

Newsletter

Volume Three - May 2017

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Welcome to the third edition of the newsletter for the Twyman One-Name Study. The past few months have certainly been informative, and have brought about a fairly significant development in my research. I full expect that this newsletter will be solely about this development given how ground-breaking it is for Twyman researchers everywhere, so without further ado I'll get to the point...

The Roots of the Surname

Long time followers of my research, and indeed those new to family history, will have asked the same question that I've been asking for a number of years now: and indeed I've worked on a number of theories, ranging from European connections to being derived from the *Twynam* surname of Hampshire (itself a variant of *Twineham*). My previous theories, however, appear to be false.

I'm sure that many readers will be aware that late last year a new surname dictionary was published, and a few months ago on a whim I decided to look up the Twyman name therein to see what it gave about the surname. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when it gave a clear origin, and one I'd not before considered - and there in black & white gave the theory that the Twyman surname was derived from an earlier name that is now extinct. *Twymmer*, and before that *de Twymere*. This for me is amazing, and was hiding in plain sight - given that the very earliest mentions of the name in Kent are spelt *Twimā* - itself not a far cry both in spelling & in pronunciation from *Twymmer*.

Naturally I've wanted to check out the evidence for myself, and must admit that there is still a missing keystone in connecting the two (for want of a better term) variants together - but this does seem to be the best theory yet, and has led to me re-evaluating my theories over the past few months.

So where does this leave things? For the most part things are unchanged - my findings of the family lines thus haven't been impacted on by this new evidence. What it has done, though, is open up possibilities. Possibilities that we might one day be able to take the surname at last back to where it began, and my latest research has been entirely into the *Twymere* spelling as you can imagine. I'm led to a point where I have a fair lineage drawn up for the generations between one *Walter de Twymere* around the 1260s & *John Twymmer* around the 1460s, but unfortunately & sadly there's a gap in the records - and the next reference I

have is not until the 1550s, with another *John Twymmer*. I'm hopeful that the later John will prove to be a descendant of the earlier John, but with a two or three generation gap it's not yet possible to make that connection.

The most frustrating part is also that this century gap in the record falls at exactly the point where the earliest "proper Twymans" (if you'll excuse the term) appear, and again while I'm hopeful that the end point is close, really at this moment it's being held away tantalising us all. One can't help but feel like Tantalus - surrounded by the waters of Tartarus, but the waters receding whenever you go to drink. The search goes on though, and hopefully a future newsletter will hold a report of the missing link.

Richard de Twymere - an attempted murder

For my profile of an "ancestor" this month I'd like to bring you one of the people I've come across in my research into the medieval records. In 1316 there was an incident in which a group of men (all bowmen in the service of one *Henry de Leybourne*) were sent out to search primarily for *Richard de Cantuaria* - the then Canon of Leeds. Under the service of the Canon was a young man of interest to our research - one *Richard de Twymere*, who at the time was living in Chatham. It is reported that in an attempt to locate the Canon & *de Twymere*, these men firstly stole a horse & cart - then later broke into the home of *de Twymere*, with the intention of murdering them both. Luckily *de Twymere* wasn't home at the time & them men settled with burgling his home, but clearly they must have been caught - as the incident came to court. Unfortunately I haven't yet come across the verdict of any trial, but *Richard de Twymere* must have survived - as there are later mentioned of him in the written records.

And that's it for now...

I think I'll draw this newsletter to a close. I could, with all honesty, go on for some time about what I've found about the *Twymere* line, but then I'd be here forever (the chapter in the book I'm writing is already at twenty pages).

Bye for now, and I expect I'll be bringing the next newsletter towards the end of the summer.

Take care all.

Simon Golding