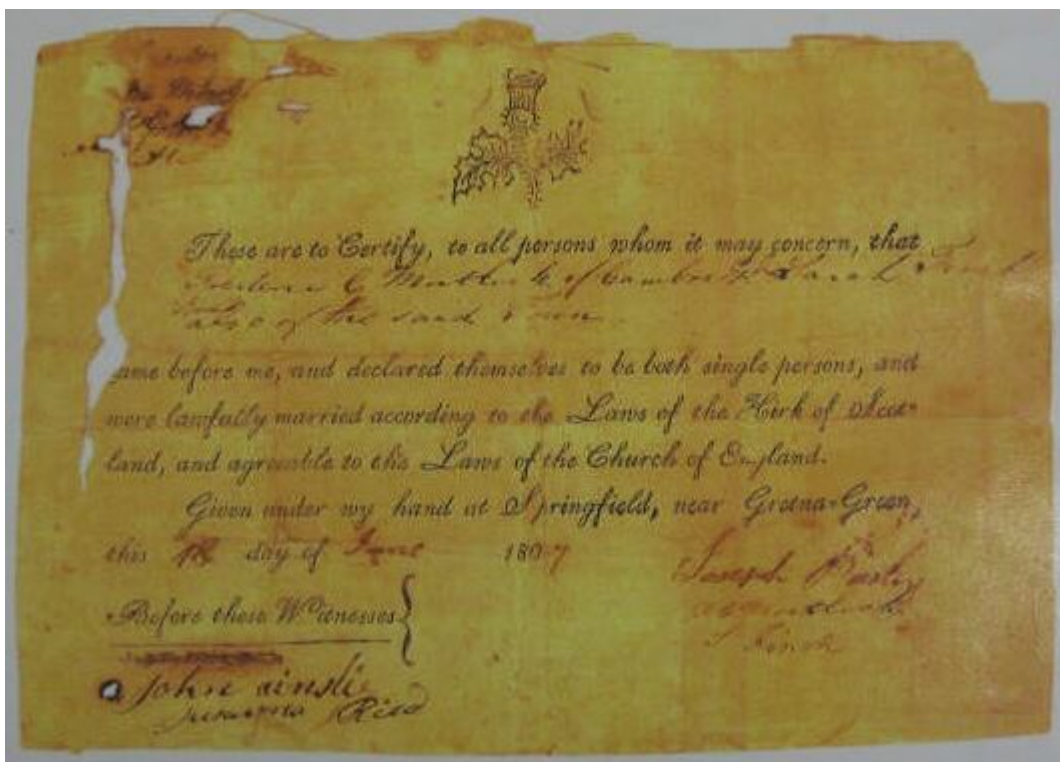


Mortlock and the Finch Connection

The Finches were a Cambridge family on the same rung as the Mortlocks, and deserve notice not only for that but for one of their Mortlock descendants being transported to Australia.

Frederick Cheetham Mortlock was born in 1784, the fourth surviving son of John Mortlock III, banker, mayor and sometime MP for Cambridge. In June 1807 he eloped to Gretna with Sarah Finch, a girl from a wealthy local dissenting ironfounder and ironmonger family connected with the Mortlock banking and political activities. This must have caused a not inconsiderable social rumpus. The background to this is that at Gretna Green, the first village one comes to in Scotland, a runaway couple could be married without their parents' consent. The ceremonies were conducted by the village blacksmith. Once so wed, the marriage was legally binding in England and the probably outraged parents had to learn to live with it.



Frederick Mortlock's Gretna Green Marriage Certificate

William Finch, who died in 1732, leaving the staggering sum for its day of £150,000, and who has a gravestone at St Mary the Great, the chief church of Cambridge, came to Cambridge from Hampton St in Dudley in Staffordshire in the year of the Glorious Revolution, 1688, and started an iron foundry and ironmongery business. He was an Independent in religion - indeed "a rigid Presbyterian" - and one of the Trustees of the Downing Place chapel. His family were already in iron in Staffordshire, his father (also William, d.1713) having started up in that business in Dudley in the late 1600s. By 1720 the Cambridge business was prospering to the extent that William was able to buy the ruin of the Austin (Augustinian) Friars in Bene't St from the University, tear it down, and build a "substantial mansion house" on the site. Cole, the antiquarian, lamented that Finch had "pulled down the good old gates".

William's son and heir William jnr, who died in 1762, is commemorated by a plaque at the east end of the south aisle of St Mary's. He acquired the manor of Little Shelford and restored and enlarged Shelford manor house (the Shelfords are about five miles south of Cambridge). In 1745 he was elected Treasurer of an Anti-Jacobite subscription, which marks him as a Tory (unlike his father); he subscribed £25 towards enlisting volunteers to face Bonnie Prince Charlie's invading "army" (actually a rabble). In 1752 he was one of the Commissioners for Bridge Repairs in Cambridge. He died unmarried and the Lordship of the Manor of Little Shelford (but not the iron business) passed to his nephew, who there upon changed his name from William Finch Ingle - his father, Samuel Ingle, was a linen draper and Citizen of London - to William Finch Finch. In 1777 William Finch Finch married Anne Bettina Beevor; Mortlocks, Finches, Beevors, Lacons, Palmers and so forth were all connected in ways beyond what there is room to chronicle here; for instance in 1806 Juliana Bettina, daughter of Sir Thomas Beevor and great niece of William Finch Finch and Anne Bettina, married a Henry Hurrell, William Finch Finch being Sarah Mortlock's third cousin.

Samuel Ingle had married Elizabeth, daughter of William Finch snr (1667-1731). Besides her brother William jnr she had two unmarried sisters, of whom Sara jumped out of a window and killed herself in 1753 aged 54. At that age one might suspect the cause to be the diagnosis of incurable illness but we shall never know.

The manor of Little Shelford remained in the Finch family until Rev. Henry Finch, who was Rector of Great Shelford - but he lived mostly in Cambridge - sold the Lordship in 1837, although he remained sequestrator of the Great Tithes until 1849. Henry was not the first Finch pluralist parson - Rev. Thomas Finch held the livings of Barrington and another parish in 1770 at a time when "church life in the parish steadily decayed" (VCH) while Rev. Thomas, like Rev Henry later, also lived mostly in Cambridge. It was of course just this sort of pluralist neglect that stoked the fires of Dissent - but by this time, as can be seen, some of the Finches had diverged to a more worldly life-view. In 1814 the Finch property in Great Eversden, which had come to them from the Days collaterally to the Days' relationship to the Mortlocks, was bought out at enclosure by the Earl of Hardwicke, along with a moated site beside the High Street in Caxton.

Joshua Finch also came to Cambridge to settle, in about 1745, and it was to him that his cousin William left the iron business. Joshua prospered and became an alderman. His son Charles married a Sarah Smith whose uncle Mr Stanton was vicar of South Moulton, Northants and the couple had three daughters and a son, also Charles. In 1823 "Messrs Charles Finch and Son" subscribed £30 to the rebuilding of the Great Bridge at Cambridge. Charles snr was clearly one of the chief men of the town. With his brother Thomas Day Finch of Great Shelford, and John Mortlock and the rather grandly named Granado Piggott, he was among the trustees appointed under the 1797 Cambridge to Abington Road Act. In 1812 he sat with John Cheetham Mortlock and Frederick Cheetham Mortlock on a Grand Jury re Mr Walsh MP robbing Sir Thomas Planer of £22,000, a juicy local scandal we may be sure. Charles Finch snr and his Sarah were Dissenters (non-conformists) as were many tradesmen and shopkeepers in Cambridge at that time. This probably marks Charles as a Whig but he would not be the first man to hold different political views from his seniors. Of the daughters, Catherine married Swan Hurrell of Foxton, probably related to the William Hurrell who was Squire of Hauxton, and Elizabeth married Ebenezer Foster, whom we shall meet shortly. The melancholy memorial to Swann's daughter Jane, who died aged only 19, can be seen in Great St Mary's. The Sarah who eloped with Frederick Cheetham

Mortlock was Charles snr's second daughter, baptised on 3rd December 1788. The pair were second cousins via the Days of Great Eversden; Mary Day, John Mortlock III's mother-in-law, was sister to Elizabeth Day (who died in 1813 aged 81), the wife of Joshua Finch. and to Esther (1720) who married in 1739 a Mr George Dunch, a connection of Oliver Cromwell. Another sister married the unfortunate Alderman Purchas who, after a bumpy ride as John Mortlock's ally, committed suicide in 1833. One of Sarah Mortlock's first cousins, the daughter, who died unmarried in 1809, of William Finch of Birmingham, was a granddaughter of Joseph Priestley by William's marriage in 1786 to Joseph's daughter Sarah.

Sarah (Finch) Mortlock had quarrelled with her sister Elizabeth and the now Mrs. Foster induced her husband to establish a Bank in opposition to the Mortlocks. The last named had the whole of the University business and a clientele of County and professional people. Fosters, on the other hand, sought commercial business and in volume of business soon outran the Mortlocks. He also prospered socially and was High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire in 1849. His grandson Charles Finch Foster sold the business of his Bank to the Capital & Counties and died about 1910 leaving over £700,000 in personalty in addition to large real estate. "Foster's Bank", so recorded in stone over the front door, is now the main Cambridge branch of Lloyds. Charles Finch Foster was reputed a most objectionable fellow – dictatorial – rude - and rough in demeanour. On the principle of "compounding for sins one is inclined to, by damning those one has no mind to" he was a great patron of the religious sect to which he adhered. To show one aspect of his mind, one of the Rawlins met him and casually mentioned the distant (Mortlock) kinship between them, and was promptly forbidden ever to speak to him again. What a mind to remember the quarrel between his grandmother and her sister, and to visit upon the head of a descendant of the last named the sins (if any) of the two women.

The word "ironmonger" had a more literal meaning then than it has today; an eighteenth century ironmonger imported iron from which others would manufacture artefacts although perhaps he might also operate at retail. In the present case we may reasonably speculate that pigs and billets were brought up the Great Ouse and then the Cam in barges from Kings Lynn. A Cambridge ironmaster thus controlled supply to all the smithies in villages round about, and to towns like, perhaps, Newmarket, less well favoured by water transport.

Charles and Sarah Finch are buried at Great Eversden in a prestigious table-top tomb. The only son, Charles jnr, married, in 1809, Sarah Dunn of Barnwell, and eventually retired to the family base in Staffordshire. On his dying without issue in 1866 the Cambridge activity passed to Swann Hurrell jnr who it would appear had already been running the business for some time. Swann moved the enterprise from Bridge St to Market Hill, prospered, and served four terms as Mayor of Cambridge where he was known as the "Iron Duke". On his demise the business passed to his nephew Edmund Beale, who went bankrupt and sold out to Alexander Mackintosh under whom it continued for some years.

Finch memorials can be seen in St Mary's and, as above, at Great Eversden. There are several Finches in DNB, and in Burke's, some of whom have an educational or parliamentary connection with Cambridge. However they appear all to be from a separate flock of Finches, from Kent, and not related to those connected to the Mortlocks.

There seems to have been a reconciliation between the Finches and the Mortlocks over the elopement. Thomas Mortlock, operating both as older brother and family lawyer, engineered a financial settlement

in which Finch put down £2,000, and Frederick added £1,500 and purchased annuities for £3,650 for Sarah should she survive him. Certainly Frederick made up in some sort with his father or he would not have been brought into, and then left, the banking business. The Gretna ceremony itself, which had already been publicly announced [see the *Derby Mercury*, and *Jackson's Oxford Journal* for instance] (but whether these advertisements were placed preemptively by Fred or forgivingly by his father we do not know) was sanctified in church at Long Melford, Suffolk on July 27th 1807, the couple having been pursued and retrieved by the enraged and embarrassed families. The associated settlement document can be seen in West Sussex Records Office in Chichester, journeying there presumably via Rev. Charles Frederick of South Bersted. The Gretna certificate ended up in Jamaica.

Sadly Frederick later became prematurely senile and ultimately the couple, who must have set out defiantly with such high hopes, and who had together produced nine children, separated. In 1823 [*Times*, 7.7.23] one of the Docwras who has lost some money tried to get back at Frederick by having him prosecuted for perjury but the case was thrown out. The last straw for Sarah was Frederick's selling out to his brothers, and the couple eventually parted in 1830, after he had had to accept the halving of his annuity, but also after the loss of two of their daughters, which last may have destabilised Sarah. It is a sad commonplace of Alzheimer's that the sufferers become quarrelsome, irritable and difficult to live with. In a world where few lived beyond forty the condition would have been little understood. It may have been that the early effect of this senility contributed to Frederick's mishandling of the Bank's affairs and thus to his brothers buying him out. Frederick died in 1838 but Sarah survived him into her nineties, and in the 1830s was living in Little Thurlow. Latterly she seems to have lived in Little Abington although she also appears to have finally lodged with her divorced daughter Elizabeth Sarah (ex-Rawlins) in lodgings in St Martin's, London run by a Samuel Clark. It is difficult to be categorical about this because Sarah snr seems to have managed to get into the 1881 census twice. The tone of Frederick and Sarah's marriage, while it lasted, is hidden from us but much can be inferred from their children's careers and unions.

Sarah (Finch) Mortlock was clearly what today might be called a "wild child" and a strong believer in Girl Power. She was a petite and very pretty girl and was the toast of Cambridge; Lord Palmerston (the same that eventually expired *in flagrante delicto* on the billiard table at Broadlands) twice proposed to her. She boasted that all the Mortlock men were in love with her but it was she that chose Fred, who was a vigorous sporting man rather than a sober intellectual. Shortly after her marriage she appeared at the County Ball in a décolletage so low that one gentleman remarked that he had not seen anything like it since he was a babe in his mother's arms. After the separation she settled in the Old House at Abington but her presence was clearly disturbing to the Mortlocks and it is said that when Abington Lodge became available, Thomas Mortlock snapped it up to prevent Sarah getting hold of it.

Believing herself (probably erroneously) related to the Earls of Winchelsea, she had no great opinion of the Mortlocks, whom she always described as country yeomen. She was not disposed to treat with tact and discretion her relations in law, who, she contended, had by chicanery dispossessed her, her husband, and her children, of their property and, moreover, she never forgot her social antecedents always including her maiden name in the subscription to her correspondence.

In addition she had the strongest will with which a woman can be gifted or otherwise. In fact she was the sun around which planets revolved and exacted implicit obedience from her children who naturally imbibed some of their ideas from her. When Elizabeth Sarah (Mortlock) Rawlins was herself an old

woman her mother would still say to her “I would have you to know Elizabeth that I must be obeyed”. However as an old lady she was always kind to her Rawlins great-grandchildren when they were guests in her house. Her faults were in a large measure due to her being a petted and spoilt beauty in her youth. She was an autocrat in her own home, and tobacco smoke was anathema to her. If, when visiting her, her Rawlins grandson wanted to smoke he had, when in the house, to do so with his head out of the window or go out into the grounds. She would never have a window closed however inclement the weather and the only artificial light she would allow were the old wax candles of her youth.

She despised her husband as a weakling and on one occasion chased him out of the house with her hunting crop. She disliked three classes of men viz. lawyers, clergymen, and doctors. The last named she would never have when her children were born and had little occasion to consult them at any time owing to her abundant good health. Clergymen she seemed to consider unnecessary. Lawyers were associated in her mind with her husband’s loss of Abington and the Bank; she saw them as denizens of Hades permitted by Satan to live on earth in order to afflict humanity. Despite her opinions she would make use of these minions of evil when, like Don Quixote, she wished to tilt at the Bank windmill with litigation as her lance.

To give Sarah her due, she was ready to pardon when the offender, even if the cause of the offence rested with her, made *amende honorable*. For years she did not speak to some of her children because they were too stiff-necked, and the only one who ever gave way to her consistently – except on one occasion – was Elizabeth Sarah (Mortlock) Rawlins. The one exception was when Elizabeth Sarah married DAD Rawlins instead of the man selected by her mother, who was Master of one of the Colleges and old enough to be his prospective bride’s grandfather. Rawlins was no favourite, on the one hand because he had married her daughter, and also because he told his mother-in-law, when she consulted him, that FCM had been quite rightfully deprived of all his interest in Abington and the Bank, and because, when she wanted to bring an action against the Duke of Manchester in respect to a large sum of money that nobleman received from the estate of Colonel Dunch (deceased) Rawlins told her she had no moral or legal right to the money (Robert, 3rd Duke of Manchester, had married, in 1735, Harriet, daughter and co-heir of Edmund Dunch of Little Wittenham, Berks.)

Frederick Cheetham Mortlock had been, in 1821, effectively banished to Rutland where he occupied a house belonging to Sir Gerard Noel Bt, father of the 1st Earl of Gainsborough. He spent much of his time abroad, in Paris, Brussels and Boulogne, towards the end of his life, but, returning, came home to Cambridge. Later, reduced to relying on charity, he was admitted as a brother of the Charterhouse. He died in Sir John Cheetham’s home in London and was buried in Chelsea. DAD Rawlins said he was one of the most charming of men, but the victim of his own good nature and the weaknesses with which nature had afflicted him.

Frederick Cheetham’s son and heir John Frederick was born in 1809. One of his early memories was of Blucher’s visit to Cambridge after the Battle of Waterloo, when Blucher did Frederick Cheetham the honour of walking arm-in-arm with him the while he (Blucher) hugged and kissed all the pretty girl groupies who clustered round him. In Rutland, where seems to have been let run wild, John Frederick nearly brought this story to an early end by tumbling on some spikes and impaling himself, mercifully only through his left arm, while climbing.

John Frederick was a scapegrace who, as an adolescent, sent from Charterhouse to Peterborough

Grammar School, absconded from the latter. One can only speculate whether that establishment's experience with John Frederick had anything to do with his younger brother Charles being translated from thence to Catterick to finish his education. In his own memoirs John Frederick persistently refers to Charterhouse although he is only credited with one year there (1820), albeit as a contemporary of William Makepeace Thackeray. He clearly relished the social aspects of his time (at least in retrospect) at "Smiffles" (the school's internal nickname from its proximity to Smithfield, then effectively a public abattoir) although he could see no point in the Latin or Greek, beaten in by "lictors" if a boy could not do the exercise set by his monitor. Following Peterborough, never referred to in his account of his life, John Frederick was then sacked by two private tutors. The first, a curate in Croxton called Holmes, got rid of him because he could not stick John Frederick's girl-chasing. A place in a Cambridge college was found for John Frederick but never taken up, he displaying no vocation for the church. He had some affinity and ability for mathematics but this never fruited, all his school time being, to his view, frittered away on dead languages. In desperation a commission was found - effectively bought - for John Frederick in HEIC's Bengal Army, and off to India he set from Gravesend in 1821, aboard the large Indiaman *Earl of Balcarres*. His own account shows him as, at nineteen, 5'8" and weighing eleven stone four pounds.

John Frederick enjoyed the trip out, particularly revelling in the young female company on board to whom he showed off - he was always athletic - by shimmying up the mast faster than the midshipmen. Disembarking in the Hooghly, he amused himself by shooting game on his way up to Calcutta, using a gun bought from a Scots solicitor on the journey out. Unfortunately an elderly native got in the way and the resulting pellet penetration had to be balmed by an application of rupees. In August, making his leisurely way up the Ganges to a regiment at Cawnpore, John Frederick weathered watching a bathing companion being taken by a crocodile. Besides his athleticism John Frederick was a truly excellent shot.

He appears to have avoided much military duty and to have spent his time tiger-hunting. Scrapes continued: several near-drownings and an encounter with a tiger which, fortunately for John Frederick, had lately gorged on a hapless native. Pleading ill-health, after two years John Frederick chucked his expensive commission, coming home in March 1830 to find himself somewhat unwelcome. He made another trip to India, on the return voyage from which, becalmed, his ship was within a whisker of being taken by pirates. In India and on a subsequent tour of Europe - John Frederick was an inveterate and extremely inquisitive tourist - he maintained himself by winning money at billiards, and by doles from friends and his somewhat reluctant relations. In 1835 John Frederick spent six weeks picketing the Bank with an apple-stall placarded with pamphlets regarding the handling of his supposed inheritance. This must have been more of a nuisance than one might suppose; a glance at Bene't St shows that there is not much room for the Bank's customers if there is an apple-stall blocking the road. The stall was something of a local spectacle, with John Frederick in a magnificent velvet-lined coat collecting sovereigns and half-sovereigns from the Bank's customers in a silver salver set before him, presumably calumniating his senior relatives the while. A ginger-beer stall followed and in 1836 John Frederick was bailed for threatening to 'thurtell' his uncle.

This and his other activities ensured a permanent want of welcome from his uncles, escalating from breaking the Bank's windows (probably) torching part of Rectory Farm at Pampisford, which was a Mortlock property but let to William Scruby, a distant relative by marriage who was also a brewer (on the site now used by the firm of Sealmaster), Pampisford being locally notorious for its beer consumption. There was another unexplained conflagration which set fire to Thomas Mortlock's

dwelling in Little Abington while Thomas was in it - John Frederick had been seen in the vicinity. In March 1837 John Frederick was tried for this but acquitted, although simultaneously bound over. His uncle Charles Finch, MP for Walsall, put up £250 surety for him on this occasion. Later and privately he admitted the offence.

On a third trip to India, in 1838 John Frederick learned through the Times that his father had died six weeks after John Frederick's sailing - a letter from home telling him of this, sent overland, did not catch up with him until he had reached Bengal. So far from his uncles taking no notice of him, John Frederick himself acknowledges that he was armed with a letter of introduction written to the Governor General by a nobleman at the behest of his uncle Edmund. However this - perhaps our hero was all too well known - produced no useful result and after three months he set off for home, determined to claim his inheritance.

He seems to have been in denial over the change of regime at the Bank being permanent, although his father's expulsion had occurred long before he was grown-up. He seems to have convinced himself that he would take his seat as head of the bank and take over Abington Hall. He called at the bank, his solicitor brother-in-law DAD Rawlins accompanying him at his request. Explanations were given but he would not accept them and after a stormy interview, both were bowed out by the Reverend Edmund Mortlock and Thomas Mortlock.

Rawlins advised John Frederick that both sides had originally employed eminent lawyers and that, however hard a bargain had been driven, everything was legally in order. Of course John Frederick would not see the matter in that light. Rawlins posted home. Some days afterwards it appears John Frederick wrote to Rawlins asking him to again go to Cambridge but the letter was not delivered.

Some weeks later Rawlins received a letter from John Frederick, addressed from the prison in Cambridge, telling him that he need not trouble to travel and giving him an account of what had occurred since they were last together.

Guerrilla warfare getting him nowhere, John Frederick had eventually come to the conclusion that the best way to settle the matter was a duel. Forgetful of the convention against men in Holy Orders shedding blood, he took his duelling pistols and proceeded to the College, and forced his way into the room in which the Reverend Edmund was sitting. He explained to his astonished uncle that the best way to settle the matter in dispute was an appeal to arms, although, by that time, the law was beginning to look with disfavour on that method of settling disputes. John Frederick offered his Uncle one of the pistols, which he would not accept, preferring (John Frederick said) to hide behind the furniture. This want of courage, as he assumed it to be, angered John Frederick, and he told his Uncle that if he would not fight at least he should die for the sins he had committed against his father, mother and himself.

The nub of John Frederick's quarrel was that the other brothers had taken in to the Bank property which was only Frederick Cheetham's in Trust and which was not therefore his to pledge, and that this had denied Frederick's children their lawful inheritance. Eventually John Frederick's sister Catherine Lamprell, perhaps spurred on by the recent demise of her husband, instituted a suit in Chancery about this, but lost it in 1868, John Frederick blaming this on her solicitor's incompetence. Rawlins would not of course take the case and the country lawyer eventually engaged, from Clare or Haverhill, perhaps did not impress anyway. John Frederick's views about the rights and wrongs of the issue can be read in his

own hand in the Cambridgeshire County Records Office, filed among the Mortlock papers.

As to the probity of the brothers' actions when they bought out the disastrous Frederick to prevent him bringing the Bank down around all their ears, four further points in their favour might not come amiss at this juncture. First, Frederick Cheetham in his will written shortly after his separation from Sarah, in 1830, left all his property whatsoever to his brothers Thomas and Edmund Davy as trustees for his children. They were given absolute discretion, including, interestingly, as to the apportionment of the proceeds between the heirs. Thus no one child had any particular title to anything and each was entirely dependent on Thomas and Edmund Davy's goodwill, a point rather missed by John Frederick. Secondly, in 1830 Frederick allowed his £1000 annuity to be halved so that his brother Thomas could settle some of the Bank's remaining debt, liabilities for which Frederick had failed to make proper disclosure. Thirdly, DAD Rawlins personally went into the matter and advised Frederick Cheetham's wife and his son, John Frederick, that everything that had happened was perfectly in order. The fourth point is that the father-in-law of Edmund John Mortlock, to whom Thomas eventually left the Bank, was Britain's foremost Chancery lawyer. He would hardly have allowed his daughter to marry a man whose entire fortune was exposed to legal challenge.

The facts of the assault, as handed down in the family, were as follows. One evening in November 1842 the Reverend Edmund Davy Mortlock was sitting in his rooms in Christ's talking to Mr Mitchell, the landlord of the Eagle and Child. Suddenly the door burst open and in dashed John Frederick, armed with a dagger and two pistols. "Give me back my property!" he cried, discharging one of the pistols. Mercifully only the cap exploded. Edmund seized a chair and Mitchell the poker, the former saying quietly and calmly "John, I have none of your property." John Frederick, dropping the dagger, then lowered the other pistol - which he had held pointing at his uncle's head - and fired. Mr Cartmel, the Tutor of the college, who lived in the room below, rushed up the stairs, wresting the poker from the terrified Mitchell who was escaping in the other direction, and arrived just in time to see the flash of the discharge of the second pistol. "He's killed me, he's killed me" cried Edmund as he staggered down the stairs followed by Mr Cartmel. The alarm was raised; the porter slammed shut the college gates. A surgeon was hastily summoned, and when Edmund dropped his trousers to have the wound examined, a bullet dropped out! There was a hole in both his trousers and his shirt, just a little blood, and an abrasion just below the navel about the size of a sixpence. The surgeon later testified that the bullet must have been fired obliquely and that had it been fired directly the consequences would have been fatal.

Cartmel returned to Edmund's room to find it empty, the dagger on the floor, and two riding whips, knotted together, hanging out of the window. Escaping, John Frederick was observed by one George Harris who kept the sluice at Bait's Bite and young Neal who lived at the pub opposite. Pursued to Ditton, John Frederick turned and fired at twelve yards, hitting Neal in the leg. He then gave himself up.

John Frederick was tried at Cambridge Assizes on 24th March 1843. Before the trial the sympathies of the public were with him because it was considered he and his family had been harshly dealt with. This was partly because of the decent reticence with which the uncles had always avoided discussing this essentially family affair in public, so only John Frederick's case had ever been put, and indeed is still being put today. No doubt his fine features - instinct with intelligence - and his debonair bearing, carried weight as they had done elsewhere. In all circles, in all parts, he had been popular, and the generosity of his disposition was beyond cavil.

He refused Rawlins's offer to defend him and conducted his own defence. His speech was regarded by Bench and Bar as a model of eloquence, but with the fatal defect that of course he could not prove that an attempt to kill was a legitimate remedy for civil wrongs – or supposed civil wrongs – of which he alleged the Reverend Edmund was the source. The result of the trial was inevitable, the facts not being in dispute; a petition got up in his favour, for political reasons, by a notorious Radical called Wagstaff, availed John Frederick nothing - indeed may have been counter-productive.

Although described at his trial (by the *Cambridge Advertiser*) as “fagged and dejected” it was also allowed that, at thirty-two, he was “of a fine, open countenance, with a remarkably handsome profile, about five feet and a half in height and of an easy, gentlemanly appearance.”

John Frederick's defence to the immediate criminal charge was that there was only a small powder charge in the pistol, merely meant to frighten, as demonstrated by the fact that Edmund's abdomen had only been bruised by the ball and not penetrated; but, as above, it was in fact providential that it was a grazing shot. His eloquence moved many of the spectators in the crowded courtroom - some had queued for their places since 7 a.m. - to tears, but not the judge, nor the jury. At the time destitute, when the sentence of transportation for twenty-one years was announced John Frederick's calm reply to the judge was only “My Lord, it will save me from starvation.”

John Frederick was undoubtedly clever but was one of those people who cannot see otherwise than that they are right and that everybody else is wrong. However he was also clearly resilient and resourceful. His first stop while awaiting passage was onboard the hulked 90-gun Trafalgar veteran *Leviathan* alongside at Portsmouth, where his confrères included a number of comparatively well-born “white-collar” criminals. Fettered and half-starved he was put to work in the dockyard, where the convicts from our maritime gulag, hobbling in their four-pound leg-irons, were a sight for flocks of amused spectators. John Frederick recognised in the crowd a Cambridge chum whom only weeks before he had been cheering on at a Leicestershire steeplechase. After eighteen weeks aboard *Leviathan*, in August 1843 he was transferred for passage to the ex-Indiaman *Maitland*. That one of his cousins was destined to marry a Maitland was a piquant irony. The *Maitland* took departure from Plymouth on 1st September 1843 and arrived in Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) in January 1844.

Imagine what transportation to Botany Bay in New South Wales meant to a man gently born. Herded on a ship carrying – from the modern point of view – ten times the number it should have done, locked up in a space about the size of a coffin with hardly any elbow room, and surrounded by the dregs of the population and at the mercy of low born warders who – class conscious – welcomed the opportunity of insulting any gentleman whom fate placed at their mercy. Then imagine the prospect of fourteen years of manual work - John Frederick can have had no certain foreknowledge that he would betimes be otherwise employed - which his birth and upbringing would have made more than the labours of Hercules, and imagine how distant he must have felt from the common criminals who were now his only companions. The only leaven was the company of not a few better-educated men and others who, like John Frederick, had overstrained the patience of their well-born familial seniors.

Mercifully never flogged himself, on Norfolk Island, where he was sent to start his sentence, he was sickened by the daily thrashing of his companions on the “triangle”. In February 1846 he was transferred, in the barque *Lady Franklin*, to Tasmania. Eventually on licence there he successfully maintained himself variously as a children's tutor, schoolmaster - arbitrarily thrashing any boys whose

parents had come out as free settlers (“This refreshed and consoled me”) - and as a pedlar in the bush.

In 1857 John Frederick, quite illegally - he refused to recognise the limitations of his licence - returned to England in the *Swiftsure*, Captain Pryce. It is a sad reflection on his saintly and forgiving uncle Alderman William Mortlock that it was news of a small legacy from William that triggered this return and hence its consequences. Apprised that this £46 was due to him, John Frederick counted up his various savings, which came to £240 and took ship as above; however the £46 did not reach Tasmania until well after John Frederick was back in England. Landing at Dartmouth, John Frederick made his way to London via sightseeing - ever the tourist - in Exeter, Bath and Oxford. In London he lodged at the Craven Hotel near Northumberland House, close to his customary headquarters in Craven Street. Trafalgar Square was new to him, as was the Crystal Palace.

But Cambridgeshire beckoned. After a pilgrimage to his sister’s grave at Westley he repaired to his mother’s for the night. The next morning, shopped by his uncle Edmund, he was arrested. A long and nugatory correspondence with that uncle followed. An earlier threatening letter to the Colonial Secretary had not helped John Frederick’s case. In March 1858 he was sentenced to a year in gaol at home to be followed by re-transportation, this time to Western Australia, to serve the five-year remainder of his original sentence. An uncovenanted benefit for us is the police description of John Frederick published at the time of his illegal return, which shows him as 5'9" tall, of square, thickset and powerful build, with light hair but a darker moustache. There is no doubt he was a fit and powerful man; his pedlar’s bundle and accoutrements on the road in Tasmania weighed at the start of a trip anything up to eighty pounds, and he bore these along on daily twenty-mile stages, through virgin bush, merely caught up in calico bundles - no ergonomic Bergen for him.

After a spell in Cambridge town gaol John Frederick was taken by rail to the Millbank prison in London and then again by rail to Portsmouth where he was briefly housed in the hulk *Atlantic* before being put onboard the convict ship *Sultana*, arriving at Fremantle on 19.8.1851. His guardian angel was by no means off duty - John Frederick, and indeed all onboard, had a very narrow escape from certain death when the ship came within a whisker of being wrecked on St Paul’s rock, which sticks up out of the middle of nowhere, miles out in the Atlantic off the coast of Brazil.

At the end of his time John Frederick came back to London, and give or take yet another unsuccessful attempt at the law, this time against Edmund John Mortlock who had inherited from Thomas, he lived in relative obscurity and poverty, in a boarding house in Craven Street (which runs off the Strand next to Charing Cross Station), kept by one Todd, an ex-servant of his mother’s, until his death in 1882. John Frederick had been well summed up years before by the *Hobart Herald*: “He appears to have had but one set objective in life. That was, while he passed it as congenially and pleasantly as his humble circumstances would allow, , to still keep in view his deep wrongs, with a determination that nothing could shake a restitution of his natural rights.”

In the middle of his succession of fruitless lawsuits John Frederick managed to write a peculiarly acute and somewhat Puseyite religious tract. His last publication was a monograph on Sir Robert Walpole.

Even in old age John Frederick’s clear-cut features and charm of manner were noted, and, although his memory began to fail somewhat towards the end, his wide range of knowledge, painfully acquired, was still remarked. In his will he left the town of Cambridge a vast but wholly imaginary fortune. He left the

rest of us a most important legacy in the shape of a literate account of the (his title) “*Experiences of a Convict*”. He is sometimes represented as a Cambridge graduate, but although entered for the university there is scant chance that he ever attended any sort of instruction. He did, however, write an elegant copperplate hand. At least one of his sisters stuck up for him, and his mother loved him, but that must have been easier in absentia. In later life he was an acquaintance of Charles Dickens and is said to have been the model for Magwitch in *Great Expectations* (1860). However Magwitch is entirely unsympathetic and totally lacks John Frederick’s undoubted personal charm. It is, though, unlikely that a craftsman like Dickens would have passed up the chance to use John Frederick as a source for circumstantial detail relating to the hulks and prisoners and their fetters and so forth, although he removed the scene to the eerie mudflats of his native Kent. Conversely, *Great Expectations* is a good source for any modern reader who wants to understand more of John Frederick’s interlude in the hulks before he was transported. In about 1890 he posthumously re-appeared, thinly disguised, in an article entitled “John Frederick Lockmore - Monomaniac or No” in *Cassell’s Sunday Journal*.

John Frederick at one point asked Dickens’ advice about finding a publisher for his memoirs but received a dusty answer to the effect that the libels would have to come out first.

Frederick Cheetham’s third son, Charles, was ordained, but his apparently expensive life caused him to be excoriated in his mother’s will. However let us remember that she was a fairly tempestuous lady. He went up to Caius in 1835 but appears not to have proceeded to a degree although clearly he achieved ordination. After a short period as a naval Instructor at Portsmouth he went out to Belize as a missionary in 1839. He then came home and became a curate at Newton Heath, Manchester in 1841 but returned to Leicester and a year’s curacy there, following a bout of smallpox. 1843 saw him briefly in Jamaica as a curate in the Anglican church at Port Royal. In Leicester in 1844 he married Mary Ann, daughter of Thomas Ingram, a Market Harborough solicitor and County Court Registrar, and his wife Mary Horspool, a grand-daughter of John Ingram and Mary Phipps who had been married in 1776. He returned to Belize and later Jamaica in 1844 and Turk’s Island, Bahamas (1845). He returned home to become vicar, first of Leicester (1848-51) where he held two livings in plurality (All Saints and St Leonard’s) and then of Pennington in Lancashire where he was inducted on New Year’s Day 1852, a cottage being bought for use as a vicarage for £190. The main reason he had come home was the loss of two sons in the West Indies, one stillborn and the other at two years. In 1862 Charles was run in to his bishop about a scandal in which Charles was alleged to have removed a deed about abstraction of tithes from the church safe, it being alleged that this occurred when he was the only person to have keys to both the safe and the church. This was widely reported - the *North Wales Chronicle* [8.11.62] and the *Leeds Mercury* both carried the story. His flighty mother’s genes obviously lived on.

Reverend Charles’ third son Charles Frederick, after education at Derby Grammar School (where he was regularly in the prize lists) and at Heversham, Lancs, was Hastings and Rigge exhibitioner at Queen’s, Oxford, although he also won a scholarship to Cambridge which he did not take up. After curacies at Ospringe and Boughton in the Blean in Kent he became vicar of South Bersted, Sussex in 1889. Charles Frederick’s mother installed herself nearby at Bognor with her unmarried daughter Sarah Emily. Mary Ann (Ingram) had apparently separated from her husband, who seems, in 1876, to have been inhibited and to have put in the first of a succession of curates at Pennington. In 1897 the vicarage was let out to a Mrs E Green of Burton, Lincolnshire for a peppercorn rent (actually a halfpenny a year) He retired to London where he died in Marlborough Road, Bedford Park, Chiswick in 1905. He seems to have been rather a cross-patch and when Frederick Rawlins, hearing that his great-uncle wished that

he would call, did so, all he got for his pains was “And pray, Fred, to what may I attribute the honour of this visit?”. The exercise was swiftly terminated and not repeated. Mary Ann died in 1904 and in 1909 Charles Frederick retired to a house, later called “Abington”, which he had inherited (so that he eventually left £37,000) from his uncle Thomas Ingram (1810-1909), at Wigston, a southerly suburb of Leicester. He and his wife Lucy Elizabeth Sherwood Dawes, whom he married at Herne Hill in 1888 and who was the daughter of Sir Edwyn Sandys Dawes KCMG and his wife Lucy Emily Bagnall, do not appear to have had any children. One of Charles Frederick’s sisters had married a railway porter which event must have caused quite a stir in Pennington.

A reproduction of a portrait photograph of Charles Frederick can be seen in *Unwillingly to School* (see references).

Frederick Cheetham’s final son, William, his mother Sarah’s Benjamin, enlisted, destitute, as a dragoon, and lost half his sword hand cut off at the battle of Chillianwallah in the 2nd Sikh War. Invalided, he subsisted on his mother’s charity until he died unmarried aged 40. He had previously been in Jamaica with his brothers. He is buried at Great Eversden where there was family property inherited from the Days as previously related. His mother, who loved him very deeply, is buried next to him at her particular request.

Of Frederick Cheetham’s three daughters who survived infancy (two, Maggy [Mary] and another, did not, and were buried at Aldeburgh where Frederick and Sarah seem to have been residing in the late 1820s), Emily (John Frederick’s ‘favourite sister’) and Catherine both married parsons - the Rev. Thomas Halstead and Rev. Charles W Lamprell.

Elizabeth Sarah married, at St Margaret’s Westminster, the Leicester solicitor DAD Rawlins mentioned earlier, by whom she had five children of whom two sons and two daughters survived. Rawlins’ father was an officer in the Black Watch who had lost his life in the Napoleonic Wars. However DAD Rawlins maltreated Sarah and knocked her about and in 1865 she divorced him and later reverted to using the surname Mortlock. The report in *The Times* of Rawlins burning his wife with a hot poker and denying her the necessaries of life makes embarrassing reading, so also that in the *Leicester Chronicle* of 6.6.1865 detailing Rawlins’ bankruptcy proceedings, which shows neither party in any very good light. Soon after the divorce there was a further notice in the *Times* recording Elizabeth’s reversion to her maiden name of Mortlock. Their sons Percy Lionel and Arthur were solicitors and active as officers in the Leicestershire Militia, perhaps getting some keenness for soldiering from their Rawlins grandfather. However Percy Lionel seems to have taken his time settling down and was articled to his father’s firm only after abortive medical studies at Caius and Addenbrooke’s, and a considerable drama in which he (allegedly) married a housemaid whom he had made pregnant, he taking his tune from his father in the matter of relationships with the female servants. This episode of course terminated Percy’s engagement to Miss Ponsonby, daughter of Queen Victoria’s private secretary. The scandal was enough to get Percy and indeed his brother Arthur sacked from the militia but they seem to have been allowed back in, after a cooling-off period, under the name of Smith, which subterfuge would have been transparent locally but opaque in London. Percy’s proficiency as a musketry instructor may have oiled the wheels of his reinstatement. Two of Percy’s children eventually emigrated to Australia, perhaps to be free of the problems caused by their anomalous position in the English class system which was then at its apogee, and that branch of the (Mortlock, Finch, Rawlins) family is still traceable in Queensland.

The Jamaica Mortlocks

John Frederick averred that his wicked Mortlock uncles had purposely placed himself and his brothers in those climates most injurious to health. Frederick William, his next brother, was employed in the Jamaica Customs for twenty-five years, an appointment arranged by his Uncle Edmund via Lord Harrowby, Edmund's erstwhile pupil's brother-in-law (later Lord Privy Seal). Frederick William progressed steadily after being appointed, by 1839, Sub-Collector at Rio Bueno, Northside. In 1851 he was Sub-collector, Waiter and Searcher at Port Antonio and earning £350 a year. This had gone up to £400 by 1857, as Sub-Collector, Warehouse-keeper, and, Shipping Officer at Falmouth; by 1861 he had moved to North Laws and was on the register of voters for Trelawney. By 1865 he had moved to Montego Bay as Sub-Collector, Warehouse Keeper and Shipping Officer; by 1870 he was a full Collector, and also Treasurer to the General and Marine Hospital of St James parish (the Jamaican equivalent of a county) but his move to Montego Bay had produced other interests.

Mrs Matilda Williams came to notice in 1873 when she was (ultimately unsuccessfully) prosecuted over an alleged illicit still on her Spring Garden estate, and for trafficking in rum without paying the duty. Frederick was (presumably moonlighting) as her plantation overseer, and this must have placed him on a sticky wicket, both as a Collector and as Mrs Williams' employee and son in law. In March of the year before, after years of enthusiastic contribution to the population of Jamaica, he had taken the wise step of marrying the boss's daughter, Amy. By the time he died in 1878 he was listed as the proprietor of what had been Matilda's Spring Garden estate at Montego Bay, said to be the largest sugar plantation in Jamaica. He also seems to have been the overseer for another plantation belonging to his mother in law, at Little River. Of his legitimate children, more later.

The row about the rum did not stop Frederick William being sworn in as a magistrate in 1874, serving on the St. James Municipal and Road Boards, and being coopted as judge of the Bellefield Races which were got up in that year.

Frederick William and DAD Rawlins were great friends and he had attended Rawlins' wedding. He used to send the Rawlins Jamaica products such as barrels of tamarinds, guava jelly, planters' rum, mulligatawny powder, and mango chutney. A small mystery attends his sending home to school in Bristol (via the agency of one of Rawlins' sons), from Jamaica, some Misses Mortlock. One may have finished up in London as a painter of miniatures; she is probably Ethel the portrait painter, described separately. If so, her brother John and sister Paula were Frederick William's; John would be Alexander John, born in March 1868, which ties in with the 1891 census. One of the witnesses at Paula's marriage was RP Mortlock, who may have supposed himself (erroneously) to be related - his line was originally from Hundon in Suffolk, not Cambridge.

Another likely son of Frederick William's is William who enlisted locally as a seaman in the Royal Navy, serving in the Jamaica guardship HMS *Urgent*. He rose no further than Leading Seaman and, as far as can be determined, never married. The timing of William's birth suggests that in 1835 Frederick William may have had more than one girl friend on the go. He seems to have taken responsibility for his irregular progeny and to have used his position to get jobs in the Customs for his son Harry Walter and his (twice, he married secondly his deceased wife's much younger sister) son in law James Monaghan, and possibly to get Charles Cleveland Mortlock established in life. Other possible outlets for Frederick William's philoprogenitive enthusiasm can be identified on the internet. Generally he is the only male

Mortlock of age to have sired these children; unfortunately for the genealogist Jamaican records often do not record either of the parents if they are not married.

Frederick William had inherited the family Bible and a Finch family tree - possibly the parchment "Tree going back to Noah" mentioned by John Frederick in his convict memoirs. The bible is now believed to be in Yale university. He died in 1878; widowed, Amy, who had settled in London, remarried to a James Rosser. The couple had three sons and a daughter, Maude Cecil Aileen.

Maude married a Dr Solomon Alexander Isaacs. They had a son, Dereck Grantley, in 1914 and a daughter Doris Aileen two years later. 27.7.1920 the four of them are recorded arriving at Avonmouth aboard Elders and Fyffe's banana boat *Coronado*. However at some point after this Maude and Solomon divorced; Maude and the children reverted their surname to Mortlock. This may fit between Dereck sailing from Southampton for Kingston in 1931 as Isaacs and 1932 when he returned from Avonmouth to Kingston as Mortlock.

Maude herself was still sailing as Isaacs in June 1936 when she arrived in Liverpool with Doris, who was travelling as Mortlock, aboard Elders' *Aracataca*. The same year a British 'thriller musical' loosely based on Bizet's *Carmen* (only the bullfighter was a boxer, etc) came out called *Melody of my Heart*. Reviewers gave it a star and a half out of five, if that; it seems to be deservedly forgotten. However the cast credits include (pretty low down) a Doris Mortlock.

Doris and her mother had not entirely cut their cable with Jamaica; on 4.7.1954 they are noted as arriving in Southampton from Jamaica together, Maude described as 'widow'. The two of them had sailed for Kingston from Avonmouth that year.

In its first 1960 number *Time* magazine ran an article about an affair the Earl of Shrewsbury had been having with Doris Aileen (now 'Nina') Mortlock. This hit the news-stands because the Earl was trying to divorce his original Countess, a public process and an expensive one too: it cost the 21st Earl his family seat, Ingestre Hall. *Time* included a photograph which showed Nina as quite a jolly lass. Although the Earl had been enjoying Nina since 1941 [*Times* Law Report, 4.11.59], the Countess intended to hang on to him and so *he* had to sue *her*, dragging into the proceedings his Countess' consoling herself in 1955 with her children's dapper 23-year-old tutor, one 'Tonykins' Lowther. At that time the Earl had been in an iron lung which must have somewhat inhibited his frolics with Nina. Butlers and a nanny and a secretary and a governess contributed their observations on the Countess and her Tonykins to the court. Nina, meanwhile, was discreetly stashed away in a (1959 money) £6,000 house in London, away from staff surveillance, presumably the house in Hornton Street, Kensington, whither Nina and her by now elderly mother had repaired in 1954. However, 1959 divorce law being what it was, the Earl's first attempt to get rid of his lawful wedded lady failed and it took him nearly four years to shake her off. By this time he and his Nina were living in Funchal, where they seem to have remained, leaving the London social field to Nadine, the ex-Countess, according to the series of *Times* notices of the engagement of the Shrewsbury children. Even so, in 1970 Nadine sold off a vast quantity of jewellery at Sotheby's.

Eventually in 1963 Nina married her Earl in Cheadle Register Office, and presumably although comparatively financially chastened they lived happily ever after. Nina had, so to speak, risen horizontally to the highest social position ever attained by a Mortlock; indeed Shrewsbury is England's senior earldom. It is to be supposed that the couple had met during the war when London was in some social

turmoil. On her marriage certificate Solomon has changed to Saunders and *his* surname from Isaacs to Mortlock; perhaps this was thought to look better when marrying into the peerage; the Earl presumably believed this to be a true bill. She stated her father to be deceased and gave her address as Hornton Street. Notwithstanding this, in the decree nisi of the Earl's divorce both Nina and the Earl are described as 'of Funchal'. *Time* had described her as "the daughter of Dr Mortlock, of London", and this description was carried over to Burke's Peerage. The Earl's last address in Who's Who was in Vaud, Switzerland.

Some while after the decease of the Earl in 1980, Nina remarried to a Mr Rosser, also of Switzerland, perhaps a cousin of her grandmother's second husband? Nina died in Switzerland in 1993.

Of her brothers, Frederick William's three legitimate sons, Frederick William Roper had no legal issue and was described as a "wild, queer fellow" who apparently lost touch with the rest of his family. He had, however, as eldest brother, inherited the largest of the four shares into which the Spring Garden plantation was split by Amy at some point after Frederick William's death.

Percival Finch Mortlock died in 1951 unmarried, after going to sea in his youth (where acquired lurid tattoos on his forearms) and then serving for a short time in the Royal Artillery, in Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, before buying himself out for £18. He was measured at 5'7.1/4", chest 37" [TNA,WO3509/167]. Immediately before enlisting he was living in London with his mother and maternal grandmother. To his very great credit he came back to the colours, aged 41, in 1914, paying his own fare back across the Atlantic. When the War to End Wars was over he understandably thought he had a case for early release; his letter to the War Office points out that he had "quitted a good position to join up" [TNA,WO363/M2030]. His prayers seem to have been answered as in 1919 he was waiting in the queue at Ellis Island. Although married a number of times to women with money, he was reduced to a genteel poverty after the Great Depression. As a freemason he had been inducted into Friendly Lodge 383 in Montego Bay on 27.3.1899 (followed by his brother Frederick William on 13.4.1903) and (presumably in London) is said to have attended the same lodge as Edward VIII when that monarch was Prince of Wales. This lodge contained a number of Isaacs.

There seems to be more than a touch of Sarah Finch's outgoing (to put it mildly) personality in Frederick William Roper, Percy Finch and ultimately Nina, whom Sarah would have well understood; both set out to get, and got, their man. There may be something there in Nina's brother's association with SOE during the Second World War. This followed his voluntary enlistment in the United States in 1941. If there is a gene for risk-taking, Sarah's was certainly persistent.

Stanley Cheatham, 1879-1956, was educated at St Paul's School, London. This may explain his mother being in Chelsea in 1891 - living there would have facilitated Stanley's attendance. He married Cornelia Berry of New Jersey, who had been 'presented' to Queen Victoria. The family moved to New Jersey when Cornelia inherited property there. By their son David Henry born in Aruba in 1917, Stanley and Cornelia were grandparents to David Henry junior, a banker in Hong Kong and Singapore, and later a doctor in Virginia, whose son David Henry Mortlock III is, in the 21st Century, the ultimate only heir of John Mortlock III in unbroken male line, a situation confirmed by Alfred, the last male heir of Captain Charles Mortlock. In this way Frederick Cheatham Mortlock has the last laugh on his brothers. In fact David Henry Mortlock III is the only descendant in unbroken male line of Rowland Mortlock of Pampisford who was born in 1645.

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