to get married, to leave the manor, and to educate their sons. And when the head of the household died, his family had to pay a "heriot" - a fine that required them to give the lord of the manor the family's best beast.
The first surviving Court Roll for Calstock, dated 1365-67, is largely illegible and no Honeycombes can be seen.
It was at this time that Geoffrey Chaucer, employed by John of Gaunt in London as a business adviser and agent, began to write verse works in English, translated mainly from French, works that culminated about 1389 in *The Canterbury Tales*, not long after Wycliffe's Bible, the first written in English (and hand-written) appeared. Books would not begin to be printed in England, by William Caxton, for another 100 years.
The next Court Roll, dated in the 22nd year of the reign of Richard II (1399), is partly illegible, but a name that might be Peter Haccomb or Hancomb or Hanicomb can be discerned. This Peter appeared before the court charged with breaking into the lord of the manor's park and taking 24 sheep and one heifer. Henry Sandulk stood as Peter's surety or pledge, and Peter was fined 8d. He was probably not a Honeycombe.
But in 1471, during the reign of Edward IV, a Geoffrey Honeycombe (spelt Honycomb) makes a definite appearance.
Geoffrey is of some importance in this history, being the probable ancestor of Matthew Honeycombe, from whom all the present-day Honeycombes descend.
From now on, to standardise the surname, it will be given here as Honeycombe - variations of Honicombe were in fact the most usual way the name was spelt by clerks and others over the next 300 years. And, as first names are frequently repeated, it will be necessary to differentiate the various Richards, Johns, Walters and Rogers by numbering them.

Geoffrey Honeycombe (1) was ordered by the manorial court in 1471, along with seven other tenants, to repair their ruinous houses. This Geoffrey is very probably the same man as the Geoffrey who appears 29 years later in the Assession Roll for 1500. Or it could of course be his son.
In the following year, 1472, there occurs an entry in the Court Roll for Calstock which is difficult to interpret. It records first of all that in January, Richard Honeycombe (1) was one of the jurors, and then in February that John Honeycombe (1) was one of six jurors ordered to see to the destruction of all the homes ("omnes destructiones domarum") in the manor – "and they say under oath that two barns, three bakehouses and one hall have been destroyed and are to be rebuilt by next court."
What is meant by this and what happened, and why was such drastic action needed?
It's possible that there had been yet another outbreak of plague, and that the leaders of the manorial community had decided, in the bitter chill of winter, to take some pre-emptive and curative action to curtail the regeneration of the plague in the spring. This may have been partially effective - fire driving out or destroying the rats and killing the fleas.

The plague had indeed been rife elsewhere in England the previous summer. Sir John Paston, writing to his brother in September 1471, says, "Please send me word if any of our friends or well-wishers are dead, for I fear that there is a great mortality in Norwich and in other boroughs and towns in Norfolk. I assure you that it is the most widespread plague I ever knew of in England, for by my faith I cannot hear of any pilgrims nor of any man who rides or goes anywhere, that any town or borough in England is free of the sickness. May God put an end to it, when it please him."
In the list of buildings destroyed in the manor of Calstock in February 1472 - barns, bakehouses and a hall - there is no mention of homes. Is some distinction implied here between wood, thatch and wattle homes and the aforesaid buildings, which may have been stone-built? If so, what about the mills and the manor house, not to mention the church?
Unfortunately, the Court Rolls provide no further information as to what actually occurred. It seems inconceivable that *all* the homes in the manor, as many as 150, were destroyed, the thatched and wooden ones presumably being set on fire. The picture of the cottages, huts and houses of the villagers in flames is a terrible one. And it was February. Where did they live and how, while their homes were being rebuilt? Did they shelter, like refugees from some disaster, in the manor house and the church?

England at that time was in the throes of the so-called Wars of the Roses - although these barely disrupted manorial life in most of the counties of England, and hardly at all in Cornwall. The battles were between the warring armies of Yorkist and Lancastrian nobles and knights, disputing who should rule the country, who should be King, and were waged across central England.
Daphne du Maurier, in *Vanishing Cornwall*, says, "During the Wars of the Roses most of the leading gentry were for the House of Lancaster - Edward Courtenay of Boconnoc, Sir Thomas Arundell of Lanherne, Richard Edgecumbe of Cotehele, John Treffry of Place House in Fowey; but Sir Henry Bodrugan, of Bodrugan near Mevagissey, declared his support for the House of York."
After the Battle of Barnet, won in April 1471 by Edward IV's faction, the Earl of Warwick was killed. That very same day Queen Margaret and her only son, Prince Edward, aged 17, landed at Weymouth in Dorset, where their forces were joined by the Lancastrian Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Devon. The Queen's army marched north, intending to join up with her Welsh supporters. But Edward IV caught up with them at Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire on 4 May and the Lancastrians were routed. Prince Edward and several nobles were killed, Queen Margaret was captured, and later that month the mentally unstable Henry VI was murdered in the Tower of London on the orders of the victorious Edward IV. However, it would not be until the death of the Yorkist Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 (when Richard Edgcumbe of Cotehele was knighted by the new Lancastrian King, Henry Tudor) that general peace and stability returned to England with Henry Tudor's accession as King Henry VII.
In this and in most historical asides that follow, Wikipedia on the Net has been an invaluable research tool in biographical matters concerning England's Kings and Queens.

After the deliberate destruction of various buildings in the manor of Calstock in 1472, some sort of normality would have returned within two years or so, while fines, rents and taxes continued to be paid.
In 1473 Sir Nicholas Prenta, who was the reeve the preceding year (and possibly lord of the manor), was fined 2d because he had concealed a plea of trespass brought against Ralph Wyllyden by Richard Honeycombe (1). That same year Richard was one of the jurors who presented the new reeve and the new tithing-man to the court in October. He was also involved in various actions until 1503, once as a joint pledge or surety with the reeve.
Honycome (sic) itself is mentioned in 1475, when Thomas Osborne handed over a temporary tenure in Honycome to John Lalbion.
Richard Honeycombe's social standing in the manor must have been fairly high. He acted as a juror and as a surety for others more than once.

In March 1487, two years into the reign of Henry VII, Richard was given a piece of land called Harrowbarrow Cliff by Johanna (?) Philip. In September that year he and Geoffrey Honeycombe (1), probably his brother (who had also been a juror), were charged by John Taylor the younger of Metherell with an unresolved plea of trespass. This firmed up the following year when Richard and Geoffrey were charged by the same John Taylor with killing four of Taylor's sheep. Compensation seems not to have been paid, as the case against the two Honeycombes came up for review at six more courts. Meanwhile, Richard asked Richard Taylor to pay a debt of 6s 1d, which also apparently went unpaid despite the reeve's intervention.

John Honeycombe (1) of Trehill appears in the Court Rolls in January 1488, when he and John Hawkin paid a fine of 8d. Later we find that at the assession in 1493 he had three dwellings and 32 acres in Trehill (otherwise known as Hill). And then Walter Honeycombe (1), probably Geoffrey's or Richard's son, was fined with John Dyry, 8d each, in March. The full entry is worth reproducing in translation as being representative of the minutes or notes written at the time by the duty manorial clerk.

"At the manorial court at East Harrowbarrow on the day of March next after the Conversion of St Paul, in the third year of the reign of King Henry VII (26 March 1488). The reeve stated that he had put up a stack of timber of the Lord King, namely sheds at the Hatches, and John Dyry and Walter Honeycomb (1), by leave of the Lord at 8d each, came and seized the said timber there and took it away and broke down the stack. And the said John and Walter came and presented themselves by leave of the Lord King for the aforesaid transgression.

At this same court, held indoors somewhere in East Harrowbarrow, near Honeycombe, Richard and Geoffrey appeared once more in connection with the offences involving John Taylor the younger and Richard Taylor, John's brother or father.

In April, Richard and five other jurors were instructed to see to the repair of all the homes within the manor. The repairs in this case may have been caused by storm damage or a great gale.

The weather in England was generally worse in those days than nowadays. Winters were colder and there was more snow and frost. Between 1400 and 1800 the country suffered from what is sometimes known as the Little Ice Age, and in this period the River Thames froze over above London Bridge 25 times. The river was slower moving then, and wider, and the narrow spans of London Bridge, on which shops and houses stood, acted as a dam. When the river froze, Frost Fairs were held on the iced-over surface, some lasting several days; the first was in 1564. Winter games were played, people danced, horses were raced, oxen were roasted, bears and bulls were baited, and tented booths and stalls sold food and drink. The River Tamar, which was not as wide as the Thames, must have afforded the Calstock villagers similar entertainments when it froze over, when they could walk on a clear day over to the Devon bank.

Bad weather, late frosts and rainy summers, might also ruin crops later on in the year. And no doubt there were months when it didn't rain at all.

In August 1488, John Honeycombe (1) asked John Hawkin to pay a debt of 1d - a debt that was apparently taken over by Richard Honeycombe (1) in September, when he asked John Hawkin the older to pay a similar debt.

The last time Richard's name appears in the Court Rolls is in June 1503. He and John Honeycombe (1) were among eight men who failed to make an appearance at the court and were fined 1d each. It seems that Richard may have died that year. Alternatively, he may have been too ill to appear at the manorial court.

As Richard's first appearance in the Court Rolls is dated 1472, when he and other jurors were instructed to destroy all the homes within the manor, we may assume that this Richard, who is recorded as living in the manor from 1472 to 1503 at least, was born perhaps about 1450.

It's unlikely that he would have been co-opted as a juror if he was a teenager - though the deaths caused by the plague of 1471 might well have made this necessary. We have further evidence that he was of some standing in the manor - along with John, who had three dwellings and 32 acres at Trehill in 1493, sharing one with Richard Vezy - as in the Assession Roll for 1500, when the Assession Rolls resume, Richard, a freeman, is in possession of two dwellings and 22 acres in

Harrowbarrow, with Geoffrey as a surety, as well as a dwelling and 19 acres in Kingsgarden, which he shares with Walter Honeycombe (1), Richard's or Geoffrey's son. Walter and all the tenants in Kingsgarden also shared 12 acres of wasteland there.
Richard, therefore, held or shared *three* dwellings and 41 acres and had the use of 12 acres of wasteland, the renting of all of which cost him about 6s 6d a year. All this makes him the most affluent Honeycombe, of whom we know something, since 1326.
Harrowbarrow was beyond Metherell - both manorial holdings being to the west of Honeycombe, which in 1500, minus two of its acres since 1493, was held by John Dobyn. Kingsgarden was down by the river, to the north of the village and Calstock church, and below the Hatches.
In 1500 five male Honeycombes are named in the Assession Roll made that year - Richard, Geoffrey, Walter, Thomas and John of Trehill, and it seems likely that they were not only related to each other but descended from the John and William Honeycombe who had lived at Honeycombe between 1326 (at least) and 1357. At this distance we cannot know who was the father, who the son or brother. But we can be sure that the Honeycombes were now well established in the manor of Calstock and that, as no other Honeycombes are to be found at this time in any other English county, one of the aforesaid five is the probable progenitor of all the Honeycombes in the world today.
All things considered - including the evidence of later Rolls and documents - it would seem that Richard (1) and Geoffrey (1) were brothers (the years in which they appear in the Court Rolls are roughly the same), that John of Trehill was probably an older brother, and that Walter (1) was most probably Richard's son (they shared together), while Thomas Honeycombe (1) was probably the Thomas who shared a house and 22 acres for a few years from 1507 with Geoffrey Honeycombe (his father?). A later Thomas (2) was definitely Walter's son - he is named as such in the Assession Roll for 1528.

Mostly unknown to the Honeycombes and the inward-looking rural community of Calstock, the world at the end of the fifteenth century was being opened up by a few small Spanish and Portuguese sailing-ships making epic voyages in uncharted oceans. The Cape of Good Hope had been reached and rounded; Columbus reached the West Indies and almost landed in America; and the coasts of India and South America were seen and surveyed. After these triumphs of navigation Spain and Portugal agreed to divide the as yet unexplored parts of the world between them.
In England, King Henry VII, an ascetic, austere and miserly man, the first of the Tudor dynasty, having crushed ill-fated attempts to seize his throne by two pretenders, Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, was establishing a sort of absolute monarchy. He was widely respected abroad. But his policy of royal marriages involving his two sons and a daughter would lead eventually, and all unknowingly, to the founding of the Church of England and its separation from the Catholic Church, and then the amalgamation of the crowns of England and Scotland. While he reigned, however, from 1485 to 1509, England prospered and was at peace.
Simon Schama says in his entertaining *A History of Britain 1* that a visitor to an English village would have seen at the end of the 15th century what had never been seen before – "A church handsomely rebuilt in the solid, economic elegance of the Perpendicular; for the first time an alehouse with a name: and at the heart of the cluster of houses a grand and handsome dwelling for the biggest tenant farmer in the area. This was no longer a glorified wattle-and-daub single-bay hut but a miniature manor house, with its own hall and servants to wait on the master and mistress, a buttery at the back, a cellar below and private retiring chambers. Out of the fires of pestilence and bloodshed had come, then, that most unlikely survival: the English country gent."
Three of the Cornish equivalents of that gent in Calstock would have been Richard Honeycombe (1) of Harrowbarrow, Geoffrey Honeyconbe (1) of Kingsgarden and John Honeycombe (1) of Trehill, all three renting more than one dwelling in the manor as well as more than 80 acres of land between them.
But none of their houses would have been as large or as splendid as the house which was in the process of being built of granite, sandstone and slate above the village of Calstock at Cotehele.

Sir Richard Edgecumbe had begun building the house in 1490, and it was finished 30 years later by his son. In the 1560s, however, the main residence of the Edgecumbes was moved to Mount Edgcumbe opposite Plymouth. This house was later on rebuilt at various times and then destroyed in the Second World War by a German bomb. It was rebuilt yet again and occupied by the Earls of Mount Edgcumbe until 1987.

John Honeycombe's home at Trehill (or Hill as it became) would have been much more modest than Cotehele. As it happened, Trehill was the geographical link between the house at Honeycombe and Cotehele House. Anyone walking from Honeycombe to Cotehele would have passed through the fields and woods of Trehill, where John Honeycombe had his home. Indeed, looking northwards up the valley from his homestead, John Honeycombe would have seen distant smoke rising from vents or chimneys in the house that bore his name.

8. HENRY VIII, EDWARD VI AND MARY I, 1500-1558

The Assession Roll for 1500 tells us of a considerable shake-up of the holdings in Trehill. The properties previously held by John Honeycombe - two dwellings and 17 acres, which were shared with Richard Vezy, went to Richard Williams; and a dwelling and 15 acres, previously held by John Honeycombe on his own, were taken over by William Penny. At the same time a John Honeycombe took another dwelling and 18 acres in Trehill, previously held by John Cregges, as well as Cregges's half of another dwelling and 18 acres. It seems that we either have a major change in John Honeycombe's circumstances or that we are dealing with *two* Johns, father and son.

These major transfers of property were possibly occasioned by family marriages, of sons or daughters, or by exchanges of property between related members of a family, or by somebody's demise B in this case the death of John Honeycombe (1). Perhaps John Honeycombe (2) had married a daughter of John Cregges, and his sisters had married a Williams and a Penny. Daughters could also be a father's sole heir, as we find out later, and widows could take over their husband's holdings.

Why would John (1), if still alive, dispose of three dwellings and 32 acres in Trehill and then take on one and a half dwellings and a different 36 acres also in Trehill? Besides, he must have toiled away for many years at his first holding, and such an outlay of hard labour and expense must usually have been jealously guarded, as if it really were his property, until nothing less than death or illness, or marriage, forced a change. It seems possible that we now have a John Honeycombe (2).

If so, the John Honeycombe (2) of Trehill, who took one and a half dwellings and 36 acres in Hill from John Cregges in 1500, remained in possession of them throughout King Henry's reign, passing them on when he died to his son, Richard (2), in 1549. We know John (2) had a wife called Johanna, who would have been called, in English, Joan, as she appears as such in November 1502 in a complaint of trespass against Ralph Facy.

Richard Honeycombe (1), who may have been a younger brother of John (1) was in 1500 still in possession of his two dwellings and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow, as well as a dwelling and 19 acres in Kingsgarden, which he shared with Walter (his son?). Walter (1) also had another dwelling and 14 acres all to himself in Kingsgarden. He and Richard and other tenants in Kingsgarden continued to rent the 12 acres of waste in Donnacomb (Danecombe) Hill.

In 1500 Geoffrey Honeycombe (1) had a dwelling and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow, which he had held before, as well as a new holding, 20 acres of waste in Kingsgarden, which he relinquished, however, to John Crabbe in 1507. And Thomas Honeycombe (1), Geoffrey's son, was sharing two dwellings and 22 acres in Kingsgarden with Thomas Prout, which Prout had previously shared with Roger Glede. Thomas had possibly married a daughter of Thomas Prout or Roger Glede.

As neither Walter nor Thomas had any land or dwellings when the previous assession was made (in 1493), we may assume that they were young men in 1500, as the land that they now rented hadn't been held by them before.

From now on the Honeycombes appear with increasing regularity in the Assession Rolls, intermarrying with their neighbours, while their holdings evolved, expanding and altering over the years until the appearance of their names in the Rolls begins to diminish with the accession of the first Stuart King, James I, in 1603. Their glory years as tenants in the manor of Calstock coincided in fact with the years when Gloriana, Elizabeth I, was queen, and Shakespeare was writing his plays.

The Honeycombes remained in Trehill or Hill until 1598. They were in Harrowbarrow until 1654, and in Kingsgarden the longest of all, until 1663. They also took holdings in Beas and Cross between 1528 and 1647. For a time they lived in Latchley and Albaston, and for less than 20 year periods they were tenants of acres and homes in Metherell, Newton, Northendredon, and Calstock Land.

After 1650 there were fewer Honeycombe families in Calstock. But they continued to live in the parish for another 200 years B the last Honeycombe to die in Calstock being, appropriately, a John Honeycombe, a farm labourer, who died there, aged 75, in March 1885.

Honeycombe Hall, which was spelt Honycombe from 1507 for 70 years, became Honicombe in 1577.

The Dobyn family were not long in residence there, John Dobyn and his son, Roger, only living there from 1500 to 1535. The Bartletts then moved in, sharing the holding from 1549 with the Stentaford family, who lived there the longest of all the tenants of the house, occupying Honeycombe for 120 years, until 1669.

Returning to 1500, we find John Honeycombe (2) at Trehill, Richard (1) and Geoffrey (1) at Harrowbarrow, Richard and Walter at Kingsgarden, as was Thomas (1).

Richard had more dwellings and acres in the manor than any of the other Honeycombes at the time. But he didn't hold them for long. He is mentioned for the last time in the Court Rolls in June 1503, when he and John, and several others, failed to appear at court. Each was fined 1d. At the assession in 1507 Richard's two houses and 22 acres go, not to a son, but to John Strike. Presumably he had died before that assession, and the Richard named in a Military Survey made in 1522 cannot therefore be Richard (1) but must be the son of John (2), ie, Richard (2).

Geoffrey Honeycombe (1) lasted until 1516, although he made only two appearances at court after October 1502, when he handed over half of his holding in East Harrowbarrow to his son, Thomas Honeycombe (1).

The Court Roll for 1503 tells us that in February Geoffrey's son, Thomas (1) was fined for the non-payment of a debt and again for not appearing in court, and in September 1503 he complained about two of Robert Hilland's animals straying in Dyzyth and Calstock - respectively, one white sheep and a male foal.

This minor dispute didn't prevent Thomas and Robert Hilland, becoming joint tenants in 1507 of the two houses and 22 acres that Thomas had previously shared with Thomas Prout. Walter Honeycombe (1) continued in 1507 to farm his holding of a house and 14 acres in Kingsgarden on his own, as well as sharing with John Strike the house and 19 acres he had previously shared with (his father?) Richard, and sharing, with others, 12 acres of waste at Donacombe Hill.

Thomas (1) and Walter Honeycombe (1) were both accused in October 1511 of going to East Harrowbarrow on 20 August and there "the said persons wrongfully took so many gross of black tin without paying toll to the Lord King." It seems their defence was that as they were immediate tenants (ie, of the manor) they had a customary right to extract tin without paying any toll to the king.

At the same court Geoffrey (1) and John (2) were fined 3d each for not coming to court and paying what they owed, and in November 1511 John (2) was in trouble several times B with Roger King and Richard Hilland for not paying certain debts, for libelling Thomas Ventin in June 1512, and for

unjustly staging a quarrel with William Brendon Westcot. John (2) then complained to the court more than once that John Harry owed him some money. Walter Honeycombe several times made similar complaints about Richard Lord.
In February 1516 the half of a holding in East Harrowbarrow that Thomas had taken from his father, Geoffrey, in 1502, went to Walter Damarell. Two months later, in April 1516, Geoffrey handed over a holding in East Harrowbarrow called Cliff to Walter Damarell and half of a dwelling in East Harrowbarrow to Thomas.
For some reason, none of the above exchanges is referred to in the Assession Rolls - unless something has been missed or there has been an error in copying. Presumably the East Harrowbarrow transfers were part of the holding of one house and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow that Geoffrey and Thomas are recorded as renting in the Assession Roll for 1507.
In February 1516 John (2) and three others were fined 6d each for some misdemeanour involving cornage - possibly short-changing others on the amount of corn delivered at the mill. It wasn't only John who had disputes with his neighbours. At the manorial court held on 7 April 1516, John (2), Walter (1) and Thomas (1) all tabled complaints about unpaid fines or debts.
It was at this court that an unusual charge was brought against Thomas (1) by the tithing-man, acting as constable, who stated that "on 20 March at Donnacombe, by force and arms, that is to say with an instrument called a billhook, he (Thomas) made an attack on John Coker the younger and drew blood." A billhook was a cutting tool about 40 cm long with a wooden handle, used for cutting off small branches, thick woody plants or saplings. Its blade was sharpened on the inside and curved at the end. It sounds as if Thomas and John Coker were working out of doors, cutting back hedges or undergrowth on a cold March day, when the attack occurred. Thomas must have been much provoked.
The clerk penning the court roll obviously didn't know the Latin for a billhook and wrote the word in English – "videlicet uno Estrumento vocato Bylhoke". Unfortunately the text that follows is corrupt and unreadable, so we don't know what the provocation was, what Thomas said in his defence, if anything, nor what his penalty was.

Walter and two other Honeycombes make an unexpected appearance in a Military Survey of Cornwall carried out in 1522. These surveys and subsequent musters of the military capabilities of a manor or parish are invaluable records of the villagers who possessed some sort of armour or weaponry, as well as of their existence and status. Those summoned to a muster were supposed to be fit and able and aged between 16 and 60.
In the Cornwall Survey, Walter Honeycombe (1) is listed, surprisingly, as having had to pay eight pounds for the privilege of hiring or renting a "full harness" - a full suit of armour - a sum that puts him among the top tenants in the manor's hierarchy. John (2) and Richard Honeycombe (1) paid two pounds, as did most of the men in the manor, but their weapons aren't specified. Only Sir Peter Edgcumbe of Cotehele and John Smale paid more than Walter, and only seven other tenants paid as much - out of a total of 81 listed in the Survey. They would all have been known to Walter, John and Richard, some better than others. Some in this list, like Walter Damarell, the Facys, Martins, Newets, Philips, Taylors, Prouts and Strikes, were closely involved with the Calstock Honeycombes or would become so, through marriage, disputes, or the sharing of the tenements of land.
Walter's suit of armour, of which he must have been enormously proud, would have been stored for safe-keeping in the church, in the care of the rector, named in the Survey as John Davy, curate, whose stipend was six pounds 13s4d a year. A chaplain is also named, but he was probably part of Sir Peter Edgecumbe's household, where a chapel at Cotehele had been built about 1520. John Davy had been employed by an absentee rector, an Italian friar called Sir John Baptist de Bazadonis. The Guide to Calstock's church, written by the Reverend Raymond Wood, tells us that Baptist "also leased part of the glebe to the parish clerk, John Manning, and the remainder of the glebe and tithes to John Bray, who sub-let it to two others."
Interestingly, and very usefully, the Military Survey's entries are amplified by another list - a general Muster of the king's tenants and tinners in 1535.

The year before this, Henry VIII had made himself supreme head of the Church of England; in 1535 Sir Thomas More and Cardinal John Fisher, formerly Bishop of Rochester, who had both opposed Henry's rejection of papal authority and his first wife, were beheaded, as was Henry's second wife the following year.
In faraway Calstock, the person who compiled the Muster noted that Walter Honeycombe (1) and Alexander Trigg jointly owned a bow and six arrows, as did Thomas (1) and John Honeycombe - this John could have been John (2) or John (3), Thomas's son. Richard Honeycombe (2) of Hill, son of John (2), had a bow and a sheaf of six arrows all to himself.
A small "m" and an "ar" beside the name of Richard (2) indicate first of all that he was a part-time or full-time tin miner - 12 other men had an "m" beside their names. He would more than likely have been mining tin at Drakewalls, as Stephen Honeycombe did 24 years later. The "ar" meant that Richard was a capable archer. His bow would have been the traditional longbow, and he might also have had a dagger or a short sword as a defensive/offensive weapon for close-up fighting. Most of the Calstock tenants were, however, sadly lacking in weapons of steel and protective pieces of armour, and although most of the male tenants had bows and arrows, some would not have been very adept as bowmen. Nonetheless, Cornishmen had a reputation for archery, using longer arrows, which suggests a stronger pull.
It was also noted that Philip Honeycombe (1), who could have been a son of Thomas (1) and therefore a grandson of Geoffrey (1), had no weapons. Although Philip was probably in his early twenties - he appears for the first time in the Assession Roll for 1528, when he holds two dwellings and 25 acres in Cross with John Philip - he may not have had a liking for weapons, or have been physically incapable of using them. He may have had some other problem, as we shall see.
Whether any of the Honeycombes took part in any actual warfare isn't known - not until the Civil War. But some of the younger Honeycombes may well have itched to leave the manor and see the world, and service in the military retinue of a local knight or lord may have helped to achieve these aims. Such service would not have lasted very long, a few years at most, and their whereabouts and in what battles they fought, as well as their possible deaths, would not have been recorded.
There is a gap in the Court Rolls after 1516. The next sequence begins in 1539. But we know from the Assession Rolls that Thomas Honeycombe (1), who continued to hold two dwellings and 22 acres in Kingsgarden until 1528 - which he shared consecutively with Thomas Prout, Robert Hilland, Walter Damarell and finally his own son, John - died before 1535. At this assession John (3), described as Thomas's son and heir in the Assession Roll, took possession of the entire holding on his own. From now on, sons and widows are identified in the Rolls as such. Fathers and sons are also sometimes identified as, for instance, John senior (the older) and John junior (the younger). First sons were generally still being given their father's Christian name, or their mother's father's name.
Walter (1) died about 1540. He was still in possession of his dwelling and 14 acres as well as the 12 acres of waste in Danecombe Hill in 1535, and he was also sharing another dwelling and 11 acres with Walter Damarell. In that year Alexander Trigg began sharing the 14 acre holding with Walter, as he did, briefly, in 1549 with Walter's widow, Ricardia Honeycombe. She died a few years later, before the next assession.
Ricardia is such an unusual name, as is Alexander for that time, that it seems likely that they were sister and brother (or that Alexander was her father). Both names indicate some learning or education. Perhaps her family had some religious or mercantile background and were better educated than most.

At this point we must digress again, as some Court Rolls found in the British Museum provide us with the names of four Honeycombes not living in the manor of Calstock. They appear in the manor of Calliland, which was three or four miles northwest of Callington, on the left side of the road going north from Callington to Launceston. The manor corresponds with what used to be the parish of South Hill. Callington had been a small market town since 1267, the market being held there weekly. It also had, in October, an annual Honey Fair.

Between 1531 and 1543 a Richard Honycomb (sic) is recorded by the Court Rolls for the manor of Calliland as having not paid a debt, as being owed money by others, and as serving twice as a juror. This Richard is likely to be the Richard whose widow, Joan, died and was buried in Callington in May 1570.
It is very tempting to try to tie in this Richard and Joan with the contemporaneous Richard (2) and Joan of Trehill in Calstock. The Calstock Richard is named in the Court Rolls there between 1539 and 1562. But he couldn't be serving on two manorial courts as a juror at the same time. Besides, Richard of Trehill's widow, Joan, was still alive in 1577 when she is named in the Assession Roll for that year, and such Christian names among the many Honeycombes spreading out over Cornwall at this time are fairly common. No, the Calliland Richard and Joan are a different couple, he possibly a descendant of the Richard Honeycombe (1) of Harrowbarrow, who appears in the records from 1472 to 1503. As we shall see, the Callington and Liskeard area became a breeding-ground for other Honeycombes in the 16th century, and the Richard and Joan of Calliland may have been the progenitors of this prolific group, which nonetheless had died out by 1750.
The Edward, William and Anthony Honeycombe who feature in the Calliland Court Rolls between 1596 and 1600 in connection with various fines - William was also a juror - can in fact be identified from parish registers with the Edward who married Joan Wilkin in Callington in 1559 and died there in 1596; with his son, William, born in 1561, who married three times (two Joans and an Alice) and died in Callington in 1640; and with another son, Anthony, who died in Callington in 1626.
More of the Honeycombe families in Callington, Liskeard and Menheniot later. Meanwhile, back to the manor of Calstock.

We are now well into the reign of King Henry VIII, who came to the throne in 1509. His older brother, Prince Arthur, Duke of Cornwall and Prince of Wales, a sickly lad, had died of a fever in Ludlow Castle in April 1502, five months after his spectacular wedding in Old St Paul's Cathedral. He was 15 when he married Catherine of Aragon (she was a year older) and was still 15 when he died.
His younger brother, Henry, who was nearly 18 when he was crowned, showed no scruples at the time about marrying Arthur's widow. Henry was a golden lad, six feet tall, well-built, athletic and jovial, and free and easy with his subjects. He was immensely popular. No other king had better prospects when Henry ascended the throne. Ironically, in view of what was to come, his defence of the Papacy against Martin Luther's forthright criticisms won him in 1521 the historic title "Defender of the Faith". Henry would in fact remain a devout Catholic all his life.
By 1524, however, he had grown tired of Catherine, who had failed to provide him with a living heir, apart from Princess Mary. Henry wanted a son. And so he initiated a sequence of events that would lead to the overthrow of Cardinal Wolsey; the separation of the church from Rome and the creation of the Church of England, whose supreme head he became; and the divorce from Catherine and subsequent marriage with Anne Boleyn, which was followed within a few years by her execution in May 1536. Uniquely, she knelt upright and her head was cut off with one blow of a sword, not an axe. Then came the dissolution and destruction of the Catholic monasteries and the confiscation of their wealth and land (1535-39), during which the extensive lands of the Benedictine Abbey of Tavistock were given to the Duke of Bedford.
Protest and outrage at all these seemingly arbitrary changes to the religious customs and observances of a thousand years had led in 1536 to an uprising in the north of England called the Pilgrimage of Grace, which was savagely put down. King Henry instructed the Duke of Norfolk, "Our pleasure is that you shall cause such dreadful execution to be done upon a good number of every town and village and hamlet that have offended, as they may be a fearful spectacle to all others hereafter."
All this must have been received with shocked amazement in Calstock, as well as by deeply affronted reactions and some resistance, especially when revered statues and Papist inscriptions were ordered to be destroyed or defaced, the medieval paintings on the walls of St Andrew's covered with whitewash, the mass outlawed, and a new kind of worship decreed. Not all this

happened at once of course, and some Catholic practices, like celibacy, transubstantiation and confession were retained. The new Church of England was not as different, however, from the Roman Catholic Church as some avid Protestant reformers wished.
What must have intrigued some of the congregation of St Andrew's in Calstock was hearing the Bible being read in English. But that didn't last long. Bibles in English were soon removed from the use and hearing of the masses and restricted by the King to the aristocracy. He told Parliament in 1545, "I am very sorry to know and hear how unreverently that most precious jewel, the Word of God, is disputed, rhymed, sung and jangled in every alehouse and tavern."
Amid all these changes Henry remarried again and again. Four other wives followed Anne Boleyn, one dying after giving birth to the desired son and heir, another being beheaded. None was actually divorced from Henry VIII, their marriages being annulled. Towards the end of his reign the golden lad had become a gross (54 inches around the waist), ulcerated, gout-ridden and murderous tyrant. He died in January 1547, aged 55.
It was nonetheless during all this national and domestic upheaval that a seemingly minor social event occurred which would be of the utmost significance to families and family historians in England and around the world - the beginning of parish registers.
In 1538 parish priests, vicars and rectors were instructed to maintain a record of all those who were baptised, married and buried within their parishes. Next to nothing has survived of these early records, which were poorly maintained, if at all, by the clergy concerned. It was not until the reign of Elizabeth, when Church of England services and administration stabilised, that parish registers began to be consistently written and kept. Even then many registers have since been lost or destroyed.
The first surviving Calstock registers date, unhappily late in the series from our point of view, from 1656 - though Bishop's Transcripts can take us back to 1620. The earliest Honeycombe entry in a Cornish register is that of the marriage of Edward Honeycombe and Joan Wilkin in Callington in 1559.

At the assession held in Calstock in 1528, Roger Dobyn, son and heir of John Dobyn, shared Honeycombe with John Bartlett. John Honeycombe (2) was still at Hill; John (3), son of Thomas, was still at Harrowbarrow; Walter (1) and Thomas (2), son of Walter, were still in Kingsgarden, where Walter had acquired another holding, one house and 11 acres, which he shared with Walter Damarell; and a newcomer, Philip Honeycombe (1), took two houses and 25 acres in Cross, which he shared with John Philip. As John Philip is named first, Philip Honeycombe would seem to be the younger man. Perhaps he was married to John Philip's daughter.
The next assession was in 1535, when Philip Honeycombe (1), who is listed in the 1535 Muster as having no weapons, again took two houses and 25 acres in Cross, now sharing them with John Philip and a third tenant, John Facy. Roger Dobyn and John Bartlett were still living at Honeycombe; John Honeycombe (2) was in Hill (Trehill); John (3) in Harrowbarrow; Walter (1) and his son, Thomas (2), in Kingsgarden; and John (3), son of Thomas (1), added to his Harrowbarrow holding by taking over the house and 11 acres he had previously shared in Kingsgarden with his father, Thomas (1) and Walter Damarell. Walter (1) still had his 12 acres of waste in Donnacomb Hill.
The next Court Roll to have survived dates from 1539. In this year Philip Honeycombe (1) was fined 3d, along with 16 other tenants, for not coming to court to answer various suits, and Thomas Honeycombe (2), son of Walter, pursued Thomas Strike for the payment of a debt. Thomas was also elected as a special sort of juror, a trior, along with 18 others, to settle some dispute or misdemeanour concerning the jurors. The clerk noted, "Sworn upon their oath they reported nothing and affirmed that all was well."
Richard Honeycombe (2) of Hill, son of John (2), was charged from 1539 with various minor offences concerning "false quarrel", as well as debts and trespass. By 1540 he is described as Richard senior (the older), which indicates he had a young or teenage son, also called Richard (3). We also learn that Richard senior's wife was another Johanna or Joan. She claimed the non-payment of a debt from Robert Martin in 1540 and in September she was in trouble, along with

Thomas (2) and six others, for being brewers of ale and for breaking some law connected either with quantity or quality. Brewing in the manor was done by some wives or widows to supplement the family's income.
In November, the Kingsgarden holding that had been handed over by Thomas to his son, John (3) was returned to Thomas. John (3) continued, however, to retain the house and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow that had once been held by Geoffrey and Thomas.
It's in March 1541 that Thomas Stentaford makes an appearance when he takes a half holding in Honeycombe from Roger Dawkin. From then on Stentafords lived in Honeycombe until 1669.
In June 1541, we hear of Walter (1) and his son, Thomas (2).
"To this court came Walter Honeycombe and gave into the hands of the Lord Prince the whole part, namely half of one holding with its appurtenances in East Harrowbarrow, which the same Walter held there, upon condition of title that Thomas Honeycombe should have the same proportion, according to, etc . . . And after this the same Thomas came and took the said proportion or half from the said Lord Prince." He paid 8d for this and his sureties were William Bond and Richard Strike.
The Lord Prince (of Wales) was now Henry VIII's four-year-old son, Edward, who was also Duke of Cornwall.
This Court Roll entry is the last in which Walter Honeycombe (1) is named. By the time of the next assession he has vanished from the scene. He is first mentioned in a Court Roll in 1488, when he was charged with stealing some timber with John Dyry. If he was 16 when this offence was committed, and accordingly born in 1472, he would have been about 70 when he died.
The status and behaviour of his son, Thomas (2), improved over the next few years, and he served with Richard Honeycombe (2) as a juror in 1549 and 1550, by which time Henry VIII had died and Edward, Henry's only son, by his third wife, Jane Seymour, was King - crowned in 1547 when he was not quite ten years of age. Jane Seymour's brother, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, had been appointed Lord Protector of the realm.
No Assession Roll for 1549 has survived. But as the one for 1556 refers back to it, we can say that in 1549, Thomas Stentaford and John Bartlett were in Honeycombe; that Richard Honeycombe (2) was still renting one and a half houses and 36 acres in Hill; that Philip Honeycombe (1) had two houses and 25 acres in Cross, which he now shared with John Facy and Richard Facy; that John Honeycombe (3), son of Thomas, had one house and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow; that Richard Honeycombe the younger (3) shared two houses and 12 acres with John Prout in Harrowbarrow; that Thomas Honeycombe (1) had the house and 22 acres in Kingsgarden that had briefly gone to his son, John (3); while Thomas Honeycombe (2) retained his house and 22 acres in Kingsgarden, where he also shared a house and 11 acres with Walter Damarell. The holding of a house and 14 acres in Kingsgarden, formerly held by Walter Honeycombe and Alexander Trigg, was held in 1549 by Alexander and Walter's widow, Ricardia Honeycombe.

1549 was a year of much religious tension and rebellion in England as the new believers, the Protestants, headed by the boy King, sought to suppress the practise and expressions of Papist worship. Much of the West Country was determinedly Catholic and many Cornish people, including some if not all of the Calstock Honeycombes, would have resented the winds of change that were sweeping the old observances away. Much of Celtic Cornwall still didn't speak English.
A doctor of physic, former monk and seasoned traveller, Andrew Borde, writing in 1547, two years before he died, said: "There be many men and women the which cannot speak one word of English, but all Cornish." He must have been referring not to the lush valleys of the Tamar but to the Cornish people living in the southwest, beyond Bodmin and Truro, as he describes Cornwall as "a poor and very barren country of all manner of things except for tin and fish." He says, "Their meat and their bread and their drink is marred and spoilt for lack of good ordering and dressing. Furze and turfs are their chief fuel. Their ale is stark and . . . thick as pigs has wrestled in it." Eastern Cornwall was not so devoid of home comforts, woods and fields and had more varied fare.
The new King, Edward VI, was the first Protestant monarch to rule the nation. As a well-read and well-educated boy, and as an opinionated teenager, he was fairly fanatical about the new

Protestant faith. Even when aged ten he had expressed the opinion that the Pope was "the true son of the Devil" and an anti-Christ. It wasn't too difficult for the Lord Protector and Thomas Cranmer, the bearded and married Archbishop of Canterbury, to propose and frame the various Acts that effected a much more radical reformation of the church than that initiated by Edward's father.

Simon Schama says in his *A History of Britain 1*: "A special 'injunction' from the royal council banned almost all the traditional customs and ceremonies. There would be no more blessing of the candles at Candlemas . . . The religious guilds and fraternities went. In their place, poor boxes were posted in the churches. Any cults of saints and processions that had survived . . . were now done away with . . . Carts and wagons were filled with the smashed-up debris of the old church: roods, stained glass, vestments and vessels . . . Bells were taken down from the belfries . . . Sounds as well as sights were banished from the liturgy" - like piping, singing, chanting and organ-playing. Stone altars were replaced by plain wooden tables in the chancel and men and women sat on opposite sides of the church and not together. Bibles in the English language reappeared in churches, and a new Book of Common Prayer, in English, ensured that the mystical Latin element of services was removed. The words "dearly beloved", spoken by the priest (as he was still called) were heard for the first time during a service.

This was all very thrilling to some, who relished the more direct and personalised approach to religion and to God. But there were others who clung to the old ways, to Catholicism and the Latin mass. This led to uprisings in different parts of the nation.

In April 1547, at Helston in Cornwall, an official supervising the destruction of graven images and idols was beaten to death outside the church by an outraged crowd. Justin Pollard tells what happened next.

"By the Easter of 1549, rebellion was brewing in the West Country. The abolition of the centuries-old Palm Sunday procession rankled, but in towns like Ashburton in Devon it was the dissolution of the chantries that really hurt . . . The townsmen, and a few local farmers, responded by beating up the servants of the Commissioners sent to confiscate the chantry's property . . . But it wasn't money that proved the final straw in the far west that Easter, but the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer to replace the Latin service book, which was promptly banned . . . Reports reached London in early June that there was trouble in Bodmin and that it was spreading. When the priest at Sampford Courtney in Devon began reading to his congregation from the new prayer book on 10 June, there were loud protests and he was forced to begin again, this time using the old Latin missal. With tempers flaring, mobs were soon on the streets. As news of the rising spread, groups from villages across the West Country answered the call to rebellion . . . By the beginning of July a 'peasant army', of a kind unseen since the Peasants' Revolt, had gathered on the outskirts of Exeter and laid siege to the city . . . The demands of the rebels give us an insight into the concerns of the people of rural Cornwall and Devon: the ancient ceremonies of the Church were to be restored, the statues brought back, the much-hated English prayer book and the bibles recalled. Perhaps more strangely to modern eyes, they demanded that Purgatory be reinstated."

The so-called peasant army, probably made up of villagers more like the Calstock tenants, were set upon and massacred by a royal army of mercenaries. Savage retribution was exacted on others, especially clergy, who had rebelled. Humphrey Arundell, a devout Catholic who was related to the Arundells of Lanherne and commanded the Cornish rebels, was captured, taken to London and hung, drawn and quartered. The mayor of Bodmin was ordered to build a gallows in front of his home, on which he was then hanged. Similar treatment was meted out to the reeve of St Ives. Another leader of the Cornish rebels was hung in chains from his church tower and left there to die and his body to rot.

There were other protests, demonstrations and revolts in other parts of the nation. What part the tenants in the manor of Calstock played in any of this we cannot know. But we can be sure that there was a good deal of tension in the manor and that the rector of St Andrew's, Anthony Hunt, whatever his beliefs, must have been a nervous man.

Catholicism and more confusion had swept the nation after Edward VI, aged 15, died of a chest infection in April 1553. His much older half-sister, Mary, became Queen and, as a card-carrying

Catholic, set about dismantling all that the Protestants had contrived to change - churches were repainted and the Latin mass, statues, stone altars and roods screens were restored. In November 1554, England became officially Catholic again, with the Pope in Rome as the head of the English Church. Before this an alliance with Spain and the Habsburg Emperor, Charles V, was cemented when Mary, aged 37, married the Emperor's 26-year-old son, Prince Philip of Spain, a widower with a son and heir, in July 1554.
That year, in Calstock, the rector, Anthony Hunt, was evicted and replaced by an ex-monk, Richard Eden, and then by a Catholic priest, John Bishop.
The burning of heretics and those who refused to acknowledge the authority of Rome began in 1555. In three years, 280 people were cruelly burned at the stake, 60 of them women. Three bishops also died in this way, as did Thomas Cranmer, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. Mary became increasingly unpopular, and was maligned as Bloody Mary. Calais was lost to the French, the Spaniards at court seemed as if they might take over the government, and Mary herself, after two false pregnancies, failed to produce an heir.
While the burning of heretics continued - to the disgust and alarm, one hopes, of the various Honeycombes in Calstock - the next manorial assession was held, in 1556.

Thomas Stentaford now shared Honeycombe with William Bartlett, John Bartlett's brother; Richard Honeycombe (2) was at Hill; his wife, Joan, former wife of John Edward senior, took over a house and 30 acres in Latchley with her son, John Edward junior; Philip Honeycombe (1) shared the Cross holding with Robert Facy, whose father and mother, John and Sibyl Facy had died; and John (3) was still in Harrowbarrow, as was Richard junior (3).
In Kingsgarden, Ricardia Honeycombe, widow of Walter (1) had died, and the holding previously rented by her and Alexander Trigg was taken up by Ricardia's son, Thomas (2) and Anthony Lyswell. Thomas (2) continued to retain his two other holdings in Kingsgarden, while the house and 11 acres formerly held by old Thomas (1) since 1500, passed to a son of Thomas, Richard (4). As with Walter (1), Thomas (1) seems also to have lived for many years, dying in his late sixties or when he was over 70.
In this year, 1556, three Richards had holdings in the manor of Calstock. In Hill was Richard (2); in Harrowbarrow his son, Richard (3); and in Kingsgarden Richard (4).
On 20 October 1558, the clerk of the manorial court writing his account of the proceedings, noted, following the usual formula, that the court was held "in the fifth year of the reigns of Philip and Mary". Four weeks later, on 17 November, Bloody Mary died of ovarian cancer; she was 42.
At the next court the clerk noted, perhaps with a happier heart and more of a flourish, that this court was held "in the first year of the reign of Elizabeth the First".
It was at this time that the former non-Catholic rector of St Andrew's, Anthony Hunt, was reinstated and it is here that the next detailed sequence of Court Rolls resumes.

9. ELIZABETH I, 1559-1575

Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn, was 25 when she was crowned queen on 15 January 1559 - the coronation service was the last to be spoken and sung in Latin. Later variously known as Good Queen Bess and the Virgin Queen, and as Gloriana and the Faerie Queene in the epic poem by Edmund Spenser, she was famously indecisive, sharp-witted, short-tempered, penny-pinching and particularly fond of handsome young men.
Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe, as well as other playwrights and poets, came to prominence in her reign, which also saw the first English circumnavigation of the world, made by Sir Francis Drake and his crew in 1577-80 (he was born in Tavistock), as well as the beginning of the English colonisation of North America; the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, in February 1587; the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588; and the founding of the East India Company.

Her reign was marked by an increase in English power and influence abroad and by further religious turmoil, plots against her life and rebellions at home. General affluence and abundance seem to have pervaded the nation, and of the many national holidays, celebrated with fireworks, feasting, bonfires, plays and various entertainments, the day of her accession, 17 November, saw the most rejoicing. She reigned for 44 years, dying in March 1603 when she was 69.
There being no Prince of Wales and no Duke of Cornwall, the Queen herself owned the manor of Calstock, and very much more. It is thought that she might never have married because she would have lost not only her independence but all the estates and income inherited from her father. Her influence within the manor also extended to the services in Calstock Church - though mass was abolished, celibacy was encouraged and saints' days could be observed; the Book of Common Prayer was restored. Elizabeth and her advisers sought to construct a compromise in religious matters that would allow Catholics to continue with the form and practise of their faith, while Protestantism became the State religion and the Queen the Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

At the start of her reign, Richard Honeycombe (2) and his wife, Johanna or Joan, were still living in Hill and in possession of one and a half houses and 36 acres. As we have seen, Joan Honeycombe had been married before; she is described in a Court Roll of 1556, in a matter concerning John Edward the younger, as being the ex-wife of John Edward the older, deceased. Most probably she was Richard's second wife.
His son, Richard Honeycombe junior (3), was in Harrowbarrow, sharing two houses and 12 acres with John Prout the younger; the son of Thomas (1), John (3) was also in Harrowbarrow; Philip Honeycombe (1) was in Cross, sharing two houses and 25 acres with Robert Facy - which separately consisted of one house plus nine acres and one plus 16; Walter's and Ricardia's son, Thomas (2), was in Kingsgarden, as was the son of Thomas (1), Richard (4) with a house and 11 acres.

The Court Rolls for January and February 1559 record nothing of special interest, except that John (3) in Harrowbarrow is described as a thatcher. James Honeycombe, another son of Thomas (1), together with Richard junior (2), was involved in a lengthy dispute with Roger Teague; and Richard senior (2) was a surety in a complaint against John Garth, who "failed to prove that a gray mare was a stray at Hingston." Such a complaint is typical of the minor matters that generally occupied the attention of the court.
But in April 1559 occurred an event that must have shocked the whole of the manor and much distressed the closely related Honeycombe families - Philip Honeycombe hanged himself.

The manorial court for 10 April 1559, when Richard Honeycombe (2) was a juror, after noting that Philip held half of a tenure with appurtenances in Cross, continued in Latin "felonia se suspendit" – "he hanged himself feloniously". This had happened less than two weeks earlier, on 27 March. The court then noted that all his goods and chattels, which were valued at 25 shillings by Richard Honeycombe and Roger Dawkin, passed to the queen.
But it didn't end there. Philip's widow, Margaret (or Margery), was present and was informed by the lord of the manor, or his representative, that despite her husband's demise she was "the tenant of the said half holding to the end of her life, according to the custom of the manor." Whereupon she officially received the half holding, expressed her allegiance to the Lady Queen and was recognised as tenant for life for a payment of 8d, her sureties being Richard Honeycombe and William Newet.
The deceased Philip had made his first appearance in the Assession Rolls in 1528, when he began sharing two dwellings and 25 acres at Cross with John Philip. As John Philip had sole possession of these holdings at the previous assession, it seems that Philip Honeycombe might have married into the Philip family, or that there was some other family connection. John Facy joined the set-up in 1535 - when Philip was recorded in the military Muster as possessing neither bow nor arrows. John Philip disappears in 1549, to be replaced by Robert Facy, who in 1556 shared the double holding

with Philip Honeycombe. But within the next six years Robert had also died, to be succeeded by his widow, Agnes Facy.

In 1559 Philip would most likely have been in his forties. Why did he kill himself? Was he, or did he become, mentally unstable? Or was he suffering from some fatal disease? One imagines he must have chosen a wooden beam in a barn or an outhouse from which to hang himself, or a secluded tree in a wood.

His name is unusual for that time and place and could be Catholic in inspiration - Philip was the name of several French kings and nobles, as well as a Spanish king of Castile. If we are right in thinking he was one of Walter's sons, his mother would have been Ricardia and his uncle or grandfather Alexander Trigg - unusual names and indicative of some learning. Philip and Alexander were also of course celebrated Macedonian kings. It's just possible that Philip's parents were ardent Catholics, as was he, and that he couldn't cope with the reversion to Protestantism at the start of the new reign.

Whatever his religious persuasion, his suicide would have damned him in some people's eyes and, deprived of Christian rites of any kind, he would have had to be buried by his family in unhallowed ground and not within the walls of Calstock's church. If Anthony Hunt had been reinstated as the rector by then, as seems likely, he would have had no option but to follow ecclesiastical law. Nonetheless, one imagines there would have been a good deal of sympathy for Philip's family in such a closed and close community, and for the first time we learn something about the complete family. For from the evidence of the Rolls, we learn later that Philip left behind not just a widow, but a daughter and three sons.

The court held a month after Philip's death, in May, mentions Richard Honeycombe junior (3) of Harrowbarrow twice, once as a surety and once because he had done some unauthorised brewing within the manor - as had four others, including John Prout junior, who shared a holding with Richard junior. For this offence they were all fined 2d each.

Another Honeycombe now makes an appearance, his first - Stephen Honeycombe (1). We eventually learn more about him from the manorial rolls than about any other Honeycombe at this time. At the court held in May 1559 he acted as a surety to John Crossman and also asked a widow, Johanna Baker, to pay some debt.

It seems that Stephen may have been Philip's eldest son, as three years later, at the assession held in 1562, young Stephen shared the two houses and the 25 acres in Cross, which had been Philip's and Robert Facy's tenure, with the widowed Margery Honeycombe and Robert's widow, Agnes. Stephen was given a fourth part - not by Margery (and there's no mention of him being her son) but by Agnes, who also took the most. Perhaps Stephen was married to Agnes Facy's daughter. Richard Honeycombe (2) of Hill and Robert Taylor were the sureties.

The Court Rolls go on to tell us a little more about Philip's family.

In June 1559, three months after his death, Stephen again tried, via the reeve, to get the widow, Johanna Baker, to pay what she owed him; she was fined 2d. At the same court a new Honeycombe, Andrew Honeycombe, was charged with some unspecified transgression or offence in June and July and was fined 2d. Then in September, Philip's widow, Margery Honeycombe, made an appearance at court and asked the court's permission "to lease all her holdings at the Cross to her sons, Andrew and John, until the next assession." This was granted. So now we have the names of two more of Philip's sons, Andrew and John (4), who are apparently living with their mother, Margery, and farming her land and feeding and tending her animals. Or are they?

Six months before this, at a court held in December 1558, a John Honeycombe complained about a trespass committed by Thomas Nethercot. A month later, this John was fined 2d "because he did not prosecute his action in a plea of trespass against Thomas Nethercot." On both occasions he is described in the Court Roll as a "thatcher", to differentiate him from any other John. He is in fact more than likely to have been John (3), son of Thomas - despite the fact that John (3) has been in the Rolls since 1521 and will be named again as a thatcher in 1576, when he must have been, if the same man, approaching 70. What would seem to resolve the problem is that in 1576 John Honeycombe, thatcher, is identified as being "of Harrowbarrow" - which is where John (3) had a holding from 1521 to 1584.

John (4) was not only from Cross but is identified in the Rolls as Margery's son. It seems, from the later evidence of a Muster in 1569, that he did indeed have a trade. He was in fact a weaver.
Although Stephen isn't mentioned in this transfer of Margery's holding in Cross to Andrew and John (and we find out later why - he also had a skilled trade), he was probably living with his widowed mother and his two brothers at Cross. It's more than likely that Andrew also followed a trade.
Meanwhile, in June 1559, Richard senior (2) had applied to be a brewer and keep a tavern. This was granted, at a cost to him of 100 shillings. His sureties, Mark Hawkin and William Webb, were called upon to pay 50 shillings each.
The following month his son, Richard of Harrowbarrow (3), who had got into trouble for unofficially brewing some home-made beer in May, with John Prout junior and three other men, also applied to be a tavern-keeper and he "put down pledges about bearing himself well in brewing and holding a tavern within the manor." The pledges or sureties were John Hill and John Baseley, who handed over 50 shillings each, as against Richard's 100 shillings.
It seems that the Duchy or the lord of the manor had decided to cash in on the tenants' practise of brewing their own beer by establishing an official tavern and tavern-keeper as well as official "tasters" who would certify that the beer was of the best. Whether the two Richards, father and son, had separate taverns we do not know. It's more likely to have been a family business - Richard senior's wife, Joan, had been fined for unauthorised brewing as long ago as September 1540. Presumably the tavern was either at Hill or Harrowbarrow, where the Richards lived. But as Hill was virtually in the middle of the manor, below Honeycombe and within a comfortable distance of most of the tenants' homes, it seems likely that the tavern was established there, long before the Boot Inn became the main pub in Calstock itself.
And what, one wonders, were the varieties of beer the Honeycombes brewed? And what did they call their tavern? The Beehive? There must have been some extensive celebrations among the Honeycombes and their friends in the manor that first summer of Elizabeth's reign.
It had already been a fairly momentous year for the Calstock Honeycombes, but there was another matter involving a Honeycombe that was dealt with by the manorial court before the end of the year.
On 2 December 1559, Sir Peter Edgecumbe and John Knight reported to the court that a month ago they had "walked the bounds of the Stannary Work called Drakewalls . .. it remaining empty for want of repair of the bounds." It isn't clear what the particular problem was, but Richard Brendon, John Newet and Stephen Honeycombe came to the court and denied they were at fault. They claimed that the bounds had been legally renewed, according to the custom of the manor. After some argument (presumably) the court concluded that Richard, John and Stephen "should have restored the said Stannary Work", and the tithing-man was asked to ensure that "all the Stannary Work will be newly bounded and enrolled and entered at the very first court of enrolment proclaimed by the Steward."
It would appear from the fact that Richard Brendon, John Newet and Stephen were all summoned by the court to face charges of neglect and inefficiency that these three worked at Calstock Stannary. If so, Stephen may not have been involved in the daily labours of his mother's holding at Cross - and he only had a fourth part of his mother's share - as he was employed at the tin works. It seems that Stephen, like his predecessor, Richard (2), was a tin miner.
The manor was indeed rich with lodes or veins of ore containing lead, copper, silver and tin. Tin, in lodes running east/west, had been dug out of the ground in East Cornwall for over 200 years, and the manor of Calstock had its very own source of tin at Drakewalls, situated between Albaston and what is now the A390. The tin-mine, or stannary, was an open-cast mine, with the hacked out ore being smelted in furnaces on the spot, the furnace's bellows being worked by a water wheel. Tin miners following the line of a lode would tunnel their way into a hillside or deep into the ground, until water seeped in and flooded the diggings B whereupon they had to dig a narrow sloping adit or drain to let the water out.
DB Barton, in *A Historical Survey of the Mines and Mineral Railways of East Cornwall and West Devon*, says of Drakewalls Mine: "Unlike the majority of the other mines in the area this was

primarily a tin producer, the lode here backing up to the surface. In consequence the mine was one of the earliest at work in East Cornwall and during the 18th century, then called Drake's Wall, was worked in a long gunnis or cutting, open to the day, to considerable depth."

It is likely that other Honeycombes, apart from Stephen and Richard (2), were employed at the Calstock Stannary.

Stephen was up before the court again, in January 1560. He and his fellow miner, John Newet, were charged by Sir Peter Edgecumbe with several "defaults" in a plea of trespass and were each fined 3d. In March, Stephen was fined 4d for some transgression involving John Parkin alias Hawkin. In the meantime, Thomas Honeycombe (2) and Richard Honeycombe junior (3), of Harrowbarrow, along with three other men, were fined 4d each because they hadn't taken the trouble to repair their holdings as they'd been asked to do.

Despite this misdemeanour, Richard (3) of Harrowbarrow, and his father, Richard Honeycombe (2) of Hill, both tavern-keepers, were sworn in with 16 other men as jurors, at the court held in April.

We next learn the name of Andrew's wife, when he, and his wife, Joan, were each fined 4d in connection with a plea of trespass in May.

This sequence of Court Rolls (1559-1560) ends with Stephen and the two Richards being fined again and Richard (3) of Harrowbarrow relinquishing some of his land to Griffin Stephen, perhaps to pay off some his debts concerning the setting up and management of the tavern.

The final Court Roll, for July 1560, says about this Harrowbarrow transfer, "To this court comes Richard Honycomb (sic) and surrenders into the hands of the Lady Queen two closes of land with their appurtenances in East Harrowbarrow called Chilscombe by Lyswell Cliff and Sladesland by the holding of John Knight called Quain Park, under the condition that Griffin Stephen should have the same two close of land for himself and have them for his own, according to the aforesaid custom of the manor. And after this Griffin Stephen comes and takes from the Lady Queen the said two closes with their appurtenances in East Harrowbarrow as aforesaid for himself and his heirs, and he made fealty to the said Lady Queen, and gives in acknowledgement 8d."

A close was an enclosure, most probably for farm animals, like sheep or cattle, and the appurtenances would have been the huts or sheds in which the animals sheltered.

No Court Rolls have survived for the next 15 years, until 1575. But the Assession Rolls for 1562 and 1570 tell us more of the Honeycombes' story.

In 1562, Richard Honeycombe senior (2) was still at Hill, in possession of one and a half houses and 36 acres. Joan his (second?) wife and lately the wife of John Edward senior, deceased, had acquired a new holding and is recorded as sharing a house and 30 acres at Latchley with John Edward the younger, his father's son and heir. We know she became Richard's wife after the death of John Edward the older as she is described as *Richard's* widow at the next assession. John Edward the younger was probably her son from her first marriage to John Edward senior. Latchley was a small village or hamlet some two miles north of the larger village of Calstock, on the other side of Hingston Down.

Richard junior (3), whose partner in Harrowbarrow since 1549, John Prout, had died, now shared the holding with Nicholas Hawkin and John Prout's widow, Katherine, who took a fourth part of it. Presumably Richard still ran the Honeycombe tavern or taverns with his father.

At Cross, Stephen still had a fourth part of the holding shared by the two widows, Agnes Facy and Margery Honeycombe.

There is no mention of Andrew. He may have died. On the other hand he and his wife, Joan, finding it impossible to live and work with the two widows, may have left the manor to find work in another manor or town - which would have been more possible of course if he had a trade.

Ageing Thomas Honeycombe (2), son of Walter, was still in possession of the house and 22 acres in Kingsgarden in 1562, which he'd had since 1528, as well as his father's former home and 14 acres, which he now shared with Richard Hawkin. He also had half of a dwelling and 11 acres which was now shared with Walter Damarell's widow, Margaret. His son, Richard (4), was still in possession of the house and 11 acres that he'd taken over six years earlier, and the other son of Thomas (2), John the thatcher (3), still had a house and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow.

James re-appears in this 1562 assession and in a part of the manor not previously associated with Honeycombes, Metherell, although it was adjacent to the Honeycombe tenure. For just the period of this assession, James Honeycombe shared a dwelling and 19 acres with five other people - Robert Bond, Andrew Dodge, Walter Hilland, Philip Bealbury and Elizabeth Crapp. This disparate group might have been elderly, unmarried persons or widows and widowers, in effect living together in an old folks' home. On the other hand, they could have been living together because they had the same occupation or allied trades. James probably had a trade, as nowhere else is he mentioned in connection with any holding, apart from the fact that in 1570 he gave half of his father's holding in Kingsgarden to Stephen, his brother, and for a few years rented a quarter of it himself. This Stephen is not of course the Stephen of Cross, Philip's son. The father of this Stephen (2), and of James, was Thomas Honeycombe (2) of Kingsgarden.
The house and 30 acres at Honeycombe were shared in 1562 by Thomas Stentaford and John Bartlett.

A deadly and widespread outbreak of plague hit England in 1563. About 60,000 people died, 20,000 of them in London. It's possible that this outbreak interrupted the sequence of manorial courts in Calstock.
A year later, in 1564, Michelangelo died in Rome and in Warwickshire Shakespeare was born.

Although we have no Court Rolls until 1575, there was another general Muster in Cornwall in 1569 and this names several Honeycombes.
John Honeycombe, "weaver", is listed as having a bow and 12 arrows, as was Thomas (2) and his son, James. This John would seem to be Margery's son, John (4). All three were noted in the margin as "a" and "ar", ie, able and capable archers, and therefore not that old. Another John listed in the Muster could only be the ageing John (3) the thatcher of Harrowbarrow, son of Thomas, who must have been nearly 60, if not more. John (3) had some serious and ancient weaponry - a bill (a six foot long pole with a spiked head and a cutting hook) and a hackbut or arquebus (a gun with a long slim barrel). These he may have inherited from his father, Thomas (1). A Philip Honeycombe, who was probably a son or grandson of Thomas, had a bill.
Only 44 men are listed in this Muster, compared with the 81 in the Survey of 1522. Not as many had bows and arrows - eight in all B while 27 had bills. Six others, apart from John (3), had hackbuts, other pieces of armour and weaponry consisting of sallets (a light helmet, with a visor to protect the neck), and a couple of jacks (padded chest armour worn by the common soldiery). Again, the Calstock tenants were poorly armed. No one had an almain rivet, as some men in other parishes did. This was light half-armour, mass-produced in Germany and imported for the soldiery to wear. The men in the parish of South Hill had 14 almain rivets, as well as 36 bows and 18 bills, two corselets and a jack.
Another Honeycombe appears in the Muster list of 1569 for the parish of South Hill. Edward Hunycomb (sic) is noted as being able and possessing a bill. We know from the parish registers of Callington that this Edward married there and died there in 1596. He was probably a son of another Richard and Joan (not the Calstock ones), for a Joan Honeycombe, widow of a Richard, was buried in Callington in May 1570.
Musters were special events in rural communities and would have been enthusiastically anticipated by the village men and to a lesser degree by their wives. Royal commissioners appointed presenters in every parish to organise a local Muster and two were held, the second being to check that the deficiencies noted at the first Muster had been rectified. These minor Musters were followed in June by a general Muster, which was held in towns or central and convenient localities. Although the big Musters were always a worry to the government and the local authorities, as large groups of armed rumbustious men would be likely to want to show off their skills, to drink overmuch and start a fight or a fracas or even a riot, such a Muster would have been a large and colourful spectacle, much enjoyed and attended by many spectators. Knights in full armour on their so-called heavy horses would have been on display, both wearing coats of arms, and well-groomed and accoutred light horses, their owners and riders carrying long spears or

lances, would have excited the envy of the many who had travelled on foot from far and wide to see the show. The excesses of modern football fans would have been small beer compared with the fights, carousing and general mayhem of a Cornish Muster.

By 1570, the year of the next assession, Richard Honeycombe (2) of Hill had died and his widow, Joan, had taken possession of his part of the house and 18 acres. The other half of the dwelling in Hill and half the acreage went to Sampson Grills. At the same time she handed over her holding in Latchley to John Edward, probably her son by a previous marriage. As her son, Richard (3) also seems to have died before 1570, Joan may have retired from the business of brewing beer and running a tavern. On the other hand, she may have soldiered on, assisted by someone like John Edward.

Sampson Grills, who had been a surety for Richard of Hill at the previous assession, from now on figures largely in the lives of three of the other male Honeycombes, as a surety and co-lessor of property. The Grills surname was widespread in East Cornwall and several generations of Grills lived and died in Calliland (South Hill) - not a few were called Sampson Grills. They seem to have originated in Lanreath and had a coat of arms. Our Sampson Grills in Calstock would later on increase his holdings by marrying a Honeycombe, as we shall see - no less than the daughter of Richard Honeycombe of Hill.

In 1570 Sampson was a surety with Stephen Honeycombe in a matter at Albaston. He was also a surety when John Honeycombe (3), son of Thomas, gave half of his holding in Harrowbarrow to his brother, Thomas (3).

Old Thomas (2) had died by this time and his holding in Kingsgarden (one house and 22 acres) had been divided up by his sons, Stephen (2) and James. It seems that the holding went originally in one piece to James, who then gave Stephen half, keeping half for himself. At the same time Sampson Grills was given a fourth part by James. Presumably James kept three-quarters of the other half to himself.

Stephen (2), son of Thomas, also took the house and 11 acres that his father and Walter Damerell had shared together in Kingsgarden. Stephen now shared it with Walter's widow, Margaret, who in the meantime had remarried John Jule (or Jewel) and passed her share on to him.

This Stephen has vanished from the records by the time of the next assession, ie, by 1577. Old Thomas's other holding in Kingsgarden, of one house and 14 acres, which had been shared by him in 1562 with Richard Hawkin and Nicholas Hawkin, was divided even further. Thomas (3), son of Thomas, took half; Sampson Grills took two parts, surrendered by young Thomas's brother, John (3) and by Richard Hawkin, and Mark Hawkin took a third of the other half. As manorial populations increased, available land was increasingly split up and shared by different families, some fields eventually ending up as narrow strips, which must have made the farming of them quite complicated and a cause of arguments about the crops to be sown.

Elsewhere, Stephen the tin miner (1), Philip's son, was adding to his holdings. For the period of one assession he acquired a new one in Newton, where he took the fourth part of a half in a house and 16 acres, the other three parts being held by Robert Veal, while the other half was shared by John Martin and Sampson Hun. Stephen also rented another fourth part, of a house and nine acres in Newton. Robert Veal again got the rest.

In Cross, Stephen's stake in the holding at Cross improved, increasing to half. Here the widowed Agnes Facy had remarried, and her new husband, Richard Baker, took five parts of half of a house and nine acres, the sixth part going to Philip Facy, perhaps Agnes's son. The other holding at Cross, of a house and 16 acres, which the widows, Margery and Agnes had held, was divided between Richard Baker and Stephen.

At Harrowbarrow the half holding held by Richard Honeycombe (3), tavern-keeper, was now taken by Roger Dodge. Richard's fourth part went to Roger Martin. A newcomer, Thomas Newton, who had married John Prout's widow, Katherine, also took a fourth part there. It seems likely that Richard (3), as well as his father, had died.

Richard (4), son of Thomas, also relinquished most of his other holding, in Kingsgarden, giving three parts of it to John Willmott.

In 1570 Elizabeth I was anathematised, cursed and denounced by the Pope, and on the continent anti-Protestant feeling was running very high.
Two years later the queen was on a summer progress, enjoying the various entertainments staged for her at Warwick and Kenilworth Castles. She was out riding when despatches reached her from Paris, telling her of what became known as the Massacre of St Bartholomew - thousands of French Protestants, Huguenots, had been slaughtered and their homes pillaged and destroyed. Catholics in other European cities also turned on their Protestant neighbours and as a result many Protestants fled as refugees to England, some arriving in Devon and Cornwall via Plymouth.
The fear that the massacre engendered in English towns and villages aroused further feelings of hostility against any Catholic and added to the pressures on the queen to have Mary, Queen of Scots, put to death. But this she didn't do for 15 years.

10. ELIZABETH I, 1575-1587

In 1575, when the Court Rolls resume, Queen Elizabeth was 42. For the next 50 years, the Rolls list too many minor misdemeanours and offences committed by the Honeycombes to be detailed here. It's impossible to know whether this was because the Honeycombes had become particularly lawless and dissolute or because the lord of the manor was particularly fussed about the sloppy way courts were conducted, or because the growing press of people in the manor led to a corresponding increase in disputes and litigation. The Rolls for Calstock from 1575 to 1577 name eight different Honeycombe men, who were charged with various and mainly unspecified offences to do with unpaid debts and trespass - Richard senior, Richard junior of Harrowbarrow, John junior, James, Thomas, Philip, Stephen and William.
William Honicombe (sic) is new to the records, which suggests he was young and probably in his teens. As his name only appears in the Assession Rolls in connection with his wife, Grace, when she receives a very small portion, an eighth, of a holding in Latchley in 1584, it would seem that he had a trade and no land. We don't even know who his father was, although he is likely to have been Thomas (3).
Much later we find out that Grace was the heir and only daughter of John Oliver and that the small portion she received of the Latchley holding had been passed to her by her father. She and William had a daughter, Alice, and a son called Anthony. Grace was a widow by 1598, and died in or before 1614.
Richard senior would now seem to be Richard of Kingsgarden (4), son of Thomas. Apart from having a son presumably called Richard junior, Richard (4) had another son, John (4), who began sharing his father's holding of one house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden in 1584. The father and the son had both died by the time of the next assession, in 1593, and the holding was taken up by their widows - Joan, Richard's widow, and Thomasina, John's widow. Thomasina was the Latin version of the vernacular Tamsin.
Another Richard, who is identified at a court in December 1575 as Richard of Donnacomb, was probably a son of Richard (3) of Harrowbarrow. This Richard (5) had a wife called Grace. Both of them failed to turn up at court. This is a complaint that continues to be noted at every court for over a year, until November 1576.
We learn later, in 1584, that Richard (5) had 12 acres of waste at Donacomb Hill, and that he was a piper - perhaps he was a shepherd. The pipe he played must have been like a flute or a recorder. He was probably an itinerant musician, playing for a few pennies at weddings, at family and village festivities. By 1584 Grace had apparently died, as Richard the piper then had a wife called Cecilia. She was a widow by 1598, and the 12 acres of waste were inherited by their son, Walter (2).
James Honeycombe makes a final appearance in a Court Roll in January 1576. His portion of a holding in Kingsgarden, shared with his brother, Stephen and Sampson Grills in 1570, was taken

over seven years later by Sampson and John Dymont or Dinmont. Another James (2), and another son of the piper, appears a few times later on, living fairly quietly and dying in 1622.
John Honeycombe (3), the thatcher of Harrowbarrow, was still there in 1584. But his half holding, which had become a quarter in 1577, went to David Sleyman in 1593, the rest of the dwelling and 22 acres being divided up between Alice Sleyman, Peter Hilland and John Edwards.
As we have seen, in the Court Roll for June 1576, John (3) is described as John Honeycombe of Harrowbarrow, thatcher - which distinguishes him from the John Honeycombe (4) of Kingsgarden, who in September and November was said to be a weaver and then a thrummer. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a "thrum" was the woven end of a warp thread, or the whole of such ends that remained when the finished web was cut away. Weaver and thrummer were aspects of the same occupation.
The Philip Honeycombe (2) named in the Court Rolls of 1575 and 1576 was yet another son of old Thomas. In 1577 Philip had a very small stake, a fourth part, in the former Honeycombe holding of two houses and 12 acres in Harrowbarrow, which he got from Roger Martin. This he swapped unequally with Roger Martin, giving Roger his half holding in the *other* Harrowbarrow holding of one house and 22 acres.
The clerk making the court roll entry in November 1576 was seemingly not from Cornwall and had difficulties with the Cornish accent. For he spelt Harrowbarrow as "Hurrabarr" - and that indeed is how Philip or Roger Martin might have pronounced the name (or as "Harrerbarre"). In the Rolls Harrowbarrow was frequently spelt by the clerks in the court as "Harebere", where the "e" sound probably indicated "er", ie, "Harrerbarrer".
Thomas (3), son of Thomas, still shared a holding in Kingsgarden in 1577 with Nicholas Hawkin and Sampson Grills.
Stephen Honeycombe the tin miner (1) of Cross was one of 12 jurors in November 1575 and in January the following year he and Philip Facy admitted to owning "a stray white sheep". Stephen was in the process of changing his holdings, though at the assession held in 1577 he and Agnes Baker, the former widow of Robert Facy, had now become the only tenants of the two houses and 25 acres in Cross. He relinquished his interest in his former shared holding in Newton. But he acquired a compensatory and useful cottage with a courtyard in Albaston from John Auger - it had a low rent but the fine was two pounds - and he took a close from Edward Philip.
Stephen wasn't named in the Muster Roll of 1569. Perhaps he had ceased to be an able-bodied male - through a mining accident? But as his first appearance in 1559 seems to indicate he was then a young man and possibly still in his teens, he would now, in 1577, be about 35.
No Court Rolls survive after 1576 until 1590, so the next Assession Roll, for 1584, is the only record of the lives and holdings of the Calstock Honeycombes at this time.
At this assession Honeycombe was held by Alice Stentaford and John Bartlett. She isn't said to be a widow, but the holding had been shared by Thomas Stentaford and John Bartlett for many years, and as the latter's son, also called John, had taken over from his father by 1593, we may assume that Alice had indeed been Thomas Stentaford's wife.
The Honeycombe holding at Hill, a house and 18 acres, held by the Honeycombes since 1493, had now been taken over in toto by the energetic and enterprising Sampson Grills – "from the surrender of his wife, Dorothy, daughter of Johanna Honeycombe." Joan, of course, was the widow of Richard (2) of Hill and had outlived him by up to 20 years. She was probably his second wife. Dorothy Honeycombe, their daughter, was probably the third or fourth wife of Sampson Grills and she managed to outlive him. In doing so she inherited most of his holdings in Hill when Sampson died, and lived on until 1600 at least.
In 1584 Stephen Honeycombe (1) still had his expensive cottage with a courtyard in Albaston, and he and Agnes Baker still rented two houses and 25 acres in Cross. There is a clerk's note at the end of the Roll to the effect that all the tenants at Albaston rented some pasture there for 10d, as well as a piece of land at Todworthy for 1s8d a year. The close that Stephen took from Edward Philip is identified in 1584 as consisting of 7 acres in Calstock Land; it was called Broomclose. Stephen shared it now with Sampson Hun.

Grace Honicombe (sic), wife of William Honeycombe (1), took half of a fourth part in Latchley, the other tenants being Thomas Reaper, Richard Strike, Stephen Steddon, Walter Wills, Margery his wife, and a widow called Agnes Beckley. A memo that follows this entry hints at some legal battle. It says, "The said Grace hath taken 26s8d of Stephen Steddon in consideration of the final end of all controversies which she has against him for and touching the said eighth part." This dispute, however, must have rumbled on for many years, reaching an extraordinary conclusion in 1614.
John Honeycombe (3), the thatcher, now shared a house and 22 acres in Harrowbarrow with John Edwards and Roger Martin, who took half. The other John Honeycombe (4), the weaver and thrummer, son of Thomas, had displaced the other three renting the house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden and had it all to himself.
Philip Honeycombe (2), son of Thomas, still had a fourth part in the two houses and 12 acres in Harrowbarrow, and old Thomas himself was sharing the house and 14 acres in Kingsgarden with Sampson Grills, John Hawkin and Stephen John.
The piper, Richard Honeycombe (5), still had 12 acres of waste at Duncombe (sic) Hill, while Richard of Kingsgarden (4) now shared his house and 11 acres with his son, John (5), whose wife was Joan.

By 1584, where we are now, Queen Elizabeth had disposed of the last of her foreign suitors, her Frog Prince, the Duke of Alencon. Younger brother of the French King Henri III, he was short, pock-marked and slightly deformed but gallant, lively and chatty. Although there was a difference of 21 years between them (she was 47 in 1581 when he was 26), he was keen on the match. In the end, after an extensive, playful courtship, she bought him off. He died in France in June 1584.
Elizabeth now faced up finally to dealing with the problem of Mary, Queen of Scots, who had been closely guarded in England, though in some style and comfort, since 1568. Eventually accused of treason and of being implicated in a Catholic plot to overthrow and assassinate Elizabeth, Mary was found guilty by an assembly of nobles in Fotheringhay Castle in Northamptonshire and beheaded in February 1587. She was 44. It took three blows to hack off her head – "Sweet Jesus," she was heard to say - and when the executioner lifted it up by the hair the head fell to the floor, leaving him holding her wig.

It is in this year that a unique document tells us exactly which of the Honeycombes in Calstock were attending church that year. Remarkably a copy of the seating plan for St Andrew's church in 1587 has survived to tell us the names of 12 of the Calstock Honeycombes and who sat where.

11. CHURCH SEATING PLAN, CALSTOCK, 1587/1588

The seating plan was discovered in the 1980s, when the records of Calstock's parish church were deposited at the Cornwall County Record Office in Truro. The plan is a copy, made on parchment, of the seating in the church in 1587 or 1588. Although the copy is dated 24 May 1654, a glance at the plan, signed by the rector, Henry Verchill, and ten parishioners, shows that those named on the plan were living in the parish some 70 years earlier.
Foremost among them, in the boxed-in pew at the west end or rear of the church, is Piers Edgecumbe, the eldest son of Sir Richard Edgecumbe and his wife, Elizabeth, who owned Cotehele at the time. Presumably Piers had a house within the manor of Calstock, while his aged parents lived at Cotehele, worshipping in their own private chapel there. In 1587 Piers shared the position of Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall with Sir Francis Godolphin, Sir William Mohun and Richard Carew. Piers died on 4 January 1608. He had a brother called Richard, who died in 1586.
There is a memorial to this Richard Edgecumbe, dated 1588, in the floor of the mortuary chapel attached to the church, and as we know that an inventory of his possessions, dated 17 January 1587, was made after his death, and as he doesn't appear in the seating plan, it is very probable that the Calstock seating plan was made in 1587, or in 1588, on the completion of the mortuary

chapel, which was dedicated in 1588. This chapel is now used as a vestry. Certainly all the Honeycombes named in the plan relate to those years, 1587/88.
Its date makes it a very rare document, as the only earlier seating plan for a church, as far as is known, is that of Trull in Somerset, which is dated 1569. Other seating plans, dated much later, have survived for some Cornish churches - there is one for St Ewe, dated 1676, and another for Crowan, dated 1666. The latter plan was made, on the instructions of the bishop, by the vicar and churchwardens. They were told to "draw up a table of the seating with reference to all private rights since the time of the late sedition (the period of Cromwell's rule as Lord Protector), and since the parishioners have taken what places they pleased in church, sitting promiscuously and unequally, so that many contentions and discussions arise, to the scandal of religion and the violation of public peace."

Clearly the Calstock seating plan was intended to impose some order on where the members of the congregation sat, placing them according to their rank and social position and separating the sexes. It also recorded what individuals paid for their seats, which they hired or rented annually - a useful income for the church.
The plan shows seating in 53 numbered box-like pews for 221 persons, including the squire, the parish clerk, the warden, and the rector's wife, Mrs Verchill. The rector, Henry Verchill, had succeeded Anthony Hunt in 1573, when Hunt died after 30 years of conducting services in the church, except for those held there during the reign of Queen Mary. Hunt also had the benefice of Linkinhorne. Verchill would be rector until 1593.
A Mr Parsons, who sat in glorious isolation in the middle of the front row, must have been the worthiest (and wealthiest) of the village worthies.
The plan also shows that pew-rents ranged from two pence to four shillings, the amount being divided among the occupants, and that the most expensive seats were in the middle at the front (as in most theatres today), with those sitting in the north and south aisles being charged less, and those at the back the least. Men and women were segregated to avoid any unseemly behaviour or distractions - most of the women sat on either side of the central aisle. The altar isn't shown, though the pulpit is.
Fixed pews didn't appear in churches until about 1290. Before then people stood, or sat on benches. In canon law the disposing of the seats belonged to the bishop of the diocese, except when a nobleman or county gentleman had donated a chapel or some extension of the church for their family's private use and continued to maintain and repair it. But from 1500, churchwardens took over the allocation of pews; they levied and collected what were supposed to be reasonable and affordable rents. The seats at the back went to "labourers and their wives not already seated". Wives and widows were also accommodated at the rear of the north and south aisles, as were, it seems, the young, the aged, the poor and infirm.
In a seating plan for the church of St Just in Roseland in 1700, some non-designated seats were assigned to the "meaner sort of inhabitants within the said parish", and parishioners were placed "according to their degrees and qualities". Pews eventually became freehold property and could be bought and sold and leased. As late as 1900 there are instances of bequests of pews in wills.
At the time of the Calstock seating plan the box-pews were probably made up of plain benches set within low partitioned-off enclosures, not too high, so that the occupants could be seen as well as see. Those in the centre of the church, on either side of the main central aisle - there were two other aisles to left and right - seem to have been divided in half, one of the halves being occasionally occupied by a just one person. Most halves, and most pews, held three people, always of the same sex - apart from one half pew, which was occupied by Sampson Grills and a Thomasin (Tamsin) Bligh. This is very odd, as nowhere else do a man and a woman share a pew. And where was his wife, Dorothy Grills? Perhaps "Thomasin" was a copyist's error for "Thomas".
There were six unnumbered sections of bare benches, only one of which held women, and that one was right at the back. Eight males were crammed into one of the sections near the front and nine other males into another - young boys or older men. They can't have been from poor families as they each paid a shilling for their seats. The quality people, like Mr Parsons, the rector's wife and the warden, would have sat in quality pews, more solidly made and ornately carved. Piers

Edgecumbe at the back of the church would have had the grandest box of all, higher than the others and overlooking the whole of the congregation.
Alice Stentaford, part tenant of Honeycombe House (and Thomas Stentaford's widow?), sat in the half of the central box-pew not occupied by Sampson Grills and Thomasin Bligh. With her were Joan Taylor and Joan Collin. Agnes Stentaford sat behind her, and two male Stentafords, William and Roger, sat behind the clerk's seat at the left front. As William Stentaford is named in 1598 as the son of Alice - when he inherited Honeycombe - he would indeed seem to have been a young boy or teenager in 1587. Alice's partner in Honeycombe, John Bartlett, who was probably middle-aged (his son, John, took over in 1593) sat in a box beside the rector's wife, Mrs Verchill, in the front row and on her left. With him were Thomas Facy, James Adam and Roger Bond, all four no doubt respected and comparatively well-off older men.
Stephen Honeycombe (1), who first appears in the Court Roll for 1559 and in the Assession Roll for 1562, must by now have been nearing 50. He and Walter Lampen, John Edward and Richard Strike sat three rows behind John Bartlett of Honeycombe, with the clerk's seat on their right. Stephen's group of four and the Bartlett four, with two other men between them, were in a privileged position at the front, and for this privilege they each paid a shilling a year. No other members of the congregation paid more, the three men who sat across the aisle from the clerk, to the right of Mr Parsons, paid the same, ie a shilling each.
The Joan Honeycombe senior who sat four rows behind Stephen, in a divided pew with five other women, was probably Stephen's wife. We know from her will that they had a daughter called Joan. But no Joan junior is listed in the church, though there are two other Joan Honeycombes. The Joan sitting beside Agnes Stentaford and behind Sampson Grills is probably the widow of Richard (2) of Hill. One imagines that Agnes Stentaford was Thomas Stentaford's mother or sister. And where is Dorothy Grills (Joan's daughter and Sampson's wife)? She isn't anywhere in the church.
The third Joan, described as Joan Honeycombe of Cross, sat with Margery Will and another woman towards the rear of the right-hand rows of pews. This Joan may have been one of the daughters of Stephen and Joan (they had at least four). A daughter called Joan is named in old Joan's will, and Stephen's main holding, which he shared with Agnes Baker in 1584, was of course in Cross.
Agnes Baker was on the far left of the church, in row 10 of 19 rows. She shared a pew with two other women behind Philip Honeycombe. This Philip could be the Philip who handed over all his holdings in Harrowbarrow ten years earlier. But which one of the two Philips he is who appear in the Court Roll for 1591 (one handed over a close, and Philip the younger got one) it isn't possible to say. Probably the older - for although this Philip had next to no land he possibly had a trade. We know for certain, from later evidence, that he had a wife, Elizabeth, and a son and a daughter - Philip junior and Alice. He also seems to have had a daughter called Elizabeth, obviously named after her mother, as she is described in the seating plan as Elizabeth junior.
Philip's wife must be the Elizabeth Honeycombe who sat in the right-hand row of pews, behind Joan Honeycombe of Cross. With this Elizabeth were Joan Harry senior and Joan Facy of Calstock, which sounds like a group of older women. Elizabeth's daughter, Elizabeth Honeycombe junior, sat with three other women, more than likely young women, at the rear of the right-hand central block. They each paid only a half-penny for their seats.
Apparently no other Honeycombe women attended the church, although there were certainly other Honeycombe wives, widows and daughters living in Calstock at that time, like Dorothy Grills and Grace Honeycombe, William's wife.
Possibly some were too old and decrepit to climb the hill to the church, or just not bothered with religious observances. Perhaps some still clung to the Catholic faith and attended private services in people's homes, where the mass would be conducted by a visiting Catholic priest.
Thomas Honeycombe, who shared the major part of a holding in Kingsgarden with Sampson Grills and four others in 1584, must be the Thomas who sat in row 5 in the far right-hand block, with Roger Martin and William Facy, possibly also older men.
Richard Honeycombe, the piper, could be the Richard who shared a pew with Roger Glass at the back, paying 2d each.

Richard of Kingsgarden seems to have died by 1587. He shared a house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden in 1584 with his son, John, but by the time of the Assession Roll of 1593, both the father and son have disappeared.
John, the son of Richard, may be one of the two John Honeycombes who sat together, paying 3d each, immediately below the grand edifice of Piers Edgecumbe's box. On the other hand, the two Johns are more likely to have been John the thatcher and John the weaver/thrummer. It would seem appropriate that they shared a pew as they both had trades that might be described as cottage industries.

It is noticeable in the plan how certain family names, which have been linked with the Honeycombes for more than two hundred years in the manorial rolls, re-occur in the seating plan, names like Facy, Taylor, Hawkin, Hilland, Martin, Philip, Edward, Baker, Prout, Strike, and Bond. One notices also how English these names are, not Cornish, which was still spoken in much of the southwest of the county.
And so many of the Christian names are repeated! Like John, Richard, Robert, Roger, Thomas and William, not to mention all the Joans, Margerys, Alices and Elizabeths. These repeated names are a family historian's nightmare, even when dates of baptism, burial and marriage are supplied in parish registers later on. There were 33 Johns and 34 Joans in the church, and only one Barbara and a George.
Most of the congregation would have been related, remote cousins at least, and family news and gossip would have been the main topics of conversation before the service began, apart from the state of the crops and the animals, the weather, and what had happened in neighbouring villages, and in towns like Liskeard and Plymouth. There would have been ongoing speculation about the queen, about whether she would ever marry and whether she was indeed a virgin, and some would still wonder at the beheading of the Scottish queen. And then there were the distant wars in France and the Netherlands - and the threat of invasion by Spain.
In July 1588, the churchgoers would have been well placed in Calstock to get the news from Plymouth when the Spanish Armada appeared off the coast, off Fowey, when beacons were lit to warn the people that the threat had visibly materialised and that the danger of invasion was real. And then how fervently the parishioners and the rector, Henry Verchill, must have prayed for deliverance and for the English fleet defending their country, their families and their homes B asking their God for a victorious outcome to the forthcoming battle at sea.

12. ELIZABETH I, 1588-1593

That sea-battle in defence of the country was fought over nine days, the smaller English ships pursuing the Spanish fleet of about 130 bigger and slower ships up the Channel to a final two-day pitched battle off the French coast, off Dunkirk. Fire-ships and contrary winds bedevilled the Spanish, as well as the more manoeuvrable and speedier English ships, which also fired their guns at a faster rate. On 29 July, having lost 11 ships and thousands of men, the Spaniards withdrew, forced by the weather up the North Sea and around Scotland, until they were further overwhelmed and destroyed by Atlantic storms, capsizing or being wrecked on rocky shores.
The news of the spectacular victory off Dunkirk reached Queen Elizabeth ten days later. It would have taken a few days more to reach Calstock, unless the news came up the River Tamar from Plymouth. In London the victory, in a ceremony of national thanksgiving for deliverance, was grandly celebrated in St Paul's Cathedral in November 1588 - as it must have been, in a lesser way but with no less rejoicing, with a thanksgiving service in St Andrew's church, and with bonfires, bells and some fireworks in the Lady Queen's Cornish manor of Calstock far away in the west.
Also in London at this time, where Tamburlaine by Christopher Marlowe was all the rage and being performed in the city's first few playhouses, which were soon to be called theatres, a young

Warwickshire actor and playwright in his twenties was working on the plays that became *Titus Andronicus,* the three parts of *Henry VI*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Love's Labours Lost, The Taming of the Shrew* and *Richard III*, all of which were staged in London before the end of 1592.

In 1590 and 1591 the Court Rolls of Calstock reveal a lessening of activity as regards the Honeycombes.
Richard (4) and John Honeycombe (5) of Kingsgarden were involved in several pleas of debt and trespass, as were Roger (1) and his younger brother, James (2). These two would seem to have been the sons of Richard the piper, whose two wives, Grace and Cecily, produced six children at least. Roger first appears in May 1591, owing money to John Jago; James appears in October.
Philip Honeycombe (2) of Harrowbarrow came to court to hand over to Thomas Salmon a storehouse, which was probably used for grain, as well as a close called Chilscombe containing about four acres and estimated as being the fourth part of a tenure. Thomas Honeycombe (3) took over a close in Harrowbarrow called Church Park from Samson Webb B which he passed on to John Harry a year later; and Philip junior (3) received a close in Harrowbarrow called Higher Broadland from Roger Dodge. Yet another close in Harrowbarrow went to Elizabeth Honeycombe, who passed it on to Walter Jane. She was probably Philip senior's wife.
Stephen (1) was one of the jurors in April 1592 and also in October 1593.
At the assession held in 1593 he and Robert Bond acted as sureties for Alice Stentaford when she took a half, while John Bartlett's son, John, took the other half, of the house and 30 acres at Honeycombe, now spelt Honicombe by the clerk who wrote up the Roll. Everywhere else in this Assession Roll the surname is spelt Honycombe.
What, one wonders, did Stephen see when he looked at the house and the acres that bore his name? Did he ever think of buying his way back into the holding, or hope that one of his daughters might marry a male Stentaford or a Bartlett? Did he ever dream that one day a Honeycombe would live at Honeycombe again?
He himself still had his cottage in Albaston and half a holding in the two houses and acreage at Cross, where Agnes Baker gave a sixth part of her half to Philip Facy, her son by her previous marriage. Stephen and Sampson Hun also kept the close called Broomclose in Calstock Land.
Richard the piper (5) held onto the 12 acres of waste at Donacomb Hill.
But John (5), son of Richard of Kingsgarden, had died, and the half he had in the house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden, went to his widow, Joan, with a quarter of the other half going to Thomas Symon. The other quarter passed to another Honeycombe widow, Tamsin, whose husband had also been a John. She was probably the widow of John the thatcher (3), whose holding in Harrowbarrow now passed to David and Alice Sleyman and to Peter Hilland in 1593.
Philip Honeycombe (2), son of Thomas, handed over his fourth part in two houses and 12 acres to Thomas Salmon, but he retained a garden there.
John the weaver (4), another son of Thomas, seems to have died, for Elizabeth Honeycombe (not described in the Roll as his wife or his widow and possibly a daughter) now shared a very small part, a sixteenth, of his former Kingsgarden holding of a house and 11 acres with five men (Roger Dodge, Robert Jago, Walter Jane, and John and Robert Edwards), while John Jule took the other half with his wife. Elizabeth received her sixteenth part from John Jane.
The two John Honeycombes, the thatcher and the weaver, seem to have died by 1593. Did they both die of the same disease or were they killed in some accident? Were they buried together, or a few yards and years apart - their bodies hidden in winding-sheets and not in coffins, their burials attended by their widows and any children, by their neighbours, their friends and by most of the other Honeycombes?
Their resting-places would have been identified for a time by some marker like a wooden cross, which in time would rot and be removed, until the graves were forgotten and grassed over by later generations.
No monument or gravestone marks the final resting-place of any of the many Honeycombes who for centuries were buried in the churchyard of Calstock's parish church. No one now knows where they lie. There is one gravestone with Honeycombe on it, dated 1830, but it has been moved, like

so many, and forms a mute wall with others at one side, while green grass grows on the lush uneven lawn where the stones once stood.

The Court Rolls for the next two years are incomplete. There was another severe outbreak of plague in London in 1592-93, during which 11,000 people died. Theatres were closed, and public gatherings were banned, including bear-baiting and bowling. People were, however, allowed to attend church services. Plague may also have disrupted manorial life in East Cornwall in those years.
Only one Honeycombe is listed in a Court Roll for October 1593 - Stephen Honeycombe is again one of the jurors. But the Assession Roll for 1593 tells us more about the disparate fortunes of the Honeycombes in Calstock.

Stephen, now the most significant Honeycombe in the manor, still had his cottage with a courtyard, for which he continued to pay, for some unknown reason, an even heavier fine of four pounds, and he still shared the two holdings in Cross with Agnes Baker - a sixth part of her half again going to Philip Facy - as well as the close called Broomclose in Calstock Land.
Though Honeycombe itself was still held by Alice Stentaford, the son of John Bartlett, also called John, now took the other half. Sampson Grills was still sole possessor of the house and 18 acres in Hill, which he'd got from Dorothy, his wife. Presumably she lived there with him.
Grace Honeycombe, wife of William, took a fourth part of a half in the Latchley holding of a house and 14 acres, the rest being divided up between eight other men and women. The fourth part in the holding in Harrowbarrow, taken by John Honeycombe, the thatcher, deceased, had passed to David Sleyman, who now shared the holding with three others.
In Kingsgarden, ageing Thomas Honeycombe continued to share a house and 14 acres with Stephen John, John Hawkin, John Jane and James Rice; and Richard Honeycombe, the piper, still had his 12 acres of waste.
The Honeycombe widows, Joan and Tamsin, shared their holding in Kingsgarden with Thomas Symon, while Elizabeth Honeycombe shared half of a holding with five men, the other half being taken by John Jule on his own, which he had got from Margaret, his wife.
The following year, 1594, when Stephen served yet again as a juror, Elizabeth Honeycombe came to a special court held at East Harrowbarrow in the spring and, in the presence of the deputy seneschal or steward, Robert Bond, sitting with the reeve, Mark Martin, and the tithing-man Walter Glubb, she took a close with appurtenances called Higher Broadland, estimated to be a 16th part of a holding, from Robert Jago the older.
It's difficult to sort out which of the Elizabeths this was. Higher Broadland was in Harrowbarrow, where Philip Honeycombe (2) had part of a holding between about 1575 and 1590. We know he had a wife called Elizabeth, and that they had a son called Philip as well as two daughters, Elizabeth and Alice. Philip junior acquired a 16th part in Higher Broadland from Roger Dodge in 1591, and then Elizabeth got the 16th part of an unnamed close in 1592. In 1593 an Elizabeth took half a holding in Kingsgarden from John Honeycombe, son of Thomas. A year later, in 1594, Elizabeth Honeycombe, described as "wife of John" took Higher Broadland from Robert Jago (as above). Do we have another John and Elizabeth here? Could this John have been Philip senior's brother? Both were in fact sons of Thomas.
Philip senior died in 1596 and his widow, Elizabeth, died in March the following year - a house, garden and a close that had apparently been held by the parents going to their daughter, Alice. At the end of 1597 Elizabeth, "wife of John" gave Lower Broadland and the Little Meadow to John Martin. Finally, in 1601, Elizabeth, a widow, gave a close called Papewill with Holes to her son, John.
The likeliest explanation of these transfers of land is that Philip had a brother, John, who died about 1600, four years after Philip, that his wife was called Elizabeth (as Philip's had been) and that John and Elizabeth had a son, John. Both father and son probably had a trade, and John junior may have left the manor, as he disappears from the Rolls at this time.

In 1593 and 1594 plague again curtailed theatre-going and other crowded assemblies in London. The theatres were closed. The enforced idleness gave the 30-year-old Warwickshire playwright and out-of-work actor the opportunity to concentrate on two lengthy poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, as well as a series of very varied plays. By the end of 1595, entirely unnoticed by the inhabitants of the manor of Calstock and most of England, Shakespeare had written and had produced in London *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Richard II*.

By this time there were three custom-built theatres, or playhouses, in London - the very first, built by James Burbage and called the Theatre, had opened its doors in 1577. The Globe was built in 1599. Previously, plays had been performed by groups of strolling players in the courtyards of inns, out of doors on platforms or in the spacious halls of the nobility. Most Elizabethan plays, which had developed out of the mystery plays (scriptural histories), and miracle plays (based on the lives of the saints), were being written by smart young Oxbridge graduates.

In Cornwall, market towns like Liskeard would have been visited annually by some player groups with big voices, big gestures and bright costumes, and mummers would have presented their seasonal and fantastic shows, masked and made-up, with music, declamation and mime, in village squares, or outside and even inside people's homes. Female parts would have been played by boys or young men. The villagers themselves may well have staged their own dramatic and musical entertainments and pageants at religious festivals. As now, everyone liked dressing up, no one more so than Queen Elizabeth, who when on public show wore extravagant, jewelled costumes. She also cultivated poets and players, and had the latest plays performed in her palaces by royal command.

England was still unofficially at war with Spain, and Spanish ships continued to be attacked, robbed and sunk by English privateers, which were armed vessels owned and officered by private individuals but sponsored by the government. On two such expeditions Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins, who had led the English ships against the Armada, died. The Spanish retaliated where they could, attacking English interests and towns in France and even, in 1595, landing in southwest Cornwall, where a small Spanish force routed the local militia, set fire to a few villages, celebrated mass, and departed when ships commanded by Sir Walter Raleigh appeared offshore. England finally ceded her territory in France and withdrew from there in 1596.

It was in August 1596 that William Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, died in Stratford, aged 11. He had a twin sister, Judith. Shakespeare was 32; his wife, Anne, was 40.

Michael Wood, in his detailed and compelling *In Search of Shakespeare*, published by BBC Books in 2003, says, "We know that there was famine and plague in the Warwickshire countryside at that time, exacerbated by a run of wet summers and bad harvests, but the cause of Hamnet's death is unknown. Shakespeare's company was on tour in Kent in early August. Hamnet was very likely buried before his father got the news . . . Within the next year or two a change gradually came about not only in Shakespeare's themes but also in his way of writing, in his language and imagery. The great tragedies followed, plumbing 'the well of darkness'."

He began writing the Sonnets the following year, but more immediately devoted himself to more practical matters concerning the future. He bought a large house in Stratford-upon-Avon for his extended family, which included his wife, his two daughters, his parents and two of his brothers, and in October 1596 he visited the College of Arms in London and applied for a coat of arms. He was working on *Henry IV*, Parts 1 and 2, which were staged at the Swan and in which he played King Henry. The following year he wrote *The Merchant of Venice.*

It's about this time that a distinguished Cornishman, Richard Carew, noted that some people lived to a great age, 80 or 90. Carew, an antiquary, a poet and a translator of ancient texts, was Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall in 1587, along with three others; he was also Sheriff of Cornwall and MP for Saltash; he died in 1620. The Carews' family home was at Antony and Pole Carews occupy the rebuilt house to this day. Richard Carew mentions two men who were said to have been well over 100 when they died and comments on the fact that the "ordinary" people mainly ate bread, cheese, curds and whey. Carew also wrote that Cornish men were "very strong, active and for the most part personable, of good constitution of body and very valourous." They were particularly adept at wrestling, which Carew praised as a sport that was "full of manliness."

In his capacity as Lord Lieutenant, he may have chaired proceedings at the manorial courts in Calstock and so may have become acquainted, albeit briefly, with some of the Honeycombes.

The Calstock Court Rolls for 1595 to 1597 list various minor actions involving the Honeycombes - Stephen, Richard, Thomas, Philip, Joan and William - no suit costing them, or winning them, more than 4d.
In December 1596 the reeve reported that Philip Honeycombe (2), son of Thomas, had died since the last court was held. His widow, Elizabeth, came to the court and, after paying a heriot of her best beast, a mare, she took over Philip's garden in Harrowbarrow. This cost her, apart from the mare, 8d. Unfortunately she wasn't able to make much of the garden, presumably a market garden, as she died before the court held in January the following year. All that she had held - a house, a garden and a close in East Harrowbarrow - went to her daughter, Alice.
In February 1597, 32 individuals, including Stephen, Grace and Elizabeth's daughter, Alice Honeycombe (all their surnames are now spelt Honicombe), were summoned to the court to account for the fact that they had allowed their homes to decay and fall into disrepair. They were each fined 4d and instructed to effect any necessary improvements. It's possible that there had been a bad winter, with an unusual amount of snow and gales, and that this had damaged as many as 32 homes.
At a court held at Trenay on 20 April, no less a person than Sir Walter Raleigh himself, Chief Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall and the new Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, was present, together with his deputy, John Hunkin. Stephen Honeycombe was one of the 14 jurors who were sworn in to deal with the various complaints, land exchanges and offences within the manor. One imagines that Sir Walter was a guest of the Edgecumbes at Cotehele.
As he chaired proceedings he may have puffed away at a pipe or chewed a wad of tobacco. Although sailors returning from the American colonies had first introduced smoking to England in the 1570s, Sir Walter is credited with introducing the practice to the royal court and popularising the weed, which was present in various forms all over the Americas, north and south and valued for its hallucogenic qualities when taken in large quantities. Then as now it could be inhaled, smoked, chewed, sniffed as snuff or even drunk. Tobacco would eventually become the main cash crop in Virginia.
Did Stephen Honeycombe and some of the other villagers, over some flagons of ale, ask Sir Walter, who was a Devonian and in his early forties, about the New World across the wide Atlantic where, in Virginia, he had tried to settle more than one colony of English migrants with ruinous results and much financial loss to himself and his friends? Did they ask him about the queen, about the time he was imprisoned in the Tower of London, about his uncle, Sir Francis Drake, about the new theatres and other sorts of entertainment in London, and about countries about which they had little knowledge and would never see? Seeing him smoke, did they, with his encouragement and example, experiment with samples of tobacco that he had with him - sharing a pipe or a primitive cigar? Did his wife disapprove of his smoking habit?
His second wife, Bess Throckmorton, whom Raleigh had married in 1591, was 11 years younger than he. She had been one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting, and after becoming pregnant by Raleigh had secretly married him, much to the queen's displeasure. In 1600 he became Governor of Jersey in the Channel Islands and initiated the building there of Elizabeth Castle. Later on, after leading yet another failed and final expedition, this time up the Orinoco River in search of El Dorado, he was implicated, apparently falsely, in a plot against the Crown, and was beheaded at Whitehall in October 1618; he was 54. "This is a sharp medicine," he said on seeing the axe. "But it is a physician for all disease." His loving wife, Bess, had his head embalmed, and kept it near her. She was in the habit of asking visitors if they would like to see Sir Walter.

On Raleigh's departure from Calstock in April 1597, the manorial court reverted to routine matters, fining Grace Honeycombe 2d for twice defaulting on payments due to two complainants. Old Thomas was also fined twice and John Honeycombe once. At the end of the year, on 30 December,

Elizabeth Honeycombe, wife of John, came to the court and handed over two closes, called Lower Broadland and the Little Meadow, which amounted to an eighth part of a holding, to John Martin. Then in October 1598, Sir Walter Raleigh, still Chief Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall, returned to chair the local court. He and his deputy, John Hunkin, were informed that Richard Honeycombe, piper, had recently died.

Richard first appears in the Rolls in 1559, so he may have been in his early sixties when he died. His holding at Donacombe Hill (sic) was passed on to his widow, Cecily, after a heriot of his best beast was paid to the Lady Queen. His "best beast" was a pathetic object, "una galina" - a hen, which was valued at 4d.

This rather implies that Richard was worth very little - with no cow, sheep or pig, even a cock, to be a heriot. Being a piper probably didn't pay very much, and if he became ill, he would have been virtually destitute. Cecily seemingly had a hard time after he died - she was among 12 villagers who were accused in the court held at West Metherell in February 1599 of letting their homes deteriorate. They were each fined 2d and told to repair their dwellings. Stephen was once more a juror in April, when James was fined 3d; old Thomas was also fined.

It's in October 1599 that Anthony Honeycombe (1), Stephen's son, first appears, complaining about a transgression or trespass committed by Philip Facy. Anthony was possibly the only surviving son of Stephen and Joan, and not much liked by his mother, as we shall see. He was married to Laura and would most probably have been living with his parents in the family holding in Cross, where Philip Facy also dwelt.

The Assession Roll for 1598 records that Philip Facy's mother, Agnes, had died since the last assession. Her son now took half of the two houses and the acreage in Cross, while Stephen had the other half. Elsewhere, Stephen retained possession of the cottage with a courtyard in Albaston, as well as the seven acres of Broomclose which were shared with Sampson Hun.

Another death that the Roll recorded was that of William Honeycombe, the husband of Grace. He must have had a trade - miner, thatcher, carpenter, stonemason, blacksmith - as he is never mentioned in connection with a tenure unless through his wife. Grace still retained her half of a fourth part in the house and 18 acres at Latchley beyond Hingston Down, now sharing the holding with nine other people.

William features very seldom in the records, but he will turn out to be one of the most important Honeycombes in this history.

It seems that the two Honeycombe widows in Kingsgarden, Joan and Tamsin, had also died before the 1598 assession, or retired to an old folks' lodging in Calstock, as Thomas Marwood took possession of their house and 10 acres all on his own.

Old Thomas Honeycombe (3) had also disappeared from the tenantry and was no longer sharing a house and 14 acres in Kingsgarden. But he hadn't died - he went to live in the village of Calstock, as a later entry in an Assession Roll reveals. Nonetheless, five Honeycombes - Richard, William, Elizabeth (who died about January 1597), Joan and Tamsin - *are* recorded as having died in the manor since the last assession, an unusual amount. Perhaps there had been a local outbreak of plague or some other disease that attacked the elderly.

Philip Honeycombe's garden in Harrowbarrow was now being rented by Nicholas Spiller - no mention of Alice; Cecily Honeycombe, Richard's widow, had the 12 acres of waste at Duncombe (sic) Hill; and Elizabeth's daughter, Alice Honeycombe, shared the house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden with Roger Dodge, Anna Dodge and John Martin. Dorothy Grills, nee Honeycombe, widow of Sampson, had taken over all his pieces of properties in Hill, and Honeycombe was now halved between young John Bartlett and William Stentaford, Alice's son.

In November 1599 Stephen Honeycombe, who was ageing and possibly ill, handed over his share, a fourth part, of the holding in Cross to his son, Anthony (1), who duly came to the court at West Metherell and paid the necessary fine for the hand-over of 8d.

Roger Honeycombe also came to this court and received all the rights, titles and interest in Tideford "commonly called Donacombe" from Katherine Harry, the wife of James Harry. It seems that Roger was one of Richard the piper's sons, the others being Walter and James. Roger also had

three daughters, the three named in the Rolls and later in James Honeycombe's will being Alice, Robish and Elizabeth.
At the court held in February 1600 at Chilsworthy, which was situated between Latchley and Gunnislake, Stephen was among 24 villagers who were each fined 2d and told to repair their homes "in decay through default of repairing". This was the third time some of the villagers had been instructed to repair their homes, the instruction always occurring in February. This would seem to indicate that winter storms may indeed have been the cause of damage to villagers' homes.
Anthony Honeycombe (1) appeared at this court in connection with the appraisal of the heriot to be given to the Lady Queen after the death in Latchley of Walter Jane. He and Griffin Adam appraised the beast, a heifer, at 21 shillings and sixpence. At later courts, old Thomas Honeycombe was fined four times for various defaults concerning four different men. James Honeycombe, Thomas's son, was fined with him on one occasion; and Grace, William's widow, was fined 2d for being unwilling "to allow the late Thomas Reaper to repair his house next to her holding". It sounds as if Grace wasn't living up to her name.

On 7 February 1601 in London, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company to which Will Shakespeare now belonged, staged a special matinee performance of *Richard II* at the new Globe theatre, which had opened in June 1599 with a performance of *Julius Caesar*. A few days later the Queen Elizabeth's former favourite, the Earl of Essex, led 200 troops in an ill-timed and rash assault on the City of London. Seized and tried for treason, he was beheaded in the Tower of London on 25 February; aged 34, he was calm and fatalistic. The night before this the queen calmly watched a royal command performance of one of the plays in the repertoire of the Lord Chamberlain's Men. There's no record of its title, but it could have been one of Shakespeare's latest - *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, or *As You Like It.* At the time he was completing *Hamlet*, which was given its first performance sometime in 1601, as was *Twelfth Night.*

In March 1601 the Court Roll reveals that Roger Honeycombe must have had a son called Roger, as the former was described as "Roger Honicombe senior" when he was fined 4d for several defaults regarding some complaints by Roger Penny. Walter Honeycombe, Roger senior's brother, was also fined for a misdemeanour, and Grace Honeycombe handed over her eighth part in a holding to her daughter, Alice, in April. In August, another widow, Elizabeth, who may have been married to John the weaver, handed over her close in "Papewill with Holes" to her son, John.
In the early autumn, in the "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness", there occurred the death of the most significant, well-documented and possibly well-regarded Honeycombe in the manor of Calstock during Queen Elizabeth's reign.
At the court held on 16 September 1601, the reeve reported that Stephen Honeycombe had died. His fourth part of a holding in Cross was taken up by his widow, Joan, and the heriot of his best beast at the time of his death was said by his assessors, John Facy and Richard Jane, to be a cow, which was valued at 28 shillings. His funeral service would have been conducted by the rector at that time, Edward Maltby (or Maebley)
Stephen had made his first appearance in the Court Rolls in May 1559, shortly after Philip Honeycombe hanged himself. It seems likely that he was Philip's eldest son and that he married Joan Facy, daughter of Agnes Facy, who later remarried and became Agnes Baker. He and Joan had four daughters at least, and a son, Anthony. Initially a tin miner, he also rented various pieces of land in the manor, his home being in Cross, and he was a juror more often than any other of the Honeycombes in Calstock. In the church seating plan he sat in an enclave of seats at the front, paying the top rental of a shilling a year for the privilege. When he died he was probably in his sixties.
He is also significant for a particular reason in this history, in that the will he made before he died has survived - and it is the earliest will made by a Honeycombe to have outlasted the accidents of time and careless clerks.

13. THE WILLS OF STEPHEN AND JOAN, 1601-1606

There were in fact *seven* earlier wills, which are listed at the District Probate Registry in Bodmin, but none exists now. This is very unfortunate. How much they might have told us!

The earliest was that of another Stephen Honeycombe, in Callington, who died in 1584. Then there was the will of Thomas (2) who died in Calstock in 1585 . . . the will of Philip (not the one hanged himself) who died in Calstock in 1596 . . . the will of Elizabeth, who also died in Calstock in 1596 . . . the will of Edward, who died in Callington in September 1596 . . . the will of John, who died in Maker in 1597 . . . and lastly two testamentary documents, a letter of administration and an inventory (but no will), both relating to the death of Griffin Honeycombe, who died in Antony in April 1601. These last two documents we have.

Letters of administration were official grants to the next of kin authorising them to administer the property of someone who died intestate. An inventory was a list of personal and household goods, including animals, left by the deceased.

Griffin Honycombe (sic) died intestate. Antony was a Cornish parish in the irregular peninsula opposite Plymouth, bounded to the north by the St Germans River and to the east and the south by the sea. Griffin was the progenitor of four generations of Honeycombes in that area, and the death of his grandson, Daniel, at sea, will provide us with a unique and touching insight into Daniel's life and times.

Suffice it now to say that Griffin's few goods and chattels were valued in the inventory at eight pounds 19 shillings. They included a bedstead, a cloak and other apparel, four dishes, a candlestick, a rug and "a whiffel". The meaning of this word is a puzzle. It either derives from the Old English for a spear or javelin ("wifel") or is a dialect name for a small sculling boat used by one person. Because of the proximity of Griffin's village to a tidal river and the sea, a small boat would seem to have been more appropriate than a spear. Whichever it was, the whiffel was worth 16 shillings - only his cloak and other apparel were worth more (40 shillings). The fact that he was owed five pounds by John Sergeant the older of Antony added greatly to the total sum of his goods, which went to his widow, Susan Honeycombe.

They were appraised by Robert Reaper and Ferdinand Trigg - surnames that occur in Calstock. It seems likely, from the deaths in the nearby parish of Maker of two John Honeycombes, in 1598 and 1604, that Griffin was related to both of these Johns (father and son?) and that all three were descended from the Calstock Honeycombes. Griffin may indeed have been a cousin of Stephen.

The difficulty in reading the aforesaid documents is that they are hand-written on scraps of parchment in Elizabethan script. Not only is the parchment worn and torn, but the shape, letters and spelling of the script isn't easy to decipher. The ink has also faded and the meaning and use of some words is obscure. But the script is similar to that which Shakespeare used, and when we look at the inventories of Griffin and Stephen, we are looking at the hand that wrote *Hamlet* and was writing *Othello* in 1601.

Stephen Honeycombe made his will in January 1601. The right-hand edge has worn away, as has part of the left-hand side. There isn't any punctuation. What can be deciphered follows, with bracketed gaps indicating missing words or phrases.

"In the name of God, amen, the 26th day of January in the year of our Lord (.----.) I, Stephen Honicombe of Calstock, sick in body but of good and perfect (memory), God be thanked for it, do ordain and make this my last will and testament (in manner and) form following. First I commend my soul to Almighty God my maker (and my) body to the earth. Item. I give and bequeath to the poor of the parish (12 shillings?). I give and bequeath towards the reparation of the parish church of Calstock (12 shillings?). I give and bequeath unto my daughters, Moad Hitching and Joan (Coole, to each) of them one sheep. Item. I give and bequeath to (Grace Wills?) and bequeath to Thomasin, my daughter, five pounds of (......) and one sheep and the (......). Item. I give and bequeath unto Edward Wills the (......) and one sheep. I give and bequeath unto my sister, Julian

Wotton (……) and bequeath to Henry Mayster, my servant, if he do remain, (which) he hath covenanted with me until he be of the age of 21 years (……) to pay him 10 shillings and one lamb. Item. The rest of my goods not here bequeathed I give and bequeath to Joan, my wife, and Anthony, my son, (asking) my executors to execute my will according to the (……) and meaning of the same, whose witnesses be Andrew Gatson (?), John (Combe), Edward Maebley, and others."
Edward Maebley or Maltby was the rector of St Andrew's and Andrew Gatson may have been a manorial official, even the lord of the manor - some indication of Stephen's status in the manor. The will wasn't signed. Nor was it signed by the witnesses - though this was not unusual at the time. In view of the wording of part of the will that his widow, Joan, made two years later, the fact that the will wasn't signed may be of some relevance.
The inventory of Stephen's goods and chattels, which were appraised by John Facy and John Combe, tells us that Stephen's possessions included two cows and a yearling, one colt, 20 sheep, two pigs, and three hens. The cows and the yearling were worth three pounds, the sheep three pounds six shillings, the colt 32 shillings and the two pigs 11 shillings. The three hens were worth a shilling, ie 4d each.
His household goods included a cupboard, some bedding, two tablecloths and a sheet, two latten candlesticks, several crocks, pans, platters, saucers and porringers (small bowls, often with a handle), and a tin cup. Latten was an alloy of copper and zinc - and the candlesticks may have been made locally, even fashioned by Stephen himself. There was also some timber, some timberware and ironware, and a few saddles and ropes. In the barn were corn and hay, and corn "in the mow".
Stephen's clothes, purse and girdle were valued at 20 shillings. The most valuable household items were the candlesticks (16 shillings), and the crocks and pans (22 shillings in all). The sum total of his possessions was 18 pounds 17 shillings and 10d.
From a village point of view Stephen must have been a respected man of modest substance, living comfortably enough. He even had a servant. His widow, Joan, however, would die in 1606 in much reduced circumstances, as we shall see.

Sir Walter Raleigh and John Hunkin returned to head the manorial court at the Hatches on 8 April 1602, at which Anthony Honeycombe (1) received 2d from Joan Gross, a widow, for some minor offence. One imagines that Sir Walter stayed again at Cotehele when he was in the area, or perhaps at Harewood House. It's possible that some of the Honeycombe men had now taken up smoking, deeming the practice, if indulged by Sir Walter, to be a fashionable and manly thing to do.
The next court, in May, and held again at the Hatches, was told that Cecily Honeycombe, Richard the piper's widow, had died. Her dwelling and an acre in Donacombe Hill were taken up by her son, Walter, whose sureties were Mark Hawkin and Philip Facy. The heriot in this case was a cock, valued at 4d. Old Thomas Honeycombe was among nine persons whose defaults were pardoned, with the fines being waived.
Sir Walter Raleigh again attended the court in October, held again at the Hatches, at which Anthony Honeycombe served for the first time as one of 14 jurors. There would be no more entries concerning Honeycombes until the beginning of the new reign in England, that of a Scottish king.
One wonders whether Sir Walter, when he visited Calstock, besides speaking of the soothing virtues of tobacco, also praised the potato, which he is believed to have introduced into Britain. A tough and durable tuber called the potato had been encountered by the Spanish Conquistadors in the Andes mountains of Peru. In Spanish colonies it was regarded as peasant food and in Spain it was fed to hospital inmates. Its more general introduction in Europe occurred about 1600, though it was still regarded as food for the underprivileged and the poor, and as it was related to the deadly nightshade family of plants (as was tobacco) it was viewed with some suspicion B its leaves are indeed somewhat poisonous. Its nutritious qualities were, however, eventually recognised, and from about 1780 Ireland and other countries began using it as a staple daily food.

Perhaps at one of the manorial courts or in a tavern Sir Walter, while indulging in some thoughtful smoking, produced a potato for the villagers' inspection and tried to persuade them to grow it in their fields. Could it be that the Calstock Honeycombes were among the first in England to grow and eat the simple potato, as well as wreathe themselves in convicial clouds of smoky nicotine?

In January 1603 the ageing Queen Elizabeth caught a bad cold in London, while in Calstock Joan Honeycombe made her will.
The Queen's health worsened in February and she and her court removed themselves to Richmond Palace, which was believed to be the warmest of her several homes. Now 69, she was unsteady on her feet and sometimes needed a stick to get about. At other times she sat alone and silent for hours, brooding over the past and the deaths of many she had known - among them Leicester, Hatton, Burleigh and Essex. She suffered from fevers, thirst, insomnia, increasing weariness and weakness. Towards the end she ate nothing and sat unmoving on cushions on the floor, until persuaded at last to lie on her bed. She died quietly on 24 March 1603.
The Scottish King in Edinburgh, James VI, son of Mary, Queen of Scots - King of Scotland since he was one year old - was proclaimed King of England and Ireland as James I.
The theatres had been closed since 19 February in anticipation of the queen's death and Shakespeare's company had performed before her for the last time at Richmond Palace on 2 February 1603. In May the company was formally restyled as the King's Men and was provided with lengths of scarlet woollen cloth to be made into a ceremonial livery as servants of their new royal patron.
James I, aged 36, was married to Anne of Denmark and had fathered five children. The new King and Queen were crowned at Westminster Abbey on 25 July 1603. There was no procession and the ceremony was much curtailed, the public being forbidden entry because of yet another outbreak of plague. Once again the theatres were closed and over one week in London that summer 1,000 people died.

At the manorial court held at Latchley on 13 May 1603, once again before Sir Walter Raleigh, the clerk of the court headed the formulaic summation of the proceedings with "anno regni dicti domini nostri Jacobi primo et Scotie tricesimo sexto" – "the first year of the reign of our said Lord, James, and of Scotland the thirty-sixth."
Alice Honeycombe came to this court and handed over her eighth part of a holding with appurtenances in Latchley to John Derry the younger.
In October the court again sat at Latchley and it is here that Edmundo Honicombe (sic) appears for the first time, in connection with a trespass or transgression committed against him by Thomas Grubb, who was fined 8d. Edmund would seem to have been a son of Anthony and therefore a grandson of Stephen. Anthony senior also had another son, Anthony junior (2), a disreputable fellow apparently. 16 years later Anthony junior was denounced in the Court Rolls as a common drunkard.
In 1604 Anthony (perhaps the senior) and Roger Honeycombe were separately fined 2d each for minor offences. Later that year Sir Walter Raleigh was succeeded as Lord Lieutenant of the Duchy of Cornwall, Chief Steward and Warden of the Stannaries, by an even brighter star of the royal court, the young and handsome Earl of Pembroke.

William Herbert, the third Earl of Pembroke, was 24. He had succeeded to the title on the death of his father in 1601. The family home was at Wilton House, near Salisbury in Wiltshire. His mother, Mary, Countess of Pembroke, was the younger sister of Sir Philip Sidney and when her brother died she assumed the role of his literary executor, becoming a patroness of other poets and writers, like Edmund Spenser.
The young Earl, her eldest son, born on 8 April 1580, had similar literary tastes and wrote poetry, some of it semi-pornographic and spiced with innuendo, but so did most poets then. Apart from Shakespeare, Pembroke was friendly with Ben Jonson and a later on he became a close friend of John Donne. The historian, the Earl of Clarendon, said of William Herbert that he was

“immoderately given up to women . . . (though) he was not so much transported with beauty and outward allurements as with those advantages of the mind as are manifested in extraordinary wit and knowledge.” His admirers included the King, who in 1604 appointed him as Warden of the Stannaries and Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall.
Some commentators have identified William Herbert as the Mr WH, the “only begetter” and “fair youth” of Shakespeare’s sonnets, the first 17 of which were probably written in 1597 when William Herbert was 17. A few years later he would be regarded by some as the Hamlet of the royal entourage. Certainly he and his even more beautiful younger brother, Philip, who became a particular favourite of King James I, are the “incomparable pair of brethren” to whom the First Folio of Shakespeare’s plays was inscribed by the printer.
Anthony Holden, in his biography, *William Shakespeare*, says: “James was to prove a valuable patron to Shakespeare and his fellows. In the thirteen years between the king’s accession and the poet’s death, the King’s Men would play at court no fewer than 187 times - an average of thirteen royal command performances a year, compared with three during Elizabeth’s reign. He paid twice as much . . . For the King’s Men, this meant gainful employment even when the theatres were closed by the plague” - as they were in the summer of 1603, when the King James retreated from plague-ridden London to stay at Wilton House as guest of the Countess of Pembroke. Holden writes that in the autumn of 1603 the King’s Men were summoned to perform *As You Like It* there, for which they were paid the munificent sum of 30 pounds. “We have the man Shakespeare with us,” the Countess wrote somewhat slightingly to her eldest son, William Herbert. Possibly she disapproved of William being identified as the beloved youth of Shakespeare’s sonnets.
The theatres re-opened in London in April 1604, and the first recorded performance of *Measure for Measure* was before King James on 26 December. Holden notes: “In the year from November 1604 to 31 October 1605, according to the accounts of the Master of the Revels, Shakespeare and the King’s Men performed at court at least eleven times - ten different plays, including seven by Shakespeare, mostly hardy annuals from *The Comedy of Errors* and *Love’s Labours Lost* to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.
He was now working on *King Lear*, which would be followed by *Macbeth*.
It was in 1604 that King James published *A Counterblast to Tobacco*, in which he denounced smoking as “a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless.”

It seems unlikely that the handsome, young and cultured Earl of Pembroke, so admired by the King, was a smoker, and indeed he may have spoken against it, even banning it in his presence. That aside, one wonders when he came to Cornwall what he made of the Calstock villagers whom he saw in the court that was held at West Metherell on 10 October 1604. And what did the villagers make of their splendid new overlord?
Respect would have been shown to his rank and his person, but the English class system had yet to develop, and although there was rank and status, the nobility would have been quite at ease with the tenantry, and vice versa. Yet how wonderful it is to think that the young Earl, who was familiar with most of the great and talented personages of his day, would also have rubbed shoulders with the Honeycombes he addressed that October morning, some of whom he must have come to know over the next 14 years.
Among them was old Thomas Honeycombe, who came to the court and handed over his sixth part of a holding called the Handyocke (sic) in Donacombe Hill to Roger Honeycombe, who was already resident there. The portions of farmland and other acres in the manor were now so sub-divided and separately rented out that they had acquired identifying names of their own. It would seem that Roger was a son of Richard the piper and Thomas’s nephew.
After concluding his business in Cornwall the young Earl journeyed home to Wilton, to prepare for his marriage to Mary Talbot, daughter of the seventh Earl of Shrewsbury, on 4 November 1604.
Pembroke wasn’t present at the two courts at which Honeycombes next appeared. These were at Chilsworthy in January and February 1605. Anthony, Edmund and Roger Honeycombe all made an

appearance, as did Alice Honeycombe. In October, Roger Honicombe de Donacombe (sic) was in trouble over several defaults concerning John Strike and was fined 4d.

On 5 November in London a plot to assassinate the King and kill the members of both houses of Parliament by blowing up Westminster Palace was discovered. A few of the conspirators, a group of Roman Catholics, managed to flee abroad, some were killed, and those that were caught were tried for treason. Guido Fawkes and four other conspirators were sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered in Westminster on 31 January 1606. Fawkes, a former soldier, who'd been tortured for several days to extract a confession, saved himself from the horrors of being drawn and quartered by jumping off the platform with the noose around his head, breaking his neck before he could be half strangled and disembowelled after his genitals had been cut off and stuffed into his mouth. This done, his body would then have been dismembered and cut in four.

On 22 January 1606 the manorial court in Calstock was held at Latchley, as it was in March and April. Anthony Honeycombe, Edmund and John were all fined for various misdemeanours, mainly relating to debts, which aren't usually specified in detail in the Rolls. However, the misdemeanour involving John Honeycombe was.
He was fined 4d because he had "cultivated wheat on the customary land of the King within the aforesaid manor and carried off the straw out of the manor against the custom of the manor." This may seem trivial, as do most of the fines, but the laws and customs of the manor were strictly observed and enforced, when possible. Now and then, for whatever reason, the fines weren't always paid, and frequently not paid on time.
It was on 22 October 1606 that the court at Latchley was informed officially that Stephen's widow, Joan Honeycombe, had died. The inventory of her goods was carried out on 28 October by John and Nicholas Lovell. It reveals the miserable deprivation of her final days and how little she had. Her main possessions were four sheep, worth 12 shillings in all. There was little else - two small pans, some pewter dishes, an iron pot with a stand for cooking items over an open fire, a feather bolster, two old blankets, two old coverlets and her woollen and linen garments. She must have slept on a bed of straw or hay in a hut or outhouse which she probably shared with the sheep. The sum total of her goods was four pounds nine shillings. Her daughters, three of them anyway, may have cared for her, but it seems she didn't lodge with them, maintaining her independence. Her best beast was a heifer, and that of course was paid as a heriot to the lord of the manor. It was worth 22 shillings. Her woollen apparel was valued at a surprising 40 shillings, which tells us it must have been of good quality and well made. She dressed well at least - or used to do so.
Her fourth part of the holding in Cross, which in 1598 had consisted of the two houses and 30 acres that Stephen had shared with Philip Facy - and had been first taken up by Philip Honeycombe and John Philip 70 years before that - went to Anthony Honeycombe, her son.
Anthony is mentioned in her will, along with her four daughters, but not in a way one might expect. The will itself isn't signed or witnessed, but it is written in a bold, clear hand. Not by her - she almost certainly couldn't read or write. Though the will is dated 1603, we would date it in 1604, as the calendar year began at that time (and until 1752) on 25 March.
It says: "In the name of God, amen, the twelfth day of January in the year of our Lord God 1603. I, Joan Honycombe, widow, of the parish of Calstock in the county of Cornwall, being then through the goodness of God Almighty in perfect mind and good remembrance, do make my will and testament in manner and form following. First, I commend my soul into the hands of God Almighty and my body to the earth, to and at the disposition of my friends. Secondly, of my goods I give and bequeath unto the poor of the parish 12 shillings. Item. I give and bequeath towards the reparation of the church 12 shillings. Item. I give and bequeath unto Anthony, my son, the fourth part of one spit, the fourth part of an iron bar and the fourth part of one winding-sheet. Item. I give and bequeath to Joan Coole, my daughter, one platter. Item. I give and bequeath unto Grace Wills, my daughter, 3 sheep and one brazen pan. I give and bequeath unto Thomasina Glubb, my daughter, one bushel of wheat, to be delivered at harvest next, and a pair of silver hooks. All the rest of my goods not given nor bequeathed I give and bequeath unto Moate Hitching, my

daughter, whom I do make my whole and only executrix, to see my will performed, and the witnesses unto the making of the same be these: Sampson Webb, Richard Raw and Anthony Honicombe with others."

From the nature of the bequests we may assume that Joan Coole, who only received a platter, wasn't her mother's favourite daughter - the other three were more highly regarded. Moate (Maud) was her executrix; Tamsin, in addition to a bushel of wheat, received the valuable pair of silver hooks, which were probably made of local silver; and Grace was given three sheep and a brazen pan. The fact that the silver hooks aren't listed in the inventory, made two years after the will, may indicate that they had already gone to Tamsin - or have been lost or stolen.

And she evidently hated Anthony. The fourth parts of a spit, of an iron bar and a winding-sheet are in effect a mother's curse - he was to get something all right, but something that amounted to a very definite *nothing*. At the next Assession after her death, however, we know that her fourth part of the holding in Cross did go to Anthony. Perhaps this was something she never wanted to happen or that Anthony managed to engineer.

The will was drawn up two years before she died, and Anthony was one of the witnesses. What did he think, and what did the others think, when she told whoever was carefully penning the will, with grim emphasis, what Anthony was to get? There is a mystery here.

14. THE ANTHONY PROBLEM, 1607-1627

There is more of a problem than a mystery about the various Anthonys who were living in Calstock and in other towns and villages in Devon and Cornwall between 1607 and 1641. There were *ten* of them.

The first Anthony (1) appears in a Court Roll for October 1599. He was the only surviving son of Stephen and Joan. We know that he also had a son called Anthony junior (2), who is first named as such in October 1607. Although Anthony senior isn't so named until October 1613, and although the last time Anthony junior is named as such is in 1619, he was still clearly living in the manor as Anthony senior is named as such in the Assession Roll for 1626. It wouldn't have been necessary to add "senior" to his name if Anthony junior had left the manor or was dead. So we have two Anthonys in the manor of Calstock between 1607 and 1627 when, as it happens, *both* Anthonys disappear from the Court Rolls, though Anthony senior (1) remains in the Assession Rolls.

And there was a *third* Anthony (3) in Calstock about this time, in 1614. He was the eldest son of William and Grace.

Apart from these three, there was an Anthony (4) who was baptised in Tavistock in 1615 and buried there in 1626; an Anthony (5) who was baptised and buried in Callington in 1623; an Anthony (6) who died there in 1626; an Anthony (7) who was baptised in Exeter in 1635; and there was an Anthony senior (8) *and* an Anthony junior (9) in the Protestation Return for St Cleer in 1641, and finally the son of Anthony (2), another Anthony (10).

The last two are the most important Anthonys from the point of view of posterity, as one of them may have been the father or grandfather of Matthew Honeycombe of St Cleer - the only begetter of *all* the Honeycombes in the world today.

Let us try and sort some of them out.

The Anthony (5) who was baptised and then buried within four days in Callington in January 1623 was the infant son of John and Katherine Honeycombe. John was one of the many Honeycombes who thrived in the Callington area from 1559 to 1746, these being the first and last years in which their names appear in the local parish registers. Their main progenitor was Edward Honeycombe, who married Joan Wilkin in Callington on 12 November 1559 - the earliest entry in a parish register concerning a Honeycombe.

One of Edward's sons was another Anthony (6), the one who was buried in Callington on 29 May 1626. This Anthony made a detailed will, and as he and his wife, Sibly (Sibella in Latin and Sibyl in English), had no heirs, all his goods and chattels went in bequests to his brothers, to their children, and to other relatives and friends. His goods were valued at 23 pounds 3s3d.
Edward it seems had a younger brother called Sampson, who sired about ten children and was buried in Callington on 18 July 1587. Although we have no record of the baptism, he would inevitably have named one of his sons Sampson after himself, as was the tradition then. And indeed the only other unaccounted-for Sampson about this time is one who appears in Tavistock in 1615 as the father of the Anthony (4) who was born there in Tavistock in October. This Anthony died of the plague, aged 10, in June 1626. He was among the 575 people who died during an outbreak of plague in Tavistock that year - 35 died in June; 49 in July; 115 in August; and 131 in September. With the onset of colder weather, the deaths declined - 86 in October and 29 in November. The normal monthly average was eight. One of the many who died in September was another Honeycombe, Edmund, probably young Anthony's older brother.
Another Anthony who lived outside Calstock was the Anthony (7) who was baptised at St Mary Major in Exeter on 2 September 1635. Nothing is known for sure about what happened to him thereafter. But what is of consuming interest is that this Anthony's grandfather, and an uncle, were both called Andrew - and his own father was a John.
The only other Andrew preceding those two is the Andrew whose father, Philip, hanged himself in Calstock in 1559. This Andrew, who had a wife called Joan, is last heard of in Calstock in 1560. It seems more than probable that after the death of Philip, his father, Andrew and Joan left Calstock to make a new life for themselves elsewhere, and it is not unlikely that if Andrew had a trade he went east, to Tavistock perhaps and thence to Exeter. The other two Andrews recorded in parish registers as being in Exeter from 1613 must surely be the Calstock Andrew's son and grandson, another grandson being the John who fathered the Anthony (7) born in Exeter in 1635.
But this Anthony cannot be either the Anthony senior (8), or junior (9), who are listed in the Protestation Returns for St Cleer in 1641. The Exeter Anthony (7) wasn't old enough.
This brings us finally back to Calstock, to the Anthonys senior (1) and junior (2) who were living in Calstock between 1607 and 1627 - as was (perhaps) the Anthony (3) named in 1614 as the eldest son of William and Grace. As Anthony junior died in 1627, the two Anthonys in St Cleer in 1641 can't be identified with him. They can only be identified with Anthony senior (1) or with Anthony (3), the eldest son of William and Grace, or with Anthony (10), the last surviving son of Anthony junior, who was baptised in October 1625.
More of this later. Meanwhile, let us return to 1607 to see what the Rolls can tell us about the Anthony senior and junior of Calstock in the reign of King James I.
It is noticeable from now on how few of the Honeycombes held any acres of land. The old divisions of the manor, the dwellings with 20 or 30 acres attached, like those at Honeycombe, Hill or Harrowbarrow, were now mainly shared or sub-divided. The Honeycombes had ceased to be small farmers and most of them now made a living from some country occupation or trade.

In 1607 we are immediately faced with another Honeycombe senior and Honeycombe junior, apart from the two Anthonys.
Roger Honeycombe *senior* came to the court held at Latchley on 13 April 1607 and faced up to several defaults. He and Anthony and Edmund were all fined, with others, for various offences - Roger and Edmund facing large fines of 12d each. Then at the next court at Latchley, in October, Roger *junior* appears. He and Sampson Hun junior were appointed as tasters of beer for the manor. Even what the tenants drank of the beer brewed in the manor had to be approved of by the Duchy's representatives.
Anthony junior also came to this court with Edmund, evidently Anthony junior's brother, as well as with John Jane and Christopher Beill, and all four were fined 3d each. Edmund may have been older than Anthony junior, as it was customary when the first son, usually named after his father, died in infancy or as a child, that a later son would also be given the name. Thus we find in some Honeycombe families that *two* children have the same baptismal name, the

second John, for instance, being given his father's or a favoured name, as the first John has died. This also applies to daughters.
The next Honeycombe to appear at the court held at Latchley in October 1607 occasions a most unusual entry in the Court Rolls of the Duchy.
It says in Latin: 'Idem presentant quod Susanna Honycombe est communis rixatrix et obiurgatrix inter vicinos ad nocumentum vicinorum suorum et in malu exemplu aliorum.' "Rixatrix" and "obiurgatrix" for once are proper Latin nouns, not bastardised like much of the Latin in the Rolls - the clerk must have had access to a Latin dictionary. The first describes a person who argues violently - a quarrelsome brawler; the other is someone who rebukes, criticises and detracts. So we may translate the sentence as follows – "The same present that Susan Honeycombe is a common scold and a shrew among her neighbours, to the annoyance of her neighbours and a bad example to others." The clerk must have taken some pleasure in finding, and using, the correct Latin words to describe Susan's bad behaviour.
From later evidence we know that Susan was Anthony junior's wife. She wasn't fined for her failings, only publicly censured. Whether this caused her to modify her behaviour we do not know. But the evidence of future courts indicates that she and Anthony junior were a rowdy pair.

In January 1608, the Earl of Pembroke and John Hunkin chaired the manorial court held again at Latchley, at which an Anthony Honeycombe and John Adam, who were triors, were fined, respectively, 12d and three shillings, for failing in their duties in a suit involving two other villagers. From Pembroke's point of view, manorial problems in wintry Calstock must have seemed a world away from the extravagant masques, dissolute immorality and intrigues of the court of King James. One wonders whether the Earl had been in snowy London the previous month, when once again the Thames froze over, immersing himself in the general Christmas festivities as well as attending an actor's funeral and seeing a couple of plays B the King's Men performed at court on 26, 27 and 28 December. The funeral was that of Shakespeare's youngest brother. On New Year's Eve, 1607, William arranged and paid for the funeral in Southwark of 27-year-old Edmund Shakespeare, a struggling actor with another company. Then, after his recent triumphs in London with *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus,* William Shakespeare began working on *Pericles*, which was staged in the spring of 1608.
A few months earlier, in February 1608, he became a grandfather at the age of 43 when his daughter, Susan Hall, gave birth to a daughter, Elizabeth, in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire; he was 44 in April. His *Sonnets* were published in May 1609 and *Cymbeline* was probably staged the following year for the investiture as Prince of Wales of King James's accomplished and artistic eldest son, Prince Henry, aged 16. *The Winter's Tale* was also performed at the Globe in London in 1610. Much was expected of Prince Henry, but two years later he died of typhoid, and his younger brother, Charles, fatefully became the heir to the throne.
His Scottish father, King James I, was already setting the stage for Charles by his addiction to the doctrine of the divine right of kings and his distrust and dislike of Parliament - in 1614 he dismissed Parliament and managed to rule Great Britain (he was the first to call it so) for seven years with the help of royal councillors, political advisers and his favourite peers. One method he devised of raising money was the selling of honours and titles - those who desired a title could become a baron for the payment of 5,000 pounds, a viscount for 10,000 pounds and an earl for 20,000 pounds. To save money and curtail the cost of foreign wars by buying peace he tried to marry Prince Charles to the Catholic King of Spain's daughter. This was generally unpopular, as was his execution of Sir Walter Raleigh. More popular was his Authorised Bible and his design for a new British flag, which became known as the Union Jack.
The King's interests included demonology and witchcraft - he wrote about both, as well as about the evils of tobacco - and despite that fact that he and his Queen Anne, who died in 1619, produced eight children, he had a passion for athletic, talented and slightly androgynous young men. Those of his favourites whose parts he esteemed the most he ennobled, like a former Scottish page, Robert Carr, who became the first Earl of Somerset, Lord Chamberlain and Lord Privy Seal when he was 26, and George Villiers, who within five years became a knight, a viscount,

an earl, a marquis and then the first Duke of Buckingham by the time *he* was 26. Both favourites married, with James's generous approval, though they spent more time in James's service than with their wives. The King was especially devoted to Buckingham, who was addressed in letters by James as his spouse and wife. Some said that while Queen Elizabeth had been more of a King, James was more of a Queen.
Francis Osborne, quoted in Wikipedia, wrote: "The love the king showed men was amorously conveyed as if he had mistaken their sex and thought them ladies . . . The king's kissing of them after so lascivious a mode in public, and upon the theatre, as it were, of the world, prompted many to imagine some things done in the tiring house (theatre dressing-room) that exceed . . . my expressions." Inevitably, when James denounced sodomy as being among "those horrible crimes which ye are bound in conscience to forgive", he was in turn derided as a hypocrite.
Ever fond of William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke - though more fond of his prettier younger brother, Philip - James appointed William Herbert as Lord Chamberlain of the royal household in 1615, then Lord Steward in 1625. He retained these titles and tasks, including Warden of the Stannaries and Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, until his death.

Meanwhile, in less licentious, less promiscuous and less debauched and extravagant Calstock, the unpaid debts and offences committed by the two Anthonys and the two Rogers proliferated from 1607 onwards. In most cases the differentiating terms "senior" and "junior" are not employed, so it isn't possible for us to be absolutely certain whether the offending Anthony or Roger is the father or the son - or Anthony (3).
Roger junior is twice identified as Roger of Harrowbarrow, the second time in 1610, and there are two references to Roger of Donacombe. But whether these Rogers are the father or the son isn't clear, although a Roger continues to appear in the Court Rolls until 1646.
Anthony junior (2) is named as such seven times - between October 1607 and October 1619 - after which he and his wife, Susan, are jointly charged with offences in October 1620 and March 1622. In February 1627 Anthony junior died.
Anthony senior (1) is so named only three times B in October 1613, June 1617 and October 1623. If the clerks writing the Rolls are to be considered as careful with names as they are with figures, then we should be able to conclude that the Anthony who is neither senior nor junior and more frequently mentioned than the others is in fact the eldest son of William and Grace, ie (3). But, as we shall see, they are not so careful - possibly because the clerks didn't live within the manor, travelling from one manor to another and being largely indifferent as to which Anthony was standing before the court. Certainly Anthonys (1) and (2) had a higher profile in the manor than Anthony (3), about whom next to nothing is known.
Working through the Rolls with all this in mind, the three Anthonys in Calstock sort themselves out as follows.

After Susan Honeycombe, the wife of Anthony (2), was declared in October 1607 to be a common scold and a shrew, Anthony (possibly senior) was at odds with William Cundy over two separate pleas in February 1608, but was nonetheless chosen as one of 17 jurors in April 1608. Roger Honeycombe also totted up some defaults with William Cundy, and he, Edmund and an Anthony were in mercy that year over various other pleas.
Roger Honeycombe and Sampson Hun were also fined 6d each in July for failing in their duties as tasters of beer, and at the court in October, held at Latchley in the presence of the Earl of Pembroke and "his noble deputy" John Rowe, Roger and Anthony junior were among eight persons fined for not following up their various suits.
In 1609 an Anthony is named three times, Edmund twice, and three Rogers are variously fined B Roger, Roger junior and Roger of Harrowbarrow. The last two could be the same man, as in October 1609 Roger Honicombe junior (sic) handed over the 16th part of a holding in Harrowbarrow to John Bond junior.
Roger senior and Roger of Harrowbarrow appear in separate pleas in 1610 and Anthony junior (2) once. On 13 June an Anthony surrendered a cottage, a courtyard and a garden in Albaston to John

Bartlett of Honeycombe. This can only be the Albaston cottage that was held by Stephen in the Assession Roll for 1597. As the next two Assession Rolls are missing, no record exists of the passing of the cottage to Stephen's son after Stephen's death, so we must assume that this entry in the Court Rolls records that fact that this Anthony *did* inherit the cottage, etc, as the only surviving son of Stephen and Joan, and is therefore Anthony senior (1), although he is not described as such.
Anthony junior was fined 4d by the court the following month for not responding to a plea of trespass. His pledge was Mark Hawkin, the Deputy Steward heading the court. Roger of Harrowbarrow was also fined for not paying a debt owed to Alexander Bowden.
In 1611, in April, Anthony junior and Roger Honeycombe, along with eight other persons, were fined 3d for not pursuing their suits. An Anthony and a Roger were also fined several times for misdemeanours involving pleas of trespass and debt. Most of these matters weren't dealt with by Anthony or Roger in 1612 and further fines resulted.
In October that year the Earl of Pembroke returned to head the court held in Calstock Town, this time with John Rowe, who lived in the parish, as his deputy. At this court an Anthony Honeycombe and 11 others were fined 3d each for not paying their debts, etc. An Anthony also acted as a pledge for John Strong in a plea of transgression against Sir Anthony Rouse.
Anthonys (1) or (2) must have had some socially significant associates, if one or other appeared in a suit involving a local knight and had as a pledge the Deputy Steward the previous year.
On 4 March 1613 John Bond junior, to whom Roger junior had handed over a 16th part of a holding in Harrowbarrow in October 1609, surrendered all his rights and interest in Donacombe Hill – 'which he lately had from the surrender of Roger Honicombe' - to Walter Honicombe (2), and Walter came and paid a fine of 8d for his slice of land.
This entry apparently places Donacombe Hill in Harrowbarrow, whereas the modern Danescombe valley leads up to Honeycombe. On the other hand, in the Assessions Rolls the Honeycombe tenure of 12 acres of waste at Donacombe is always listed in the Kingsgarden section of the Rolls, and Kingsgarden is beyond Honeycombe, to the east of Albaston and Cross.
The entry also introduces us to Walter (2) who, as we shall see, took over in 1617 the 12 acres of waste at Donacombe that had been occupied by his father Richard the piper. It would seem that the acres had passed in previous missing Assession Rolls to Roger, who passed them on to John Bond before they were taken by Walter (2) - most fittingly, as they had been held by Walter (1) since 1500. Walter (2) was Roger's brother, both being sons of Richard the piper, also known as Richard of Donacombe.
At the next court held at Latchley, on 20 March 1613, the manor's "viewers of reparations" reported that 11 persons, including Roger Honeycombe, had allowed the roofs of their separate homes to decay or fall into disrepair. All 11 were fined 2d each. Perhaps wintry gales of the early spring were responsible for wrecking some of the thatched roofs of the houses in the manor.
It's at this court that "Roger Honicombe de Donicombe" is named as such in connection with a suit involving Philip Webb. The old Honeycombe holding in Hill also gets a mention – "To this court comes William Grills, merchant, and surrenders into the hands of the Lord King one holding with appurtenances in Hill alias Trehill called ye West Tenement lately in the tenure of Richard Honeycombe." The holding went to Roger Bealbury junior, whose probable ancestor was the Walter Bealbury who was a pledge for John Honeycombe (2) at Hill in 1535.
Richard (2) had been in possession of Hill since 1549. It had then passed to his widow, Joan, then to Sampson Grills and then to *his* widow, Dorothy Grills (nee Honeycombe), who took possession of the house and 18 acres in 1598. William Grills was probably Sampson's son and Dorothy may indeed have been his mother. What's also interesting is that he is described as "mercator", a merchant, though his business must have been limited in Calstock to agricultural produce or machinery, tin-mining or the river trade.
In October 1613, Anthony senior (the first time he is named as such) was one of the 15 jurors sworn in at the Latchley court.
In November Roger Honeycombe came to the court and surrendered a dwelling and a garden containing eight roods of land (two acres), described as a "parcel of one tenement in Todsworthy",

to John Adam; the pledges were John Edwards and Richard Facy. Todworthy was the manorial division adjacent to Honeycombe's eastern border.
The next Court Roll entry of note, if we omit a few minor pleas and suits involving the Anthonys and the Rogers, was made at the court held in Calstock Town on 3 January 1614, when Anthony Honeycombe sought a licence from the court to transfer a close called Broom Park, estimated to be two acres in extent, to Richard Jane for four years. To this the court agreed.
Again, this must be Anthony senior, as the seven acres of Broom Close in Calstock Land were held previously by his father, Stephen (1), from 1583 until his death in 1601. Noteworthy is the fact that Richard Jane and Roger Bealbury were both pledges for Stephen (1) when he renewed his tenure of his cottage in Albaston in 1593.
We now come to the only definite reference to Anthony (3). He appears as such in an extraordinary passage in a Court Roll written in May 1614 - extraordinary not just because of its content but also because of the fact that it was written not in Latin but in English. Very few entries in the series of surviving Court Rolls are in English, and this one was probably written in English because it contains a deposition, the statement of a village witness, the aged Thomas Honeycombe.
It says: "The Homage likewise present upon the testimony this day given in Court to the Homage and Jury by the deposition of Thomas Honeycombe of Calstock town, husbandman, aged fourscore years or thereabouts, who did depose that above threescore and five years since he did well know (that) John Oliver of Latchley was tenant for the customary land in Latchley within the manor aforesaid, but how much it was he cannot certainly set down, and further he sayeth that the said John Oliver had only one daughter and heir called Grace, who after married with William Honicombe, and he also saith that the said William Honicombe had a son called Anthony Honicombe being their heir and oldest son. And find that Grace the daughter of John Oliver to be heir unto him the said John for so much land as he died seized of, and we find Anthony Honicombe to be heir to the said Grace for so much land as she died seized of."
Although it sounds as if Anthony (3) was alive and still living in Calstock, he may have been living elsewhere. At any rate there is no mention of him in the 1617 Assession, and Alice, his sister, by then had passed her portion of land in Latchley, which she got from her mother, Grace, to John Mohun.
The Thomas Honeycombe, husbandman (small farmer), who was aged 80 or so in 1614, must have been born about 1534, when Henry VIII, with the Act of Supremacy, took control of the English Church. He can only be the Thomas (3) of Kingsgarden, son of Thomas (2) and grandson of Walter (1) and Ricardia Honeycombe, who had occupied a house and 14 acres in Kingsgarden since 1500. The last mention of Thomas (3) in the Assession Rolls is in 1598, when his half in the family holding was taken over by John Stephens, Henry Facy and Edmund Tucker. It seems that he then retired to a cottage in the village of Calstock, where he may have lived with a married son or daughter, or on his own. William Honeycombe was probably his son and Anthony (3) his grandson.
80 was a great age, especially in those days. For all we know Thomas even lived to be 90. But some of the other Honeycombes in Calstock lived to be 70 at least.
As small people are said to live longer than tall ones, we may presume that Thomas (3) was a little man. In fact all Honeycombes born before 1936, whose heights we know, are of less than average height, and the three women in modern times who have lived the longest, two reaching 100 and one 102, have been five feet two inches or less. Also less than five feet was the Honeycombe male who has so far lived the longest - Richard the stonemason, who was 95 when he died in Melbourne in 1925.
Thomas Honeycombe (3) lived through the reigns of three kings and two queens (three queens if you count the uncrowned Queen Jane), through turbulent and bewildering times when much that had been unchanged for hundreds of years was swept away and when Catholicism and Protestantism competed cruelly and confusingly for the minds and souls of the people and Puritanism took hold. There were burnings and beheadings and men were hung, drawn and quartered. At the same time the feudal system began to fall apart as fields were divided up or enclosed by expansionist land-owners, while the burgeoning of trade and trades produced a

merchant middle-class. Privacy and possessions became more desirable, and as the population grew, despite the many plagues, the world was opened up by far-sailing ships.
Pizarro conquered Peru; the Portuguese reached Japan. Drake sailed around the world, and the eastern coast of North America was colonised by the English and the Dutch. While England lost Calais and was threatened by invasion by the French and Spanish, the Ottoman Empire declined and the Moors were driven out of Spain. In Italy the Renaissance flourished; the Dutch Republic was formed; Quebec was founded by the French; and Ulster was filled with Scottish and English colonists. In 1611 the Authorised Version of the Bible appeared, as did *The Tempest*, and two years later a Romanov became the first Tsar of Russia.
The greatest European works of art and literature were created during Thomas Honeycombe's lifetime. He himself had probably met and conversed with men like Raleigh and Pembroke who had seen and read such works, who knew monarchs and the mighty, and one of whom had been loved (perhaps) by Shakespeare. There were only three degrees of separation then.
In 1613 Shakespeare's brother, Richard, died. All three of his younger brothers were now dead. "None had married, left children or lived to a good age," writes Michael Wood. "The four Shakespeare boys did not turn out to be good home-makers. By Tudor standards an unusual family." William Shakespeare's last plays were collaborations, the last known work being written with John Fletcher, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Michael Wood speculates that the final speech of Theseus in the play may have been the last thing he wrote – "Fittingly it is addressed to the inscrutable gods," says Wood. It may serve here as Thomas Honeycombe's epitaph.

Oh, you heavenly charmers,
What things you make of us! For what we lack
We laugh, for what we have, are sorry, still
Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful
For that which is, and, with you, leave disputes
That are above our questions.

William Shakespeare died in April 1616 and was buried in the parish church in Stratford. Perhaps Thomas Honeycombe died the same year, obscurely. He has no tomb, no gravestone, nor undying fame, only the continuing memorial of a family name he helped to perpetuate.

It was in 1616 that Pocahontas arrived in Plymouth as the second wife of a pious businessman, John Rolfe. They had sailed from Jamestown in Virginia, where Rolfe's tobacco plantations were flourishing commercially B four years later 117,000 pounds of his tobacco would be exported to Europe. The appearance of Pocahontas, now known as Mrs Rebecca Rolfe, would have been something of a sensation in Plymouth, and she was not alone, being attended by 11 other native Americans. Curiosity at least must have drawn many to Plymouth to view these beings from another world, and one imagines that a Honeycombe or two may have been among them.
Apart from that, in Calstock in the three years leading up to and including the year of Shakespeare's death (1614-1616), nothing of special note occurred involving the Honeycombes. Only three are mentioned. Anthonys were fined 18 times at courts held at Calstock Town, Latchley, Albaston and Slimeford. Roger made fewer appearances. He was, however, fined 4d in 1614 for letting his home in Honicombe fall into disrepair – "domum in Honicombe esse in decasu". So a Honeycombe was living again in Honeycombe after 300 years!
But what was Roger doing there? Presumably William Stentaford and John Bartlett, who shared the Honeycombe tenure, let Roger live and conduct his business or trade in a cottage on the holding or in one of the buildings that were part of the homestead. Over the next two years Roger failed, however, to do anything about repairing his home in Honeycombe and was twice fined 2d. His wife, Jane, continued this family tradition for the next 20 years.
If only we knew what Roger knew about the history of Honeycombe. If only we knew what it looked like then and what Roger saw as he went about his daily business. Did he know that Honeycombe was his ancestral home? And did he care?

15. CALSTOCK, 1617-1621

In January 1617, Mrs Rebecca Rolfe (Pocahintas) was taken by her husband to the royal court in London, and at a performance of a masque by Ben Jonson, *The Vision of Delight*, she met King James. Three months later, after embarking on a ship bound for her homeland in Virgina, she became so ill that she had to be taken ashore and died of some bronchial or tubercular infection at Gravesend in Kent.

Most diseases were likely in those days to result in death. Anne Somerset, in *Unnatural Murder*, a most detailed account of the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury in 1613 in the Tower of London - for which the Earl and Countess of Somerset, among others, were tried and found guilty in 1616, though never executed - says, "Medical science was primitive to the point of barbarism . . . The concept of disease as an entity was only imperfectly understood, for in general illness was presumed to arise from an imbalance in the humours. To correct this, physicians sought to purge the offending humours through forcible evacuation, relying mainly on blood-letting, emetics and laxatives. These drastic remedies, combined with an ignorance of the causes of infection and an utter disregard for hygiene, often constituted more of a threat to the patient than his original malady." Any invasive surgery was carried out without any anaesthetics. The king's personal physician believed that the bitterest medicines often worked the best - such as "a syrup made with the flesh of tortoises, snails, the lungs of animals, frogs and crayfish, all boiled in scabrous and coltsfoot water" and sweetened with sugar candy. Another remedy was a balsam of earthworms or bats. Similar treatments, and worse, would have been common in the ancient manor of Calstock.

1617 sees the appearance of the next Assession Roll to have survived temporal accidents - the previous one being dated 1598. It is kept in the Public Record Office in London. Attached to it is a summary of several matters concerning the Prince of Wales's woods, wastes, timber and some of the encroachments on those wastes, which gives us some useful information about the manor at that time.

The Prince of Wales and Duke of Cornwall was now Prince Charles, who would be 17 in November that year. Already given the newly created titles of Duke of Albany and Duke of York in 1603, he was made Prince of Wales and Duke of Cornwall in 1612, as well as Lord of the Isles, Duke of Rothesay and Earl of Chester. Earl of Carrick was then added to that list.

William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, who was 37 in April 1617, was still looking after the Prince's interests in Cornwall with his deputy, now Richard Connock, though he seldom personally chaired proceedings at the manorial courts held in Calstock.

It was about this time that Richard Connock, the Duchy's land agent and a lawyer, wrote to the Duchy's auditor and asked him not to blame the reeve of Calstock if he was late with his accounts – "For he hath often called upon the tenants to bring in their rents and yet they do it not." Connock also became involved in a local scandal, whose outcome was eventually resolved by the Star Chamber.

Raymond Wood, in the Guide to Calstock Church tells us that in 1612, the rector of St Andrews, Nicholas Deeble, MA, had leased his glebe and tithes to Richard Connock, who appointed Richard Franklin as curate. Franklin was later accused of having "a turbulent, factious and malicious disposition" and was in the habit of denouncing parishioners from the pulpit. One of them may well have been Anthony Honeycombe junior.

The Assession Roll made in 1617, in the 15th year of the reign of King James I, provides us with much helpful information, beginning with a list of the principal tenants in the manor.

The most important was Sir Richard Edgecumbe, who had properties at Cotehele, South Newton, Morden Mill and West Cotehele. William Brendon, "gent", also resided at Cotehele. John Harris

and John Clonberry, esquires, were at Dennisham, west of Gunnnislake. Another Agent was Nicholas Maynard, who lived at Sandock above Gunnislake. Richard Osborne was at Latchley; William Bond at Metherell; John Battersby at West Harrowbarrow; Charles Howard at Colihatch Park; and Mark Martin and John Hun at Slade Park. All the above were free tenants. There is no mention of Harewood House or of who lived there. In fact it wan't built until after 1619, when Richard Connock, in his will, left the land on which Harewood House is now situated to his nephew and heir, John Connock.

The next list is of the conventionary tenants. Of the 22 holdings that are named 12 were still held by single persons. The other ten were shared by as many as 11 persons, all small farmers or market gardeners, although some of them would have had a trade or occupation.

Mark Hawkin, who had deputised for the Duchy's Steward, lived at Chaporisham (whereabouts unidentified) and another deputy, John Rowe, had Hawkmoor, which was situated in a bend of the river above the New Bridge. John Hawke and Richard Bealbury were both at Newton; John Stephens was at the Hatches; Lawrence Read at Northendredon; and Peter Taylor at Hedging, which was beside the western boundary of the manor. Richard Dobbs had North Park; Humphrey Arundell was at Colihatch Park with Charles Howard; and Agnes Hun had Northwood, which was north of Gunnislake, as well as part of Sandock. The house and 30 acres at Honeycombe were still held by William Stentaford and John Bartlett.

Seven people shared Todworthy; six shared Chilsworthy; four were at Trewin; and three at Harrowbarrow. There were eleven persons at Metherell, where a mill was owned by Sir Richard Edgecumbe. Seven people, three of them widows, were at Latchley, and over 15 people had a piece of Calstock Land - which probably meant that they also lived in the village. There is no mention of Anthony junior in this Assession Roll, nor of any other person who had a trade and a home but no land.

Anthony Honeycombe (1) had taken over two fourths (ie, half) of a house and nine acres in Cross from his father, Stephen, and his mother, Joan. The other half was held by Richard Facy. The pledges were Mark Hawkin and Robert Hawkin. He also shared another half of a house and 16 acres in Cross with Philip Facy - two houses and 25 acres in all - and shared the seven acres of Broomclose in Calstock Land with Samuel Hun. The cottage at Albaston that had passed from Stephen to Joan, to Anthony, to John Bartlett, to George Gee and finally to Samuel Hun, was now said to be not in Albaston but in adjacent Trewin.

In Northendredon, which lay between Kingsgarden and the river, Roger Honeycombe and Richard Hawkin shared a house and 40 acres, as well as four acres of waste and a rood of meadow. The holding had come to Roger via Walter Adams, Robert Hilland, Thomasina Hilland (Robert's mother), Richard Hilland (Robert's father), James Adams and Mary Webb. The pledges were Anthony Honeycombe and Richard Facy; the rent was seven shillings and one penny; the fine two pounds.

Walter (2) had the 12 acres of waste at Donacombe Hill, listed here as being in Kingsgarden, which he had inherited from his mother, Cecily, and his father, Richard the piper. John Stephens now had the 16th part of a holding in Kingsgarden that had been surrendered by Roger Honeycombe, as well as a fourth part surrendered by Roger's father, Thomas.

Alice Honeycombe had given up her piece of a house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden to Philip Dodge, as well as her bit of a holding in Latchley, which went to John Mohun. However, she still had a house and 11 acres in Kingsgarden, which she shared with John Martin and Robert Edward. There is no mention of Anthony (3).

It's evident from the above that Anthony senior (1) was now the head, in terms of property, of all the Honeycombes in the manor of Calstock. Roger, Walter and Alice were the only other Honeycombes in possession of some land. As Anthony junior (2) makes his first appearance in the Rolls in 1607, when we may presume that he was between 16 and 20, his father, Anthony (1), would in 1617 have been aged between 45 and 50.

The summary of matters concerning the Prince of Wales's woods, etc, attached to this Assession Roll, mentions no Honeycombes, but gives us a partial picture of village activities, some of them nefarious. It is written in English and is called "A brief abstract taken out of the presentments of

the ancient Duchy tenements at the Assession 1617, concerning the several answers unto the general heads mentioned in the margins."

The first heading, dealing with domain lands, says that in Liskeard, "There is a Park called Lodge Park alias New Park containing about 400 acres in the tenure of Richard Connock, esquire." The second heading, referring to woods in the manor of Calstock, says, "There is a wood in the manor in his Highness' possession called Chaporisham alias Rimsloose (?) containing about seven acres, and is about six years growth - the lease expired about five years since," also, "There is a wood called the King's Wood, or Common Wood, out of which the tenants claim timber and fuel for reparation and use and say that timber hath been taken out of the same for the reparation of the parish church of Calstock."

The third heading concerns "wastes, and the cutting down of woods and timber" in Calstock. It says, "The tenants may by the custom fell down any trees growing upon their tenures for repairs, and may sell the same to any other customary tenants to be employed for repairs within the manor, and if they be sold out of the manor, the tenants are presented and fined for it as the law goeth" . . . "Roger Bealbury the younger since the last assession did sell (…..) timber trees to the value of 20s to one Emmanuel Facy who was no tenant" . . . "John Adams did sell 1 timber tree worth 8d to the said Facy" . . . "There are 4 acres of coppice in Hawkmoor eaten and spoiled by beasts for want of enclosure, but by whose default they know not" . . . "Peter Newet, John Read, and Anthony Bartlett have cut down 8 timber trees, which were converted to the making of Calstock weir" . . . "John Foot hath cut down 3 timber trees, which were likewise employed to the making of the said weir" . . . "John Read and Anthony Bartlett have cut down 6 timber trees out of the King's Wood, which timber was carried to the parsonage of Calstock" (Richard Franklin was probably still the rector of St Andrew's then) . . . "John Bond the elder hath taken and carried away much of the wood and tops of the said trees so felled" . . . "Anthony Bartlett hath cut down 6 small timber trees standing in Heriot, which were carried to the parsonage of Calstock" . . . "Divers timber trees have been felled by Walter Adams and others by his warrant, but they know not the quantity nor the value" . . . "Some small timber trees and other trees have been rooted up in Hanwood alias Heriot in the land of Richard Connock, esquire, of the said manor, but they know not the quantity nor the value."

The final heading deals with "encroachments upon the Prince's wastes." It says, "Richard Connock, esquire, hath lately caused a new weir to be made athwart the River Tamar half a mile above the New Bridge, which weir is fastened in Cornwall upon his Highness' land" . . . "Walter Adams hath built a new house upon his Highness' Common called Colleycliff alias Netslakes (?)" . . . "Anthony Bond, a poor man, hath built a house upon the Common."

The foregoing indicates the nature of some of the charges that might have been brought against errant villagers concerning trespass - they might have been purloining wood from their neighbours' holdings or from Duchy property, and farm animals might have been invading other people's holdings. It also reminds us about the stone bridge that had been built across the river (about 1525), entering Cornwall at Gunnislake. The ferryman was probably now out of business, and Richard Connock had done what the Abbot of Tavistock once did - he had built a weir without the Duchy's permission. It seems that the parsonage or rectory, wherever it was, was being repaired, and that such was the pressure of population and the shortage of homes that some people had to build new ones, doing so regardless of manorial approval. Whether the new weir and the new homes were hereafter dismantled by order of the Duchy isn't known.

Throughout 1617, one or other of the Anthony Honeycombes and Roger Honeycombe continued to appear before the courts for various acts of trespass and non-payment of debts.

In May 1617, at the court held at Sandock before the Earl of Pembroke and his deputy, Richard Connock, armiger (which meant that he was entitled to heraldic arms), Anthony junior (2) was fined for various defaults. His father, Anthony, was one of 15 jurors at this court. At the next court, in June, he surrendered the close of land called Broomclose in Calstock Town, "lately divided into two closes", to John Combe. In September he, or his son, surrendered an eighth part of a holding with appurtenances in Latchley, lately held by Stephen Stoddon, to Robert Carter. There is no

other record of this holding in connection with either Anthony, so he must have acquired it at one of the assessions whose rolls are missing.
The viewers of reparations, who up to now had charged Roger Honeycombe with allowing his house in Honicombe to fall into disrepair, covered themselves by also charging John Bartlett junior with the same offence; he was fined 4d. Perhaps Roger had successfully claimed that Bartlett, who rented Honeycombe, was ultimately responsible for any repairs. Or perhaps Roger had moved out - or been thrown out. The charge against Roger was nonetheless repeated. An Anthony, probably junior, was on the receiving end of an insult or assault ("insultum") committed against him with force and arms ("vi et armis") by Philip Webb, who was fined 4d. This was returned by Anthony, with interest, in 1620.
The Earl of Pembroke, Warden of the Stannaries, Chief Steward of the Duchy and Knight of the Garter, returned with Richard Connock to Calstock to chair the court held at Sandock in October 1617. The court that was held every October was clearly an annually important court after the summer recess and the harvest.
At this court William Stentaford was elected to be the reeve for the following year and Honeycombe was chosen as the venue for the next series of courts.
On 12 November 1617 the subsequent court was duly convened at Honeycombe, more than likely in the hall B which survives, though much altered, to this day - and the court happened to deal with a matter involving two separate Honeycombe families, an unusual event.
Roger Honeycombe appeared before the court at Honeycombe and surrendered a newly built mansion-house ("unam domum mansionalem de novo edificatum") and a piece of land adjacent to the house, estimated at half an acre, to Anthony Honeycombe junior, who came and took the property, paying 8d. The pledges were William Bond and Thomas Jago.
The house was in Wimple, alias Northendredon, and must have been the one taken by Roger and Richard Hawkin earlier in the year. But why would Roger give a newly built house to anyone other than his own son, Roger junior? Roger junior has not in fact been mentioned as such since October 1609, and the last time Roger senior was so named was in January 1610. But Roger Honicombe junior (sic) and his wife, Jane, appear in a court roll in October 1619. So *both* Rogers must have still been alive.
Courts were held at Honeycombe up to and including October 1618. None, however, was apparently headed by the Earl of Pembroke. One or other of the Anthony Honeycombes was involved in 12 minor suits, the Rogers in four and Edmund in two. The Anthonys' complaints and offences involved John Adams, Walter Harris, Robert Hawkin, Mark Hawkin, John Facy, John Bond, Philip Webb and Abel Bond. From the frequency of the Anthonys' appearances in pleas of debt and trespass, and as a pledge, they would seem to have been rather litigious and concerned about their rights - or *one* of them was.
On 17 October 1618 an Anthony, probably junior, and John Facy were appointed as executors of the office of tasters of beer for the year. A Roger was in trouble again, along with Mary Hawkin, Walter Adams and Richard Facy, for doing nothing about repairing his ramshackle home. They were fined 2d each.
From December the courts were held at Metherell, and from then until December 1619 Anthonys appeared in 11 pleas of debt and two of trespass, for which they were fined either 2d or 4d. The Rogers were involved in only two pleas, a debt and trespass, and acted as a pledge for John Facy in a plea of debt to an Anthony, again probably the younger (2). Edmund Honeycombe appeared but once B in a suit in which he was owed some money by Richard Webb.
In April 1619 Anthony Honeycombe - and it has to be the younger - surrendered the mansion-house and half an acre in Wimple, estimated to be an eighth part of a holding, to John Ricard. The pledges were William Bond and Richard Webb. And then, on 20 October, Anthony junior blotted the manorial copy-book and his family's good name. He was declared to be a common drunkard. The court entry reads: "The Homage present that Anthony Honicombe junior (sic) is a common drunkard ('comminis ebriatus') within the aforesaid manor contrary to, etc, and because summoned he came and acknowledged the aforesaid presentation and put himself at the Lord's pleasure.' He was fined a fairly large sum, 20d.

Obviously, if Anthony junior *was* the Anthony appointed with John Facy as tasters of beer in October the previous year, the office of taster, as well as the beer, had gone to his head. But how shameful it must have been to be so denounced in such a small and close community - and how humiliating for his father and mother. Possibly less so for his wife, Susan, who had been declared a scold and shrew back in 1607. Indeed she might have driven him to drink if she habitually treated him as she did her neighbours.

Another wife appears at this same October court. Jane Honeycombe, wife of Roger junior, received a close called Papewell, estimated at one acre, from Walter Adams. Her pledges were John Bond junior and Roger Bealbury junior. We know from later records that she and Roger, who must have had a trade and may have been a miner, lived on until 1634 at least.

An illuminating insight into the activities of Cornishmen elsewhere is provided by a report, written in 1619, concerning those who lived in the far southwest, near the Lizard. They had complained about the primitive lighthouse, the first in Cornwall, built on the shore at Lizard Point by Sir John Killigrew, saying that it "would take away God's grace from them, as they will have no more benefit from shipwrecks." It was in fact abandoned four years later.

In 1620 the courts were held at Calstock Town. At a court in January, 18 persons, including Jane Honeycombe, were fined for letting their holdings (not their homes) decay - a curious charge in the depth of winter as nothing would have been too tidy. Perhaps gales had brought down some trees or torrential rain had flooded some fields. Jane, however, continued to be fined, and failed to pay the fines, for the next eight years.

The Anthonys - and it would now seem that Anthony junior was the main offender - appeared 15 times that year in pleas of debt and in one of trespass. A Roger was named in two pleas and Edmund not at all.

At the last court held at Calstock Town, on 18 October, both Anthony junior and his wife, Susan, again aroused the disapprobation of the community. The Roll says: "The jurors present that Anthony Honicombe (sic) and Susanna his wife made an assault ('insultum fecerunt') on Walter Battishall, Philip Webb and Agnes his wife and drew blood ('traxerunt sanguinem') on the aforesaid Agnes." The Honeycombes were heavily fined - two shillings and 6d.

It seems they didn't recompense Philip Webb, or apologise, for over the winter Anthony was fined twice more in connection with the assault and Philip Webb himself was twice charged with trespass by the unrepentant Anthony.

Then on 2 May 1621 the jurors presented Anthony Honeycombe "because he himself arrested Richard Harry within the manor with an action not of the bench (the court) of the said Lord King at the suit of Sir Thomas Wisse and Mark Hawkin, for a reason here determined as being against the custom, etc . . . And because summoned he came, acknowledged the said presentation and put himself at the Lord's pleasure. And so he is in mercy."

We don't know what that was all about. But it sounds as if Anthony, most probably the son, was too eager to assist the local gentry in some doubtful enterprise, and if this Anthony was Anthony (2), the enterprise was probably fuelled by drink.

Anthony (2) would die a few years later, at the beginning of 1627. In the meantime, other Honeycombes, leading more moderate lives, left a kind of memorial to those lives in their wills.

16. HONEYCOMBE WILLS, 1620-1644

Wills at this time were for the most part dictated, written down by a reliable neighbour and witnessed. Usually they were also signed. If the person dictating the will couldn't read or write he or she scratched a mark, perhaps an attempt at the initials of their name. Not all the children of the deceased were automatically mentioned in a will, and the omission of some children or close relatives didn't mean that they were out of favour. Friends were just as likely to be given bequests as family.

Other documents connected to wills were Administrations - permissions granted to the next of kin to administer the property of someone who had died intestate, without making a will - and Inventories, which were hand-written lists of personal and household goods left by the deceased. Usually these were drawn up by trusted neighbours soon after someone died.
Don Steel, in *Discovering Your Family History*, says: "Before the middle of the 18th century, most rural inventories - even those of craftsmen - mention farm animals, and those of farmers usually mention both animals and crops, for there was little specialisation, except that dictated by local conditions . . . There were frequent mentions of beds and bedclothes. Tables were most commonly referred to as table boards and were boards on trestles. A cupboard was formerly just a side table (a cup board), but by the 17th century it had acquired an extra shelf and doors. Chairs were mentioned in many of the inventories, but there were more stools and forms, for chairs were normally used only for the head of the household and important visitors. Kitchen utensils and equipment were usually mentioned - brass pots and pans, pewter dishes, iron spits and bars, pot-hooks and pot-hangers - there were no ovens and all cooking and boiling was done over (or in front of) the open fire. Troughs and tubs figured prominently - they were used for salting . . . and for boulting (sieving the flour to separate it from the bran)."
Although wills give us some details about a family and their names, and how individuals, depending on the nature of the bequests, were esteemed, inventories give us a picture of how people lived and what they owned.
Of the few 17th century Honeycombe wills made in Cornwall that have survived, the one made by John Honeycombe of St Kew shows him to have been the wealthiest Honeycombe of them all when he died - as far as we know. And he was a blacksmith.

We know from the names of relatives mentioned in his will that John the blacksmith came from Callington, that he married Grace Ham at St Kew on 16 July 1609 and that they had no children. He himself was probably the last (and possibly the twelfth) child of Edward and Joan Honeycombe, who had married in Callington on 12 November 1559. Edward we have met before - he appears in the Muster Roll for South Hill in 1569. Edward's surviving sons were the thrice-married William, Anthony (who married Sibly Crabbe, had no children and died in 1626), Walter (who also married three times), Ralph (who married Joan Michel and had at least six children), and lastly John. No baptismal record for John exists. But as he married Grace Ham in 1609 we may assume that he was born about 1582 - the brother who precedes him, Ralph, was born in May 1579.
A clue as to where he did his apprenticeship, or where he first worked, is provided by the fact that he is named in the will of John Hoyell, another blacksmith, who died at Quethiock, a few miles south of Callington, in 1600. Our John may have been trained by Hoyell and probably worked with him before moving to St Kew. It's possible that John moved to St Kew in search of work or was recommended by some member of the Callington gentry to fill a vacancy at St Kew. Or perhaps there was some family connection on his wife's side. St Kew, near the northwest coast, is some seven miles south of Tintagel and about ten miles north of Bodmin.
The blacksmith's forge was not apparently in the village of St Kew but on the main inland road between Wadebridge and Camelford, now the A39, at what is known as St Kew Highway. Here John worked with metal, fire and horses, while Grace, being childless, probably managed the farm animals and their farmland. It seems from John's will that they may have been helped by a young brother or nephew of Grace, John Ham, who was bequeathed the large sum of 13 pounds 6s8d - considerably more than was left to any of John's brothers, relatives or friends. John Ham, who was not yet 21, might have been an apprentice blacksmith, but if so, why wasn't he left all of John Honeycombe's work tools? Perhaps young John Ham lived with the Honeycombes, assisting with the animals and crops, and filled the place of the son John Honeycombe never had. The very specific sum of money that young John received might indicate it was given to him for some specific purpose - to pay for his education or the learning of a trade, or to set himself up by buying himself into a business or by renting some land.
John Honeycombe had only been married for 11 years when he died, and if he was born about 1582, he would have been 38 when some accident or disease caused his death. It must have been

quite virulent or violent as the will was drawn up less than two weeks before he died. Even his signature, a thinly scrawled attempt at a J and an H seems proof of his weakness - the sadder in that, being a blacksmith, he must have been a strongly muscled man, larger than most. It also seems from the inventory that he brewed his own beer and enjoyed a drink.

The will is dated "The fourth day of April, in Anno Domini 1620." Its unusual spelling and punctuation have been modernised.

"In the name of God, amen. I, John Honycome (sic) of St Kew in the County of Cornwall, blacksmith, being sick of body, but perfect and sound of memory, thanks be to Almighty God, do here make my last will and testament, disannulling all former wills by me made. First I give and bequeath my body to the earth, to be buried in the church of St Kew aforesaid. Secondly, I bequeath my soul to the Almighty God to be in eternal bliss by the merit of Jesus Christ my Redeemer. My goods, chattels and cattle I give and bequeath as followeth.

"Imprimis. I give to the poor people of St Kew five shillings (five shillings has been crossed out). I give to the poor people of Rillototon (Rillaton?) 3s 4d. Item, I give to my brother, Ralph Honycome, my second suit of apparel. I give to Ralph Honycome, the son of Ralph Honycome, 20s, and to the rest of his children 10s apiece. Item, I give to Mary Honycome, the daughter of my brother, Walter Honycome 10s. Item, I give to Johanna Olliver, the daughter of Edward Olliver of St Mawgan, 10s. Item, I give to Barbara Reeve, the daughter of John Reeve of St Columb the Higher, one ewe and a lamb. Item, I give to Grace, the daughter of Tristram Sobye (?) one ewe and a lamb. Item, I give to Joan Mark one ewe and a lamb. Item, I give to John Ham 13 pounds 6s and 8d, to be paid to the aforesaid John Ham when he cometh to the age of 21 years. All the rest of my goods, chattels and cattle, as well moveable as unmoveable, within doors and as well as without, I give to my wife, Grace Honycome, whom I make here my whole and sole executor, to see my body decently buried as aforesaid and my aforesaid legacies paid, in the name of the Highest. In witness hereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, given the day and year first above written, 1620." The will was witnessed by John Webber, William Randell and Richard Sobye (?), who all signed their names. John made his mark.

One wonders whether some of the women who were given ewes and lambs were Grace's married sisters. Johanna Olliver might have been John's married older sister - he did indeed have a sister called Joan - and her name follows the other Honeycombe bequests.

It's clear from the extensive inventory that John Honeycombe was not only comfortably well-off but also enjoyed his food and drink. He salted his own meat, brewed his own beer, grew his own corn, and was seemingly used to entertaining visitors, family or friends. Though a childless couple, he and Grace had an excess of beds - they had a feather bed, presumably theirs, with a feather bolster and pillows, three dust beds with flock bolsters, and four low bedsteads, also three pairs of blankets, three pairs of sheets, and five coverlets. There were several brass pans, cauldrons, skillets (small metal pots with long handles), brazen crocks and a toaster, and plenty of platters, puddingers (bowls), saucers, glass cups and various clay or earthenware vessels, as well as two bowls and several dishes, trenchers and spoons. The table board on its trestles, around which could be placed a chair and four stools, would have been covered with one of two board cloths and adorned with a brazen candlestick, two pewter candlesticks and a salt. Another smaller table could be used to accommodate extra guests (or children). There was even a drink stand, though no cupboard. Clothes, linen, other items and personal possessions would have been stored in the five coffers or displayed on two small shelves. "A cage" listed in the inventory might have housed a pet rabbit or a bird.

The Honeycombes fed well. Two flitches of bacon and tubs of salt meat were listed, and in adjacent fields and outhouses were two mares, a nag and a colt; four cows, two heifers and a yearling; six ewes and six lambs; a ram, four little pigs; geese and other poultry. There was "corn in the mowhay, corn in the ground, and threshed." And of course there were all the necessary farm tools and equipment (there were 14 scythes) and John's anvil, bellows and the other tools of his trade, all worth four pounds.

His purse, girdle and wearing apparel, woollen and linen, were also worth four pounds. The cows, heifers and yearling were worth over 13 pounds; the ewes, lambs, ram and pigs three pounds. The

corn was worth over 26 pounds, while the house itself and its outbuildings were assessed at 14 pounds.
John must have been a canny man where money was concerned, for his investments – "laid out beforehand, upon ground, bonds and specialities" - amounted to 40 pounds. All that he had and owned was worth in all a very substantial 240 pounds, 13 shillings and fourpence. This must have made Grace, though a widow, a very attractive proposition to any man seeking a wife, and as she was in her thirties, or less, she probably married again.

The next will that has survived comes from Calstock and is even meaner in terms of its contents that Joan's. It was made by James.
He was one of the sons of Thomas (2) and is only mentioned a few times in the Rolls, once when in 1570 he handed over part of a holding in Kingsgarden to his brother Stephen (2) and to Sampson Grills, while keeping half of the holding of a house and 22 acres to himself. This he surrendered to Sampson Grills and John Dinmont seven years later. He must have had a trade, but there is no indication in his will and inventory what that trade might have been or that he ever married.
His will was written on 3 December 1622, so he is likely to have been about 70 years old when he died a month or so later. He had a brother called Walter, as well as three sisters, Alice, Robish and Elizabeth. But this Walter can't be Walter (2), whose parents were Richard the piper and Cecily.
James's goods were valued in all at a mere three pounds 6s7d. Debts of two pounds were owing to him, and the only items of any worth were his linen and woollen wearing apparel (13s4d). All he had was a bedstead, a pair of blankets, a bolster and a coverlet, two coffers and a clay vessel - nothing else. Compared with John of St Kew James could be described as being not only poor but destitute. He was also "sick in body" when the will was written.
In the will he left four shillings and a blanket to his eldest sister, Alice Piper. His second sister, Robish Bonney, received four shillings, as did another sister, Elizabeth. His god-daughter, Alice Bonney, was given ten shillings "to be put in use for her till she come to lawful age." His sister-in-law, Joan, received ten shillings and a chest. What was left went to Joan's husband, Walter Honycome (sic), James's brother and executor. The will wasn't proved until April 1623. His funeral service would have been conducted by Nicholas Deeble, who was rector of St Andrew's for 36 years.

In the neighbouring parish of St Dominic, another John Honeycombe made his will on 20 August 1625. We don't know when he died - the will was proved, however, in March 1626. John was a grandson of Richard the piper, his father and mother being the John and Joan who between them shared with others a holding in Kingsgarden of a house and 11 acres from 1584 to 1593 - Joan was a widow in 1593 and apparently died before 1598.
John of St Dominic was said to have been a husbandman when he died - his possessions indicate, however, that he was not much more than a farm labourer. He can't have been that old as his five children were all under the age of 21 - the eldest, John, seems to have been 17 or 18. We know that John the father married Christian Edgecumbe at Stoke Damarel in Plymouth about 1606. Their first son, John, was born there about 1608. As John and Christian's other four children were born at St Dominic, it's possible that that their marriage was a runaway one, that they got on a boat or barge and sailed downriver to Plymouth. Perhaps her parents (she was an Edgecumbe after all) disapproved of the liaison and she may have been quite young. On the other hand she may have had some relatives in Stoke Damarel.
John would have been about 36 at the time of his death. He had little to leave. His household goods were minimal, and he had no animals or crops. Only one bed is mentioned in the inventory, so on what did the children sleep - mattresses filled with hay? All he owned were several brass and iron pots, a cauldron, some pewter candlestick and some cups; some chests, wooden utensils and his work tools - beataxes (short curved blades with wooden handles for cutting the tops of sugar beet then spearing them and picking them up with the point), a shovel and other unspecified tools. He possessed "bands and bills" worth 18 pounds and the total value of his goods was 24 pounds 12 shillings.

Sick in body, he dictated his will to the only witness, Anthony Edgecumbe, probably Christian's brother. Unsigned, it is carefully and finely penned, and looks like the work of a scholar or educated man. John left three pounds to each of his sons, John, William and Thomas; his daughters, Ann and Christian, received seven pounds. All his children were to be paid "when they shall come to the age of one and twenty years." Everything else was left to his wife and executor, Christian Honicombe (sic).
She would have had a hard time bringing up five children without a husband. If she didn't remarry, the oldest children would have had to be lodged with relatives or sent out to work. Possibly their uncle, Anthony Edgecumbe, took one or two into his home.
We don't know what happened thereafter to John Honeycombe's three sons, whether they ended up in one of the Cornish towns and villages where Honeycombes are known to have lived for a while - in Mevagissey, St Austell or Linkinhorne - or travelled further afield, to Plymouth or even to London. Wherever they went, none of their descendants is alive today.

It is an extraordinary fact in this history that *all* of the many apparently thriving lines of Cornish and Devonian Honeycombes - in Botus Fleming, Stoke Damarel, Devonport, Plymouth, Tavistock, Exeter and Weare Giffard; in Calstock, Callington, Liskeard, Maker, Antony, Saltash, St Austell, Lawhitton, Linkinhorne, Truro, Kenwyn, St Allen, Mevagissey, St Kew, St Columb Minor, London and Sonning - *all* eventually petered out by 1800 or even earlier and came to a nameless end - except those descended from just one man, Matthew Honeycombe of St Cleer.

The next extant will is that of an Anthony Honeycombe and takes us back unfortunately not to Calstock, but to Callington. This is the Anthony (6) who married Sibly Crabbe about 1585.
He was the second son of Edward and Joan Honeycombe and was born about 1563. His youngest brother was John Honeycombe, the blacksmith of St Kew. Anthony married Sibly (Sibella) Crabbe about 1585. They had no children. It appears from the inventory of his possessions that he was, in part, a husbandman. His will, dated 20 May 1626, was written down by an unnamed witness whose handwriting was clear, unblemished and precise. Anthony makes an odd mark which is neither an A or an H. He died soon afterwards, aged about 63, and was buried on 29 May. It's possible, as plague seized Tavistock in May 1626 that Callington was also thus infested and that Anthony died of the plague.
The inventory was made on 7 June by John Westcott, William Honeycombe and William's son, John Honeycombe.
William, who was 65 (baptised in March 1561), had married for the third time in February 1620, siring a son who was born that October. The third son from his first marriage, John, aged 37 (baptised in February 1589), is the John who made the inventory with his father and John Westcott.
Anthony possessed some items which were not that typical of a small farmer at that time. There were the usual household possessions - bedstead, bedding, dustbed, blankets, coverlets, bolster, coffers and a press, two table boards, two forms, a chair and assorted tubs, pots, crocks, and vessels of clay, wood and pewter. There is, however, no mention of any cutlery. "His bacon" was worth 18d, his wheat and barley 40 shillings, and "his oats in the ground" 30 shillings. In his farmyard and fields were 21 sheep, six lambs, two pigs, one cow and a heifer (worth three pounds 10 shillings), and some poultry. Despite the fact that he had a harrow and two "tows" he didn't have a horse. He must have borrowed one when any ploughing or carrying had to be done.
But he wasn't just a farmer. He also possessed "one pair of looms and fleece and turn and card" - he was a weaver, working at home. Or perhaps Sibly did the weaving. The looms, etc, were valued at 40 shillings.
It also seems that Anthony had been a soldier and taken part in some war, as he had a small armoury of personal weapons - a pike, a sword, a dagger and a halberd. In the service of some Elizabethan knight or lord he might have fought as an infantryman on the mainland of Europe, in

the Dutch-Spanish wars. If so, the weapons, after 40 years, would have been somewhat rusted. They were certainly not valued very highly by his brother and nephew, who concluded they were worth in all a mere five shillings. The two pigs were valued at eight. The total worth of Anthony's goods and chattels came to 23 pounds 3s3d, of which the poor of the parish received ten shillings. In his will he gave a single sheep to three members of his wife's family, John Crabbe the younger, Mary his sister and Anne. Another Mary Crabbe, the daughter of William Crabbe, got a lamb. Sheep also went to two of the sons of his brother William, to William Honicome the younger (sic), to Richard, and to William's daughter, Christian. The children of Anthony's much younger brother, Ralph Honicome (sic), were not forgotten, sheep going to Edward and John and a lamb to Henry. Friends or relatives also had gifts of sheep - Thomas Souther, Anthony Facy and Anthony Lampen, who received a lamb. The most important bequests, however, were those involving land.
"Item. I give to Mary Souther one close of land called by the name of Crosyoke (?) after the decease of Sibly my wife, and after Sibly and Mary Souther decease, Henry Honicome, the son of Ralph Honicome, shall have the said close of land . . . Item. I give to John Honicome, the son of William Honicome, the house and ground that belong thereto after the decease of Sibly my wife. Item. I give to my brother William Honicome two beams that be in the barn. So I make Sibly my wife my whole executor and administrator of all my goods."
Sibly lived on for another eight years and was buried in Callington on 20 May 1634 - eight years to the day on which Anthony made his will.

Now we come to the Calstock will, that of Anthony Honeycombe junior, which might have been the most informative of them all - except that we don't have it. All we have is the inventory, which tells us very little, and this will be dealt with in the next chapter. An Administration, which once existed, is also missing. It tells us at least that Anthony junior died intestate, suddenly perhaps.
In the meantime a picture of manorial life in the reign of Charles I can be gleaned from other wills.

William Honeycombe of Callington - he with the three wives - died and was buried in May 1640. His will was made on 1 May and proved in July. Heading the inventory list, after his girdle, purse and wearing apparel (30 shillings) are his cows, calves and young cattle (12 pounds), his sheep and lambs (12 pounds), his pigs and farrows (13s), and one grey nag (21s). The rest of the items, apart from a "glass box", are unexceptional. He was worth 54 pounds, 10s10d.
William's son, John, aged 59, and John's second wife, Alice (he had two) were each given a ewe and a lamb; his grandson, William, received two ewes and two lambs, as did his grand-daughter, Christian. Two other grand-daughters, Agnes and Elizabeth, were each given a ewe and a lamb, and all William's godchildren received 12 pence each. Wiliam's youngest son, Richard, born in October 1620, was made executor and bequeathed "all my goods and chattels, moveable and unmoveable, not given nor bequeathed." The poor of the parish were left a paltry two shillings.

Four years later, two years after the Civil War began, and a couple of months before the Battle of Marston Moor, William's eldest surviving son, John Honeycombe, made his will - on 8 April 1644. He was 55 in February that year. We don't know when he died, but his will was proved in December 1644. John's first wife, Katherine Williams, had died without issue in November 1627. He had remarried in 1628, his second wife being Alice Osborne. They had several children, some of whom died young.
His daughter, Christian, who was baptised in Callington on 3 February 1631, was given six pounds 13s4d, to be paid two years after his death - she was 13 when he died. Another daughter, Agnes, who never married, was given five pounds, to be paid three years after his death. She must have been 12. His wife, Alice, received the Colland meadow and another field, and his eldest surviving son, William, the little Colland and the long Colland. Both were made John's executors and given all the rest of his goods and chattels "not formerly given or bequeathed." The poor of Callington got two shillings.

His eldest son, William, was the first that John's first wife, Katherine, had borne. There were two other boys, but they both died very young. William was baptised in March 1617, so he must have been 27 when his father died.

John was worth in all 67 pounds 2s6d. The land he farmed was comparatively sizeable and amounted to 13 and a half acres of wheat, barley and corn. He also had more animals than most B five steers, five heifers and five calves, 14 ewes and 14 lambs, 35 wethers and barren ewes, and six pigs. There were various pieces of farming equipment and kitchen equipment, as well as an axe and a hatchet, and his home was well furnished with five beds, one a feather bed, with four table boards, three forms, "two board cloths and other linen", several chairs and stools, "one dozen pewter dishes and other small pewter" and two latten candlesticks. There was also a cupboard and a coffer, as well as "bacon and other salt meat", cheese and butter.

It wasn't until April 1651, when he was 34, that John's eldest son, William, married Agnes Hendy, whose father, William Hendy, was a mariner. In *her* father's will, made in 1664, Agnes was left 10 pounds - provided William "will not meddle with it". When her mother died in 1670, Agnes received several items and four pounds. We don't know when they both died, but it seems they had no children.

Although Daniel Honeycombe left no will, it seems appropriate to end this chapter with his story. Depositions concerning his demise were made in 1644 and 1647. He died in fact about 1639 - and he died not in Cornwall but at sea.

Daniel's grandfather was Griffin Honeycombe, who died intestate in April 1601 at Antony, a village on the south bank of the St Germans River, on the Cornish peninsula that jutted eastwards towards Plymouth and the Devon shore. Griffin's wife was Susanna, and they had three sons - Ambrose, Thomas and John.

It seems that John never married, dying in 1640. Thomas, who was a mariner, married three times and died in 1646. Griffin's eldest son, Ambrose, married Margaret Mutton about 1607. At some point Ambrose and his brothers settled in the parish of Maker, whose main settlement was the small port of Millbrook, at the far end of a tidal creek called Millbrook Lake. The church was high on a hill, as at Calstock, and the eastern part of the peninsula was occupied by the house and grounds of Mount Edgcumbe, overlooking Plymouth Sound.

It's possible that all three brothers were mariners. There was a distinction then between mariners and sailors, the former being professional sailors with career ambitions, the latter being content with an ordinary sea-faring life.

Ambrose and Margaret had six children - Margaret, Nicholas, Daniel, William, Elizabeth and Richard, who were born between 1608 and 1618. Their mother was the daughter of a tailor, Nicholas Mutton of Maker, who when he died in 1616 left three silver spoons to his godson, Nicholas, then aged about six.

The second son, Daniel, went to sea in the capacity of a cooper, someone who made and repaired casks and barrels, in short a carpenter. It's likely he had been apprenticed to a carpenter and learned his trade on shore.

On 13 January 1637, when he was about 25, he married Jane Halse at St Andrew's Church in Plymouth. There is no record of them having had any children. His brother, William, who married Ann Roberts the year before Damiel's marriage, had two. *His* son, William, married Rachel Pearce in Saltash and they moved to Botus Fleming in Devon, where their only son (they also had three girls) died soon after he was born. The wife of Ambrose's fourth son, Richard, apparently died in childbirth in 1641.

By this time Daniel was also dead. He died and was buried at sea in 1639. By this time his father, Ambrose, aged 56, had gone blind.

There was obviously some family dispute after Daniel's death about his goods and chattels and about any payment he would have received for his percentage of any successful trading done by the ship, "his voyage". It's likely that his wife and family didn't learn about his death for over a year, especially if he died on the voyage out. Eventually a court of inquiry tried to resolve the

matter over the next eight years, a difficult task for them as witnesses to his death and last wishes could have been away from home for many months, even years.
We don't know what the outcome was, but depositions made by two of Daniel's shipmates have survived, simple statements that are so evocative now of the lives and times of those who went to sea in the 1630s.

"Memorandum that the eleventh day of January 1644 William Isett of Maker, sailor, being shortly to go to sea, came before us and voluntarily deposed as followeth.
"That being at sea about five years since in the ship called the Cat of Millbrook, of which was Master, John Trenamen, bound for the isle of St Christopher, in which ship there was one Daniel Honi(combe of the) town of Millbrook, son of Ambrose (Honicombe) of the same town, who was coop in the said ship and in the said voyage thitherward. The said Daniel fell sick, and being asked by this deponent whilst he was of perfect memory who should have all his goods in case he should decease, the said Daniel made answer his father, and farther said that he was an old man, and blind, and that he ought to make much of him; and about four days later, the said Daniel died."

William Isett signed this document by making his mark.
The other deposition was written down by Roger Porter, to which someone else had added a note – "Mind to enquire for the will of Daniel Honicombe dec(eased) Millbrook 5 or 6yr 8yr."

"The voluntary deposition of Mark Berry of Plymouth, mariner, given at the Admiralty Court of Cornwall held at Craft Hole the 18th day of October 1647." Note that Berry was a mariner, while Isett was a sailor.
"This deponent saith that he was a cabin mate with Daniel Honicombe, deceased, in the voyage that the said Honicombe died in, being then in the Cat of Millbrook (whereof John Trenamen was Master), and that he heard the said Honicombe advisedly and often so say words to this effect, vide, that his old father, Ambrose Honicombe, should have his voyage and all else that he was owner of. And this deponent further asking whether he had not made his will before he came away, the said Daniel answered him, that he had made no will; but that his will was that his father should have all that he had as aforesaid. And this deponent is sure he made no other will afterward because he was constantly with him until he died."

Somewhere in the Atlantic in the cramped shared cabin of a small creaking, swaying ship, Mark Berry sat beside his dying mate and, there being no doctor on board such a small ship, did what he could to ease Daniel's passing.
St Christopher is now known as St Kitts, a small island in the West Indies, 23 miles long, with a central range of rugged mountains. It had been occupied by the English and the French since 1623. Sugar-cane was grown there, and sugar, cotton, molasses and tobacco were the main industries. Whether Daniel died of some disease picked up in England or in St Kitts we do not know. But as soon as he was deemed to be dead his body would have been pitched overboard with little or no ceremony. He would have been about 27.

Let us now return to May 1621, when the activites of the Calstock Honeycombes were last noted in the manorial courts.

17. COURT ROLLS AND ASSESSION ROLLS, 1621-1646

An Anthony, more than likely Anthony junior, and probably both the Roger Honeycombes, appeared in court in connection with various pleas of debt during the rest of 1621, and Jane, wife of Roger junior, was among 32 tenants who were fined 2d each for letting their tenements decay. In March 1622 Anthony junior and Susan were jointly fined 6d for several pleas of default in a matter concerning John Facy, and an Anthony appeared seven times at courts at Newton and

Todworthy. Edmund Honeycombe made two claims of unpaid debts in 1623 and Anthonys and Rogers were consistently fined that year, generally 4d.
Anthony Honicombe senior (sic) came to the court held at Todworthy on 23 October and surrendered a close of land called North Close, estimated as the 16th part of a tenement in Cross, to Samuel Hun. In April 1624 Arthur Tooker was fined a shilling for selling Awood growing within the manor@ to Edmund Honeycombe. An Anthony - and we presume now that it is always Anthony junior - was fined nine times during that year, once for not paying Edmund. Three times he was fined 8d. Roger appeared just once in 1624 and Jane was once again fined 2d for not repairing her tenement.
Susan Honeycombe came to the court held at Metherell on 27 October 1624 “and with the assent of her husband” surrendered a house and a garden, estimated as the sixth part of a holding in Northendredon, alias Ichimple (Wimple) to George Gross. This may have been forced on them to pay off Anthony’s debts or because he was ill.

On 27 March 1625 King James, whose mind and health had been impaired by bouts of senility the previous year, died at the age of 58 of a tertian ague and a stroke. He was succeeded on the same day by his son, Charles, Prince of Wales, who was 24, small and slight, stubborn and yet weak-willed, and prone to making the wrong decisions.
In June 1625 Charles married 15-year-old Henrietta Maria, sister of the French king. Plague swept through London that winter, but the coronation nonetheless took place in February 1626. The young King made peace with France and Spain three years later, and having embarked on a collision course with the Puritanical and largely middle-class members of the House of Commons, who continued to displease him and thwart his conviction that he had a divine right to rule - to the extent that he considered their attitude “seditious” - he dispensed with Parliament altogether for eleven years.

In the manor of Calstock the 1626 Assession Roll tells us that the house and garden relinquished by Susan Honeycombe in Northendredon were handed on by George Gross in 1626 to Laurence Read, who shared them with Samuel Hun.
Anthony senior (1) still retained his half of two holdings in Cross, the rest being divided up now between Samuel Hun, Richard Facy and George Gee - in 1619 only Anthony and Samuel Hun had shared the holdings. Samuel Hun already had what had been Stephen Honeycombe’s cottage at Albaston, as well as Broomclose, which he and John Combe took from Anthony in 1619. His take-over of several Honeycombe properties seems to indicate that he or his sons had married Honeycombe girls.
Walter (2) was also losing out. In 1626 he was left with the residue of 12 acres of waste in Cross (sic), most of it, as well as a house and garden, now being taken over by his sister, Robicia (Robish) Greet. From 1619 the clerk penning the Assession Rolls placed the 12 acres of waste in Cross, moving them from the Kingsgarden section. It seems that Robish had remarried, as in the will of her brother James in 1622 she was Robish Bonney.
The house and 22 acres called the Ford Land, which were near a cemetery in Calstock Land - not the churchyard of the parish church which was high on a hill - and had been taken by Anthony (2) and Elizabeth Bailey in 1619, were still held by them in 1626. Roger Honeycombe took a close in Calstock Land via his wife, Jane, and Walter Adams. They shared it with Mary, the wife of Peter John. William Stentaford was still at Honeycombe, which he now shared with John Bartlett’s widow, Thomasina.
The Honeycombes were fading away as holders of land and also as regular fixtures in the courts. In 1626, in the first year of King Charles’s reign, the Anthonys and a Roger Honeycombe made fewer appearances, while Edmund appeared just twice and Jane, as usual, once.
In the first seven months of 1627 Roger appeared only once in court and an Anthony twice, on 26 February and on 23 May.
It would seem that this Anthony *can’t* have been Anthony junior as he had died, intestate, *before* those dates, at the end of January or perhaps at the beginning of February. But it was not until a

court was held at Metherell on 16 August 1627 that the death of Anthony junior was officially announced. So it's possible that any pending or actual suits involving him were still noted down. He would have been buried by the rector, Nicholas Deeble.
Why did it take so long, however - over six months - for the fact of his death to be officially made known? Why were so few courts, apparently, held that year before the one held in August? Was the weather so bad, or did some other plague or epidemic smite the manor? Why wasn't Anthony's death announced in February, soon after he died?
The relevant Court Roll for 16 August, translated, reads: "The reeve gives the court to understand that Anthony Honicombe died since the last court possessed of one house in Calstock Town, whereupon it falls to the Lord King for a heriot his best animal at the time of his death, and because he had none there falls to the Lord King by agreement 12d, and Susanna, his wife, is then the next tenant and John Honicombe, his son, is the next tenant, according to the custom of the aforesaid manor, and the aforesaid Susanna made fealty and so is admitted tenant by the pledge of John Bealbury and James Edwards and gives in acknowledgement of fealty 8d."
We know from the inventory that at the time of his death that Anthony *did* have a best beast, a heifer, which was worth two pounds 10 shillings, not to mention some sheep and pigs. It seems that the reeve was either one of Anthony's well-placed friends or unaware of the contents of the inventory and of Anthony's heifer, sheep and pigs. Perhaps they had already been seized by Anthony's creditors or had been sold or hidden away by Susan. Another mystery.
The inventory of Anthony junior's goods was made in fact on 3 February 1626 - that is, according to the Gregorian Calendar introduced in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII, when the New Year began on 25 March. That system was changed to the present form of dating in 1752. So *we* would say that Anthony died some time in January or February *1627*. Indeed the inventory was proved on 29 March 1627, ie, eight weeks after it was made. We may surmise that combative, drunken Anthony either died a few days to a week before the inventory was written down or on the very same day.
His will and an Adminstration, which are both missing, could have told us something about his brothers and sisters and about his own children. However, we are able to surmise from other documentary evidence that he had an older brother, Edmund, and two sisters, Alice and Anne - also that he and his shrewish wife, Susan, had at least five children, the eldest being John. But none of this, alas, can be confirmed by any bequests.
As it happens, the Calstock parish registers, available at last, tell us that Anthony's last two children were Grace (baptised in May 1623), and Anthony (baptised on 16 October 1625). There seems to have been an earlier Anthony, who must have died before 1625, as well as a Mary and a John. There were probably others, some of whom must have died, as Anthony and Susan would have married about 1606 - they both enter the Court Rolls in October 1607.
If we assume that Anthony was 20 when he married, then he was born about 1586. This would make him 40 or 41 when he died early in 1627.
As with Anthony (4) of Tavistock and possibly Anthony (6) in Callington, Anthony (2) may have died during an outbreak of plague. Tavistock was beset with plague the year before, from May to November 1626.
The two men who appraised his goods and chattels were John Jackman of Lawhitton and John Wills of Calstock. Neither signed the inventory, now torn and stained, and it was loosely spelt and roughly written. Lawhitton, by the way, is a village some 12 miles north of Calstock, so John Jackman may have been a concerned friend or Susan's brother.
His purse, girdle and wearing apparel were worth one pound four shillings, about the same as Anthony's of Callington. He had three bedsteads, and unspecified bedding and bedclothes. His furniture consisted of two coffers, a table board and forms, a board cloth, a cupboard, three candlesticks, some stools and chairs and the usual mix of pots, pans and crocks, pewter vessels, an earthenware vessel, some dishes and spoons, and two new-fangled kitchen accessories, a griddle and a frying-pan. His work equipment included a harrow (a heavy frame with iron teeth which was dragged over ploughland to break up clods and weeds), mattocks (pickaxes with an adze and chisel edges at the ends of their heads), a shovel, hatchets and a hook. There were also some stone

troughs, a barrel and two hogsheads (large casks). Seemingly Anthony brewed his own beer - which might explain in part how he became a drunkard.
Twelve pounds of wool, both coarse and fine, were in the house, which came from his sheep. Their numbers aren't known, as the page is torn thereabouts. But they were valued at one pound. As Anthony of Callington's 21 sheep were worth four pounds, we may assume that Anthony junior had five or six sheep. He also had a heifer and two pigs. There was an acre and a half of wheat in the ground and an acre in the mow, both of which were worth six pounds. Money owed to him amounted to 19 shillings. He was worth 24 pounds four shillings when he died.
Susan presumably inherited most of the above, as she did the house in Calstock Town. The Court Rolls also tell us that her son, John, was her heir.
She had given birth to her last child, Anthony, in October 1625, and if she was younger than her husband, which is likely, she would have been about 37 or 38. We know that she was a spirited woman, argumentative and aggressive, but she also seems to have been a serious cook (she had a specialised griddle and a frying-pan) and possibly a house-proud wife - the cupboard, coffers, candle-sticks, chairs and stools and quantities of dishes and spoons seem to indicate a large family or visitors frequently dropping in for a meal and a drink.
We would like to know more about him and his family, but we won't, unless his will is found.

Two months later, on 17 October 1627, when the court was held at Hill, Roger came and handed over an acre of land, a pasture called Papewell, to Robert Edwards junior, and over the next three months Susan Honeycombe was fined a total of 10d for the non-payment of debts to three different men, after which she is no longer mentioned. She disappears from the Rolls. Nor does the name of any Anthony Honeycombe appear in the Court Rolls again. The irregular sequence of Rolls ends 20 years later. A James, who can't be the James who died in 1622, makes a solitary appearance, in mercy for defaults in pleas of debt. He was most probably a son of Walter (2).
In 1628, a year after the death of Anthony junior, there is a marked reduction in the entries involving Honeycombes at the manorial courts - there are only five. Jane still hadn't done anything about her decaying tenement, and Roger and Edmund were both fined in pleas of debt.
After that there is a gap in the records, the next record of a manorial court being in March 1631. In that year Edmund, Roger and Jane again make brief court appearances, as does a newcomer, Peter Honeycombe, possibly another son of Walter (2) - or of Anthony (1) - who was fined 2d for not paying what he owed to Thomas Combe.
Thereafter, court records only exist for 1634 and 1646. The rolls become illegible, and are decayed and torn. They come to an end in 1648.
The last Court Roll entry naming a Honeycombe is one made at a court held at Todworthy on 24 November 1646, toward the end of the First Civil War. It says that John Bealbury came to the court and surrenderd a newly built house, a garden and a nearby close of land called Donacombe, alias Donacombe Hill, to John Honeycombe, who must be yet another son, in addition to James and perhaps Peter, of Walter (2).
The Assession Rolls resume in 1647, but the continuity of tenure has been broken and the Honeycombes hardly figure at all, disappearing altogether after 1669 and and not reappearing until 1703, when only one Honeycombe, Sampson, is named.
He and his family are the sole representatives thereafter of the generations of Honeycombes who held land in the manor of Calstock since 1326 if not before, and then, after 1773, they too disappear.

What is remarkable about the court roll for 1627 is that not only does Anthony junior (2) vanish from the court records that year, but that Anthony senior (1) and Anthony (3) also disappear - although there are doubts about the actual living presence of Anthony (3) in Calstock. The last reference to an Anthony at Calstock is on 23 May 1627, when an Anthony, most likely junior, is involved in a plea of debt.
What happened to Anthony senior (1)? And to Anthony (3)?

Anthony senior (1) continued in fact to live in Calstock until 1647. He died there some time before 1654, as did his wife, Laura, perhaps in 1650. We know this because the Assession Roll of 1647 says that Anthony (1) was sharing a house and 16 acres in Cross with Thomas Combe - as he had done at the previous assession, in 1640. This was the remant of the two house and 25 acres in Cross that had been in the possession of the Honeycombes since 1528, passing from Philip (1) who hanged himself, to his widow, Margery, to his son, Stephen, and then to Anthony (1).
The next Assession Roll, for 1654, reveals that Anthony, and his wife Laura, had died since the last assession and that the holding was now being shared by Thomas Combe and Anne Dodge, who was Anthony's daughter, together with John Dodge, Anne Dodge's son and Anthony's grandson. The clerk compiling the rolls spelt Laura as "Lore" - obviously a name that was new to him. It indicates to us that she came from a family with an educated interest in Christian names.
As Anthony (1) first appears in a Court Roll in October 1599, we may conclude that if he died about 1650 he was in his late sixties and possibly 70 when he died.
It now seems highly probable that he was involved in few if any of the suits of debt and trespass before the courts since 1606 and that his son, Anthony (2) was the main miscreant and offender. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that after the death of Anthony (2) - from 1628 to about 1650, when Anthony (1) may have died B no Anthony Honeycombe appears in any court. For over 20 years Anthony senior was clearly a law-abiding tenant. And if he was such a good neighbour over *this* period there is every reason to suppose that he was just as law-abiding during the previous 20 years. It is more than probable that most if not all of the offences involving an Anthony Honeycombe up to 1628 were committed by Anthony junior (2).
As for Anthony (3), the son of William and Grace - only mentioned as such in 1614 - there is a possibility that he died soon thereafter, or that he was no longer living in the manor of Calstock. But if he was alive after 1628, where was he?

More of that later, for a Civil War was looming which would engulf most of the counties of England including eastern Cornwall, where four notable battles were fought in 1643-44.
In one of them at least a Honeycombe took part. He was a junior officer, and a Royalist, and appears in a comprehensive list of Indigent Officers in 1663.
There must have been other Honeycombes among the soldiery, and most if not all of them would have been Royalists - most men in Cornwall were. But where they fought and whether they lived or died is not recorded in any known document.
Nonetheless, we know from the Protestations Returns of 1641 who most of the male Honeycombes were at that time and where they lived, and perhaps we can now work out, from the pieces of documentary evidence that have survived, how Matthew Honeycombe came to be in St Cleer after the social upheavals of Civil War and Cromwell's Commonwealth.

18. CIVIL WAR, 1642-1649

There was a very slow build-up to the Civil War. It seems to us now to have been inevitable, but it was not so at the time. Even when it began the Royalists and the Parliamentarians continued to negotiate, seeking some peaceful solution to their conflicting ideas and opinions. The latter hoped to save the king from his advisers and expected him to be reasonable and see the error of his ways. But King Charles had the wilfulness and spoilt, stubborn nature of a child. He believed he was special - he was *king*. He was also fatally indecisive, vague and imprecise.
Charles's struggle for power with Parliament must have puzzled most people, and they were generally not impressed by what they knew or were told about him. He levied taxes without Parliament's consent. His Catholic wife, as well as advisers like Archbisop Laud, seemed bent on making yet more changes to the way people worshipped, veering back towards Catholicism, making religious practices more sacramental and ceremonial. He also refused to acknowledge the

Calvinist reformist inclinations and wishes of the Scots. Much deplored was the Court of Star Chamber set up by Archbishop Laud, at which those who refused to accept religious reforms were harshly treated, mercilessly questioned and tortured into submission.
In 1639 Charles and his Royalist adherents invaded Scotland in what was called the First Bishops' War. The rebellious Scots, the Covenanters, wouldn't accept that bishops should have any authority over them and desired to replace Episcopalianism with their own brand of religious belief, Presbyterianism. People were forced to take sides and Scot was pitted against Scot. Small armies marched hither and thither, castles were taken, towns captured, but in the few skirmishes hardly anyone was killed.
In his masterly and engrossing book, *Civil War,* Trevor Royle says: "The campaign in the northeast (of Scotland) introduced tactics that would become drearily familiar to the non-combatants. The rival armies lived off the land, houses and farms were plundered, harvests destroyed and in some cases the opposition put to the sword . . . (In Aberdeen) a heavy fine was levied, there was an outbreak of ransacking and the city's dogs were slaughtered (by the Royalists) for the only reason that their owners had thought it a good jest to make them wear blue Covenanting ribbons."
A truce was declared in June. King Charles recalled Parliament in April 1640 and its members were asked to subsidise and pay for punitive actions against the Scots for their "foul and horrid treason". The members of the House of Commons refused to consider this until their various grievances about the growth of Catholic practices and monopolies, the collection of import taxes and the tyrannical disposition of the Star Chamber, were all dealt with first. After three weeks Parliament was once more dissolved by the King, and now the Scots seized the initiative, invading England in August 1640 after first indulging in some vicious clan warfare. The English forces, outnumbered five to one, were routed and fled, and although an English garrison held onto Berwick-on-Tweed, the Scots occupied Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham and other towns in Northumberland, while the Royalist strongholds of Dunfermline Castle and Edinburgh Castle fell into their hands.
Under pressure from his nobles and in order to deal with the various demands of the Scots, Charles I was forced to recall Parliament on 3 November 1640. It became known as the Long Parliament as, apart from a couple of breaks, it sat for an unprecedented 20 years.

Meanwhile, in Calstock, the Honeycombes were maintaining the noiseless tenour of their lives, not much perturbed so far by the news and rumours of troubles far away in the north of England and in wild and mountainous Scotland. But some of the local nobility and the administrators of the Duchy of Cornwall, which consisted of 78 manors in 1640 - including 17 "antiqua maneria", originally part of the Earldom of Cornwall - would have been assessing each manor's military capabilities and calculating how many men would be prepared to fight on behalf of the king.
Anthony Honeycombe and his wife, Laura, were farming the family holding in Cross and living in the house they shared with Thomas Combe. If Thomas was married to one of Anthony's daughters, another of them, Anne, was now probably married to one of the Dodges. In Kingsgarden, Roger Honeycombe shared a holding of a house and 16 acres with James Bligh, while Walter (2) was ageing and preparing to wind his business down.
Seven years later his 12 acres of waste at Donacombe Hill would be divided up between Jane Greet, sister or daughter of Robish Greet, George Weston, John Honeycombe and Mark Honeycombe's wife, Katherine, her portion having been inherited from Roger (probably Walter's son). We learn in 1647 that Walter had a stamping mill - a mill in which ore was crushed by stamps, heavy wooden beams with metal facings. Such a mill could have as many as ten stamps, arranged side by side. Walter's tin mill in 1647 was handed over to six other people, though he retained an interest in it and a place to live.
Mark Honeycombe and John Honeycombe, whose wife was Elizabeth, are likely to have been Walter's sons, as were probably Peter and James.
We actually have a parish register entry for the marriage of Mark and Katherine Saunders, which took place on 3 November 1634. They had at least three children, two boys and a girl - their son, John (born about 1640), and *his* wife, Emlin, producing in turn eight children, one of whom was Sampson Honeycombe, the progenitor of the last of the original Calstock Honeycombes. John and

Elizabeth, and Peter Honeycombe and his wife, Mary, also had children, but only one or two were born or survived, and none as far as we know left any descendants.
Nothing is heard of Susan Honeycombe after 1627. Nor is anything more known about her daughters or her sons - John, born about 1610, and the last, Anthony, baptised on 16 October 1625. Where were *they* in 1640?
But elsewhere in Cornwall there were heaps of Honeycombes - in St Dominic, Callington, Liskeard, Menheniot, Maker, Saltash, St Germans, Linkinhorne, Lawhitton, Truro and Mevagissey, and then there were those in Plymouth and Exeter - and now there was a family in St Cleer. None of them, although they were aware of the power struggles in London and that these struggles were reaching a crisis, would have dreamed that they would be involved in a Civil War within three years.

The Long Parliament, led by John Pym and John Hampden, at which a new voice, the member for Cambridge and Hampden's cousin, Oliver Cromwell, was heard, contrived to push through the Triennial Act in February 1641 - Parliament now had to be summoned every three years, and to this was added a clause in May that Parliament could not be dissolved without its own consent. King Charles agreed to bills of attainder authorising the executions of the Earl of Strafford and Archbishop Laud; ship money and other money-raising schemes employed by Charles were declared unlawful; and the Star Chamber was abolished. He also agreed to the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, but this was so that the Scots and their army would now be on his side.
In May an Oath of Loyalty to Parliament, and the King, was taken by all the members of the House of Commons and then by the House of Lords. It was aimed at confounding "the designs of priests and Jesuits" conspiring to "subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom and to introduce arbitrary and tyrannical government."
The obligation of signing this was then extended to include *all* adult males in England aged 18 and over, and on 30 July 1641 the House of Commons passed a resolution that all who refused to take the oath and sign their names were unfit to hold office in Church or State. County sheriffs were instructed by Parliament to organise the signing of the so-called Protestation Returns, which they did, assisted by justices of the peace and local clergy, who read to their parishioners the wording of the oath . . . "To live and die for the true Protestant religion, the liberty and rights of subjects, and the privileges of Parliament."
That autumn, or later, all the residents of the manor of Calstock would have assembled to hear the old rector of St Andrews, Nicholas Deeble, read the oath and then, with some awareness that this was a momentous occasion, one by one they appended their names.

The Protestation Returns for Cornwall, now kept in the House of Lords with all the other Returns, are the most complete in Engand. Only four parishes are missing. On the Cornish Returns we can see the signatures and marks of virtually all the male Honeycombes who were living in Cornwall then.
There are 19 Honeycombes in the Returns - only Truro is missing, where we know some Honeycombes dwelt. In the parish of Calstock there were five Honeycombes - Walter, Mark and Peter and two Rogers, all of whom made a mark. They were all most probably members of Walter's family, including the two Rogers, who made their marks one after the other and must have been father and son. Noticeably absent from the list are Anthony Honeycombe (1) and Thomas Combe, who shared a holding in Cross. Also absent are John Honeycombe, Walter's son, and Susan's son, John. Her much younger son, Anthony, would not have been old enough.
Does this mean that Anthony senior, his grandson, John, and Walter's son, John, all *refused* to sign? Does it mean that they were Catholics? Or were they absent from the parish? This is possible. A note at the end of the list for St Germans says: "These whose names do follow are now from home, but their protestations shall be taken (God permitting) at their returns." The names of three men are then noted. It seems inconceivable, however, that all three Honeycombe men were incapacitated, ill or absent on the same day.

150 men signed at Calstock, 40 of whom penned their names.
These included John, Robert and William Bond, Alexander and William Arundell, John and Anthony Gee, Samuel and Richard Dowrish, Mark Hawkin, Anthony Randell, Nicholas Battersby, Samuel Hun, Roger Martin, Richard Bealbury and Peter Bartlett. Among those who couldn't write were Mark Stentaford, John Stentaford, Philip Webb, John Facy, John Dodge, Anthony Dodge, James Bligh, John Jane, Walter Jane and five of the Edwards family. One of the marks is a neatly drawn pair of scissors, indicating that Sampson Andray (Andre) - the surname sounds French - was a tailor.
In the Returns of most of the other Cornish parishes the vicar, curate, constable, churchwardens and overseers are all separately listed. No one is so identified at Calstock.
There were three Honeycombes in the parish of Callington - John and Richard, who made a mark, and John's 24-year-old son, William, who signed. All of them we have met before. John and Richard were the surviving sons of William Honeycombe (he with the three wives), who died and was buried on the same day, 18 May 1640.
In the large neighbouring parish of Menheniot three Honeycombe men were listed - Ralph, John and Edward. All three wrote their names. Ralph we have also met before. He was a brother of John Honeycombe of St Kew, blacksmith. Ralph was baptised in Callington on 23 May 1579, so he was 62 in 1641. His eldest son, John, was baptised on 22 December 1607, and so was now 33. John had married Grace John in June 1606 and they had seven children or more. Ralph's son, Edward, named after his grandfather, was born in 1611, and may have remained unmarried. He would have been 30 at the time of the Protestation Returns.
Two Honeycombes lived in the small parish of St Germans, John and Edmund. Both made a mark. Nothing else is known for certain about either of them.
The only other Edmund of whom we know something - apart from the one who died during the plague in Tavistock in 1626 - is the Edmund in Calstock who we think was a brother (older) of Anthony junior and son of Anthony (1). This Edmund is named for the last time in a Calstock Court Roll in 1634. Parish registers tell us that he had two daughters, Johanna and Agnes, born in 1622 and 1623. There may have been others and there may have been sons. It's possible that the John and Edmund in St Germans in 1640 were sons of the Calstock Edmund.
Alternatively, the St Germans Edmund and the Calstock Edmund could be the same man, aged about 60, and the St Germans John could be his nephew, ie, the eldest son of Anthony junior and Susan, who disappears from Calstock after his father's death in 1627.
St Germans is seven miles southwest of Calstock, an easy walking distance. We do our ancestors less than justice if we imagine they stayed put in their villages and hardly ever moved outside their parishes. Although they had no holidays as such, apart from a day of rest on Sunday, there was seasonal inactivity as well as activity, and there were holy days and festivals and market days and visits to be made to relatives and friends in other villages and towns. Those who had trades and weren't tied to the land must have sought work outside the villages where they were born, and a large family might have motivated some of the more energetic sons to move out in search of a new life and possibilities elsewhere.
Lawhitton, for instance, is some 12 miles north of Calstock off the road to Launceston. Ambrose Honeycombe was living there in 1641 and signed the parish Protestation Return. We know from parish registers that he married twice and that his first wife probably died giving birth to Joseph, who was baptised in June 1649. His second wife gave him seven children, six of whom were girls. Ambrose would have married before 1649 - say about 1646 - and would therefore have been about 20 or less in 1641.
There's no mention of a John Honeycombe in the Returns for Lawhitton, but a will made by a John Honeycombe at Lawhitton in 1640 used to exist. It lay among the Devon Wills and Administrations at the Exeter Probate Court, all of which were unfortunately destroyed in a German bombing raid in the Second World War. If we had had the will we might have learned where this John originated and who his family were - whether, indeed, Ambrose was his son. Another son may have been the John who became the Register of Lawhitton Parish in 1655 and is named in the Hearth Tax of 1664.

The connection with Lawhitton was a tenuous one, however, and didn't last more than three generations.
West of Calstock and north of Truro is the parish of St Allen, where one Honeycombe is listed. Here and at nearby Kenwyn a rural family of Honeycombes had established themselves about 1605. There was a John and a Joan, who seem to have been brother and sister. Parish registers tell us that Joan married Lancelot Cowlyn at St Allen in June 1611. John married Jane Watt. It's likely that the Michael Honeycombe listed in the Returns for St Allen - he made his mark - was a son of this John and that he fathered the line of Honeycombes who lived and died in the Truro area for over a hundred years and then died out altogether.
The last Cornish parish to feature a Honeycombe in the Returns is that of St Cleer. The three Honeycombes named therein are the most important entries from a genealogical point of view. Once again we have an Anthony senior and an Anthony junior, as well as a John. The surname is here spelt Honicomb. We don't in this case know whether they signed their names or made a mark as no indication of either is given in the St Cleer list. 183 men are listed in these Returns, including the vicar and the constables of St Cleer.
One of these three Honeycombes must have been the father of Matthew Honeycombe, who married in St Cleer in 1682 and is the sole ancestor of all the Honeycombes in the world today.

In October 1641 the native Catholic population in Ireland rebelled against their English overlords and although the combined English and Scottish forces managed to crush the rebellion, civil warfare continued in Ireland for 11 years, with massacres and atrocities committed by both sides. Hundreds of refugees fled across the sea to England and Scotland. The English Parliament viewed the rebellion as further evidence of a Catholic conspiracy and of the threat of a return to popery. King Charles was thought to be behind this and in particular his Catholic queen, Henrietta Maria. When rumours reached Charles that Parliament intended to impeach the Queen, he took drastic action, prompted by her. He also believed that riots and unrest in London were being fomented by Parliamentarians.
In January 1642 he invaded the House of Commons, attended by 400 armed supporters, expecting to arrest the five members he deemed to be principally responsible for his troubles. Warned in advance, they had escaped. "I see all the birds have flown," said Charles. By violating Parliament with an armed force, the breach between the King and Parliament became permanent. The local militia, the Trained Bands, joined the people of London in supporting the Parliamentary cause. Charles moved his family out of London and went north to rally support for the Royalist cause and raise an army. Henrietta Maria went abroad to raise money to pay for it and find some allies. The royal standard was raised at Nottingham on 22 August 1642 and the royal court and Charles's military HQ was then established at Oxford.
Loyalties were strained and divided, in towns, villages and families. Some tried, vainly, to remain neutral. A Parliamentarian lawyer wrote to his wife: "It is strange to note how we have insensibly slid into the beginnings of a civil war . . . and scarce we know how. But from paper combats, by declarations, remonstrances, protestations, votes, messages, answers and replies, we are now come to the raising of forces." The Royalist Governor of Scarborough said: "I am forced to draw my sword, not only against my countrymen, but my dear friends and allies."
The first major battle was fought inconclusively at Edgehill in October 1642. Armies marched, retreated, fought and counter-marched across England for over four years, with many deaths and eventually more defeats than victories for the Royalists. King Charles, abandoned by the Scots, was taken into protective custody in January 1647. So ended the First Civil War.

One of the earlier battles of the Civil War was fought about 15 miles west of Calstock, at Braddock Down. Others fought later in eastern Cornwall were at Lostwithiel, Launceston and Stratton. Some of the younger male Honeycombes must have become involved in these battles in some capacity, most probably on the Royalist side, and we know that one of them was - Ensign John Honeycombe, who fought for the Royalists under Sir Jonathan Trelawney as a foot soldier, although as an ensign he may have carried his regiment's banner while riding a horse.

John Honeycombe's name appears in *A List of Indigent Officers* drawn up in 1663. These were officers who had fought on the side of King Charles and were now claiming some compensation, some "relief" from the 60,000 pounds set aside by King Charles II "for his True and Loyal Indigent Party." John's Foot Regiment (as opposed to Horse) was that commanded by Colonel Trelawney. As Trelawney is known to have raised a company in support of Charles I in 1642, and as his family seat at Pelynt was only some seven miles south of Liskeard, a large market town, we may presume that it was at Liskeard that Trelawney raised his standard and that John Honeycombe was living in the area and among the first to join the company. He would also have been a youngish man as he was an ensign, the most junior of the officers, lower than a lieutenant.

There are five possible candidates for Ensign John. There is the John who was the eldest son of Ralph Honeycombe and was born in Menheniot in December 1607. In 1620 he received ten shillings in the will of his uncle, the blacksmith of St Kew, and six years later got a sheep from his much older uncle, Anthony. John married Grace John at Menheniot in 1632 and over the next ten years she bore him five children. This John, as well as his younger brother, Edward, and his father, Ralph, all *signed* the Protestation Returns, which indicates they were educated to some degree. In 1642 John would have been 34. A man of that age, with a small farm to run and five children to feed, isn't likely to have volunteered for war.

Then there is the John who was the eldest son of John and Christian Honeycombe of St Dominic and is mentioned in his father's will in the autumn of 1625, when he and his two brothers each received three pounds. Young John was 17 or 18 at that time, so he would have been about 34 in 1642. The impoverished family of John Honeycombe of St Dominic would seem unlikely to have produced a junior officer - unless the mother of the three boys remarried well or they received a good upbringing and some education from Anthony Edgecumbe (their uncle?). In which case young John might have been expected to join Major Pierce Edgecumbe's troop of Horse, which included Captain William Grills and Ensign Hannibal Grills, as well as Lieutenant John Arundel and Cornet Robert Edwards.

Our John doesn't feature, however, in the St Dominic Returns - not surprisingly, as he was probably living in Stoke Damarel in Devon - where he was born and where he married Elizabeth Hodge about 1630. It's highly unlikely a man from Parliamentarian Plymouth would have joined Trelawney's Foot, and in any event he couldn't have been Ensign John as he was in no position to make a claim as an indigent officer in 1663 - he had died in 1650.

Another unlikely John is the John who was born about 1612 in Exeter in Devon and married there in 1634 - his first two sons were also born there. If he enlisted it would not have been in a Cornish regiment.

We are left with the two Johns from Calstock and St Cleer.

The first of these is the son of Anthony and Susan, who is named as his mother's heir in a Court Roll in 1627. No John from Calstock signed the Protestation Returns and we know nothing else about him.

There were two other Johns in Calstock, father and son, living in Kingsgarden, but one was too young in 1642 to be going to war, and *both* of these Johns died in 1661 - so they are also hardly likely to have been putting in a claim in 1663.

John Honeycombe of St Cleer, along with Anthony senior and Anthony junior, is listed in the Returns made there in 1641, though we don't know if any of the three signed or made a mark. It's likely that they did. For in later years an Anthony and a John witnessed wills and drew up inventories, as did Matthew himself. The men of the family had obviously had some kind of education. It seems, moreover, that John senior - a John junior is named in a will in 1670 - was born about 1622 and married an Elizabeth about 1649 - the year King Charles I was beheaded. If this is roughly right, this John was about 20 at the start of the Civil War. And he came from St Cleer, a few miles north of Liskeard, which was the nearest sizeable market town to Pelynt and where Trelawney must have raised his standard and called for volunteers. Ensign John Honeycombe and John Honeycombe of St Cleer are in all likelihood the same man.

Trelawney's name would become famous in later years through his son, another Jonathan Trelawney, who was born in 1650, and was one of seven bishops (he was Bishop of Bristol)

imprisoned in the Tower of London by James II. This incarceration inspired a Cornish song, containing the lyric – “And shall Trelawney die? Here’s twenty thousand Cornish men will know the reason why!” His death in 1721 is commemorated by a coffin brass plate in the parish church at Pelynt, where memorials to some of his descendants can be seen today. Other Trelawneys are memorialised in Menheniot’s church and even in the church at Calstock.

We know at least that Ensign John Honeycombe survived the Civil War as he appears on the List of Indigent Officers. If he took part in the various skirmishes and campaigns in the West Country in 1642, he would have been involved in events leading up to the Battle of Braddock Down and thereafter, as described by Trevor Royle in *Civil War.*

“By the summer of 1643 William Waller had come a cropper in a pitched battle outside Devizes, the key city of Bristol had fallen to Rupert’s forces, and Gloucester was under threat. Exeter and Plymouth, both occupied by Parliamentary garrisons, remained under siege, but the West Country was more or less in Royalist hands. Most of the success was due to the king’s exemplary field commander, Sir Ralph Hopton . . . Lack of support (in Somerset in 1642) forced Hopton to seek men further west . . . An attempted muster at Bodmin attracted barely two hundred men, leaving him to complain that they treated it as ‘a great fair’ . . . Hopton began his campaign by occupying Launceston and using it as a base for raiding into neighbouring Devon . . . His options were stymied by the Parliamentary commander opposing him - Colonel William Ruthin, a Scottish soldier of fortune and the military governor of Plymouth - who constantly harried him across the River Tamar . . . Reinforced by forces led by the Earl of Stamford, and anxious not to lose command, Ruthin sought a decisive engagement with the Royalist forces . . . and at the beginning of January 1643 moved his army up to Liskeard to threaten Losthwithiel . . . Stamford was marching on Bodmin . . . Re-equipped with fresh weapons and with morale riding high, Hopton’s army marched to meet the threat posed by Ruthin. On 18 January they found themselves camped in the grounds of Lord Mohun’s estate at Boconnoc, three miles to the east of Lostwithiel and within sight of the Parliamentary army . . . Next morning brought the first confrontation on an open piece of ground called Braddock Down . . . Among the Royalist commanders was the legendary Cornish squire, Sir Bevil Grenville, a giant of a man, standing over six feet.”

He had a younger brother, Sir Richard Grenville, a professional soldier, who had fought in Germany and Ireland. Sir Richard had accepted 600 pounds from the Parliamentary leaders and then switched sides. Daphne du Maurier says of him, “Brutal, ruthless, a tremendous disciplinarian and an able tactician hated by his enemies, feared and sometimes mistrusted by his friends, he soon became exasperated by the careless methods of his co-commanders. They were slow in decision, so he thought, not swift enough in pursuit; they went about the business of war as if it were a game instead of a process of extermination.” The following year, when he violently disagreed with Hopton’s orders and refused to obey them, he was arrested. He escaped to France, still calling himself ‘The King’s General in the West’.

Trevor Royle: “The action began when Mohun, a Cornish magnate (the family originated in Devon), brought two pieces (guns) from Boconnoc, which were then concealed below the infantry, with the cavalry, as was normal, forming the wings. After two hours’ stand-off the Parliamentary forces began a tentative advance, only to be surprised by a salvo from the two guns. At that point the men of Cornwall countered, advancing over the open ground with Grenville to the fore . . . while Hopton’s cavalry charged into the flanks . . . ‘I had the van,’ remembered Grenville. ‘And so, after some prayers at the head of every division, I led my part away, who followed me with so great courage, both down one hill and up the other, that it struck great terror in them’ . . . The rout continued to Liskeard, where the Royalist forces took over one thousand prisoners and captured a good deal of booty, including the opposition’s artillery pieces, which Ruthin had rashly left behind. It was a well-won triumph . . . In pursuit of Ruthin (Hopton) inflicted another defeat on him at Saltash three days later . . . and his opponent was obliged to escape back to Plymouth in a small open boat.”

Boconnoc House, beautifully situated in the valley of the River Lerryn, now belongs to the Fortescues and is in the process of being restored.

Stamford's force headed back into Devon and Hopton sent a column after them. It came to grief at Chagford on 8 February 1643, when it was ambushed by Parliamentary musketeers. Several Royalists died, among them the young poet, Sidney Godolphin, known as "Little Sid". There was another defeat, at Modbury, when about 100 Royalists died and five guns were captured. But in April, Hopton's forces routed some 2,500 Parliamentarians at Launceston. Two days later another of his columns was ambushed and routed near Okehampton in Devon during a thunderstorm. A bigger confrontation at Stratton in the north-eastern corner of Cornwall resulted in a major Royalist victory. Over 300 of their opponents died, 1,700 were taken prisoner, and a great quantity of Parliamentarian guns, gunpowder and supplies was captured. Trevor Royle: "Cornwall was once again in Royalist hands, and apart from Plymouth and Exeter, Devon would soon follow . . . (Then Hopton) received news from Oxford that (Prince) Maurice and (the Marquis of) Hertford were marching westwards with 2,500 men, including much-needed cavalry, to join up with him at Chard in Somerset - which they did on 4 June."
From Janary 1643 the parish registers for Tavistock contain frequent entries for the burial of soldiers and prisoners. In 1644 the vicar wrote, "From the 24th day of this month of July to this 28th day were 18 soldiers buried." And then there is this – "Bennet Tozer was buried being executed for running away from his cullers (colours)."

All this marching and counter-marching, skirmishing, attacking and retreating was being repeated on a larger scale all over England, and the blood of many English men soaked into many manorial fields. But how dramatic, exciting and thrilling it must have seemed to young Ensign John from the parish of St Cleer - the noble commanders, the cavalry charges, the smoke, the confusion, the noise and the deadly onslaught of the guns, even the horrors of hand-to-hand fighting, of men being killed, of men being mutilated by sword, pike, musket or gun, of men dying and dead. And so it went on - and in some towns civilians were also being slaughtered.
In April 1644 the Earl of Essex, having raised the siege of Lyme Regis in Dorset, and then the siege of Plymouth, made a rash and independent decision "to reduce the West" and invaded Cornwall with his army. He reached Bodmin on 28 July, three weeks after the bloodiest battle of the war at Marston Moor.
In order to defend the small port at Fowey, which was being used by Parliamentary ships, Essex positioned his army at Lostwithiel. King Charles, accompanied by Hopton, Prince Maurice and 16,000 men, outnumbering Essex's forces three to one, managed to surround him. Charles's HQ was at Boconnoc House, and there on 30 August, two deserters arrived "with the news that Essex's cavalry were to break out that night and attempt to escape eastwards while his infantry retreated into Fowey." The escape plan worked - 2,000 men and horses fleeing overnight to Liskeard and thence to Saltash. But in the ensuing running battle between Lostwithiel and Fowey, the Parliamentarian forces were overwhelmed and surrendered. Essex fled in a ship from Fowey. His army was allowed to leave Cornwall with their personal arms and colours and return to London. A Royalist officer, watching the army retreat in pouring rain, said: "They all, except here and there an officer (and seriously I saw not above three or four that looked like a gentleman), were stricken with such dismal fear that as soon as their colour of the regiment was passed (for every ensign had a horse and rode on him and was so suffered), the rout of soldiers of that regiment was pressed all of a heap like sheep . . . So dirty and so dejected as was rare to see. None of them, except some few of their officers, did look any of us in the face." Some of those officers had their coats and hats torn off them and others were "abused, reviled, scorned and kicked" as they shambled past the jeering Royalists in the downpour. Ensign Honeycombe was probably there.
Two days later King Charles took his army back to Tavistock, and it would have been a wondrous sight for the people of Calstock to see the victorious royal forces and their King, flags and banners flying, lengthily crossing the narrow New Bridge above the River Tamar. 16,000 men, with their baggage, supplies and guns would have taken hours to cross, and among the marching soldiers may have been Ensign Honeycombe on a horse, proudly carrying his regiment's colours.
Among the cheering, waving country people lining the road might have been the ageing Anthony Honeycombe senior, his wife, Laura, and their daughters; elderly Roger Honeycombe; John and

Elizabeth and their 12-year-old son, John; Mark and Katherine Honeycombe with their young children; Peter and Mary Honeycombe with theirs.
But the following year everything changed. Royalist successes were less and soon the King Charles's cause was all but lost. Cromwell's New Model Army, led by the invincible Sir Thomas Fairfax, triumphant at the Battle of Naseby, turned its attention on the last Royalist strongholds in the West, where the 15-year-old Prince of Wales, his advisers and the remnants of his forces had gathered in Truro.
Trevor Royle: "Dartmouth had fallen on 19 January 1646 after a short night attack and 1500 Cornishmen fell into Fairfax's hands. All were well-treated and were given the choice of returning to their homes or joining the New Model Army." Was Ensign Honeycombe was among them? If so, he would probably have opted to go home to St Cleer.
"Exeter was the next target, but as hard winter weather began to set in, Fairfax wanted an early end to the campaign, and that meant beating Hopton, who had decided to make a stand at Torrington (in Devon) . . . The attack went in shortly after midnight on 17 February, the flashpoint being a firefight between the defenders and dragoons sent forward by Cromwell . . . Within two hours' close-quarter fighting 'at push and pike' it was all over. Those who could, fled; those who could not, surrendered, and the casualties would have smaller than 200 had not the Royalist magazine suddenly exploded, killing the same amount over again, most of them Parliamentary prisoners in the church . . . (Fairfax) continued the pursuit into Cornwall: Launceston fell, then Bodmin, and on 2 March Royalist resistance came to an end when the Prince of Wales retreated to Pendennis Castle to sail for the Scilly Isles."
The rest of the year was spent in mopping up other Royalist forces, and in the capture of Royalist castles and towns. At Newcastle, King Charles was discarded by the Scots and taken into protective custody on 28 January 1647. Two years later he would be beheaded.

Some normality returned to country life in England. But there had been many deaths of husbands, fathers, brothers, as well as much damage in towns and in the country, and food supplies had been depleted. In Calstock Nicholas Deeble junior, BA, had succeeded his father as rector of St Andrew's, in June 1645, and the first Assession for 21 years was organised by the Duchy of Cornwall, although the circumstances of the Duchy's continuing existence had somewhat altered. As if in recognition of the new Parliamentarian and Puritan regime, the Assession Roll for 1647 was written for the first time entirely in English.
The Roll tells us that Anthony Honeycombe senior and Laura were still at Cross, sharing a house and 16 acres with Thomas Combe "which they had before". In Kingsgarden, Roger Honeycombe continued to take "a 4th part of a 12th part" in a house and 16 acres that was mostly taken by James Bligh. But the 12 acres of waste at Donacombe Hill were now divided up between Katherine, "the wife of Mark Honicombe", John Honeycombe and George Weston, and Walter Honeycombe's stamping mill was shared between Katherine, John and six others, while Walter took the residue. William Stentaford was still at Honeycombe, where Thomasina, John Bartlett's widow, had remarried and was now Mrs Bailey.

For over a year there was an uneasy truce in England while the struggle for power between King Charles and Parliament continued. The King had been defeated and was under guard and Parliament expected him to accept their demands for a constitutional monarchy. But he was awkward and oblique, and negotiations, which also involved the Scots, were complex and protracted. Charles escaped to the Isle of Wight where, though now confined in Carisbroke Castle, he continued to bargain with factions and opposing interests, succeeding in gaining the Scots as allies by agreeing to the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland and England. In July 1648 Royalist forces regrouped and the Second Civil War began. The Scots once again invaded England. Although there were Royalist uprisings in Kent, Essex and Cumberland, there were no major battles until the Scottish and Royalist armies were defeated in August at the Battle of Preston by an army led by Cromwell himself.

Events moved quickly after that. A special Act was passed to try the King for treason and the trial began on 2 January 1649 in Westminster Hall. He was beheaded on a scaffold outside the Banqueting Hall of Whitehall Palace on 30 January. Before he died he said, after protesting his innocence and that he had only desired the liberty and freedom of his people, "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be." He knelt, laid his neck on the block and stretched out his arms.
Trevor Royle: "A single stroke cut off the king's head cleanly, and as the axe hit home a deep groan rose from the crowd, a terrible sound which one witness had never heard before and hoped never to hear again. It was shortly after two o'clock on a bitterly cold winter's afternoon, and for the first time in recorded history, England was without a king or a lawful successor . . . The executioner held up Charles's head with the traditional words: 'Behold the head of a traitor!' "
His remains were placed in a velvet-lined coffin, which was taken inside the Palace. "Cruel necessity," Cromwell remarked on seeing the body. The head was sewn back on again, with Cromwell's permission, and the body embalmed. Charles I was buried a week later in St Georges Chapel in Windsor Castle as snow fell outside.
He was 48 when he died and had fathered nine legitimate children, six of whom survived. Two of his sons would before long succeed him as King.
In February 1649, the teenage Prince of Wales, who was now based in the Netherlands, was proclaimed King in the Channel Islands and in Edinburgh as Charles II.

Royalists were particularly shocked and horrified at the execution of King Charles I, and the tenants of the Duchy of Cornwall must have been bewildered as well as appalled. For a time people would have been quite traumatised by recent events, and not just by the beheading of their king. About 80,000 men had died in battle, most of them Royalists, and many more had been injured. Townspeople and villagers had also been slaughtered, caught up in sieges and street fighting, and in the inevitable rape and plunder that followed any victory. Plague and other diseases had devastated some areas. It's estimated that some 40,000 civilians died during the Civil Wars. Almost 12,000 died in Devon alone, a quarter of them being victims of illnesses contracted during the siege of Plymouth.
There were other effects, other changes. The monarchy and the House of Lords were abolished and a republic was created called the Commonwealth of England. All signs and symbols of royalty were removed, from services and the coinage, as well as several administrative and legal institutions like the Privy Council, the Exchequer and the Admiralty. The nation was now to be ruled by a Council of State. Church services were modified yet again and Puritanism became the approved model of social and family life. It was a new world and not a welcome one to most.
How many of the Honeycombes survived the war and the social upheaval we do not know. One or two must have died as a result of it, as soldiers if not as civilians. But not much seems to have changed in Calstock.
The Assession held in Calstock five years after the end of the war, in 1654, tells us - and the Roll is written again in English - that Anthony Honeycombe and his wife, Laura, had both died by then and that their daughter, Anne Dodge, took a small portion of the holding in Cross, a larger part going to Thomas Combe, and an eighth part to Anne's son, John Dodge. But Katherine and Mark Honeycombe were still in Kingsgarden, as was John Honeycombe, and probably his wife, Elizabeth, and Roger Honeycombe still had a fourth part in the holding that he shared with James Bligh. Presumably Peter and Mary were also still in Kingsgarden. William Stentaford was at Honeycombe but had handed over part of the holding to John Stentaford (his son?). Thomasina Bailey was also still there.
Where, however, were Susan's sons - John, who was designated as her heir in 1627, and Anthony, who was born two years before that? The Assession Rolls can't help us there, as no more Assessions were held during the period of the Commonwealth, the next Assession occurring in 1663.
However, from parish registers and other documents we can piece together some moments in the story of the other Honeycombes in Cornwall.

In St Dominic, Christian Honeycombe, John's widow, died in 1652. Her eldest son, John, who had married in Stoke Damarel in 1635, had also died, in 1650. Her daughter, Christian, married Ezekial Bond that year, but there is no information about Christian Honeycombe's other children, Thomas, baptised in 1613, and Anne. Her fifth child, William, had died in 1628. Did Thomas join a Royalist regiment and was he killed?

We know already that in Callington William Honeycombe, who signed his name in the Protestation Returns in 1641 married Agnes Hendy ten years later, when he was 34. It's quite possible, as he married comparatively late, that he served with a Royalist regiment during the Civil War in some capacity. He was young enough, he was literate, and he came from a large and settled family who had farmed in the area for four generations in Callington and Menheniot.

Two of Ralph Honeycombe's sons had died in Menheniot before the Civil War began - both died when they reached the age of 19, one in 1636 and the other in 1640. Another son, Ambrose, may be the Ambrose who signed his name in the Returns for Lawhitton. His first wife died in 1649 after giving birth in Liskeard to a Joseph in June. His second wife, whom he married in 1650, produced four children over the next eight years, so Ambrose is unlikely to have been fighting battles far from home. Ralph's eldest son, John, whose wife, Grace, produced seven children at least between 1632 and 1646, would also seem to have stayed at home. The eldest of their offspring died in 1644 aged 11. This John seems to have died about 1646 when John's last son, yet another John, was born.

There were other Honeycombe families - in Devon, and in Maker, Saltash, St Germans, St Austell, Linkinhorne, Truro and Mevagissey, and no doubt yet others lived temporarily elsewhere. But they were small families, and in time all their lines died out, as did the original Honeycombes in Calstock and the large groups of Honeycombes in Callington, Menheniot, and Liskeard.

The originators of all the modern Honeycombes are to be found in St Cleer, the home, we think, of Ensign John Honeycombe, as well as of Anthony senior and Anthony junior, who signed their names in the Protestations Returns of 1641. It was also the home of Matthew Honeycombe, the only begetter of us all.

19. ST CLEER, 1649-1660

The parish of St Cleer is one of the largest in Cornwall. Its northern part, the church guidebook tells us, is thinly inhabited moorland, but in the middle and south there are several communities, like Common Moor, Darite, Crow's Nest and Tremar, with several large farmhouses presiding over the arable land on the hills and in the valleys. Most of the hamlets seen on maps today are of fairly recent origin, a result of the copper-mining boom in the first half of the 19th century. In 1801 the population of the parish was 774, but 60 years later it had risen to almost 4,000. At the time of the Commonwealth the parishioners must have numbered about 360 - 183 men signed the Protestation Returns of 1641, including the Vicar, Matthew Sharrock, and the constables.

A Norman church once stood on the site of the present parish church of St Cleer, who was either an obscure saint, called St Clarus, or a Celtic abbot or a ninth century bishop. The church was rebuilt about 1290, when its patrons were the Knights Hospitallers of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. The north aisle and then the south aisles were added later, as was the tall granite tower and the wagon-wheel roof, and by the time of the Civil War the church looked roughly as it does now, though less adorned with memorials and other items and with heavy wooden box pews then occupying most of the floor space. There was no organ and probably only one bell in the church tower.

There is an ancient holy well, called Listitha Well, not far from the church, surmounted by a 15th century baptistry. Nearby are a tall stone cross and a hawthorn tree, which was planted during the Honeycombe Heritage Weekend in 1984. Scraps of cloth or handkerchiefs, a primitive and

superstitious substitute for prayers, are now being tied to its branches. Other much more ancient monuments can be seen in the vicinity - King Doniert's stone, dating from the 10th century; Trethevy Quoit, a 4,000-year-old chamber tomb near Darite; and the prehistoric Hurlers, three stone circles on the moors.

The early parish registers of St Cleer have disappeared, have been stolen, burned, lost or thrown away. Part of the marriage registers from 1597 to 1673 exist, but the full series, including baptisms and burials, doesn't start, most unfortunately, until 1678.

The two Anthonys and John, who were living in St Cleer in 1641, apparently newcomers, were the nucleus of a small family, unlike some of those who had lived in the parish for many years. For instance, 15 men with the surname Cole are listed in the Returns. Some of them are identified by where they dwelt, like John Cole at Well (Listitha Well), John Cole at Yate, John Cole of Trengole and John Cole of Tenloy. Other male Coles added identifying occupations to their names - one was a tailor and another Cole was a tinner.

The name heading the list is that of the local squire, John Connock, who may have been the son of someone we have met before, in Calstock - Richard Connock.

An interesting correspondence has survived between Richard Connock and Prince Henry, the teenage Prince of Wales, concerning the better management of the Duchy's affairs. Richard Connock also had shares in the Virginia Company, which was financing the colonisation of Virginia, and is named in charters dated 1609 and 1612. In 1617 he was the Earl of Pembroke's deputy at manorial courts. It was he who built an illegal weir on the River Tamar and possessed at that time the 400 acres of Lodge Park near Liskeard. The Lady Chapel in the church at St Cleer contains a Georgian monument to Nicholas and Mary Connock of Treworgey Manor, which exists today. Other local worthies were John Bray, gent; Jasper Stawell, gent, and John Truebody of Tremar. Another fertile family was that of the Lynes. There was John Lyne of Trehill, John Lyne of Newton, John Lyne of Tremellick, John Lyne junior and Andrew Lyne, and there were five men with the surname Bant, four called Hornabrook, four called Budge, and three Bennets and three Daws. Honeycombes would later marry into families with the surnames of Hawkin, Bennet, Jane, Ough, Bant, Bone and Laundry.

Of the three Honeycombes who signed the Protestation Returns in 1641, John has been identified with the Ensign John Honeycombe who took part in the Civil War.

Ensign John, we think, was born about 1622 and married Elizabeth Daw about 1649, at any rate after the end of the war and the execution of King Charles I. It's likely that her surname was Daw as Ensign John's son, John Honeycombe junior, was given a sheep in the will of James Daw in 1670. James Daw could have been a family friend, but he is more likely to have been Elizabeth's father or brother, and thus John junior's grandfather or uncle. If John junior was born two years (1651) after his parents' marriage - and the fact that he had his father's Christian name indicates he was the eldest son - he would have been 19 when he received one of James Daw's sheep. Ensign John must have been John junior's father as there is no other John in St Cleer who fits the dates.

John senior (Ensign John) was buried in St Cleer on 22 April 1690, his wife Elizabeth having predeceased him, in October 1687. If we accept that he was born about 1622, the Royalist warrior with all his tales of battles fought and lost would have been 68.

But who was the father of Ensign John? It can't have been Anthony junior, who was paid 30 shillings in a document surviving from 1677 - money he was acknowledged to have been owed in the Administration of Richard Grubb. He also witnessed two St Cleer wills, of John Collin and Phillipa Collin, in 1679 and 1680. Anthony junior died in fact in January 1698 and was buried at St Cleer on the fifteenth of that month.

We can't say how old he was, and we don't know whether he married, but we know he was old enough (18 at least) to sign the Returns in 1641. So he must have been born about 1620 and no later than 1623. This puts him in the same age bracket as John senior, the father of Ensign John - who we surmise was born about 1622.

It follows therefore that Anthony junior and John senior were brothers, and sons of Anthony senior. And both died within ten years of each other in St Cleer.

But where did Anthony senior come from? Who was *his* father?

All we know is that he signed the Returns in 1641 as "Antho Honicomb sen" (sic) and that Elizabeth Honeycombe, "wife of Anthony Hunnicombe of St Cleer", was buried at Liskeard on 8 January 1654.
What was Elizabeth doing in Liskeard? Perhaps she was visiting relatives when some disease or winter ailment caused her death. Liskeard is only a few miles south of St Cleer and one wonders why she wasn't buried at St Cleer. Perhaps whatever illness killed her was contagious. Perhaps the unusually precise indication of her marital state was made because there was *another* Elizabeth Honeycombe in Liskeard at that time.
Again, we have no idea how old she was. However, if Anthony senior's sons - Anthony junior and John, the father of Ensign John - were born about 1620-26, and she married Anthony senior a year or so before 1620 (in 1616 for instance) she must have been about 59 when she died.
There is every possibility that the aforesaid brothers had a sister.
The first Honeycombe to be named in a parish register of St Cleer is in fact a bastard - and he was not the last. The Baptismal Register for 1635 reveals that William, the "base child" of Margaret Honeycombe, was baptised on 6 May that year. If we assume that Margaret was a teenager, as is not unlikely, then she herself was born within the same age bracket as Anthony junior and his brother, John. If she was 15 when William was conceived she would have been born about 1619, and thus would have been the older sister of the boys. If she was 20 she would have been born in 1624. It very much seems as if Anthony junior, Margaret and Ensign John were siblings - and of course were probably not the only children of their parents. Others may have died.
It seems therefore that Anthony senior and Elizabeth married, not necessarily in St Cleer, about 1617.
Now with which of the other known Anthonys might he connect?
Anthony (1) in Calstock was married to Laura and died there about 1650. His son, Anthony (2) died in Calstock in 1627. Neither of them can be the Anthony senior and junior signing the Returns in St Cleer in 1641. Nor can the son of Anthony junior (2), Anthony (10), who was baptised in October 1625, be either of the Anthonys in St Cleer. His father (2) was dead and he wasn't even old enough to sign the Returns in 1641. He was 16.
This leaves us with Anthony (3) of Calstock, the eldest and possibly the only son of William and Grace. Can Anthony (3) be the same man as Anthony senior of St Cleer, father of Anthony junior and Ensign John and grandfather of Matthew, the only begetter of us all? Well, yes, he can.

Anthony's mother, Grace, who inherited a piece of land in Calstock from her father, John Oliver - she was named as his heir and only daughter in the deposition of old Thomas - is described as a widow in the 1598 Assession. Her husband, William, was obviously dead by then. She herself had died by the time that old Thomas was called upon to make the deposition in May 1614. By 1617, her daughter, Alice, was also dead or had moved on, as her portion of the family holding in Latchely went that year to John Mohun.
Anthony, the son of William and Grace, must have had a trade or occupation, like his father. Neither father nor son is recorded as having rented any land. It seems that Anthony, possibly with his sister, Alice, moved away from Calstock between 1614 and 1617. If he had a trade this would not have been unusual - John Honeycombe, the blacksmith of St Kew, moved right across Cornwall in pursuit of *his* trade.
The probable dates of the births of Anthony senior's children (Anthony junior, Margaret and Ensign John) in St Cleer between 1618 and 1625 tie in very well with the disappearance of Anthony (3) and his sister Alice from Calstock by 1617. If, as we may assume, that Anthony senior and Elizabeth were married in 1617, not necessarily in St Cleer, then there is every likelihood that Anthony (3) and Anthony senior are the same man.
We have no indication of his age. But he is likely to have been a young man in 1614, even a teenager apprenticed at some trade, and might therefore have been born between 1590 and 1595, in the last golden years of the reign of Elizabeth I.
Why did he move to St Cleer? We will never know. There might have been an initial move to Liskeard, a few miles south of St Cleer, where indeed he might have met his future wife on some

market day, holy day, or at some seasonal festival. Or he might have had some relatives or friends living and working in St Cleer.
As to his trade - his grandfather, old Thomas, was a small farmer or husbandman, and his uncle John was a thrummer. Four 18th and 19th century descendants of Matthew were farmers, but we have no knowledge of their 17th century occupations. Later Honeycombes in St Cleer were carpenters, stonemasons and miners. We know that some of the Honeycombes in Calstock were involved in the local tin mines and that there were mines near St Cleer. But whatever it was, Anthony's occupation must have been a rural one, strongly associated with agricultural needs and the countryside thereabouts.
But which of Anthony senior's two sons was Matthew's father? It doesn't seem likely that Anthony junior was Matthew's father - we don't even know whether Anthony married. We only know that Anthony was named in three documents between 1677 and 1680 and that he died in 1698.
Matthew's father was most probably Ensign John, who married Elizabeth (Daw?) about 1650.
John and Elizabeth's eldest son was born about 1652 and was the John who received a sheep in the will of James Daw in 1670. This John married Grace (surname unknown). It seems they had no children, or none that survived. She died in St Cleer and was buried there on 16 October 1706. He must have died a few years later. His name is recorded in St Cleer wills of 1688 and 1694, so not only was he literate but of some standing in the community.
Matthew was the second or third surviving son of John and Elizabeth and was born about 1658-1660. This assumption is based on the fact that he married in 1682, when we have the first official record of his actual existence and when he becomes a historical fact. The parish registers of St Cleer record that he married Joan Rainold on 12 October 1682. He would marry twice and have two sons who survived him.
So we can now say that Matthew was most probably related to the Calstock Honeycombes via Anthony (3), son of William and Grace, and was a descendant of either John, Richard or Geoffrey Honeycombe of Calstock, who all date from 1470, if not before, each possessing houses and 20 to 30 acres of arable land in the Hill, Harrowbarrow and Kingsgarden holdings of the manor of Calstock in 1493.

It is from Matthew's two sons that all the Honeycombes living today are descended - all the other lines of Cornish and Devonian Honeycombes having died out. Though ten generations removed from him, we are all Matthew's children.

20. MATTHEW

If Matthew was born about 1658-1660, then it isn't surprising that no record remains of his baptism, for it was in September 1658 that Oliver Cromwell died in London and the general unrest and dissatisfaction of the previous nine years, which ultimately led to the restoration of the monarchy, must have been reflected in the ensuing national confusion in matters of Church and State.
Wars and battles hadn't ended with the execution of Charles I in 1649. Soon thereafter Cromwell had become involved in bloody battles with the Scots and the Irish. In 1649 he invaded Ireland, determined to end the military and Papist threat that the Irish Catholics and English Royalists there were to him and Parliament. At Drogheda and Wexford thousands died and continued to die in massacres, some involving civilians, which continued until the last Irish troops capitulated in 1653. In the meantime, Scotland was invaded - Charles I's eldest son, Prince Charles (never formally invested as Prince of Wales) had landed in Scotland and had been crowned KIng of the Scots at Scone in January 1651. A few months later, at the Battle of Dunbar, over 4,000 Scots were killed and 10,000 taken prisoner, many of whom were shipped across the Atlantic (as were the Irish) to act as virtual slave labour in the American colonies. At the Battle of Worcester in September 1651 the armies of the remaining Scots and Royalists were finally destroyed and young Charles, now 21,

after six weeks of adventurous flight through southern England, managed to escape to France. Other Royalist uprisings were swiftly crushed and England was divided into military districts governed by major-generals. While all this was happening the English navy had to deal with the Dutch in a two-year Anglo-Dutch war.

It was in December 1653 that Cromwell accepted the title of Lord Protector, having declined the offer of being crowned. His religious convictions were the central fact of his life, though he was deemed by some to be a religious hypocrite - he advocated religious liberty while non-Puritan and non-Anglican blasphemers were punished and tortured. A serious and ambitious man, and a great military leader, he tried to turn England and the English into a republic, discarding centuries of feudal custom, royal and religious tradition and deeply ingrained attitudes and ways of life.

During the Commonwealth some of the large Cornish estates had changed hands. Daphne du Maurier says, "John St Aubyn, a Parliament supporter, held St Michaels' Mount instead of Arthur Basset. Francis Godolphin of Godolphin Hall went into exile, along with John Grenville, Sir Bevil's son. The Trelawneys of Trelawne were imprisoned and the Arundells fined. Jonathan Rashleigh of Menabilly was ruined and his home destroyed . . . When the Restoration came in 1660, fortunes and estates were given back to their former owners, but the main body of the Cornish gentry, and the people with them, were weakened and impoverished, and from this time forward the great events of history passed them by . . . The majority settled down to the life and pursuits of quiet country squires."

When Cromwell died in September 1658, his son, Richard, temporarily succeeded him. Though capable, he was no substitute for Old Ironsides, his father, and resigned in the spring of 1659. A period of civil and military unrest and uncertainty ended when General Monck, Governor of Scotland, brought an army south and entered London, forcing the Long Parliament to dissolve itself. For the first time in almost 20 years there was a general election. Mainly Royalists were elected and it was agreed that the monarchy should be restored.

In May 1660, Charles II, who would be crowned as such the following April, arrived in London on his 30th birthday to widespread acclamation and relief. He had agreed to a general amnesty and only 13 people were executed in connection with the beheading of his father. They were hung, drawn and quartered. Others were imprisoned or fled abroad or banned from office for life. Cromwell's body was exhumed from Westminster Abbey and hung in chains at Tyburn. What was left was then thrown into a pit, though his head remained on a pole outside the Abbey until 1685 when King Charles II died of uremia in February at the age of 54, converting to Roman Catholicism on his deathbed.

By then Matthew Honeycombe had married Joan Rainold in St Cleer, on 12 October 1682. If he was born in the year before the Restoration, in 1659, then the first 25 years of his life were spent growing up during the reign of the Merry Monarch, a time of prosperity, colour, hedonistic licence and an awakened interest in the arts. Political intrigue and a continuing though modified struggle with Parliament characterised the reign of Charles II, during which the political parties of the Whigs and Tories were born.

King Charles II married a Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza, in 1662. In her dowry were the useful foreign ports of Bombay and Tangier. Even more useful was Dunkirk, which Charles sold, however, to the French King for 40,000 pounds. Although Queen Catherine had several preganancies, these ended in miscarriages or still births and produced no heirs. Charles II later in his life acknowledged 14 illegitimate children by seven mistresses - there were probably more of both.

The Second Dutch War, mainly of a naval nature, occurred in 1665-67, and the last great devastation of the plague hit London in 1665 when Matthew was about five years old. At its height about 7,000 people were dying in London every week. This was followed in September 1666 by the Great Fire of London, in which over 13,000 houses were consumed by fire as well as 87 churches, including old St Paul's Cathedral.

In St Cleer the regular pace of country life would have taken a few years to re-establish itself after the social upheaval of the Civil War and the Commonwealth.
Matthew's wife, Joan, produced two sons, whose baptisms are recorded in the parish registers - John, baptised on 20 November 1683, and Matthew, baptised on 29 March 1688, the year in which the Catholic King James II, Charles's brother, was ousted in the so-called Glorious Revolution and replaced by James's Protestant son-in-law, a Dutch aristocrat, Prince William of Orange, and his daughter Mary, who were crowned as William III and Mary II in April 1689. The following year, Ensign John Honeycombe died in St Cleer, taking all his tales about the Civil War to his grave but leaving his son, Matthew, with some remembrances of times past.
The joint reign of William and Mary was a short one. Mary died of smallpox in 1694 and William died in March 1702. They were succeeded by Mary's younger sister, Queen Anne.
Matthew's second son, Matthew, died in October 1693 when he was five. There may have been other children, but no record of their existence survives. When Joan died and was buried in June 1707, Matthew Honeycombe remarried a month later. Why the haste? Perhaps Joan had been ill for some time. His second wife was Jane Bennet, and they were married in the parish church of St Cleer on 14 July 1707, the year in which the Act of Union finally united England and Scotland. Matthew was now aged about 47. His first son, John, by his first wife, Joan, would now be 24.
Matthew and Jane had three children whose baptisms are recorded - there may have been others. There was a second Matthew, who was baptised in May 1708 and died the following month. Then there was Jonathan, baptised on 28 August 1709, and Jane, baptised in May 1714, two months before Queen Anne died. Is it possible that Jonathan's Christian name, a famous one, was Matthew's way of commemorating his father's Civil War connection with Sir Jonathan Trelawney? Parish records of St Cleer indicate that Jonathan Honeycombe grew up in fact to be a respectable and respected person. He was a churchwarden in 1760 and an overseer of the parish in 1763. His son, William, is described as a "yeoman" in his marriage allegation in 1760. A yeoman was someone who *owned* his land and therefore had some local status. It's possible that his father, Jonathan, was also a small farmer, like his son - and indeed like Matthew Honeycombe. As Jonathan married at an early age - he was 17 - it seems likely that he married (in October 1726) on taking over his father's farm when Matthew was too old or ill to run it. Matthew died and was buried in St Cleer two years later, in September 1728, when he would have been about 68.
His *eldest* son, John, who was baptised in November 1683 and married in 1703, was almost certainly a stonemason. Churchwardens' accounts for St Cleer between 1726 and 1729 reveal that John was involved in some sort of repair or renovation of the church. *His* son, John, probably an only son and born in St Cleer in 1706, was similarly employed as a stonemason between 1742 and 1762 - as were seven successive generations of Honeycombes, culminating in Samuel George Honeycombe, one of the sons of the town crier of St Helier in Jersey in the Channel Islands.
It may seem odd that Matthew's eldest son, John, was apprenticed to a mason and had a trade, rather than following his father's supposed occupation and inheriting his land. But Matthew's farm may have been too small to require any filial assistance - if there was a farm - and Matthew may have inherited such a property, or increased its size, through his second marriage to Jane Bennet. In any event Matthew's two surviving sons, John and Jonathan, would seem to have been responsible, hard-working, sturdy and solid family men.
John had only one surviving son, another John, who was born in 1683, married Joan Hawkin in St Cleer in 1703, and died there in 1716. This John had a daughter and a son, yet another John, who when 29 married Mary Ough in 1737 in St Cleer. They had seven children, including five boys, from whom the main lines of Honeycombes are descended, none of whom now live in Cornwall, having spread around the world.
Jonathan had five children, three of whom were boys, Matthew, John and William. John never married and died, aged 80, in 1813 in the Liskeard Poorhouse. His brothers had similar fates, both dying as paupers. The eldest, Matthew, a labourer, left St Cleer and returned to the parish of his ancestors, Calstock - perhaps one of the original Honeycombes there got him a job. He married in Calstock in 1753, when he was 29. His wife was Deborah Deeble, probably a great-grand-daughter

of Nicholas Deeble junior, who retired as rector of St Andrews in 1677. They were married by the current rector, Nicholas Richards, and the witnesses were Edward Deeble and John Hunn.
Matthew and Deborah had eight children. Most of their descendants would eventually emigrate. Among the last of their line to die in Calstock were two bachelor brothers, John and Matthew, who lived together (one was a stonemason and the other also a mason or a miner) and died together in 1847, probably of cholera. Their nephew, yet another John, a farm labourer, was the last of Jonathan's line to die in Calstock. That was in 1885. The last of the *original* Calstock Honeycombes, Samuel and Mary Honeycombe of Kingsgarden, had died in 1750 and 1779.
The very last Honeycombe to die in Cornwall was appropriately a farmer, William Honeycombe, of Menaburle near Boconnoc, a seventh generation descendant of the first Matthew of St Cleer. He died in July 1936, aged 76, and is buried in the graveyard of the small church on the Boconnoc estate, overlooking the house where once King Charles I lodged during the Civil War and in whose fields Ensign John Honeycombe may once have been encamped before the Battle of Braddock Down.

It is from Matthew's two surviving sons, John and Jonathan, that all the Honeycombes in the world today are descended. The American and Canadian Honeycombes, the New Zealand Honeycombes and most of the English ones are descended from John Honeycombe, stonemason, of St Cleer. The Australian and South African Honeycombes, and a few English Honeycombes, are descendants of Jonathan Honeycombe, once a churchwarden in St Cleer.
The present direct descendant of Matthew Honeycombe, via eldest surviving sons, is Nathan Honeycombe of Southampton in England, eleven generations later. Nathan was born on 28 March 1991, the only son of Peter and Cheryl Honeycombe, who married in the parish church of Calstock during the Honeycombe Heritage Weekend, on 29 September 1984. They were the first Honeycombes to marry there since 1871, where Honeycombes had been baptised, married and buried for well over 600 years.

And that brings to a temporary end this story of the origins of the early Honeycombes. Admittedly much of it is speculation, but much is based on documentary evidence, historical records and some research. More may be confirmed and ratified when further research and the discovery of other ancient records add to our knowledge of what went before - who the Honeycombes were and what they did and where and how they lived.
But someone else must take that on.

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Visit www.honeycombe-archive.com if you wish to peruse the family trees, photos, BMD certificates, census returns, court rolls, assession rolls, wills, books, memoirs, maps and other documents relating to the Honeycombes.
If you wish to make a correction or add some item or piece of information to the Honeycombe archive, contact Ross Honeycombe on honeyfam@bigpond.net.au.

Gordon Honeycombe, 2009