

**THE PITTOMS OF  
BARBY NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**Three Hundred Years of a Yeoman Family  
c1700-1990**



**Barby Local History Group**

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## **Introduction**

Because the Barby parish registers only survive from 1748, and the Bishops Transcripts (copies of the registers) from 1701, it is difficult to trace families in the earlier period. There are official listings however such as the Hearth Tax of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and earlier tax records. These give names of those in Barby sufficiently well off to pay, as well as those who were exempt because they were too poor, and therefore show which families were then resident here. The name Pittom does not feature in the Hearth Tax returns for Barby, the latest return being 1689, suggesting the family came into the parish after this date. It is more likely to be between 1702 and 1705 as William is listed in a Northamptonshire Poll Book for the latter year but not the former.

During the three centuries after their arrival, the Pittom landholdings and influence increased, partly by advantageous marriages but also by purchasing land and property when the opportunity arose. They made alliances with existing landowners in the village and the surrounding neighbourhood, consolidating their position further. They never seem to have overstretched themselves, and were mainly content to remain in their own locality. Very few of them had large families or many sons, and they generally lived to a good age, all of which gave them time and means to consolidate their financial position.

## THE FOUNDER

### **William Pittom 1** (c 1657-1728)

The first member of the Pittom family to be recorded in Barby is William Pittom who died in 1728 aged 71 when he was living at Onley Grounds, thus placing his birth c1657, towards the close of the Commonwealth period and just before the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. Nothing is known of William's origins or early life except that his will names his wife as Sarah. There is a record of a marriage in Brownsover Warwickshire in 1700 between Sarah Smith and William Pittam, but as his only child William from his age at death was born c1690 (baptism not found), she may have been his second wife, or this may not have been his marriage - there is nothing to indicate one way or the other. William first appears in a Poll Book of 1705 at Barby cum Onley, so was already a sufficiently prosperous man to qualify for the franchise, although this was probably through a property he owned in Churchover. At this time men qualified to vote by owning land worth forty shillings (£2) in rental. He does not appear on the Poll Book for 1702.

William was living at Onley in 1713 when he bought some land in Barby from the estate of Arthur Cryer of Hillmorton (deeds of Hillview Cottage), but he also owned a house and land in Churchover Warwickshire; his family links to that village have not been found, the register is missing between 1670 and 1720.

The land at Onley is low lying and flat, unlike the exposed hills of Barby itself. It was used to pasture livestock, especially sheep, brought from further afield along the drove roads, to rest them and fatten them up before they were driven on to markets locally, in East Anglia, and of course London, and there was a small nucleus of men who were involved in this trade. According to research in 2006 by Gren Hatton of Kilsby, Onley Grounds was held (and maybe partly owned) by the Smith family through most of the 1500s and 1600s, and owned in 1650 by Zaccheus Isham, an offshoot of the landed family at Lamport. The Isham heirs finally sold it in 1748, so it seems that William Pittom was maybe a tenant of the Ishams, who had six hearths in the Hearth Tax returns of 1662 and 1674, far the largest of any taxpayers who mostly had one or two. Thomas Isham was the Rector of Barby 1662-1667.

The Pittom Family

11

	1702	1705		1702	1705
John Smith.....	S	C I C	Abraham Lucas.....	I	C I C
Thomas Russell.....	S	St I C	Thomas Whitton ....	I	C I C
Samuel Russell.....	S	St M St	William Chapman....	I	C St
Richard Marriott....	I	C I C	Richard Gardiner....	I	C I C
Richard Marriott....	I	C I C	William Cowley.....	I	C I C
Thomas Marriott....	I	C I C	William Ellington....	I	C I C
Thomas Masters.....	S	St M	Thomas Chapman....	S	S I C
Robert Marriott....	S	St I C	Jos. Abbott.....	I	C I C
Richard Povy.....	S	St M St	William Webb.....	S	St I C
Thomas Saunders....	S	I C	Thomas Lord.....	S	St M St
John Draper.....	S	St I C	John Clark, Esq.....	I	C I C
John Ward.....	S	St I C	John Brimmidge.....	I	C I C
Richard Goodman....	I	C I C	Arthur Cryer.....	I	C I C
John Smith.....	I	C I C	Richard Marriott....	S	St M St
Richard Morris.....	S	St I C	George Hewitt.....	S	St M St
Edward Goodman....	S	St M	Henry Abbot.....		M St
John Barnes.....	S	St I C	John Phillips.....		I C
John Russell.....	C	M St	Robert Wiggins.....		M St
Thomas Edwards....		M St	Benjamin Matthews..		M St
Henry Cox.....		M St	Samuel Hinton.....		I C
John Newnham.....		I C	William Herne.....		M St
John Luck.....		I C	Jonathan Banister....		M St
John Deacon.....		I C	Edmund Whitton....		M St
William Marriott....		I C	Thomas Nichols.....		M St
			John Town.....		I C
			Robert Brown.....		I C
BARBY cum ONLEY.			Thomas Kettle.....		M St
Thomas Leeds.....	S	St	Thomas Taylor.....		M St
Thomas Boyce.....	S	St	Francis Isham.....		M St
Thomas Boyce.....	I	C	William Pittum.....		I C
John Luke.....	I	C	William Wood.....		I C
Thomas Davy.....	S	St	Henry Abbot.....		I C
John Clark.....	S	St	William Cock.....		I C
Francis Alaby.....	S	St	John Allen.....		I C
John Coldburn.....	S	St	John Carter.....		I C
John Clark.....	S	St M St	William Abbot.....		I C
William Lucas.....	S	St I C	William Bosworth....		M St
John Curtis.....	S	St I C	Thomas Wood.....		M St
John Farthing.....	I	C I C	John Wood.....		M St
Joseph Varnum.....	I	C I C	John Atkins.....		I C
Thomas Newcomb....	I	C I C	Robert Harvey.....		I C
Thomas Hall.....		C I C	Robert Boyce.....		I C
John Belch.....	S	St M St	Nathaniel Clark.....		M St
Daniel Rowlett.....	S	St I C	Humphrey Davis.....		M St
Richard Lord.....	S	St St C			
Edward Tompson....	I	C I C			
Samuel Hall.....	I	C I C			
John Hall.....	I	C I C			
Knightly Hollyed, Cl.	I	C I C			
Richard Radburn....	I	C I C			
John Salsbury.....	I	C I C			

BRANSTON.

Thomas Clark.....	I	C
John Clark.....	I	C
Thomas West.....	I	C

B 2

Poll Book for Northamptonshire for 1702 & 1705, showing the entries for Barby cum Onley (London Metropolitan Archives on Ancestry.co.uk).

Note that many more Barby men voted in 1705 than in 1702. This suggests more became qualified to vote. The few who are not listed as voting in 1705 probably died or moved away. Of these, Leeds, Boyes and Clarke are all established Barby families of this time.

## The Pittom Family

The Barby land bought by William Pittom was described in the 1713 Indenture as follows:

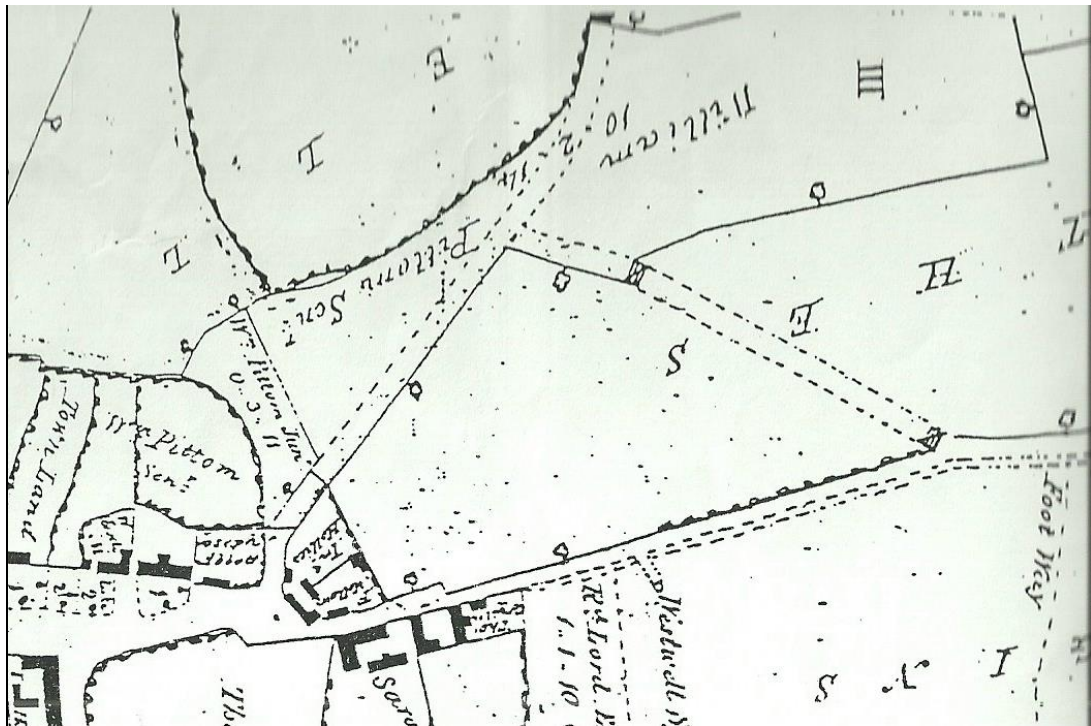
*"All that quarter or fourth part of a yardland [about 8acres] with appurtenances lying in the fields of Barby known by the name of the Hall Quartern ... and all that Leasure [enclosure] known as Davis Leasure ... [which may have been Toft Hill] and also that half quarter or one eighth part of one yardland with appurtenances in possession and occupation of William Letts the Elder".* Note that a yardland in this area was approximately 30 acres. All this had been previously in the possession of Robert Bagshaw. Humphrey Davies whose will was proved in 1634 had been the schoolmaster of Barby, and Elkington Lane at enclosure in 1778 was known as Davis's Lane, implying that the Davis family had been of some standing in the village. Another Humfrey Davis, probably a grandson, appears in the Hearth Tax returns for 1662 and 1674 with 1 hearth, there is no mention there of William Letts or Robert Bagshaw, and neither appears in the Poll Book.

William's will, proved at Northampton in 1729 but dated 1722, stated he was a yeoman of Onley Grounds, and in good health at that time. He left to his wife Sarah all the household goods, and his house and lands in Churchover during her lifetime. After her death this was to go to his son William (William Pittom 2), who was appointed Executor. William 2 inherited his property in Barby (probably Toft Hill where his own son was living in 1778), any other land he held, and the rest of his goods and chattels. William 2 also referred in his own will to 2 cowcommons in Barby which his father had bought from Richard Webb and Edward Elkington: although these did not have land with them, they gave the right to pasture a cow on the common ground of the village. It seems that William senior had only the one surviving child as no other children or grandchildren are mentioned in the will, which was written before his son's marriage.

**PITTOMS OF TOFT HILL** (present name of the property at 19 Rugby Road)

**William Pittom 2** (c1690-1763 – see Tree 1, p9)

William married Mary Lord in 1725; from their ages at death he was about 35 and she was ten years his junior. They had three sons, William, Thomas and Richard, and three daughters, Mary, Sarah (who died before her father) and Hannah. Mary Lord was a member of a family that had been resident yeomen in Barby for at least 150 years. With this alliance William was cementing links as a newcomer with older families of the same status. He too had been increasing his landholdings since he had inherited his father's property in 1729; as well as the land bought by his father, he refers in his own will to "a half yardland [about 15 acres] and premises in the open fields bought of the Devises [heirs] of Mr Webb". Maybe William 2 built or remodelled a house on the Toft Hill site, none is specifically mentioned in the 1713 purchase, but it would have made a suitable property for William 1's son when he should wish to set up his own establishment, and was probably bought by his father for that purpose. It and the two adjacent home closes are seen below on the Enclosure Map of 1778.



## The Pittom Family

We do not know if William continued the tenancy of the farm at Onley Grounds after the death of his father, but when he died, his will stated he was of Barby, not Onley. As he was buying land in Barby's open fields during his lifetime, he was probably building up enough to make a viable holding for himself. He also still had the revenue from the Churchover property.

He was a Churchwarden of Barby in 1732 shortly after his father's death, signing the Bishops Transcript for that year, so he was of sufficient economic standing to take on this responsibility. A surviving Window Tax assessment of 1752 listing 34 names (NRO D6330) informs us that he had nine windows in his house and was taxed two shillings. The majority of those listed had nine windows, householders with less than seven were exempt. There were only six men who had more than nine, Mr Holled the Rector with 28, William Clark 19, John Clark and Edward Thompson with 14 each, and Richard Lord and Thomas Wiggins with 11 each. The return does not seem to include Onley as there is no mention of George Arnold who had considerable holdings there let out to tenants.

William died in 1763 aged 73, and his will was proved at Northampton that year. He appointed his wife Mary sole Executrix; she was left his house and two adjacent closes in Barby plus 2 closes in Onley, and all his goods and chattels. This is the first specific mention of a house, although of course one is implied in the Window Tax assessment. After Mary's death (which occurred in 1782) the property was to go to his daughter Hannah while she remained single (she married in 1774), then to son Richard who on inheriting had to pay £60 to his brother William and £30 apiece to his sisters Hannah and Mary.

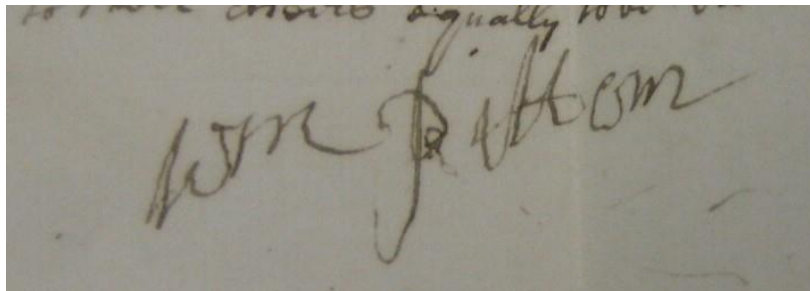
As well as the house and closes he was to receive after the death of his mother, Richard was also left the Churchover property. It is likely his father had already set his brother William up with a farm of his own, probably the property he bought from Webb which William was already occupying, although this was left to his two daughters. His son Thomas too appears to be a landowner in his own right, he was certainly entitled to an allotment equivalent to half a yardland at Enclosure in 1778, so had probably already received assets from his father as he is not mentioned in the will.



## The Pittom Family

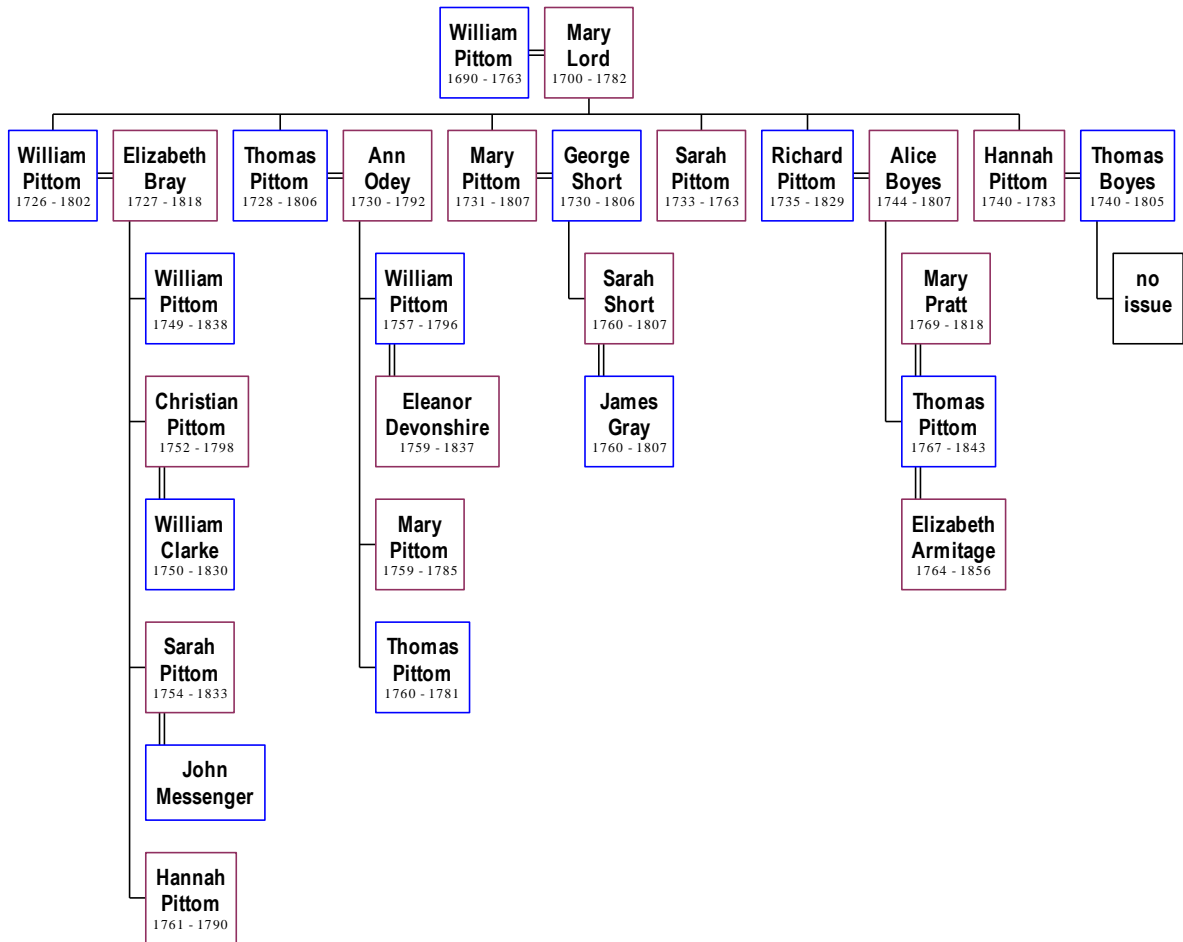
William left to his daughter Mary his "cowcommon which my father purchased of Edward Elkington" and "the half quarter yardland purchased of Mr Webb", to William "the cowcommon bought by my father from Richard Webb", and to Hannah "the half quarter yardland purchased of William Gubbins". "A half yardland and premises in the open fields bought of the Devisees of Mr Webb and now in the occupation of my son William" was left equally between Mary and Hannah, so their father was ensuring that they would have funds of their own, and presumably expected William to buy them out and provide the cash. Mary and Hannah both married, but only Mary had a child, a daughter. Hannah received money from the Oxford Canal Company in 1773 for the purchase of part of this land, which must have been the two closes at Onley (purchased from Gubbins) referred to in the will of William 3 below.

The will was signed rather shakily by William; the witnesses were Knightley Holled [the Rector], Thomas Killworth and John Groves who all signed their names.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Wm Pittom". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper. Above the main signature, there is some faint, partially legible text that appears to say "equally to".

# The Pittom Family

## *Descendants of William Pittom*



Tree 1

Family of William Pittom 2

## **CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION**

### **Enclosure of the Open Fields**

#### **Third Generation Pittoms: William 3, Thomas Snr & Richard 1**

It was during the lifetimes of these three men that England was flourishing, with the building of canals to expedite carriage of heavy goods and materials, and of course Enclosure of the former open fields which benefited those with larger holdings. In 1773-4 the Oxford Canal Company was buying up land in Barby along the route of the proposed canal, so those whose land it was to pass through received good sums of money (TNA RAIL 855/157). The Pittoms were some of those fortunate people, William received £35.15s in 1774, his brother Thomas £2.15.1d in 1773 and a further £8.16.6d the following year. In 1773 Hannah Pittom (who in 1774 married Thomas Boyes) received £2.12.9d and with Thomas Holled, perhaps to do with her marriage settlement, a further £6.19.9d.

In 1774 the price per acre paid by the Company is quoted as £63, vastly more than its value as agricultural land. This was before the enclosure of Barby's fields, so tells us who owned land along the route of the canal. This money to the fortunate landowners would provide added impetus in the way of capital to forge ahead with the proposals to enclose the open fields, and have gone a long way towards paying for the costs of obtaining enclosure, and fencing and ditching the land allotted.

**William Pittom 3 (1726-1802)** (see Tree 1, p9) married Elizabeth Bray of Sapcote Leics in 1750; they had four children but only one son. At Enclosure in 1778, William owned only half a yardland of Hall land (see page 20) with right of commons for which he was allotted two plots of about 11 acres each. It appears he did buy out his two sisters Mary Short and Hannah Boyes who had been left this land by their father, and must also have purchased his father's house from his mother and brother Richard to whom it had been left. One of William's plots was in Wood Field, adjacent to the boundary with Onley; this was later referred to as Rowdyke. He also held two closes in Onley referred to in his father's will for which he received money from the Oxford Canal Company for purchase of

## The Pittom Family

part of them, they were probably adjacent to this Wood Field allotment: the land at Onley was never subject to an enclosure award.

His other plot was in Netherfield on Onley Lane, stretching from behind his house and across the lane at the bottom of Cart Hill: these closes were later known as Toft Hill and Hill Foot. He also received two small pieces of land adjacent and to the east of his house on Town Street. Before enclosure there were large common verges along the main street between the houses and the roadway, and those householders applied for the verges adjacent to their properties to be allotted to them (see map on p6).

Mary Pittom received in lieu of her cowcommon a small piece of land alongside the allotment of Thomas Pittom Snr in Onley Lane. For his cowcommon, his own son William received a piece of land at the top of Cart Hill adjacent to his father's holding. The enclosure award reads thus:

*Whereas [SARAH ATKINS, THOMAS CAVE,] WILLIAM PITTOM junr & MARY PITTOM are entitled at certain times of the year to a right of common called a Cottage Common for one cow to feed within the open fields & commons, & have no other property therein, they are awarded the following plots of land in full & ample satisfaction & compensation.*

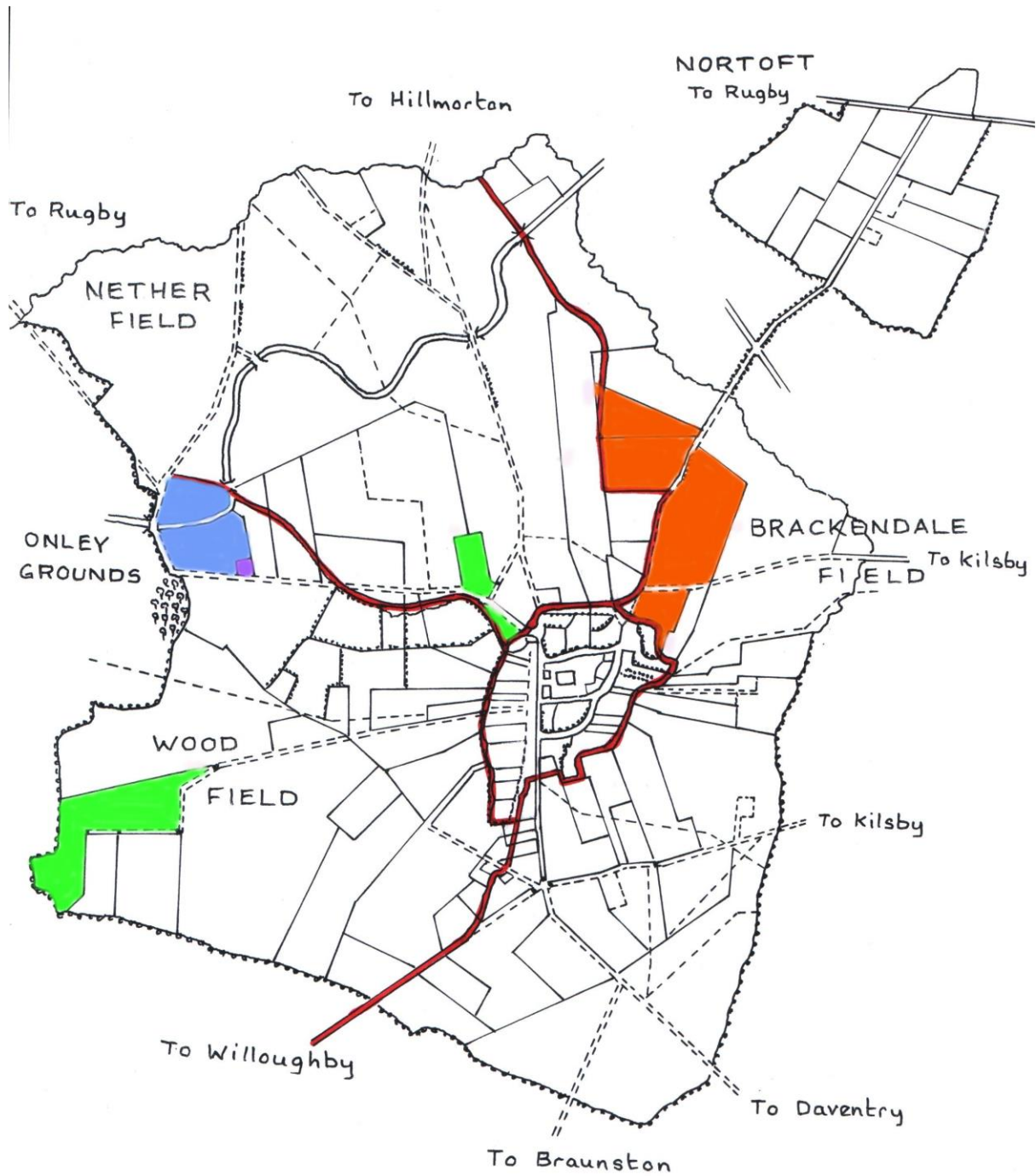
***To WILLIAM PITTOM jnr one plot in Nether Field of 3r 11p bounded NE by public carriageway from Barby to Rugby, on E by a Street in Barby, on pt of S & on SE by a Street in Barby, on pt of S & on SE by the Homestead & Old Enclosure of WILLIAM PITTOM Snr, on remainder of S & on SW by JOHN WHITMELL & on NW by WILLIAM PITTOM Snr. (see map on p6)***

***To MARY PITTOM one plot in Wood Field of 1ac 1r 6p (exclusive of all roads) bounded on S by THOMAS LORD Snr, on W & N by THOMAS PITTOM, on E by SARAH THOMPSON***

Neither of these plots was large, there were 4 roods to the acre and 40 perches to a rood, but they both added to the Pittom landholdings.

The location of the Pittom allotments can be seen on the map on the next page.

# The Pittom Family



## BARBY'S OPEN FIELDS and ALLOTMENTS OF THE ENCLOSURE AWARD 1778

Allotments to the Pittom Family

William Pittom senior ■

Mary Pittom ■

Thomas Boyes ■

William Pittom Junior (see map on p6)

Thomas Pittom Snr ■

## The Pittom Family

William died in January 1802 aged 75, outlived by his wife Elizabeth who died in 1818 at the grand age of 94. His will proved at Northampton left the Rowdyke land on the east side of the canal to his wife, and legacies to Sarah Messenger of Sapcote Leics, his only daughter still alive at his death, to her children John and Mary Messenger, and to Christian Evans, Mary, Sarah and Thomas Clarke, the children of his deceased daughter Christian wife of William Clarke of Barby.

The rest of his real estate went to his only son **William Pittom 4** (1750-1838), a maltster who died unmarried aged 88, leaving his estate between his various nephews and nieces and their children. He too had acquired a fair amount of real property during his lifetime, some inherited and some he had purchased. Fields mentioned are Toft Hill 4ac, Hill Foot 6ac (the land originally bought by his great-grandfather in 1713 and both granted to his father at Enclosure), Hare Pits 18ac (allotted to and purchased from his great uncle Thomas Pittom), Rowdyke 13ac (also granted at Enclosure), and two closes in Onley, Rowdyke and Banky Ground 12ac, a total of 53 acres. He ordered the Rowdyke and Onley fields to be sold after his death to provide for the children of his niece Mary wife of John Haddon. His will mentions five cottages including one bought by his father from Thomas Wiggins and another he himself purchased from William Goode, all were left to relatives (several of whom were already the occupants of the houses they inherited), but he himself lived in his father's house on the site of Toft Hill in Rugby Road, which he left to his nephew Thomas Clarke, son of Christian and William. In addition to the family bequests, William also left £100 to be invested, the interest to be paid annually to the five oldest poor widows of the parish.

There is no mention in William 2's will of his son **Thomas Pittom Snr (1728-1806)**, a woolcomber. Weaving and allied trades such as woolcombing were widespread occupations in this area of Northamptonshire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although they had all but disappeared by the mid 1800s, wiped out by competition from the industrialised mills in Yorkshire.

Thomas married Ann Odey at Kilsby in 1752 and had three children, William, Mary and Thomas, all baptised at Barby. He must have bought or acquired land

## The Pittom Family

in Barby himself, as from the enclosure award of 1778 Thomas Pittom senior was the owner of "one quarter of a yardland of Customary land with right of Common", and was therefore, as well as a small plot to the east of his house, allotted 16 acres in Woodfield. This was later known as Harepits, on the corner of Onley Lane opposite the entrance to Barby Wood Farm and backing on to the canal. He must have owned this land before Enclosure as he received money from the Oxford Canal Company for part of it. It seems that he sold the 16 acres to his nephew William Pittom 4 the maltster (died unmarried in 1838) who in his own will mentions buying it "from my uncle Thomas Pittom". By this time it consisted of 18 acres, suggesting that Thomas had bought Mary Pittom's small adjacent allotment.

In 1777 Thomas was Barby's Constable, when he signed the Militia List of those men in the village between the ages of 18 and 45 liable to serve in the county militia. The only Pittoms who feature in the listing are William "a farmer's son" and William, a woolcomber, Thomas's own son.

According to the Enclosure map, Thomas's house (seen below in the early 1900s) was on the corner of what is now Rectory Lane and The Green.



Thomas's children all predeceased him, although his son William married Eleanor Devonshire of Kilsby in 1787 at Kilsby, and had at least seven children. Thomas's simple unproven will dated 1799 (NRO ZB1696) suggests that Eleanor

## The Pittom Family

was then a widow as he left his house and premises in Barby to her for life, and named six grandchildren.

*"My will is that my daughter in law shall have what she can make of it to breed up the children, and after her death my Trustees to sell my house etc and give to my grandchildren share and share alike."*

After Eleanor's death in 1837 it must have been bought by Thomas Pittom 1, son of Richard, who is listed as the owner in 1840. The site continued in Pittom ownership until the 1990s.

Thomas's grandsons moved away from the village and seem to have become labourers, but grand-daughter Elizabeth Pittom married John Elkington of Barby at Newnham (Northamptonshire) in 1815. They lived in a house on the site of the present Westfield House at 1 Rugby Road, which was bought by a later Pittom when John died. Elizabeth & John had seven daughters, a number of whom married into local Barby families (see the file on the Elkington family for further details).

William 2's youngest son **Richard Pittom 1 (1735-1829)** (see Tree 1 p9) was Churchwarden from 1769 to 1780, signing the entries in the parish register with the Rector and his fellow churchwarden. According to his father's will, he was to inherit his father's house at Toft Hill after the death of his mother, and the rest of his real estate except that left to his brother William. However Toft Hill had passed to his brother William before enclosure in 1778, presumably with the agreement of Richard and his mother. Maybe Richard sold it to him as part of the £90 he had to raise under the terms of their father's will to pay him and his sisters.

In 1766 at the age of 31 Richard married Alice Boyes, a member of another longstanding Barby family. His sister Hannah married Alice's elder brother Thomas in 1774 but they were childless. Hannah's marriage however was to further the Pittom fortunes as Thomas Boyes, who seems to have been the last male of his line in Barby, left his property to members of the Pittom family in his will of 1805, mostly to Richard's only son Thomas, but a couple of fields to



## The Pittom Family

William 4, son of William Pittom 3. On the 1778 enclosure map Richard Pittom's house is at the north end of the present Kilsby Road, almost opposite The Homestead, although he was allotted no land.

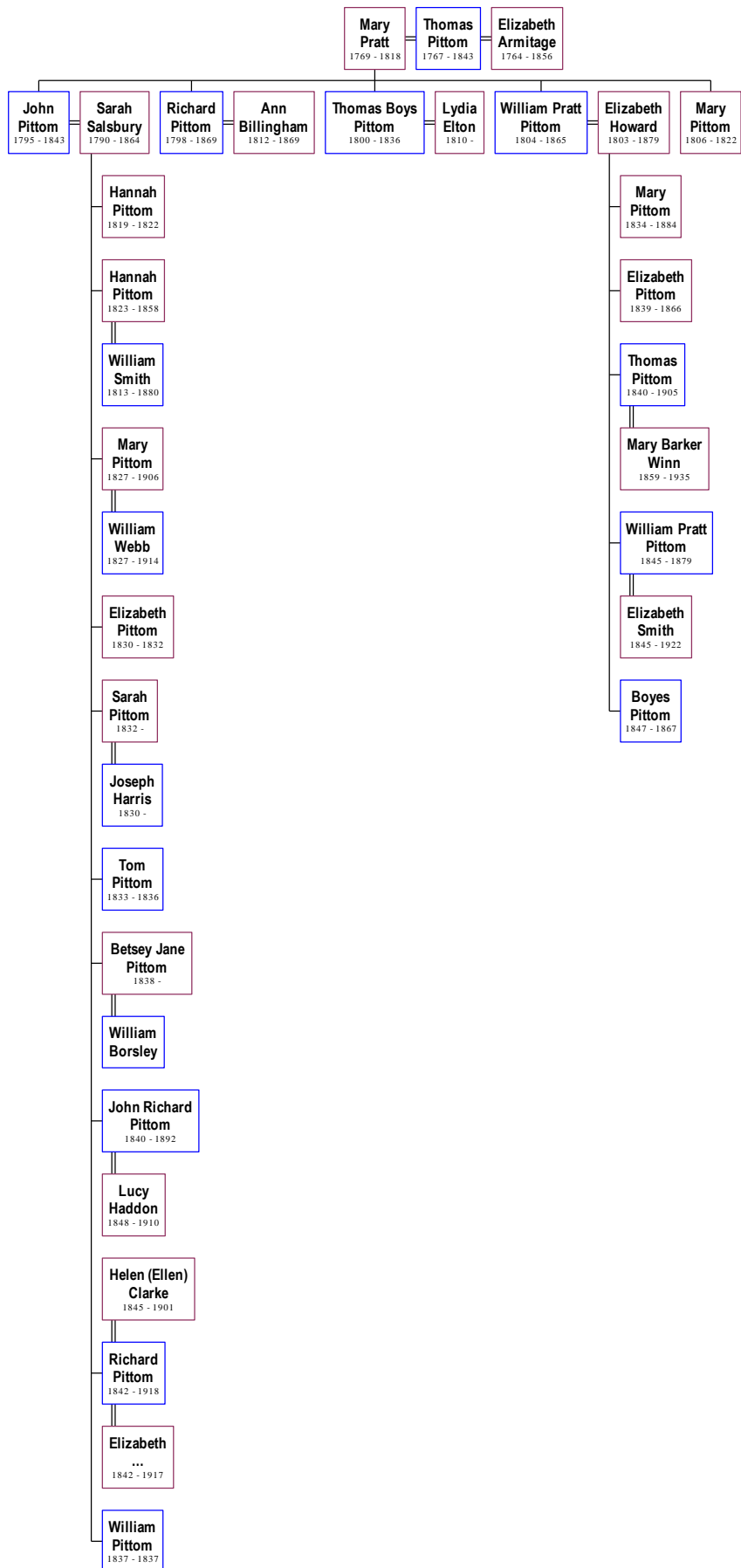
Richard and Alice's only child Thomas was born in 1767, Alice died in 1807 aged 71, but Richard lived a further 20 years dying in 1829 aged 93.

Richard's will, made in 1827 and proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) in 1838, nearly nine years after his death, referred to an indenture of 1814 whereby he had given his personal estate to his son Thomas Pittom the Elder, and another indenture of 1827 whereby he gave more of his estate to his four grandsons John, Richard, Thomas and William Pittom. This was undoubtedly because he had lived to such a ripe old age and wanted to ensure the family estate was being properly looked after by his descendants. He referred to his house in Barby used as two dwellings occupied by John Lee and Susannah Voss, his orchard in Barby, and a half share in a dwellinghouse and 10 acres at Churchover, all of which he left to his grandson John Pittom, who was appointed sole Executor.

In 1798 a listing was made of all the landowners and occupiers in the country for purposes of levying a Land Tax, together with the sum to be paid based on a levy of four shillings in the pound on the value of the land. That for Barby and Onley is in TNA IR23/63 f136. In it are mentioned William Pittom for himself and Richard Pittom £1.16.4d, and for himself in Onley £1.16s, Thomas Pittom jnr for himself £2.17.3, Thomas Pittom snr for William Pittom jnr 1s, and Richard Pittom for himself 1.4d. Richard was assessed for £1.4s for his Churchover property occupied by Thomas Bearley (IR23/91 p252) and was also one of the seven tenants of Rev Gillbee whose land in Barby was assessed at £24.1s. William, Thomas jnr and Richard Pittom made a redemption contract on 21 March 1799 to commute future tax liability, the amount was equivalent to 15 years' payments which could be paid as a lump sum or by instalments. Listing in Land Tax records provided proof of eligibility to vote up to 1832, so included those who had commuted, but thereafter the records were no longer used for that purpose so those names will not be listed.

# The Pittom Family

*Tree 2: Children and Grandchildren of Thomas Pittom 1*

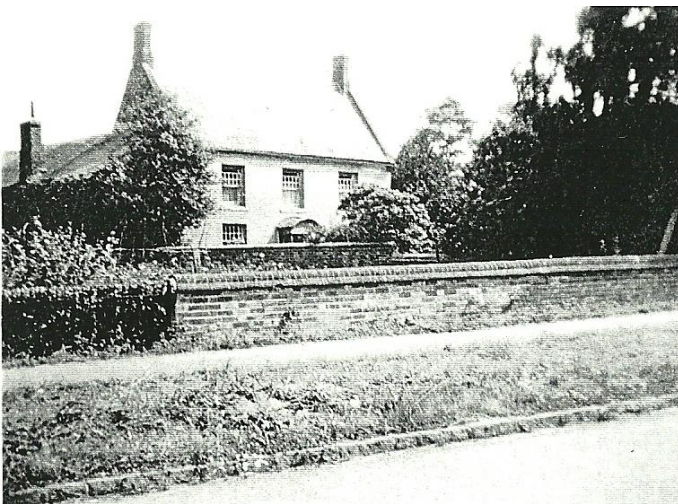


## **FURTHER EXPANSION AND FAMILY SOLIDARITY**

**Fourth and fifth generations: Thomas Pittom 1 (1767-1843) and his sons** (see Tree 2 on previous page)

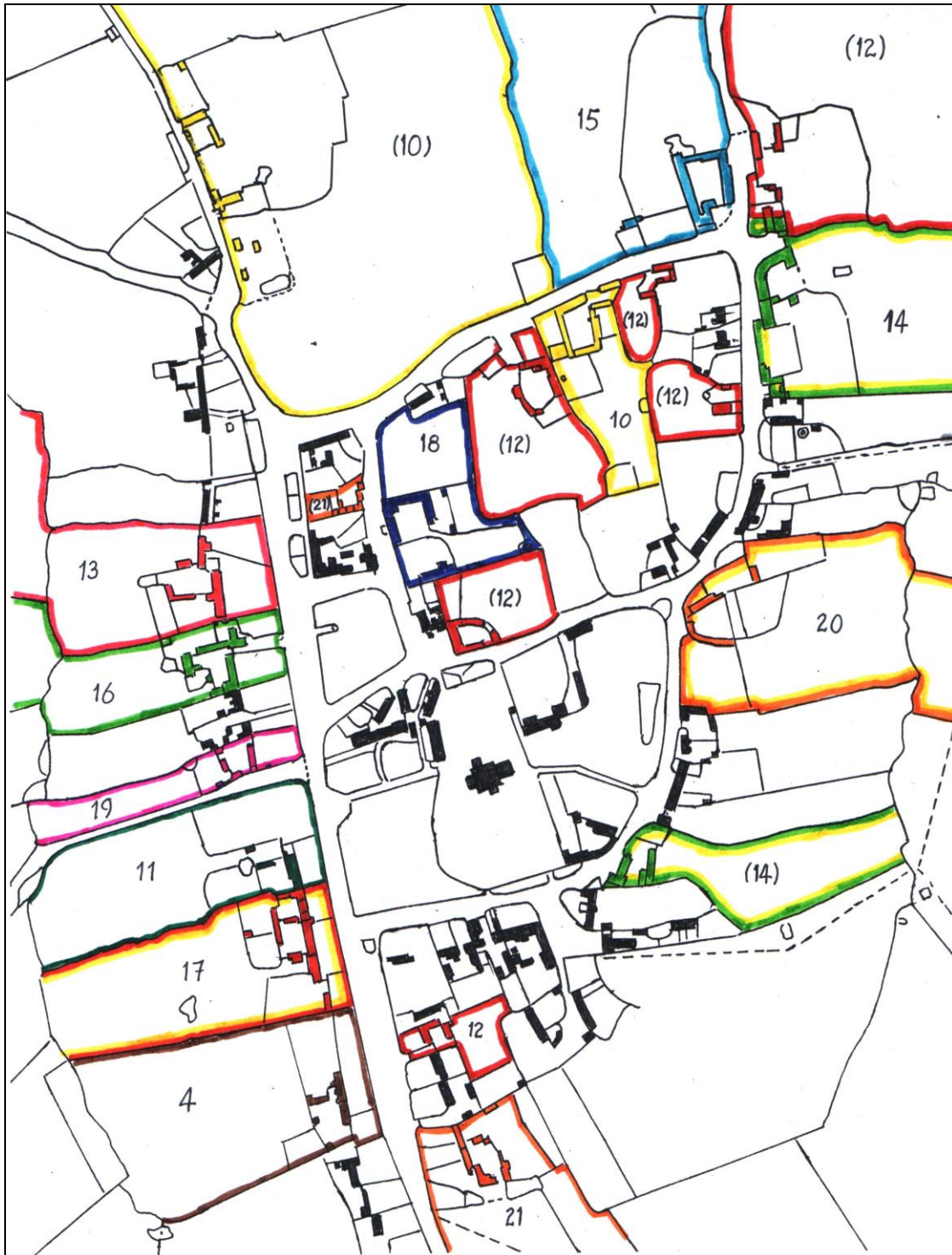
Richard Pittom's will proved in 1838 referred to the settlement of property on his only son Thomas in 1817, Thomas in his own will said it was half of the Churchover property settled on him at his marriage "to my first wife Mary Pratt", the mother of all his children, whom he married in 1794 at Barby. This was obviously the same property referred to in the will of William Pittom 1 in 1722, the other half of which Richard left to Thomas's eldest son John. Mary Pratt came from a well-established yeoman family in Newton in the parish of Clifton on Dunsmore, Warwickshire, about eight miles from Barby. The Pratts had close links with other Barby families, earlier generations having married into the Clarkes and the Lords.

Mary died in 1818, and Thomas married again in 1825, this time to Elizabeth Armitage. She was widow of Thomas Harris, yeoman of Barby, who had lived at the present Holly Lodge at No 19 Daventry Road. From his will proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) in 1818 Thomas Harris owned a house and two cottages in Barby, left to his wife for life then to his son Charles Harris, and had left £1000 each to his son and daughter Mary Ann, so was a wealthy man. Thomas Pittom acquired Holly Lodge before 1840 when he is listed as the owner- occupier.



In the 1840 Oakley Survey, Thomas is listed as the owner of Holme Farm in Kilsby Road together with its 54 acres, occupied by his son Richard, as well as his own residence Holly Lodge (pictured left) and another 90 acres he farmed himself which included Thomas Boyes's

## The Pittom Family



### **Farms in the Oakley Survey of 1840** (from *Putting Barby on the Map*)

Thomas Pittom's land in the village, in several parcels, is numbered 12 on the above map, his residence being the present Holly Lodge at bottom centre.

Part of the Thomas Boyes estate can be seen in the top RH corner.

Richard Pittom 2 lived at Holme Farm, No 20 on the map.

## The Pittom Family

land inherited by his grandfather Richard Pittom. He also owned several pieces of land in the centre of the village around Pinfold House and Manor Farm (see map on previous page).

Thomas Pittom's will proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) in 1844 listed his "*messuage in Barby late in the occupation of his son John deceased*" (the old Boyes homestead, west of Manor Farm (No 10 on the map), left to him by Thomas Boyes), a messuage and windmill at Woolscott lately bought of William Goodman, a leasehold messuage in Braunston with cowhouse and yard "*purchased jointly with my late father of William Waldin*", and a property in Braunston divided into two tenements purchased of William Walker. This again shows that the Pittoms were still adding to their holdings in the area, but now beyond the parish boundaries. However Thomas directed that the premises outside Barby, including his half of the Churchover property, should be sold and the proceeds divided between the children of his deceased brother John.

He also referred to land in Barby he bought from Thomas Lissaman and from his cousin William Pittom 4, maltster (he who died unmarried in 1838, mentioned on p12), a house and land bought from John Hall, and a cottage from Robert Gardner, so was still increasing his holdings within the parish.

Thomas left Holme Farm with 54 acres to his son **Richard 2**; this was the property bought from John Hall who owned it at Enclosure in 1778 and died in 1791.

Thomas and Mary Pittom had one daughter **Mary** who died at the age of 16, and four sons, **John, Thomas Boyes, Richard** and **William**, the first two dying before their father. These are the grandsons named in the indenture mentioned by Richard Pittom in his will.

**John Pittom**, the eldest, (1795-1843) who died six months before his father, married Sarah Salsbury (1790-1864) in 1816 and had 10 children, but four died as infants. Sarah's family were masons and carpenters in Barby having lived in the village for many generations, but it is interesting that John, the eldest Pittom

## The Pittom Family

son, should marry into the artisan class rather than the landowning. In 1851 the widowed Sarah is an annuitant living in Barby with her five unmarried children, the eldest daughter was already married. Several of her other children also married into the artisan class in Barby or neighbouring villages, so it appears that this Pittom branch did not worry about obtaining land. They had however been left money by their grandfather and more in 1870 by their uncle Richard.

John and Sarah lived in the old Thomas Boyes homestead next to the Ware (between parcels 18 & 10 on the map on p19). John's will proved PCC in 1844 instructs his brothers Richard and William Pratt Pittom to sell his real property and invest the proceeds for the maintenance and education of his children. His father Thomas is to be given first refusal. His wife is to have use of all the household goods and chattels which are to be sold at her death and the proceeds invested for their children as before.

John's brother **Thomas Boyes Pittom** (1800-1836) married Lydia Elton at Walsgrave on Sowe near Coventry in 1835 and died childless in 1836, he was then of Woolscott Mill purchased by his father Thomas, who in his will ordered it to be sold to provide for John's children.

**Richard Pittom 2** (1798-1869) married his housekeeper Ann Billingham late in life and also had no children. He lived at Holme Farm in Kilsby Road, owned with its land of 54 acres in the 1840 Oakley Survey by his father Thomas Pittom, who left it to Richard. It was then named as Home Farm.

According to the 1851 census Richard was a farmer of 277 acres employing 3 men. He is also listed in the 1840 Survey as the occupier of Onley Fields Farm of 215 acres near Willoughby which he rented from Lumley Arnold of Ashby Lodge, and a further 15 acres off Nortoft Lane owned by the Trustees of Thomas William Cleaves. The latter land according to his will he later bought from the Trustees, as well as other land and premises in Barby and Kilsby during his lifetime.

## The Pittom Family



Home Farm in the early 1900s, now demolished

In 1853 Richard brought a lawsuit in Chancery against Edward Thompson (TNA C18/4/20), concerning some eleven acres of land in Kilsby bought from Edward. Edward declared the sale was invalid as he had been ill at the time, and too sick to know what he was doing. The purchase must have stood, however, as Richard mentions the land in his will proved at Northampton in 1870.

Some time before his death in 1869 he bought Fir Tree House, York Cottage and their attached land from Marmaduke Duffkin of Leicester who owned it in 1840 when it was farmed by his "faithful servant" William Butler.

Richard left his real estate between his three nephews **Thomas 2** and **William Pratt Pittom 2** (sons of his youngest brother William Pratt Pittom 1 who had died 5 years before Richard) and **Richard Pittom 3** (son of his eldest brother John Pittom who had died in 1843), in three separate holdings totalling 282 acres. He also left sums of money to be invested for his four nieces Mary Pittom (daughter of William Pratt Pittom), Betsey Jane Borsley, Mary Webb and Sarah Harris (daughters of his brother John), and an annuity to their brother John Richard Pittom.

## The Pittom Family

The property he owned consisted of 100 acres in Kilsby, 66 of which had been bought from Mr Margetts, the rest from John Odey, which were left to Thomas Pittom, then to his children after his death. To William Pratt Pittom he left 66 acres, 11 in Kilsby purchased from Edward Thompson of Barby (the land subject to the lawsuit), the rest in Barby including the Rowdyke fields inherited from his father plus a couple more off Nortoft Lane bought from the Trustees of Mr Cleeves, and a house and close of 5 acres (Westfield House), which he had bought from the Trustees of John Elkington. His own residence known as Home Farm now increased to 116 acres, and 2 dwellings occupied by Mrs Gillbee, widow of the late Rector Charles Gillbee (Fir Tree House), and George Hopkins a local carpenter (York Cottage), were left to Richard Pittom 2.

### **William Pratt Pittom 1** (1804-1865) – see Tree p 25

the youngest son of Thomas Pittom 1, married Elizabeth Howard (1804-1879) daughter of Samuel Howard of Barby, in Southwark, Surrey in 1831. They lived for the first 10 years of their marriage on the Ashby Lodge estate of the Arnold family, just south of Barby – in his census entry for 1841 he is listed, just after the mansion Ashby Lodge itself, as a farmer at The Lodge, possibly what is now Ashby Grange. He probably returned to Barby village after the death of his father in 1843 when he inherited real estate in the village.

William was a farmer of 180 acres in the censuses for 1851 and 1861, in 1861 his children, all living at home, were all employed about the farm. At that time they were living at The Homestead in Kilsby Road, maybe bought from the Lord family of Ashleigh House after they had fallen on hard times in the 1840s.

William's will proved in 1866 referred to his wife Elizabeth, who was left his household effects, and his house in Barby in his own occupation for her lifetime. He listed fields he owned, Home Close or Batson Close, Gt Balden, Lt Balden, Weldonsich, Top Horsepool and Bottom Horsepool totalling 75 acres (subject to a mortgage of £3000 on the last 4), which were left to his son Thomas. These closes, which formed part of the estate left to Thomas Pittom by Thomas Boyes in 1805, were charged with an annuity of £60 to his wife. If she died before



## The Pittom Family

their son Boyes Pittom, he was to receive an annuity of £30 for his maintenance. This suggests that Boyes was not in good health, he did in fact die the following year aged only 19.

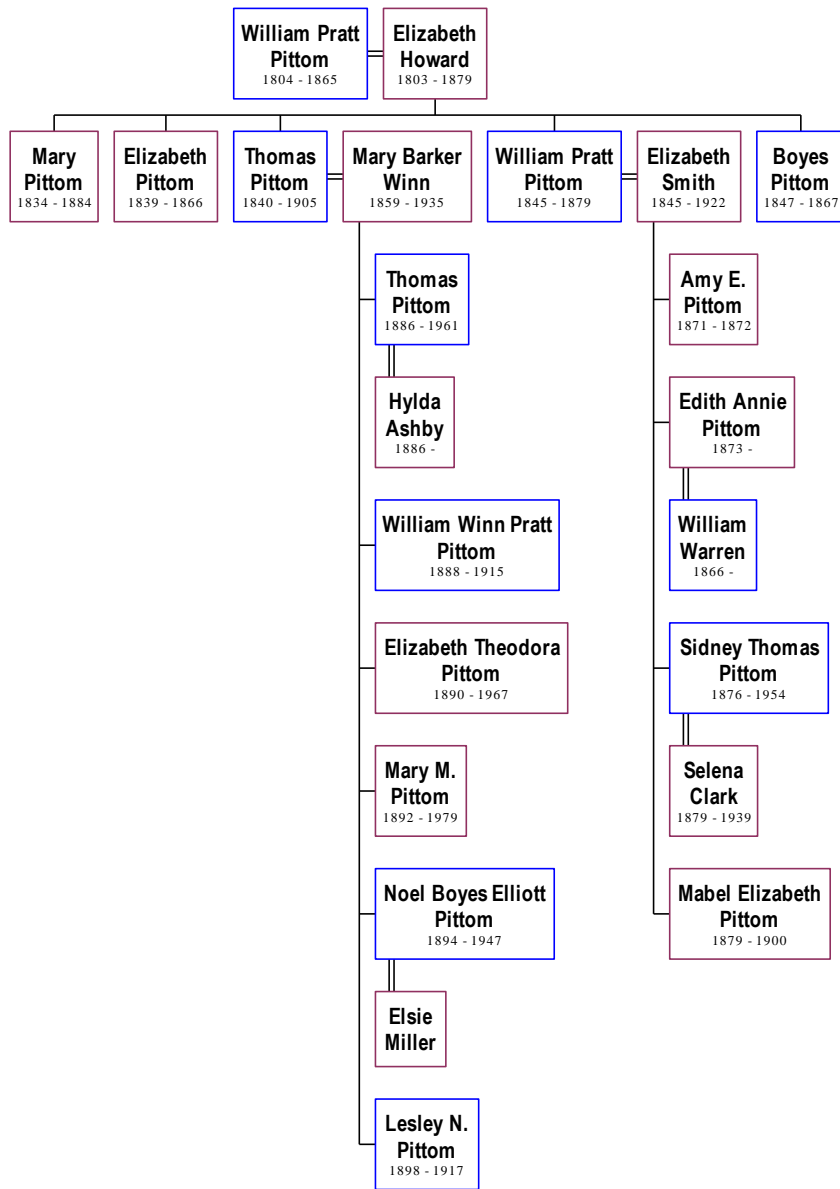
William owned 10 houses in Barby, three vacant, the others occupied by Timothy Roberts, Thomas Coleman, Hannah Rounds, James Curtis, Wm Barratt, David Embery and William Salisbury, an orchard in his own occupation called Pittoms Orchard behind Pinfold House, and 9 houses at Braunston occupied by Mrs West and others, all of which he left to his son Thomas Pittom.

He owned 3 more pasture fields at Barby: Edoms Piece, Dane and Stony Meadow (37a 3r 4p on Nortoft Lane, probably the Cleeves land) and 3 closes called Hovel Close, Three Cornered Close and The Meadow (12a 2r 8p) which he left to Elizabeth and Thomas in trust for his son William Pratt Pittom 2, charging them with an annuity of £60 to his wife as before.

All other real estate went to his sons Thomas 2 and William Pratt Pittom 2, with legacies of £1500 each to his daughters Mary and Elizabeth Pittom. Both remained unmarried, Elizabeth dying the following year aged just 27. Mary died in 1884. She left in her will £20 to her cousin Mary Webb, daughter of her uncle John Pittom and wife of William Webb of Barby, and £300 to Northampton General Infirmary. She also provided trust funds of £800 for her nephew Sidney Thomas Pittom and £1000 between her nieces Edith Annie and Mabel Lizzie Pittom, children of her late brother William Pratt Pittom, to be paid to them when 21. The residue of her estate went to her brother Thomas Pittom, her Executor.

# The Pittom Family

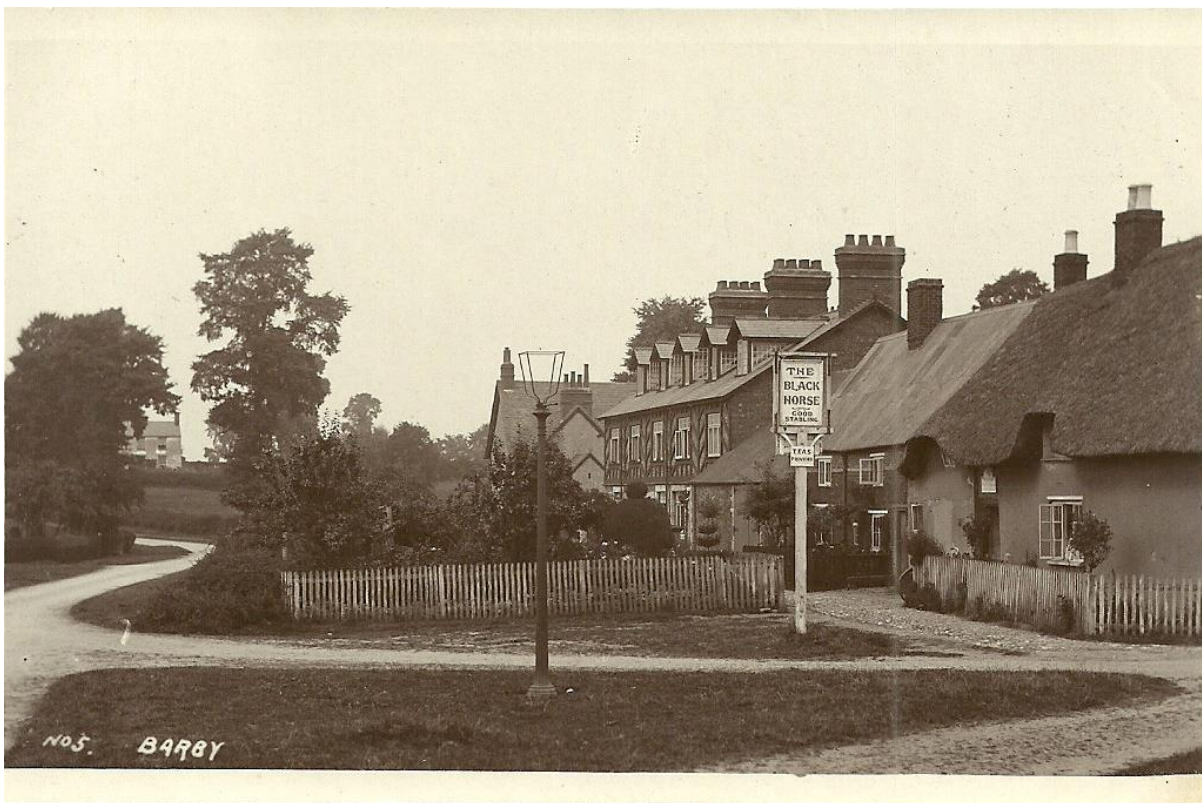
## *Descendants of William Pratt Pittom*



Tree 3

### **PIT TOMS OF THE LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

Following Richard's death in 1869, there were still several Pittom families in Barby. **John Richard** (1840-1892), youngest son of John Pittom, in 1864 married Lucy Haddon whose grandfather John born in Naseby had married into the Messenger family who in turn were connections of the Pittoms. In 1881 John Richard is described as a farm labourer, but in 1891 he is shown as the licensee of the Black Horse public house. He died the following year, his widow then married William Elkington in 1893, and continued to run the pub with him. John and Lucy had a number of children, but all left Barby to seek their fortunes elsewhere – there was little future in the countryside at a time of agricultural depression for those with no land.



The Black Horse public house c1920

## The Pittom Family

The three Pittoms, **Richard 3**, **William Pratt 2** and **Thomas 2**, who inherited from the elder Richard in 1870, were all substantial farmers and landowners.

In 1864 **Richard 3** (1842-1918), John Richard's brother, married Ellen Clarke (whose great grandmother had been Christian Pittom, daughter of William 3) at Leamington Spa, but they returned to Barby where they had two surviving children Richard and Sarah. By 1871 they were living at Holme Farm in Kilsby Road, inherited from his uncle Richard Pittom 2, farming 250 acres employing 5 men, 3 boys and 3 women. This suggests Richard was also farming Onley Fields as his uncle had before him. In 1910 he was living in New York Cottage (now No 3 Rugby Road), but still owned Holme Farm and 56 acres (which was let to the Herbert family), Fir Tree House and a further 62 acres occupied by himself – this equates with the land left to him by his uncle. His estate however was worth just under £300 when his son Richard, described as a labourer, took out Letters of Administration in 1918, suggesting he had already sold any land he owned. Richard's children both left the village (see the article on **York Cottage** for further details of them).

**William Pratt Pittom 2** (1845-1879) was born on the Ashby Lodge estate while his father was running one of the estate farms. It must have been William and his mother who had the present Westfield House (below in 1974) built c1868 on the site of the old Elkington farmhouse.



## The Pittom Family

In 1870 at Wootton by Bedford, William married Elizabeth Smith (1845-1922), a granddaughter of Hannah Riddey who had been the licensee of The Crown in Barby. They had four children, only two reaching adulthood.

William died at Barby in 1879 aged only 33, his widow married again in 1882 to Thomas Wiggins Riddey, another grandchild of Hannah and son of John Riddey and Ann Wiggins – the Wigginses were another longstanding landowning family in the village based at Manor Farm in Ware Road. Thomas Riddey lived at The Laurels in Daventry Road where the Pittom children were brought up with their half sister Gertrude Riddey who became one of the teachers at Barby School in the early 1900s.

William's daughter Edith Annie married William Warren, Barby's schoolmaster, in 1896 in Paddington, London. In 1901 they moved to the school at Hillmorton.

William's only son **Sidney Thomas Pittom** (1876-1954) was farming 105 acres from Westfield House in 1910, his initials appear on a beam in one of the outbuildings there dated 1918. At his death he was living at Northfield House in Kilsby Road, his burial entry says he was Churchwarden for 55 years. He died intestate, Westfield House was sold in 1955 by his son Sidney William of Foxley Lodge, Towcester to William Henson of Nortoft Lodge Farm.

**Thomas Pittom 2** (1840-1905) was also born at Ashby. In 1881 he was a farmer of 288 acres employing 9 labourers, 2 boys & 3 women, living with his unmarried sister Mary. In 1885 he married Mary Barker Winn (1859-1935) at Holy Trinity Coventry, the granddaughter of another Pittom alliance in 1815 between John Elkington and Elizabeth, daughter of William Pittom and Eleanor Devonshire (see Tree 1 p9). The **Elkingtons** were another long-standing Barby family – see the account of this family for further details.

Thomas and Mary Pittom had six children, and lived at Ashleigh House Farm (below), which had been purchased around 1870 from the estate of Rev Richard

## The Pittom Family

Stephens, vicar of Belgrave Leics. They had six children, **Thomas 3**, William Winn Pratt (1888-1915), Elizabeth Theodora (1890-1967), Mary M (1892-1979), Noel Boyes Elliott (1894-1947) and Lesley Norris (1898-1917). The girls never married, Lesley died when she was only 19; and William died at home while serving in the Army during World War 1. He is buried in the churchyard and also has a stained glass window in his memory in the church (see his biography under those who died in the war). Noel also served in the War, from 1914 in the Northamptonshire Yeomanry and transferring to the Military Mounted Police in 1917 when he was posted to Taranto in Italy. He was an auctioneer and estate agent in Northampton.



A lady who lived as a child at Holme Farm in the 1890s recalls Tom Pittom when she wrote to her niece in the 1970s.

*"There was an old farmer named Tom Pittom lived down the Kilsby road and he had land up on the Willoughby road. He used to ride by our house on his old pony every day, he had a fierce dog. I was terrified of it, he always fought other dogs who came near him."*

**Thomas Pittom 3** (1886 – 1961), his eldest son, continued to farm his land in Barby together with his mother Mary Barker Pittom who died in 1935 at Kilsby. In 1910 he is also listed as Trustee with his mother of The Homestead in Kilsby

## The Pittom Family

Road, farming the land although the house was let. They are also listed as the owners of Ashleigh House where Thomas lived. He married Hylda Ashby at Kilsby Independent Chapel in 1914, they had three daughters who all remained unmarried and forged careers for themselves.

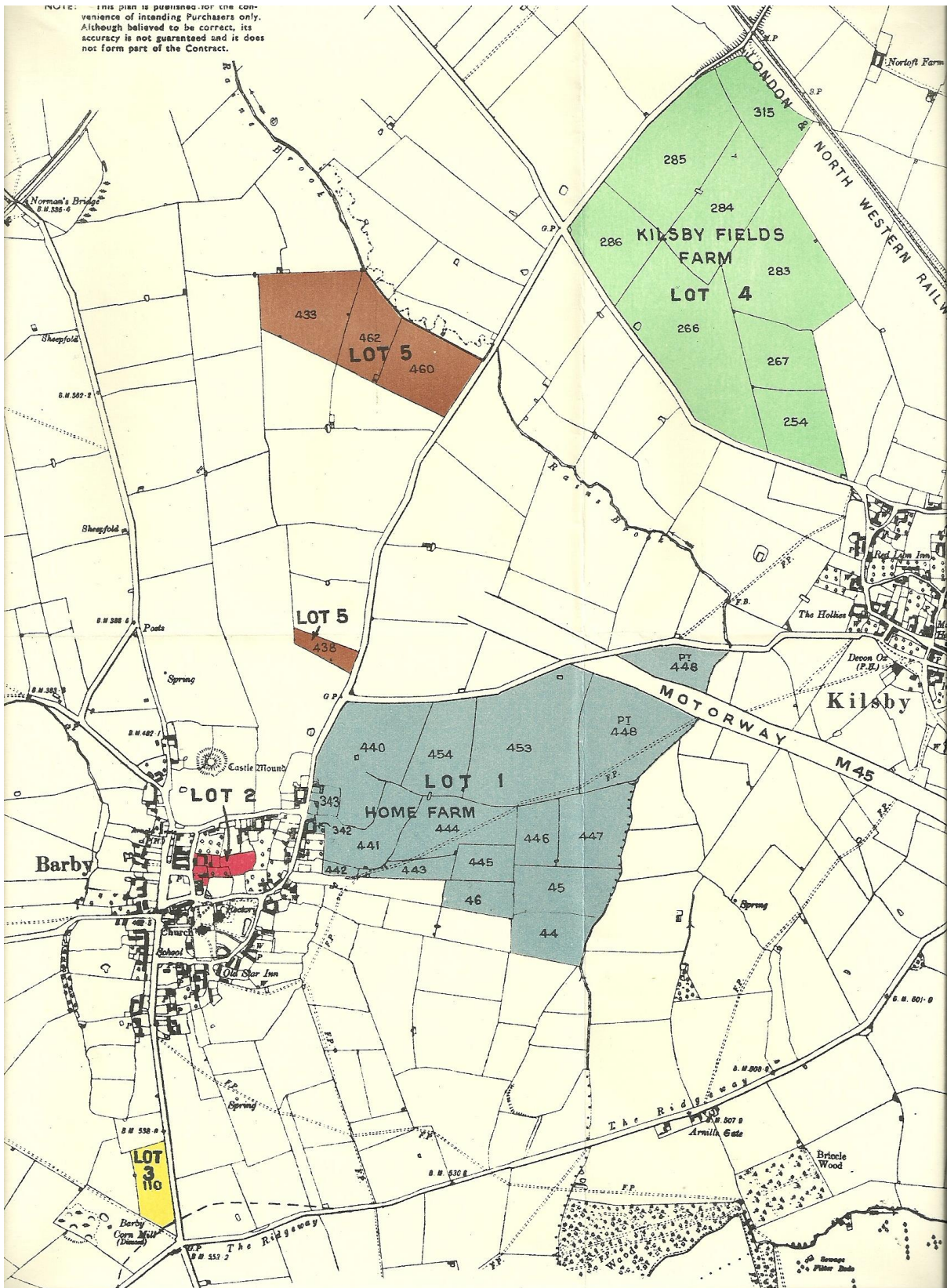
From the Abstract of Title of 1963 to a house later built in Almond Close, Barby, in the 1970s, Thomas bought Pinfold House on The Green from the Trustees of the will of Anne Barker, the last surviving daughter of Samuel Barker, in 1907. From the same document, other properties in Barby then owned by Thomas Pittom 3 are listed as follows:

1. Pasture of 13ac called Big Bawlands with cottage in occupation of - Linnett (this was across the Kilsby road from Ashleigh House).
2. Messuage & 5 closes of 61 ac (Battsons Close, Weldons Switch, Lt Bawlands, Top & Bottom Horsepool) occupied by himself with 2 cottages occupied by Charles Salisbury (this land with No 1 above included the Thomas Boyes estate).
3. 2 cottages with gardens occupied by William Webb and - Middleton.
4. All Ware Orchard with house etc occupied by Stephen Prestidge (this was sold in 1948 to Daventry District Council who built the council houses on part of the land).
5. Hop Yard or Pittoms Orchard and 3 cottages etc occupied by William Howe, William Cole, Mrs Goode and himself (this was the property near The Green owned by Thomas Pittom at Enclosure).

[all these were inherited from his father]

6. Four closes known as Elkington Farm of 18 ac bought from Trustees of Rev Richard Stephens deceased.
7. House and 1 acre adjoining Rectory bought in 1878 from Job Hart's devisees.
8. Farmhouse etc and 5 closes totalling 17 acres bought of Miss Osmond – this property has not yet been identified.

# The Pittom Family



Sale map for land of Thomas Pittom 3 in 1962



## The Pittom Family

Thomas died in a car crash on the M1 in 1961, the majority of his estate was sold the following year. At that time (see map on p31) it consisted of two farms, one known as Home Farm of 106ac (not to be confused with Holme Farm owned by Richard Pittom) on the Kilsby Road (Lot 1) which included the Boyes estate plus land formerly attached to The Homestead, and Kilsby Fields Farm (98ac) in Kilsby parish off Nortoft Lane (Lot 4) which had been inherited by his father from Richard 2. There were also four fields of accommodation land off Nortoft Lane (26ac) beside the Rainsbrook (Lot 5), and Miller's Close (4ac), the field now between the water tower and the school (Lot 3). Pinfold House (Lot 2) with a paddock of 2ac was also sold. In addition five plots of building land were for sale, three in Kilsby Road to the south of The Homestead, one on the corner of Kilsby Road & Ware Road, and one beside Manor Farm, part of the site of the Boyes Homestead. Most of the land within the village was used for housing in the 1960s and 1970s.

Audrey, his middle daughter (on right of picture below with her sisters), had a bungalow built (No 1 Rectory Lane) on land her father had owned on the site of Thomas Snr's house at Enclosure, and lived there after her retirement from the Civil Service until her death in 1990. She was the last Pittom to live in the village which had been the home of her family for nearly 300 years.



## The Pittom Family

**Sources** (all at Northampton Record Office [NRO] unless stated otherwise):

Barby parish registers and Bishop's Transcripts

Census returns for Barby 1841-1911

Barby Enclosure Map & Award 1778

1840 Oakley Survey

1910 Valuation Survey (The National Archives [TNA] IR58/59150-52, IR126/5/125, 191)

Pittom wills proved at Northampton, Prerogative Court of Canterbury (TNA) and Principal Probate Registry, Holborn, London

Documents & photographs in the archive of Barby Local History Group