

LETTER TO THE EDITOR REGARDING
'ORIGINS OF MATHIAS AND NICHOLAS SENSION DETERMINED'

Suzanne St. John

Dear Editor,

I am again writing in regard to the 2013 article in *The Register* by Jerome Lafayette Santken entitled "*Origins of Mathias and Nicholas Sension Determined.*"¹ I am continuing from my first letter from March 2014 by providing additional information to support the earlier letter and also to strengthen my position on the entire topic.

New Evidence for the Anglo-Norman Origins of Mathias Sension

The article² took the view that the European predecessors of Mathias Sension of Dorchester Massachusetts, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Norwalk Connecticut descended from a Dutch Santken family rather than an armigerous St. John family of England or Wales. The Dutch origin is not consistent with earlier accounts of St. John family history claiming Anglo-Norman heritage, but unambiguous evidence for either view has been difficult to find.

In this document, using newly discovered evidence for James Sension (Mathias and Nicholas' brother) of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, I shall develop a case for an Anglo-Norman origin. I will show James Sension had three surviving sons, Jeremiah, John and James. I will also show James Sension identified in the parish registers as having the occupation of 'chandler' was actually a 'baker'. Then I will show that his youngest son James grew up to be a goldsmith who had a daughter named Elizabeth. Finally, I will show the social status, citizenship and biological relationships between this family and the de Port-St. John family of Longthorpe; proving James, Mathias and Nicholas Sension were unambiguously from the armigerous St. John family of Glamorgan, Wales making it impossible for their father, Christopher, to be Christian Santken, a Dutch immigrant.

James Sension, Sr. of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey

1. JAMES ST. JOHN, SR., was baptized 30 Oct. 1608 St. Olave Silver Street Parish, London, England; son of Christopher St. John and his wife Joane ____.³ He married, Anne Wiggins,

¹ Jerome Lafayette Santken, *Origins of Mathias and Nicholas Sension Determined*, Volume 167 (Boston: NEHGS, April 2013), pgs. 85-95.

² Jerome Lafayette Santken, *Origins of Mathias and Nicholas Sension Determined*, Volume 167 (Boston: NEHGS, April 2013), pgs. 85-95.

³ London Metropolitan Archives, St Olave Silver Street, Composite register of baptisms 1562-1770, marriages 1562-1680, burials 1561-1770, P69/OLA3/A/001/MS06534.

on 4 Nov 1635 St. Margaret Moses, Little Friday Street Parish, London, England.⁴ In the parish registers of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, he was identified as having the occupation of chandler. Records also show his brother Mathias baptized children there and was also identified as a chandler.⁵ Chandler has been widely believed to mean the brothers were candle-makers or ship merchants. But, from the will of Isack Grosse of Boston, brewer, Mathias was called "Sentyon, the baker of Wethersfield."⁶ And two additional records identify, James St. John, baker as James Sension of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey. In the 1641 poll tax records, "James Saint John" is listed as an inhabitant of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey while having the occupation of brown-baker. In the Merchant Taylor School admission records, "John Saint John", second son of James, baker of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey is included. Using the parish registers of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, the records for James, John and their other siblings provide us baptism and burial details for this family confirming the sum of these records apply to members of this single family.

Children of James St. John and Anne Wiggins.

- i. JAMES ST. JOHN, bp. 31 Jul. 1636 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey; bur. 6 Aug. 1641 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.⁷
- ii. JEREMIAH ST. JOHN, bp. 21 Jan 1637 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey⁸; bur. in 1697 St. Martin in the Fields, Middlesex, England.
- iii. ANNE ST. JOHN, b. about 1638 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey; bur. 8 Dec 1639 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.⁹
- iv. MARY ST. JOHN, bp. 14 Mar. 1640 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey; bur. 28 Apr. 1647 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.¹⁰
- v. JOHN ST. JOHN, bp. 4 Mar. 1642 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey¹¹; adm. Merchant Taylor's School 1691¹²; bur. 1691 St. Martin in the Fields, Middlesex, England.¹³
- vi. MARTHA ST. JOHN, bp. 7 Jan. 1644 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey; bur. 1 May 1647 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.¹⁴

⁴ London Metropolitan Archives, St Margaret Moses, Register of marriages 1558 - 1665 and burials 1558 - 1812, 1558 - 1812, P69/MGT2/A/002/MS03480.

⁵ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

⁶ Abstracts of Early Wills, Volume 7 (Boston: NEHGS, 1853), pgs. 228-229.
<https://archive.org/details/newenglandhistor007wate>

⁷ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

⁸ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

⁹ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹⁰ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹¹ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹² A Register of the scholars admitted into Merchant Taylor's school: From A.D. 1562 to 1874, comp. from authentic sources and Ed. with biographical notices, volume 1, January 1, 1882 Farncombe and Company publisher.

¹³ "England, Middlesex, Westminster, Parish Registers, 1538-1912," index and images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:MM9.1.1/KCHB-D9N> : accessed 13 Oct 2013), John St John, 1691.

¹⁴ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

- vii. A CHRISON MAN CHILDE ST. JOHN, bp. 14 Dec. 1646 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey; bur. 14 Dec 1646 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.¹⁵
- viii. SAMUEL ST. JOHN, bp. 3 Feb. 1647 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.¹⁶
- ix. SARAH ST. JOHN, bp. 21 Mar 1649 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.¹⁷
- 2 x. JAMES ST. JOHN, bp. 4 Apr. 1652 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey¹⁸; bur. 30 Jul 1726 at St. Lawrence Pountney, London, England.¹⁹

James St. John, Jr. of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey

2. JAMES ST. JOHN, JR, was baptized 4 Apr 1652 St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, London, England. He married (1), Sarah Griffith, 13 Aug 1678 at All Hallows in the Wall, London.²⁰ *“13 Aug 1678 James St John, of Cheapside, London, Citizen & Goldsmith, Bachr, abt 29, & Sarah Griffith, of St Helen's, London, Spr, abt 24, at her own dispose, her parents dead; at All Hallows in the Wall, London.”*²¹ Sarah died probably between November 1680 and April 1685, because James then married (2) Alice Bayly on 19 Apr 1685 at Bridewell Chapel, London, England.²² In 1695, he was recorded in ‘The inhabitants Within the Walls’ and listed as *“James St. John, a goldsmith, assessed at 600 pounds, with wife Alice living in the parish of St. Mary Woolnoth”*.²³ James St. John, Jr was apprenticed as a goldsmith under John Vaughan, a master goldsmith with the company of Goldsmiths in London. The apprenticeship record informs us that he was the son of James St. John, baker and citizen through the Company of Bakers in London.

Date: 4 May 1667 for 8 years. New Apprentice: James St. John, to be a Goldsmith apprentice under John Vaughan, Master of Company of Goldsmiths. Father of Apprentice: James St. John, a baker in London, London. A citizen with the Company of Bakers.²⁴

He became a Freeman in 1667.²⁵ Beginning in 1677, James had become an eminent goldsmith who opened his own Goldsmith shop at the White Horse on Lombard Street in what

¹⁵ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹⁶ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹⁷ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹⁸ London Metropolitan Archives, St Nicholas Cole Abbey, Composite register: baptisms 1538/9 - 1650, marriages 1584 - 1650/1, burials 1538 - 1647, P69/NIC2/A/001/MS05685.

¹⁹ London Metropolitan Archives, St Lawrence Pountney, Composite register: baptisms 1538 - 1739, marriages 1538 - 1666, burials 1538 - 1739, P69/LAW2/A/001/MS07670.

²⁰ Ancestry.com. Kent, England, Extracted Parish Records [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2001. Original data: Electronic databases created from various publications of parish and probate records.

²¹ Kent: Canterbury - Marriage Licence allegations, Dean of Westminster, 1558-1699 and Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1660 to 1679 (Marriage); Ancestry.com. Kent, England, Extracted Parish Records [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2001. Original data: Electronic databases created from various publications of parish and probate records.

²² London Metropolitan Archives, Bridewell Chapel, Composite register, 1682 - 1693/4, CLC/275/MS08310, Item 001.

²³ 'Surnames beginning 'S'', London Inhabitants within the Walls 1695 (1966), pp. 256-285. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=1919> Date accessed: 01 November 2014.

²⁴ http://www.londonroll.org/event/?company=gsm&event_id=GSDM9442

²⁵ http://www.londonroll.org/event/?company=gsm&event_id=GSDM9442

was known as Goldsmith's Row, in Cheapside. In 1677 James St. John advertised for a gold medal weighing nearly 2 ounces inscribed, "Urbanus VIII Port. Max, etc."²⁶ His shop sign still exists today after it was adopted in 1888 as the logo for Lloyd's and Company bank in Birmingham, England.²⁷



Figure 1 The Black Horse Logo of James St. John, Goldsmith of London

In addition to becoming a Master Goldsmith, (1677²⁸, 1686²⁹, 1689³⁰) James St. John, became a banker and Receiver General³¹, a public officer in charge of the treasury, by 1689. He was also involved in the New Jersey colony of 1690. He was the church warden in 1699-1700 at St. Mary Woolnoth parish. The following record shows us that he had a business relationship with Francis [de Port] St. John, Esquire of Thorpe.

May 21, 1689. James St. John, goldsmith at the White Horse in Lombard Street, for co. Bucks (May 31). Proposal for his sureties, May 30. Warrant for taking his sureties, May 31. *Surety* : **Francis St. John, esq., of Thorpe, co. Northants. For co. Northampton**^{32, 33, 34}

²⁶ "Signs of Old London" by F.G. Hilton Price published in London Topographical Record, 1906. p. 33; <https://archive.org/stream/londontopographi04londuoft#page/n4/mode/1up>

²⁷ Charles Lloyd, from Wales, set up a banking business in Birmingham in 1677, which became the private bank of Taylors and Lloyds in 1765, changing its name to Lloyds and Company in 1853. It adopted a London goldsmith's sign of a black horse as its symbol in 1884; <http://www.thepotteries.org/art/h10.htm>

²⁸ http://www.londonroll.org/event/?company=gsm&event_id=GSDM6660

²⁹ http://www.londonroll.org/event/?company=gsm&event_id=GSDM7527

³⁰ http://www.londonroll.org/event/?company=gsm&event_id=GSDM7819

³¹ 'Entry Book: May 1689, 21-31', Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 9: 1689-1692 (1931), pp. 126-144. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=104775> Date accessed: 26 October 2014.; 'Entry Book: August 1689, 1-15', Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 9: 1689-1692 (1931), pp. 207-223. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=104780> Date accessed: 26 October 2014.; 'Entry Book: September 1689, 1-15', Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 9: 1689-1692 (1931), pp. 237-254. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=104782> Date accessed: 26 October 2014

³² 'Entry Book: May 1689, 21-31', Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 9: 1689-1692 (1931), pp. 126-144. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=104775> Date accessed: 26 October 2014.

³³ Reference Book VI, p. 93. 'Entry Book: August 1689, 1-15', Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 9: 1689-1692 (1931), pp. 207-223. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=104780> Date accessed: 26 October 2014.

³⁴ Reference Book VI, p. 93. 'Entry Book: August 1689, 1-15', Calendar of Treasury Books, Volume 9: 1689-1692 (1931), pp. 207-223. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=104780> Date accessed: 26 October 2014.

He was buried 30 Jul 1726 at St. Lawrence Pountney, London, England.³⁵

Children of James St. John and Sarah _____.

- i. JOHN ST. JOHN, bp. 14 Aug 1679, Saint Matthew Friday Street London, England “son of James St. John and Sarah”.³⁶
- 3 ii. ELIZABETH ST. JOHN, b. Nov 1681; bp. 9 Nov 1682, Saint Matthew Friday Street, London, England; B. 25 Aug 1783 Saint Matthew Friday Street, London, England “daughter of James St. John and Sarah”.³⁷ She was aged 10 in 1693 when she was recorded at St. Mary Woolnath, London, England.³⁸ She died 25 Aug 1783 and was buried 1 Sep 1783 at St. Mary Abchurch, London, England where she was identified as a stranger.³⁹

Children of James St. John and Alice Bayly.

- iii. JAMES ST. JOHN, bp. 7 Jul 1686, Saint Matthew Friday Street, London, England. “James Saint John” son of “James Saint John and Alice”.⁴⁰
- iv. SAMUEL ST. JOHN, b. 3 Sep. 1687; bp. 17 Sep 1687, Saint Mary Woolnath, London, England. “September 1687. The third day of this month was borne Samuell the son of Mr. James St. John and of Alice his wife. & baptized the 17th day following – (Goldsmith) – ”.⁴¹

Elizabeth St. John buried at St. Laurence Pountney

Spinster, Elizabeth St. John was the daughter of James St. John and Sarah Griffith. After her mother’s death, her father married Alice Bayly, April 19, 1685. Elizabeth lived into her 102nd year of life, dying August 25, 1783.⁴² Her will was dated February 17, 1777 and was proved in front of witnesses August 22, 1783 indicating she was formerly a resident of Chingford, Essex, England, and also late of Addle Street, London but was of Stoke Newington, Middlesex, England at the time of her writing the will.⁴³ Published obituaries say she lived near Paddington, on

³⁵ London Metropolitan Archives, St Lawrence Pountney, Composite register: baptisms 1538 - 1739, marriages 1538 - 1666, burials 1538 - 1739, P69/LAW2/A/001/MS07670.

³⁶ Ancestry.com. England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014. Original data: England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.

³⁷ Ancestry.com. England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014. Original data: England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.

³⁸ <http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~frpayments/MA1693/MA-ST.htm>

³⁹ Email correspondence: Fr Philip Warner <rector@stmagnusmartyr.org.uk.> Dear Mrs St John Thank you for your email. ‘Stranger’ in this context means not resident in the parish, so she might have died while on a visit to London. Yours sincerely Fr Philip Warner.

⁴⁰ Ancestry.com. England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

Original data: England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.

⁴¹ London Metropolitan Archives, St Mary Woolnath, Composite register: baptisms 1641 - 1693, marriages 1641 - 1715 and 1727 and burials 1641 - 1686, P69/MRY15/A/001/MS07635, Item 002.

⁴² The Gentleman’s Magazine, and Historical Chronicle, Volume 53, part 2

⁴³ The National Archives; Kew, England; Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers; Class: PROB 11; Piece: 1107.

Edgware Road when she died.⁴⁴ She was a single woman of considerable wealth and social standing and was named as one of the few survivors to a tontine, or an annuity shared by subscribers to a loan or common fund, the shares increasing as subscribers die until the last survivor enjoys the whole income, which was set in 1694. Individuals originally subscribed 100£. As nominees died, the remaining survivors benefited and their annual profits increased until it amounted to 1000£, each, which was to be paid annually to the surviving seven, for which she was included until her death. She was buried on September 1, 1783 at St. Mary Abchurch⁴⁵, as requested in her will, to be near her father, James St. John, Esquire in the burial ground of St Laurence Pountney. Because she was not a regular member of the church, living in its vicinity, the term stranger is found following her name in the parish's burial register. Since London's parishes were under authority by the government, one might assume stranger should always mean born overseas, but the records show she was born and baptized in London to a citizen of London; so clearly, stranger, in this context means not a member of the parish and evidence to confirm it is found in her will; confirmed by the parish.

St. Laurence Pountney was a parish church in the City of London. It stood in Candlewick Street, in Candlwick Ward until its destruction in the Great Fire of London in 1666. It was one of the first to perish and it was not one of the churches chosen for reconstruction. Following the fire, the parish was united to that of St. Mary Abchurch. The site of the church was retained as a graveyard, and is now a privately owned garden, as is the church's original graveyard, just to the south.⁴⁶

A table monument made of Portland stone was erected with an inscription for Elizabeth as follows: "In memory of Mrs. Elizabeth St. John, daughter of James St. John, Esq. citizen of London, who departed this life Aug. 25, 1783, in the 102d year of her age."⁴⁷ There was a very strongly built vault dug on purpose for her, and was probably set up by her worthy relation, cousin and dear friend,⁴⁸ Mrs. Frances [de Port] St. John, spinster daughter of Sir Frances [de Port] St. John, 1st Baronet of Longthorpe.⁴⁹ Elizabeth's father, James St. John, Esquire was buried there, without any memorial, July 30, 1726, having himself been an inhabitant of Laurence-Pountney lane.⁵⁰

Elizabeth named her '*cousin and dear friend*', Mrs. Frances [de Port] St. John, of Wimpole Street, spinster as her sole executrix.⁵¹ Mrs. [de Port] St. John of Wimpole Street cared for Elizabeth during her final days. In the will of Mrs. Frances [de Port] St. John, Spinster, she indicates she wished to be buried in her family vault at Thorpe.⁵² Frances was the daughter of Sir Francis de Port-St. John, 1st Baronet of Longthorpe in Northamptonshire and granddaughter

⁴⁴ The Gentleman's Magazine, and Historical Chronicle, Volume 53, Part 2

⁴⁵ London Metropolitan Archives, St Mary Abchurch, Composite register, 1737 - 1812, P69/MRY1/A/002/MS07667.

⁴⁶ Wikipedia contributors. "St Laurence Pountney." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 19 Sep. 2013. Web. 27 Oct. 2014.

⁴⁷ The Gentleman's Magazine, and Historical Chronicle, Volume 53, part 2

⁴⁸ The National Archives; Kew, England; Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers; Class: PROB 11; Piece: 1107.

⁴⁹ The Gentleman's Magazine, and Historical Chronicle, Volume 53, Part 2

⁵⁰ London Metropolitan Archives, St Lawrence Pountney, Composite register: baptisms 1538 - 1739, marriages 1538 - 1666, burials 1538 - 1739, P69/LAW2/A/001/MS07670.

⁵¹ The National Archives; Kew, England; Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers; Class: PROB 11; Piece: 1107.

⁵² The National Archives; Kew, England; Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers; Class: PROB 11; Piece: 1247.

to Sir Francis de Port-St. John, Esquire. The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle stated this of Elizabeth and Frances:

Elizabeth St. John, daughter of James St. John, Esq.; formerly an eminent goldsmith in Lombard Street, born Nov 1681. This lady (after having passed her latter days under the care of a very respectable and worthy relation, Mrs. St. John, of Wimple-Street [Wimpole], daughter to the late Sir Francis [de Port] St. John, Bart. and sister to the lady of the late Sir John Bernard, Bart.) died at Edgeware Row, Paddington, Aug 25, 1783, and was buried in the church yard of St. Lawrence Poutney, London: She was said upon her coffin plate to be in the 102d year of her age. There is a vault dug on purpose for her and very strongly bricked and probably her worthy relation Mrs. [de Port] St. John will set up some monument.

Sir Francis St. John, Esq.

Sir Francis [de Port] St. John, Esq. (will dated 29 Jul 1705⁵³) was an English lawyer and politician who sat in the House of Commons at various times between 1654 and 1698; he did banking business with Elizabeth's father James St. John, Esq. He was the eldest son of Oliver de Port-St. John and Joane Altham of Kaysoe, Bedfordshire, and Thorpe hall, Northamptonshire. He married Mary Wakering and Mary Forth⁵⁴ and had a son, Francis, bp. 6 Aug 1677 Saint John the Baptist, Peterborough, Northampton, England⁵⁵; d. 3 Sep 1756⁵⁶, who became the 1st Baronet of Longthorpe on September 10, 1715.⁵⁷

His sister Catherine married a distant cousin, Henry de Port-St. John of Lydiard Tregoze. His sister Johanna married a distant cousin, Walter de Port-St. John of Lydiard Tregoze. Walter and Henry were the sons of John de Port-St. John and Anne Leighton from Lydiard Tregoze. John de Port-St. John's sister, Eleanor married Sir William St. John, Knight of the St. John family of Uchel-olau (Highlight), Glamorgan, Wales; another distant cousin branch. These aforementioned relationships represented just a few of the possible cousin routes, through marriages and biological descent, that one might be able to link Elizabeth and Frances as cousins through both the de Port-St. John and St. John families. However, we know James Sension was the son of a Christopher St. John. The only known "cousin", Christopher St. John, living in this time period was from the St. John family of Highlight, Glamorgan, Wales. That Christopher was the son of Thomas St. John and Jane Mathew and grandson of Christopher St. John d. 1616 and Robert Mathew d. 1608. Evidence shows the sons of the elder Christopher relocated to London in the 16th and early 17th centuries as members of the English Royal Navy, The Virginia

⁵³ The National Archives; Kew, England; *Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers*; Class: *PROB 11*; Piece: 484.

⁵⁴ Ancestry.com. *England, Select Marriages, 1538–1973* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

Original data: *England, Marriages, 1538–1973*. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.

⁵⁵ Ancestry.com. *England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014. Original data: *England, Births and Christenings, 1538-1975*. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.

⁵⁶ The National Archives; Kew, England; *Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Related Probate Jurisdictions: Will Registers*; Class: *PROB 11*; Piece: 825.

⁵⁷ Wikipedia contributors. "St John baronets." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 21 Jul. 2014. Web. 28 Oct. 2014.

Company of London, The Plymouth Company of London, and as members, investors, and adventurers of the earliest West Indies, Africa, and North America colonization efforts carried out for England.

DNA

In 2012, my brother and I, FTDNA Kits 233862 and 228350 respectively, participated in the St. John DNA project by having his y-DNA and my autosomal DNA tested. My brother's y-DNA was a match to the core group of descendants who claim Mathias Sension as their ancestor. I, now as administrator of the DNA project as well as the administrator for the family website, have since confirmed the genealogical record for each of these test subjects verifying they come from this family. My autosomal DNA showed I, and others, had shared cousins with the descendants of Mathias Sension as well as the descendants of Oliver de Port-St. John and Margaret Beauchamp. Additionally, my results provided me a report detailing my ethnic origins. It returned a 98% European result broken down as 37% British Isles (England, Wales, and Ireland), 35% Scandinavia (Norway and Sweden), and 26% Southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece). However, when I compared my ethnic origins to the others in the project we only shared British Isles and Scandinavia between us all; meaning our shared St. John heritage could only come from the British Isles and Scandinavia. This finding supports the known history of the St. John and de Port-St. John families and does not coincide with the Dutch claim made by Santken.

Stranger

The premise behind Santken giving Mathias and Nicholas Sension a Dutch origin was based largely upon the term Stranger and records found for a Thomas Santken in the Dutch Congregational Church. Please, refer to my previous "letter to editor" submission regarding the misinterpretation of this term's use in the 17th Century and the subjective connection made between Thomas Santken and Christopher St. John. Since writing that submission, the following additional definition has been identified: The Law Dictionary: Defining and interpreting the terms of words of art, and explaining the rise, progress and present state of the English law states "Stranger," means born out of the realm, **or unknown**. The Law Dictionary recognizes a specific categorical difference between "merchant-strangers" (merchants from out of the realm or unknown) and "merchant-aliens" (merchants from overseas) recorded in law statutes: "Merchant-strangers may come into this realm, and depart at their pleasure; and they are to be friendly entertained. And merchant-aliens shall be used in this kingdom as denizens are in others."

Additional 17th Century Terminology

Gentleman Chief Justice Coke (1552-1634) defined “gentleman” as those who bear coat armour [armor]. According to the College of Arms, Coats of arms belong to specific individuals and families and there is no such thing as a coat of arms for a family name. From their origins in the twelfth century to the present day, arms have been borne by individuals, and by corporate bodies, as marks of identification.⁵⁸ For any person to have a right to a coat of arms they must either have had it granted to them or be descended in the legitimate male line from a person to whom arms were granted or confirmed in the past.⁵⁹

Esquire Esquire originally had a medieval meaning of “squire” and implied being an armiger, one who bears coat armour. In the United Kingdom, it was a title of respect accorded to men of higher social rank. While this word has a lot of ambiguity, in the 17th century a man was only called an Esquire if he ranked above a gentleman.

Final Conclusions

James Sension, Sr. of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey was identified as a “citizen”. From 1604 to the General Naturalization Act in 1709, English-born children of alien (born overseas) parents were made denizens not citizens; therefore, his father Christopher could not have been born overseas.⁶⁰ We can determine from James St. John, Jr.’s title as esquire in the 17th century that he was a man of a higher social standing, placed above that of a gentleman but ranked below a knight. As a man with higher than gentleman social standing, we can determine he either held coat armor himself or descended from one who had; making him armigerous. Lastly, from the will of Elizabeth St. John we can see this family was a cousin St. John branch to the armigerous de Port-St. John family of Longthorpe. Based on the findings presented here, I believe the ‘Dutch’ supposition must be rejected.

Christopher St. John of Saint Olave, Silver Street parish was probably born outside the city of London, but not necessarily, (likely in Glamorgan, Wales) as a direct descendant of the armigerous Anglo-Norman St. John family of Highlight, Glamorgan, Wales.

⁵⁸ <http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/>

⁵⁹ <http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/resources/faqs>

⁶⁰ <http://www.clohres.net/books/7/20.pdf>