

# 1.1.1 Thomas BLACKWELL

Birth: 1600, Knaptoft, Leicestershire [2]

Death: Arnesby, Leicestershire

Spouse: Grace

Name probably changed from Blackwin to Blackwell during this period.. [2]

Called the Older

Children: Thomas (1657-1704)

Thomas, the Older, was around 21 when his family moved to Arnesby from Shearsby at a time when the economy and the structure of farming were going through rapid change.

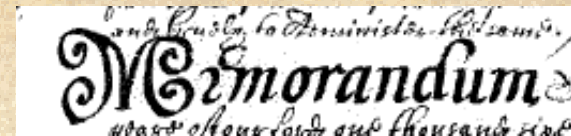
In June of 1651, when he was 51, Thomas bought a cottage and croft. His occupation at that time was listed as “husbandman”. As a husbandman, he was essentially a tenant farmer, working land that was rented from a landowner. An earlier historian observed, “They that be husbandmen now haue but a scant livinge thereby.” (“The Discourse of this Common Weal of England”, Elizabeth Lamond. 1893). Poor tenants make unprofitable tenants and so it

was these small tenant farms that were being enclosed into larger land holding forcing people like Thomas off their farm to work elsewhere. Between 1550 and 1577 there were 12 villages in Leicestershire that saw evidence of the “open-field” system of medieval agriculture change to ‘enclosure’. Between 1578 and 1607 when Thomas was born, the number was 63 and 22 villages had completely changed. (J. Thirsk. *Agrarian History, 1540 – 1950*. Victoria History, Leicestershire, Vol II, 1954. Pps. 254-259).

So Thomas bought (there is no mention of it being a lease) a cottage and croft. A croft, in English terms, was a small piece of tillable, arable land, usually hedged. It probably was not a lot larger than his tenant farm – but it was his. “With property came standing in society and a future for one’s children, for in the early part of the [18th.] century it was relatively easy to pass from one social class to another...” (J.H. Plumb. *England in the Eighteenth Century*. 1950 Penguin Books P. 17).

1651 24 June

Conveyance of cottage and croft Edward Williams of Kilworth to Thomas Blackwell of Arnesby, Husbandman [4]



and by this to Deminister the same.  
**Memorandum**  
what of our lands and thousands and

1670 April 1

Conveyance in lease and release of close 1 1/2 yards. Thomas Hall of Walton, yeoman and Anne, his wife, to Thomas Blackwell of Arnesby, yeoman. [4]



Twenty years later, in 1670, now 70 years old, he is listed as a yeoman – lower than a gentleman, but much better than a tenant farmer husbandman. In the agreement of April 1, 1670 he leased (with option to renew) a close of 1 1/2 yardlands. A yard or yardland was 20 acres, so his new property was 30 acres and a “close”- a sign that he was moving from tilling his property to grazing.

To add to the story, six years after he bought the first cottage, at age 57, his son, Thomas was born – Thomas the Younger.

### **Yeomen, Gents, and Nobles.**

The structure of society in England was in a process of change at this period of history. The Continental system of a noble caste has not existed in England since early medieval days, and the past seven centuries have rarely seen the use of caste to prevent vertical movement in society, even though it has usually impeded it. The landed gentry, recognized as Britain's untitled aristocracy, intermarried with the peerage families and were recognizable as a caste, and a noble caste at that, identifiable by their arms, but its membership was not protected by law and privilege to the degree prevalent on the Continent. Younger sons of the peerage families dropped into the landed gentry with a small legacy or through marriage, and a couple of generations later their younger grandsons might be yeoman farmers or city merchants or professional officers in the army or navy. During that journey they would have passed the wealthy granddaughters of newly landed squires whose own grandfathers had been successful merchants or lawyers or sea captains enriched by prize money. Those rich and fashionable girls were about to marry newly impoverished peers. Britain had a flexible society that allowed success to prosper socially. In the connection with the Blackwell families of this time (1500-1850), we see yeomen farmers (farmers, graziers, husbandman), gents (wealthy farmers who no longer need to work), or merchants (corvisor – shoe maker, mercer, tailor, miller).



Arnesby

## 1.1.1.1 Thomas BLACKWELL [5]

Birth: 11 Jan 1657, Arnesby, Leicestershire  
Death: c. 1704, Arnesby, Leicestershire  
Burial: 1704, Arnesby, Leicestershire

Called the Younger

Spouse: Eleanor (Ellen) CLARKE [5] [4]  
Birth: 22 Sep 1655, Arnesby, Leicestershire [5]  
Death: c. 1727, Arnesby, Leicestershire  
Father: Thomas CLARKE  
Mother: Elizabeth (CLARKE)  
Marr: 6 Jun 1675

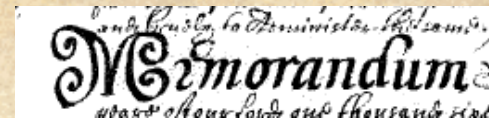
Children: Thomas (1679-1732)

In March of 1675, the year of his marriage to Eleanor Clarke, Thomas the Younger obtained 10 acres from Thomas and John Hall, Thomas Wyatt, Thomas Clarke, and Richard Hiffe. We have already seen some of these names before as a Richard Hiffe and a William Wyatt, possibly the fathers of this Richard and Thomas, were the source of the property bought by Samuel in 1621. . The Hiffes, Wyatts, and Halls are families that are connected to the Blackwells for many years and in many ways including being buried near each other at the Parish Church at Arnesby.

We also have been introduced to Thomas Hall, as was from Thomas and his wife, Anne, that Thomas Blackwell the Older bought his 30 acre property five years earlier.

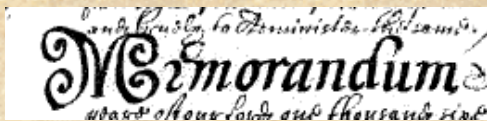
1675 13 March

Conveyance of half yardlands, Thomas Hall of Arnesby, yeoman, John Hall, Thomas Wyatt, gents, Thomas Clarke and Richard Hiffe, yeoman, to Thomas Blackwell, the younger, all of Arnesby.



Memorandum

1675 28 April  
Marriage Settlement on Marriage of Thomas, grandson of Samuel and son of Thomas and Grace, to Ellen, daughter of Thomas Clarke of Arnesby, yeoman.



Thomas the Younger married Eleanor Clarke, daughter of Thomas Clarke of Arnesby. The details of the marriage settlement for Thomas and Eleanor are not known at this stage, Thomas Clarke, yeoman, was the eldest son of William Clarke, listed at times as a yeoman, at others as a gent.

In William Clarke's will, of which Thomas Blackwell was an executor with William's brother, Robert Clarke, the Clarke family is listed.

1685 – 1691 Leicestershire Wills

William Clarke, Arnesby, yeoman  
My eldest son, Thomas, 1/-  
My daughter, Eliz Clarke £10 at 21  
Son Samuel Clarke, £10 at 21  
My daughter, Eleanor Clarke, £10 at 21  
My sone? £10 at 21  
Executors: brother Robert Clarke, Thomas Blackwell

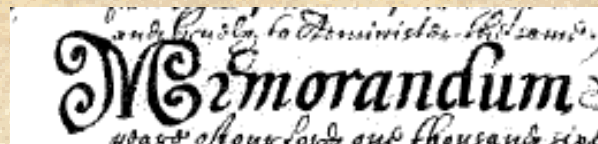
DD.CH 20/1..30 1675-1833  
Right hand indenture of a fine.

Plantiffs:

- \* Thos. Blackwell
- \* Wm. Clarke, gent.
- \* Thos. Clarke

Defs.:

- \* Thos Hall and wife Anne
- \* Rob. Putt, gent., and wife Mary
- \* Thos. Marvin and wife Hannah



60a. land, 20a. meadow, 50a. pasture, 30a. furze and heath and common of pasture in Arnesby, Lubenham and Bruntingthorpe.  
£100 Latin. Trinity 27 Chas.II (1675)

In the record above, which is probably a suit in which land on which taxes were owed, or for other reasons had been seized by the Crown, the family, Thomas Blackwell (the Younger), William Clarke, gentleman and Thomas' father-in-law, and Thomas Clarke, brother-in-law are bidding on land, meadow, and various pastures in Arnesby, Lubenham, and Bruntingthorpe for a payment of £100. Among the defendants are Thomas Hall and his wife, friends of the family, who in the same year had sold property to Thomas. As defendants under the law had up to a year to pay their debt, it maybe that the Blackwell/Clarke plaintiffs bought the property to prevent it being lost to the Halls.

# 1.1.1.1.1 Thomas BLACKWELL [6] [7]

Birth: 1679  
Death: >1732

Spouse: Isabel TEBBS [6] [8]  
Birth: c. 17 June 1688, Arnesby, Leicestershire  
Death: 4 Mar 1720, Arnesby, Leicestershire [8]  
Father: John TEBBS  
Mother: Isabel  
Marr: 26 Mar 1712, Arnesby, Leicestershire

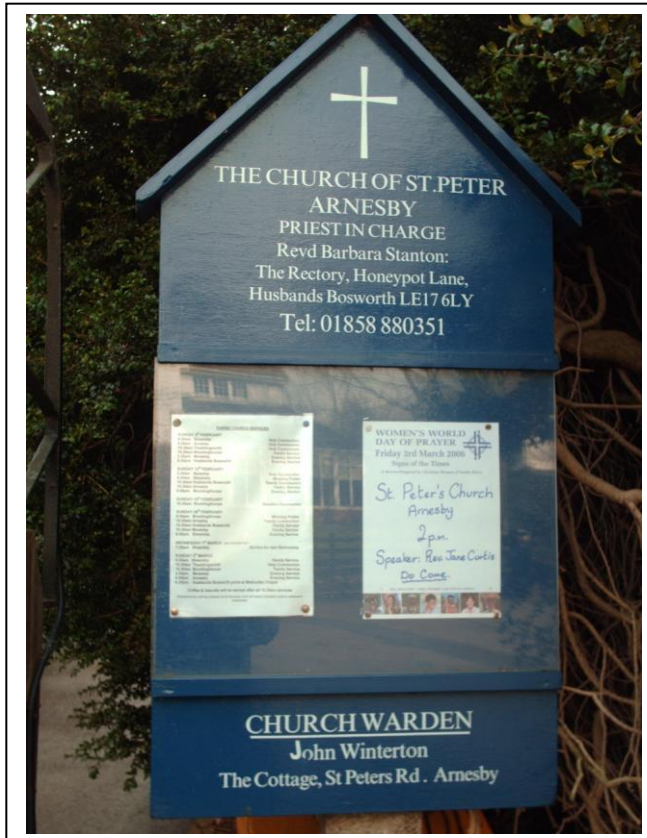
Children: Thomas  
Elizabeth (1682-1682)  
John (1685)  
Samuel (1690-)  
Grace (1692-)\*  
Elizabeth (1695-)\*  
Eleanor (1697-1697)\*  
Joseph (1700-)\*

\* May be incorrect



Thomas Blackwell was born to Thomas and Eleanor in 1679 in Arnesby. He married Isabel Tebbs in 1712 at the Parish Church in Arnesby by the Rev. Samuel Grimstone. Their children included Thomas, Elizabeth, John and Samuel.

The Church of St. Peter, Arnesby. John Tebbs, as Churchwarden, and Thomas Blackwell, as Overseer of the highway, negotiated a property for the vicar, Rev. Samuel Grimstone in 1693 using a bequest given to the church.

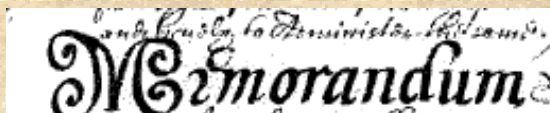




**TEBBS FAMILY**

John Tebbs Sr. was a butcher in Arnesby and married to Isabel and the father of two children, Isabel and John. John Jr. married Anney and they had a son, John. Isabel married Thomas Blackwell.

1693/4 John Tebbs, Churchwarden, Thomas Blackwell, Overseer of the highway. Conveyance of land in Gilmorton to vicar of Arnesby, Samuel Grimstone, with legacy from Loseby family.



Isabel



FILE - [no title] - ref. DD/CH/20/20-21 - date: 11 and 12 April 1769

Scope and Content

Indentures of lease and release.

1) Rich. Miles of Cosby (Leics.), gent., s. of Eliz. and Rich. Miles.

Thos. Miles of Littlethorpe (Leics.), yeo., exor. of Rich. Miles.

2) Thos. Blackwell of Arnesby, yeo., and wife Eliz., nee Miles.

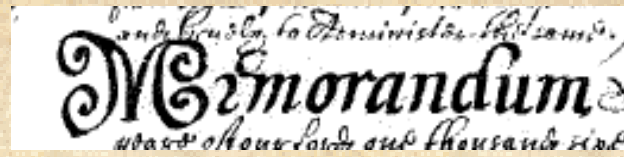
3) John Tebbs of Arnesby, butcher trustees.

John Wyatt of Arnesby, gent. trustees.

4) John Ward of Shearsby (Leics.), yeo., trustee.

Reciting above deeds, etc., for £170 to Thos. Miles in discharge of mortgage and £115 to R. Miles, (1) to (3) and (4)? yard land in Arnesby and term of years on same, for specified uses for (2).

Sigs. and seals of (1), (2) and J. Tebbs.



and hereby to Administrators of the said  
**Memorandum**  
ward of our Lord one thousand six

The extended family became a major source of support in the acquisition of property. In the above document, Thomas, eldest son of Thomas and Isabel, received a lease of land from his wife's family (Miles), John Tebbs (cousin), John Ward (brother John's wife's family) and John Wyatt, family friend.

# 1.1.1.1.1 John BLACKWELL [5]

Birth: 1 Jan 1685, Arnesby, Leicestershire

Death: <1773

Spouse: Elizabeth WARD [9]

Father: William WARD

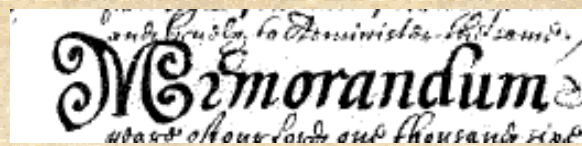
Children: John (1739-1803)

Thomas

Indenture of lease and release.

- \* (1). Thos. Blackwell, sen., Thos. Blackwell jun. of Arnesby (le.) yeoman.
- \* (2). John Blackwell of Arnesby, yeo. (youngest son of T.B., sen.) and wife Eliz., nee Ward, and niece of (4).
- \* (3). Wm. Ward of Shearsby, (Le.) yeo. [father], Jos. Reynolds of Walton (Le.) yeo trustees
- \* (4). Roger Ward of Shearsby, mercer. [uncle]

For marriage of (2) and £100 from (4) as portion of Eliz., (1) to (3) messuage and homestead and 1/4 yard land (bought by TB jun. and J.B. from Thorneton and Ward), and 1/4 yard land (bought by T.B. sen. from his bros. and sisters), all in Arnesby. For specified uses for (2). Sigs. Mark and seals of (1), (2) and (4). 21 and 22 June 1732. [9]



Land & Tenure, to the Minister of the Parish  
**Memorandum**  
ward of our Lord and thousand five

1745 7 August. Conveyance of quarter yardland (terrier and hacher?) John Blackwell of Arnesby and Elizabeth, his wife, Thomas Blackwell, his brother, and William Wyatt of Arnesby, yeoman, to William Seale of Bruntingthorpe, tailor, and Lavenport Gambe, of Willoughby Waterles. [4]



lands of Arnesby, to Administrators of the same  
**Memorandum**  
ward of our lords and thousands

- [no title] - ref. DD/CH/20/22 - date: 3 April 1773

Scope and Content

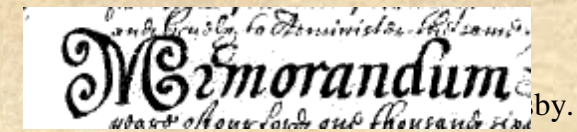
Indenture, quitclaim.

1) Eliz., widow of John Blackwell of Arnesby, yeo.

2) Her s. Thos. Blackwell of Arnesby, yeo.

Reciting life interest of (1) and that (2) bound to pay her £4 p.a. for life, now (1) to

Mark and seal of (1).



lands of Arnesby, to Administrators of the same  
**Memorandum**  
ward of our lords and thousands

FILE - [no title] - ref. DD/CH/20/23 - date: 13 April 1773

Scope and Content

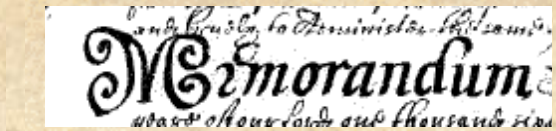
Indenture, to lead the uses of a fine, mortgage.

1) Thos. Blackwell of Arnesby, yeo.

2) Edward Bird of Shangton (Leics.), grazier.

For £100 from (2) to (1), covenant to levy fine of messuage and homestead in Arnesby, to be to use of Eliz., mother of (1) for life, then to use of (1), and of ? and ? yard land in Arnesby, to use of (2) until £100 repaid, then to use of (1).

Sig. and seal of (1).



lands of Arnesby, to Administrators of the same  
**Memorandum**  
ward of our lords and thousands

Arnesby Baptist Church



Somewhere in this period, some of the Blackwell family became associated with Arnesby Baptist Church, perhaps because the famous preacher, Robert Hall, himself from Arnesby, was pastor here at the time. Several Blackwells are buried in the churchyard.

It maybe that it is through the Arnesby Baptist Church that the Blackwell family and the Margetts family from Enderby and Theddingworth become associated eventually seeing the marriage of two of their children. Not that either family were necessarily Baptists, but the Hall family was very involved with the Blackwells and Margetts, as we have seen in the transfer of various properties through the years. John Hall also is mentioned prominently in the will of Peck Margetts and Hannah Margetts left a small amount in her will to Robert Hall.

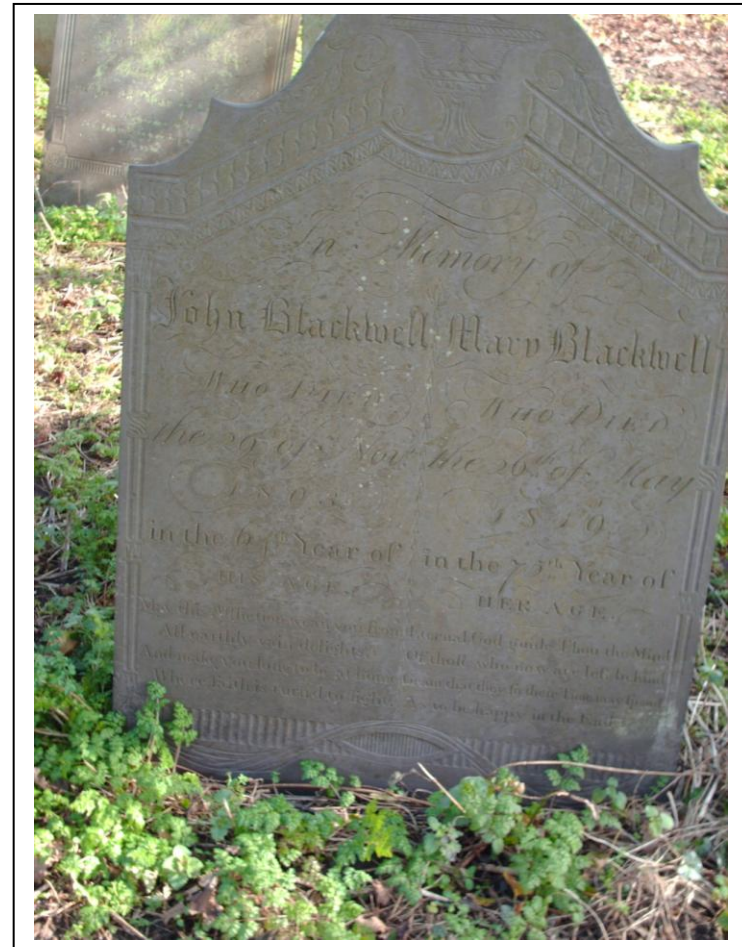
The farm adjoining the Baptist Church in Arnesby was the Hall Farm, now called Hall Close.

# 1.1.1.1.1.1 John BLACKWELL

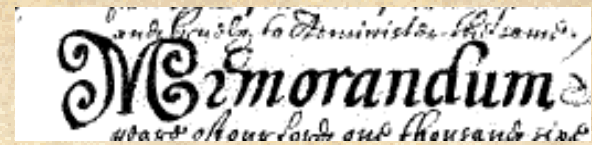
Birth: 1739  
Death: 1803, Arnesby, Leicestershire [10]  
Burial: Arnesby, Leicestershire

Spouse: Mary BOLLARD  
Birth: 1744, Willoughby Waterless Leicestershire  
Death: 1819, Arnesby, Leicestershire  
Father: Benjamin BOLLARD  
Mother: Dorothy

Children: Thomas (1771-1847)  
Mary (1772-1840)  
Martha  
Jonathon  
William (1765-1840)  
Joseph  
Samuel



1793 23 Feb Lease for lives Wigston's Hospital to John Blackwell of Arnesby, grazier, for the lives of Joseph, Jonathon, and Samuel, the three sons of John Blackwell. [4]



# 1.1.1.1.1.1.1 Thomas BLACKWELL

## [6], [11]

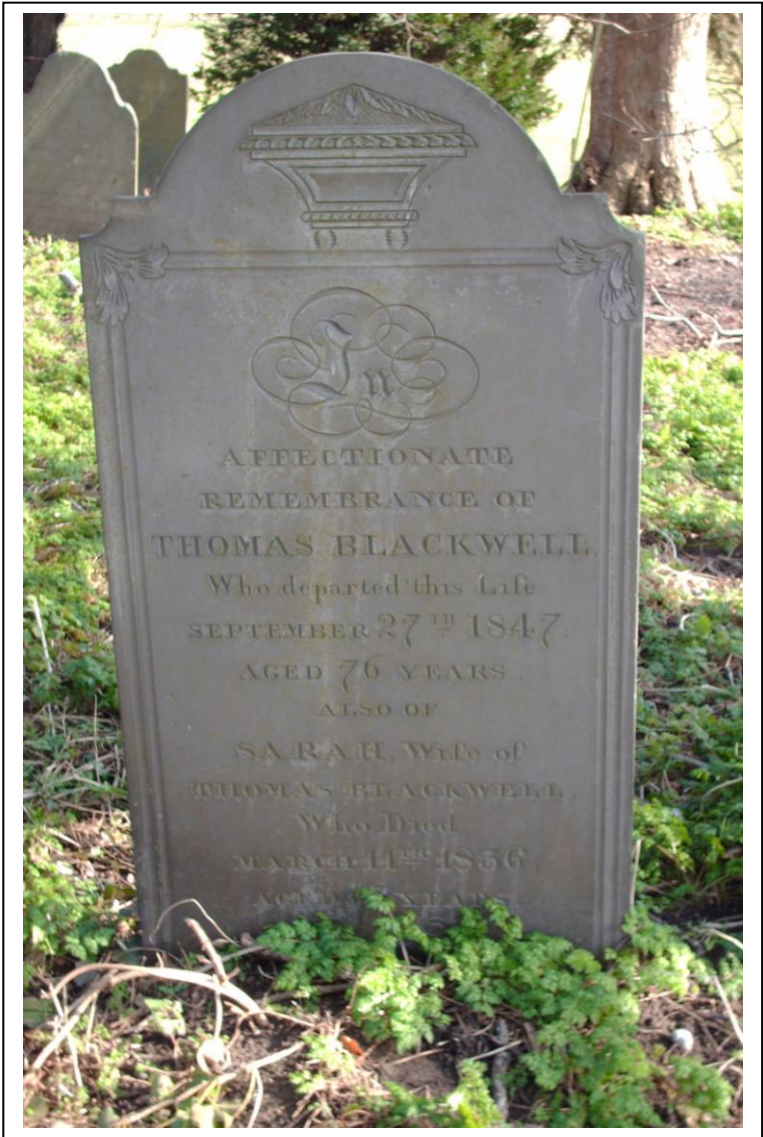
Birth: 1771  
Death: 27 Sep 1847, Arnesby, Leicestershire [8]  
Occ: Farmer/grazier[12]

Spouse: Sarah HERBERT [8]  
Birth: 14 Dec 1783, Bruntingthorpe, Leicester  
Death: 1836, Arnesby, Leicestershire [10]

Father: Benjamin HERBERT (-1876)  
Mother: Elizabeth NEWTON (1805-1881)

Children: Thomas Jervis (1813-1864)  
John (1814-1864)  
George (1816-1868)  
Charlotte Mary (1821-)  
Caroline Elizabeth (1823-1833)  
Eliza Ann

1815 16 May Will of Thomas Blackwell of Arnesby, farmer,  
Bequests to his wife, Sarah (Herbert) [4]





A family of Herberts owned and lived at the Joiner's Arms in Bruntingthorpe around this time. How long they had owned the pub and what their relationship was to Sarah is unknown at this point.





# 1.1.1.1.1.1.1.1.1 George BLACKWELL

## [6]

---

Birth: 16 May 1816, Arnesby, Leicestershire, England  
Death: 8 Oct 1868, William Margett's House, Wynyard, Tasmania  
Occ: Flour Miller - Newry Flour Mill, Longford, Tasmania  
Reli: Plymouth Brethren?

Spouse: Anne Francis MARGETTS  
Birth: 2 Sep 1820, Enderby, Leicestershire, England  
Death: 12 Dec 1905, James Dean's House, Wynyard, Tasmania  
Father: William MARGETTS (1775-1844)  
Mother: Mary WARD (1788-1867)  
Marr: 22 Dec 1840

Children: George Frances (1841-1860)  
Caroline Elizabeth (1844-1877)  
Anne Margetts (1847-1938)  
Thomas William (1843-1868)  
Edwin Orlando (1852-1932)

George Blackwell was born on May 16, 1816 in Arnesby. He is listed as a miller in census records and probably worked at the magnificent flourmill in Arnesby. He married Ann Francis Margetts from Enderby some eight miles from Arnesby.

Sometime between 1849 and 1851, the family moved to Enderby probably because under the wills of her father and uncle, Anne Francis, inherited, along with her brothers, substantial property in Enderby. They are listed in the 1851 census as residents of Enderby.

They were only residents in Enderby for a few years, as in 1855, George Sr. with his son, George, and his brother-in-law, John Ward Margetts, sailed to Tasmania to be followed by the rest of the family in 1857.

That, however, is another story.



Flour Mill at Arnesby



1. Index Leicestershire Archaeological/Historical Society, 49, 8.
2. Robert Blackwell, "The Blackwell Family History," 4/30/2002.
3. "Lease Agreement," January 21, 1622, National Archives, Wigston, Leicestershire.
4. "c.1621-1864 Arnesby and Wigston deeds and Blackwell correspondence and papers Inc financial and business papers," 1621-1864, 15D41 NRA 6087 Blackwell, Wigston, Leicestershire Archives.
5. "International Genealogical Index/British Isles."
6. "Blackwell Homepage (Aust and NZ)," Frank Blackwell.
7. "Parish Records," Kimcote and Arnesby, Kimcote DE 1241/2, Arnesby DE 1216/2.
8. Arnesby, Leicestershire Cemetery
9. David Blackwell, "Blackwell Study Group."
10. Arnesby Parish Cemetery
11. Rex Blackwell - Burnie Tasmania (son Ian). Identifies line from Thomas/Sara on Source 10 email.
12. "Church Register christenings," Arnesby.