

## **THE FILBY INHERITANCE FROM THE CLERE FAMILY**

*(As mentioned on The Royal Connection Family Tree)*

**Susan Filby usurped the rights of her brothers when she married Miles Filby - thus "assuming the Filby Name" for herself, which was the inheritance of properties and lands from her great Aunt Elizabeth Clere.**

From Samuel Filby's note book written between 1830/60

**QUOTE** "There unravelled a great deal concerning our family so I take the liberty to give you a brief sketch - the property in question belonged to the Cleres - in 1636 a Elizabeth Clere widow was Lady of the manors - The Cleres Title became extinct in 1621 - after the demise of Elizabeth Clere it reverted to a Edmund Filby Line - Edmund dying leaving a daughter who was Aunt to a Robert Filby, my great grandfathers father. This Robert Filby had two sons, Richard, and John, the daughter of Edmund Entailed the said property to Richard and John Filby. John died without issue and we are a direct line from Richard and want to find out the name of Edmund's daughters, the females who are buried in the Channel of Windham Church, and one daughter of Robert Filby by a second wife. Richard and John left home when young and never went home again, the eldest daughter Susan married a Miles Fablain, (who changed his name to Filby by 'sign manual') and she usurped the rights of her brothers and assumed the 'Filby Name'. Susan and her three children having died in 1737 this Miles lived a Widower and having no Heir he made in Favour of a William Filby, whose mother was cousin of Susan, on condition that he was to Name his first son Miles. This William Filby had a son November 1764, this Miles (nee Fablain) Filby adopted him and named him and invested money in his name in the Bank of England. This Miles (Fablain) Filby died in 1771 and William Filby went from London to take possession of Mattishall Hall in Norfolk and other Manors at the parish for his son Miles. At the Validity of the Will the other sister being alive commenced a Criminal Prosecution against William Filby and Ejected him of the Property. This Elizabeth was married her name was Moss, she got the property and 'Assumed the Filby Name', she died in 1775 and is buried in the channel of the Windham Church, she had two daughters and one married Robert Filby the other to a Isaacs. This Robert had a son who married and had a daughter they both died young and left this daughter which called herself an Heiress she had the Box of Filby Plate."

**This fascinating line of the Filbey Family Tree continues in the Filby Association Trees T01 & T02 and has been updated since this research was done.**

## **Researched for Enid and Alan Reginald Filbey - by Marion Filby (2005)**

Introduction:

I feel very honoured and privileged to have been given the opportunity to investigate further, the work of Alan's father, the late Leonard Henry Filbey 1908 -1972. I was entrusted with his 'priceless' collection of research notes, private letters and original family documents that he had accumulated during his lifetime.

Leonard is 1st cousin, 4 times removed from Samuel Filbey (born 1792). It was from Samuel that he inherited the original documents and letters that had been written during the mid-1800's, when Samuel had taken it upon him-self to follow in his grandfather's footsteps (William of Heston b1740) and seek out the Filby Inheritance.

The letters, being well over 150 years old are very fragile and discoloured. Great care has been taken to ensure their preservation for future generations. The handwriting is not always easy to decipher and the ancient wording takes time to appreciate its meaning.

Leonard Henry Filbey had transcribed many of the letters and Wills himself, which helped immensely. His file of literally hundreds of research letters to and from various people and establishments made extremely interesting reading and so unfolded the Filby saga.

Legal documents plus Wills, Birth, Marriage and Death certificates formed evidence of his findings, and aided by thorough searches of numerous Parish Records resulted in the accumulation of his family tree, which he had typed out and filed in book form. In the many years that Leonard had undertaken this challenge there was no easy or speedy way to acquire information, everything had to be requested from the authorities in writing, paid for, given time allowed for the search and arrival via Royal Mail. In one letter he had paid three guineas for a certificate!

Sadly, when Leonard died, he still had many unanswered questions; where did the Filby Inheritance go? What is the relationship between the Heston Filbeys and the Snailwell Filbys? (Spellings vary throughout) Where did the family originate? How do the Clere family related to Anne Boleyn connect to ours?

I began where Leonard left off - in the hope of answering his questions with the aid of modern technology, studying Leonard's work in minute detail and being fortunate enough to have the Filby Association files and records to cross reference his finding with my own. Leonard did all the ground work to which I have added what I believe to be some of the missing links with sufficient evidence to make them acceptable - but with family history everyone has their right to disagree.

Whilst I have been working on Leonard's files and reading his letters I have come to admire him greatly, and I feel saddened that I was not fortunate enough to have made his acquaintance. He was obviously a very determined family historian to pursue his quest over so many years. I cannot imagine the difficulties he must have had in piecing together the many names and dates without the aid of a computer - I doubt I would have persevered!

I have brought together his findings, added a great deal of new, checked and credible information from other sources and formed a Master Tree of which he would have been proud. Leonard's meticulous research has made it possible for me to hand over the product of our combined labours to his family in a format that will preserve both his and Samuel's work for posterity.

On the genealogy report I have added much of the information found from other Wills and legal documents in my possession, to read it is like reading a book and I would recommend it as a good read. It is a wonderful story about people and personalities, tragedies, disappointments and pleasures in the lives of this family. I feel I know them well!

In brief, here is one of the fascinating stories from this **Filby Family Saga**.

Elizabeth Filby, (born abt. 1595 in Mattishall Burgh, Norfolk) daughter of Edmund Filby, (abt. 1575) married into the Clere family. As the widow of Edward Clere she inherited great wealth from the 'Clere Filby' Estates. With no children to inherit the Clere Filby Estate, it meant the end of this 'Clere' line and she left all to her brother, Richard Filby. From here it passed down through the Filby family to Susan Filby, her great niece, who married Miles Fablain Filby (b1691) in 1713. Upon her tragic death and that of their three children in 1737, Miles 'assumed' (inherited) the 'Filby Name' (a title of deed to the Estates).

Samuel's grandfather, William Filbey (b1740), felt cheated out of his rightful inheritance after the demise of Miles Fablain Filby. By agreement, Miles had adopted the illegitimate son of William, born in 1764, named him Miles, set up a Trust for him in the Bank of England and assured William of his inheritance.

When Miles Fablain Filby died in 1771, William took up residence on the Filby Estate and went to London to claim his inheritance. (Unfortunately, we cannot find evidence of his illegitimate son's survival). Elizabeth, sister to Miles Fablain's first wife, the late Susan Filby, had married John Moss. She then, Elizabeth Moss, took it upon herself to bring Criminal Proceedings against William. The Court ruled in her favour stating that Hereditary Property could not be willed away, and Miles Fablain Filby was the "In-tail Male" - Elizabeth Moss evicted William from the Filby Estate at Mattishall Burgh ordering him to pay all book rents.

Miles Fablain's widow, Elizabeth Filby, buried him in Wymondham Abbey alongside his first wife, Susan, and their three children. She lived a further four years and in 1775 was also buried in Wymondham Abbey, Norfolk. There is a plaque on the wall near the nave. No member of the Filby family was mentioned in her Will.

After his bankruptcy in 1826, Samuel set about writing down all that his grandfather had told him about his ancestors, and from here began his own search for the Filby inheritance, known as the 'Filby Name'. In the next forty years he wrote numerous letters to family and friends. He went to London to inquire about the Court Case of 1771. He requested legal advice

on who owned 'Filby Yard', Uxbridge. Only to be told "it had been settled some 40 years earlier and no information could be divulged". Sadly, he died in 1871 - none the wiser.

Establishing the benefactors of the 'Filby Name' inheritance proved to be one of the most fascinating aspects of this project - Through Elizabeth Moss, and her daughter, Elizabeth's marriage in 1734 to Robert Filby (b1708) in Snailwell, came the first link between the Heston Filbys and the Snailwell Filbeys. (Robert is the husband of Elizabeth Moss - who is first cousin once removed to William of Heston, Samuel's grandfather) It also gave direction to the dispersal of part of the 'Filby Name' Estate and the box of family silver plate - to the granddaughter of Elizabeth Moss, namely, Harriett Filby (b1770) the self-proclaimed 'heiress', when her widowed father died in 1789.

How they linked up to the London Filbys - Finding Administration Bonds establishing that William Filby (b1729) at Mattishall Burgh was the son of Michael (Miles) Filby, Late of Yaxham (b1704 and first cousin of Miles Fablain Filby).

The descendants of Michael (Miles) Filby also appear to have been a family of means. His son, William Filby (b1729 and first cousin once removed of Miles Fablain Filby) had a very successful Tailoring business in Ludgate Hill, London, which two of his three sons, inherited and continued. (*See William Filby of Pilgrim Street article*) William had invested a large sum of money in a "Moon Trust" from which each of his children was to receive an annuity.

Finally, it was William's grandson, William Filbey (b1793) Hillingdon, that married Samuel's sister, Esther Filbey (b1794) Heston, at St. Georges, Hanover Square, London, in 1819, relating the Filby/Filbey family yet again! In the 1851 Census they were living at Chequers Yard, Uxbridge.

What goes around comes around!

I am guessing that if records are ever found - the Mattishall Burgh ancestors of the London Filbeys will be close relatives of the Mattishall Burgh ancestors of the Heston Filbys, but that's another story!

On behalf of The Filby Association,

Marion Filby, April 2005.