

12th Great Grandparent – Sir John Popham (Amy Adams) – A Page in History

Sir John Popham was born in 1531 Huntsworth in the Parish of Petherton, near Bridgewater, in Somerset. (see map) ★

He was the second son of Alexander Popham (c1504-1556) of Huntsworth and his wife Jane Stradling of St Donat's Castle, Glamorgan.

John Popham was educated at Balliol College, Oxford where he read classics and divinity.

He then entered the Middle Temple as a Law Student. The **Middle Temple** is just one of the Law Societies that made up the court system in London. The four Inns of Court were – Gray's Inn, Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn and **Middle Temple**.

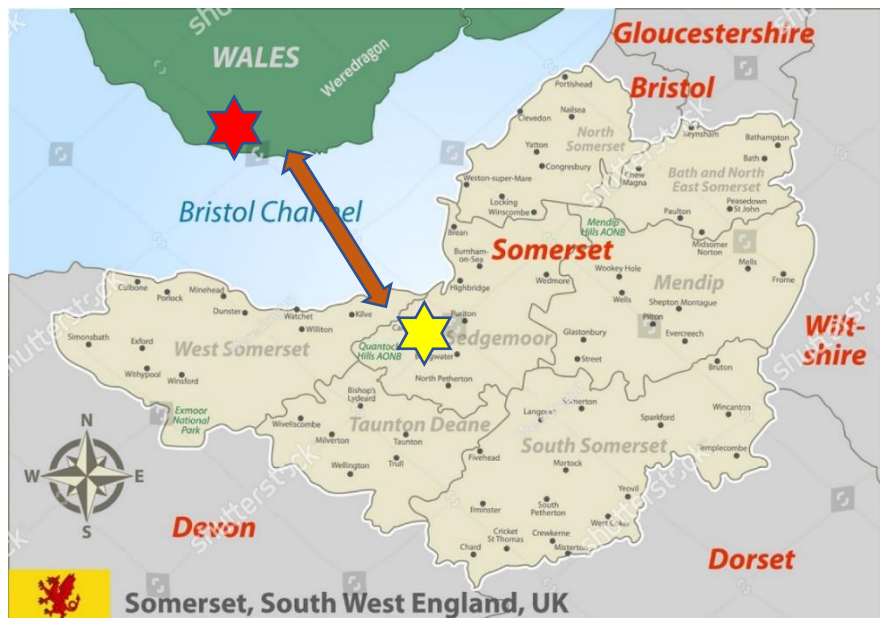
Pedigree Chart Joseph Barton to John Popham

1	Joseph Barton	Johanna Butler
2	James Barton	Margaret Brett
3	Thomas Barton	Hannah Balls
4	Thomas Balls	Mary Lewin
5	Robert Lewin	Mary Hensman
6	Mark Hensman	Rachel Woodward
7	Thomas Woodward	Frances Wingate
8	Francis Wingate	Ann B Annesley
9	John Wingate	Alice Smallman
10	Robert Wingate	Amye Warre
11	Roger Warre	Eleanor Popham
12	John Popham	Amy Games

★ Stradling home St Donat's Castle, Glamorgan, Wales

across the Bristol Channel between Somerset and Wales

★ Popham Family home at Huntsworth, Somerset

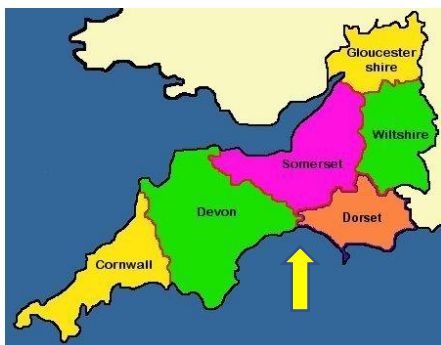


John Popham – early life and career

It is said that, as a young child, John Popham was kidnapped by gypsies, and spent his childhood wandering with this lawless group of associates. Various sources also suggest he supported himself as a highwayman [I can't verify these stories]!

John Popham began his career as a Member of Parliament for Lyme Regis in 1558.

Lyme Regis is a seaside town by the English Channel, near the Devon-Dorset border.



John Popham further served as Member of Parliament for Bristol in the 1571 and 1572 and was a Justice of the Peace in Somerset. {Justices of the Peace were a key element of local government in Elizabethan England. Justice of Peace was a voluntary position, however, it was a great honour to serve as a justice of the peace. They were responsible for ensuring law and order were kept in the counties.}



John Popham served in the honourable position of ‘Recorder’ of Bridgewater and of Bristol (an honorary magistrate/legal position). John Popham was promoted to Sergeant-at-Law in 1578 and appointed Solicitor General in 1579.

*In 1581 he was appointed Speaker of the House of Commons and later that year was appointed Attorney General. In 1592 following the death of Sir Christopher Wray, he was appointed **Chief Justice of the Queen’s Bench**.*



*As Chief Justice, John Popham is credited with maintaining the stability of the British State, and for being one of the ‘real colonisers’ of the British Empire, being heavily involved in the orchestration and funding of an early colony in what was later to be known as the **New England** region of the **Americas**.*

Popham Colony: The First English Colony in New England

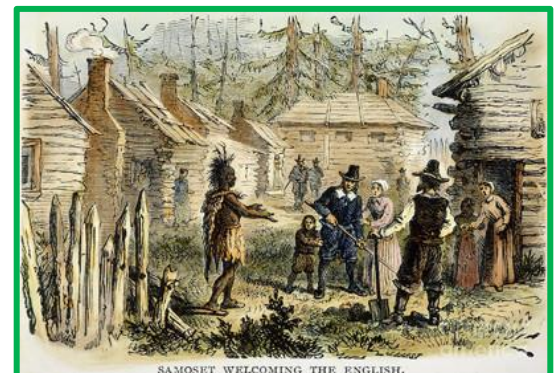
In August 1607, about 100 men arrived at the mouth of the Kennebec River on the ships, ‘*Gift of God*’ and ‘*Mary*’ and ‘*John*’, hoping to trade with Native Americans, find gold and other mineral riches, and discover a Northwest Passage to the Pacific and Asia.

George Popham, the nephew of John Popham, was the leader of the expedition.

The **Popham Colony** was a **short-lived English colonial settlement** in North America. It was established in 1607 by the proprietary Plymouth Company and was located in the present-day town of Phippsburg, Maine, near the mouth of the Kennebec River.

It was founded a few months after its more successful rival, the colony at Jamestown, Virginia.

The Popham Colony was the second colony in the region that would eventually become known as New England. The Colony lasted only 14 months – the failure was partly due to the lack of financial support, especially after the **death of Sir John Popham**.

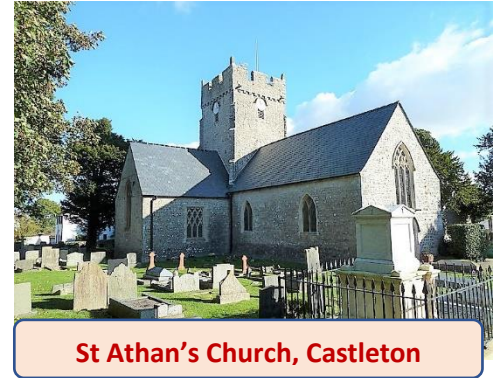


Family of Sir John Popham and Amy Adams (or Games)

John Popham married Amy Adams (alias Games), daughter and heiress of Robert Games of Castleton, Glamorgan, Wales) at St Athan's Church, Castleton, Wales.

Children included:

- *Penelope Popham m Thomas Hanham*
- *Eleanor Popham m Roger Warre (11th Great Grandparents)*
- *Amy Popham m Thomas Horner*
- *Elizabeth Popham m Richard Champernowne*
- *Mary Popham m John Mallett*
- *Katherine Popham m Edward Rogers*
- *Francis Popham (Sir Knight) m Anne Dudley*



John Popham became a very wealthy man and amongst the many estates he owned was:

- *"Publow" in Somerset*
- *"Littlecote" in Wiltshire*
- *"Hemyock Castle" in Devon*



"Littlecote" House in Wiltshire

(Situated on the River Kennet between the villages of Ramsbury and Chilton Foliat in Wiltshire)



Hemyock Castle in Devon

(Situated in the village of Hemyock, Devon)

St John the Baptist Church, Wellington Somerset

John Popham died at Wellington, Somerset on 10 June 1607, while his wife Amy (nee Adams) had died over a year earlier on 25 March 1606, also in Wellington, Somerset.

They were both interred in St John the Baptist Church at Wellington where various monuments celebrate their life.



Figures represent the children of John and Amy Popham.



Amy and John Popham

Jesuit Priest - Robert Southwell

King Henry VIII's break with the Catholic Church is one of the most far-reaching events in English history. During the Reformation, the King replaced the Pope as the Head of the Church in England, causing a bitter divide between Catholics and Protestants.

The Catholic Mass became illegal in England in 1559, under **Queen Elizabeth I's Act of Uniformity**. Thereafter Catholic observance became a secretive and dangerous affair, with heavy penalties levied on those, known as recusants, who refused to attend Anglican church services.

Robert Southwell (c. 1561 – 21 February 1595), {**Saint Robert Southwell**}, was an English Roman Catholic priest of the Jesuit Order. He was also a poet, a hymn writer, and a clandestine Catholic Church missionary in Elizabethan England. After being arrested and imprisoned in 1592, and intermittently tortured and questioned by Richard Topcliffe, Southwell was eventually tried and convicted of high treason for his links to the 'Holy See' (ie. Pope in Rome).

{ **Richard Topcliffe** was a priest hunter and practitioner of torture during the reign of Elizabeth I of England. A landowner and Member of Parliament, he became notorious as the government's chief enforcer of the penal laws against the practice of Catholicism}.

In 1595 the Privy Council passed a resolution for Southwell's prosecution on the charges of treason. He was removed from the Tower to Newgate Prison, where he was put into a hole called Limbo.

A few days later, Southwell appeared before the **Lord Chief Justice, John Popham, at the bar of the King's Bench**. Popham **made a speech against Jesuits and seminary priests**. Southwell was indicted before the jury as a traitor under the statutes prohibiting the presence, within the kingdom, of priests ordained by Rome. Southwell admitted the facts but denied that he had "entertained any designs or plots against the queen or kingdom."

On 21 February 1595, Southwell was sent to Tyburn (a village where the gallows once stood). The execution of sentence on a notorious highwayman had been appointed for the same time, but at a different place – perhaps to draw the crowds away – and yet many came to witness Southwell's death.



Gibbet

Having been dragged through the streets on a sled, Southwell stood in the cart beneath the **gibbet** and made the sign of the cross with his pinioned hands before reciting a Bible passage from Romans 14. The sheriff made to interrupt him; but he was allowed to address the people at some length, confessing that he was a Jesuit priest and praying for the salvation of Queen and country. As the cart was drawn away, he commended his soul to God with the words of the psalm 'in manus tuas'. He hung in the noose for a brief time, making the sign of the cross as best he could. As the executioner made to cut him down, in preparation for disembowelling him while still alive, Lord Mountjoy and some other onlookers tugged at his legs to hasten his death. His lifeless body was then disembowelled and quartered. As his severed head was displayed to the crowd, **no one** shouted the traditional "Traitor!".

In 1970, Robert Southwell was canonised as a "Saint" by Pope Paul VI as one of the 'Forty Martyrs of England and Wales'.

[Extract Source: Wikipedia]

The Conspirators of the 'Gunpowder Plot'

The Gunpowder Plot of 1605, in earlier centuries often called the Gunpowder Treason Plot or the Jesuit Treason, was a failed assassination attempt against King James I by a group of provincial English Catholics led by Robert Catesby who sought to restore the Catholic monarchy to England after decades of persecution against Catholics.

The plan was to blow up the House of Lords during the State Opening of Parliament on 5 November 1605, as the prelude to a popular revolt in the Midlands during which King James's nine-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, was to be installed as the Catholic head of state. Catesby may have embarked on the scheme after hopes of securing greater religious tolerance under King James I had faded, leaving many English Catholics disappointed.

His fellow conspirators were John and Christopher Wright, Robert and Thomas



Wintour, Thomas Percy, Guy Fawkes, Robert Keyes, Thomas Bates, John Grant, Ambrose Rookwood, Sir Everard Digby and Francis Tresham. Fawkes, who had 10 years of military experience fighting in the Spanish Netherlands in the failed suppression of the Dutch Revolt, was given charge of the explosives.

The plot was revealed to the authorities in an anonymous letter placed in the hands of William Parker, 4th Baron Monteagle, on 26 October 1605. During a search of the House of Lords in the evening on 4 November 1605, Fawkes was discovered guarding 36 barrels of gunpowder—enough to reduce the House of Lords to rubble—and arrested.

Most of the conspirators fled from London as they learned that the plot had been discovered, trying to enlist support along the way. Several made a stand against the pursuing Sheriff of Worcester and his men at Holbeche House; in the ensuing battle Catesby was one of those shot and killed. At their trial on 27 January 1606, eight of the survivors, including Fawkes, were convicted and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered. [Wikipedia Extract:](#)

Trials [Extract:](#)

Edward Coke conducted the interrogations of those thought to be involved with the conspiracy. By coincidence, on the same day that Garnet was found, the surviving conspirators were brought before the court in Westminster Hall. Seven of the prisoners were taken from the Tower to the Star Chamber by barge. Bates, who was considered lower class, was brought from the Gatehouse Prison. Some of the prisoners were reportedly despondent, but others were nonchalant, even smoking tobacco. The King and his family, hidden from view, were among the many who watched the trial. The Lords Commissioners present were the Earls of Suffolk, Worcester, Northampton, Devonshire, and Salisbury. **Sir John Popham was Lord Chief Justice**, Sir Thomas Fleming was Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and two Justices, Sir Thomas Walmsley and Sir Peter Warburton, sat as Justices of the Common Pleas. The list of traitors' names was read aloud, beginning with those of the priests: Garnet, Tesimond, and Gerard.



Engraving of conspirators of the Gunpowder Plot being hanged, drawn and quartered in London.

[Wikipedia Extract:](#)

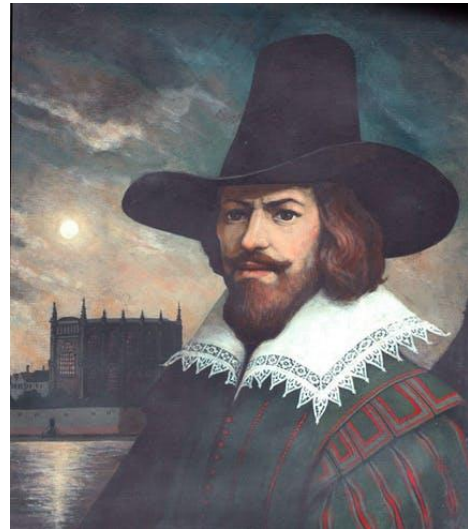
Executions *Extract:*

Although Catesby and Percy escaped the executioner, their bodies were exhumed and decapitated, and their heads exhibited on spikes outside the House of Lords. On a cold 30 January, Everard Digby, Robert Wintour, John Grant, and Thomas Bates were tied to hurdles—wooden panels—and dragged through the crowded streets of London to St Paul's Churchyard. Digby, the first to mount the scaffold, asked the spectators for forgiveness, and refused the attentions of a Protestant clergyman.

He was stripped of his clothing, and wearing only a shirt, climbed the ladder to place his head through the noose. He was quickly cut down, and while still fully conscious was castrated, disembowelled, and then quartered, along with the three other prisoners. The following day, Thomas Wintour, Ambrose Rookwood, Robert Keyes, and Guy Fawkes were hanged, drawn and quartered, opposite the building they had planned to blow up, in the Old Palace Yard at Westminster. Keyes did not wait for the hangman's command and jumped from the gallows, but he survived the drop and was led to the quartering block. Although weakened by his torture, Fawkes managed to jump from the gallows and break his neck, with that avoiding the agony of the gruesome latter part of his execution.



Guy Fawkes Apprehended



Guy Fawkes

Mary Queen of Scots (1587)

Sir John Popham presided over the trials of Mary Queen of Scots (1587)

Wikipedia Extract:

Mary, Queen of Scots (8 December 1542 – 8 February 1587), also known as Mary Stuart or Mary I of Scotland, was Queen of Scotland from 14 December 1542 until her forced abdication in 1567.

The only surviving legitimate child of James V of Scotland, Mary was six days old when her father died and she inherited the throne. During her childhood, Scotland was governed by regents, first by the heir to the throne, James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, and then by her mother, Mary of Guise. In 1548, she was betrothed to Francis, the Dauphin of France, and was sent to be brought up in France, where she would be safe from invading English forces during the 'Rough Wooing'. {Scottish society in the 1540s was one dominated by the Church. Henry VIII sought to exert control over Scotland during this period. The violence during this period is known as the 'Rough Wooing'.}

Mary married Francis in 1558, becoming queen consort of France from his accession in 1559 until his death in December 1560. Widowed, Mary returned to Scotland in August 1561. Following the Scottish Reformation, the tense religious and political climate that Mary encountered on her return to Scotland was further agitated by prominent Scots such as John Knox, who openly questioned whether her subjects had a duty to obey her. The early years of her personal rule were marked by pragmatism, tolerance, and moderation. She issued a proclamation accepting the religious settlement in Scotland as she had found it upon her return, retained advisers such as James Stewart, Earl of Moray (her illegitimate paternal half-brother), and William Maitland of Lethington, and governed as the Catholic monarch of a Protestant kingdom. Mary married her half-cousin, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, in 1565, and in June 1566, they had a son, James. In February 1567, Darnley's residence was destroyed by an explosion, and he was found murdered in the garden. James Hepburn, 4th Earl of Bothwell, was generally believed to have orchestrated Darnley's death, but he was acquitted of the charge in April 1567, and the following month, he married Mary.

Following an uprising against the couple, Mary was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle. On 24 July 1567, she was forced to abdicate in favour of her one-year-old son. After an unsuccessful attempt to regain the throne, she fled southward seeking the protection of her first cousin once removed, Elizabeth I of England.



As a great-granddaughter of Henry VII of England, Mary had once claimed Elizabeth's throne as her own and was considered the legitimate sovereign of England by many English Catholics, including participants in a rebellion known as the Rising of the North. Perceiving Mary as a threat, Elizabeth had her confined in various castles and manor houses in the interior of England.

After eighteen and a half years in captivity, Mary was found guilty of plotting to assassinate Elizabeth in 1586 and was beheaded the following year at Fotheringhay Castle. Mary's life and subsequent execution established her in popular culture as a romanticised historical character.



**Trial of Mary Queen of Scots
Judge Sir John Popham Presiding**

Sir Walter Raleigh

Website source: greatestbritons.com

One of Britain's most famous explorers, Sir Walter Raleigh, led many expeditions to America and introduced tobacco and the potato into England.



Sir Walter Raleigh

A soldier, warrior, politician, writer and poet too, Raleigh was equally famed for his relationship with [Queen Elizabeth I](#), in whose court he served.

Raleigh first came to the attention of Queen Elizabeth I in 1580 when he went to Ireland to fight against rebels

in Munster. On his return, he was invited to the Queen's court where he made a lasting impression.

Once he gained influence at court, Raleigh - who was also motivated by his support for Protestantism and an intense dislike of Spain - promoted the idea of creating English colonies in North America to challenge Spanish colonial policy.

The Queen rewarded Raleigh with the right to [colonise North America](#), and he even chose the name of the first English colony in America, Roanoke Island (now north Carolina), naming it Virginia in honour of the virgin queen. Raleigh was also granted large estates in Ireland, monopolies, trade privileges, and a knighthood.



Queen Elizabeth 1

But the charm of Raleigh often landed him in trouble and he [fell out of favour](#) with the Queen, which led to him being imprisoned in the Tower of London.

On his release, he continued his colonial ventures in an attempt to win back the Queen's trust - setting off to South America in search of the mythical golden land of El Dorado.

He failed to impress the Queen's successor, James I of England and VI of Scotland. Having spent time imprisoned in the Tower of London again on two further occasions - during which time he wrote poetry and his book "*The Historie of the World*" - Raleigh was charged with treason.

THE INDICTMENT: *That Sir Walter Raleigh, with other persons, had conspired to kill the king, to raise a rebellion, with intent to change religion and subvert the government, and, for that purpose, to encourage and incite the king's enemies to invade the realm.*

The overt acts charged were, that, on the 9th of June, Sir Walter Raleigh had conferred with Lord Cobham about advancing Arabella Stuart to the Crown of England, and dispossessing the king; that it was then arranged that Lord Cobham should go to the king of Spain and the archduke of Austria to obtain from them 600,000 crowns for the purpose of supporting Arabella Stuart's title; that Arabella Stuart should write letters to the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, and the archduke, and undertake these three things: peace with Spain, toleration of the Popish religion in England, and to be governed by the King of Spain in contracting marriage. The indictment further charged that it was also agreed that Cobham should return by the Isle of Jersey, and there meet Sir Walter Raleigh, to consult further of the plot and the distribution of the 600,000 crowns; that, on the 9th of June, Lord Cobham communicated this agreement to George Brooke, who assented to it; that, on the 12th of June, Cobham and Brooke said that 'there never would be a good world in England till the King and his cubs were taken away'; that, in furtherance of the above confederacy, Raleigh delivered to Cobham a book written against the king's title to the crown, which Cobham afterwards delivered to Brooke for the purpose of confirming him in his treasons; that Cobham, on the 16th of June, by the instigation of Raleigh, Arabella Stuart to write the

letters aforesaid, which he undertook to do; that, on the 19th of June, Cobham wrote letters to Count Aremberg for the advance of 600,000 crowns, and sent the letters by one Matthew de la Rensy; that, by letter received by Lord Cobham on the 18th of June, Count Aremberg promised the money; that then Cobham promised Raleigh, that on the receipt of the money persuaded Brooke to urge he would give him 8,000 crowns, and Brooke 1,000 crowns, to which they both assented.
To the indictment, Sir Walter Raleigh pleaded not guilty.

The Commissioners were: Henry Howard, Earl of Suffolk; Lord Chamberlain Charles Blunt, Earl of Devonshire; Lord Henry Howard, afterwards Earl of Northampton; Robert Lord Cecil; Edward Lord Wotton, of Morley; Sir John Stanhope, Vice-Chamberlain; **Lord Chief Justice Popham**; Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas Anderson; Mr Justice Gawdie; Mr Justice Warburton.



Sir John Popham
Lord Chief Justice of England
(12th Great Grandfather)

Sir Walter Raleigh was found guilty of treason and was *executed* outside the Palace of Westminster in 1618.

