Warburton: The Village and the Family By Norman Warburton

Introduction

The above book was published in 1970 by the Research Publishing Company. The book is out of print and the publishing company seems to be no longer in existence. I have located copies in the British Library, the Chester Records Office and at the Family History Centre in Salt Lake City. I spent a day at the British Library looking at their copy and this report is the result.

I did not have time to read it from cover to cover, and inevitably my focus and note taking concentrated on sections of interest to me. However, I hope this overview will help anyone in deciding to make a similar pilgrimage.

Structure and Content

The book is 200 pages in length, including over 60 pages of Appendices, and some interesting charts and maps. It is divided between discussion of the village itself, and the history of the Warburton family and the authors connection to the founding family of de Dutton, later Warburton of Warburton and Arley. Warburton is a village in Cheshire, situated on the south bank of the river Mersey, and close to Manchester, Altrincham and Lymm.

The structure of the book is as follows:

Acknowledgements and Introduction: The only thing I picked up here was reference to Warburton as a Saxon and Viking settlement, which had received attentions from Irish pirates, and subsequently the Norman Invasion.

Chapter 1 – Origins of the Name: This chapter starts with a review of other Warburtons in the world. Some are similar names with no known link to Cheshire, for example:

- Two farms in the Highlands of Scotland which seem to derive from Wardroperton

- A hamlet near Arundel in Sussex referred to as Walbergtone in the Doomsday Book

- A hamlet near Emley, Huddersfield that no longer exists, but whose name is still used for an area. It is said to mean guard or watchtower.

Others obviously derive from wandering Warburtons, including a town and a river in Victoria, Australia named respectively after Charles Warburton Carr, and Peter Egerton-Warburton (1813 - 1889) a soldier and explorer. There is also a town in Lahore named after an Inspector General of Police.

The story of the founding and naming of Warburton is as follows. Following a defeat of Northumbria, the river Mersey became the northern border of Mercia in 626AD. Subsequently Wolfere became the first Christian king of Mercia. His daughter Werberg devoted her life to the community. She was Lady President of Weedon and Abbess of Ely. She died in 700AD and was buried at Hanbury near Repton. She was

canonised in 875AD and her body moved to Chester. Queen Ethelfleda (daughter of King Alfred and wife of Ethelred of Mercia) built a monastery in her name. It was situated just west of where the Lady Chapel of Chester Cathedral is today. In 915AD Ethelfleda, now widowed, was fighting the Danes who were on the Wirral peninsular. She built a series of forts, one of which was situated by a ford and was named after St. Werberg (also spelt Werburgh or Werburghe). This settlement became known as Werbergtune and is so recorded in the Doomsday Book. In 991AD it paid Dane geld of ten shillings, suggesting a prosperous settlement. The name ending of "–ton" or "–tun" implies a farm enclosed by a ditch, moat or fence.

Chapter 2 – Description of the Village: An interesting picture is built by the book as a whole of a thriving community on the banks of the river. They held regular regattas. In the 19th century an old wooden bridge was replaced by an iron one, but 30 years later (around 1860 from memory) the Manchester Ship Canal was built, bypassing the village and causing the old river bed dry up. The new but useless bridge became the approach ramp of new bridge over the canal.

Chapter 3 – The Old Church: The church is not mentioned in the Doomsday Book but it is believed to have existed in Saxon times. The Normans would not have named a church after a Saxon saint.

A Priory was established in 1190AD on lands equal to half of Warburton, granted by Adam de Dutton. The other half of the village was a fief of the Priory of St John of Jerusalem. The new Priory was established by the White Canons of St Norbert from Cockersand Abbey. But in 1270AD they surrendered the land (less 8 oxgangs) back to Geoffrey de Dutton, and sold the residue the following year.

The last ashes buried in the church were of Rev George Egerton-Warburton in 1925. In 1832 and 1845 a retaining wall bas built and divided into sections to be looked after by individual parishioners. Two sections are assigned to William and Charles Warburton.

Chapter 4 – The Old Church Rectory and Records: The Warburton moiety was granted by charter to Adam de Dutton in 1228AD. It was linked to Lymm and they shared clergy. The link was broken in 1869 when Warburton became part of the parish of Outringham.

Chapter 5 – The Manor House and Bailiff: Sir Peter de Dutton moved to Warburton towards the end of Edward I's reign (circa 1300AD). His son Peter was the first to be styled Peter de Werberton (the modern spelling seems to have been introduced in the late 16th century). However by the late 15th century the family had moved to Arley. Piers de Werberton (d 1495) was the first to be styled "of Werberton and Arley".

Lesser branches of the family may have continued as tenants on the old Warburton estate, which was now at least 3 properties, Warburton Park, Little Park and Park Gate. There were non-Warburton tenants as well. Warburtons of Hefferston Grange and Partington were the principle Warburton tenants. In 1673 Richard Warburton has 5 hearths, which implies he held Warburton Park.

Chapter 6 – Saracens Head and the Pipe and Punchbowl: There was a belief that, because part of Warburton was a fief of the Priory of St. James of Jerusalem, it was a sanctuary from the law. There is a story (unconfirmed) that Dick Turpin stayed at the Pipe and Punchbowl Inn. Also it is noted that Warburtons were widely dispersed from the 16th century

Neville of Preston, Frank of Liverpool and Earl C of Oakland California, all collaborators on the book, are all descended from William, born 1732. William married

Elizabeth Atherton in Warburton in 1765. He was publican of Pipe and Punchbowl, and associated with Hemp Cross. There are several parcels of land around Warburton called Hemp Cross, including one adjacent to the pub. The Pipe and Punchbowl ceased t be a pub around 1850 due to the presence of the Saracens Head. It was felt that the village was only big enough for one pub.

Up to 1890 all residents of Warburton (other than the Warburtons of Arley) were tenants or leaseholders.

Chapter 7 – The Cross, Stalls, Mill and School: A descriptive chapter I didn't read.

Chapter 8 – Early Warburtons: Odard (or Udard) de Dutton came to England with 4 brothers at the time of the Norman invasion. He was son of the Vicomte de Constin and half-brother of Nigel 1st Baron Hatton. I have seen notes on discussion boards that he was a cousin of William the Conqueror but that is not claimed here.

Odard settled at Dutton and in 1086 he was the seneschal of the town of Acton, a portion of Weston and a third of Dutton (Dutton is, or was near Runcorn, Cheshire).

The houses of Warburton, Cheadle, and Ashley originate from Odard. Adam (who granted lands for the Priory) was the second son of Hugh great grandson of Odard. Adam's son Geoffrey was a crusader; his son, also Geoffrey settled in Weberton and probably built Warburton Park. His grandson Peter was the first to use the name Werberton.

The family tree described in the book is to be found in the OneWorldTree on Ancestry (but you will need to subscribe to see it).

Warburtons in Ireland originate from a John who emigrated in 1645. Three Werbertons, Robert, Thomas and Hayman are on the 1520 Inspeximus of the St James of Jerusalem as tenants. This covers only half the village. The Rent Roll of Sir John of Arley gives other indications of Warburton tenants on the old Warburton estates (see Chapter 5).

From 1220-1520 descendants of the younger sons settled in North Cheshire and North (should this be South) Lancashire. A few founded minor lines of gentry, now extinct. Examples given include Hatton in Runcorn, Newcroft in Flixton, Agden and Partington in Bowden, and Over Tabley in Rostherne

Chapter 9 – Later Warburtons: This chapter gives short descriptions of a number of Warburtons from the 16th Century onwards who form the ancestry of the author and link back to the original Warburton family. There is also an A3 size family tree. This tree seems consistent with one I found here.

One entry of particular interest to me was Peter Warburton of Warburton Green (1618-78). This is the only mention of Warburton Green, which was where my GGG Grandfather William (1775-1862) was baptised, and lived (at least in his later years). It is some 7-8 miles from the village of Warburton, on the other side of Altrincham. Peter was a second son and leased 10 acres of land "at the Greene". However he was married and buried at Warburton and his son does not seem to have continued at the Green (according to the information I found here). It does not say who owned Warburton Green, or why it was so named.

Chapter 10 – A Random Selection: This chapter gives details on various other Warburtons. Of interest is Sir Peter of Arley (1754-1813) who died childless. The estate passed to Rowland Eyles Egerton-Warburton, son of Rev Rowland Egerton

and Emma Croxton. Emma was the daughter of Sir Peter's younger sister who married James Croxton of Norley Bank.

Chapter 11 – Notes on Warburton by its Personalities: This is more about the village. It had some unique privileges. It was ruled by a Court Leet and made its own laws. Its inhabitants were exempt from jury service until 1868.

Chapter 12 –Warburton Charities: This is about how the village cared for the poor and covers examples from approx. 1760-1840.

Chapter 13 – Administration: Some examples of accounts, such as the Parish Constable's accounts from 1761-80.

Chapter 14 – Conclusion: There are some closing comments about modern Warburton which, although threatened by the expansion of Manchester, is still (even today - 2006) rural, though little more than a hamlet. I have memories of cycling through it as a boy in the early 1960's and plan to revisit it next month.

Appendix A – Accounts: More examples of late 18th century accounts.

Appendix B – Administrators: Lists of Constables, Church Wardens, and Surveyors of Highways, as well as some Alehouse Recognizances. There is a smattering of Warburtons throughout.

Appendix C – Tithes: Not looked at.

Appendix D – Wills: There are descriptions of 78 wills either of Warburtons, or where Warburtons are executors. One was of personal interest was that of John Warburton of Hale dated 14th Jan 1686-7 (the administrative year ended at the end of March), and proved in March 1691 by Josiah his executor. It mentions 5 sons (Thomas, John, George, Josiah and Enoch) 1 daughter, and his wife Margaret. My interest is because Warburton Green is in Hale, and Josiah is a not too common name that occurs in my family. Also a heavy emphasis on sons occurs frequently in my family.

Appendix E – Cheshire Place Names: Some names are explained, including:

- Ashley - Ash(=ash) + ley(=field
- Bowden – An arched or rounded hill (I can remember cycling up it to school).
- Dunham Massey – homestead or living on a fortified hill once owned by Hamo-de-Masei (from Massey in Seine, France)
- Flixton – from Flikton (Danish) or Flik's abode
- Sinderland – from Sunder land (Old English) meaning separate land (from the main estate).
- Ton or tun – farm enclosed with ditch, moat, hedge or fence.

Appendix F – Genealogical Epitome: Mentions the Warburtons of Partington, junior branch of the Warburtons of Arley from 14th century, though with a later inter-marriage. By 1650 they are fourth cousins. This is part of the author's genealogy. It also gives genealogical detail repeating more formally the information in Chapter 9, which can be found here.

Appendix G – The Inspeximus of 1520: This lists tenants of the Priory of St James of Jerusalem, including 3 Werbertons.

Charts and Maps These include:

- Inside front cover – 1794 map of area around Warburton

- Title page- includes Warburton crest

- Family tree from Adam de Dutton to Sir John Warburton of Warburton and Arley (died 1575).

- Family tree of Norman Warburton

- Inside back cover – 1839 Tithe map of Warburton

Conclusion

The premise of the book is that all modern Warburtons are descended from one of the many branches that originated with Piers de Dutton who adopted the Warburton name in the 14th century. This is a family with Norwegian origins who moved first to Normandy and then came to England with the Norman Conquest.

The main line ended when Arley Hall passed to the Egerton-Warburtons in the 19th century. Arley Hall is now in the hands of Viscount and Viscountess Ashbrook and is open to the public. I have yet to determine if the Ashbrooks are descended from the Egerton-Warburtons.

A Warburton Surname DNA Project would determine if the premise of the book is true. It is inevitable that over the last 700 years non-paternal events such as adoptions or illegitimate births will mean many Warburtons no longer carry the Y-chromosome of Adam de Dutton. But if a significant proportion (circa 50%) of modern Warburtons show they have a good probability of sharing a common ancestor around 700 years ago, and no other strong clans of similar age emerge, then this would support the premise of the book.