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**A doubtful point in the Genealogy of Hicks of Beverston**

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A DOUBTFUL POINT IN THE GENEALOGY OF  
HICKS OF BEVERSTON,

*As it appears in Burke's Peerage and Baronetage.*

By THE REV. FRANCIS J. POYNTON, M.A.

THE few remarks which I am about to offer refer to the only daughter of Sir Michael Hicks, of Beverston, Knight, in the early years of the last century.

Sir Michael was the younger brother of Sir William Hicks, the second baronet, who died in 1703. He married Susan, youngest daughter of Sir Richard Howe, of Surrey, Knight; and when he died in 1710 he left her surviving; he also left a son, Howe Hicks, and an only daughter Alice.

It is with the marriage of Alice Hicks that I have to do. The account given of the family in *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage*, under "Hicks-Beach," makes Alice to be the wife of William Somerford of Wilts, Esq. Now I have looked in vain for the family of "Somerford," of Wiltshire, in any books or registers of that county that I could command for reference. But it happened about two years ago, when I was engaged in some researches on the families of Thorner, and of White of Wiltshire, that I was favoured by the Rector of Little Somerford in that county with the following extract from one of his parish register books :

"MEMORANDUM."

"Susannah the daughter of William and Alice White was born  
"August the 6th and baptized August the 23rd, 1713, at  
"Widcombe, Gloucestershire."

Here, then, was a noteworthy circumstance, that the child of a gentleman and lady, who were residents of Somerford Parva in Wilts (I ask you especially to notice the word *Somerford*), was born and baptized at Widcombe or Witcombe, in Gloucestershire, and that the event should be deemed of sufficient importance to be entered by special memorandum in the Somerford Register. This

circumstance attracted my attention, and wishing to ascertain the maiden name of Alice White, I tried to find out more about the parish of Witcombe and its inhabitants of old. I soon discovered that the parish was rich in memorials of the House of Hicks, and that Susannah and Alice were names occurring in its genealogy. I had reason to believe that Susannah, daughter of William and Alice White, was a first born child, indeed an only child, so, putting all things together, I now began to suspect that Alice, the mother, was a lady connected ancestrally with Witcombe; had repaired to her parental home for her confinement, and was not improbably a daughter of the house of Hicks. Application was then made to the Clergyman of Witcombe for further evidence from his Registers. But, unfortunately, the early books of that parish were found to be missing. Failing such direct proof, there seemed to me, notwithstanding the failure, little doubt that the wife of William White, Esq., of Somerford Parva, was really the Alice, only daughter of Sir Michael Hicks, by the Lady Susan, his wife, and that the entry now to be found in "Burke" relating to Alice Hicks' marriage ought to be amended by the insertion of William White's name as her husband, and that the word "Somerford," which stands in it, should be made applicable to a *Place*, and not to a *Person*.

Sir Michael Hicks, in his will dated 26th Jan., 1709-10, and proved by his relict, the Lady Susan, on the 5th of Dec. 1710, speaks of his daughter Alice by her maiden name. She was, therefore, not married at that date; but the birth of Susannah, daughter of Alice White, takes place at Witcombe in August, 1713. Her marriage might well have taken place shortly after Sir Michael, her father's, decease, (say in 1711 or 12); and such a marriage would fit in very well with the presumption that William White was the husband of Alice Hicks, and the father of Susannah, "born and baptized at Witcombe."

If the marriage licence of William White, and Alice his wife, could be found our conjecture could be reduced to a certainty. But if not the alternation of Susannah and Alice as christian names in this case; the associations of the Hicks family with Great Witcombe

at the period; the concurrence of dates, and the evidently good social standing of the two families (for William White, in his will, bequeaths to his wife Alice all such rings, watches and plate, as were hers before marriage): all these circumstances lead to a strong presumption, that the correction of Burke's account ought to be made as above indicated.

The point I have raised, though not of great importance, is one which is rendered interesting to us at this moment, both as bearing on the family of the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, and as having some reference to Beverston Castle, one of the places set down for the Society to visit in its excursion of tomorrow. The attention I have invited to this genealogical question, may, I hope, lead to the discovery of the fact one way or other! Is "Burke" right, or am I?

#### SUPPLEMENT SHEWING HOW THE HICKS PROBLEM WAS SOLVED.

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THE preceding matter formed the substance of the paper which I was permitted to read at the Evening Meeting of our Society at Dursley, on Tuesday, August 3rd, 1886. Time went on, the point at issue received no solution. No one communicated with me on the subject:—The Inscriptions of "Hicks of Great Witcombe," printed in Vol. III. of "The Genealogist," edited by Dr. Marshall, did not supply the information wanted. So my paper was passing into the hands of our Society's printer in the month of December. When, to my gratification, I received the following communication from a Genealogical friend (not one of our Society's members, but one to whom I had expressed a wish that I could settle the Hicks question):—"I have been at last to Lambeth, after longer delay than I liked, and now send you the result of my search on your question: and it seems to me to be highly satisfactory on your side."—

“Vicar General’s Office, Lambeth, 22th Feby. 1711-12, appeared William White, of Little Somerford, Wilts, Esq<sup>r</sup>. ætat: 23, Bachelor, and alleged that he intended to marry Miss Alice Hicks, of St. Peter’s, Paul’s Wharf, London, aged 18, spinster, with consent of her mother, Dame Sus<sup>ah</sup> Hicks of the same, widow, and prayed for license to marry in the Parish Church of St. Bennett’s, Paul’s Wharf, London.

(L.S.) William White.

Eodem die.

“The aforesaid Dame Sus<sup>ah</sup> Hicks, of the Parish of St. Peter’s, Paul’s Wharf, London, widow, made oath &c., that she was lawful mother of the above Miss Alice Hicks, and consents, &c., &c.

(L. S.) S. Hickee.

Upon the receipt of this intelligence, I felt all doubt was at an end as to “who was the husband of Alice Hicks.” I at once communicated with Sir John Maclean, in whose hands my original paper was placed, and in reply received the expression of his wish, that I would add to the original any additional matter I had collected about the Hicks family in my researches, and especially the details of the marriage allegation just received, which settled the doubtful point. It is in compliance with this wish that I now send to the Transactions of the Society this account of “how the Hicks problem was solved” and a tabular pedigree illustrative of the whole matter.

## A GENEALOGICAL TABLE ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

Sir William Hicks, 1st Bart., of Beverston, = Margaret, daughter of Wm. Glouc., eldest son of Sir Michael Hicks, Knt., who purchased Beverston. Created a Baronet, 21st July, 1619 (17th Jas. I.) Died 1680. Lord Paget

Sir William, 2nd Bart., died 1703. Sir Michael Hicks, Knt., 2nd son, of Great Witcombe. Died 4th May, 1710. *Ætatis suæ* 65. Will dated 26th Jan. 1709-10; prob. 5th Decr. following. M.I. in chancel, of Witcombe Church. Adminis. "de Bonis non," 14th May, 1725, Lady Susan being then dead, and a further adminis. 21st Nov. 1743 (P.C.C. 265 Smith).

This line supplied the 3rd, 4th and 5th Barts.

Michael was 3rd son. Died an infant (according to M.I. in Witcombe Ch. 2nd son, name undiscovered. Howe Hicks, Esq., of Great Witcombe. Born 1690. Died 12 Feb. 1727-8, aged 38. Bur. at Great Witcombe, with M.I. Will dated 7 Jany. 1724. Cod. 29 August 1726. Prob. 18 March, 1727-8 (P.C.C. 8 Brook). = Mary, daur. of Jeffry Watts, of Much Leys, co. Essex, Esq. Marr. articles, 1720. Died 6 August, 1728, aged 36. Bur. at Witcombe, with M.I. Her will dated 21 Mar. 1727. Cod. 25th July, 1728. Prob. 24th Jan. following. (P.C.C. 12 Abbott).

Sir Howe Hicks, 6th Bart. Died 9th April, 1801, aged 78. M.I. at Witcombe. = Martha, dau. of John Browne, Clerk, Rector of Coberley. Died 4th May, 1802, aged 86. M.I. at Witcombe.

Sir William Hicks, 7th Bart. Born in 1754. Was twice married, but died s.p.m. (see Burke) 23rd Oct. 1834, aged 80. = Michael Hicks, Esq., of Beverston Castle, assumed the additional surname of Beach. Died 1830.

Michael Hicks-Beach, Esq., born 22nd Oct. 1780. Died 27th Sept. 1815, *vita patris*. = Caroline Jane, eldest daur. of William Mount, Esq., co. Berks. Married 26th Jan. 1809.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach succeeded his great uncle on his decease in 1834, and was the father of the present (1887) Chief Secretary for Ireland, The Right Hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach. Born 1837.

## PRECEDING LETTERPRESS ON HICKS.

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<p>Susanna, youngest daughter of Sir Richard Howe, of co. Surrey, Knt. Proved her husband's will, 1710. Died in Nov. 1724. No will found. Her M.I. in chancel of Witcombe Church.</p>	<p>Letitia, wife of Arthur, Earl of Donegal, according to Barke's Peerage.</p>
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<p>William White, of Little Somerford, co. Wilts, Esq. Buried 18th April, 1722, at Somerford. Will dated 18th Feb. 1719-20, to be buried at Somerford. Admin. granted to Alice his relict, the ex<sup>x</sup>. having renounced, in the Archd. of Wilts, 9th June, 1724, Records now removed to London.</p>	<p>Alice, only daur. named in father's will. Marriage allegation dated 29th Feb. 1711-12, Vicar General's office. Died 1731. Adminis. of her estate granted to William R. Earle, Esq., husband and guardian of Susanna, her daughter being a minor, 9th April, 1731.</p>
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<p>William Rawlinson Earle, of East Court, Parish of Crudwell, Esq., M.P. for Malmesbury, 1721.</p>	<p>Susanna White, only child. Born 6th, and bap. at Great Witcombe, 23rd August, 1713. Married at Malmesbury Abbey, 30th Dec. 1730.</p>
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<p>Henrietta Maria only daur. of Wm. Beach, Esq. of Nether Avon. Died 18th Oct. 1837.</p>	<p>Martha = John Pettat, Clerk.          Alice = Thomas Lefield, Esq.          Ann = James King, Esq., of Stanton, co. Hereford.          Susanna Elizabeth, died June 17th, 1747, aged 1 year and 23 days.          Mary, died 30th July, 1758, in the 15th year of her age.</p>
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<p>William, of Oakley Hall, Hants, and of Keevil, Wilts, Esq.</p>	<p>= 1826, Jane Henrietta, daur. of John Brown, Esq., of Salperton.</p>
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