

The Hartnoll Family of North Devon

(comments by Pilton Historian Margaret Reed augmenting the notes of Anne Bishop and Jan Morrell on The Pilton Story archive, including a family tree going back to 1669)

The map below shows the parishes in North Devon where members of the Hartnoll family live or lived since the commencement of parish registers in the 16th century. Most of these parishes have been looked at and notes taken of any Hartnolls found. However, the large number of John Hartnolls around, coupled with the difficulty that until Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 25th March 1754, meant that it was perfectly legal for a couple to stand before lay witnesses and affirm their marriage vows in any place, although clearly many chose to do this in a church. After that date it was legally enforced for the ceremony to take place in a Church of England before a licensed vicar and recorded in the register there, although Quakers and Jews were exempt from this new Act. As you may imagine, this creates all sorts of difficulties for genealogists when suddenly children are recorded as being born to a couple with no sign of a marriage having taken place, which was why I had to abandon delving further back than the late 17th century with a common name of John Hartnoll, [of which there were many] as I was in danger of falling into the quicksands of speculation and guesswork.

Parish Map of Devon showing where Hartnolls lived (red outline)



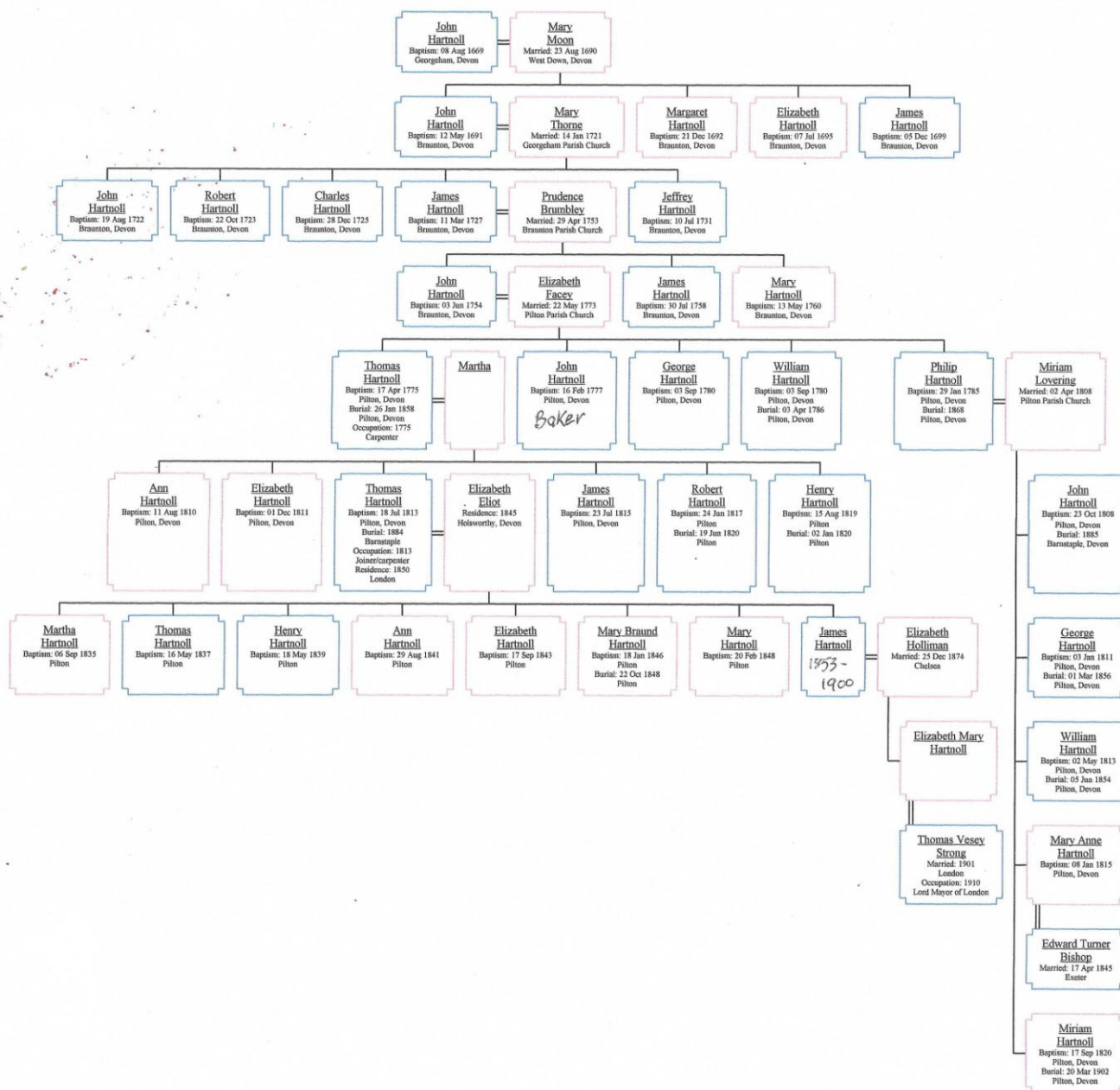
John Hartnoll the baker, baptised 16th Feb 1777 in Pilton was the son of John and Elizabeth and the brother of Philip, Thomas, George & William, as shown on the family tree on the next page. In 1852 he is described as a baker living somewhere near the top of Pilton Street, where he had lived and worked for over 30 years. A sale notice of 1852 gives information about the premises as a house with 'a bakehouse and capital coal oven', sitting tenant John Hartnoll. So this is the man mentioned in the Anne Bishop and Jan Morrell account of the descendants of John Hartnoll.

On the matter of a possible Wesleyan chapel in Pilton, there has never been a place of public worship in Pilton differing from the established church, St Mary's Church, which is Anglican. This is due mostly to the close proximity to Barnstaple, where a number of non-conformist churches were established after the Toleration Act of 1689 which allowed non-conformists to have their own places of worship for the first time in history, provided that they were licensed by the legal authorities at the quarter sessions. In 1821 a questionnaire sent out by the Bishop of Exeter revealed that there were ten families of Presbyterians and Methodists in Pilton, but with no licensed premises for worship in the parish, so clearly the Pilton non-

conformists took the short walk to Barnstaple rather than enduring the trouble and expense of having their own facilities.

Further information on Hartnolls from the Post Office Directory for Barnstaple, Devon, 1873
 Hartnoll, John & Son, builders, undertakers & house agents, established 1807, 65 High Street, Barnstaple
 Hartnoll, John, lodging house, Alexandra Place, Barnstaple.

Descendants of John Hartnoll



The inscription to James Hartnoll below the stained glass window in the south aisle of Pilton Church depicting the story of the Good Samaritan reads as follows:

'To the Glory of God and in loving memory of their father, this window is erected by the son and three daughters of James Hartnoll of London, who on January 23^d 1900 at the age of 46 years, fell asleep. 'Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away'