

This hived-off manor of three hides (about 350 acres) was held in 1199 by a Richard D'Oilly, probably the grandson of Guy d'Oilly, the youngest brother of Robert, who arrived in England shortly after the invasion; it was his descendants who founded the Adderbury branch of the d'Oilly family. For some unexplained reason Richard had enfeoffed (surrendered) his Adderbury manor to a member of the de Mandeville family. This manor then experienced, as medieval manors did over the years, many complicated land transactions involving various aristocratic landowners until 1230 when it came into the hands of Amaury de St Amand just before he joined the royal household of Henry III.

Three hundred and thirty-five years later, in 1565, the wheel turned full circle, as the manor of St Amand's, then held by George Danvers of Calthorpe House at Banbury, was sold to his brother-law Sir Robert Doyly of Merton (near Bicester), who had moved in court circles, hence his knighthood. This Robert, a direct descendant of Guy d'Oilly, purchased St Amands (sometime before 1577) for the children of his second wife Katherine Tregyan.

In the event Robert died of the Black Death in 1577; many of Oxfordshire's gentry were wiped out that year. Presumably Katherine, his wife, stayed put with her first brood in their manor at Merton and their only surviving son Robert, born in 1566, was aged nineteen when he inherited St Amands in 1577: this then, is where our story really starts.

This Robert also married twice: his second marriage was to widow Ann Yates of Witney; they produced six sons and three daughters. John, their eldest son, born in 1592, was considered to be mentally challenged and his step-mother had taken a violent dislike to him, spending much time trying to get her husband to settle his manors on her and her first brood. He refused so she sued out a Commission of Lunacy against John in 1599. This was granted in 1600 but her husband countered by presenting a petition to the Court of Wards who partially reversed the Lunacy Commission's verdict. They deemed him *per lucida intervalla* 'lucid at intervals'. The Court of Wards, however, retained the management of his estates. John, nevertheless, married Ann Bray of Fifield and they too raised a large brood of six boys and one girl. It was their eldest son, born in 1634 and christened Bray, his mother's maiden name, who became a Quaker.