

The Origin of John Balchen, who died in December 1721 at Whitechapel, London

For a number of years, researchers amongst the extant MAN families have looked for the birth information for the grandfather, John, of Mary Balchen, who married John Man in London in 1747 and from whom all known Man descendants now claim as common ancestors.

In a letter to Col. Andrew Man on 1 November 1992, Pat Green, Ilminster, Somerset, of the Balchin Family Society, wrote, in part "John Balchen's father Henry was baptised at West Clandon near Guilford, he [Henry] was the son of John Balchin and Frances Ryde who married at West Clandon . . . that was 1650, . . .".

Thus, we would have, in line of descent –

John Balchin – France Ryde

Henry Balchin

John Balchen (I don't know when the change in spelling took place)

IGI records reveal that John and Frances were married on 3 February 1650/1. Their son, Henry, was baptised on 4 March 1651/2. On the other hand, our John married Susannah Barnes on 10 November 1691 in London. This John, in his marriage allegation, said he was 28-years old (thus born about 1663). That would mean that his father, Henry, would have been 10-years old at the time of his marriage – hardly likely.

Therefore, these cannot be the ancestors of our John Balchen.

The first real clue as to John's origin came from a Will found by David Man of an Edward Balchin of Horsham, Sussex, prepared in 1712, which appointed John Balchen of Whitechapel, London – kinsman – to be the executor of his Will.

The Will also made bequests to daughters Elizabeth Sayres and Rachael Lancaster. Subsequently, births were found for these two daughter and also two sons at Horsham between the years 1664 and 1672. Though a marriage record has not been found for Edward, a burial record was found at Horsham for Rachael, wife of Edward Balchin, in 1696. Guessing that the marriage took place around 1662, we were then in a position to estimate a probable date for Edward's birth around 1635. A search of the IGI records for an Edward Balchin born in England between 1620 and 1645 yielded only one possibility – an Edward Balchin born in 1629 at Bramley, Surrey – father's name Henry.

There are no other records for the surname of Balchin in Horsham other than the direct family of Edward's. Thus, our attention was drawn to Bramley.

It also should be noted that of Edward's four children, one died young (Thomas), two married and lived in Horsham (Edward and Elizabeth) and the first child (Rachell) married a John Lancaster in Horsham and then they moved to Bramley and raised four children there.

Returning to Bramley, we find that Edward apparently had four brothers: Henry, born in 1622; John, born in 1624; William, born in 1626; and Richard, born in 1635. Their parents were Henry Balchin, born in Bramley in 1577 and Elizabeth Keene, born in Godalming, Surrey, in 1600. They were married in Bramley in 1619 (Henry had been previously married to a Johane Powell in 1609 at Bramley).

Edward's oldest brother, Henry, raised three children in Bramley; brother John raised seven children in Bramley; brother William has not been identified beyond his baptismal record; Edward raised four children as mentioned in Horsham; and brother Richard has not been identified beyond his baptismal record, either. (I surmise that William and Richard had left the parish of Bramley)

Edward's brother John's seven children were: Mary, born in 1650; William, born in 1651; Thomas, born in 1653/4; **John, born in 1655**; Emblene, born in 1656/7; Ann, born in 1657; and Elezebeth, born in 1663.

Thus, I believe, this nephew of Edward Balchin – John Balchin, born in Bramley in 1655 and baptized at Holy Trinity, Bramley, on 10 October 1655 is our John who married Susannah Barnes on 10 November 1691 at St Mary Abchurch's, London.