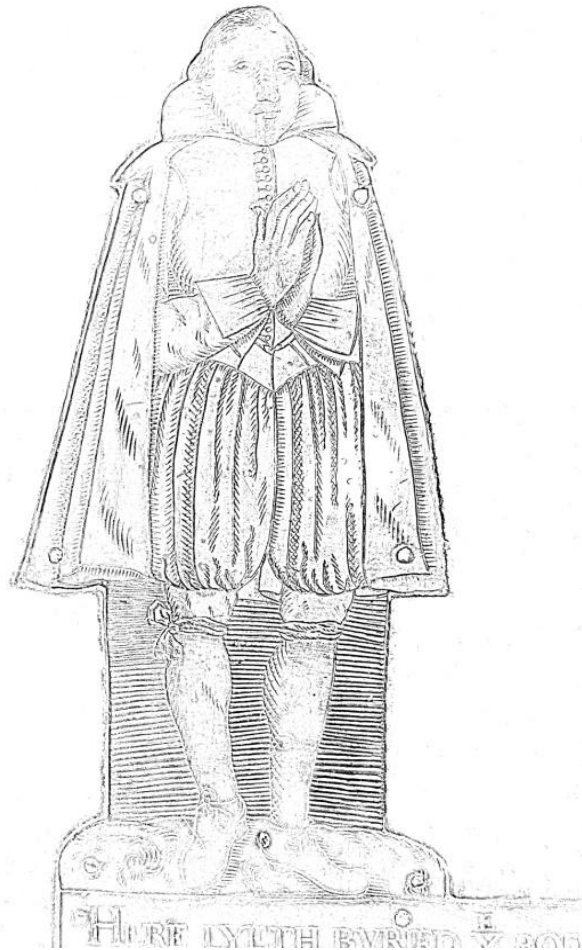
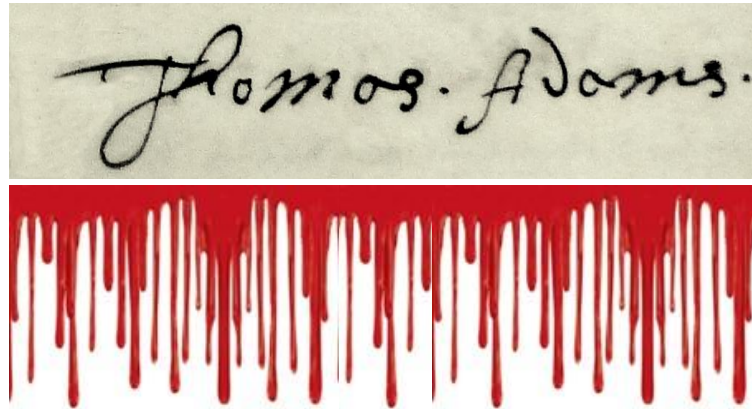


The Story of Thomas Adams, gentleman, *and his family* *and genealogy.....*

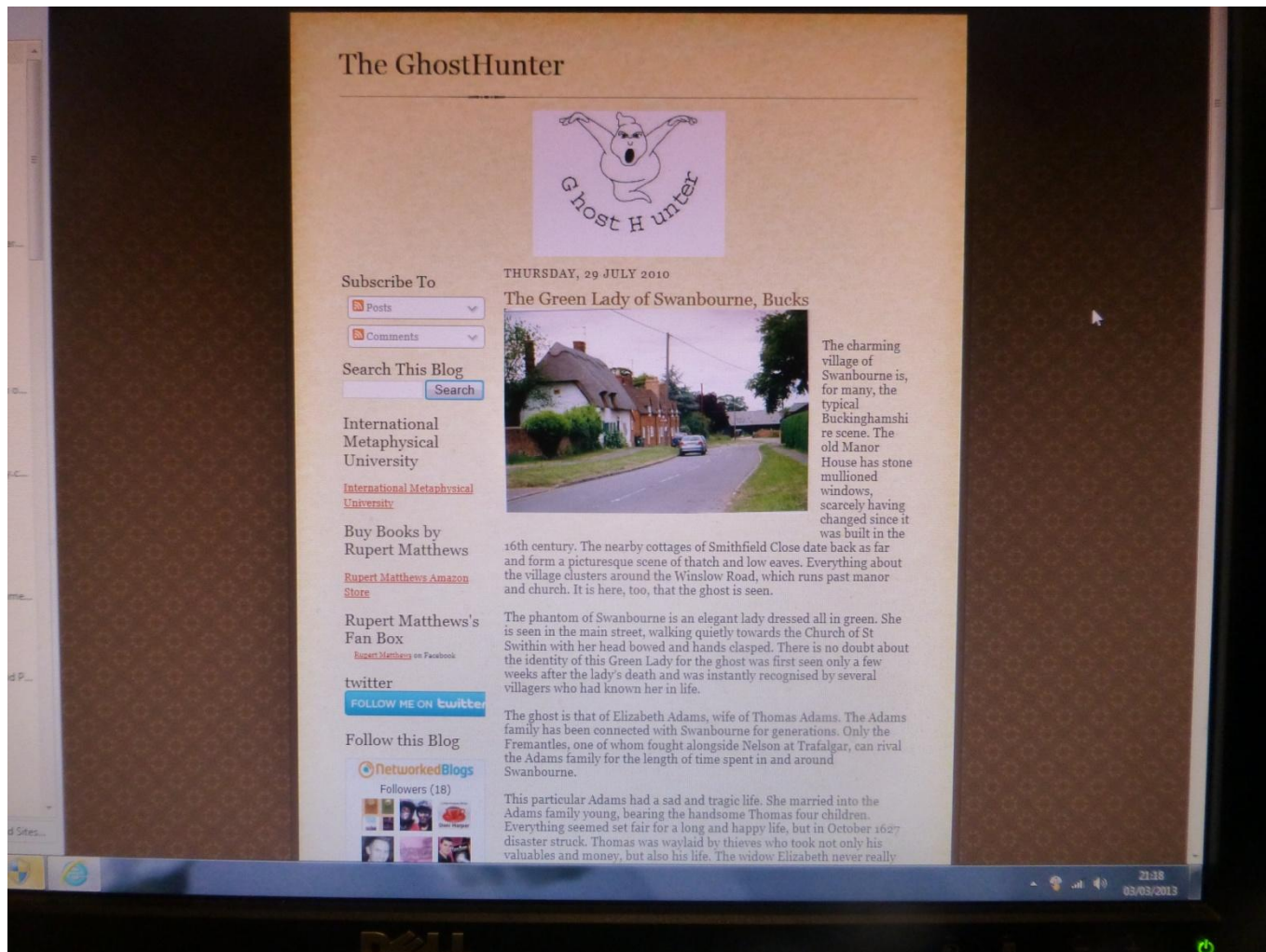


- Overlord of the Manor of Swanbourne, Bucks
- Respected land owner and farmer
- London businessman
- Father of four



MURDERED by
highwaymen, 1626 AD

Swanbourne ghosts – according to the websites



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YOU ARE HERE Green Lady of Swanbourne

Green Lady of Swanbourne

The apparition of a Green Lady was said to traditionally haunt the village of Swanbourne. The woman reputedly walked soundlessly up the main street toward the Grade II listed, 13th Century, Church of St Swithin, head bowed, hands clasped and wearing a green dress. This was said to be the ghost Elizabeth Adams who lived in Swanbourne during the 17th century.

Elizabeth was married to Thomas Adams and they had four children together. In 1626 Thomas was waylaid on the road and killed during a robbery. He was then buried at the Church St Swithin, where Elizabeth would apparently visit his grave each evening.

Elizabeth raised her children in Swanbourne and as they grew and moved on she is said to have lost the will to live after never fully recovering from her husband's unlawful killing. Eventually she just passed away quietly.

Shortly following her death the Green Lady is said to have started haunting the village and those who encountered her identified the ghost as being the widowed Elizabeth Adams.

On the north side of the chancel in St Swithin's is a brass memorial to Thomas and Elizabeth, depicting four figures, a man, a woman, two boys and two girls. It also bears a shield of the arms of the Butchers' Company, and is inscribed with the following dedication to Thomas:

*'Who in prime of youth by bloody theves was slain,
In Liscombe ground his bloud ye grass did staine.'*



Map

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NAVIGATION

- Recent Activity

The Museum of Witchcraft

the world's largest
collection of witchcraft
related artefacts & regalia



Click to see our website

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- Staffield Hall, Kirkoswald
- Can You Interact With Ghosts?
- Occult Today
- An illustration of the Lambton Worm

Swanbourne

Contents -- Click Site Name to view details

General

A brief note about the area

St Swithin's Church

The ghost of Elizabeth Adams

General

The name of Swanbourne derives from the Old English words *swana* or swan and *burna*. This means 'peasants' or herdsman's stream' or 'swan stream'. In the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of 792 the village was recorded as *Suanaburna*. In the Domesday Book of 1086 it is referred to as *Sueneborne*, *Sueneberne*, *Soeneberno* and *Sueneberie*. In the 2001 Census the parish population was 466.

In 1873 in Swanbourne there was an agricultural strike which was led by members of the Primitive Methodist Chapel who were in the National Agricultural Labourer's Union.

St Swithin's Church

Between the old manor house and the church, dedicated to St Swithin, a ghost dressed all in green can be seen. This is the ghost of Elizabeth Adams who continues to walk the route from her home to her husband's tomb in the churchyard. Elizabeth Adams was married to Thomas Adams and bore him four children. Their life seemed ideal until, on 17th October 1626, Thomas was robbed and murdered by thieves. Elizabeth never got over his death and each evening she would walk from the manor house where she lived to visit the tomb of her husband. She was devoted to her children and they kept her alive. As her children grew older she just seemed to fade away as if she had lost the will to live. Eventually she died and was buried alongside her husband. Shortly afterwards her ghost made its first appearance and can still be seen today. Locals say that she is still searching for those responsible for her husband's death.

To view a map of the area click on the button below



To view images see: [Swanbourne - St Swithin's Church Album](#)

To view a report about St Swithin's church see: [27-03-2009](#)



Luton Paranormal Society

investigations

Pre-Vigil

20:52 When walking around the back of the church, Stephanie feels an intense tingling all over as she walks between the two Celtic cross tombstones beneath the east window.

Vigil 1 – 21:25 to 22:00

For a plan of the site and the vigil locations see the end of this section.

Bill set up a video recorder to record from the southwest corner of the churchyard across the Winslow Road in the area in which the ghost appears.

21:24 While Steph is setting up her equipment she picks up the name *Miriam*.

21:25 Steph measures the temperature as 2°C.

21:29 Bill measures the temperature at -1.5°C on the ground and +2°C on the nearby church walls.

21:35 Steph was filming her surroundings, holding the camcorder in her hands. As she finishes filming she lowers her right arm which is holding the camera and is unable to do so. It feels as if something is either holding her arm up or preventing her lowering it. After 3 attempts she is able to lower her arm on to her lap. She runs through the action again to see if her coat could

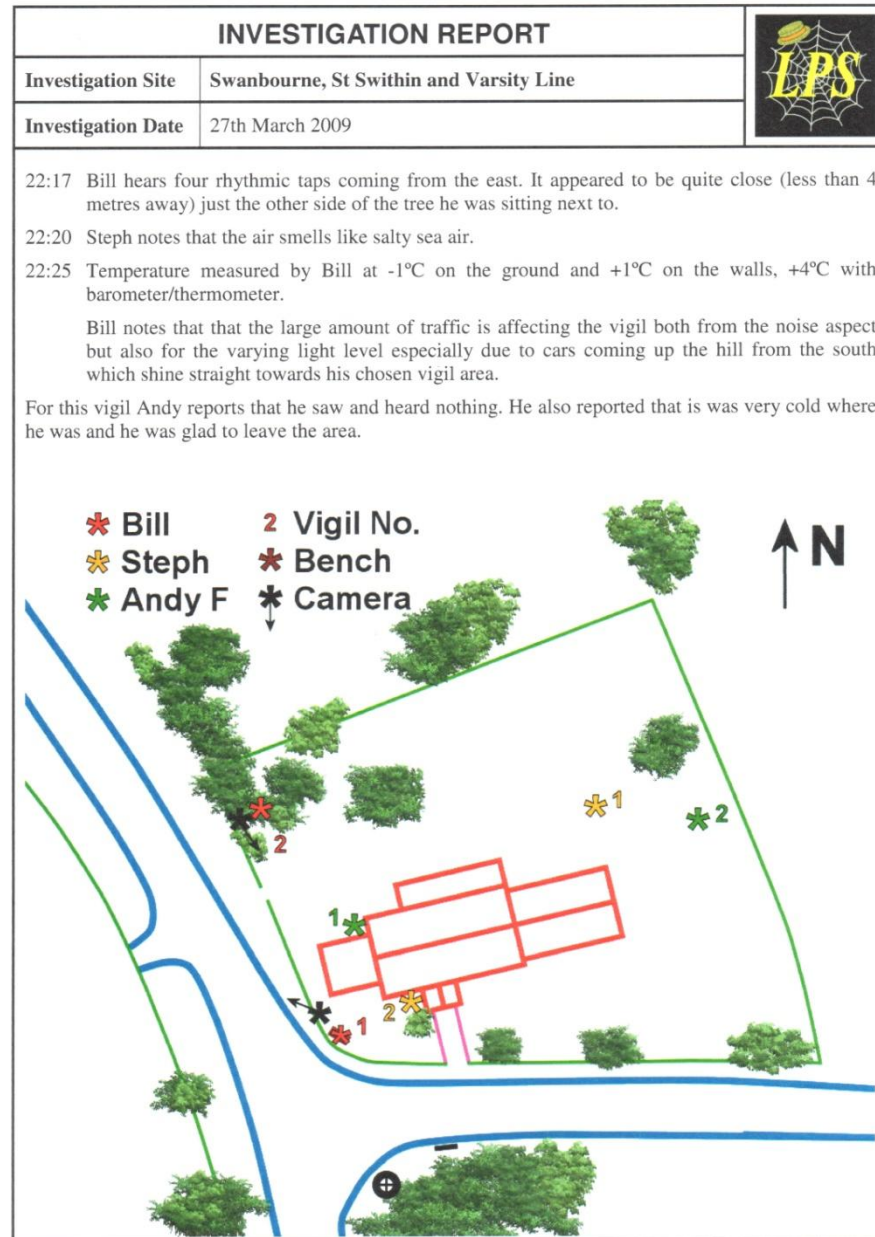
Luton Paranormal Society

investigations

have been caught on anything. If her arm was close to her chest it became caught on the walkie-talkie aerial in her top coat pocket. She did not think it could be this because as she pulled her arm down with her coat caught on the aerial, the walkie-talkie presses hard in to her ribs which she is sure could not have gone unnoticed during the original experience. Also she notes her arm was not pressed up against her chest, which was required for her coat to catch the walkie-talkie aerial

- 21:42 Steph hears what sounds like two taps on the church window to her left.
- 21:42 Temperature measured by Bill at 0 to -1°C on the ground and +2 to +5°C on the walls.
- 21:51 Bill measures the temperature at -1°C on the ground and +4°C on the walls. Ambient measured with barometer/thermometer +5°C.
- 21:52 Bill hears a sound like ticking coming from high up in the tower,
- 21:55 A rustling sound like that made by clothes is heard by Bill coming from just in front of the tower to the west.

Bill notes that during this vigil traffic noise was excessive so that it was very difficult to hear anything apart from the cars.
- 21:57 Bill hears a noise like pebbles hitting metal (several clicks) coming from the direction of the Mursley Road sign on the opposite side of the road (near the war memorial)
- 21:58 Temperature measured by Bill at -0.5°C on the ground and +5°C on the walls, +4°C with barometer/thermometer.





The Manor House

I recall an occasion when, during my years as Officer in Charge at the Manor House, Swanbourne, a 'ghost' was seen – and not, apparently, for the first time....

I had admitted a gentleman for a few weeks relief care. One morning during his stay he came to the office to report that he had seen a 'ghost' the previous night. The apparition, wearing a long black cape and a black hat, was on the landing, and had walked through the closed bathroom door then disappeared. Many months later the residents and staff of The Manor House were moving to a new purpose-built home (Swan House in Winslow) and all the cupboards, drawers and storage spaces needed to be cleared, including the cellar where cleaning materials, residents' suitcases etc. were kept. In the far corner was a collection of old, unclaimed property including paperbacks and cards, and amongst these we found a diary belonging to a resident who had died some years before my appointment. There was little written in it, but one entry caught our attention - it said *"I saw the ghost last night, he was dressed in a long black cape and black hat".....*

Ruth Thrower

Evidence contained within St Swithun's Church

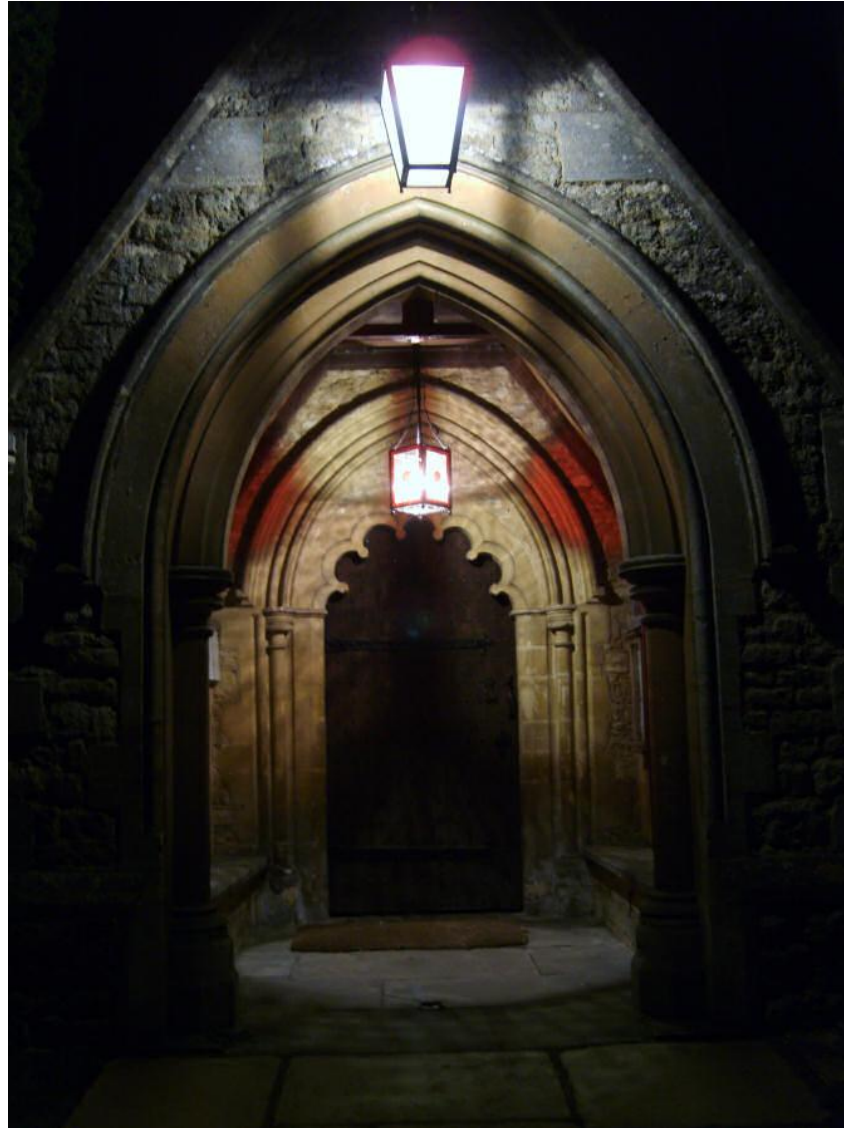




The East side of the church where Steph had a reaction



The south door with a strange blue light



Area Behind Bill's Vigil Position Where He Heard Tapping

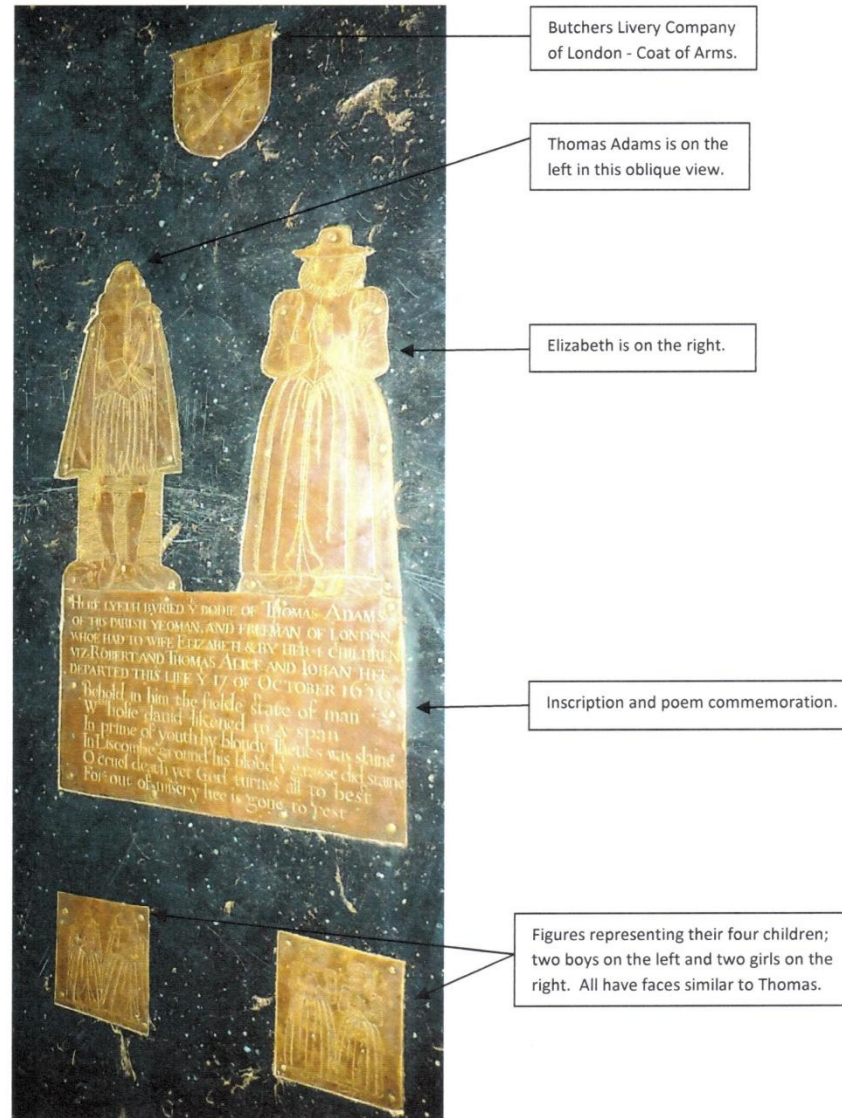


The brass inscriptions within the church

“HERE LYETH BURIED YE BODIE OF THOMAS ADAMS OF THIS PARISH YEOMAN AND FREEMAN OF LONDON WHOE HAD TO WIFE ELIZABETH & BY HER 4 CHILDREN VIZ ROBERT AND THOMAS ALICE AND JOHAN. HE DEPARTED THIS LIFE YE 17 OF OCTOBER 1626.”

“Behold in him the fickle state of man
Wch holie David likened to a span
In prime of youth by bloody Thieves was
slaine
In Liscombe ground his blood ye grasse
did staine
O cruel death yet God turns all to best
For out of misery hee is gone to rest”

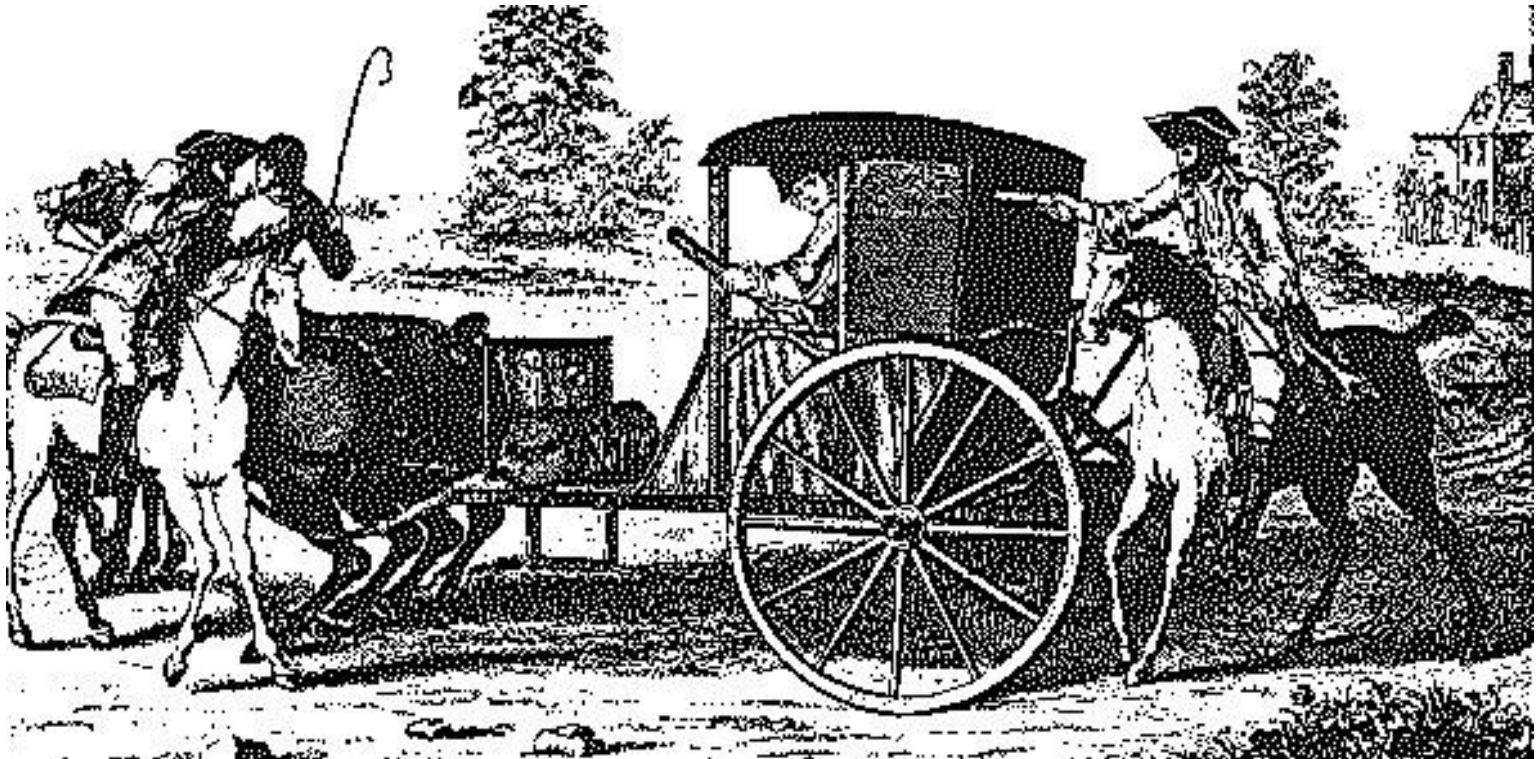
The grave and brass inscriptions of Thomas
& Elizabeth Adams in St. Swithun's Church,
Swanbourne, Bucks





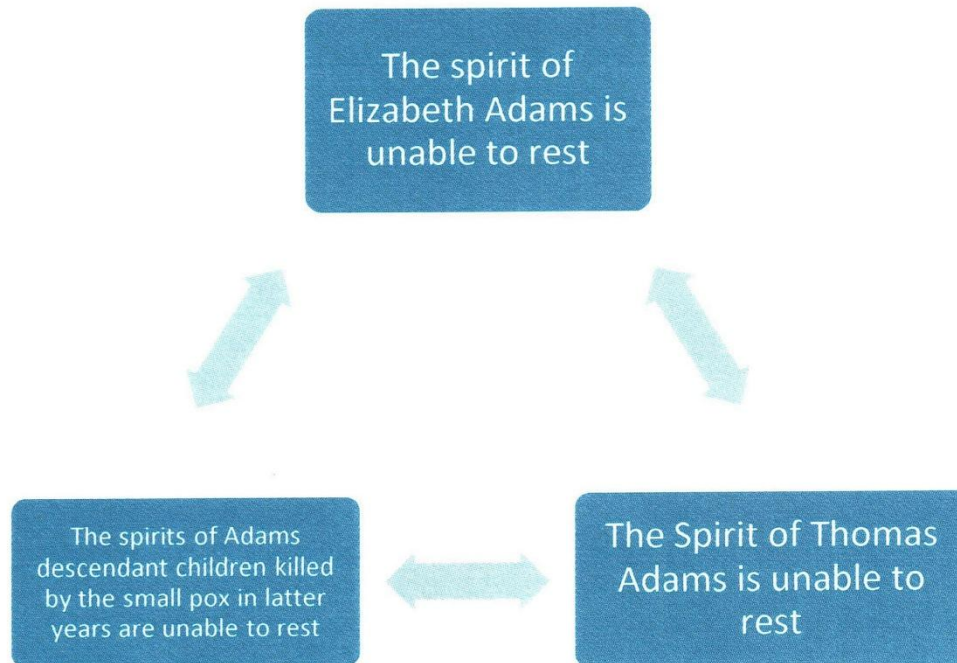


Reconstruction of events, Saturday, 17th October 1624 at Liscombe, Soulbury, Bucks



Possible ghost explanations (1)

Supernatural explanation



Possible ghost explanations (2)

Pseudo-Scientific Explanation

Limestone and plaster might act as a kind of tape recorder of events which may “play back” images and sounds through susceptible people. The latter are often older people or teenage girls.

Possible ghost explanations (3)

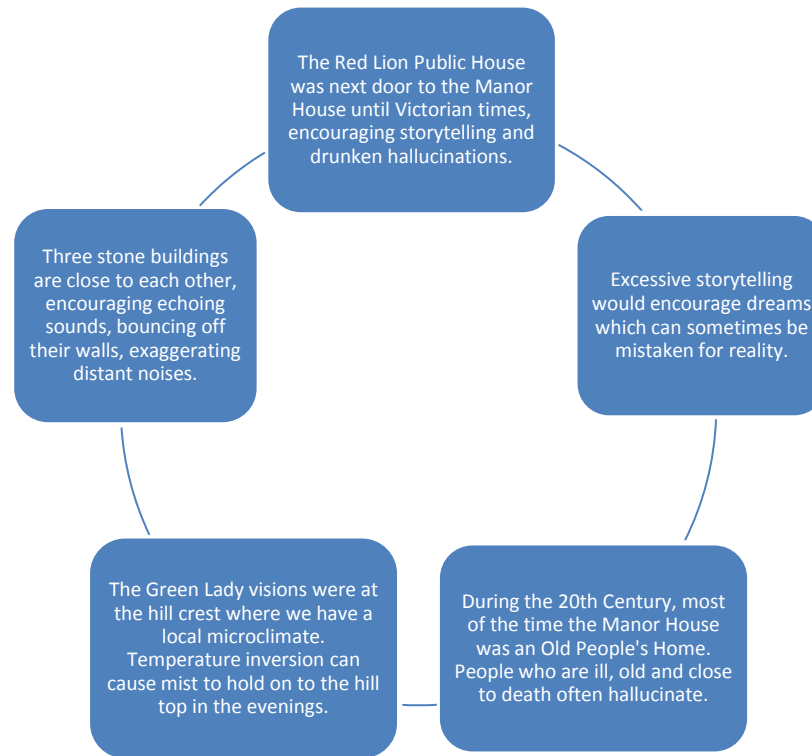
Temperature inversion

Evening hill fog from temperature inversion occasionally has a ghostly appearance.



Possible ghost explanations (4)

A combination of Logical and scientific explanations



Summary - Is there any truth in the ghost stories?

In investigating this story, the factual basis has been examined, and logical explanations seem to be most likely. A detailed examination of the Adams family tree has cast new light on the accuracy of the legend, as evidence from family wills show that Elizabeth had re-married within two years of the murder. Her new husband (by whom she subsequently had four more children) lived with her at the Manor house.

Eventually, Josias Askew becomes prior Lord of the Manor. He is the grandson of Elizabeth Adams and Thomas Askew.

However, Luton Paranormal Society have conducted field investigations and published a report and photographs (which are available through their website) tending to support ghost theories.

Further research in to the history of the Adams family

Summary of the Lords of the Manor of Swanbourne

Order of Lords of the Manor (with tithes) of Swanbourne

FORTESCUE FAMILY Sir John Fortescue is cousin of Queen Elizabeth 1. His grandson sells in 1624.

ADAMS FAMILY Already living in Swanbourne at Adams Farm, John & Thomas purchase joint Overlordship, the Manor House, Swanbourne House (the Old House) and extensive lands in 1624.

ASKEW FAMILY - New evidence suggests that after the murder of Thomas Adams (1626), his wife Elizabeth marries an Askew, and their son Josias acquires half of the Overlordship derived from Thomas.

DEVERILL FAMILY - Half of the Overlordship and the Manor House is left to John Deverill in Josias Askew's will, in 1750.

WILLIAMSON FAMILY - James Adams, the last of the male Adams line dies in 1775 and leaves the Old House and half of the Overlordship to be left in the hands of trustees, two nieces and James Adams Williamson, the Great nephew (of James Adam's wife).

FREMANTLE FAMILY - Purchase of the Old House and 5 acres from the Williamson's (or their trustees) in 1798. John Deverill sells the Manor House and its lands four years later (1802) which unites the twin Overlordships back to one. However, there is evidence to suggest that some elements of vicarial tithes remained with the Williamsons until 1820.

Sources of information used to deduce the Adams

Family tree

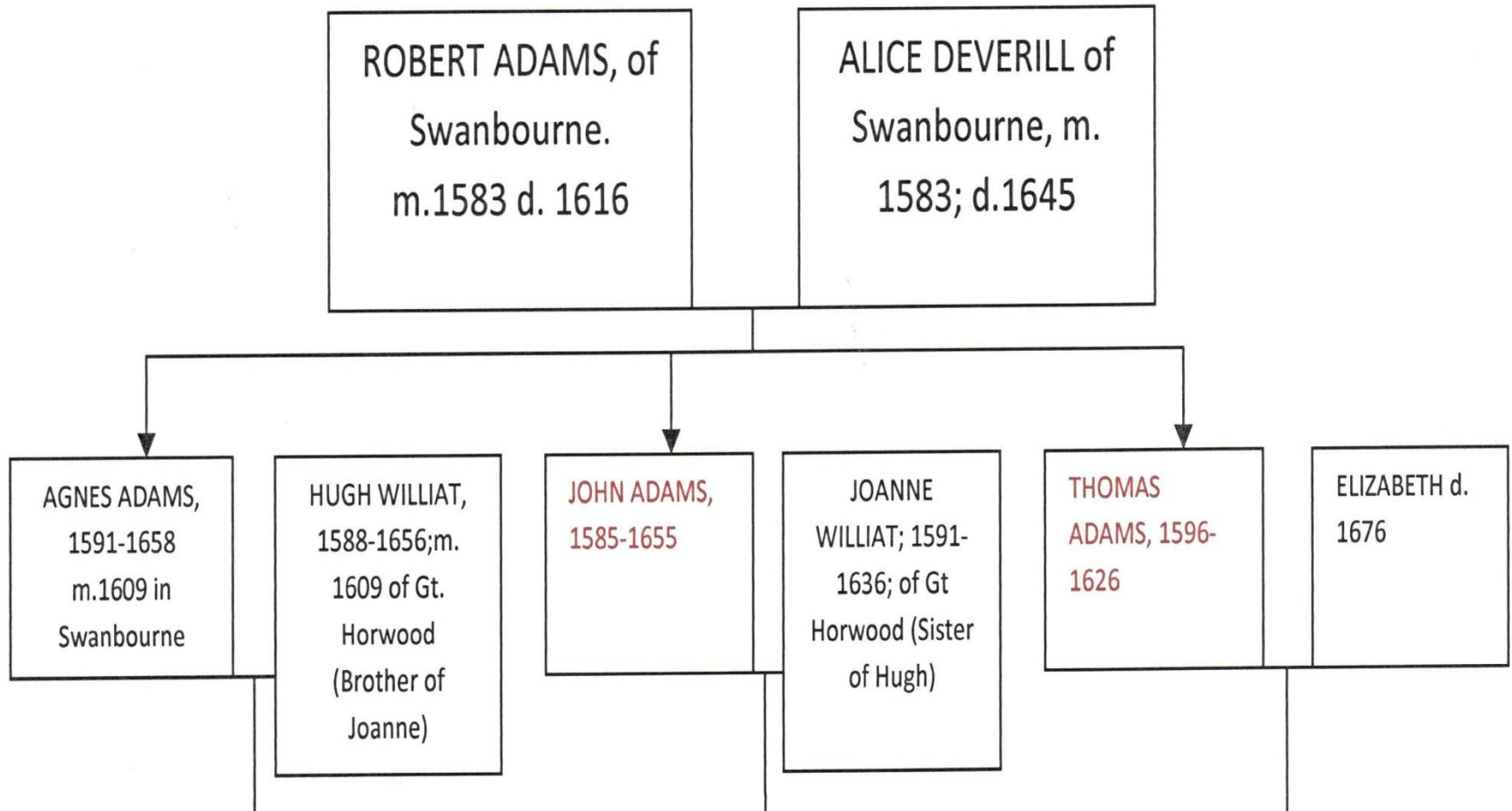
The monuments in the Church, particularly in the Chancel.

Parish Records, now fully transcribed, give us dates of key events, namely baptisms, marriage banns and deaths, sometimes with extra information about an individual.

Previously published book and newspaper articles.

Bucks County Archives (at the Study Centre) in Aylesbury.

Starting to reconstruct the Adams family tree.....



Their Manor Houses

THE MANOR HOUSE with manorial rights and tithes was built around 1580 by Sir John Fortescue as his country retreat from Salden. Purchased and lived in by Thomas Adams, wife Elizabeth and their children in 1624.

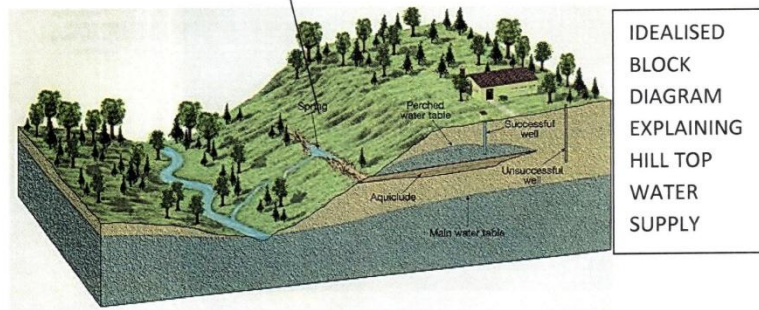
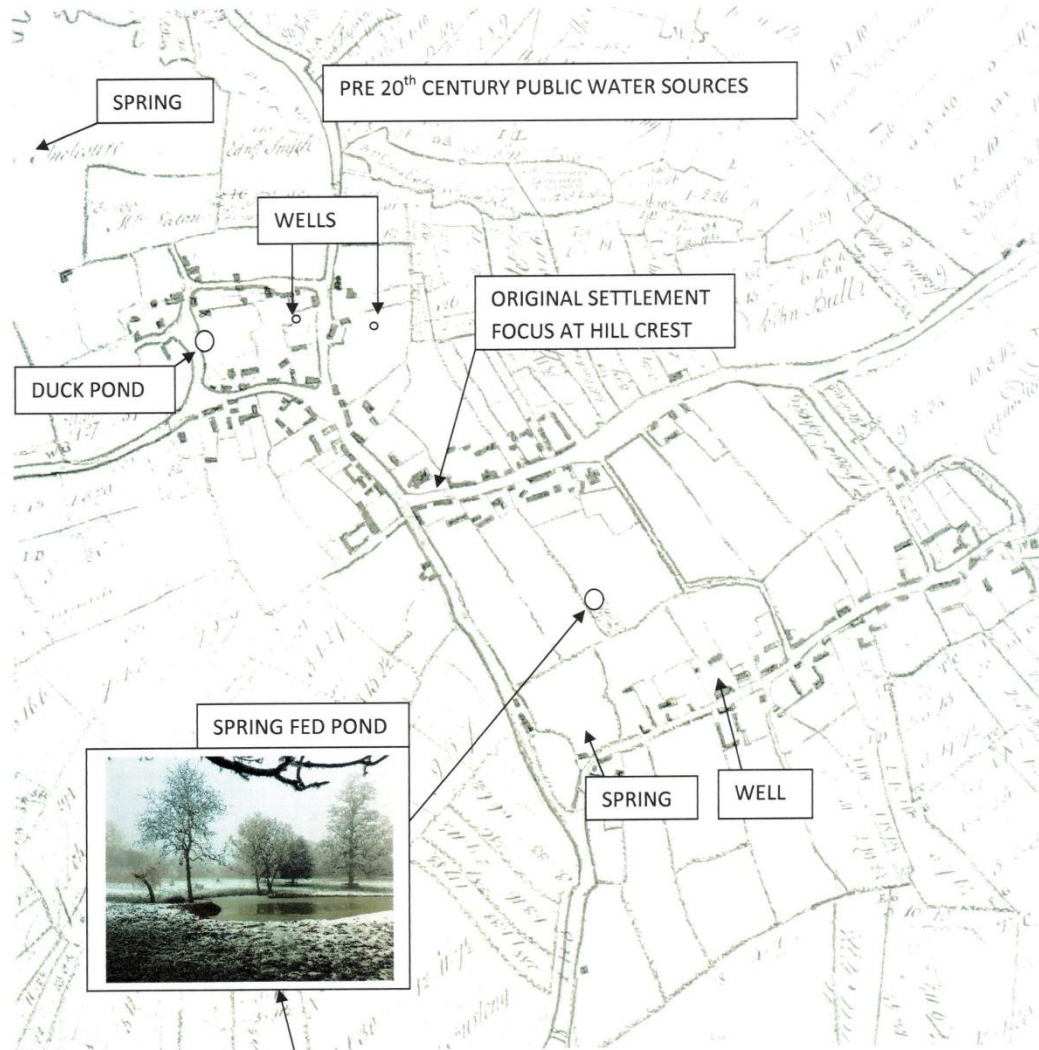


THE WHITE HOUSE (NOW THE OLD HOUSE) with manorial rights and tithes was purchased by John Adams and his wife Joanne (Willett) in 1624, who lived here with their daughters.



ADAMS FARM (NOW ATHAWES FARM).

Built on the land of a former leprous nunnery, probably granted to The Adams family in the 16th Century by Queen Elizabeth I.



ADAMS FAMILY - SPRING & FISHPOND WERE LIKELY TO BE ORIGINAL WATER SOURCES FOR THE OLD HOUSE

Robert Adams

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF ROBERT ADDAMES
OF SWANBORNE IN THE COUNTY OF BYCK
DECEASED THE 13 OF APRILL & WAS BYRIED
ON THE 14 OF APRILL 1616

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF ROBERT ADDAMES
OF SWANBORNE IN THE COUNTY OF BYCK
DECEASED THE 13 OF APRILL & WAS BYRIED
ON THE 14 OF APRILL 1616

THE SURVIVERS IS JOHN
THOMAS ADDAMES AND

THE SURVIVERS IS JOHN ADDAMES &
THOMAS ADDAMES AND ANNES ADDAMES

TO ^EY^E MEMORY
OF MARY DAUGHTER OF
ROBERT ADAMS OF ^NTHIS
PARISH GENT: & ELIZABETH
HIS WIFE; WHO DEPARTED THIS
LIFE OF ^EY^E SMALL POX IN LONDON
IAN: ^{RY}Y: ^EJ6: TH1725: IN: ^EY: THJ9: YEAR
OF HER AGE WHOSE BODY
LYES BENEATH INTERRD WITH
HER ANCESTORS: WE TRUST
FOR A GLORIOUS RESURRECTION
WHEN, THO[^] NOT ANGEL MADE, IN HEAVEN SHALL SHE
IF UERTUOUS FOUND, WITH ANGELS EQUAL BE.
HERE LYES A PROOF: ^TY: YOUTH NOR WIT CAN BE
DEFENCE ENOUGH AGAINST MORTALITY.

Monuments immediately inside the Church

John Adams of Lutterworth by his last Will ordered this Monument to be erected
To the Memory of
Robert Adams and Elizabeth his Wife, by whom he had two Sons and two Daughters
John who married Mary Daughter of William Deverel Gent: died without Issue
Robert, Joan and Mary who all died unmarried
Matthew Brother of Robert Adams married Susanna Daug^r of Roger Adams of Little Horwood
by whom he had two Sons and one Daughter
Matthew who died unmarried
Mary married to Thomas Gattaker Attorney at Law died without Issue
John who settled at Lutterworth in the County of Leicester died 3 May 1763
He married Elizabeth Daughter of Thomas Matthew
of Daventry in the County of Northampton Banker
by whom he had one Son Thomas Matthew
who died in the 20th Year of his Age
at Fort S^t Davids in the East Indies
and was buried in the English burying Ground there
Elizabeth the Wife of John Adams died 23 March 1758.

SACRED

To the Memory of

JAMES ADAMS, Esq^r;

Lord of this manor.

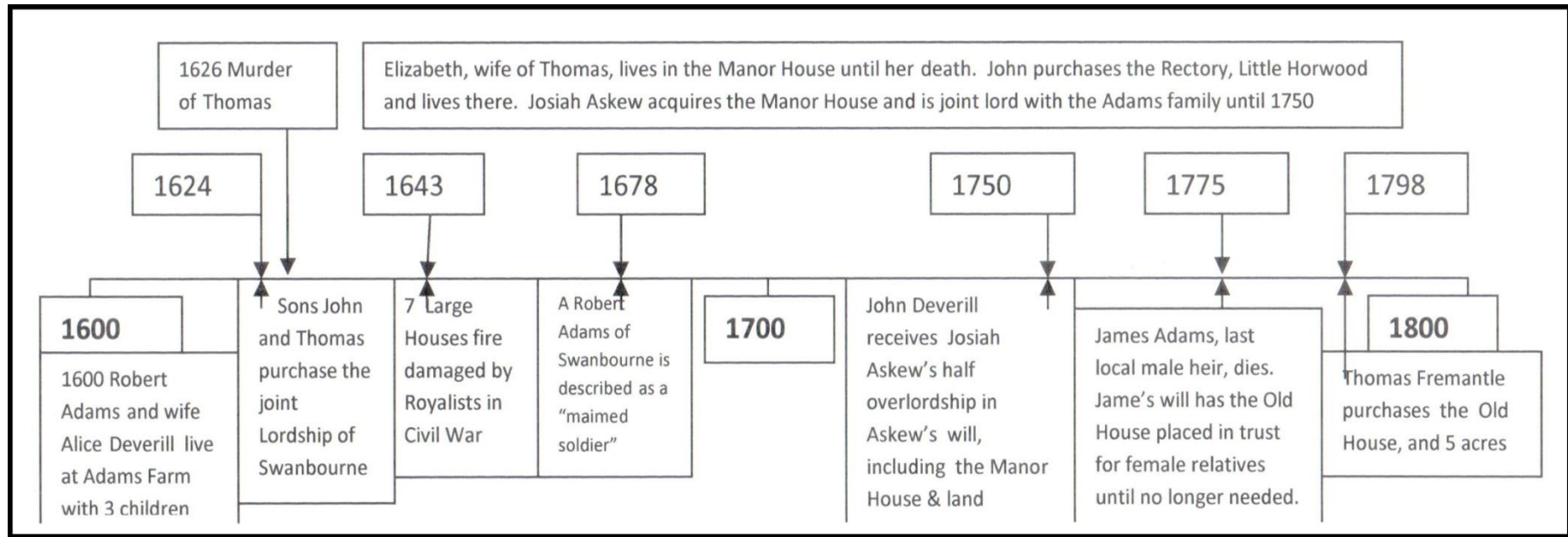
He was the last surviving Son
Of the late *ROGER ADAMS*, Gent.;

And *SUSANNA* his Wife
Of Little-Horwood in this County;

His mortal Remains
Lie interred near this Place.

He exchanged this Life
For a better, Oct^r the 5th, 1775,
Aged 59 Years.

The 17th Century Time Line



New information from the will of Robert Adams, Bachelor of Physic

of ffinne pound of currant Engliff Monney to be paid vnto him with his
and bequeath to my deare and louinge Mother Elizabeth Askeue All the residue
of ffinne and bequeath vnto my louinge Brother Richard Askeue All the residue
of ffinne of currant Engliff Monney to be paid vnto him within one halfe year
to each of my two other Brothers Thomas Askeue and Josias Askeue. I doe
saie summe of ffinne pound I will paye and vnto them severally within a
year and bequeath to my deare Aunt Isabell Cooke of Eghenley in the
pound of currant Engliff monney to be paid vnto her within one Moneth
yeare discharging and all my debte fully satisfied and paid I doe
testate to my louinge Brother Thomas Adams Bachelor of Physic
Our witnessse wherof I have hereunto subscribed my name and seale

Who was Matthew Adams?

1781
This is the last will & Testament of me Matthew Adams of
Swanburn in the County of Bucks Gentleman writing at
former will by me made first I give & devise all that my
Messuage or Mansion house wherein I now live & situate in
Swanburn aforesaid with all houses Outhouses Barns
& stable Outlands Gardens Backsides & Appurtenances to the same
belonging

belonging & all other my household, Messuages Cottages
Land & Tenement & Hereditament whatsoever situate lying
& being in Swandunw aforesaid whereof I am now seised
on any way & Intituled unto to my loving brother John
Adam & his heirs & Assignes for ever. I also give & devise
to my said Brother John Adam & his heirs & Assignes
all my household Land & Tenement whatsoever in
Swandunw aforesaid. And I do hereby constitute & appoint
my said Brother John Adam sole Executor of this my
last will & Testament to whom I give all my Goods Chattels
& personall Estate whatsoever Nevertheless my will &

The Inscription and monument to Josias Askew

Near this Place lies interr'd
the Body of *JOSIAS ASKEW*
Lord of the Prior Moiety
of this Mannor;
who died April ^e 15th 1750;
aged 94 Years.

READER

The deceas'd above mention'd,
was a constant Church man,
a good Master to a poor Man,
a sincere Friend to those who
would obey his Instructions.

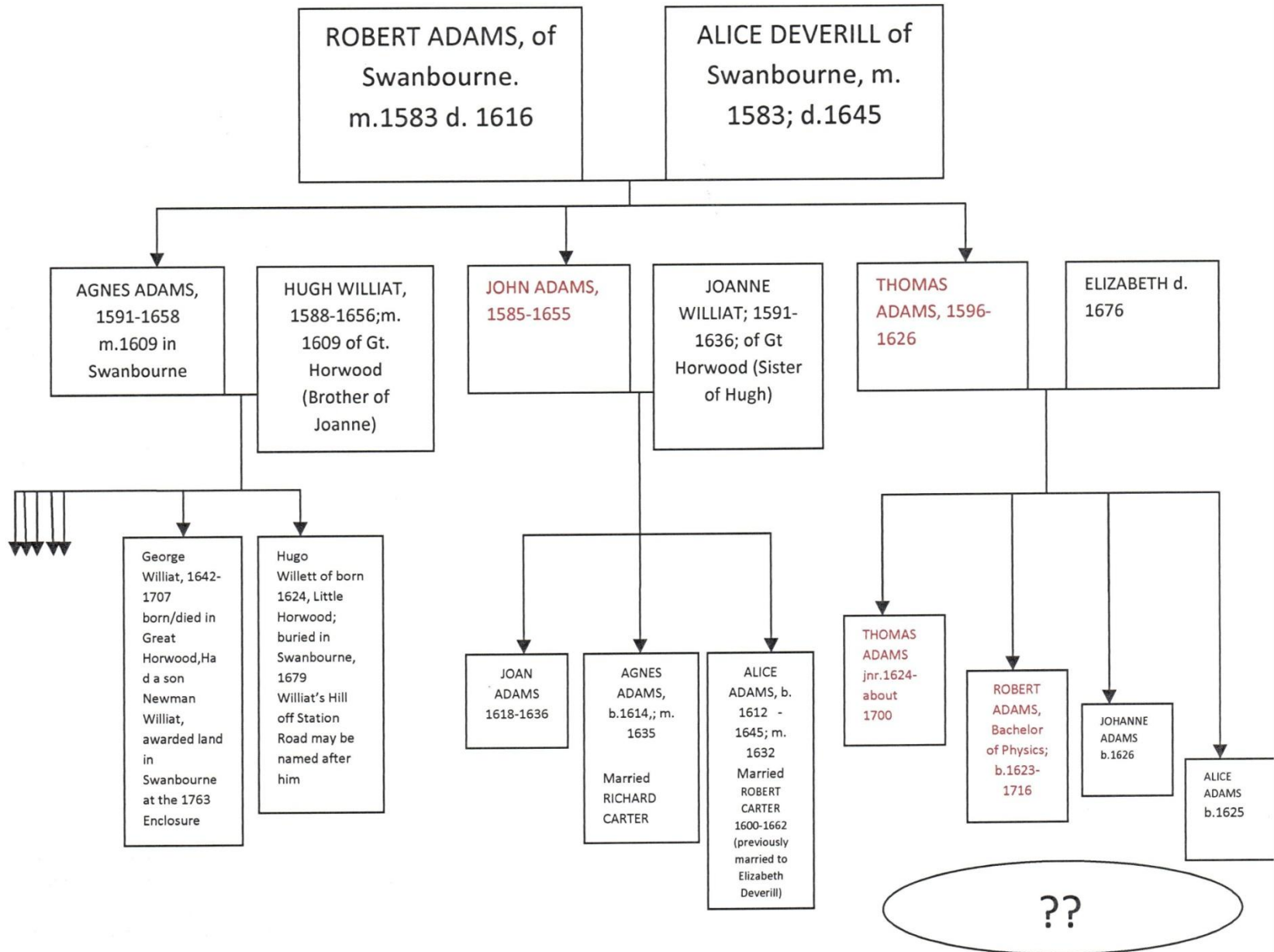
AND

what more, the last Day will
determine.

James Williamson's property

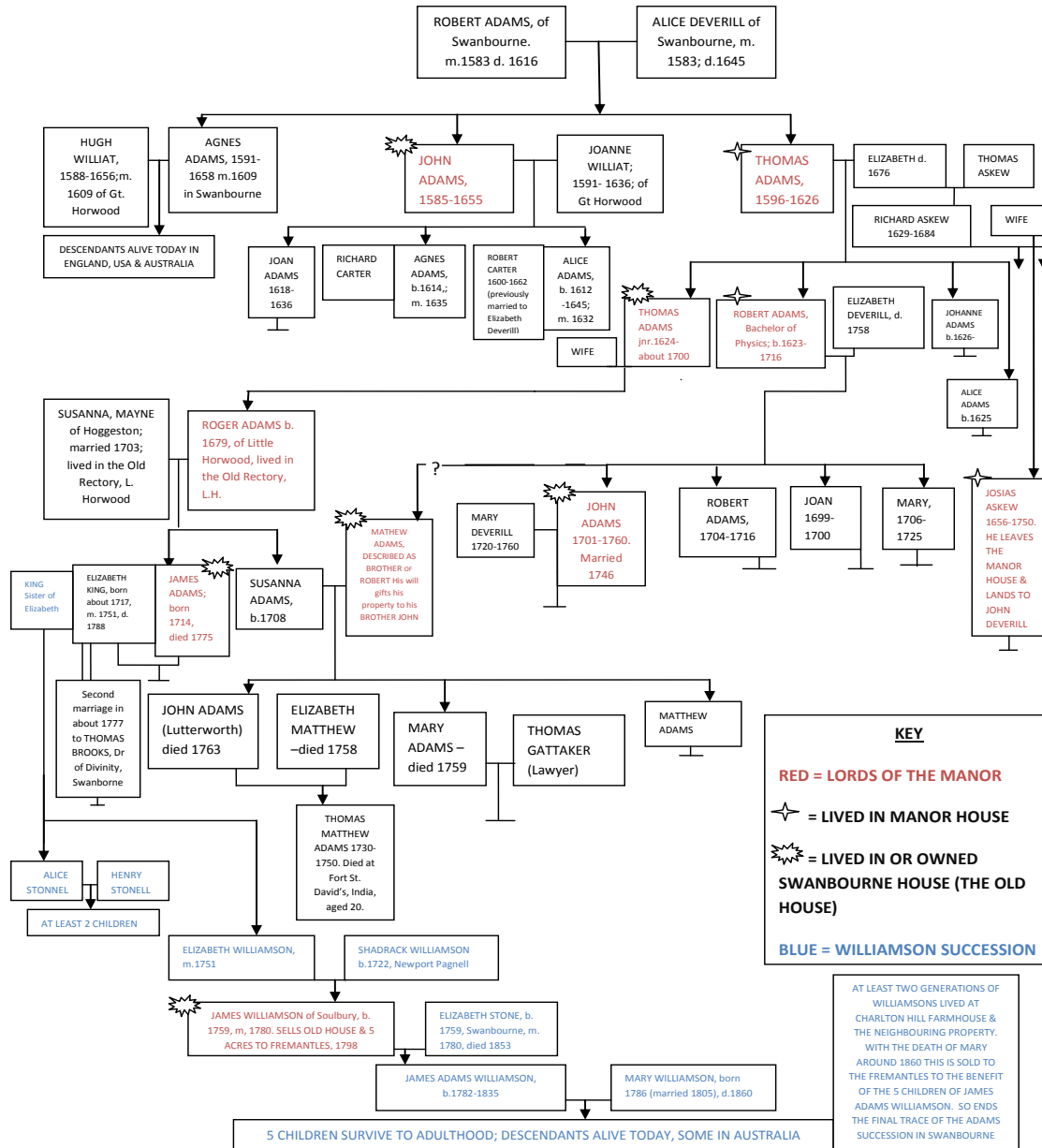


Starting to reconstruct the Adams family tree.....



Summary of the Adams Family Tree

Lords of the Manor of Swanbourne, 1624-1775





The 1762 Pre- Enclosure Map



The End