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SOME TITLE DEEDS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELATING TO PROPERTY IN SHIPBOURNE PARISH, 1423-1823

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Introduction

These documents concern some small fields and houses in Shipbourne, near the Green, particularly two acres called Spelcroft. In comparison with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century title deeds, medieval deeds are rare, those of the sixteenth century relatively scarce, and seventeenth-century documents less common. It is unusual to be able to trace archival evidence for little properties from the early fifteenth century onwards.

While wills have recently attracted much attention from historians, the value of deeds has been less appreciated. This applies especially to rural documents. Huge numbers have survived for Kent, partly because the land was mostly freehold, partly because its ownership was greatly divided, at least before the nineteenth century. Besides a brief reference to the property, they record owners, their residence and occupation; adjoining properties are usually mentioned, and sometimes the names of occupiers. Signatures and sometimes surviving seals are found at the end, and the signatures of witnesses are endorsed. The majority of the population, especially women, were unable to write in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, so that 'marks' are frequent. If the properties are sold or mortgaged, sums of money are stated. Leases, except leases for a year in combination with releases, rarely survive because their legal value disappeared at the end of the term.

Deeds are parchment, and become gradually longer with more legal detail, so that one sheet is common in the sixteenth century and two or three in the eighteenth century. Grants, and feoffments, that is conveyances by 'livery of seisin' (or delivery of possession) are normal before about 1650. Then leases and releases on successive dates become usual in the eighteenth century; in this case the first is a lease for a year granting possession at a nominal sum, a shorter version, and the second a release giving the interest, with full details. Bundles of deeds proving ownership include wills, or extracts of wills, relating to the property. The deeds are sometimes accompanied by bonds in twice the amount of the purchase price, which is thus guaranteed. To protect ownership the conveyance is often registered by the Court of Common Pleas in the form of an agreement following a fictitious suit, the defendant (the vendor) being said to levy a fine, acknowledging the right of the plaintiff (the purchaser) to the property, which is described in approximate terms, with an approximate price; one copy was given to the purchaser and is typically found with the deed. Deeds sometimes include covenants to levy a fine, mentioning the parties, the property

and its intended formal description in the fine. While a bundle of deeds is particularly concerned with one or more properties, others are mentioned in some deeds, and naturally in wills, which are given in full. Fines and covenants to levy a fine are often found for two or three conveyances, to save expense.

The deed of 1423 is in the Centre for Kentish Studies collection classified as U442, assembled from solicitors' offices and private owners by the Sevenoaks antiquary, Dr Gordon Ward, and presented to the Kent Archaeological Society in 1954. The deeds relating to Spelcroft are from U55, collected similarly by the solicitor and historian, H. W. Knocker. The deeds labelled 'Martins', presumably from Martins Farm in Shipbourne, are owned privately and were studied while in the possession of Mr Sydney Simmons, the historian of Tonbridge Castle and Tonbridge Town Lands. The three earliest deeds in this bundle concern Spelcroft and may be strays from the Knocker bundle. The seventeenth and early eighteenth-century documents were prepared by members of the Hooper family, attorneys and scribes in the neighbouring market town of Tonbridge.

Spelcroft lay south of Nether Street, running from a junction with the Tonbridge-Ightham road near Shipbourne Church eastwards to Claygate, near the eastern corner of the Green (see Fig. 3). Stallands or 'Stonelands' field (2½ acres) adjoined the road. Spelcroft was on its southern boundary with access to the road on its west side. The house called Longs lay on the north-east side of the Green. Among other properties Bouchers *alias* Reeves was to the north of Nether Street and on the south of the Green. The house called Pike Hill and the little hemp-plot (in the deed of 18 April 1710) were at Stumbles Hill by the Tonbridge-Ightham road.

Spelcroft and the other properties were owned by local farmers, and master craftsmen and tradesmen who were sometimes also farming. The description of the owners of Spelcroft as 'husbandmen' suggests that they were smallholders, compared with larger farmers or 'yeomen'. Building in brick was clearly becoming usual by the end of the seventeenth century. Holders of property made wills and were about a quarter or one third of the inhabitants. It was common for some owners to hold several fields and houses in the same district, to let or mortgage some or all of them, and to rent farms, as did Robert Wamsley (died 1573). Property was sometimes owned by families for 100 or 200 years, as was the case of Spelcroft and Stallands. Among apparent causes of selling were migration from the area and joint ownership by heirs, as in the deed of 16 January 1657/58. Property values are of great interest, the steady prices of the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries being noticeable. Field names often continue for centuries; sometimes a change of owner may alter the name, as shown in the deed of 16 January 1657/8.

The historical significance of title deeds is increased by the study of other documents related to the owners, such as parish registers, wills kept in the records of the ecclesiastical courts, and probate inventories. Some relevant documents are calendared in the Appendix. Wills may refer to the family, the distribution of personal estate, property owned and leases and mortgages. Inventories describe and value personal estate such as household goods in their rooms, working tools and materials, and crops and livestock. The main series of Rochester Consistory and Archdeaconry probate inventories begins in 1687, and the inventory of 1573, found with the original will, is a chance survival which may be unique among the wills.

THE DOCUMENTS

1. C.K.S. : U442 T89A

[original in Latin]

9 January 1422/23

Grant

John Colyn of Shipbourne, Richard Chown, William Owtred junior of Shipbourne, Richard Lawrance of Milton [*either* next Gravesend *or* next Sittingbourne], Robert Turke of Wrotham and Thomas Owtred of Sevenoaks to Thomas Hadlo, William Owtred senior and John Reve of Shipbourne [probably Colyn was conveying to Hadlo and the others were trustees]

A parcel of two acres called Spelcroft; adjoining south, north and east to the land of Thomas Watt, and west to the land of John Watt, with a regular way belonging to the parcel leading beyond a parcel of Thomas Watt called Gretstonlands by the west hedge for going, riding, leaving, carrying and carting out at all times of the year.

Consideration 40 shillings in St Giles Church, Shipbourne, apart from 20 shillings for things permanently on the property; that is, 20 shillings next Christmas Day or during the following 12 days, and 20 shillings on the ensuing Christmas Day.

Endorsement Witnesses John Chown, James Watts, Richard Dyne

[No signatures or seals of parties; tags for seals attached]

2. C.K.S. : U55 T359/1

22 February 1558/59

Grant

John Goodwyne of Shipbourne, senior, to Henry Goodwyne his son

A parcel called Stonelande (two and a half acres) in Shipbourne; adjoining west and east to the lands of John Chowne, south to the lands of Richard Hadlowe, west to the lands of Henry Colen and north to Netherstrete

Signed John Goodwyne senior (his mark), and *sealed*

Endorsement Witnesses Robert Swane, Richard Pyckerell, William Owtred, John Hooper

3. C.K.S. : U55 T359/2-3

2 April 1625

Mortgage

John Goodwyne son of John Goodwyne of Shipbourne, shoemaker, deceased, and Elizabeth, his widow to Richard Lambe of Edenbridge, yeoman, brother of Elizabeth

A messuage, yards, garden and orchard (one acre); Stallandes (two acres); both occupied by John Goodwyne; in Shipbourne.

Consideration £30 (£32 6s. to be paid by 4 April 1629, at house of Richard Lambe in Edenbridge), [£2 6s. does not correspond with any obvious rate of interest]

Signed John Goodwyne, with broken *seal*; mark of Elizabeth Goodwyne, with *seal*

Endorsement Witnesses Thomas Paltock, John Coombes

[other identical deed signed Richard Lamb, with seal]

4. C.K.S. : U55 T359/4

23 September 1634

Feoffment

David Wamsley of Shipbourne, butcher and Joan his wife to Richard Mylls of East Greenwich, butcher

Spelcrofte (two acres) in Shipbourne; adjoining east to the lands of Richard Goodwyn, north to the lands of the heirs of John Goodwyn, west to the lands of Robert Holmden, sometime Henry Colyn the elder, and south to the lands of Peter Elfeck; with 'the way to come, go, ride, lead, drive, carry and recarry to and from Spelcrofte to the lands of John Goodwyn by the west hedge thereof, to and from the highway there at all times'; excepting the lease for 90 years on 20 July 1625 from Wamsley to John Hooper of Tonbridge, for one wheat corn [Hooper, a notary public, being presumably a trustee]

Consideration 'competent' sum

Signed David Wamsley with a mark and a broken *seal*

Endorsements

1) Witnesses Thomas Harte, John Dunck, John Hooper 'who did attorne tenant' saving his lease excepted

2) enrolled by Shipbourne manor court 9 October 1634, quitrent 1½ d.; witness Henry Wimsley [?] steward

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

5. C.K.S. : U55 T359/5

23 September 1634

Bond

David Wamsley to Richard Mylls

Consideration £100

(signed and witnessed as in feoffment of same date, with broken seal)

6. C.K.S. : U55 T359/6

15 March 1636/7

Feoffment

Richard Mylls of East Greenwich, butcher to John Wamsley, son of David of Shipbourne, butcher, late master of Mylls

Spelcrofte (two acres), adjoining east to the lands of Richard Goodwyn, north to the lands of the heirs of John Goodwyn, west to the lands of Robert Holmden sometime of Henry Collyn the elder, and south to the lands now or late of Peter Elfeck, with 'the way to come' [as in 23 September 1634 feoffment], in Shipbourne, bought by Richard Mylls from David Wamsley on 23 September 1634 for £50, witnessed and enrolled in manor court [as in same feoffment]

Consideration £40 and affection of Mylls for David Wamsley

Signed Richard Milles, with seal

Endorsement Witnesses Thomas Everest, Nicholas Hooper, John Hooper senior

7. C.K.S. : U55 T359/7

18 October 1653

Bond

John Goodwin of Shipbourne, husbandman, to Thomas Freeman of Seal lathmaker

[no price stated]

Signed John Goodwin, with seal

Endorsement Witnesses Thomas Calverley, George Hooper [in the hand of George Hooper of Tonbridge, scrivener]

8. C.K.S. : U55 T359/8

12 January 1657/8

Covenant to levy fine

1) John Goodwyn of the City of Rochester, cooper, and Elizabeth his wife, Richard Goodwyn of Rotherfield, Sussex, husbandman, Jeremy French the elder of Seal, husbandman, and Joan his wife, William French of Seal,

husbandman, brother of Jeremy, Robert French the elder of Seal, husbandman, and Mary his wife, and Jeremy French the younger of Seal, husbandman, son of Robert the elder.

2) Joan Brattle of Plaxtol, widow

3) Robert French the younger of Faulke, Seal, husbandman

Messuage, three cottages, three gardens, three orchards, five acres of land in Shipbourne and Seal [property to be in described in final concord]

Recitals

a) Feoffment of same date: John, Richard and Thomas Goodwyn to 2): Messuage occupied Mary Goodwyn, spinster and Edward Easterfield called Bowchers or Reeves, and 1½ acres adjoining anciently Reeves, then Owtreds, sometime Hornes, late Canons, and one small messuage adjoining occupied Rebecca Field, widow, 'anciently ye Goodwyns', all on south side of Shipbourne Green; and two parcels called Stallands or Stonelands 'also anciently ye Goodwyns' (2½ acres) at Netherstreete, occupied Stephen Batchelor; all in Shipbourne.

b) Ditto: Jeremy French the elder and William French to 3): Messuage or tenement occupied by them on west side of Godden Green, *Seal*.

c) Ditto: Robert French the elder and Mary his wife and Jeremy French the younger to 3): Messuage, tenement, cottage or dwelling house at Godden Green, Seal, occupied Robert French the elder, 'with the close necke of grownd', backside, orchard and appurtenances (½ acre) occupied Robert French the elder and Jeremy French the younger adjoining, bought from Jeremy French the elder and William French, on the west side of Godden Green.

Signed Elizabeth Goodwyn [her mark], Richard Goodwyn, Thomas Goodwyn [his mark], Jeremy French the elder [his mark], Joan French [her mark], William French [his mark], Robert French [his mark], Mary French [her mark], Joan Brattle [her mark], Robert French the younger [his mark]

Sealed in whole or part by Richard Goodwyn, Thomas Goodwyn, Joan French, William French, Robert French [the elder] and Mary French

Endorsement Witnesses Nick Brattle, Wil Coseneay, George Children, Thomas Knight, Daniel Newman, John Perder [?]

9. C.K.S. : U55 T359/9

10 June 1658

Feoffment

John Walmsley of Frant, Sussex, butcher, to Joan Brattle of Plaxtol, 'hundred of Wrotham', widow

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Spellcrofte (two acres) at Neitherstreete, occupied David Walmsley, sometimes Richard Milles, adjoining north to other lands of Joan Brattle called Stallands, west to the lands of Robert Holmden, gentleman, east and south to the lands of John West and John Petley junior, with the way to the highway through Stallands at the west side to and from Spellcrofte.

Consideration £40

Signed John Wamsley. with seal

Endorsements 1) Witnesses Nick Brattle, Edward Easterfeild [Easterfield], Henry Wood [his mark]

2) 25 September 1663 declaration of Joan Brattle that she bought in her name as her son Nicholas wished to save a heriot, and bond that they will not molest his daughter Elizabeth in her occupation as if it was bought by Nicholas in his name; signed Joane Brattle [her mark], with seal; witnessed Thomas Saxby, Robert Newman and John Brattle.

10. C.K.S. : U55 T359/10

25 February 1668/9

[Probate date and other details omitted]

Will of Joane Brattle of Roughey [Roughway], Wrotham., widow

Preliminaries

1) 'I surrender into the hands of Almighty God my Creator my soule and spiritt assuredly trusting through the only meritts death and passion of my only saviour Jesus Christ to obtaine remission of all my sinns and eternall salvation'

2) body to be buried in Wrotham church at the discretion of executors

3) to the poor of Wrotham parish 40 shillings to be distributed at burial or short time after as executors think fit

Bequests

To Jane daughter of Nicholas her son, deceased, £40, which Nicholas by will 17 September 1658 bequeathed to her, to be paid within two years of his son John becoming 21, out of lands called Benedicts and Gouldings *alias* the George Lands in Sevenoaks.

To Margaret daughter of Nicholas these lands charged with £40 according to Nicholas's will; as the lands were bought in her name with Nicholas's money, they are bequeathed according to his will [as above].

To Elizabeth daughter of Nicholas a parcel called Spelcroft comprising two acres in Shipbourne bought from John Wamesley, which Nicholas desired her to convey to her; bought with Nicholas's money in her name.

To Sara her goddaughter, wife of John Crosfield, 5 shillings, and to the maidservant attending at her death 5 shillings within a short time after she dies.

To Joane her grandchild, daughter of Nicholas, a silver spoon and a pair of sheets.

To Margaret Brattle, her grandchild, a pair of sheets.

To Alice Saxby, her grandchild, her wedding ring, silver spoon, two pairs of sheets.

To Grace Brattle, her grandchild, a black gown, 'groegreene'¹ petticoat and the rest of her woollen and linen apparel.

To Nicholas Brattle, her grandchild, a little messuage or tenement late occupied Rebecca Feild now William Webb, anciently the Goodwyns, and a garden, backside and orchard bought with divers other tenements from John, Richard and Thomas Goodwin in Shipbourne.

To John Brattle and William and Stephen Saxby her grandchildren equally one messuage or tenement occupied by James Wellard called Bowchers *alias* Reeves, and 1½ acres, and 2½ acres called Stallands *alias* Stonelands and freehold lands in Shipbourne.

To her granddaughter Alice her Bible, brass and pewter.

To John Brattle, her grandson, her silver bowl, cupboard, table with a frame and form, and two bloom andirons in the hall of her house; and her carpet and a joined chest wherein is set the first two letters of his grandfather's name.

John Brattle and William and Stephen Saxby to be her executors; the rest of her personal estate to be used to settle her debts, pay her funeral charges and the testamentary probate costs.

Endorsements Witnesses William Gilbourne, George Hooper; copy for Henry Collins, by George Hooper who wrote the original will witnessed by George and John Hooper, 1 August 1670.

[Written by George Hooper, of Tonbridge, scrivener]²

11. C.K.S. : U55 T359/11

2 August 1670

Feoffment

- 1) John Brattle of Sevenoaks, gentleman
- 2) William and Stephen Saxby of Brenchley, yeomen
- 3) Henry Collins of Shipbourne, carpenter

¹ Grogam: A coarse fabric of silk, of mohair and wool, or of these mixed with silk; often stiffened with gum.

² The 'will' bequeathed the real estate and normally its details followed the rest of the document comprising the 'testament', as in U55 T359/15.

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Messuage or tenement sometime occupied Mary Goodwyn, spinster and Edward Easterfield, now James Wellard, called Bouchers *alias* Reeves, and 1½ acres used and adjoining to it, occupied James Wellard, lying north to Shipbourne Green, south and east to the lands late of Henry Mills, west and south to the lands late of Robert Holmden, gentleman, and the lands late of Walter Collins, clerk, or one of them, and now of . . . Gransden, and west to the tenement of Nicholas Brattle now or late occupied Rebecca Feild and William Webb. Two parcels called Stallands *alias* Stonelands (2½ acres) occupied James Wellard late Stephen Batchelor, lying north to Nether Street, west to the lands of William Coveney, east and south to the lands late of John Wamesley now Elizabeth Brattle called Spellcroft, and to the east to the lands of John Petley. And the rest of the property of John Brattle, William and Stephen Saxby bequeathed by the will of Joan Brattle, their grandmother. All which tenements, with a little tenement she bequeathed to Nicholas her grandson and now or late occupied by Rebecca Field and William Webb were bought by Joan Brattle from, John Goodwyn of Rochester, cooper, Richard Goodwyn of Rotherfield, husbandman and Thomas Goodwyn of Rochester, husbandman on 12 January 1657/58.

Consideration £105 by 3) to 1) and 2)

Signed John Brattle, William and Stephen Saxby [seals missing]

Endorsement Witnesses Henry Wood [his mark], George Hooper, James Willard

[Deed written by George Hooper]

12. C.K.S. : U55 T359/12

2 August 1670

Bond

John Brattle, William. and Stephen Saxby to Henry Collins
To perform conditions in deed of same date [U55 T359/11]

Consideration £210

Signed John Brattle, William Saxby (twice), Stephen Saxby, with one seal

Endorsement [Witnesses as in feoffment of same date]

[Bond written by George Hooper]

13. C.K.S. : U55 T359/13

6 July 1677

Feoffment

Elizabeth Brattle of Tonbridge, spinster to Henry Collins of Shipbourne,
carpenter, for life and thereafter to his son Henry

Parcel of two acres called Spelcrofte at Neither Streete, occupied by Henry Collins the father, sometimes Richard Mills, adjoining north to the lands of the said Collins called Stallands, west to the lands now or heretofore of Robert Holmden, gentleman, and east and south to lands now or late of John West and John Petley junior, with the way through Stallands at the west side.

Consideration £38 11s

Signed [Elizabeth Brattle], with seal removed

Endorsements 1) Witnesses Thomas Roots, John Brattle

2) Thomas Knight the younger of Shipbourne, yeoman, her attorney to deliver possession to Henry Collins, father and son, witnessed John Gransden, William Nicoll *alias* Web

14. C.K.S. : U55 T359/14

6 July 1677

Bond

[Same parties]

To perform conditions in the deed of the same date [U55 T359/13]

Consideration £80

[same witnesses; seal in fragments]

15. C.K.S. : U55 T359/15

26 February 1693/4, proved 27 May 1694 (in Rochester Consistory Court)

Will of Henry Collins of Shipbourne, yeoman

Preliminaries 'Being aged and infirm and not knowing how soon my dissolution and departure hence may be, I recommend my soul into the hands of Almighty God hoping and steadfastly believing through the only merits death and passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to receive salvation, and my body I commit to the earth from whence it was taken to be decently buried at the discretion of my executors'.

Bequests:

To Thomas his son £10 when he is 20

To William his son £10 when he is 20

To Margaret, and Anne his daughters £20 each when they are 21 or on marriage, whichever is the sooner

To Thomas a cupboard and a pair of andirons in the hall of his house at Shipbourne

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To William, Margaret and Anne a silver spoon each

To Thomas, William, Margaret and Anne two chests, one joined and one plain, each

To Margaret his wife the linen and the rest of his personal estate, for her use while she is a widow, to be shared by her equally among the children at her discretion

To Margaret his wife the east end of the house (hall and rooms, chambers and garrets) and the woodhouse and orchard he occupies, as long as she is a widow; if she dies or remarries, to Anne his daughter 20 shillings, to be paid by Thomas until she is 18, with the right to distrain if unpaid

To Thomas his son the house he occupies and four parcels of six acres, of which three were occupied by himself and the fourth (Spellcroft of two acres) was held by Thomas Denton, all in Shipbourne; if Thomas sells, then £20 each to William, Margaret his sister and Anne; he can make a jointure or settlement in marriage on a wife

To Margaret his daughter, then if deceased to William his son, a messuage with garden and backside in two parts, occupied Jonathan Long and Widow Sharley, in Tonbridge town

To William his son two messuages adjoining the last mentioned messuage, with stables, outhouses, buildings, closes, yards, backsides, gardens and orchards occupied Mr Timothy Stileman and John Barnaby, in Tonbridge town; out of it William is to pay a £5 annuity to his widow, with the right to distrain if unpaid; if William sells the two messuages left to him, then he is to pay Thomas, Margaret his sister and Anne £20 each; he can make a jointure or settlement in marriage on a wife

Executors and Overseers Margaret his wife, Thomas his son and Margaret his daughter to be executors; his friends William Busse and Thomas Denton to be overseers, their costs being paid by the executors

Signed Henry Collins [his mark]

Witnessed Alice Page [her mark], Anne Rumings [her mark], Thomas Stileman

16. C.K.S. : U55 T359/16

9 and 10 February 1709/10

Lease and release

Thomas Collins of Newington [next Sittingbourne ?], cordwainer and Elizabeth his wife, and William Collins of Gillingham, husbandman, his brother, to Stephen Fremlyn of Shipbourne, bricklayer

Messuage late occupied John Frye called Bowchers *alias* Reeves, and 1½ acres adjoining and used with it, adjoining north to Shipbourne Green; two parcels

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called Stallands *alias* Stonelands (2½ acres), adjoining north to Nether Street; and parcel called Spelcroft, (two acres), adjoining north to Stallands, late occupied John Frye now Stephen Fremlyn; all in Shipbourne; bequeathed to Thomas Collins, by his father Henry, 26 February 1693/4

Consideration £104 to Thomas Collins and £16 to William Collins

Signed Thomas Collins, Elizabeth Collins [her mark], and William Collins, with seals missing

Endorsements Witness James Coleman of Shipbourne; memorandum of receipt of monies, witnessed George Hooper, George Hooper, junior.

17. C.K.S. : U55 T359/17

25 March 1710

Mortgage for seven years

Stephen Fremlyn of Shipbourne, bricklayer to James Edmeads of Shipbourne, bricklayer

Messuage late occupied John Frye now empty called Bowchers or Reeves, and 1½ acres adjoining and used with it, adjoining north to Shipbourne Green; two parcels called Stallands *alias* Stonelands; parcel called Spelcroft; both late occupied John Frye now Stephen Fremlyn; [both described in deeds 9 and 10 February 1709/10]; all in Shipbourne.

Consideration £40 at £2 per annum [five per cent]

Signed Stephen Fremblin, with seal missing

Endorsement 29 April 1717; receipt by Robert Edmeads of £54 [signed with mark]: 'of Steven Fremblen the sum of 54 pound the full sum of this bond'.

18. C.K.S. : U55 T359/18

18 April 1710

Covenant to levy fine

- 1) John Barton senior of Hadlow, yeoman, and John Barton junior of Hadlow, his eldest son
- 2) Thomas Denton of Frindsbury, husbandman, and Margaret his wife
- 3) Thomas Collins of Newington, cordwainer, and Elizabeth his wife
- 4) William Shipley of Ightham, yeoman, Thomas Newman of Crowhurst, Wrotham, yeoman, Thomas Knight, yeoman and Stephen Fremlyn, bricklayer, both of Shipbourne

Two messuages, one 'cottage, three barns, two stables, one malthouse, three gardens, three orchards', eight acres of land, four acres pasture and one acre of wood, in Hadlow and Shipbourne; so to be called in final concord

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Recitals

a) [Marriage settlement, undated, by John Barton senior on John Barton junior and Mary his wife]: messuage called the Kitchin House occupied John Barton the elder, and two barns and a malthouse newly built by Barton in Hadlow Street; Mill Land (1½ acres), occupied Barton; and parcel called Allens Loane or Kitts Croft, (two acres), occupied Barton; all in Hadlow.

b) Feoffment 14 June 1709: Thomas Denton to Thomas Knight: messuage, tenement or cottage late severally occupied William Martin and Bennett Harman, widow, now Edward Waller, called Pike Hill, and adjoining parcel called 'the hemplott', etc. (one rood) at Strumbles Hill, heretofore occupied Widow Denton and Widow Skinner, late occupied William Martin and Bennett Harman or one of them, now Edward Waller; parcel called Hallowes and adjoining little coppice, both part of Keileys (1½ acres), late occupied Thomas Denton; all in Shipbourne.

c) Lease and release 9 and 10 February 1709/10: Thomas and Elizabeth Collins and William Collins, to Stephen Fremlyn: property as in deed of this date above [U55 T359/16].

Signed John Barton (2), both with seals, Thomas Denton, Margaret Denton [her mark], Thomas Collins [his mark ?], with seal, Elizabeth Collins [her mark], William Collins, William Shipley [his mark], with seal, Thomas Newman, with seal, Thomas Knight, Stephen Fremblen

Endorsement Witnesses Richard Adams, Geo[rge] Hooper, T[homas] Puckle [?], Thomas Barton, Geo[rge] Hooper junior

19. C.K.S. : U55 T359/19

3 and 4 June 1717

Lease and release

- 1) Stephen Fremlyn of Shipbourne, bricklayer
- 2) James Coleman of Shipbourne, bricklayer
- 3) Thomas Coleman of Worth, Sussex, tailor, and John Coleman of Lingfield, Surrey, carpenter

Messuage called Bouchers *alias* Reeves, occupied by John Frye; two parcels called Stallands *alias* Stonelands and parcel called Spelcroft [as in deeds of 9 and 10 February 1709/10] formerly occupied by John Frye, now 1); to 3) Coleman trustees for use of Fremlyn for life, then 40s per annum to Margaret his wife from the property (on feast days of St John Baptist and 25 December); also paying 20s per annum after Fremlyn's death for the use of the Shipbourne poor on 26 December; property to 2) after death of Fremlyn; Fremlyn covenants with James Coleman that if Coleman continues with him as his servant and dies

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before him and Margaret his wife, then their executors within 20 days after their death will pay Coleman's heirs £40.

Signed Stephen Fremblen, James, Thomas and John Coleman, with seals

Endorsements Sealed and delivered by Thomas and John Coleman, witnessed by Alice Rogers, George Hooper; ditto by Fremlyn and James Coleman, the three 6d stamps being affixed, witnessed by Henry Sanders, George Hooper junior.

20. C.K.S. : U55 T359/20

[1743]

Case of Mr William Collins

[submitted for counsel's opinion to Robinson]

In April 1743 Stephen Fremlyn thought he might revoke the deeds of 3 and 4 July 1717, without altering the will of 25 July 1741

Recitals

3 and 4 June 1717 Lease and release [as above]; 'there is no power of revocation in this deed' [in another hand]

25 July 1741 Will of Stephen Fremlyn, bequeathing all his lands including property in deeds of 1717 to kinsman William Collins, allowing his sister Rachel 30s per annum, and Edward Bloom 10s per annum; after their deaths Edward Roberds 5s, Nicholas Page 5s; and 20s annually to the Shipbourne poor from Bouchers on St Stephens Day. Collins sole executor, and given his personal estate to settle his debts.

Signed Stephen Fremlyn, witnessed Samuel Moyce, Sarah Barrett, Joseph Calvert.

Stephen Fremlyn died in April 1743 without altering the said will giving all his estate to Collins, who supposed the testator might revoke the deeds of 1717 above mentioned in regard the settlement is voluntary; the will was declared by the testator to be his last will in the presence of three witnesses, and it was executed by him in their presence.

[In another hand] the will 'was executed as the law directs'; by it the estate is devised to William Collins without any limitation to his heirs or otherwise; he is given the inheritance so that if he dies his heirs may pay the annuities, a life interest being insufficient for this purpose; he takes the fee simple, and is entitled to the surplus of the testator's personal estate.

L. Robinson

10 May 1743

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

21. C.K.S. : U55 T359/21

24 May 1744

Bargain and Sale

James Coleman, bricklayer, to William Collins, labourer, both of Shipbourne Property as in deeds 3 and 4 June 1717, devised by Fremlyn to Collins by will of 25 July 1741

Recital deeds 3 and 4 June 1717

Consideration £100

Signed James Coleman, with seal

Endorsement Witnesses Francis Brooke, William Russell
[stamped]

22. C.K.S. : U55 T359/22

25 September 1745

[paper document]

Agreement to levy fine

James Coleman and his wife Sara to William Collins

Consideration cost of levying fine

23. C.K.S. : U55 T359/23

12 November 1818

Agreement for loan

1) Jeremiah Collens of Shipbourne, yeoman, 2) Jeremiah Collens the younger of Shipbourne, labourer, Robert Collens of Seal, labourer, and Henry Collens of Bedford Place, London, servant, three sons and coheirs in gavelkind of Henry Collens of Shipbourne, deceased, 3) John Simpson of Fair Lawn, Shipbourne, esquire

Consideration £120, secured by bond at five per cent and mortgage of 31 December 1818 concerning a messuage or tenement, outbuildings, garden ground, orchard and four parcels of arable and hopground (eight acres) belonging to it, occupied by 1)

Signed Jeremiah Collens, Jeremiah Collens junior, Robert Collens; *witnessed* John Simpson and

<i>Endorsement</i> [in pencil]	12 Nov 1818	120
Int 1 yr pd. ...			
4 yr. Int. due	12 Nov. 23		<u>20</u>
			140
			<u>16</u>
Include the Mortgage Sec[ur]ity			156

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

To be made a Mtge Secy to Mr Wm Jeffery in this sum

24. C.K.S. : U55 T359/24

12 November 1818

Bond

[Parties as in agreement next above, except John Simpson described as of Fair Lawn, Wrotham]

To perform conditions in agreement of same date [U55 T359/23]

Consideration £120 at 5 per cent on 12 May 1819

Signed Jeremiah Collens, Jeremiah Collens the younger, Robert Collens [no signature of Henry Collens: space blank],

Witnessed John Simpson of Shipbourne Green, William Scoones junior Tonbridge [a solicitor]

Receipt 12 November 1823 of £140 from J. C., J. C. the younger, R. C. and H. C. through Mr William Jeffery, in discharge of principal and interest due on security and agreement annexed, witnessed William Scoones, John Thomas Simpson attorney to John Simpson.

25. C.K.S. : U55 T359/25

11 September 1823

Letter of attorney

[attested copy made 17 October 1823]

John Simpson of Fair Lawn [Wrotham], esquire, now of Calais, to John Thomas Simpson of Liverpool, Lancashire merchant and shipowner, now of Fair Lawn

Personal estate owing him; as J. S. intends 'to reside some time in foreign parts', J. T. S. to manage his affairs.

Signed and sealed John Simpson the elder (stamped), witnessed by Thomas Barker, Battersea, Surrey, William WyId, Clerk to the Consul at Calais; execution witnessed Sam[ue]l Shannell, H.M.'s Consul at Calais.

Resigned and resealed John Simpson, 11 September 1823 at Dover, Kent, 'John Simpson the younger' having been altered to 'John Thomas Simpson' and 'the elder' having been omitted, witnessed by James Fuller Madox Austin Friar solicitor, Thomas Barker. Copy certified as true, '17 Oct. 1823 W[illia]m H[enr]y Dashwood, W. H. Barber, clerks to Mr Scoones attorney Tonbridge'.

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

[M. F. 1 -13.

Title deeds, 1555-1770, formerly bound with paper inscribed 'Sundry Old Deeds K29279, Martin's Farm' (Shipbourne)]

26. M.F. 1

10 April 1555

Grant

Richard Hadlowe of Shipbourne carpenter to Richard Hadlowe, his son

A parcel of land or pasture (two acres) called Spelcrofte in Shipbourne; 'to hold of the chief lord of that fee by the services by right from it due and accustomed'

Sealed at Shipbourne by the first Richard [seal missing]

Endorsement Witnesses Edward Woodgate, Richard Love, Robert Swanne, Richard Smythe

27. M.F. 2

12 April 1555

Grant

Richard Hadlowe of Ightham carpenter to Richard Hadlowe of Shipbourne carpenter his father and Joan his mother wife of the second Richard

[Parcel called Spelcrofte aforesaid]

Sealed at Shipbourne by the first Richard [seal missing]

Endorsement Witnesses [as for grant 10 April]

28. M. F. 3

4 October 1570

Grant

Edward Woodgate of Penshurst yeoman to Robert Wombseley of Shipbourne husbandman

A parcel of land (two acres) called Spelcrofte in Shipbourne; adjoining west to the lands of Henry Collyn, south and east to the lands of John Goodwyn, and north to the lands of Henry Goodwyn, which he obtained by grant on 20 November 1569 of Richard Hadlowe late of Shipbourne carpenter; 'to hold of the chief lord ...' [as for grant 10 April 1555]

Consideration 'a certain sum of money'

Sealed at Shipbourne by Edward Woodgate [seal missing]

Endorsement Witnesses Thomas Tuttesham gentleman, Robert Coker and Servans Appowell

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

29. M. F. 4

23 October 1586

Grant

William Brewer of Shipbourne, yeoman and Susan his wife to Henry Nicol *alias* Webb of Leigh, butcher

Messuage or tenement called Longe, close, garden, orchard and adjoining little parcel called a barnsteddle, part of parcel called Longe (one acre) at Shipbourne Green, Shipbourne; adjoining west to the Green, south and east to the rest of Longe, and to the north to a landway leading to Saunderland; which they bought of Edward Swan of Shipbourne, weaver, which he had from his father Richard, according to several documents, 'to be held of the chief lord . . .'

Consideration £40 to William Brewer

Signed William and Susan Brewer (their marks)

Endorsements Witnesses Thomas Collyn, William Byssshop, Thomas Potter, Roger Knell, William Nicol *alias* Webb, Nicolas Hooper 'and others'; signed Potter, Byshopp, Knell and Nicol (their marks)

30. M. F. 5

Easter 1587

Final concord

Henry Nycoll *alias* Webb and Edward Swanne plaintiffs and William Brewer and Susan his wife

Messuage, garden, orchard three acres of land and two acres of meadow in Shipbourne; 'whereupon a plea of covenant was summoned between them in the said [Court of the Queen at Westminster] ... that is to say that the said William and Susan acknowledged the aforesaid property ... to be the right of him, Henry, as those which the same Henry and Edward hath of the gift of the said William and Susan, and these they have remised and quitclaimed from them William and Susan and their heirs to Henry and Edward and their heirs'

Consideration 130 marks

31. M. F. 6

21 March 1665/6

Feoffment

(1) William only son and heir of John Nicoll *alias* Webb deceased, both of Shipbourne, tailor (2) George Masters of Shipbourne, blacksmith

Messuage called Longs and the buildings, a close, garden, orchard with a hemplot in it, and a little corner of land called a barnsteddle (formerly the site of a barn) now in the orchard, containing one acre, all occupied by

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

(1); south and west to the road or green called Shipbourne Green, north to a landway or lane called Saunderland lane, and east to the lands called Longs formerly of Robert Swann now of Henry Mills, gentleman, in Shipbourne; formerly owned Thomas Nicoll *alias* Webb of Tonbridge, butcher, and on 6 September 1618 by deed poll conveyed to John, his brother, father of (1); '(of the chief lord of the fee ...)'

Consideration £52/10 to (1)

Signed and sealed (1) ('Willyam Nicoll Aleors Web') [seal missing]

Endorsement Witness Geo. Hooper; signed William Hubble, Arthur Niccolls, Richard Niccoll *alias* Webb (their marks)

[written by George Hooper of Tonbridge, scrivener]

32. M. F. 7

21 March 1665/66

Bond

(1) to (2) [in feoffment of same date]

To perform conditions in 2 deeds of same date [other missing]

Consideration £150

Signed and sealed (1) 'Willyam Nicol Aleors Web' [most of seal missing]

Witnessed Geo. Hooper; signed William Hubble, Arthur Niccolls, Richard Niccoll *alias* Webb (their marks)

[written by G.H.]

33. M. F. 8

2 October 1666

Grant

(1) Anne Masters, widow of George Masters, blacksmith, both of Shipbourne

(2) Walter Baker, hempdresser and Margaret his wife, one of the two sisters and coheireses of George Masters, and Thomas Cowchman, husbandmen, and Hester his wife, the other sister and coheirress, all of Shipbourne

[Property as in feoffment of 21 March 1665/6, late occupied by William Nicoll *alias* Webb], which was inherited by Margaret and Hester on the death of George Masters

Consideration £10 to (1)

Signed and sealed (1) [seal missing]

Endorsement Witnessed William Walter, Geo. Hooper

[written by G. H.]

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

34. M. F. 9

3 October 1666

Counterpart Lease for 60 years or lives of (2)

(1) Walter and Margaret Baker, and Thomas and Hester Cowchman

(2) Robert Masters of Shipbourne, blacksmith and Hester his wife

[Property as in grant 2 October 1666]

Consideration silver penny if requested at house of (2)

Signed and sealed Robert and Hester Masters

Endorsement Witnessed William Walter, Geo. Hooper

[written by G.H.]

35. M. F. 10

Hilary 1691

Final Concord

Thomas Streatfield gentleman and Thomas Couchman plaintiffs and Clementia Child, widow, Walter Bassett and Anne his wife, Lush Cooper and Mary his wife, Thomas Baldwin and Isabel his wife, and Walter Baker and Margaret his wife deforcians

Two messuages a stable two gardens two orchards and an acre of land in Sevenoaks and Dartford; the moiety of a messuage, garden, orchard and an acre of land in Shipbourne, 'whereupon a plea of covenant . . .'

Consideration £60

[*inter alia* this conveys Walter Baker's half of the Shipbourne property to Thomas Couchman]

36. M. F. 11

18 January 1705/6

Release [lease missing]

1) Thomas Cushman of Ashurst, yeoman

2) Robert Cushman of Ashurst, and Richard Cushman of Penshurst, both husbandmen, sons of (1)

[Property as in feoffment 21 March 1665/6], occupied — Browning

Consideration £50 to (1)

Signed and sealed Thomas Cushman (his mark) [seal missing]

Witnessed Richard Fry, Aden Farmer ('the two six penny stamps being there visible hereupon')

37. M. F. 12

18 October 1706

Covenant to levy fine

(1) Stephen Fremlyn of Shipbourne, bricklayer and Margaret his wife, and Thomas Cowchman of Ashurst, husbandman and Hester his wife

(2) John Wood of Rotherfield, Sussex, gentleman

a) Three messuages, now comprising four dwellings, all under one roof, formerly occupied by Owen Brett, Thomas Barrett and John Haisleden, late of James Burgeis, John Dryland, George Home and widow Simmonds, and now empty, and one yard of land [$\frac{1}{4}$ acre] [§]; east to the highway through the town from Rye to London, north to a footway to Hilden Green, west and south to a garden and backside late of Arthur Amherst, now of the heirs of Thomas Miller deceased, and south to a barn late of A. A. , now of Md. Packere; in Tonbridge town, Tonbridge.

b) Messuage 'or cotage' [etc, as in release 18 January 1705/6, except bounding east to lands called Longs only] occupied by William Browning

c) both to be described in fine as 'one messuage one cotage two stables two gardines one orchard and one acre of land with the appurtenances in Tonbridge and Shipbourne', a) to use of (2) and b) to use of Stephen Fremlyn

Signed and sealed Stephen and Margaret Tremblin', Thomas and Hester Cowchman (their marks) and John Wood [seals missing]

Endorsements 1) Witnessed by Geo. Hooper, John Hooper 'the two six penny stamps being affixed'

2) 'Stephen Fremlyn 2£ 06 06'

[written by George and John Hooper?]

[§] Described formally [?] as 'all and singular the shopps stables brewhouse [sic] outhouses and buildings tofts gardines orchards closes yards backsides and appurtenances whatsoever'

38. M. F. 13

Easter 1770

Final concord [2 copies]

Thomas Dalton plaintiff and John Francis, Clerk, and Sarah, his wife, Samuel Brunsell, gentleman, and Elizabeth his wife, William Pechey gentleman and Margaret his wife, Thomas Harvey, Esquire, and Charlotte his wife deforciant

Four-sevenths parts of one messuage, two barns, two stables, one toft. two gardens, two orchards, 60 acres land, 20 acres meadow, 30 acres pasture and 10 acres wood in Shipbourne

Consideration £60

Endorsements (on one copy) 'Jemmett Kent Dallon and Francis'; (on other copy) 'delivered by proclamacon according to the form of the statute'.

APPENDIX

39. C.K.S. : Drb Pw 11 and Drb Pwr 14 fol. 169

[Original will and registered copy]

3 September 1573, proved 29 December 1573

Will of Robert Wombselye of Shipbourne, husbandman

Preambles

Commends his soul to Almighty God his Maker and Redeemer, and his body to be buried in Shipbourne churchyard

Bequests

To Agnes his wife his personal estate to pay his debts, paying off mortgage on his land to Henry Collyn of Shipbourne, then land to Agnes for life or while she is a widow; then Spelcrofte to his son Samuel and his heirs, and in default to his son David and his heirs.

To Agnes his wife his lease in 'Lordshippes' land for 40 years if she lives or is a widow, then to son Robert.

To son Robert after the death of Samuel and David without heirs his house and the copyhold belonging to it, 'and with the goodwill and licence and after the manner and custom of the manor'.

To Robert 40s, and Agnes to pay him 40s more that I owe him within a year.

Executor Agnes; *overseer* Henry Collyn, paying him 10s.

Endorsements Witnesses Lewys Nollart ['Lewis Nollard' in registered copy], Henry Collyn, Henry Goodwyn and William Nycolson [Nicolson]

Proved in presence of Lewis Nollard, curate of Shipbourne, deputy of venerable master Stephen Nevinson etc vicar in special.

40. C.K.S. : Drb Pw 11

11 December 1573 Probate inventory [attached to original will above], taken by Henry Collyn, Robert Swanne, Henry Goodwyn, all of Shipbourne

<i>Hall</i> pair tressels, form, two chelffes [shelves] of boards	2s	
<i>Parlour</i> pair tressels, form, table, old cupboard, settell, chair, painted cloth, pair of tables	13s	4d
<i>Kitchen</i> little table, boards, chelffes with stools and form	1s	8d
<i>Kitchen Chamber</i> knedyng trough, bounting hutch, brewing salt with other small tubs and other wooden implements with barrels	10s	
brass	20s	
laton [latten, an alloy of copper and zinc]	2s	
pewter	10s	
two trevetts, two little spits with other iron implements	3s	4d
<i>Chamber over Parlour</i> bedstead, feather bed, bolster with two pillows, covering, blanket, two little chists	13s	4d
<i>Chamber over Hall</i> three bedsteads, three old feather beds, with simple coverings	20s	
linen	20s	
pots and crocks and other earth implements	1s	
Axe, bill, spade, shovel	1s	
lease of Lordship Land	£6	
five kine	£5	
three bullocks two years old	£2	
five 'wanielles' [weanlings, presumably sheep]	25s	
colt	10s	
hay	£1	
Apparell	6s	8d
Debts owing him:-		
Sir Christopher Allyn	£5	8s 10d
Humfry Lotter of Tonbridge	£6	13s 4d

SHIPBOURNE TITLE DEEDS

Robert Herryson	13s	4d
William Sone for his work	1s	8d
John Cole for bees	14s	2d

41. C.K.S. : DRb Pw 29 and DRb Pwr 22 fol 253

[Original will and registered copy]

Will of John Nicholls *alias* Webb of Shipbourne

[Will made 1637], proved 4 August 1637

Preambles

Soul bequeathed to Almighty God his heavenly Father and his body to be buried in the churchyard.

Bequests

To Avis his wife his house and lands and all estate for her life if she stays single, and to have the income from it even if she remarries, discharging all his debts, keeping it 'to her best effort' if she does not need to spend it; son William 'not to have a penny'; if she marries estate to his brother Thomas.

To son William his estate afterwards; now only his working tools and 2s 6d in token.

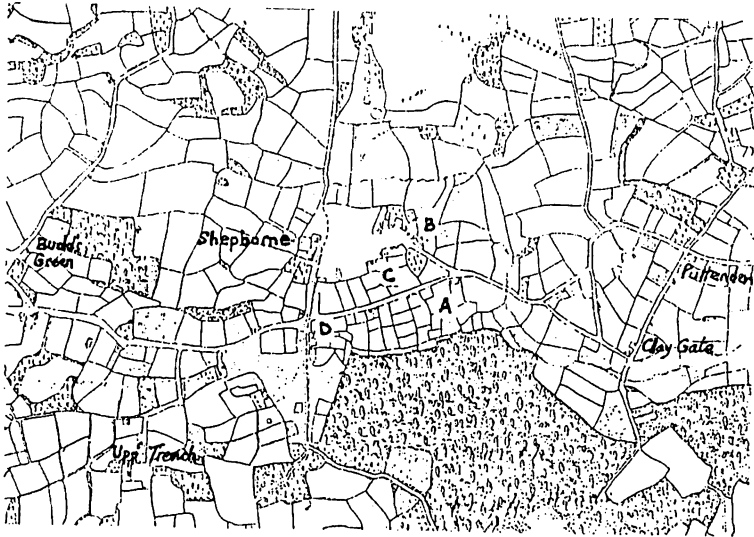
Executrix Avis his wife, *overseers* his brother Thomas Nickolls and Richard Bowlles, minister of Shipbourne parish paying them 2s each

Signed John Nicolls (his mark), Henry Williams

Delivered orally to Bowlles, Thomas Nicolls and others 'this twelve month'

Signed R. Bowlles, Tho. Web

Fig. 3. SHIPBOURNE IN 1800



Approximate Location of Properties:

- A Spelcroft and Stallands
- B Longs
- C Bouchers *alias* Reeves
- D Pike Hill

[Section of 1799 draft of 1st. edition Ordnance Survey map of Kent
Courtesy of British Library]