

# Notes on my Ancestors

## Methods

I started researching my own family tree in early 2006. This was after having my DNA tested for deep ancestry and learning how Y-chromosome results could benefit genealogy. Also most public databases where DNA results can be logged ask for your earliest known ancestor and I didn't know much. I even had to check the name of my paternal Grandfather with my sisters. He died long before I was born.

A lot of my research is Internet based. I use it to access censuses, the the index of registrations of births, marriages and deaths, and parish records. Increasingly images of parish records are appearing on-line.

I also made use of primary sources, including wills, parish records, monumental inscriptions and estate records such as leases and rentals. These are mainly held at the Chester Records Office, though I also obtained microfilms of Parish Records through my local Family History Centre in Cardiff. Much of Bowdon Parish was part of the Stamford estates and these records are held at the John Rylands Library in Manchester so I have visited there.

I have studied a series of publications from the Northern Writers Advisory Service's *Between the Mersey and the Bollin* series, together with a Warburton Biographical Index obtained from the author. These include transcripts of wills from the Hale and Bowdon areas of Cheshire between 1600 and 1760. This has not pushed my tree back beyond George (d.1639), but it has increased my confidence in the last couple of links where the evidence is a little circumstantial. It has also demonstrated the complexity of the Warburton family in the area at the time. Probably only DNA can prove that the various strands are, or are not part of the same family.

I also delight in making contact with distant relatives around the world. My biggest breakthrough was through distant cousins who took my tree back four generations beyond where I had reached.

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So far, with the help of my distant 'cousins', I have traced my tree back to George Warburton who lived in Hale Barns, Cheshire, and died in 1639. There is also some evidence to suggest that Thomas Warburton, who died in 1634 was George's father. Whether I will ever get back further is uncertain as records become more scarce, but there is always a chance of finding something amongst estate or court records of the time. Because my research is oriented towards the **Warburton One Name Study**, and its companion **Warburton Surname DNA Project** I have mapped many lines of George's descendants, and hope to be able do more. I have also made contact with several of his descendants living today, including at least two genetic cousins amongst the growing Cheshire Group of my DNA matches who share a more distant common ancestor.

The following narrative describes my ancestors starting with George..

**George Warburton** (d 1639), was my 8 x Great Grandfather. Documents relating to him include his will, which identifies his wife Sybil, five married daughters, and two sons, William and John. There are also two leases for land, one in Hale Barns, the other in Ringway. The first mentions a third son Thomas, as well as one William Barrett. A William Barrett was a famous non-conformist preacher at Ringway Chapel during the Civil War, but I don't know if this is him.

There is also a possible reference in the accounts of his daughter Sybil Eaton. These accounts relate to Sybil's first husband John Barrington and make reference to money owed by George, but dependent on the death of Thomas. This probably relates to her marriage portion, but there are at least 2 other Georges in the parish at that time as 2 Georges signed the Grand Remonstrance 3 years after my ancestor's death. So two mysteries exist. Who is Thomas (see **George's Father** below), and who are the Georges? One George is known to be farming at Pool Bank Farm in Bowdon, but the other is a mystery. Apart from being an appraiser of my

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ancestor's inventory (and a number of others) there is no record of a marriage, death or any children belonging to him.

George's son William leased land from the Tattons in Northenden, but also died in 1639. He had no sons, but his will refers to his mother's tenement and house in Hale as Hill Top, the only reference we have to the name. There is also a rent roll from the 1640s showing Sybil paying rent to the Crewe estates.

**John Warburton** (John I 1608-91) is mentioned with 2 hearths in the Hearth Tax return of 1664, and with a wife and seven children in the Poll Tax return of 1667. There are 4 Warburton families and 2 other Johns in Hale in the returns, plus 2 other families elsewhere in the parish, but the land tenures make it pretty certain this is the right John. John's grave is in the cemetery at Bowdon St. Mary, as are the next 5 generations of my ancestors. I also have a copy of his will.

**Josiah Warburton** (1658-1730) was one of John I's five sons. He was a leader of the non-conformists at Ringway Chapel, and later a founder of Hale Chapel, a Presbyterian church which still exists as a Unitarian Chapel. He was also bailiff to the Crewe estates in Hale. He is mentioned in that capacity on leases from 1686 to 1722. Josiah's will shows him to be worth over £1000. Josiah was the first of his name in the family, but the name has been used many times since, particularly within the family where it is a useful marker for possible relatives.

Two of Josiah's four brothers, Thomas and John, produced numerous descendants.

Thomas, the eldest brother, stayed in Hale and presumably inherited the family farm in Hale Barns. His descendants still occupy the farm, known as Oaklands Farm, today. Part of the farm land is now included in Ringway Golf Club, but some of the fields remain in use today. The 18th century farm house remains and is a bed and breakfast, though the old barns were recently redeveloped as apartments (see **The Link to Oaklands Farm** below).

Two brothers, John and Enoch, moved to Mobberley. John's descendants are numerous, but Enoch and his wife died young, in 1692. There is evidence in the Mobberley parish records of the baptism of a daughter, and the burial of 2 unnamed infants, but his will speaks of children suggesting there were others, possibly baptised by Presbyterian ministers at home, or at Ringway Chapel. It is the presence of a John of Mobberley is an executor in Enoch's will that helps identify John of Mobberley as Josiah's brother. See **The Mobberley Connection** for more detail identifying John as Josiah's brother.

The fourth brother, George is a mystery. There is no record of a marriage or burial at Bowdon, but he is mentioned in his father's will. However he is the only brother who isn't an executor in either his father's or Enoch's will. Probably he moved further afield but no evidence has yet been found.

**John Warburton** (John II, 1680-1756) was Josiah's only son. He appears on leases dated 1708, 1719, and 1746, probably all relating to the same land in Hale. He is also buried at Bowdon and he left a will. He married Martha Hanson, daughter of a Mobberley landowner. His sister-in-law married into the Leicester family of Hale Low, one of Hale's minor gentry. His father-in-law's will of 1723 is available.

**John Warburton** (John III, 1716-1791) was also the only son to reach maturity. His baptism, and that of a brother Josiah who died in infancy, are not recorded at Bowdon, so it is likely they were Presbyterian baptisms at Ringway Chapel.

John's first wife, Sarah, produced four children. His son John leased land in Northen Etchells, called Haveley Hey. His family continued here until the last male Warburton, another Josiah, died a bachelor in 1869. I am however in contact with a descendent of one of Josiah's sisters.

John married his second wife, Mary in 1769, when 53 years old, and had eight more children, including 6 boys who reached adulthood. Another, called Josiah, died aged 10 months and is buried in Bowdon cemetery. He left a complex will to cater for his daughter Jane, youngest of the family and only 7 when he died. This might be the reason why a number of his sons spent time away, one marrying in Newcastle and another in Bury. They mostly returned to Hale subsequently, but two, Nathaniel and Thomas have not been traced.

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**William Warburton** (1775-1862) was married at Manchester Cathedral to Ann Wright. His occupation is described as cordwainer, but he returned to farm in Hale at Ross Mill farm. His nine children included six sons, including one called Wright, another family name that is repeated subsequently.

When I started my genealogy I had little family knowledge to work with. The 19<sup>th</sup> century censuses make the 19<sup>th</sup> century the easiest to research so I began by focusing on identifying all male descendants of John III who are present in the 1901 census (the 1911 census was not then available). I assumed that any potential relative would be able to trace their ancestors back at least that far, and so connect with my tree.

I began with William's descendants. Of 48 Warburton great grandsons of William, 40 are present in the 1901 census, and only 4 are confirmed dead. There were only 28 Warburton granddaughters due to a tendency for some largely male families.

I then started on William's brothers. According to the International Genealogical Index (IGI) they were all baptised at the Hale Chapel. Josiah and Joseph both survived to the 1851 census, and I have also followed their lines through the 19th century. I have traced a couple of descendants of Joseph. James, the eldest seems to have married a Jane and died in 1832. He is an interesting subject in his own right and is discussed further in **James Warburton** below.

**Thomas Warburton** (1810-88) spent much of his life in Flixton as a farmer and Innkeeper, but he moved back to Altrincham and is buried at Bowdon. He was latterly a carter. He also had nine children including 4 boys.

**George Warburton** (1852-1929) was a joiner who spent his life in Altrincham. He had six sons and one daughter.

**Charles Edward Warburton** (1877-1927) was my Grandfather, who died before I was born. He was an upholsterer and left my Grandmother with property in Altrincham which encompassed 3 shops and the Police Lockups. He committed suicide by drowning in the Bridgewater Canal at Sale due to health problems. I have the accounts of his Inquest and burial (in Altrincham Cemetery) from the local newspaper of the time.

**Alfred Edward Warburton** (1916-72), my father was an only son with one sister.

**Raymond George Warburton** (1945-) is me. I am also an only son with two sisters and no children, so the line ends with me.

### George's Father

There is an argument that George's father is Thomas the Elder of Hale Barnes (not proof, but an interesting argument). Thomas the elder is known from the following:

- Thomas of Hale Barns is overseer and witness on the will of Robert Barlow in 1604. Robert died in 1611.
- He, together with Thomas the younger, is witness to the will of Richard Grantham in 1624. This is the only reference to Thomas the younger
- His own inventory is dated January 20th 1634/5, and his burial is recorded in the Parish record on January 14<sup>th</sup> 1634/5.

Norman Warburton in **Warburton: The Village and the Family** says this Thomas was the father of William of Northenden. It is clear from the references in both George and William's wills that William is George's son. However, maybe Norman was on the right lines but just missed a generation. Norman mentions a widow, Alice but there is no mention of her on my copy of the Inventory. Maybe it is on the original but not copied.

Both Thomas and George are linked specifically with Hale Barns. However the mention in Sibil Eaton's accounts of 1628 is most telling. These accounts include references to a payment due by George Warburton to George Burgess and George Birch dependant upon the death of Thomas Warburton. I cannot believe that George could have agreed to pay this money after the death of Thomas unless he was due to receive money or land on his death. That could only mean Thomas is his father.

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The main inheritance would have been the family farm at Hale Barns, but George was party to at least two 3-life leases on other lands, probably to provide a living for his younger sons. Maybe Thomas had been similarly involved in leases, though I have found no reference to Thomas in either the Crewe records at Chester, or the Stamford records at Rylands Library.

These leases were at rents fixed centuries before and so valuable assets that could be farmed or sub-let. However the death of a life on a lease usually cost money in the form of a *herriot* to the landlord. For an even larger *fine* a new name could be added. As well as George's two leases mentioned earlier, George Burgess took a 3-life lease in 1617 in which John son of George was one of the lives, at the age of about 8. This could be the source of the arrangement.

It would also mean that Thomas the younger was probably George's brother, but there is no further evidence of him, or his possible mother Alice. Thomas would be quite old when he died. George must have been at least sixty, making Thomas probably eighty when he died. A widow would probably be a second wife.

### The Link to Oaklands Farm

I saw a newspaper article about a family of Warburtons who owned, and still live at, Oaklands Farm in Hale Barns from 1680 onwards. I believe that Josiah's brother Thomas was the ancestor of this family, though the farm was probably held by the family from a much earlier date. The evidence is set out below.

The tithe map of 1838 shows the fields of Oaklands Farm owned and occupied by William Warburton. Five years later William died aged 90 leaving a will which clearly identifies his land. William was born in 1752, son of Thomas.

The Crewe records include a number of Rent Books which identify an estate at Hale Barns Green on which chief rent was paid, by John (1734-7), William (1764, 1792, 1807) and Thomas's widow Mary (1770-3). Mary will have paid on behalf of her son William in 1770-3. The strange thing is that as late as 1807 William is paying for the late Thomas's estate, although Thomas died in 1755.

The following Parish Records and Monumental Inscriptions from Bowdon St Mary suggest that John and his son Thomas of Oaklands Farm are descended from Thomas, the brother of my 6 x great grandfather Josiah. The starting point is their father John who died in 1691.

- A Thomas was baptised November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1638, father John. This is a bit speculative. It is the only entry that fits, but the true record could be missing.
- Thomas married Alice Worsely on April 9<sup>th</sup> 1668.
- George son of Thomas of Hale Barns was baptised on April 18<sup>th</sup> 1669.
- Aron (sic) son of Thomas of Hale Barns was baptised on February 6<sup>th</sup> 1670/1.
- Deborah daughter of Thomas of Hale was baptised April 24<sup>th</sup> 1674.
- Deborah Robinson, sister of Josiah and Thomas died on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1677 and was buried in grave P431B.
- John son of George of Hale was baptised "by whom I do not know, Aron (sic) Warburton told me of it" on December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1696. Only one Aaron is identifiable in the records at this time and he is the son of Thomas of Hale Barns. The quote suggests Aaron and George are related, and therefore George is also Thomas's son.
- George son of Thomas of Hale died on March 13<sup>th</sup> 1696/7 and was buried in grave P431A.
- Alice wife of Thomas of Hale died on September 9<sup>th</sup> 1709 and was buried in linen.
- Thomas senior died on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1710/11. The "senior" implies a Thomas junior, his son was alive at the time. There is no known grave for Thomas and Alice but the inscription for grave 160 on the Owen Manuscripts is very faded but seems to include 'Warbur'. However it is not present in the modern Monumental Inscriptions record.

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- Deborah of Timperley, spinster, daughter of Thomas of Hale was buried in grave P424 on April 21<sup>st</sup> 1711. No age is given but this would appear to be the Deborah born in 1674.
- John married Hannah Gleave on December 26<sup>th</sup> 1716.
- Mary daughter of John was baptised "in the house" on Dec 26<sup>th</sup> 1717.
- Thomas son of John of Hale was baptised on July 16<sup>th</sup> 1719.
- Hannah wife of John of Hale Barns Green died on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1722, and Mary her daughter died on July 26<sup>th</sup> 1722 and both were buried in grave P431B with Deborah Robinson. If John was the son of George and grandson of Thomas, then Deborah would be his great aunt.
- John of Hale died on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1734 and was buried in grave P431A with George son of Thomas. This would seem to confirm that George was his father.
- Thomas of Hale died on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1755 aged 35 and was buried in grave P424 with Deborah. This Thomas is the right age for John's son Thomas, which would mean he was buried with his great aunt.

There is, however an issue in that there is a will for John from 1734 and it doesn't mention Thomas. It is possible that this is because the inheritance was assured and the will is to safeguard a second wife and her 2 young children.

### The Acquisition of Oaklands Farm

A newspaper article in the "The Courier", a local paper in the Altrincham area, dated December 1994 discussed the history of Oaklands Farm and quoted the current owners saying "we've found documents mentioning the Warburton name at this farm from as early as 1680, but the earliest paper dates back to 1595". I have been unable to trace these papers and when I spoke to the owners directly they were unable to enlighten me, but it would suggest the farm was in Warburton hands before my 7x great grandfather John died.

Eighteenth century rent books from the Crewe family, who held half of the manor of Hale at that time, show a peppercorn rent of 6 1/2 old pence per annum being paid for Oakwood farm. This suggests the land was granted for services rendered to the Lord of the manor.

According to Don Bayliss, a local historian (as quoted to me by Jill Groves) Hale was 'planted' with soldiers and their families, who would have supplied armed men for the Masseys of Dunham Massey, or for Sir Thomas Danyers, who owned land in Hale at the time. Don bases his theory on the rentals from the mid-14th century for the de Massey family. A likely date for this was the time of Hamon de Massey V, in the early 1300s. One example is the Davenport family of Davenport Green in the 14th-16th century.

However the Stamford papers at John Rylands Library include three lists of freemen and villains in Hale, the last dating from the early fifteenth century. Although there are Davenports and Danyers present there are no Warburtons. It would seem that the Warburtons did not arrive in Hale until after this date, and the land was granted for services to a later lord of the manor.

The half of the Hale manor that was held by the Crewe family in the 18th century was held by the Stanley family from 1433 until the early 17th century when it passed first to a merchant, Sir Baptiste Hicks, and then to Sir Randle Crewe. Therefore my ancestors seem to have arrived in Hale Barns during the Stanley's tenure.

The Stanley family had considerable lands in the North West (Lancashire and Cheshire). In 1461, during the Wars of the Roses Sir Piers Warburton, the man who built Arley Hall, made an agreement with Sir William Stanley of Holt 'to do him service in peace and war before all other persons'.

At the battle of Bosworth Field in 1485 Henry Tudor overthrew King Richard III to become Henry VII and found the Tudor dynasty of England. The crucial event in the battle was when Sir William Stanley together with his brother Thomas, later 1st Earl of Derby, having arrived with their forces without declaring their allegiance, intervened on Henry's side. There is no contemporary evidence of Sir Piers Warburton at Bosworth, but given his pledge of allegiance

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it is likely he was not only present, but had contributed to the 8,000 men the Stanley brothers brought to the battle. It is also likely that his contribution included members of his own extended family.

Such service is also evidenced by the subsequent marriage between Sir Piers's son Sir John, and Sir William's daughter Joanne, and the appointment of Sir John as a 'knight of the body' to King Henry VII.

Sir Piers had the soubriquet 'Wise Piers', mainly because when Sir William Stanley lost his head for his involvement in the Perkin Warbeck rebellion of 1495, Sir Piers kept his.

DNA evidence indicates that my ancestors were probably related to the Warburtons of Arley Hall and so may well have been represented at the battle of Bosworth Field. This may be the occasion of the service which saw them granted lands from the Stanley estates in Hale. The date also gives plenty of time for Warburtons to be well established by 1600 when evidence of their presence becomes plentiful. In fact the presence of Warburton Green in Hale, but separate from the farm at Hale Barns suggests that the grants were originally greater but that other branches of the family subsequently died out and the lands reverted to the Lord of the manor.

### The Mobberley Connection

John is equated with John of Mobberley on the following circumstantial evidence:

- John is with his father for the 1667 Poll Tax. At that time there is no Warburton family in Mobberley. By 1671 John of Mobberley has appeared in Mobberley and started a family. After the death of his first wife he remarried to Elizabeth Trefis and had a second family. His two families are linked by his son John's will.
- His brother Enoch's will of 1692 lists Thomas of Hale, John of Mobberley, and Josiah of Hale as executors. These are the names of his brothers in the correct birth sequence with John in the middle, implying John is his brother.
- John of Mobberley's date of death is unknown but he would appear to be alive in 1722 when his son John is called John junior on his wife's burial record.
- His brother Josiah mentions John and his wife Elizabeth in his will, written in 1729, indicating they were alive at that time. This ties in with Elizabeth Trefis, John of Mobberley's second wife. Also despite a long life, Josiah's brother left no trace in the Bowdon parish record.

### Ann's Ancestors

I met Ann in the autumn of 2006 during a holiday in Australia. I had circulated a note to all those listed on the Cheshire Family History Society website who had declared an interest in the name Warburton. It was part of my efforts to publicise the Warburton Surname DNA Project. One of the responses I received was from a lady who was looking after Ann's internet address as she no longer had access where she was living. She suggested Ann might be interested and I should write to her. By pure chance her address happened to be close to where I would shortly be staying on a holiday in Western Australia. Whilst there I gave her a ring and was invited around for morning coffee.

Although she had followed her ancestors back so far she was unable to continue through her lack of an Internet link. Her maiden name is Warburton. Her auburn hair reminded me of my sister, and her families origins in Northern Etchells matched a branch of my own so I decided to hunt for a link. Unfortunately Ann has no known living male Warburton relatives to allow a DNA test to help in the task.

Ann had already accessed information from various censuses and had found her grandfather, great grandfather and various other relations. She did not however, have information from the 1851 or 1841 censuses, which I have access to. I began by tracking her ancestors right through the censuses from 1901 to 1841 with additional information from Births, Marriages and Deaths (BMD) registers where appropriate. Registrations for Northern Etchells were recorded at

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Wilmslow. The starting point is Ann's father Alfred who was born in 1895. Note spellings are as recorded and not corrected.

### Alfred

Ann's father Alfred is in the 1901 census, aged 5 and living at home at home in Hey Head, Northern Etchells with his father John (42), mother Grace (41), and brothers John (17), and Fred (8). John was a general farm labourer born in Northern Etchells. Grace was born in Rusholme, Lancashire.

### John – Ann's Grandfather

John first appears in the 1861 census, aged 3. The age is indistinct and could be 5 but that doesn't fit with his age at other censuses, which suggest his birth was in 1858/9. There is no baptism that matches on the International Genealogical Index (IGI) though there is an entry on Cheshire BMD for 1858 which may be him.

His father is John senior (38), his mother is Elizabeth (34), and his sister is Mary Elizabeth (7). They were living at Hey Head, Northern Etchells.

The family are not present in the 1871 census. There are only 12 pages for Northern Etchells, compared with 19 in the 1861 census, with no mention of Hey Head so possibly some properties were missed, or the pages lost.

In 1881 John (22) was living at Hey Head, Northern Etchells with his wife Grace (21). Cheshire BMD records that John and Grace H Nicholls were married in a civil marriage at Altrincham in 1880. This probably means it was a nonconformist wedding.

In 1891 their address was recorded as Woodhouse Lane, Northern Etchells. Woodhouse Lane, unlike Hey Head is on modern maps, close to names such as Longhey, Newhey, and Haveley Hey, suggesting it is in the area once known as Hey Head. Also John's wife was called Hannah. Hannah was Grace's second name. Their children were Jemima (9), John (7), Polly (6), and Thomas (3). Brother-in-law James Nichols was also present.

In 1901 Thomas (13), Alfred's brother, was a servant with Ethelbert and Emily Read in Ringway. Ethelbert was the son of Thomas's great uncle James's second wife (see below). Mary Alice (Polly) is staying with her Aunt Clara. I haven't found sister Jemima Elizabeth in the 1901 census, though there is no marriage or death recorded in Cheshire BMD.

### John – Ann's Great Grandfather

John first appears, aged 20, living at Woodhouse Lane, Northern Etchells with his parents Edward (40), and Mary (40), brother James (6), and sister Sarah (15) in the 1841 census. In the 1841 census ages were only required to the nearest 5 years. Edward was a farm labourer, and is the first new ancestor of Ann I was able to find. An IGI baptism that matches was at Ringway Chapel on June 25<sup>th</sup> 1820.

In 1851 John was recorded as being 29. His age varies throughout the censuses, being 38 in 1861, 48 in 1871, 62 in 1881 and 71 in 1891. He is not in the 1901 census and a John's death was registered in the first quarter of 1901 aged 81. His wife Elizabeth's age is also variable, being 34 in 1861, 46 in 1871, 53 in 1881, and 66 in 1891. Elizabeth is also not recorded in the 1901 census and was probably dead. A possible death registration was in 1900 at the age of 76, though this is older than her census ages.

John was described as an agricultural labourer throughout the censuses, except in 1891 when he is on parish relief. In 1851 he was still living with his parents Edward (51), and Mary (50) at Hey Head, Northern Etchells. His brother James (16), and sister Sarah Shaw (25) together with her husband George (26) and children Mary Anne (2), and John (7 months) were also there. Edward was a farm labourer who was born in Millington, which is near Rostherne. Mary was born at Styal, Cheshire.

In 1861 John was still at Hey Head, Northern Etchells but now with his wife Elizabeth, daughter Mary Elizabeth (7), and son John. Cheshire BMD has a civil marriage at Altrincham between

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John and Elizabeth Bailey in 1855. Again this probably means they had the nuptials in a nonconformist church. Elizabeth was born in Styal like her mother-in-law Mary.

In 1871 John was described as living at Hey Head Cottage. A second Hey Head Cottage and a Hey Head Farm are mentioned on the same census page. His wife Elizabeth, daughters Clara (8), Martha (5), and boarder Joseph Bailey (41) were also present. Joseph was probably Elizabeth's brother.

In 1881 John is a neighbour of his son John at Hey Head. His wife Elizabeth, daughters Clara (17), Martha (14), and nephews Edward (21) and James (20) were present. By 1891 when he is on parish relief, and only Clara (26), a charwoman, was still at home.

Of John and Elizabeth's other children Mary Elizabeth Bailey Warburton was baptised on November 4<sup>th</sup> 1855, but cannot be found after 1861 so her story is unknown. A daughter Sarah was baptised the same day but died aged 1 year.

Clara was baptised on July 1<sup>st</sup> 1863. In 1901 she was recorded as aged 36, a market hand living with her niece Mary Alice (16) at Hey Head. In 1903 she married George Wood at the Bethel Methodist Church, Stalybridge. Martha was baptised on September 16<sup>th</sup> 1866 but does not appear after the 1881 census and no reliable marriage or death registration can be found.

### **Edward – Ann's Great Great Grandfather**

Edward is not recorded in the 1861 census. An Edward's death was registered in the first quarter of 1858, aged 60. This does not quite match his age of 51 on the 1851 census. A search on IGI found that an Edward Warburton was baptised at Rostherne on August 25<sup>th</sup> 1799. His parents were John and Ellen. This matches the 1851 census age. Also Rostherne is close to his recorded birthplace of Millington. In fact a check on the parish registered confirmed that his parents were 'of Millington'.

IGI records a marriage of an Edward Warbuton to Mary Dickin on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1820 at Stockport. (I've had this misspelling at Stockport before). Also on IGI a Mary Dicken was christened at Wilmslow on February 18<sup>th</sup> 1798, parents Samuel and Sarah. There is no clear-cut death for Mary in Cheshire BMD, but she is not obviously present in the 1861 census.

### **Edward's son James**

Before tracing back from Edward's parents I investigated Edward's younger son James who offered the possibility of another line that might produce a living male Warburton descendant who could be DNA tested.

In 1861, a James, aged 26, a farm labourer, was living at Hey Head with his wife Sarah (23), and son Edward (2). His birthplace, Northen Etchells, and his age are correct for Edward's son, whilst the naming of his son Edward is further circumstantial evidence.

In 1871 James, aged 36, an agricultural labourer born in Northern Etchells was living in Hale, with Ann Reed who was aged 31 and was born in Burslem, Staffordshire, as a boarder. Also present were Edward Motterhead (12), and Ethelbert Reed (4), both born in Northen Etchells, and described as sons, and daughter Mary (3 months), born in Hale. James was a widower, and the death of Sarah Warburton was registered in 1863, aged 25.

James and Sarah had two sons, Edward who was 2 in 1861, and James who was born in 1861, after the date of the census. Both boys were staying with their grandfather John in 1881. James's location is unknown in 1871, but the strange Edward Motterhead is the right age for Edward, and he doesn't appear again so this may well be James's son mis-named. Edward is missing from the 1891 and 1901 censuses, but neither Cheshire BMD, nor the National Registration index have any likely deaths.

James, however is in the 1891 and 1901 censuses, called Wm Jas. His age and place of birth are correct. The only birth recorded by Cheshire BMD in the Wilmslow district shortly after the 1861 census was William James who was born in the second quarter of 1861. However his marriage was recorded under the name James when he married Ellen Hewitt in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter



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of 1881 at Northenden St Wilfred. Hence I equate the William James of the 1891 and 1901 censuses with Edward's son James.

In 1891 James (Wm Jas) was a market gardener, aged 28, born in Northen Etchells, and living in Hey Head with his wife Ellen, aged 26 and born in Manchester, and sons Jas (8), Wm (6) and Walter (6 months). Also present was Sarah Hewit (14), a sister-in-law. In 1901 Wm Jas and his family were still living in Hey Head. In addition to his three sons a daughter Annie, aged 14 is mentioned. She must have been away from home in 1891.

Meanwhile in 1881 James senior was living at Davenport Green, Hale with his wife Anne. They are living with their sons Ethelbert Read (14), John W Warburton (7), and Thomas (1), and daughter Mary Read (10).

John and Ann's marriage in 1874 was recorded as a civil wedding. The marriage record would suggest that Ann was Ann Cooper before her first marriage. She had 2 children by her first marriage, Ethelbert, born around 1866 and Mary, also known as Polly born in 1870. Her date of birth is uncertain as her age varies through the censuses from 31 in 1871 to 56 in 1901. Also her place of birth, which was originally Burslem, changes to Sharston in 1881, and later to Delamere.

In 1891 James (age illegible) was at the Old Buttery House, Hale (near Davenport Green), with Ann (45, she ages rather slowly), Ethelbert (24), Polly (22), Thomas (11) and Robert (8). Polly is a nickname for Mary. Their son John W is probably the servant John, born in Hale, living at the Stathams in Baguely, but a John W's death aged 22 is recorded in Cheshire BMD in 1895 .

By 1901 Ann (56) was a widow living at Buttery House Farm Cottage with sons Thomas (21) a teamster on the farm, and Robert. James died in 1897 aged 62.

Thus James had 5 sons of whom 3 are living in 1901, 1 is dead and 1 unaccounted for. He also has 3 grandsons and a granddaughter. I haven't tried much tracing of people in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as it seems difficult to go forward without censuses. One trick is to search the Ancestry or Genes Reunited sites for other researchers interested in one's family members, but a search on Edward found nothing.

Edward's other children included Sarah who was baptised in Cheadle on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 1826, and married George Shaw at Bowdon St.Mary in 1846. They had 2 children Mary Ann (1849-54, and John (1850-5). They spent their lives in Northenden until beyond 1901. Also Mary was baptised on December 31<sup>st</sup> 1827 and Thomas was baptised on November 29<sup>th</sup> 1829, both at Ringway Chapel, but neither appears in any census and were probably dead by 1841.

### John - Ann's 3 x Great Grandfather

IGI records a marriage on October 17<sup>th</sup> 1797 at Rostherne between John Warburton and Ellen Dooley. There are no other baptisms for children of John and Ellen suggesting Edward was an only child.

It was at this point in my research that another piece of luck entered the scene. I was developing a conviction that the various Warburton families in Mobberley were descended from an elder brother of my 6 x Great Grandfather Josiah. The rationale for this is documented in the **My Genealogy** chapter.

I then received an email which included notes of Monumental Inscriptions at Mobberley St Wilfred which included, in grave no. 380 John Warburton of Millington died 1801 aged 61 also Peter and James his sons who died in infancy, Mary his wife died 1827 aged 75, John their son died 1852 aged 77 and Ellen his wife died 1852 aged 73. This not only took me back two more generations but raised a possibility of a link to the Mobberley Warburtons and hence my own ancestors.

My first search found a John baptised on May 20<sup>th</sup> 1739 that seemed about right. His parents were Josiah and Martha who married in Bowdon 1737. I couldn't find Josiah's parents and he clearly wasn't one of my Mobberley Warburtons. In fact he seems to have moved back to Ashley in Bowdon parish and raised a large family, so it is a coincidence if his eldest son moved back to Mobberley.

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I then obtained a fiche of the published Mobberley Monumental Inscriptions and also began piecing together the various families who linked back to my ancestors. I discovered that the date of John's death was in October 1801. He was interred on either the 21<sup>st</sup> according to the parish record, or the 25<sup>th</sup> according to his headstone. Also his age was given as 'in his 61<sup>st</sup> year. This puts his birth in the 12 months before October 21<sup>st</sup> 1741, and makes the son of Josiah too old.

IGI has no John's baptised anywhere in the requisite 12 months. However a John was baptised at Mobberley St Wilfred on December 20<sup>th</sup> 1741. Of course he would have been born some time before his baptism, and although 2 months is above average it is not untypical. Furthermore John would appear to be a twin. His brother James was baptised the same day. Their parents were Thomas and Mary.

### **Thomas - Ann's 4 x Great Grandfather**

Thomas was baptised on November 9<sup>th</sup> 1691, the eldest child of Thomas. He was buried on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1780. His age was given as 86 which is a little low. He married Mary Burgess on November 25<sup>th</sup> 1733. They had six children. Their firstborn Mary must have died as an infant as a second Mary was baptised 5 years after the first. Their sons were Thomas, James John and Josiah.

### **Thomas - Ann's 5 x Great Grandfather**

Thomas was baptised on January 11<sup>th</sup> 1672 (by the modern calendar; until 1754 New Year was towards the end of March). His parents were John and Mary. He was buried on October 15<sup>th</sup> 1724. There are entries on IGI that suggest he married in 1689, but his wife's name isn't given. It is possible she was the Mary who was buried at Mobberley in November 1729 and described as a widow of Mobberley. Their first child, Thomas was followed by Mary (died an infant), Mary, Deborah (died an infant), Enoch, Elizabeth, Deborah, George (died an infant), Peter (died an infant), Peter, Aaron and George.

### **John - Ann's 6 x Great Grandfather**

John was born in Hale Barns around 1648 and died sometime after 1730. His parents were John (1608-91) and Margaret Hardy, (d.1696), my 7 x great grandparents. He moved to Mobberley between 1667 and 1671 and had 3 children with his first wife Mary, named Thomas, Deborah, and John. Deborah was tragically killed "under the stone in the bark mill" aged 2. John left a very detailed will that provides a lot of the evidence for this family. John then married Elizabeth Trefis in 1701. They had three children, William, Josiah and Mary. Elizabeth died a widow in 1747.

## **James Warburton**

A child of 9 weeks called Thomas, the son of James and Mary, was buried in the grave of John Warburton (my 5 x Great Grandfather) at Bowdon St Mary in 1828. He died on March 21<sup>st</sup> and was buried on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. A question arises as to the identity of Thomas's father James. My 3 x Great Grandfather William had a brother James, who would be 57 years old in 1828, and a son James, who would be 20. Neither seems a likely candidate. I have therefore searched for another James, possibly a nephew of William's, who might fit the bill.

Firstly I investigated William's son James. He was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 1808. He appears in census records from 1841 to 1871 identified by his place of birth, Hale, and his age which consistently fits with being born shortly before his baptism in March 1808. Also his death is recorded in the first quarter of 1878 aged 69, which is correct for his date of birth. These census entries show he was married to Alice who was born in 1808/9 in Hale.

There is only one International Genealogical Index (IGI) entry that exactly matches James and that is William's son. The next nearest are 1 year younger, baptised in Wilmslow (Dean Row), 2 years younger in Bowdon, and 3 years younger in Bowdon.

James and Alice's eldest child was born in 1832/3. IGI has two possible marriages for James and Alice, both at Manchester Cathedral. That to Alice Birch on 28<sup>th</sup> Dec 1831 is most likely as an Alice Birch was christened at Ringway Chapel on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1808 by parents Isaac Birch and

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Alice. This was probably the Isaac and Alice Royle who married on Nov 5<sup>th</sup> 1799 at Bowdon, and who had 7 daughters and 2 sons all christened at Ringway.

James married Alice when he was 23 years old. This leaves little time for an earlier marriage to Mary. Possible James and Mary marriages on the IGI are:

1. Manchester Cathedral 4<sup>th</sup> April 1825 to Mary Ann Larby.
2. Manchester Cathedral 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 1828, to Mary Royle.

The first was when William's son James was only 17, and the second is after the birth and death of Thomas.

William's brother James was baptised on September 4<sup>th</sup> 1771. He is also mentioned in his father's will of 1791.

An Oath of Administration dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 1832, was issued for a James Warburton, a farmer of Hale who died on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1832. The parish record shows that he was buried on February 26<sup>th</sup> and he was "of Hale", and 61 years old. Unless James was over 7 months old when baptised, this is a slight exaggeration of his age, but this is very probably William's brother. Another James was baptised at Bowdon in July 1770. His parents were from Altrincham and he is probably the James of Dunham who was buried at Bowdon on November 29<sup>th</sup> 1831 aged 62.

The Oath of Administration gives the administrators as James's wife Jane, Josiah Warburton and Thomas Warburton, all of Hale. The men are both farmers. The estate is worth no more than £200. Josiah signs, though Jane makes her mark. Josiah could be James's and William's brother (though he only marked his wedding record and will), or his nephew (William's own son Josiah would be too young). William has a brother, a son and a nephew called Thomas.

There are two James and Jane marriages in Bowdon. The first, on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1786 to Jane Houghton of Rostherne, is too early for William's brother, but the second, on Jan 27<sup>th</sup> 1790 to Jane Davenport is possible. Davenport is a common name in Hale.

There were 9 baptisms in Bowdon to James and Jane Warburton between 1788 and 1808. The first two are too early for the later marriage, while the third is just nine months after it.

1. Elizabeth, 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 1788, of Bollington.
2. James, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1790, of Bollington.
3. Martha 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 1790 (born 16<sup>th</sup> Oct), of Baguely .
4. John, 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 1792, of Baguely.
5. Nancy, 5<sup>th</sup> 1795, of Chorley, Wimslow parish.
6. James, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1798, of Heaton Norris.
7. Jane and Nancy, twins, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1801 ( born Feb 20<sup>th</sup>), of Heaton Norris.
8. Thomas, 28<sup>th</sup> Oct 1804( born 20<sup>th</sup> Sept), of Stockport.
9. Mary Anne, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1808 (born Feb 15<sup>th</sup>), of Hale.

The first 2 baptisms, and the 5<sup>th</sup> probably belong to James and Jane nee Houghton, whilst the rest follow a pattern of movement from Baguely to Heaton Norris, then Stockport and then finally Hale where James was when he died. Heaton Norris is really part of Stockport so there may not have been a move between 1801 and 1804. Whilst Baguely was in Bowdon parish, Stockport is some 8 miles away and the fact they kept returning to Bowdon for baptisms shows a link to the parish.

The Bowdon Parish Register entry for the burial of baby Thomas states that he is from Stockport. There is no baptism record at Bowdon, or on IGI.

The most likely scenario is that the father of Thomas is William's nephew, son of brother James. Brother James married Jane Davenport in 1790 and they lived in Baguely, then Heaton Norris near Stockport, before returning to Hale. However they returned to Bowdon for the christenings of their children Martha, John, James, Jane, Nancy, Thomas and Mary Anne. James died in 1832 in Hale, and their last child was born in Hale in 1808. This is similar to a pattern followed by his brothers William and Josiah who worked away before returning to Hale. This may well have been related to the terms of their father's will in which part of their inheritance was not available until their youngest sister Jane reached 21 in 1806. Also in 1807 the Crewe estates in Hale were sold. Previous generations of the family were tenants of the

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Crewes and it is possible that the changes in ownership gave rise to new tenancy opportunities. Judging by the place of baptism of William's children it was in about 1807 when he took the tenancy at Ross Mill farm.

Their son James must have returned to Stockport where the family perhaps retained contacts. He married either Mary Anne Larby at Manchester Cathedral, or another Mary in a church around Stockport not reported on IGI. In the 1841 census James aged 45, and Mary aged 35 were living in Lowe St, Stockport. Lowe St. isn't on modern maps. He was a cotton weaver. They had no children. James cannot be found in the 1851 or later censuses. I cannot find his death registration.

### Notes on Bancroft Warburton

A recent DNA match to myself comes from a descendant of a William Warburton of Widnes who was born around the same time that William, son of Bancroft Warburton was born in nearby Great Sankey. Whilst this is not the only possible identification of William of Widnes it does offer some interesting possibilities. These notes record the known facts concerning William and Bancroft, and explore the implications should William indeed be the son of Bancroft.

The DNA match comes from a descendant of a George Warburton who was born in Widnes in 1822. George was baptised at St. Wilfred, Farnworth, Widnes, son of William (a labourer) and Elizabeth of Widnes. In all William and Elizabeth had 11 children baptised there, and William is variously called a husbandman or labourer. There is nothing to suggest there were two families based on the records in Lancashire Parishes Online but a check of the actual parish register should be carried out.

A marriage at St Mary the Virgin, Prescott on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1810 between William Warburton, a labourer and widower of Widnes, and Elizabeth Traverse a widow of Widnes is probably this William and Elizabeth, especially as their first child was baptized on February 17<sup>th</sup> 1811. St Mary the Virgin is the parish church of Prescott, St Wilfred (later St Luke) of Farnworth being a chapel of ease within the parish.

William and Elizabeth are present in the 1841 census living at Barrow Green, Widnes with son Matthew. William is 60 and Elizabeth 55, ages in 1841 being rounded down to the nearest 5 years. This gives William a birth date of 1777-1781. Neither William nor Elizabeth can be found in the 1851 census. The deaths of 2 Williams are recorded at Warrington in 1841. Both Williams were also buried at Warrington and Lancashire Parishes Online gives their age at death. One can be discounted as he is at the same address in the 1841 census and the burial record, though his age is correct for the son of Bancroft Warburton. The other is one year older, but his address on the burial record is also in Warrington. However he is not in the 1841 census unless he is William of Widnes.

In fact deaths at Widnes would have been registered at Prescott. Bancroft's son Joseph was farming very close to William in Widnes, in Crow Wood Lane, and his death in 1845 was registered at Prescott. However the first William whose death is registered at Prescott after 1841 is in 1857. I'm not sure if the proximity between William and Joseph implied kinship or is simply coincidence. Bancroft's sons William and Joseph were the youngest, and the two who didn't inherit one of Bancroft's estates in his will of 1804.

William's son Matthew is also an enigma. He doesn't appear in any census after 1841. The death of a Matthew was recorded at Warrington in 1854. Unfortunately age at death is not given on the index to the registers until 1865, and no burial is recorded on Lancashire Parishes online, there being no burials recorded for Great Sankey, Farnworth or Prescott for the relevant period. However given the rarity of the name this is quite possibly him, though it doesn't explain why he was missing from the 1851 census. There are several families at Barrows Green in the 1851 census so if William was alive and missed the census like Matthew it would seem he was living elsewhere.

All that is known of Bancroft's son William is that he is mentioned in Bancroft's will of 1804, which was proved in 1805, and so is known to have survived past that date. The key to determining if William of Widnes could be the same person is to identify his death registration

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or burial record and check if his age at death matches a 1779 baptism. Even so with 14 baptisms of Williams between 1777 and 1781, seven in 1779 alone, it will need a DNA comparison with a known descendant of Bancroft to determine if they are the same. Two of the seven baptisms in 1779 were in Bowdon where my own ancestors lived, and only one in Warrington, in 1781.

Bancroft Warburton was baptised at Bowdon St. Mary on November 12<sup>th</sup> 1738, the child of John Bancroft and Elizabeth Warburton of Sinderland. On April 20<sup>th</sup> 1767 Bancroft Warburton married Elizabeth Norman at St. Luke, Farnworth, Widnes. Bancroft was described as of the parish of Prescot. He subsequently died in 1805 and was buried at Great Sankey, St. Mary, a chapelry in Prescot parish.

There is nothing to prove that the Bancroft baptised at Bowdon is the same as the one who married in Widnes and lived at Great Sankey except the coincidence of the unusual name, the correlation between the dates, and the lack of any other evidence of a second Bancroft. However, if Bancroft's age at death in 1805 ties in with the Bowdon baptism, i.e. it is 66 years, this would be pretty good proof. The record is included in Lancashire Parishes Online but no age at death is given. The parish records need to be checked to see if his age is given. It is also possible a monumental inscription might exist.

The Bancroft of Great Sankey is also said to have 2 brothers. This is apparently a little guess work on the assumption Bancroft was born near where he lived and these "brothers" were from the same area. I think these brothers can be discounted.

The following facts can be determined about the background to the Bancroft baptised at Bowdon. On March 20<sup>th</sup> 1723/4 Mary Warburton of Dunham married John Bancroft of Carrington. By 1736 they had four children baptised at Bowdon (I do not yet have their names; they are currently missing from IGI though in the past the coverage of Bowdon by IGI has been good). Mary, wife of John Bancroft of Carrington, was buried at Bowdon on June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1737. Unfortunately there is no extant grave for Mary, or any other Bancroft buried at Bowdon in this period.

Mary Bancroft nee Warburton can be identified as the daughter of Thomas Warburton of Hale and Pheobe Dean of Knutsford who married at Bowdon on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1701. This family subsequently farmed at Sinderland as tenants of the Crewe estates. Thomas died in 1727 and left a will which wasn't proved until 1734. It refers to his daughter Mary Bancroft. Phoebe died in 1761, by which time she was living in Marple, Stockport. Her son John continued the lease until his death in 1809. He does not appear to have married. His will exists but has yet to be examined.

The origins of Thomas of Hale are clouded as there are a number of Thomases attested in Hale at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and there is a known tendency for nonconformist baptisms to occur away from Bowdon, St Mary and so go unrecorded. However, if occupation is a clue, my own ancestors were the main Warburton farming family in Hale at that time and my ancestor Josiah was bailiff to the Crewe estates in Hale from 1686 to the early 1720's. He may therefore be the Thomas born in 1676 to Thomas (brother of Josiah) and Alice Worsely.

On a geographical note, on the baptisms of their children Thomas and Pheobe are sometimes described as of Sinderland, and sometimes of Dunham. Sinderland occupies the northern area of Dunham and these two names are frequently interchanged. Carrington lies to the north of Sinderland, still within the ancient parish of Bowdon.

Following Bancroft's baptism in 1738 there is a wedding between John Bancroft and Elizabeth Warburton on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1749. Both are merely described as "of this parish". The question arises whether these are the parents of Bancroft Warburton, and whether it is the same John Bancroft who was married to Mary Warburton. Obviously the 10 year gap between Bancroft's birth and the marriage is strange, particularly as John Bancroft was not apparently attached himself.

Some clues come from the will of John Bancroft of Carrington who was buried at Bowdon on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1756. Firstly he is confirmed as the husband of Mary by reference to his brother-in-law John Warburton of Sinderland, who was one of his executors.

John left bequests to a son-in-law John Hallam (his main beneficiary), and two daughters Pheobe, and Ann (who got £100 each). There was no stipulation about waiting until they are

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21, suggesting they were already adults. It is likely that the wife of John Hallam, and one other child were dead by then as they are not mentioned.

John also left "house room" to his wife Elizabeth, so he had clearly remarried to an Elizabeth. I don't know if a John Bancroft is recorded as marrying any other Elizabeth than Elizabeth Warburton in the area at that time. Certainly if she is the Elizabeth Warburton who married John Bancroft in 1749 the children are too old to be hers.

Finally, and most intriguing is the bequest of £20 to Bank Warburton. No relationship or reason is described, but it is likely that Bank might be a diminutive of Bancroft, in which case the Bancroft baptised at Bowdon would appear to be alive in 1756.

Elizabeth Bancroft's own burial might be expected to be at Bowdon. Three possibles are:

Elizabeth Bancroft buried December 8<sup>th</sup> 1764 was from Sinderland, daughter of William and Margaret. When the parents are described it usually means the death of a child, so this one is unlikely. Also there is no known marriage of a William Warburton to a Margaret at this time.

Elizabeth Bancroft buried January 10<sup>th</sup> 1775 was from Prescott, Lancashire. This is intriguing because Prescott is where Bancroft lived so it would seem logical for her to go to her son in widowhood but return to her home parish for burial.

Elizabeth Bancroft buried April 21<sup>st</sup> 1793 aged 98 was the wife of Thomas from Sinderland. She would be 43 in 1738, a little old to be having illegitimate children, and probably long married.

Elizabeth's origins are difficult to determine. There is no age at death on the 1775 burial. They were introduced as the norm at Bowdon just a few years later. Since Bancroft was conceived a few months after John's first wife's death, Elizabeth might have gone as a servant to help him with his young family. This might imply she was related to Mary, though Mary had no sister of that name. A cousin, a daughter of one of Thomas of Sinderland's brothers would be most likely. Also the delay in them marrying might have had something to do with waiting until the family was more grown up. It might also mean Elizabeth herself was very young.

It should be noted that there were a number of Warburton families in Bowdon, some apparently unrelated to each other so having the name Warburton in common does not in itself imply a close relationship.

Elizabeths baptised at Bowdon in the relevant timeframe are:

- The daughter of James of Altrincham baptised on September 17<sup>th</sup> 1702, is possible, but a little old. However if Thomas of Sinderland is the son of Thomas of Hale, then James would be his brother.
- The daughter of John of Altrincham baptised on June 15<sup>th</sup> 1711, would be 27 when Bancroft was born. This John would not be a brother of Thomas, because although there is evidence of a brother John he probably died in 1695.
- The daughter of George of Dunham baptised on August 31<sup>st</sup> 1712, would be 26 when Bancroft was born. No likely wedding has been found for George. As with John, Thomas's brother of that name was dead by this time. He did also have an uncle George but if he had a family it was not in the Bowdon area.
- The daughter of William of Hale baptised on April 10<sup>th</sup> 1717, would be 21 when Bancroft was born. This William is probably the one who married Mary Dawson in 1707 when both were described as of Baguely. Their first child was baptised before the wedding, and in subsequent baptisms the children are described as the children of William of Hale. There is some evidence for Thomas having a brother William in that his brother Aaron acquired some land on behalf of a William in 1702. This William could not have been Aaron's son due to age; Aaron didn't marry until 1694.
- The daughter of Josiah of Timperley baptised on June 6<sup>th</sup> 1721, would be 17 when Bancroft was born. There is an argument for Josiah being brother to Thomas based on his name. It is known Josiah was born around 1691 from his age at death. His parents had been married over 20 years by this time so he would have to be one of the youngest. However, by this time Thomas's uncle Josiah had become a significant figure

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being a leader of the non-conformist movement, and bailiff on the Hale estates of Lady Lucy Crewe. The name becomes quite frequent in the family after this time. However it must be noted there is another Josiah of unknown origin in the parish at this time.

None of the above Elizabeths was buried as a child, and only two other marriages involving an Elizabeth occurred in the period up to the marriage of Elizabeth to John Bancroft in 1749, or for 15 years afterwards. One is the remarriage of the widow of Josiah of Timperley, and so can be discounted. The other was in 1738 to Robert Thorley. Also the IGI doesn't have any other likely Elizabeths baptised nearby.

John Bancroft's will provides circumstantial evidence that he was the father of Bancroft Warburton, and that he later married his mother. The Elizabeth who went to live in Prescot before being buried in Bowdon offers a suggestion of a link between the two Bancrofts.

If William of Widnes is Bancroft's son then unless John Bancroft himself, or one of his ancestors, was the illegitimate son of a Warburton, he cannot be Bancroft's father according to the DNA evidence. The closeness of the DNA match makes it unlikely that such an illegitimacy took place very much before. More likely Bancroft's father was a Warburton. This raises 2 questions, who was he, and did John Bancroft know.

As to the latter we can only guess, though if he did know then it implies he was prepared to claim paternity to hide a greater scandal, implying Elizabeth and the father were closely related.

For the former the only clue is geography. On Bancroft's baptism his parents are described as from Sinderland which is where Mary Bancroft's family farmed. By 1738 both Mary's father and eldest brother were dead. Her mother Pheobe was running the farm on behalf of her remaining son John. John was baptised on May 27<sup>th</sup> 1725, so would be not yet 13 when Bancroft was conceived. It is just possible, and certainly a scandal if true.

More probably the DNA match is proof that William of Widnes is not Bancroft's son, but until a descendant of Bancroft is tested the possibility of a deeper scandal remains.