

Our appraisal of the HOLMES FAMILY HISTORY connected to Alston, Cumberland, UK.

Introduction

Tradition has it that this Holmes family are descended from Vikings who landed on the north east coast of England many hundreds of years ago. (Reputedly after being repelled further south on English beaches). Our research has led us as far back as 1654. At that time the country was in the aftermath of the civil war, which meant that many records have not survived, however we have been able to follow the progress of the Holmes family from County Durham to West Cumbria, and indeed many other parts of the world.

Richard Holmes

Our Holmes story starts with Richard Holmes of Wiserley, Wolsingham, Durham, England who died in 1696. From the parish records of Wolsingham we have found that Richard was a church warden in 1676, a surveyor in 1683, and a collector in 1690. Richard left a will naming his wife Elizabeth and children Richard, Leonard, Henry, Abigail and John.

We found baptism records for seven of Richard and Elizabeth's children: Mary b.1654, Abigail b.1656, Henry b.1657, John born in 1662, and Elizabeth b.1668. all at Middleton-in-Teesdale Durham, England. Another son, John died in 1661, and another daughter, Elizabeth, died in infancy in 1664, both were buried in Middleton-in-Teesdale. During this period Richard and Elizabeth Holmes were living at Stotley, Middleton-in-Teesdale. We have not yet found a marriage record and so do not know Elizabeth's maiden name. We think that Elizabeth may have been Richard's second wife as there is a burial record for "Margaret, wife of Richard Holmes" at Middleton in Teesdale in 1652. There were also two burials at Wolsingham, of Jenet, daughter of Richard Holmes in 1678, and Michael, son of Richard Holmes in 1687, but we are not certain that they are this Richard Holmes's children. It is possible that the sons Richard and Leonard mentioned in Richard's will were from his first marriage. Elizabeth, Richard's widow, died in 1708 and was buried at Romaldkirk, Durham.

John Holmes and Rachel Appleby

John Holmes was born in 1662, the son of Richard and Elizabeth Holmes. In 1699, John Holmes married Rachel Appleby at Romaldkirk, Durham, England. In the church records John was noted as "of Bradley Burn in the parish of Wolsingham". Rachel Appleby was baptised at Romaldkirk in 1674, the daughter of John Appleby and Ann Wilson, of Cotherstone. John Appleby and Ann

Wilson were married at Romalldkirk in 1670. John and Rachel Holmes' eldest three children Richard b.1700, John b.1701 and Elizabeth b.1703 were born and baptised at Wolsingham, Durham, England but no address is mentioned in the church records. By 1704, John and Rachel had moved to Crookbeck Hall at Cotherstone, where they had a further three children, Henry b.1706, Ann b.1708 and Thomas b.1713, all baptised at Romalldkirk. Crookbeck (as it is now called) is a farm, and is typical of the building style of that period. One of the buildings at Crookbeck has a stone inscribed with their initials JH and RA, and the date 1704. We believe that this building was built as their home. In 1708 John Holmes's mother Elizabeth Holmes "an old widow of Cotherstone" was buried at Romalldkirk. Rachel Holmes died in 1726 and John Holmes died in 1730, both at Cotherstone. They were both buried at Romalldkirk, and although we have searched, we have not found their gravestone.

Richard Holmes and Mary Briggs

In 1725, Richard Holmes, the eldest son of John and Rachel, married Mary Briggs at Romalldkirk. Mary Briggs was baptised at Romalldkirk in 1698, the daughter of William and Esther Briggs of Cotherstone. William Briggs and Esther Hutchinson were married at Romalldkirk in 1697. Richard and Mary Holmes had eight children, Rachel b.1726, Mary b.1728, Sarah b.1730, John b.1732 and Richard b.1735 all born at Crookbeck Hall, Cotherstone and Thomas b.1737, Esther b.1739 and William b.1742 all born at Wolsingham. Unfortunately Thomas died in infancy and Esther died in 1745. Both of these children were buried in Wolsingham.

Some of the Holmes family moved west up the Wear valley towards St Johns Chapel, Durham, England as in 1748, Richard and Mary Holmes' eldest daughter Rachel was married to Thomas Errington and in 1760 Richard and Mary Holmes' son Richard Holmes married Jane Little, both marriages were in St Johns Chapel in the parish of Stanhope. At the time of these marriages, they were described as "natives of this parish". To date we have not discovered when Richard and Mary Holmes died or where they were buried.

The name of St Johns Chapel originates from the church itself. Originally the people living in that area would have had to go to Stanhope to attend church. The Bishop of Durham allowed a chapel to be built there, although it was still linked closely with Stanhope, the "mother" church.

Richard Holmes and Jane Little

Richard and Jane Holmes had ten children baptised at St Johns Chapel, Stanhope. The eldest, Richard was born at Windyside, Daddry Shield in 1763, the second, Mary, was born at Hill House,

Daddy Shield in 1765, and the third, Sarah, was born at Fieldstile in 1767. All the rest were born at Harthopeburn; Thomas b.1772, Jane b.1775, Margaret b.1777, Rachel b.1779, Ann b.1781, Esther b.1782 and Jonathan b.1786.

Two of these children did not survive to adulthood, Jane died in 1789, and Jonathan died in 1788.

We think that Richard and Jane Holmes actually had eleven children, as one of the sons, Thomas, married Ann Dixon in 1798, and in 1797 a William Holmes married Mary Dixon. The witnesses at William and Mary's marriage were Thomas Holmes and Ann Dixon. We think that this was a case of two brothers marrying two sisters. Also there is a gap in Richard and Jane's family between Sarah and Thomas into which William would fit nicely, this fits with William's age on his death certificate, and a William Holmes was a witness at the marriage of John Wearmouth and Mary Holmes in 1790. Three of Richard and Jane Holmes' daughters married at St John's Chapel. In 1790, Mary married John Wearmouth, in 1797 Sarah married William Collingwood, and in 1808, Margaret married Thomas Mitchell.

Mary and John Wearmouth stayed in the Daddy Shield area and had children born at Pinfold House. Thomas and Ann Holmes also had children born at Pinfold House. William and Sarah Collingwood lived at Harthopeburn and had children born there. William was a lead miner. In the 1841 census Margaret was widowed and a farmer at Daddy Shield, she died in 1844.

In 1797 a Margaret Little, "aged 88, a pauper of Harthopeburn", was buried at St Johns Chapel. It is likely that she was the mother of Jane Little, as the date, place, name and age all fit.

Richard Holmes died at Pinfold House in 1812, aged 77, and Jane died at Daddy Shield in 1822, aged 84, they were both buried at St Johns Chapel.

William Holmes and Mary Dixon

William was born around 1770, son of Richard and Jane Holmes. We found no record of his baptism, but have information from a family bible that he was the son of Richard and Jane Holmes.

Also from the bible; William and Mary Holmes had thirteen children, eleven of them baptised at St. Johns Chapel: Martha b.1798, Thomas Dixon b.1800, William b.1802, Mary b.1804, Jane b.1806 at Pinfold House. The rest were born at Daddy Shield, Esther b.1807, John b.1809, Ralph b.1811 d.1811, Ralph b. 1813, James b.1815, Charles b.1817 d.1817, Fanny b.1820 d.1821, and Adam b.1821. Of these children, William died in 1832, murdered by a poacher. Five of the sons survived to carry on the family name; Thomas Dixon

Holmes, who married Jane Kidd in 1828; John Holmes, who married Henrietta Reather in 1839; Ralph Holmes who married Ann Wood in 1841, James Holmes, who married Jane Gibbon in 1837 and Adam Holmes, who married Dorothy Taylor in 1843. When William died in 1839, the informant on the death registration was Ralph Holmes, son of the deceased. William was a miner, probably a lead miner. His sons John, Ralph, James and Adam were also miners. Ralph died in 1872, having married and had one daughter. Adam moved to Waldrige, Durham. He was living there in 1841, with Mary Holmes his mother. Adam and Dorothy spent all their married lives in Waldrige, where he was a coal miner, and had four children. Dorothy died in 1896 and Adam died in 1907. All of their children married and raised families in Waldrige. Mary, William's widow, died at Daddry Shield in 1849.

We owe thanks to Amanda, one of William's descendants, for her help in tracing this family.

Thomas Dixon Holmes and Jane Kidd

Thomas Dixon and Jane Holmes had eleven children, all born at Daddry Shield; Mary b.1828, William b.1830 and d. 1841, Fanny b.1831, Jane b.1832 and d. 1853, Phoebe b.1835, Esther b.1836, Margaret b.1838, Sarah Ann b.1840, Elizabeth b.1843, Maria b. 1845 and Hannah b. 1848. Phoebe, Esther, Margaret, Sarah Ann, Elizabeth, Maria and Hannah all married and remained in the Daddry Shield area. From Thomas Dixon Holmes' will we think that Frances must have died before her father as her share was left to her daughter Mary Ann.

We know from a letter written by John Joseph Wilkinson, Maria's son, that Thomas Dixon Holmes was a clockmaker as well as being a lead miner. Jane died in 1872 and Thomas died in 1875.

We owe thanks to Barbara Dickinson, a descendant of Thomas and Jane's daughter Hannah, for help in researching Thomas Dixon Holmes' family.

John Holmes and Henrietta Reather

John Holmes b.1809, son of William and Mary Holmes, married Henrietta Robinson, a widow in 1839 at Houghton le Spring, Durham. From the marriage record, her father was William Reather. John and Henrietta had a family of seven children, and lived at Crook, where John was a coal miner. John died in 1867 and Henrietta died in 1887.

One of their sons, Richard Holmes, b.1846 married Mary Arkle in 1871. This Richard was a butcher in the 1871 census. Richard and

Mary emigrated to New Zealand with their young family. From the New Zealand Electoral Rolls we found that Richard continued his trade as butcher in New Zealand.

James Holmes and Jane Gibbon

James Holmes was born in 1816. We have had information from a family bible held by one of his descendants that James was the son of William and Mary Holmes – his baptism record named his parents as Thomas and Ann Holmes. We think that James and Jane had three children; the eldest, Thomas was a joiner. William, the youngest emigrated to Pennsylvania with his wife Sarah Jane and their family in 1879. William was a coal miner before and after he emigrated. He died in 1898 at Scranton, Lackawanna, Pennsylvania. James was a coal miner, he and Jane both died in 1892.

Thomas Holmes and Ann Dixon

Thomas and Ann Holmes had eight children, John b.1798, Thomas b.1801 at Pinfold House, Richard b. 1803 d.1803 at Saugh Shield, all the younger children; Betty b.1804, Martha b.1807 d.1808, Richard b.1809, George b.1811 d.1815, and Henry b.1814 d.1815 at Daddry Shield. Their eldest son John married Hannah Hodgson at St Johns Chapel in 1825. Thomas, second son of Thomas and Ann, married Elizabeth Gardiner in 1826, theirs was another family of coal miners. We think that the Ann Holmes who was buried at St Johns Chapel in 1816 at the age of 38 was probably Thomas's wife, we do not know when Thomas died.

John Holmes and Hannah Hodgson

John was b.1798, eldest son of Thomas and Ann Holmes. John and Hannah had eight children. John was a coal miner and died in 1876 at Tudhoe, Durham. We have managed to trace three of their sons to the USA., where they were coal miners. John, their second son, b.1828 emigrated in 1877 with his wife Isabella (nee Critchley), they had a family of eight daughters. John died at Fayette, West Virginia in 1910. William, John and Hannah's third son, b.1832 emigrated in 1881 with his wife Isabella (nee Daglish) and family. William spent some years in Fayette, West Virginia before going to Chicago, Illinois, where he died in 1917. Cuthbert, John and Hannah's fifth son, b.1844 emigrated to Fayette, West Virginia in 1887 with his wife Mary (nee Robson) and family. John and Hannah's other children remained in County Durham – all were either coal miners or wives of coal miners. One of John and Hannah's grandsons, another John, emigrated to Australia aged 20 in 1883. This John was born 1863, eldest son of Henry Featherstone Holmes and his wife Hannah (nee Hepburn).

Richard Holmes and Elizabeth Slack

Richard and Jane Holmes' eldest son Richard married Elizabeth Slack at Alston, Cumberland, England in 1790. Elizabeth was born and baptised in Alston in 1766, the daughter of Thomas and Ann Slack. Thomas Slack married Ann Watson at Alston in 1761. Thomas was born at Coatlith Hill, Alston in 1733, the son of Thomas and Margaret Slack. Thomas Slack snr. married Margaret Shutton at Alston in 1722.

Richard and his two brothers Thomas and William Holmes were all lead miners at the time of their children's baptisms. At that time the Weardale and Alston Moor areas were producing one quarter of the total lead output for the whole country, and many of the local people worked in the mines. It was usual for the mining families to have a smallholding which would be used to grow crops and to keep animals, as the miners had to have another form of income. The lead miners were paid very little, for very hard work.

Richard and Elizabeth Holmes had nine children that we know of, the eldest five born in Westgate, Durham; Ann b.1791, Jane b.1793, Mary b.1795, Elizabeth b.1797 and John b.1800.

Westgate is a small village in upper Weardale. The story behind its name is that in 1235 the Bishop of Durham ordered a wall to be built around his deer park so that he could keep a certain type of deer. There were four gates into the park, two of these were known as the east gate and the west gate. Gradually communities built up around them and the villages of Eastgate and Westgate developed. At that time the valley was much more forested than it is now.

Richard and Elizabeth then moved to Nenthall, Cumberland, England and had four more children, Bella b.1802, Thomas b.1804, Henry b.1807 and d.1809, and Maria b.1810.

Mary Holmes b.1795 married John Shield at Alston in 1816, her father Richard was a witness at the marriage. John Holmes b.1800 married Mary Shield at Alston in 1825, and it is quite possible that John and Mary Shield were brother and sister.

Bella married Joseph Hutchinson at Alston in 1820. He was another lead miner, they lived at Frosterley, Durham, Bella died there in 1877.

Richard Holmes (b.1763) died in 1836 at Grassfield, near Alston. His daughter Ann died there in 1837, Elizabeth his wife died in 1847, and their daughter Maria died at Grassfield in 1846. They were all buried in Alston.

John Holmes and Mary Shield

John Holmes, Richard and Elizabeth's eldest son, moved to Newcastle upon Tyne with his wife Mary, and was a leadworks manager.

From the 1841 and 1851 censuses we found that John and Mary had a large family; Ann b. 1828, Elizabeth b.1830, Mary Sophia b. 1832, Richard Henry b. 1836, Robert Shield b.1836, Isabella b. 1838, Fanny b. abt 1840, Eliza S b. 1842 and d. 1858, John J b. abt 1843 and d. 1861 and Maria Jane b.1847. Ann married John Millican, a draper and lived in Alston. Richard married and lived in Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne, where he was a chartered accountant. Robert married and lived in Ryton, Northumberland, where he was a steam engineer. Elizabeth, Mary Sophia, Isabella, Fanny and Maria Jane all married and lived in Northumberland. John died in 1851, and Mary died in 1891.

Thomas Holmes and Jane Walton

Thomas Holmes, Richard and Elizabeth's second son, married Jane Walton at Alston, Cumberland in 1826. Jane was born in 1804 at Low Galligill, near Nenthall, Cumberland, the daughter of Jonathan and Jane Walton. Jonathan Walton and Jane Richardson were married in Alston in 1792. Jane Richardson was baptised in Alston in 1770, the daughter of Thomas and Catherine Richardson. Thomas Richardson and Catherine Wilkinson were married in Alston in 1770. Family tradition has it that Thomas Holmes built Grassfield near Alston, Cumberland around the time of his marriage (We assume the modern house part of the farm). However, we know from the church records that there were people living there before them. Also, one of the buildings looks much older than the main house. We also know that there was a lead mine nearby, called the Grassfield mine.

The Grassfield mine was situated on the moor behind Grassfield, and was opened in 1803. It was at its most productive during the following seven years, but in fact remained open for a long time. Thomas Holmes worked as an agent for the lead mines. The lead mining agents would negotiate with the mine owners to have the right to work the mines. The agent would then negotiate with teams of miners who would actually work the mines as to how much they would be paid for producing the lead ore. These arrangements were usually reviewed quarterly as some veins would be worked out quicker than others, and the mining agent would not want to be tied into a deal that was not profitable to him, and in turn to the mine owner. The miners themselves had to pay for all their equipment, tools and gunpowder, and also had to pay workers on the surface,

usually young boys, to wash and sort the lead ore.

Thomas was also very involved with the Wesleyan Church and was a class leader at the chapel at Nenthall.

Thomas and Jane Holmes had eleven children, all born at Grassfield, Jonathan b.1826, Elizabeth b.1828, Richard b.1831, Jane b.1834, Ann b.1836, Walton b.1839, Margaret b.1841, twins Thomas and Mary b.1844, John b.1846 and William b.1849. Mary died as an infant. Thomas Holmes (b.1804) died in 1871 at Grassfield, of pneumonia. It is known from a letter that his daughter Annie Bramwell was sent for to come to his deathbed, but arrived too late. His wife Jane died in 1874 at Grassfield. They are both buried in the cemetery at Alston.

Thomas and Jane Holmes' children spread to various parts of the world.

Jonathan Holmes and Margaret Peart

In the 1851 census, Jonathan was working as a schoolmaster at Tanfield, Durham. His sister Annie was a schoolmistress at the same school. Jonathan Holmes married Margaret Peart in 1851 at Alston. In 1853, they emigrated to Toronto, Canada, with Jonathan's brother Richard and sister Jane. In Canada Jonathan worked first as a timekeeper on the railway, then as a schoolteacher. Jonathan and Margaret had six children, Cuthbert Walton b.1854, Jane Elizabeth b.1856, Thomas George b.1858, Jonathan Joseph b.1861, Margaret Annie b.1866 and Walton Arthur b.1870. Jonathan died in Pickering, Ontario in 1890, and Margaret died in 1913.

Joseph Hornsby and Elizabeth Holmes

Elizabeth Holmes married Joseph Hornsby at the church in Nenthead in 1848. Joseph was a lead miner at the time of his marriage, and when his children were born. In the 1851, 1861 and 1871 censuses, Joseph and Elizabeth were living at Grassfield. They had twelve children, Sarah b.1849, Thomas b.1850, Jane b.1852, Frances Ann b.1854, Richard Walton b.1856, Elizabeth b.1858, William b.1860, Joseph Henry b.1863, John Edwin b.1865, Meggie Ellen b.1868, Maria b.1871 and d.1871, and James Frederick (Fred) b.1873. All these children with the exception of Fred were born at Grassfield, Fred was born in Coanwood, Northumberland. By the time of the 1881 census, Joseph and Elizabeth had moved to Redheugh Road, Gateshead, and Joseph was working as a grocer's assistant. Joseph died in 1889, in Gateshead. In the 1901 census, Elizabeth was living with her daughter Meggie, who was now married to a William Howston, in Whickham, Durham. Elizabeth died in 1906.

Richard and Hannah Holmes

Richard Holmes emigrated to Canada in 1853 with his brother Jonathan and sister Jane. He married Hannah Linton and had ten children, Jane Ann. b.1856, Robert Walton. b.1858, Thomas John b.1861, Christiana b.1863 d.1865, Mary Onetta b.1865, Richard Henry Jonathan b.1867, Albert Linton b.1869, Annie Dalphina b.1871, Frederick William b.1874 and Nellie Eaphema b.1876. Richard died in Canada in 1911, and Hannah died in 1907.

Jane Holmes and Joseph Cahill

Jane Holmes emigrated to Canada in 1853 with her brothers Jonathan and Richard. She married Joseph Cahill and had a family. We found a record in the 1881 Canadian census showing the family living at London, Middlesex, Ontario: Joseph and Jane Cahill with six children: Minnie, Annie, Thomas, James, John, and Harry. Joseph Cahill was a schoolteacher. Joseph died in 1905, and Jane died in 1909.

John Bramwell and Annie Holmes

In the 1851 census, Ann Holmes (known as Annie), was working as a schoolmistress at Tanfield, Durham, with her brother Jonathan. Annie married John Bramwell, a schoolmaster, in the Alston Wesleyan chapel in 1861. They had a family at Escomb, near Bishop Auckland, Durham: Joseph Frederick b.1862, Thomas Holmes b. 1863, Louisa Jane b.1864, Helena b. 1866, Arthur b.1867 and Annie Holmes b. 1868. John Bramwell died in 1880 aged 49. In the 1881 census, Annie, now a widow, and the family were living in Bishop Auckland, with the exception of the eldest son, Fred, who was at college in Middlesex. Fred became a head teacher in Exeter, and Annie spent the later years of her life there, she died in Exeter in 1917. Their son Arthur died in Natal, South Africa 1909.

It is possible that John Bramwell was the brother of Mary Bramwell who married Thomas Holmes, as in census records we have found them both with parents Joseph and Jane Bramwell.

Thomas Teasdale and Margaret Holmes

Margaret Holmes married Thomas Teasdale in the Alston Wesleyan chapel in 1871. They had six children, James William b. 1872, Thomas Edmund b.1874, John Herbert b. 1876, Annie Jane b.1878, Sophia Meggie b. 1880 and Edith Mary b. 1882. In the 1881 census Thomas Teasdale was a farmer of 124 acres at Laversdale, near Irthington, Cumberland.

Later the family moved to Bedfordshire, England where Thomas leased 500 acres of the Duke of Bedford's estate at Steppingley.

Herbert Sydney Holmes worked there for him for two years.
Margaret died in 1913.

Thomas Holmes and Mary Bramwell

In the 1861 census, Thomas was an apprentice draper at Great Dockray, Penrith.

Thomas Holmes married Mary Bramwell in 1866 in County Durham. Thomas and Mary had eight children, Henry Edwin b.1866 in Alston; Jane b.1868, Annie Loiusa b.1871, Mary Elizabeth b. 1872, Edith Bramwell b. 1875, Bertha b.1878, all born in Lancashire, Percy Walton b.1884 in Edmonton, London, and Winifred Agnes b.1889 in Lancashire. Thomas spent most of his married life in Lancashire. In the 1871 census he was living in Leigh, working as a draper. His brother William was living with them, and was a draper's assistant. In the 1881 census he was a draper in Pennington in Leigh. Two of Thomas and Mary's children, Percy and Jennie (Jane) emigrated to New Zealand.

It is possible that Mary Bramwell was the sister of John Bramwell who married Annie Holmes, as in census records we have found them both with parents Joseph and Jane Bramwell. Thomas died in 1913 at Padiham, Lancashire.

John Holmes b. 1846

John Holmes went first of all to Canada, in order to better his prospects so that he could marry. Apparently, when he returned to England, he was met at Liverpool with the news that the girl he was to have married had in fact married his older brother Walton. Following this he spent time in South Africa and then Australia before going to New Zealand. Here misfortune struck again, his fiancée was thrown from a horse and killed shortly before they were due to be married. John was presented with a gold hunter watch from the local farming community in New Zealand before returning to Alston where he died in 1917. He was physically thrown onto the boat at Tolaga Bay to return to England by his nephew Herbert Sydney Holmes.

William Holmes and Margaret Wade

In the 1871 census William was living in Leigh, Lancashire, with his brother Thomas, and working as a draper's assistant.

William Holmes emigrated to Durban, South Africa, where he had two sons, Walton and Monty. In the 1901 census William was living in Camberwell, London, with his wife and sons, and was a draper's agent.

William died in Natal, South Africa in 1929.

His son Walton Holmes b.1890 died in East Africa during World War

1.

Monty Holmes married Irene Billinge von der Heyde. They had a family in South Africa and we have details of their part of the family tree from Roger Holmes, Monty's grandson.

Walton Holmes and Annie Nicholson

Walton Holmes married Annie Nicholson at Alston in 1870. Annie was the daughter of John Nicholson and Sarah Walton, and was born in 1849 at Hudgill Rigg, not far from Grassfield. John Nicholson and Sarah Walton married in Alston in 1846. John Nicholson was born in 1817 at Greenends, the son of John and Nancy Nicholson. Sarah Walton was the daughter of Joseph Walton. Her mother was Mary Cameron, from Scotland, which is where the Cameron name entered the Holmes family. Joseph Walton and Mary Cameron were married at Strontian, Argyll, Scotland in 1821. At that time Joseph was working there as a lead mines agent. Mary was the daughter of Alexander Cameron of Acharacle.

Walton and Annie Holmes had a large family, all born at Grassfield with the exception of the eldest, Thomas Arthur. Walton and Annie's children were: Thomas Arthur, b.1870 Hudgill Rigg, John Edwin b.1872, Sarah Jane b.1874, Charles William, b.1876, Florence Annie (Florrie), b.1877, John Cameron, b.1880, Frederick Walton b.1882, Ernest Nicholson b.1884, Herbert Sydney b.1885, Eveline Mary b.1889, Mabel Edna b.1890 and Richard Henry (Harry) b.1892. These children were baptised at the Wesleyan Chapel, Nenthall. Four of Walton and Annie's children did not survive, John Edwin and Ernest Nicholson died as babies, Sarah Jane died of pneumonia in 1893 and Florrie died of measles in 1899.

Walton and Annie Holmes remained at Grassfield. Like his father Thomas, Walton was a mining agent, working for Swan & Co, the London Lead Co and the Old Mountain Zinc Co (of Belgium). He was also a farmer, in the 1901 census he was farming 90 acres at Grassfield. Again like his father, Walton was heavily involved with the Wesleyan Chapel. At some stage in his life he became a Justice of the Peace. Walton died in 1920, Annie had died some years before him, in 1903. They were both buried in the cemetery in Alston.

Thomas Arthur Holmes and Dora Simpson

Walton and Annie Holmes' eldest son, (known as Arthur) was the only one of their family to remain in Alston. In 1901 he married Dora Simpson at the Wesleyan Chapel, Alston. Dora Simpson was born in Alston in 1872, the eldest daughter of William Johnson Simpson and his wife Mary, who had six children all born in Alston. William J. Simpson married Mary Anne Whaley in 1869 at Lambley, Northumberland. He had three sisters, who never married, and who

lived at Ashley House in Alston. The Simpsons ran a long-established drapery business on Front Street in Alston, Arthur and Dora took over the business following their marriage. Previous to that, Arthur had farmed at Grassfield. Arthur and Dora Holmes had four children, William Walton b. 1902 at Grassfield, John b.1904, Arthur Ernest b.1905 and Dorothy Annie b.1915. Ernest and Dorothy were both born at Front Street, Alston.

Arthur was assistant organist at the Wesleyan chapel, he was also a very good singer.

After his death in 1929, Dora continued to run the drapers shop on Front Street. Dora Holmes died in 1953 and they are both buried in the cemetery in Alston.

Charles Holmes and Agnes Rachel Stevenson

Charles Holmes married Agnes Rachel Stevenson (known as Ray Stevenson) in South Shields in 1902. They had a daughter, Florence Ray, who was born at Slaggyford, near Alston in 1902, and baptised at the Alston Wesleyan chapel. They emigrated to South Africa, where Charles was a poultry farmer. Charles died in 1933.

John Cameron Holmes and Edith

John Cameron Holmes (known as Cameron) also emigrated to South Africa. He married and had one son, Walton Robert Holmes who worked for Shell oil.

Frederick Walton Holmes and Florrie Stevenson

Frederick Walton (known as Fred) Holmes also emigrated to South Africa, where he was a farmer. He married Florrie Stevenson, sister to Ray who married his brother Charles. Fred and Florrie had a daughter, Gretta. Fred died in South Africa of peritonitis in 1925 and Florrie and Gretta returned to the UK in 1926.

Herbert Sydney Holmes and Margaret Drury

Herbert Sydney Holmes (known as Bert) emigrated to NZ. He married Margaret Drury there in 1924 and they had four children; Cecilia Jean, twins Kenneth Nicholson and Frederick Walton, and Gordon Vallancy. Herbert was a farmer in NZ, he died there in 1981.

Reverend Thomas Arthur Lindsay and Eveline Holmes

Eveline Holmes married Reverend Thomas Arthur Lindsay in 1910, they lived in Harrogate, Yorkshire, and had three children Mona, Walton and Sheila.

Campbell Menzies and Mabel Holmes

Mabel Holmes married Campbell Menzies. They emigrated to Africa after Walton Holmes' death, and had three children, Walton Richard, Neil and Jean. Campbell Menzies was manager of a sugar estate in Portuguese East Africa from 1926 - 1948, then they moved to Pretoria, South Africa. Mabel died in 1963.

Harry Holmes

Harry Holmes emigrated to New Zealand in 1922, where he too was a farmer. He remained a bachelor and died in New Zealand in 1968.

Bill Holmes and Edith Ruff

William Walton (Bill) Holmes served with the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME) during the Second World War, which was how he met Edith, whom he married in 1944.

After the war, Bill returned to Alston, to run the drapers shop. Bill and Edith had three children, all born in Alston; Glenys, Jillian and John. Glenys married Roger Campbell in 1970, they had two children, Stephen and Sally, and live in Penrith, Cumbria, England. Bill and Edith Holmes moved to Penrith when Bill retired. Bill died there in 1999, and Edith died in 2012.

John Holmes and Dulcie Thompson

John Holmes b.1905 married Dulcie Thompson in 1932. They had one son, Ian b. 1940. John was the manager of a bank in Morpeth, Northumberland. He died in 1978.

Ian remained a bachelor, and took over the shop on Front Street when Bill retired in his eighties. Ian sold off the business and died in 2000. The shop is no longer a drapers, but a newsagents. (On our most recent visit the shop was closed down).

Ernest Holmes

Ernest Holmes emigrated to New Zealand in 1927, where he was a farmer. He remained a bachelor, and died in New Zealand in 1963.

Bill Souter and Dorothy Holmes

Dorothy Holmes married Bill Souter in 1940. They had two sons, William b. 1945, and Alan b.1950, and lived in Gloucestershire. Dorothy died in 1993. William died in 1997.

Alan married Svetlana in 2001 and they have a son called Daniel.

John Holmes and Jane Armstrong

John Holmes married Jane Armstrong in 1977. We have three children, Alan, Sarah Jane and Andrew. Alan has a son Matthew. Andrew has a son John. We live near Cockermouth in West Cumbria, so the Holmes family truly has migrated from one side of the country to the other over the last 300 years, with some interesting stops in between.