

From the *Transactions* of the  
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

**Sir Vincent Gookin of Highfield, Gloucestershire**

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1943, Vol. 64, 113-117

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SIR VINCENT GOOKIN OF HIGHFIELD,  
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

by C. ROY HUDLESTON

IN the *Monumental Effigies of Gloucestershire and Bristol*, 1931, pp. 73-75, Miss Ida Roper describes the effigy of the son and heir of Sir Vincent Gookin (of Highfield in Upton Cheney, Bitton) which is placed against the south wall of the south aisle in the Lord Mayor's Chapel, Bristol (1). The inscription has however long read (2): 'Here lyeth the Body of John Cookin sonne and heire of Vincent Cookin of Hifield Esq. who beinge about 11 years olde departed this life the 12 Day of March Anno Dom. 1627', and the substitutions of the letter C for G at some unknown date has turned *Gookin* into *Cookin*, and so obscured the identity of the family to which the boy belonged.

The Gookins were a Kentish family, and Vincent Gookin was the fourth son of John Gookin of Ripple Court, Kent (3), who married Catherine Denne at Bekesbourne in that county on 28 October 1566. The D.N.B. (viii, 154) gives the date of his birth as ? 1590, but in view of the fact that his parents were married more than 20 years before, it seems probable that his birth was earlier than the suggested date.

Gookin settled in Ireland early in the 17th century and became a considerable landed proprietor there. In 1634, however, he caused a sensation by a bitter attack on the Irish, and the D.N.B. quotes an account which says that his invective 'did so incense . . . all sorts of people

<sup>1</sup> There are no registers for the Lord Mayor's Chapel, burials having apparently been recorded in the registers of St. Augustine-the-Less. There is, however, no record of the boy's burial in the latter register.

<sup>2</sup> Barrett in his *History of Bristol* (1789) gives the boy's surname as Cookin.

<sup>3</sup> Berry's *Kentish Pedigrees*.

against him as it was evident that they would have hanged him if they could'. A warrant for his arrest was issued, but two days before it arrived Gookin and his wife fled to England, no doubt to Highfield in Upton Cheyney, an estate which he had bought in 1627. In the Ellacombe MSS. at the Central Library, Bristol, is a transcript of the fine in Trinity Term, 3 Charles I ' between Vincent Gookin armiger quer. and John Barker and Mary his wife, four houses one dovecote four gardens four orchards 80 acres of land 20 of meadow 60 of pasture, and 40 of wood in Upton Cheyney, Highfield, Wick, Bitton, Abson, Pucklechurch, Hanham and Siston (Siston). Vincent Gookin gave to John and Mary Barker £160'. The D.N.B. says that it is not known what Gookin's punishment was or whether he managed to evade it, nor is it known when or for what reason he was knighted.

Vincent Gookin married twice—first to Mary Wood, of Waldron, and secondly to Judith, daughter of Sir Thomas Croke, of Baltimore, co. Cork, and had children by both marriages. He died at Highfield in February 1637-8, the day of the month being variously given as the 5th, 7th or 8th. It is probable the first is correct for he was buried at Bitton on 8 February (4). ' Judith ye Lady Gookin ' was buried at Bitton on 2 May 1642.

Sir Vincent's Inq. P.M. (5) was taken at Thornbury on 27 September 1638, when it was found that he was seized of the capital messuage of Highfield House, three other houses, 39 acres of land, 33 of meadow, 106 of pasture and 32 of wood in Upton Cheyney, Highfield, Wick, Bitton, Abson, Pucklechurch, Hanham, Oldland and Siston. By his will 1 February 1637-8 he bequeathed this property to Judith his wife for life, with

<sup>4</sup> It is just possible that this date is 13, the entry being made in Roman numerals, and the first numeral might perhaps be ' x ', though I think it is ' v '.

<sup>5</sup> Misc. Chan. Inq. p.m. 14 Chas. 1, pt. 21, no. 163, printed in Gloucestershire Inq. p.m. 1625-42 (1899), p. 58.

remainder to his son Vincent and his heirs. The heir was then 18 years 10 months and 9 days old.

The younger Vincent, who became Surveyor-General of Ireland, also has a place in the D.N.B., together with his younger brother, Captain Robert Gookin. Four years after the death of Lady Gookin, Vincent sold the Gloucestershire property to Samuel Bave for £200, the transaction being recorded in Feet of Fines, Michaelmas Term 22 Charles I, 'between Samuel Bave and John Baughe quer, and Vincent Gookin arm. and Mary his wife and Robert Gookin gen. def., of four houses one dovecote four gardens 80 acres of land, 20 of meadow, 60 of pasture 40 of wood in Upton Cheyney, Highfield, Wick, Bitton, Abson, Pucklechurch, Hanham and Siston'.

There the Gookin family's connexion with Gloucestershire ended, and Highfield House was (according to a note in the Ellacombe MSS.) pulled down by Dr Archibald Drummond, who died in 1801.

#### APPENDIX

Abstract of the will of Sir Vincent Gookin (P.C.C. Lee, 48) 1638.

The last will of me Sr Vincent Gookin Knight written with my own hand 1 February 1637 . . . I do nominate . . . for my executors my wife my brother Samuel Wood dwelling at the sign of the Golden Falcon upon London Bridge my servant John Burrowes now in Ireland and James Powell dwelling upon the Bridge in Bristol. Overseers of this my will my worthy and respected friends Sr John Seamor Knight of Bitton and Mr Phillip Langly the elder of Mangotsfield. Unto my wife during her life my house and all my land at Highfield now belonging unto the said house and the yearly rent due from the two tenements one held by the widow Kirton the other by [blank] and £50 per annum to be paid out of my land of Breandowne during her natural life. To my son Vincent my house and land at Highfield, etc. etc. after the death

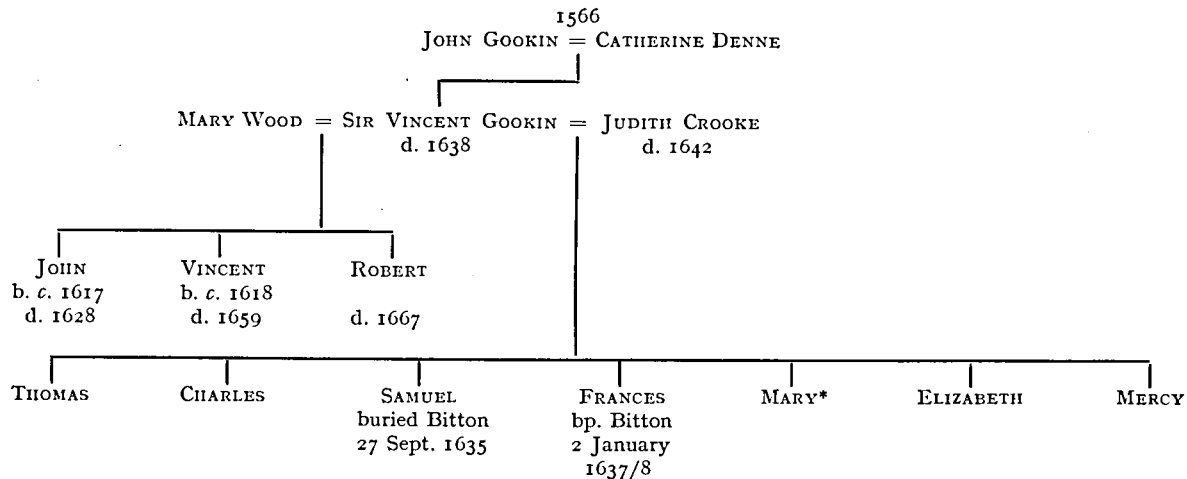
of my said wife with remainder failing his heirs male to my son Robert [with similar remainders] and failing him and his heirs male to descend to my son Thomas. To my son Vincent all my land of Breandon mentioned in a deed granted by R<sup>t</sup>. Hon. the Earl of Danby to me. My executors shall keep in their hands all the said lands of Breandowne and all rents and profit thereof for the payment of the Earl of Danby's £3000 and raising of portions for my daughters until my son Vincent be twenty four years of age and then my executors to deliver quiet possession of all my lands to him he giving security to pay £1000 to his sister Mercy and £500 to his sister Elizabeth [If one or both sisters die before my son Vincent's entrance upon Breandowne £2000 to be paid to my executors to raise portions for my Daughters then living] To my son Robert and my son Thomas my Manor of Castle Maughon as it now standeth made over to them by deed from Mr Henry Beecher by feoffment. If Robert die without issue male his part to descend to his brother Thomas [with similar clause if Thomas dies without issue male and if both so die, then to the daughters]. To my son Charles all my land at Cargen and Bally Langio and my land of Ballmacke William and my lease of Lyslo the whole profits to remain with executors for raising of portions for my daughters until he is 21 All my lands and leases in Ireland to be let and my fishing malthouse I give power to sell my land at Compton Magnor to pay debts and raise portions for my daughters. Balledowincy to be sold for portions for my daughters.

To my executors £20 each To John Burrowes a mortgage I have upon William M<sup>c</sup> Phillip at Kilmackamoge and my lease of Court M<sup>c</sup> Chery after 5 years

Vincent Gookin

Witnesses: Robert Browne, John Wood, Thomas Briant, John Morrom his mark.

Proved at London 13 April 1628 [*sic* but should be 1638] by Dame Judith Gookin the relict, power being reserved to Samuel Wood, John Burrowes, and James Powell.



\* ' Mary Gookin gent ' was buried at Bitton 27 July 1635.