

## **“Henry Atfeild the Elder”, 1686(?) – 1746**

*by John Attfield*

The original Attfield family tree circulated by Colin Attfield in 1956 traced the lineage back to Henry Attfield “of Chertsey” (although I believe he was actually from Windlesham) who was born in 1722 and died in 1793. To date it has proved impossible to extend the lineage back beyond this with any certainty, largely on account of unfortunate gaps in the Windlesham parish records.

Although the relationship cannot be proved as yet, I consider the most likely candidate for Henry’s father to be “Henry Atfeild the Elder” of Windlesham, yeoman, whose will was dated 9.11.1745 and who died in 1746. A transcript of his will can be downloaded from my web site (<http://www.familytree.john-attfield.com>).

Here is what we know or can guess about “Henry the Elder”:

### **Birth and parents**

Henry was probably born at Windlesham somewhere between 1685 and 1695. A likely candidate is **Henry Field**, baptised at Windlesham on 28.3.1686, to parents Henry Field (b. Windlesham ca.1661) and Hannah (source: IGI). Siblings also recorded in the IGI are Mary (baptised in 1679) and Jane (baptised in 1684), but these two sisters have not been traced any further.

A Henry Attfield witnessed the will of Thomas Hart, carpenter of Windlesham, in 1701. This could have been either “Henry the Elder” or his father.

It should be noted that this Henry – like many others in the family – used the names Field, Attfield and Attfield interchangeably. In his will, “Henry the Elder” was called Atfeild, but his burial record shows his name as Field.

### **Occupation**

A series of depositions have survived which were made in 1716 in connection with an inquiry into whether certain estate of James Zouch of Hoe Place, deceased, was part of the Royal Manor of Woking and held from the Crown or his own personal property (ref: PRO E134/5George2/Mich1-9). The depositions are cited on the web site of the Friends of Woking Palace (<http://www.woking-palace.org/>) as follows:

*Two of the depositions, by **Henry Attfield**, yeoman of Windlesham and a servant at Hoe Place for three years prior to the death of James Zouch, and John Freeland, husbandman of Woking, appear to disclose underhand dealings by Mr and Mrs Abel immediately following the death of James Zouch. Mrs Abel is said to have come down from London to Hoe Place, where James Zouch had died, in*

*a great hurry and taken back certain "writings" to London and Mr Abel was observed by Henry Attfield and John Freeland burning "writings and papers" in the kitchen at Hoe Place.*

The Henry Attfield mentioned here is not inconsistent with "Henry the Elder", and it can be supposed that it is the same person. If he was working as servant to James Zouch at Hoe Place for three years before the latter's death, this would have been from 1705 to 1708, which would be consistent with Henry's assumed birth dates. If he was a yeoman by 1716, then possibly his father had died prior to that (i.e. between 1708 and 1716) and Henry had inherited. (However a Henry "Alfield" was buried at Windlesham on 1.12.1718, which would tend to contradict this.)

At any rate, "Henry the Elder" was still a yeoman of Windlesham at the time of his death in 1746, as mentioned in his will.

## **Marriage**

His wife, as mentioned in his will, was called Ann, and he must have married her before 1719 when their first child was baptised.

A good candidate is **Ann Lun** (or Lunn), who married Henry Attfield of Windlesham on 8.9.1716, bondsman Thomas Lun of Farnborough (source: Hampshire Parish & Probate Records at <http://www.ancestry.com>). The marriage between "Henry Atfield" and "An Lunn" in 1716 is also recorded in Boyd's Marriage Index (online at The Origins Network, <http://www.originsnetwork.com/>), where the source is cited as Huntingdon Archdeaconry.

This marriage record requires clarification by viewing the original document. But in any case there are few records of any other marriages between a Henry Attfield and Ann in the relevant period, so this is the best candidate.

## **Children**

Henry's will mentions three or possibly four children:

- Ø **Martha** (the eldest child). She was baptised at Windlesham on 19.10.1719, daughter of Henry Field. She married Theophilus Barrow, presumably around 1740; he died and was buried at Chertsey on 12.4.1744, and in 1745 she is referred to in the will as his relict. I have not been able to discover any further trace of Martha after that date.
- Ø **Henry** (the eldest son). This is likely to be the "Henry of Chertsey" who was born in 1722. The date would fit well. But unfortunately there is a gap in the Windlesham parish registers at this period, and no birth or baptism record for Henry has been found apart from the reference in the original Attfield family tree.

- Ø **William** (the youngest son). He was baptised at Windlesham on 9.6.1729, son of Henry Atfield. This William cannot be traced further with certainty, but it is possible that he married Elizabeth Collier at Windlesham on 30.3.1752 and died in 1783, being buried at Windlesham on 24.12.1783. His will, which says that he was a yeoman, was proved on 16.1.1784 and mentions four sons (William, James, George and John) and two daughters (Mary, who married William Collyer in 1775, and Jane).
- Ø There was possibly also another son called **John**. This name is mentioned in the will, but the reference is contradictory and it may have been a clerical error. There is no other hard evidence regarding him.

There may well have been other children who had died before 1745, although none can be identified from the surviving Windlesham registers. There may also have been other living children. Not being mentioned in the will is no evidence of non-existence!

### **Death, burial and will**

“Henry the Elder” wrote his will on 9.11.1745; he left legacies to his wife Ann and children Martha, Henry and William (and possibly John), including his “freehold messuage or tenement barns buildings yards edifices gardens orchards backsides lands hereditaments and premises” at Windlesham which was left to his wife, and after her death or re-marriage was to be divided between the three children, share and share alike. His son Henry was also left “five shillings in money”. His wife Ann was named as executrix of the will.

“Henry the Elder” died in 1746 and was buried at Windlesham on 3.8.1746. The burial register records his name as Henry Field. His age was not recorded in the register, but if he was born in 1686 he would have been 60.

The will was proved at London on 16.10.1746.

#### **Note:**

*I will amend and update this article as and when more evidence comes to light. I would be most grateful for any further information that would shed any light on “Henry the Elder” or on other early Atfield families in Windlesham.*

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