

Dummer and Pyldren

Early History and the Dummer Name

The Dummer name originates with the Village of Dummer in northern Hampshire that takes its name from the Old English words “Dun” (hill) and “Mer” (lake or water). There is to-day a hill known as Dummer Hill, but there is no lake or pond. It has been suggested that perhaps the pond dried up long ago. The earliest people bearing the Dummer name used it in the form “de Dummer” (or Domer, Dumer, etc.) to mean “from Dummer”. For example, Geoffrey de Dummer was “Geoffrey from Dummer” to distinguish himself from other Geoffreys.

Strictly speaking, the Dummer name should have died out in the 14th century when the heiress Ellen de Dummer married Sir Nicholas Atte More; but their descendants adopted the Dummer name. The same situation appears to have arisen in the 16th century when Matilda Dummer married Richard Pyldren; but once again the descendants seem to have adopted the Dummer name.

The arms of Dummer are “Azure, a crescent between six billets 3, 2 and 1, Or” which means “a blue shield with gold crescent in the middle of 6 gold bars arranged in rows of 3, 2 and 1”

A possible early Dummer genealogy is as follows:

1. **Odin de Windsores** (fl. 1086) was Chamberlain to William the Conqueror. He is also referred to as Odo of Winchester and is said to have been a Saxon landowner who survived the Norman Conquest.
2. **Hungar** (fl. 1086) who is shown in the “History of the County of Hampshire” simply as “Hungar” but shown elsewhere as “Hungar FitzOdin”, and is therefore perhaps a son of Odin de Windsores. Hungar may simply have been a tenant of Odin de Windsores from whom he held the manor of East Dummer.
3. **Henry de Domera** (living 1107 - 1128) is thought to have been a son or perhaps a grandson of Hungar FitzOdin. Evidence for this connection is:
 - o Henry de Domera owned exactly the same houses in Winchester that were previously owned by Hungar with no known owners in between.
 - o The names “Hungar” and “Dummer” or “Domera” sound something alike.

Regardless of his forebears, our genealogy begins with Henry de Domera, known to be living in the early 12th Century and who is shown under “Generation One” next.

Generation One

Henry de Domera, living 1107 - 1128 had a son:

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



Generation Two

Ralph de Dummera

Living 1148

Died before 1205

Married to Agnes de la Penne, heiress of Penne, Somerset; which place was afterwards known as Penne-Domer, and still exists as Pendomer, situated about four miles southwest of Yeovil and four miles east of Crewkerne, Somerset.

Ralph and Agnes had the following children:

- **Henry de Dummer**, mentioned next.
- Robert de Dummer who married and had children. The line terminated in an heiress circa 1350
- Geoffry, who became a priest and was the parson of Dummer in Hampshire.

Generation Three

Henry de Dummer had the following children:

- **Sir William de Dummer**, mentioned next.
- two daughters

Generation Four

Sir William de Dummer, living 1213 - 1243

Sir William married Sibilla de Caune, a sister of Herbert de Caune, lord of the manor of Drayton, Hampshire and they had a son:

- **Sir John de Dummer**, mentioned next.

Generation Five

Sir John de Dummer, living 1268 - 1320

Sir John married a sister of Sir William Paynel, Baron Paynel, and they had the following children:

- **Thomas de Dommer**, mentioned next.
- Richard de Dommer (d.s.p., *decessit sine prole*, died without issue.)
- John de Dommer who married and had children. John succeeded to the estate in Pendomer, Somerset; his grandson and last male heir sold this estate in 1408. The line terminated in co-heiresses in the early 15th century.

Generation Six

Thomas de Dommer succeeded to the family estate in Dummer, Hampshire.

Died in 1316

Thomas married Joan, and they had the following children:

- John de Dummer (d.s.p.)
- **Thomas de Dummer**, mentioned next

Generation Seven

Thomas de Dummer was a minor in 1318, was living in 1349, and had a daughter:

- **Ellen de Dummer**, mentioned next.

Generation Eight

Ellen de Dummer, heiress of Thomas de Dummer

Ellen married first to Sir Nicholas Atte More, and they had a son:

- **Thomas At More**, alias **Thomas Dummer**, mentioned next.

Ellen married secondly to William Farley, who was living in 1395.

Generation Nine

Thomas At More, alias **Thomas Dummer** had a son:

- **Henry Dummer**, mentioned next.

Generation Ten

Henry Dummer, living in 1428, married and had a son:

- **Robert Dummer of Dummer**, mentioned next.

Generation Eleven

Robert Dummer of Dummer, Hampshire, Lord of the Manor and Patron of the Church of Dummer, Hampshire in 1450 and 1462.

Robert had two sons:

- George of Dummer who died before 1510. His only daughter, an heiress, married Thomas Tottishurst of Kent.
- **Henry Dummer of Dummer**, mentioned next.

Generation Twelve

Henry Dummer of Dummer who died in 1516

Henry married first to a daughter of Thomas Starling, and they had a son:

- Richard, living in 1524 - 1525 who had the following children:
 - Joane Dummer (d.s.p.)
 - John Dummer (d.s.p.)
 - William At More (alias Dummer), born on February 13, 1508/09, was for fifty years Clerk of the Lord Mayor's Court and Comptroller of the Cahmaber of London. He died in 1593 and was buried at Dummer on July 11, 1593. William married Kinborough Brydges, a daughter of Edmund Brydges of London, and they had a son:

- Richard who died an infant. Professor Salisbury reports in his *Family Memorials*, pg. 216 & 217 that there is a brass plate in the East wall of the Chancel of the Dummer Church with an inscription, part of which reads:
 - “Within this tounge lyethe buryed ye bodye of William at More al’s Dommer Esquyre borne the xiiith daye of Februarye Anno 1508 . . .
 - “ . . . he maryed Kinborowe Daughter of Edmunde Brydges . . .
 - “ . . . had issue betwene them a sonne who died in his infancie.”

Henry Dummer of Dummer married second to Alice Franklin, and they had two children:

- Margaret Dummer
- John Dummer (died on January 1, 1570/71) who had the following children:
 - two sons who died infants
 - Rose Dummer who married John Edmonds of London in 1561
 - Joan Dummer (died in 1605) who married at Dummer on October 5, 1561 to John Cocke

A Gap in the Dummer Line

There is at this point, according to Mr. Salisbury, “a gap that cannot be bridged”, but supposed to have been filled by marriages of Dummer daughters to gentlemen who assumed the Dummer name. The next to appear is John Dummer, Reeve of Overton, Hampshire, living 1471 - 1506.

Some overly enthusiastic family historians bridge this gap by claiming that Richard, the son of William At More and Kinborough Brydges, (shown above) did not die an infant; and is Richard Dummer (or Pyldryn) who married Matilda Dummer and had a son John Pyldren as shown in Generation Two below. However, William At More was born on February 13, 1508/09 and John Pyldren married Joane Smith on October 5, 1541. Were the gap bridged in this fashion, there would be only 32 years between the birth of William At More and the marriage of his grandson John Pyldren to Joane Smith! Clearly, this could not be so.

Dummer – Pyldren Line Continued

Next to appear is John Dummer, Reeve of Overton in Hampshire in 1471. His ancestry has not been determined; but his daughter was most likely Matilda (or Maude) Dummer who married Richard Pyldren of Owlsebury and Overton.

The arms of Pyldren are “azure, three fleurs de lis Or, on a chief of the second a demi-lion of the first” which means “a blue shield with three gold fleurs de lis, and at the top a gold bar with a blue half lion.”



Generation One

John Dummer of Overton, Hampshire, living 1471 – 1506. Strong evidence suggests he had a daughter:

- **Matilda Dummer**, or Maude Dummer, mentioned next.

Generation Two

Matilda Dummer who appears very likely to have been to be the heiress of John Dummer. Matilda married Richard Pyldren of Owlsebury and Overton, Hampshire (died before 1540/41) Richard apparently also used the names Pyldrem, Domer and Dummer.

Richard is referred to in various documents as “Richard Pyldren alias Domer” and “Richard Dummer alias Pyldren”. Matilda (or Maude) is referred to as “Mawde Pillgryme” in other documents. Thus, it is not entirely certain who was “Dummer” and who was “Pyldren” in this relationship. However, the preponderance of evidence would seem to indicate that Matilda Dummer, daughter of John Dummer of Overton, married Richard Pyldren of Owlsebury and Overton as shown here.

Professor Salisbury wrote: “At all events, this Richard Pyldren and Maude his wife are the earliest ancestors, of whom we can be absolutely certain, of the Dummers of New England, and of Bishopstoke and elsewhere in Hampshire.” (E. E. Salisbury, *Family Memorials*, Privately Printed, 1885, pages 216 & 217)

Matilda and Richard had the following sons, both named John. Although this seems strange to us to-day, two brothers with the same Christian name are of frequent occurrence for 300 years before this and perhaps 100 years after. It is unclear which John was the eldest:

- John Pyldren (or Pyldryn) who married at Newton Vance, Hampshire, on October 5, 1541 to Joane Smith, daughter of Robert and Agatha Smith. John Pyldren appears to have died without issue as no children are named in his will which was dated August 24, 1559 and was proved at Winchester on June 3, 1561.
- **John Pyldren** (or Pyldryn), mentioned next.

Generation Three

John Pyldren (or Pyldryn) of Overton and Durley, Hampshire.

Died in December 1574

John married Alice, who survived him, but about whom little else is known. She may be “Alice Dummer, widow” who was buried at Durley on December 15, 1603, but this is uncertain.

John and Alice had the following children:

- John Dummer who is the ancestor of the Dummers of Durley, Hampshire.
- **Thomas Pyldrym** (or Dommer), mentioned next.
- Joan who married either Richard White or William Colebrook
- Margary who married either Richard White or William Colebrook.
- Alice who died in December 1568

Generation Four

Thomas Pyldrym (or Dommer) of Bishopstoke, Hampshire.

Living on September 24, 1625

Died before March 11, 1625/26

Thomas married Joane, and they had the following sons:

- John Dummer of Swathling, Hampshire who had issue:

- Thomas Dummer who married on August 2, 1659 to his cousin Mary Dummer.
- {Rev.} John Dummer who was unmarried.
- Edmund Dummer who married Barbara Cornelius.
- Anne Dummer who married Richard Chemish (or Kemish).
- Dorothy Dummer who married John Hunt.
- Elizabeth Dummer who married Robert Blake.
- Richard Dummer of Bishopstoke (1598 - 1678/79) who emigrated to New England and had issue:
 - {Rev.} Shubael Dummer who married in 1656 to Mary Rishworth. Shubael was shot at his own door on the occasion of a surprise attack on York by a large party of Indians and French Canadians in January 1691/92. His wife was carried into captivity.
 - Jeremiah Dummer who married Ann (or Hannah) Atwater; their son:
 - Governor William Dummer of Massachusetts who willed his mansion and 300 acre farm at Byfield, Massachusetts “for the endowment of a free grammar-school.” This was the earliest academy in New England, and was opened on February 27, 1763, with twenty-eight pupils. Until the early 21st century, it was known as “Governor Dummer Academy” at which time it was decided to change the name; probably because students were weary of being referred to as “Dummer (dumber) Students”, “Dummer Graduates” and so on. The initial suggestion for a new name was “The G.D.A.”; but this would almost certainly have become known as “The God Damned Academy”. The name was eventually changed to “The Governor’s Academy”.
 - Hannah Dummer who married Jeremiah Allen.
 - Richard Dummer who married Elizabeth Appleton and had issue:
 - Richard Dummer.
 - Nathaniel Dummer who married Sarah Moody; and from whom is descended Don Beattie whose family records helped with this genealogy.
 - William Dummer.
- Thomas Dummer of Dummer Park who had issue:
 - Thomas Dummer who married Joane.
 - Joane Dummer who married Thomas Nelson of Rowley, Massachusetts.
 - Margaret Dummer who married Job Clements.
 - Susan Dummer.
 - Hester Dummer.
 - Jane Dummer who married Mr. Carter.
 - Mary Dummer who married on August 2, 1659 to her cousin Thomas Dummer.
- **Stephen Dummer or Pyldrym**, mentioned next.

Generation Five

Stephen Dummer or Pyldrym of Bishopstoke, Hampshire who emigrated to New England with his wife Alice Archer and their children aboard the *Bevis*, circa 1638. They returned to England in 1646/47. Stephen died in 1670.

Stephen married Alice Archer, and they had the following children:

- Stephen Dummer (1621 - 1695) who married Alice Matthew and had issue:

- Nathaniel Dummer, d.s.p. æt 81
- Stephen Dummer and a twin, both died as infants.
- Mary Dummer who married Mr. Young.
- Stephen Dummer (born 1670) who married Ann Colebrook and had issue:
 - Thomas Dummer (b.1700) who married Mary Osman and from whom is descended Paul S. Monks whose family records helped with this genealogy.
- Sarah Dummer who married Thomas Storke.
- Jane Dummer.
- Samuel Dummer who married Rebecca.
- Richard Dummer who died unmarried.
- Thomas Dummer who married and had issue:
 - Stephen Dummer.
- Nathaniel Dummer who married Abigail and had issue:
 - Nathaniel Dummer who married Elizabeth.
 - Stephen Dummer, d.s.p. æt 31
 - John Dummer who died a child.
 - Abigail Dummer who married John Cosens.
 - Hester Dummer who married Thomas Eastman
 - Elizabeth Dummer who died a child.
 - Mary Dummer who married Walter Gater.
 - Sarah Dummer who married Mr. Weekes.
- **Jane Dummer**, mentioned next.
- Dorothy Dummer
- Mehetable Dummer, who appears in {Judge} Samuel Sewall's Diary as "Aunt Holt", married Mr. Holt and had issue:
 - Thomas Holt
 - Robert Holt
 - Jane Holt
 - Mehetable Holt
- Sarah Dummer who married and had 2 children.
- Ann Dummer, who appears in {Judge} Samuel Sewall's Diary as "Aunt Rider", married James Rider and had issue:
 - James Rider
 - John Rider
 - Ann Rider
 - Mary Rider
 - Deborah Rider

Generation Six

Jane Dummer

Born at Bishopstoke, Hampshire in 1628

Died at Newbury, Massachusetts on January 13, 1701, Æt 72.

Jane married to {Rev} **Henry Sewall III** (see *Sewall and Sewell*, Generation Four)

For the continuation of this line, see *Sewall and Sewell*, Generation Four.

Sources

{Judge} Samuel Sewall, *Diary*, 1674 - 1729

Prof. Edward Elbridge Salisbury, *Family Memorials*, published privately in 1885, pages 215 - 280

Michael Dummer: *The Family of Dummer*, published privately in June 2005 and kindly shared by John Rees

Don Beattie, *Letters*

Paul S. Monks, *Letters*, November & December 2004