

In the Beginning

16th to 18th century

SKIPWITHS

of

Theddlethorpe, Manby, Grimoldby, Alvingham

Lincolnshire, U.K.

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by

Mary Skipworth mkip@xtra.co.nz 2 October 2009

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Introduction

Family Surname

There is no doubt that the original spelling of the surname was Skipwith. Prior to about 1750 the spelling Skipworth is rare in the records, and attributable to an error for Skipwith.

The name, meaning sheep farm, derives from the manor of Skipwith, a few kilometres south-east of York. The Lordship was held from the 12th century by a Skipwith family which survives to the present day. They have held three baronetcies, one of which continues in the person of the 12th Bt., and are referred to as the "main" family in this discussion. They have always retained the Skipwith spelling.

In the 14th century they moved from Skipwith, Yorkshire to South Ormsby in north-east Lincolnshire. They were a family of local importance there until the seventeenth century, when they fell on hard times and the Lincolnshire estates were sold. One branch fled the Civil War and established in Virginia, others re-emerged in Warwickshire and Leicestershire. Thus well before the change to the Skipworth spelling the main family was no longer resident in north Lincolnshire.

Around 1760 the remaining Lincolnshire Skipwiths began to use Skipworth as the preferred spelling. The simplest explanation is that people find -worth an easier suffix to pronounce than -with. Present day Skipwiths complain of clerks misspelling their name Skipworth, but the reverse does not occur. The rather speedy change is less easy to explain, but it may have been a way of distinguishing them from the main family.

In the later nineteenth century some Skipworths reverted to Skipwith. Some of them used distinctive Skipwith forenames, such as Peyton and Estoteville, and engraved the Skipwith crest on their silver and stationery. In the preface to his book "*A Brief Account of the Skipwiths of Newbold, Metherringham & Prestwold*," Fulwar Skipwith, wrote in 1867:

"The Skipworths of Lincolnshire use the arms and crest of the Skipwiths but how they obtained them I do not know, there is no connection between the families."

In other words they were using arms without authority. There is no indication in the Herald's Visitations of Lincolnshire of any armigerous family among the Skipworths.

If we accept that all were originally Skipwiths, the question arises whether the name has a single origin, in which case all bearers are related, or whether there have been multiple origins.

The name Skipworth is very restricted geographically, and when the parishes of their 16th and 17th century forebears are plotted on a map they coincide very closely with manors held by the main family. Possibly Skipworths were tenants on the Skipwith manors and adopted their Lord's name when surnames first came into general use, possibly they descend from a forgotten younger son of a younger son in the main family. I prefer the former explanation, the matter is discussed further in Appendix 2.

For convenience I have retained the Skipwith spelling throughout this chapter, even though most of the final generation were using Skipworth by the end of their lives.

Status

Although the term middle class is not applicable in this time period, these folk belong in the middle. Certainly they were not gentry like the main family, but they were not labourers either. When first encountered in the records they termed themselves husbandmen, meaning they worked a small piece of land on their own account, but did not employ labourers. A few of them made wills, leaving an item of furniture or a few animals, where these could be spared, to each daughter or younger son, while the eldest son received the core household goods and stock

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along with a responsibility to support his dependent siblings and widowed mother. In the case of daughters these items constituted their marriage dowry, to be returned to them in widowhood.

By the eighteenth century they were moving up to the status of yeoman, farmers whose holding of land and stock was more than they could manage themselves, requiring the employment of labourers. In the period covered by this chapter it is probable that they were all tenants, not owners of their holdings, most land being owned by the aristocracy.

Forenames

A feature of this line is the repeated use of the name Philip. It is like a trademark distinguishing them from the main family, in which the name Philip first appears in the early twentieth century. Among the local population in general, the IGI reveals that Philip occurs with a frequency of less than 1%, making its repeated use among these Skipwiths all the more striking.

In this early period spelling is far from being standardised and documents often use a phonetic spelling, or a Latinised form of a name, which is different each time the person appears in the records. In this chapter I have standardised most names in their modern spellings, eg James for Jhames, Catherine for Kitren, Isobel for Esabell, John for Jhon, Johnis or Johanes.

To avoid confusion among the many Philips I have added nicknames referring to their parishes: Philip of Manby, of Grimoldby, of Alvingham, etc.

Dates

Dates are recorded as found in the source, with no adjustment for the old style calendar. One year variations between sources can be explained by inconsistent use of the old and new calendar. I have not attempted to resolve such discrepancies, recording dates as I find them.

Farming in the Lincolnshire Marsh

Appendix 3 provides an account of 20th century farming in this area to help the reader to picture their lives. The soils are deep and fertile, and judging by the impressive churches that were built in these parishes, capable of returning a good income to the landowners. However, much of the area is only a few metres above sea level, making it prone to flooding, and to occasional incursions of salt water in heavy storms. Such problems must have been much more acute without the use of machinery to construct sea banks and deep drains. The area is very exposed to cold winds from the North Sea and experiences occasional heavy snow falls, making winter survival an ordeal for both man and beast.

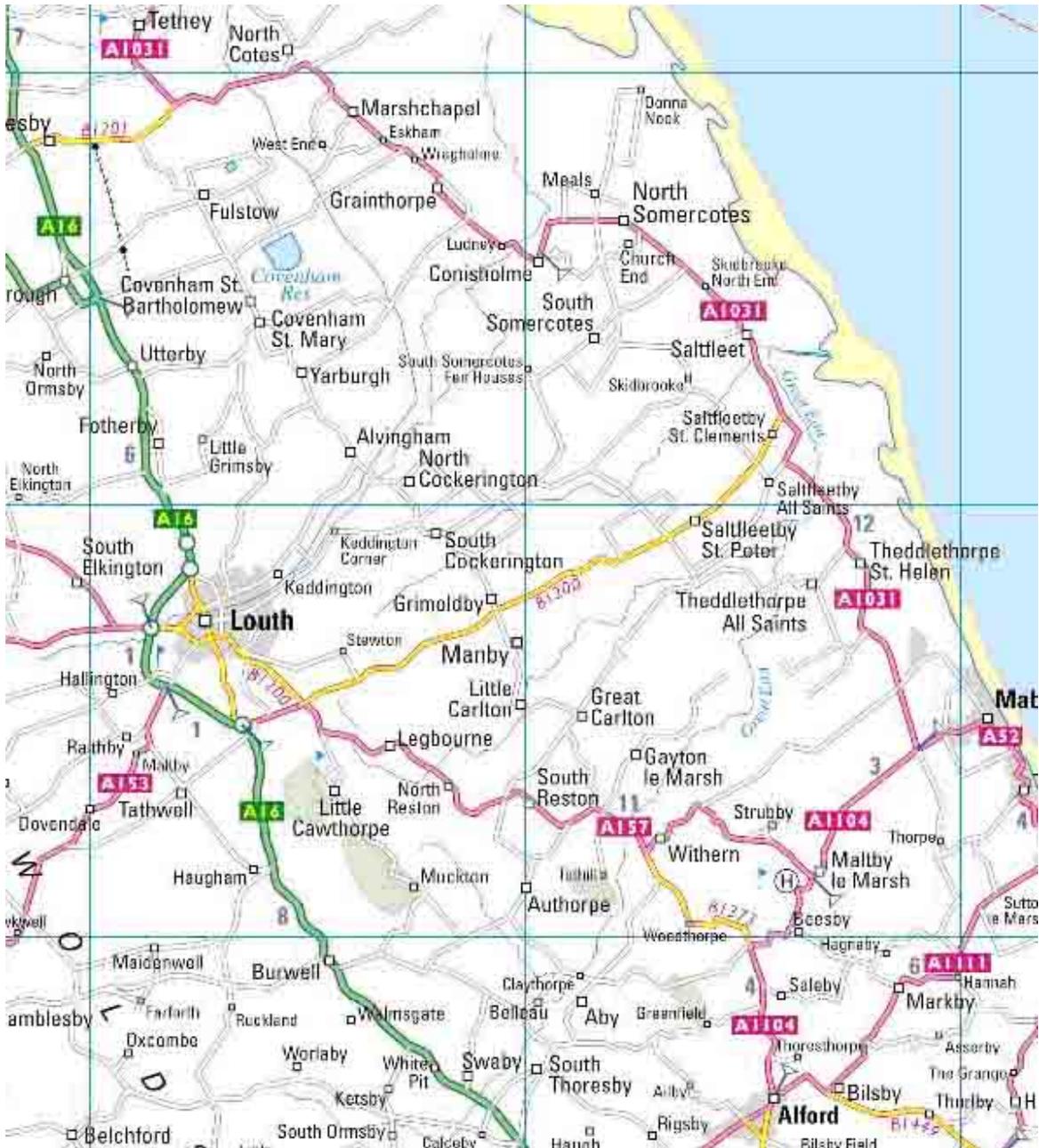
Acknowledgements

I have had access to the work of three previous genealogists: William Theodore Timbrell Elliott's chart at the Society of Genealogists, London,¹⁴ John Kirkby's pedigree at Lincoln Archives¹³ (both late nineteenth century), and Richard Teft Skipworth's history¹² which he kindly sent me in 1975. I have also used parish registers, bishop's transcripts and family wills, some originals at Lincoln Archives, some microfilmed by the LDS, as well as the resources of the Society of Genealogists Library in London, Lincoln Public Library, and New Zealand National Library in Wellington. The early registers are in very poor condition with portions unreadable. Attempts to reconstruct families in this period must therefore be regarded as tentative. If modern forensic techniques were to be applied to this material previous conclusions may need to be revisited, and this is likely to be an ongoing process. .

I wish to thank particularly two cousins Dawn Smith and Lynn Taylor,¹⁹ who have rechecked my conclusions against the original records, added some new details and corrected some errors.

I welcome any comment from readers who may have additional information to contribute, or who feel that any of my conclusions are contrary to the evidence.

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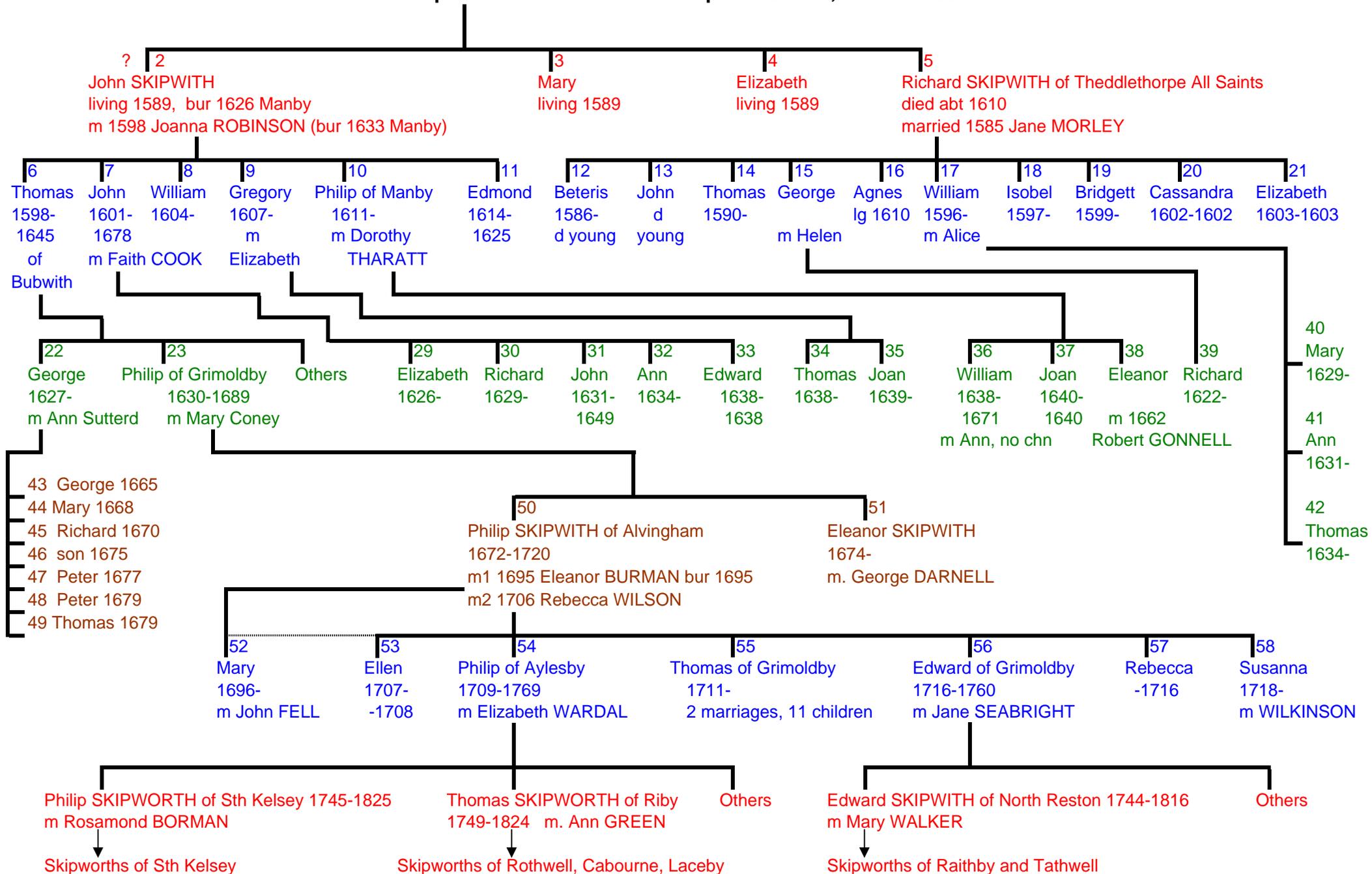


Map of the Lincolnshire Marsh

South Ormsby, principal residence of the main Skipwith family, is almost off the map to the south; North Cotes, subject of the faming study in Appendix 3, is almost off the map to the north; Manby, east of Louth, is rather more important than surrounding villages today because an airforce base and housing were built there in World War II. These facilities are now used for an off-road recreational driving centre.

Scale: each map square is 10 kilometres across

Philip SKIPWITH of Theddlethorpe All Saints, d about 1589



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First Generation

1. **Philip SKIPWITH** was buried on 3 Jun 1588 in Theddlethorpe, Lincolnshire, UK.²¹

No marriage for Philip has been found, and his wife's name is known only from her burial at Theddlethorpe on 8 Jun 1584, "Bridgett wife of Philip Skipwith."²¹ The only other record apart from the burials of Philip and Bridgett is Philip's will [LCC 1589/184]¹, in which he mentions 2 sons, 2 daughters and 2 grandchildren:

To daughter Mary 2 cows, brass pot, best table, and a woolen wheel
To daughter Elizabeth 2 cows
To John Skipwith, son to Richard, five shillings
To Beteris Skipwith, daughter to Richard, five shillings
To son Richard, fourteen shillings
To son John chair, table, stool, bed sheets, and mattress
Rest of household goods to 2 daughters
Rest of estate to son John (to be executor)
Reference to 4 acres of ground leased from John Skipwith, gent, of Saltfleetby
To inhabitants of "Willowe Cawe" in Theddlethorpe four shillings and four pence
To the poor of Theddlethorpe two shillings:
Robert Thompson 4 pence, Wid. Ransonn 4 pence, Richard Butterine 3 pence,
Wid. Burton 4 pence, Christopher Ingram 4 pence, John Clark 2 pence, John Cook 3 pence.
Reference to annual rent 16 shillings on his house and grounds due to Mr Samuel Skipwith, his landlord.
Debt to be paid to John Maddison of Theddlethorpe 7 shillings and 8 pence.

Philip's children were:

- | | | | |
|---|------|---|------------------------|
| 2 | i. | John SKIPWITH of Manby living 1589 died 1626 | <i>Refer to page 7</i> |
| 3 | ii. | Mary SKIPWITH living 1589 | <i>Refer to page 7</i> |
| 4 | iii. | Elizabeth SKIPWITH living 1589 | <i>Refer to page 7</i> |
| 5 | iv. | Richard SKIPWITH of Theddlethorpe living 1589-d.1610 | <i>Refer to page 7</i> |

Note: I wish to emphasize that proof is lacking for the identification of John Skipwith of Manby with the son of Philip Skipwith of Theddlethorpe, and likewise there is no proof that Thomas Skipwith of Bubwith is the same person as Thomas, eldest son of John Skipwith of Manby. These scenarios are only possibilities for which there is no contradictory evidence, which should be considered alongside any other alternatives that may be proposed.

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Second Generation (Children)

2. **John SKIPWITH of Manby** (*Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was buried on 2 Nov 1626 in Manby, Lincolnshire.³

John, son and executor of Philip Skipwith, inherited the balance of his father's estate plus a chair, table, stool, bedsheets, and mattress. He was probably the eldest son if executor.

There is no proof that the John mentioned in Philip Skipwith of Theddlethorpe's will and the John Skipwith of Manby whose records follow are the same person.

John married **Joanna ROBINSON** on 15 Jun 1598 in Manby,² (indexed SKIDWITH). Joanna was buried there on 5 Mar 1634.³

They had the following children:

6	i.	Thomas SKIPWITH of Bubwith 1598 - 1645	<i>Refer to page 8</i>
7	ii.	John SKIPWITH 1601 – 1678	<i>Refer to page 8</i>
8	iii.	William SKIPWITH 1604 - after 1642	<i>Refer to page 9</i>
9	iv.	Gregory SKIPWITH 1607 - after 1642	<i>Refer to page 9</i>
10	v.	Philip SKIPWITH of Manby 1611 - after 1642	<i>Refer to page 9</i>
11	vi.	Edmond SKIPWITH 1614 - 1625	<i>Refer to page 9</i>

3. **Mary SKIPWITH** (*Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was born before 1589 in Theddlethorpe All Saints. She received 2 cows, a brass pot, the best table, and a woolen wheel in 1589 in her father's will.

4. **Elizabeth SKIPWITH** (*Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was born before 1589 in Theddlethorpe All Saints.

She received 2 cows in 1589 in her father's will.

5. **Richard SKIPWITH of Theddlethorpe** (*Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was buried on 31 Jan 1609 in Theddlethorpe All Saints.²¹

In 1589 he was left 16/- in his father's will.

He signed the Theddlethorpe All Saints Register as churchwarden in 1608.

His own will (Richard Skipwith, weaver of West Theddlethorpe, LCC 1610/364)¹ mentions six surviving children, but no wife – she had probably predeceased him. It reminds us that farming was not the only occupation available to these families. The older brother John, having inherited the family land holding, Richard may have been producing cloth for local use from the wool of their own and their neighbours' sheep.

Richard married **Jane MORLEY** on 2 Feb 1585 in Theddlethorpe All Saints.⁴ Their children were:

12	i.	Beteris SKIPWITH before 1589 - before 1610	<i>Refer to page 9</i>
13	ii.	John SKIPWITH before 1589 - 1602	<i>Refer to page 9</i>
14	iii.	Thomas SKIPWITH 1590 -	<i>Refer to page 9</i>
15	iv.	George SKIPWITH 1600 -	<i>Refer to page 10</i>
16	v.	Agnes SKIPWITH living 1610	<i>Refer to page 10</i>
17	vi.	William SKIPWITH 1596 -	<i>Refer to page 10</i>
18	vii.	Isobel SKIPWITH 1597 -	<i>Refer to page 10</i>
19	viii.	Bridgett SKIPWITH 1599 -	<i>Refer to page 10</i>
20	ix.	Cassandra SKIPWITH 1602 - before 1610	<i>Refer to page 10</i>
21	x.	Elizabeth SKIPWITH 1603 - before 1610	<i>Refer to page 10</i>

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Third Generation (Grandchildren)

6. Thomas SKIPWITH of Bubwith (*John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 2 Feb 1598 in Manby² and was buried there on 24 Jan 1645.³

1598: baptism indexed STEPWITH. His parents had been married in June 1598, which comes before February under the Old Style Calendar in which the year commenced at the end of March. Thomas Skipwith of Manby signed the Protestation Returns in 1642

A Thomas Skipwith married in 1638 at Bubwith, Yorkshire, UK. This was probably a second marriage as a Thomas Skipwith had had children baptised at Bubwith in 1627 and 1630.

There is **no proof** to link the Thomas who married at Bubwith to the Thomas who was born in 1598 at Manby, but there are supporting details.

- In the first place his age is within the expected range, this Thomas would have been 37 at the time of his [second] marriage.
- A second point is the name Peter given to his son in 1647. George Skipwith of Manby, this Thomas' supposed son, gave the name Peter to two of his sons, born in 1677 and 1679. This is the only known record of the name Peter Skipwith at Manby, Grimoldby or Alvingham, but the name was commoner among the Bubwith Skipwiths.
- Thirdly this Thomas had a son Philip christened at Bubwith in 1630. This could be the Philip, for whom no other christening has been found, who married Mary Coney at Grimoldby in 1671.

The "main" Skipwith family held the manors of both Bubwith and Manby at this time. I suggest that when John's eldest son Thomas came of age a holding (and possibly also a wife) was found for him at Bubwith. He remained at Bubwith through his middle years, though returning to Manby on the occasion of signing the Protestation Return, and eventually returned to Manby for burial. This scenario, though speculative, is useful in explaining away the unusual lack of a wife and family for Thomas of Manby.

Thomas Skipwith had the following children christened in Bubwith:²⁰

22	i.	George SKIPWITH of Manby 1627 -	<i>Refer to page 11</i>
23	ii.	Philip SKIPWITH of Grimoldby 1630 - 1689	<i>Refer to page 11</i>

Thomas' first wife died and he remarried **Barbara SMYTH** on 6 Nov 1638 in Bubwith.²⁰

They had the following children christened at Bubwith:

24	iii.	Bethal SKIPWITH 1641 -	<i>nothing further known</i>
25	iv.	Robert SKIPWITH 1642 -	<i>nothing further known</i>
26	v.	Alice SKIPWITH 1645 -	<i>nothing further known</i>
27	vi.	Peter SKIPWITH 1647 -	<i>nothing further known</i>
28	vii.	Catherine SKIPWITH 1647 -	<i>nothing further known</i>

7. John SKIPWITH (*John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 19 Apr 1601 in Manby² and was buried there on 11 May 1678.³

John Skipwith of Manby signed the Protestation Returns in 1642.

John married **Faith COOK** on 27 Apr 1626 in Manby.² Their children, all born in Manby, were:

29	i.	Elizabeth SKIPWITH 1626 -	<i>Refer to page 11</i>
30	ii.	Richard SKIPWITH 1629 - after 1657	<i>Refer to page 12</i>
31	iii.	John SKIPWITH 1631 - 1649	<i>nothing further known</i>
32	iv.	Ann SKIPWITH 1634 -	<i>nothing further known</i>
33	v.	Edward SKIPWITH 1638 - 1638	<i>nothing further known</i>

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8. William SKIPWITH (*John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 12 Aug 1604 in Manby² and died after 1642.

He is assumed to be the William Skipwith of Great Carlton who signed the Protestation Returns in 1642

9. Gregory SKIPWITH (*John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 13 Mar 1607 in Manby² and died after 1642.

Gregory Skipwith of Great Carlton signed the Protestation Returns in 1642.

Gregory and **Elizabeth** had the following children at Great Carlton (no marriage record has been found):

- | | | | |
|----|-----|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 34 | i. | Thomas SKIPWITH 1638 - | <i>nothing further known</i> |
| 35 | ii. | Joan SKIPWITH 1639 - | <i>nothing further known</i> |

An Elizabeth SKIPWITH who was buried on 13 Apr 1657 in Grimoldby could have been Gregory's wife, but see also Elizabeth (no 29), daughter of John.¹⁷

10. Philip SKIPWITH of Manby (*John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 7 Jul 1611 in Manby² and died after 1642.

Philip Skipwith of Manby signed the Protestation Returns in 1642.

Philip married **Dorothy THARATT** on 8 May 1634 in Manby.² They had the following children:

- | | | | |
|----|------|---|-------------------------|
| 36 | i. | William SKIPWITH 1639 - Apr 1671 | <i>Refer to page 12</i> |
| 37 | ii. | Joan SKIPWITH 1641 – 1641 | <i>Refer to page 12</i> |
| 38 | iii. | Eleanor SKIPWITH | <i>Refer to page 12</i> |

11. Edmond SKIPWITH (*John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 19 Mar 1614 in Manby² and was buried there on 17 Dec 1625.²

12. Beteris SKIPWITH (*Richard*⁵, *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 20 Feb 1586 in Theddlethorpe All Saints.⁴

She was living in 1589 when she received 5/- in her grandfather's will, but is not mentioned in her father's will so is assumed to have died before 1610.

13. John SKIPWITH (*Richard*⁵, *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was born before 1589 and buried on 27 Jul 1602 in Theddlethorpe All Saints.²¹

He was living in 1589 when he received 5/- in his grandfather's will, but is not mentioned in his father's will as he had died before 1610.

14. Thomas SKIPWITH (*Richard*⁵, *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 16 or 26 Dec 1590 in Theddlethorpe All Saints.^{4, 21}

He was living in 1610 when he was mentioned in father's will.

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Fourth Generation (Great-Grandchildren)

22. George SKIPWITH of Manby (*Thomas of Bubwith*⁶, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 27 Apr 1627 in Bubwith.²⁰ George Skipwith, taylor, was buried on 3 Jan 1681 in Manby.⁹

No christening of a George in the relevant period has been found at Manby, and I have tentatively identified his father as Thomas SKIPWITH of Bubwith, the hypothesis being that just as his father moved from Manby to Bubwith, the two sons George and Philip returned from Bubwith to Manby and Grimoldby when they married.

Alternatively, he could be the George, son of John and Helen, who was christened in 1639 at Grimoldby. John's position in the family has not been ascertained, refer to page 17.

George married **Anne SUTTERD** on 4 Apr 1665 in Manby,² Anne died in July 1680.

George and Anne had the following children born at Manby:

46	i.	George SKIPWITH	ch 29 Jun 1665	<i>nothing further known</i>
47	ii.	Mary SKIPWITH	ch 21 Mar 1668	<i>nothing further known</i>
48	iii.	Richard SKIPWITH	ch 11 Dec 1670	<i>nothing further known</i>
49	iv.	son SKIPWITH	ch 27 Feb 1675	<i>nothing further known</i>
50	v.	Peter SKIPWITH	ch 17 Feb 1677, bur 17 Nov 1678	<i>nothing further known</i>
51	vi.	Peter SKIPWITH	1679 - 1680	<i>nothing further known</i>
52	vii.	Thomas SKIPWITH	1679 - 1680	<i>nothing further known</i>

23. Philip SKIPWITH of Grimoldby (*Thomas of Bubwith*⁶, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 26 Sep 1630 in Bubwith,²⁰ and buried on 20 Aug 1689 in Alvingham.⁷

No baptismal record for a Philip SKIPWITH has been found in Lincolnshire at this period, but with the unusual name of Philip it seemed most likely that he was a grandson of John of Manby. My suggestion is that his father was Thomas of Bubwith, Yorkshire, as discussed for his supposed brother George (no 22).

It is interesting that Philip and Mary were married and settled at Grimoldby immediately after William's (no 36) death, suggesting that they were taking his vacated holding. Elliott indicates that this Philip was a second son, but names the older brother Thomas without providing any date or other detail about that Thomas.¹⁴

Philip married **Mary CONEY** on 4 May 1671 in Grimoldby,⁸ a marriage that would last 18 years, until Philip's death in 1689. Mary was buried on 30 Dec 1717 in Alvingham.⁷ Their son Philip was christened at Grimoldby, then Eleanor at Manby (which is so close to Grimoldby that there is now only a main road separating the 2 villages), and finally settled at Alvingham where the family would remain for the next 80 years or so. Philip signed as churchwarden at Alvingham in 1677, indicating at least a degree of literacy.

They had the following children:

53	i.	Philip SKIPWITH of Alvingham	1672 – 1720	<i>Refer to page 13</i>
54	ii.	Eleanor SKIPWITH	1674 -	<i>Refer to page 15</i>

29. Elizabeth SKIPWITH (*John*⁷, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 10 Mar 1626 in Manby.²

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Under the old style calendar Elizabeth's birth came in the last month of the year (Mar 1626) in which her parent's marriage had occurred in the first month (April 1626).

She could be the Elizabeth Skipwith who was buried in 1657 in Grimoldby, but see also Gregory's wife (no 9).¹⁷

30. Richard SKIPWITH (*John*⁷, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 9 May 1629 in Manby² and died after 1657.

Not in Protestation returns as he would have been aged 13 in 1642. Taken to be the Richard Skipworth appointed supervisor in the will dated 28 Aug 1657 of Henry PADDISON, yeoman of Grimoldby.¹

36. William SKIPWITH (*Philip of Manby*¹⁰, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 8 Mar 1638 in Manby² and was buried on 28 Apr 1671 in Grimoldby.⁶

William Skipwith, husbandman, eldest son of Philip and Dorothy of Manby, married **Ann PHYSSICKE or PHYSHWICKE** of Skidbrooke. Even the lawyer drawing up his will [LCC 1671/162]¹ had difficulty with the spelling, which the Skidbrooke register seems to indicate should be Fishwick. They settled in the next parish, at Grimoldby, but the marriage was of short duration - Ann was still under 21 and childless at the time of William's death. The chief provision of his will directed that Ann receive an annuity of five pounds due to her under an agreement that had been made with her uncle Joseph Fishwick. William also left Ann "my red flect quie or cow, all her apparel, and the bed her grandmother gave her." Such was a woman's lot in those times that a specific direction was required to prevent the widow being turned out of her house without even her personal clothing. The remainder of his goods went to his father, Philip. William signed with his mark and his seal, which could indicate that he was illiterate, or simply too ill to sign. Ann remarried at Bilsby on 22 Jun 1671: Lincs Marriage Licence, Edward Andrew of Manby, lbr, and Anne Skipwith of Grimoldby, widow.¹⁶

37. Joan SKIPWITH (*Philip of Manby*¹⁰, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 17 Jan 1640 in Manby² and was buried there on 2 Feb 1640.²

38. Eleanor SKIPWITH (*Philip of Manby*¹⁰, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹)

Eleanor married **Robert GONNELL** on 29 May 1662 in Grimoldby.⁸ The register records her as "Elinora, filia Philippi Skipwith et Dorothe uxore eius," providing evidence of her parents and a replacement for her missing baptismal record.

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Fifth Generation (Great Great-Grandchildren)

53. Philip SKIPWITH of Alvingham (*Philip of Grimoldby*²³, *Thomas of Bubwith*⁶, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 15 Sep 1672 in Grimoldby and buried on 15 Apr 1720 in Alvingham.⁷ Kirkby indicated that Philip may have died in 1716 though his administration was filed in 1720.¹³

Like his father, Philip served as churchwarden in 1698, 1699 and again in 1717.¹² He left no will but there is an administration and inventory (LCC Admon 1720 Philip Skipworth, yeoman of Alvingham Abbey).¹ Rebecca Skipwith the relict is bound with Edward Wilson and John Robinson to make up an inventory and administer his goods according to the law. She signed with a cross. The inventory is a treasure, taking us through his house, room by room. There seem to have been a main room, just termed the house, two bedrooms – the heated chamber and the kitchen chamber, a nursery, kitchen, brewhouse, and dairy, with 27 items of furniture including five beds. There is no mention of silver, but significant value in the pewter and brass tableware. There was plenty of work for the women brewing ale, making butter and cheese, and tending poultry. The farm carried around 100 animals with both draught horses and oxen available for the heavy work of ploughing, sowing and reaping crops. They would be growing barley for malting and wheat for bread, the latter probably carted to a miller for grinding. With the assistance of three grown sons Philip may not have needed much additional help at this stage from agricultural labourers, but the designation “yeoman” implies that he was in a position to employ labourers, though still working the farm himself. The family would have been virtually self-sufficient in food and fuel, though salt, spices and sweetening may have been bought.

A true and perfect inventory of all the goods and chattels of Philip Skipworth laic of Alvingham Abby in the county of Lincoln laity deceased and viewed and praised [viewed and appraised] April the 19th AD 1720.

Imprimi [first] his purs and apparel	10.00.00
It [item] in the hase [house] two tables one couberd [cupboard] one form and nine chares [chairs]	1.13.04
It in the Hated [heated] Chamber one bed and table and one chare	2.03.00
It in the kitching chamber three beds one chist of Linings [chest of linen]	7.13.04
It in the Nursery one bed four chares one table one chist	4.03.04
It in the Kitching [kitchen] the Puter and Bras [pewter and brass]	6.00.00
It in the Brewhouse fouer barils and four tubes [4 barrels and 4 tubs]	1.10.00
It in the Dary [dairy] one Chorne [churn] and bouls [bowls] and Chesfats [cheese vats]	13.04
It in the Kitching three tables and six chares	15.00
It Corn in the Chamber and the Barn	17.00.00
It Malt in the Chamber	7.10.00
It Six drought [draught] oxen	28.00.00
It fife three years old Beas [five 3 year old beasts (bullocks)]	10.00.00
It six two years old Beas	9.00.00
It fouer year old Beas	7.00.00
It fife cows and fife calves	17.10.00
It thirty Ewes and lambs	21.00.00
It twenty eight gelt sheep [weathers – gelded]	17.00.00
It six drought horsis and Mares	18.00.00
It two yearling foals	3.00.00
It forty nine acres of corn upon the ground	50.00.00
It thirty acres of land fallowing	3.00.00
It two wains one cart with gears and harones [?harrows]	10.00.00
It Blocks and stockes and Poultry	13.04
The total sum	253.04.08

Praisers: Allan Burman, Tho Sonder, Tom Burman, John Cuvit his mark

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Philip married **Eleanor BURMAN** on 20 May 1695 in Alvingham.⁷ She was buried on there on 14 Mar 1695,⁷ [March comes after May in the old style calendar] soon after the birth of their daughter:

- 55 i. **Mary SKIPWITH** was christened on 1 Mar 1695 in Alvingham.¹⁰ I have no knowledge of how the infant was raised in the absence of a mother. [Kirkby¹³ lists a second name Elizabeth, but this is not in the baptism record as extracted to the IGI.]
Mary married **John FELL**.^{13,14}

It was to be ten years before Philip married again to **Rebecca WILSON** on 27 Apr 1706 in Alvingham.⁷ Philip and Rebecca had the following children:

- 56 i. **Ellen SKIPWITH** was christened on 9 Feb 1707 in Alvingham¹⁰ and buried on 12 Feb 1708 in Alvingham¹⁰ at age 1.
- 57 ii. **Philip SKIPWITH of Aylesby** 1708 - 1769 Refer *Skipworths of South Kelsey*
- 58 ii. **Thomas SKIPWITH of Grimoldby** 1711 - Refer to page 16
- 59 iv. **Edward SKIPWITH of Grimoldby** 1716 - 1760 Refer *Skipworths of Grimoldby.....*
- 60 v. **Rebecca SKIPWITH** buried on 7 May 1716 in Alvingham.¹² No record of her christening has been found.
- 61 vi. **Susanna SKIPWITH** was christened on 8 Feb 1718 in Alvingham¹⁰ and died after 1769.
Susanna married **David WILKINSON** of Hagnaby in 1738 in South Cockerington, Lincolnshire.¹⁵ She was a beneficiary in her brother Philip's will in 1769 "Susanna Skipworth of Belchford, widow of Yarborough and Grainthorpe."

Philip died in 1720 and Rebecca remarried **Andrew DUNHAM** on 11 May 1721 in Alvingham.⁷ Andrew and Rebecca DUNHAM had the following children:

Elizabeth DUNHAM christened 8 Feb 1720 in Alvingham.⁷
Andrew DUNHAM chr 1 Mar 1722 in Alvingham,⁷ yeoman of Yarborough.

Rebecca died about 1734 after being widowed a second time. In her will¹ she deals carefully with the combined estate of her two husbands:

In the Name of God Amen, I Rebekah Dunham of Alvingham in the County of Lincoln, Widow being Sick and Weak of Body but of Sound and Perfect Mind and Memory praised be God for the same Do make and ordain this my last Will and Testament in manner following: First I bequeath my Soul into the Hand of Almighty God hoping through the alone Merits and Mediation of my Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to have forgiveness of all my Sins. Also I give my Body to be decently buried at the Discretion of my Executor hereafter Named; And as to my Worldly Goods wherewith God has blessed me
First: I give unto my Son Thomas Skipwith the Sum of Thirty Pounds to be paid him within twelve Months of my Decease. Also I give unto my Son Edward Skipwith the Sum of Thirty Pounds to be paid at the Age of twenty one Years. Also I give unto my Daughter Susanna Skipwith the Sum of Thirty Pounds to be paid her at the Age of Twenty One Years and also the Green Bed and full bedding thereunto belonging. Also I give unto my daughter Elizabeth Dunham the Sum of Twenty Pounds to be paid her at the Age of Twenty One Years and also the Blue Bed and full bedding thereunto belonging in the Matted Chamber. Also I give unto my Son Andrew Dunham the sum of Twenty Pounds to be paid him at the Age of Twenty One years. And in case any one of my said Children dye before their said Portion become due I

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order that the said Legacy be Equally Divided amongst all the Rest of their Surviving Brothers and Sisters both Skipwiths and Dunhams. And I will that the said Legacys, besides what was left each of them by their Respective Fathers, be paid in full without any deduction, and the said Children be maintained in all the Necessaries by my Executor so long as they continue to live with him or their Legacys become due. Also I give unto my son Philip Skipwith All the Rest and Residue of my Money Goods and Chattels and Appoint him Whole and Sole Executor of this my Last Will and Testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this Sixteenth day of October in the Eighth Year of King George the Second, And in the year of Our Lord 1734.

Signed Sealed Published and Declared by the said Testator Rebekah Dunham X her mark.
In the Presence of us: Thomas Burman, Thomas Wilkinson, curate of Alvingham

I am indebted to Richard Teft Skipworth for alerting me to Rebecca's second marriage and will, and for his account of the family,¹² from which I have quoted as indicated.

54. Eleanor SKIPWITH (*Philip of Grimoldby*²³, *Thomas of Bubwith*⁶, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 15 Sep 1674 in Manby.²

Eleanor married **George DARNELL** on 11 May 1694 in Alvingham.⁷ They had 4 daughters and 4 sons, including a Philip DARNELL.

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Sixth Generation (3x Great-Grandchildren)

Note regarding 6th generation: The descendants of Philip Skipwith of Aylesby (54) and Edward Skipwith of Grimoldby (56) are to be found in separate documents - refer page 14.

58. Thomas SKIPWITH of Grimoldby (*Philip of Alvingham*⁴⁸, *Philip of Grimoldby*²³, *Thomas of Bubwith*⁶, *John of Manby*², *Philip of Theddlethorpe*¹) was christened on 19 Nov 1711 in Alvingham.¹⁰

Thomas married **Mary BORRETT** on 7 May 1735 in Alvingham.⁷ Mary was buried on 7 May 1738 in Grimoldby.⁶

Thomas and Mary's children were

- 62 i. **Rebecca SKIPWITH** christened on 20 Feb 1735 in Grimoldby.¹⁷
The entry in the Grimoldby register is for Rebecca, daughter of Thomas and Mary SKIPPER, but this has been accepted tentatively as an error for SKIPWITH because, although established elsewhere in Lincolnshire, there were no Skippers around Grimoldby at that time. The birth fits neatly nine months after Thomas and Mary's marriage. This is probably the Rebecca SKIPWORTH who married **John BURMAN**, widower, farmer of Alvingham, in 1760 in Alvingham.⁷ John's will dated 4 Nov 1761, proved 20 Jan 1762¹ leaves his wife Rebecca executrix and mentions a son John BURMAN, a minor.¹³ I believe Kirkby¹³ was incorrect in identifying Rebecca BURMAN with Rebecca SKIPWITH (57), page 14 above.
- 63 ii. **Eleanor SKIPWITH** christened on 9 Apr 1738 in Grimoldby.¹⁷

Mary SKIPWITH was buried on 7 May 1738 in Grimoldby,⁶ and on 11 Aug 1742 Thomas was remarried to **Elizabeth CROWSTON** in Grimoldby.⁸

Thomas and Elizabeth's children (some listed Skipwith, others Skipworth) were:

- 64 iii. **Mary SKIPWITH** christened on 22 May 1743 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 65 iv. **Elizabeth SKIPWITH** christened on 23 Sep 1744 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 66 v. **Thomas SKIPWITH** christened on 12 Oct 1746 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
Thomas signed Grimoldby Bishops Transcripts as churchwarden in 1769 & 1770.
- 67 vi. **Susanna SKIPWITH** christened on 5 Jun 1748 in Grimoldby,¹⁸ and buried in 1749. [Skipwith in burial record, Shipworth/Skipworth in IGI]
- 68 vii. **John SKIPWITH** christened on 21 Jan 1749 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
Witness at his sister Martha's marriage in 1780.
He may be the John Shipwith who married Rebecca LONGMIRE at Tealby 26 Oct 1779. She was christened on 21 Jun 1779.
John Skipwith & Rebekah had a daughter **Sophia SKIPWITH** christened on 14 May 1794 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 69 viii. **Philip SKIPWITH** christened on 7 Apr, buried on 16 Apr 1751 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 70 ix. **Ann SKIPWITH** christened on 21 Apr 1752 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 71 x. **Edward SKIPWITH** christened on 10 May 1754 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 72 xi. **Frances SKIPWITH** christened on 28 Dec 1755, buried 15 Feb 1756 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
- 73 xii. **Martha SKIPWITH** christened on 5 Feb 1758 in Grimoldby.¹⁸
Martha married **Edward WILLSON** on 1 Jun 1780 in Grimoldby,¹⁷ the parties all signed the register. Martha WILSON was buried aged 66 on 25 Aug 1824 in Grimoldby.¹⁷
- 74 xiii. **William SKIPWITH** christened on 19 Oct 1760 in Grimoldby.¹⁸

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Appendix 1: Relationship to Skipworths of Sth Lindsey & Holland

The earliest known ancestor of the Skipworths of Halton Hologate and other parishes around Spilsby and Boston is a Thomas Skipworth who married in 1748 at Irby in the Marsh. If he derived from the Skipwiths of Manby and Theddlethorpe he would fit about Thomas of Grimoldby's generation. However, there are at present no records to link the two groups. In my introduction to the South Lindsey families I have discussed the possibility that they have had a separate origin. DNA testing might throw some light on this question.

Other Skipwith records from this time period and area are listed below. They are probably of this family but there is no evidence of how they were related. It is also possible that the wrong father's name has been recorded in some of these strays. They are listed here to indicate to the reader that there were a number of other Skipwiths around, apart from those who have been fitted into this chapter. The list would be even longer if all parishes in the Lincoln Marsh were included – this is just from the parishes that have featured in this account. As indicated, the evidence for some of the relationships I have included is tenuous, however I feel that the overall picture which emerges is useful even if some of the links turn out to be misplaced.

Hellina Skipwith married William Greene at Theddlethorpe St Helens on 16 Feb 1659

George Skipwith 1593, son of George at Great Carlton

Mary Skipwith 1601, dau of George at Great Carlton

Ann Skipwith 1601, dau of George at Great Carlton

Ann Skipwith 1606, dau of George at Great Carlton

Margaret Skipwith 1606, dau of George at Great Carlton

William Skipwith 1633, son of George at Great Carlton

Elizabeth Skipwith 1599, dau of John at Great Carlton

Robert Skipwith 1603, son of John at Great Carlton

John Skipwith 1673, son of John and Ann at Great Carlton

James Skipwith 1675, son of John and Ann at Great Carlton

William Skipwith 1677, son of John and Ann at Great Carlton

James Skipwith 1590, son of George at Theddlethorpe All Saints

Catherine Skipwith 1590, dau of George at Theddlethorpe All Saints

Richard Skipwith 1622, son of George at Theddlethorpe All Saints

John Skipwith 1625, son of John at Theddlethorpe All Saints

John Skipwith 1635, son of John and Helen at Grimoldby

Anna Skipwith 1632, dau of John and Helen at Grimoldby

William Skipwith 1643, son of John at Grimoldby

George Skipwith 1639, son of John and Helen at Grimoldby

Sophia Skipwith 1794, dau of John and Rebecca at Grimoldby

At Bubwith there were several Skipwith families:

John had a son Robert in 1640

John married in 1659 and had children Marie 1660, John 1664

John had Ann 1686 and Peter 1688

Peter married Margaret in 1650 and had Steven 1651, John 1653, Jane 1656

Peter had Mary 1600 and another Mary 1635

Peter: John 1724, Peter 1727, George 1730, Sarah 1733, Sarah 1736, Elizabeth 1736, Thomas 1739

William had Thomas 1657, William 1659, Frances 1661, George 1663, John 1663, Mary 1665

William married 1666 and had Ann 1667

George had Thomas 1660, Thomas 1667, Elizabeth 1669, Edward 1671

Thomas had William 1687, Ann 1690

Frances had Peter 1625, John 1628, Frances 1631, Frances 1634, Joyes 1637, William 1641

Further Research Will to check at Lincoln Archives, also check Borthwick Institute for Bubwith wills HOBSON, Skipworth, yeo Fishtoft LCC will 1719/ii/110 [note a Skipworth HOBSON, son of Skipworth HOBSON and Alice, was bapt 25 Jan 1718 at Fishtoft.] This marriage has not been found.

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Appendix 2: Relationship to the Skipwiths of Utterby

At the top of Elliott's chart he indicates that Philip of Grimoldby - no 23 in this account - was the son of William Skipwith of Utterby born 1608, and his wife Dorothy. Elliott immediately creates a difficulty by estimating that Philip of Grimoldby was born about 1610, when his supposed father was only 2. However there is no need to propose such an early birthdate for Philip, who married in 1671 and died in 1689. Kirkby adopts the same view of the Skipworth origins, though whether he followed Elliott or vice versa, or whether he worked independently, I cannot determine.

I have a number of reasons for doubting the Utterby link. In the aftermath of the Civil War the main family lost their Lincolnshire estates and disappeared from the county. They had been involved in the complex political manoeuvrings of the times and had ended up on the wrong side, with consequent fines and confiscations of land. By contrast life for the Skipwiths at Manby seems to have carried on after the Civil War much as before. The Skipwiths of Utterby are referred to as gentlemen, well above the husbandmen of Manby. The Utterby Skipwiths are well documented, with evidence of younger sons marrying heiresses who brought land into the family to establish collateral lines. The Manby Skipwiths shared none of these characteristics.

My final concern with the proposed Utterby link is that it is too late. If Philip of Grimoldby was the son of William and Dorothy of Utterby, then Philip of Manby and his kin are not part of this family. But in terms of status, and in their use of the name Philip, the Skipwiths of Grimoldby and Alvingham have far more in common with the Skipwiths of Manby than they do with the Skipwiths of Utterby. No-one seems to have offered any evidence in support of an Utterby link.

I have recorded below details of the Skipwiths of Utterby, from a pedigree at Soc Genealogists, London, and other sources, so that others may probe the possibilities of a Skipworth link should more evidence come to hand.

Ancestry of Margaret Skipwith of Utterby:

Sir John Skipwith of Ormsby who died 1415 ("main family") had a younger son: Patrick Skipwith who married Agnes, dau of Sir Thomas Hawley, Lord of Utterby

Patrick and Alice's eldest son John Skipwith married Agnes Langholm,

their son Thomas married Joan Elkington, their son John married Agnes Langham

their son Thomas married Mary Billesby, their son John married Eleanor Sutton.

John and Eleanor had 2 sons Thomas, and William of Utterby, gent (will 1571)

Thomas the elder son married Mabel, daughter of Sir William Skipwith of Ormsby

They had sons William and Edmund, and 4 daughters including Margaret

Margaret Skipwith of Utterby married Samuel Skipwith of Hagnaby, will proved 1646 when he was of Great Grimsby.* They had 3 sons:

1. William, living in 1643, mentioned in Samuel's will. He may be the William, whose widow Dorothy signed a deed, with her son Thomas, in 1685, concerning lands in Co. Lincoln. [Mr Coleman's catalogue of old deeds]

2. David, bapt 16 Sep 1599 at Utterby, gent age 27, marriage licence 24 May 1627 to Frances, dau of Sir Francis South. He had a son Richard. He suffered as a delinquent for being in arms against Parliament.

3. Richard, bapt Utterby 12 Jun 1606, living 1643

The Skipwiths of Snore in Norfolk also descend from this Patrick.

If a link to the Utterby family were to be established the Skipworths would be shown to descend from William d'Estouteville, who accompanied William the Conqueror from France in 1066. DNA testing may offer the only hope of settling the question.

* Elliott's chart has Samuel Skipwith of Hagnaby as son, not son-in-law of Thomas & Mabel of Utterby

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Appendix 3: Farming in Lincolnshire

from “*The Changing Geography of Britain*” N.E.Marsden, 2nd ed, 1984, Oliver & Boyd

A study of the farm of Mr G.H. Parker which is located at North Cotes, on the Lincolnshire coastal marshes south of Grimsby.

Geology and Relief

Looking first at geology and relief, we should note that the rocks of Lincolnshire, mostly limestone, chalk and clay, are much younger and less tough than the old volcanic rocks of the Lake District. Consequently the relief outlines are less sharp and less spectacular. A west-to-east section shows the Vale of Trent (clay), through the ridge of Lincoln Edge (limestone), then the Lincoln Clay Vale, followed by the Lincoln Wolds (chalk upland), and finally the drained Lincoln marshes (recent deposits of boulder clay and alluvium). It is in this last area that Mr Parker's farm, known as The Grange, stands.

To the west of the farm runs the fairly steep slope of the edge of the Lincoln Wolds, but the rest of the area is almost completely flat. The marshlands, which have been reclaimed for farming, are only slightly above sea level, and have to be protected from the sea by dykes, known as ‘sea banks’ in this area. After the beach and some coastal dunes, there is waterlogged ground, backed by a sea bank, which protects the fields behind. The boundaries of some of the fields are formed by drainage ditches.

Weather

The annual rainfall is less than 650mm. Occasionally heavy rain may fall in autumn to interrupt harvesting, but the only problem is usually too little rainfall in summer, when irrigation water may have to be applied. This is particularly true on the Wolds, where the soils and the underlying chalk are porous and allow water to seep through quickly. On the more impervious soils of the marshes, water stays longer on the surface.

As Lincolnshire faces east, it is open to cold winter winds from Europe. These travel across the North Sea, pick up moisture, and sometimes result in heavy snowfall, especially on the higher land on the Wolds. The cold winters of the eastern part of the country are in fact a help to farmers, because frost breaks up the soil, lets in air, and makes ploughing easier.

The worst disaster experienced in this area came in the winter of 1953, when gale-force northerly winds, combined with high tides, led to storm waves overwhelming the sea banks, and flooding the coastal marshlands.

Soils

The soils can be divided into three types:

(a) Coastal silt (or alluvium) makes up the very deep soils of the coastal marsh and stretches inland for up to 2.5 kilometres.

(b) The ‘Middle Marsh’ soils to the west are also very deep. These consist of heavy boulder clays laid down during the Ice Age. However, a ‘heavy’ clay in this relatively dry area is less of a problem than one in a wet area, and Mr Parker can plough this land for crops, though its sticky nature limits the types of crops which can be grown on it.

(c) Near the edge of the Wolds the clay is mixed with chalk which gives a fairly light loamy soil. Where the chalk meets the clay, the water seeping through the porous chalk comes to the surface in a series of springs and a *spring line* results. This provided sites for early villages, giving a local water supply, and a dry location above the wet coastal marshes.

Thus while Mr Parker has to take some account of the physical environment of the area, he has a much wider range of choice of types of farming than in the Lake District, and economic factors are much more influential than physical in deciding what to produce.

Mr Parker's Farm, The Grange

The farm is an 800 hectare unit, very large by British standards. The fields are scattered, largely because the farm unit is built up from the amalgamation of older farms. Land has been bought from over thirty different people. Most of the older farms were 20-40 hectares in size, and some of these still remain in the area. Usually when adjacent land comes on the market, Mr Parker will try to buy it to make his farm an even larger and more compact unit. Many of the fields have also been enlarged. Mr Parker's son now farms one third of the total farm area.

Mr Parker is a very different type of farmer from those of the Lake District. It would be fair to say that farming in the Lake District is still in

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part a traditional total way of life, although some changes have taken place. In Lincolnshire, farmers such as Mr Parker conduct their businesses as considerable industrial enterprises.

Farm Output

The easier physical environment gives a wide range of choice of farming activities and this can be seen in the table which shows the variety of produce of The Grange.

Crop	Hectares 1971	Hectares 1981
Wheat	220	413
Barley	165	100
Potatoes	75	53
Sugar beet	45	114
Peas	115	115
Grass	170	114
Store cattle	310	267

The rotation of crops is on a six or seven year basis, and includes wheat, barley, potatoes, sugar beet and ley grass to discourage the build up of insect pests and diseases in the soil.

All the wheat produced is winter wheat, drilled between October and December, which lies dormant through the winter and starts to grow the following spring. Most of the grassland is ley, or temporary grass. It provides higher quality but more expensive grazing than permanent pasture.

Marketing

Beef is sold when the cattle are fifteen to eighteen months old at Louth, the nearest market town.

Potatoes are bulky and expensive to transport and are usually bought by local merchants at Grimsby, Louth and Brigg. The majority end up in Manchester and London.

Wheat is dried, stored and sold the following spring to large flour mills at Sheffield, Hull and Selby (Yorkshire). A proportion of the barley is used for feed on the farm, the rest is sold to merchants, also for feed.

Sugar Beet is sent to the sugar factory at Brigg. There is also another sugar factory at Bardney. Sugar beet is bulky and expensive to transport, for every eight units in weight of

beet only one unit of raw sugar is produced. Beet processing also uses lime from the Lincoln Edge and coal from the Yorkshire coalfield, west of Scunthorpe.

One of the by-products of the beet factory is beet pulp, which, mixed with molasses, is sold back to nearby farms as a high-energy stock feed. Spent lime is another by product, sold for fertiliser.

Inputs on the farm

Machinery and Buildings: Machinery used includes four combine harvesters, one beet harvester shared with another farmer, three self-propelled pea-pickers shared with three other farmers, fifteen tractors, a forklift for pallets of potatoes etc., and a variety of drills, sprays, harrows and other small equipment.

Modern barns and storehouses are dotted over the farms. Some are heated with thermostatic controls to allow potatoes, for example, to be stored until good prices can be obtained. The highly mechanised nature of the farming is made possible by the vast output, by the level or gently undulating nature of the ground, and by the large size of the fields.

Labour: Twenty-five full-time men and part-time or casual workers for the potato harvest are employed.. The full-timers, who are provided with living accommodation, include two foremen, one handyman, one bricklayer, one carpenter, two mechanics, two lorry drivers, and two other men.

Seeds and Fertilisers: Good quality seed and large amounts of fertiliser are bought, to produce high yields. Although some farmyard manure is used, the bulk of fertilisers are chemical, including nitrates and phosphates. An adviser, shared with neighbouring farms, is employed to assist with sprays and fertilisers.

Water: The main expenditure is on drainage. All the fields are under-drained by plastic pipes, and drains are renewed every 17 or 18 years. The drains run into ditches on at least two sides of the fields, and the ditches in turn run into several outfalls to the sea.

An elaborate drainage system is essential in view of the level nature of the land and its nearness to sea level, where artificial drainage does not take place.

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