

SHORT SUMMARY OF THE ATTREE FAMILY HISTORY

The Attree family, known also by the old English name of **Att Ree** or **Atte Ree** and also known as Atree and even **Tree**, is recorded in the thirteenth century as "**William Atte Ree of Warnham son of Alan Atte Ree of Warnham, born about 1230, died before 1271**".

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Attree family was established in the towns (villages) of Ditchling and Wivelsfield in Sussex and at that time they were in their own right lords of the manor.

The most known (published) pedigrees are the **Pedigree of Attree of Theobalds** (Wivelsfield) and the **Pedigree of Attree of Barcombe and Ditchling**. The Pedigree of Goodman of Otehall starts with **John Atte Ree, Lord of the Manor of Otehall, 1438**. The present Otehall house was built in three stages, the oldest section being the middle part, the stem of the T, dating to approximately 1550, while the head of the T or east wing is dated 1600.

The pedigree of Attree of Theobalds, published in the Sussex Archaeological Collections volume XXXV in 1887 together with an article about Wivelsfield by Captain F.W.T. Attree, R.E. refers to the descendants of Richard Attree (died circa 1544). This family owned a house called Theobalds (or sometimes known as Tibbles) for 256 years or more, from which the pedigree is named after. John Attree (1793-1876) grandson of John Attree the Malster of Ditchling (1708- 1772) sold Theobalds in 1823 to William Henry Bacchus. The house "Theobalds" still exists today.

The pedigree of Attree of Barcombe and Ditchling (also published in another volume of the SAC) starts with John Attree (1530-1610) of Barcombe. John is the second son of Thomas Atte Ree (d 1533) of Town Place in Horsted Keynes. Thomas was a brother of Richard of Theobalds. From this pedigree various lines branched off namely:

- a) The main line is from William (1583-1654) through William of Fletching (1613-1683), John of Fletching (1652-1684), William of Ditchling (1681-1747), John Attree, Malster of Ditchling (1708-1772). John the Malster first married Jane Attree daughter of John of the Birth, Wivelsfield (1674-1721) grandson of William of Ditchling (1611-1659). Jane died in 1743 and John married in 1745 Susan Scrase, their son John (1747-1801) married first Dorothy Mill daughter of Dorothy Attree of Theobalds and John Mill, and then Sarah Francis Turner, at this point the pedigree comes together with that of Theobalds. This line continues to the Attree's of Ditchling and Brighton (e.g. Thomas Attree of Queen's Park) of which many memorials can be seen in the Ditchling parish church. William of Brighton (1749-1810) the son of John of Ditchling (1708-1772) and brother of John (1747-1801) is the ancestor of the Rev. F.T. Attree see further below.
- b) Thomas Attree (1576-1641) son of John of Barcombe married Joan Attree daughter of John of Lockstrood and this line branched through William of Ditchling (1611-1659); Thomas of Ditchling (1654-1741) and on to Jesse, yeoman of Street (1688-1768). The pedigree is linked to the main branch via the grandson of William of Ditchling (1611-1659). From Jesse of Street (1688-1768) various branches developed in West Fittleham, Brighton, Crawley and Dorking in Surrey. From descendants of Thomas of Newick, first son of Jesse of Street, a branch settled during the 1840's in the Orange River Colony (now Orange Free State) in South Africa. This South African branch is still in existence at this time.
At the present time various descendants of Jesse Attree of Street can be found through out England and also in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In my opinion a large proportion of living Attree's descend from Jesse Attree of Street (my 6 x great grandfather).
- c) From John Attree (1609-1653) son of William of Barcombe (1583-1654) the branch of Attree's residing in Newick, Bolney, Shermanbury and Cowfold was developed. The line joined with John (1789-1870) son of John of Shermanbury (1755-1839) (3 x great grandson of John (1609-1653)) to Amy Attree (1784-1840) granddaughter of William of Reigate (1728-1812). The Reigate branch moved to Reading in Berkshire.
- d) The branch of John Attree of Ardingly (1700-1768), linked to John Attree (1530-1610) of Barcombe, has present day descendants in Australia via James (1742-1822), Thomas (1787-1863) farmer at Lockstrood (1841 and 1851 census) and his son William (1828-1917). William married Eglah Smith in 1854. Eglah was the grand daughter of Richard Smith and Mary Attree (b. 1759). Mary in turn was the daughter of William Attree of Crawley (1733-1784) youngest son of Jesse Attree of Street. William and Eglah emigrated to Australia and settled in the Nariel valley on the borders of Victoria and New South Wales.

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There are other branches of the Attree family, although at this time I have not been able to link them to the foregoing pedigrees they do form part of the overall Attree family history, for example:

- Nelson Attree (1808-1874) of Brede, Sussex, descendants in various locations in England, Northern Ireland and Queensland, Australia.
- Thomas Attree (1837-1920) of Sussex, descendants in England and Toronto, Canada.
- Thomas Attree (1796-1844) of Croydon, Surrey, descendants in various locations in England and Queensland, Australia.
- John Attree (1829-1888) of Yorkshire, England.

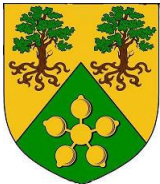
From the above pedigrees and branches there are other various lines that are now to be found afar a field as Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and the USA.

I have even received a letter from a René Attrée of Cannes, France. René's link with the English Attree's was with the Indian Ocean islands of Reunion and Mauritius and the Attree's who served in the Navy patrolling the route to India from the 16th century onwards. Unfortunately René passed away in 1995 before we had time to investigate this further.

Ditchling church as well as the churchyard has many Attree memorials. Behind the church is the village museum, where there is a room named **ATTREE**. The museum curator is a walking encyclopaedia on the Attree's and their connection with Ditchling.

The Attree family was said to be non-armigerous until a coat of arms was granted to the descendants of Rev. Francis Town Attree (1814-1858). Although in the will of John Attree of Theobalds in Wivelsfield dated 1665, there was mention of arms, but without clear details. The Rev. Francis Town Attree was a son of William Attree (1780 - 1864) and Maria Town of Brighton (William was the surgeon to George IV and William IV), and grandson of William Attree (1749-1810) and Frances Blackman.

The following is from page 62 of ARMORIAL FAMILIES by A Foxed Daved 1929:



ATTREE.

Party per chevron or and vert, in chief two oak-trees eradicated proper, and in base a cinquefoil of the first. Crest--upon a wreath of the colours, on a mount, an oak-tree, and in front thereof a serpent nowed, all proper.

Motto --"Sperate futurum".

Livery--Dark green, with yellow facings.

Sons of Rev. Francis Town Attree, (1814-1858) Clerk in Holy Orders B.A., sometime Incumbent of Middleton-by-Wirksworth, Derby, by Mary (1818-1884) his wife, daughter of John Harding of Lamingham, York, sister and co-heir to her brother, Thomas Harding:-

- 1) Frederick William Town Attree, Esq., Brevet-Col, late Royal Engineers, F.S.A.; served in the Afghan War 1879, and at Suakim in the year 1886, born 1853; married 1887, his cousin Francis Elizabeth Mary Wakeford Attree, only surviving daughter and heiress of Richard Wakeford Attree of Colmenny House, Corwen, Merioneth; and has issue:
 - i) Francis William Wakeford Town Attree, Gentleman, Captain 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment, born 1888, killed in action 1915 Ypres.
 - ii) Lorna May Wakeford Town Attree, born 1892.
- 2) Alfred Augustus Town Attree, Gentleman, born 1857, died 1899.

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This summary was compiled by:

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(Descendant of Jesse Attree of Street, Sussex)

March 1996
Updated November 2007