

Denne

Origins of the Denne Family Name

In Saxon Britain, “dennes” were rough clearings which threaded through the woodlands of the Kentish Weald and gave free passage to livestock between areas of pasturage. The dennes also provided a sort of woodland pasture, especially for swine. Thus, the Denne name may be of Saxon origin; i.e., one who lived near or made use of a denne.

It has also been suggested that the name may come from the Norman French “Dene” meaning “the Dane”; thereby suggesting a Scandinavian or Viking origin for the Denne Family.

The Arms of de Dene or Denne circa 1050 are described as “Azure three leopards heads, couped, or”; which means “a blue shield with three gold leopard faces.” This Coat of Arms was authenticated at the Heralds College from the original manuscript by the personal inspection Frederick Slater on December 8th 1880.



England in the 11th Century

Edward the Confessor was born in 1002, son of King Æthelred the Unrede and Emma of Normandy, who was a sister of Richard II “the Good”, 4th Duke of Normandy. Following the invasion of England and the victory in 1013 of the Danish King Sweyn Forkbeard, it was natural that King Æthelred, his wife Emma and their family sought refuge in the court of Emma’s brother, Richard “the Good”. They certainly took retainers with them, and it is possible that a member of the Denne family was included.

However, Sweyn Forkbeard was never actually crowned King of England; and when he died on February 3, 1014, the Witan recalled Æthelred who reigned until his death on April 23, 1016. Emma returned to England as well. Following the death of Æthelred, she married the Danish King Canute; who, incidently, proved to be a fair and honest king who provided a reign of peace with honour for Anglo Saxons and Scandanavians alike. Emma’s son, the young Edward the Confessor, remained in Normandy until he was invited to return to England in 1041 by his half brother and Canute’s successor, the childless King Hardecanute. Thus, Edward the Confessor spent much of his childhood in Normandy, was educated there, and was in many respects a Norman. He was proclaimed King of England following Hardecanute’s death in 1042.

Saxon England was not a feudal state to the extent that Normandy was. The King was served by a national militia plus his own retainers. The earls were as powerful as the king himself, and were rivals as often as allies. In order to strengthen his hold on the crown and to prevent the Saxon earls from becoming too influential, King Edward the Confessor gave fiefs to Norman lords. One of these Norman lords was Robert de Dene; and although it cannot be proven, it is possible that he was a descendant, perhaps a son, of a Saxon retainer who had accompanied the family of King Æthelred of England and his queen, Emma of Normandy, into exile almost thirty years before. It would appear just as likely that he was of Norwegian (Viking) and Norman ancestry. However, regardless of his exact ancestry, Robert de Dene was a Norman who held large estates in Sussex and Kent as well as in Normandy. He was “pincerna”, a household official in charge of wine, beverages and food service to King Edward the Confessor. It is with this Robert de Dene that our Denne Family Genealogy begins.

Generation One

Robert de Dene, a Norman, had large estates in Sussex and Kent as well as in The Duchy of Normandy. He was “pincerna”, a household official in charge of wines, beverages and service of food to King Edward the Confessor (1042 – 1066). Kings and nobles lived in constant fear of being poisoned; hence the position of pincerna was one of considerable importance and trust.

Robert de Dene had a son:

- **Robert de Dene**, mentioned next.

Generation Two

Robert de Dene who had a son and heir:

- **Ralph de Dene**, mentioned next.

Generation Three

Ralph de Dene, Lord of Buckhurst in Sussex, possessed large estates in Sussex and Kent.

Living: during the reign of William the Conqueror (1066 – 1087)

Married: Sybella de Gatton, sister of Robert de Gatton.

Ralph de Dene and Sybella de Gatton had the following children:

- **Robert de Dene**, mentioned next.
- Ella de Dene who married Sir Jordan Sackville, ancestor of the Dukes of Dorset. Ella inherited Buckhurst and other estates in Surrey. In her widowhood, she endowed Bayham Abbey.

Generation Four

Robert de Dene

Born circa 1130

Robert inherited the Kentish Estates. He married Sybylla and they had the following children:

- **William de Denn**, mentioned next.
- Alice de Denn who endowed Bayham Abbey.
- Agnes who married De Icklisham.

Generation Five

William de Denn of Denn Hill, in the Parish of Kingston on Barham Downs, Kent, had a son:

- **Sir Alured de Denn**, mentioned next.

Generation Six

Sir Alured de Denn of Denn Hill.

Living “19 Henry III”, i.e., 1234

Sir Alured de Denn had three leopard heads caboshed (i.e., three leopard “faces”) on his seal; and was known as a person of great learning. He was Seneschal (the official who governed the overall operation of the household) of the Priory Christ Church of Canterbury and Escheater of

Kent in 1234. He was appointed by King Henry III (1216 – 1272), in conjunction with Sir Henry de Bath, to enforce the the Laws of Romney Marsh, which extends for some 25 miles along the coast from Folkstone to Rye and runs 10 miles inland to Appledore, linking the two counties of Sussex and Kent. It is a flat, remote, hazy expanse, reclaimed from the sea and intersected by a tangled network of roads and waterways that connect the myriads of small towns, villages and isolated hamlets.

Sir Alured de Denn had the following sons:

- **Walter Denne**, mentioned next.
- George Denne
- John Denne

Generation Seven

Walter Denne of Denne Hill, living in 1256, had a son:

- **Walter Denne**, mentioned next.

Generation Eight

Walter Denne of Denne Hill, living in the 9th Edward I (1281) had a son:

- **John Denne**, mentioned next.

Generation Nine

John Denne of Denne Hill, living in 1308, had a son:

- **Sir William (or Walter) Denne**, mentioned next.

Generation Ten

Sir William (or Walter) Denne Knight of Denne Hill, sat in Parliament for the City of Canterbury in 19 Edward II (1326) and for the County of Kent in 14 Edward III (1341).

Sir William married to Elizabeth de Gatton, daughter and co-heiress of Hamo de Gatton of Boughton, and they had a son:

- **Richard Denne**, mentioned next.

Generation Eleven

Richard Denne of Denne Hill was living in 6 Richard II (1383).

Richard married to Agnes Apuldrefield, a daughter of (?) Apuldrefield of Challock. This ancient family is descended from Henry de Apuldrefield of Apuldrefield in Coudham who, with other Kentish gentlemen, fought with King Richard I at the Siege of Acre in Palestine.

Richard and Agnes had the following sons:

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Denne, mentioned next. • Michael Denne | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Denne • Robert (or Richard) Denne |
|---|---|

Generation Twelve

Thomas Denne of Denne Hill married Isabel de Earde, daughter and heiress of Robert de Earde; and they had had 2 sons:

- **John Denne**, mentioned next.
- Thomas Denne who died without issue in 1468.

Generation Thirteen

John Denne of Denne Hill married Alice Ardren, daughter of Richard Ardren (or Ardearne); and they had the following children:

- **Michael (or Alured) Denne**, mentioned next.
- Thomas Denne who married Agnes Eshehurst, daughter of William Eshehurst, and had a daughter:
 - Avice Eshehurst who married John Crispe, of Queux, in the Isle of Thanet.
- Parnell Denne who married William Keale.

Generation Fourteen

Michael (or Alured) Denne Esq. of Denne Hill

Living during the reigns of Edward IV (1461 – 1483) and Henry VII (1485 – 1509)

Michael married to Christian Combe of Lypne, an heiress. Her maiden name may have been Christian Fort who was born circa 1440 at Lypne, Kent. Regardless of her exact ancestry, Christian and Michael had the following children:

- **Thomas Denne**, mentioned next.
- William Denne
- John Denne of Lypne, Kent who had four sons:
 - Michael, Henry, John and Peter
- Michael Denne who had two sons, both of whom died without issue:
 - Henry and Edmund
- Isabella who married Simon Quilter, of Staple.

Generation Fifteen

Thomas Denne Esq. of Denne Hill

Thomas married Alice Eshehurst (or Ashurst) and they had three sons:

- Thomas Denne, of Denne Hill, who married Alicia Mett, daughter of Thomas Mett
- **William Denne**, mentioned next.
- James Denne, of Marley (died at Kingston in 1574) who married Agnes.

Generation Sixteen

William Denne Esq. of Kingston, Kent, proprietor of extensive estates there.

Died on October 21, 1572.

William married Agnes Tufton (died in 1588), daughter of Nicholas Tufton, Esq. of Northiam Place, Sussex who was the great grandfather to the first Earl of Thanet.

William Denne and Agnes Tufton had the following children:

- Vincent Denne of Kingston, LL.D. (died in 1591) who married Joan Kettell of London
- Thomas Denne of Adisham, a bencher of Lincoln's Inn in 1590, who married Jane Swift.
- Mary Denne who married first to John Coppin of Deal (or Deale), and second Thomas Boys of Eythorne in Kent.
- **Catherine Denne**, mentioned next.

Generation Seventeen

Catherine Denne

Catherine married John Gookin, Lord of the Manor of Ripple Court, Kent. John was the son of Thomas Goolkyn (or Goolken) of Bekesbourne, Kent (died in 1599) and grandson of Arnold Gookin (or Gokin), probably of Canterbury, Kent who was born as early as the reign of King Henry VII (1485 - 1509).

Catherine Denne and John Gookin had the following children:

- Thomas Gookin, Lord of the Manor of Ripple Court who married Jane Thurston.
- John Gookin who married Anne Brett.
- Daniel Gookin who died an infant.
- **Daniel Gookin**, 2nd, mentioned next.
- Sir Vincent Gookin who married 1st to Mary Wood and 2nd to Judith Crooke.
- Ann Gookin.
- Elizabeth Gookin who died an infant.
- Elizabeth Gookin, 2nd.
- Catharine Gookin who married Thomas Milton.
- Margaret Gookin who married Thomas Marshe.

Generation Eighteen

Daniel Gookin of Carriagaline, Ireland.

Born at Ripple on October 28, 1582.

Died in February or March 1632/3 at the Red Abbey, parish of St. Finn Barr, Cork City, Ireland.

Daniel Gookin lived in Kent, and emigrated to Virginia in 1621, but he returned to England and then to Ireland in the spring of 1622 following a great Indian massacre on March 22, 1622.

There is no evidence to indicate that he ever returned to the New World.

Daniel married on January 31, 1608/9 in Canterbury Cathedral, County Kent to Mary Byrd. Mary was a daughter of Richard Byrd, Canon at Canterbury Cathedral and Elizabeth Meye who was in turn a daughter of John Meye, Bishop of Carlisle. Mary's birth and death dates are unknown, but she was buried at Bitton in Gloucestershire on July 27, 1635.

Daniel Gookin and Mary Byrd had the following sons:

- Richard Gookin, of St. Finn Barr, County Cork, Ireland was born about 1609 and died before 1655. He was evidently the father of:
 - John Gookin of St. Dunstan's in the East, London. John was a mariner. He married Mrs. Francis Pitt of Stepney, Middlesex, a widow age about 23, on November 21, 1665. John was about 28 at that time.
- Edward (or Edwine) Gookin, born at Ripple on June 23, 1611 and died young.
- **{Major General} Daniel Gookin**, mentioned next.
- John Gookin who was perhaps a twin of Daniel.
- Edward Gookin who was born probably in 1615 and died unmarried before 1655. This could be the same Edward, a "son of Daniel and Mary Gookin" who was christened on September 24, 1628 at London, St. Botolph, Bishopgate.

Generation Nineteen

{Major General} Daniel Gookin

Born in 1612, Kent of County Cork, Ireland

Died on March 19 or 30, 1686/87

Daniel was granted a license to marry his 2nd wife Mary Dolling in 1639 when he was in London. In 1641 he went with his wife and infant son to Nanse Plantation, Virginia. On May 20, 1644 he arrived in Boston

{Major General} Daniel Gookin had three marriages:

- First Marriage: Details unknown. There must have been a first marriage because Daniel was referred to as "a widower" at the time of his second marriage in 1639.
- Second Marriage: to Mary Dolling in 1639, of the parish of St. Dunstan in the West, London. Mary was a spinster, aged about 21, whose parents were dead. Mary died in 1683.
- Third Marriage: to Hannah (Tyng) Savage about 1684.

{Major General} Daniel Gookin and Mary Dolling had the following children:

- Samuel Gookin, born probably in England by 1640 and died in Virginia before 1644
- Mary Gookin, (1642 - 1702) who married Edmund Batter.
- **Elizabeth Gookin**, mentioned next.
- Hannah Gookin, born at Roxbury, Massachusetts on May 9, 1647 and died an infant on August 2, 1647.
- Daniel Gookin, born at Cambridge, Massachusetts on April 8, 1649 and died an infant on September 3, 1649.
- {Rev} Daniel Gookin, (1650 - 1717) who married 1st in 1681 to Elizabeth Quincy (1656 - 1691), a daughter of {Colonel} Edmund Quincy (1627 - 1697/98) and his first wife Joanna Hoar. {Rev} Daniel's sister Elizabeth had married in 1680 to {Colonel} Edmund Quincy, thus {Rev} Daniel's first wife was his sister's step daughter. {Rev} Daniel married 2nd to Bethia Collicut.
- {Sheriff} Samuel Gookin, (1652 - 1730) who married 1st to Mary and 2nd to Hannah Sterns.

- Solomon Gookin, born at Cambridge, Massachusetts on 20 June 20, 1654 and died an infant on July 16, 1654.
- {Rev} Nathaniel Gookin who married in 1685 to Hannah Savage, a daughter of the widow Hannah (Tyng) Savage who had married about a year earlier to his father. Thus, Nathaniel married his father's step daughter.

Generation Twenty

Elizabeth Gookin

Born on March 14, 1645 at Boston, County Suffolk, Massachusetts

Baptized on March 30, 1645 in Roxbury, County Suffolk, Massachusetts

Died in 1700

Elizabeth married 1st to {Rev} John Elliot, Jr. She married 2nd to 1680 {Col} Edmund Quincy (1627 - 1697/98) who had a previous marriage to Joanna Hoar.

Elizabeth Gookin and {Col} Edmund Quincy had a son:

- **{Judge} Edmund Quincy** (See *Quincy*, Generation Twenty)

For the continuation of this line, see *Quincy*, Generation Twenty

Sources

The information for the Denne Genealogy is primarily a result of exhaustive investigations by the late Sewell V. Sample (1928 – 2005), who listed his sources as follows:

John Burke: *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*, London (1838) Vol III, pp. 19-21

The Visitation of Kent, 1619, Harleian Society

William Berry: *County Genealogies. Pedigrees of the families in the County of Kent*, London: Sherwood, Gibert, and Piper, 1830, pg. 194 & 195

Additional Information comes from:

Richard N. Gookins, *An Historical and Genealogical Sketch of The Gookin Family of England, Ireland and America*, Tacoma, Washington, 1952.

E. E. Salisbury, *Family Memorials*, Privately Printed, 1885, pages 381 – 383

The Gookin pedigree chart from E. E. Salisbury's *Family Memorials*, Privately Printed, 1885.

Janet Denne of Australia who has kindly shared information from an unpublished manuscript on the history of the Denne Family written by Frederick Slater and dated 1880.

