

## INTRODUCTION

In "The Hoppers of Iveston, Part 1" the story was told of 6 siblings: Margaret, George, Johanna, Rachel, Benjamin and Joseph Hopper, who lived in Iveston in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

They and their parents, John and Elizabeth Hopper, were some of the earliest converts to Quakerism and part of an early Quaker meeting, for which records start as early as 1653 – the movement only started in ca 1648, some 5 years earlier.

Before their conversion to Quakerism, the records of the Hopper family are most likely to appear in those of the Church of England, specifically the Parish of Lanchester, within which Iveston is located. However, this was a turbulent period in English history as it falls in the period of the English Civil War and its aftermath: The Commonwealth and the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. During this period the responsibility for keeping records of births/baptisms, marriages and deaths/burials was taken from the Church of England and given to representatives of the Civil authorities, known, confusingly, as Registers. The survival of the records of these Registers is variable and in many cases nothing currently exists. Typically, parish records resume after the restoration of the monarchy in the form of Charles II.

There are some surviving records for Lanchester Parish from 1560 but a significant gap from 1603 to October 1653 – See Annex 3. Thus, other records are used in association with surviving parish registers to trace the Hopper family further back in time.

## JOHN AND MARGARET HOPPER

On 19 May 1655 John Hopper of West Rawe<sup>1</sup>, Parish of Lanchester, yeoman and Margaret, his wife, passed the following property in Iveston to Thomas Hutchinson of Billingside, Yeoman<sup>2</sup>:

- Messuage or tenement in Iveston, County Durham
- 16½ acres of land meadow and pasture with gates or pasture for 5 beasts.

The property was sold for £72 and the agreement included a clause to the effect that John and Margaret would not have to travel further than Durham to complete the sale!

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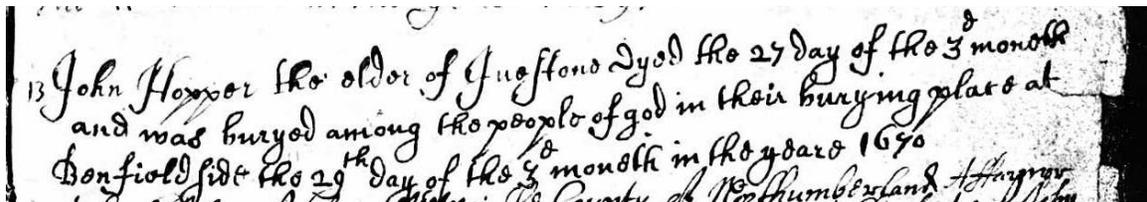
<sup>1</sup> This could refer to a specific property or just to the West Row of houses in North East dialect.

<sup>2</sup> Durham Record Office D/Co 31/21(5)

On the 20 August 1655 the deal was concluded as the “livery of seisin” was performed in front of witnesses. This was a legal process involving the handing over of a handful of earth from the land in question or other token from the seller to the buyer.

Ann of West Row, daughter of John Hopper was baptised at All Saints, Lanchester on the 26 June 1657<sup>3</sup>.

John Hopper the older of Iveston died on the 27 May 1670 and was buried on the 29 at the Friends burial ground at Benfieldside<sup>4</sup>.



John is here described as “the older” – reinforcing the view that the two Johns were father and son. It also indicates that John senior was also a Quaker by this time.

The Benfieldside Monthly Meeting records 1653-1820<sup>5</sup> include details of a small number of sufferings and two (shown below) mention John Hopper – the first from 1655 and the second from 1658. Unfortunately, it is not clear *which* John Hopper is meant in either case.

*John Hopper and others were [ ] to [ ] Bench Westminster because they could not pay tithes to James Cholmley of Durham, tutor, for John Hodgshon's children. They appeared in person at the said upper bench in the year 1655.*

This appears to relate to a case in the Court of Exchequer in 1659<sup>6</sup> which involved Nicholas Byerley, John Bradshaw, John Hopper, Robert Newton, Thomas Raw, and others v. Thomas Wray, James Cholmley, Elinor Hodshon, and others, infants, by Ralph Hedworth, their tutor and guardian.: Deanery and vicarage of Lanchester (parcel of late Dean and Chapter of Durham), and lands in Muggleswick. Tithes.: Durham.

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<sup>3</sup> Record Number: 255336.0 [www.durhamrecordsonline.com](http://www.durhamrecordsonline.com) 9/3/2018

<sup>4</sup> Piece 1252: Monthly Meeting of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Benfieldside (1653-1820), England & Wales, Quaker Birth, Marriage, and Death Registers, 1578-1837 [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). 20/3/2018

<sup>5</sup> Piece 1252: Monthly Meeting of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Benfieldside (1653-1820) England & Wales, Quaker Birth, Marriage, and Death Registers, 1578-1837. [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). 20/3/2018

<sup>6</sup> TNA. E 134/1659/East15

In his response to the interrogatories (questions) John Hopper said that he was of Lanchester, a yeoman and 48 years of age. This would mean that he was born ca. 1611 – during the gap in the parish registers – and so was John Hopper “the Older”. This suggests that he is probably the father of John the Younger.

John Hopper and others were committed to the Durham Quarter Sessions for refusing to pay anything to the steeplehouse (church) for 1655.

Note: Tithes were a form of tax payable to the local clergyman. Quakers refused to pay this tax on principle along with any other payments to the Anglican Church or its representatives. As such payments to the Established church were a legal requirement this frequently ended up with the Quakers in court and the removal of goods as recorded in the Book of Sufferings (see Annex 1).

John was also involved in a case in the Court of Chancery in 1658<sup>7</sup>. In this case he was the defendant against Richard and Elizabeth Craggs and the case concerned some property (ca. 8 square yards) in Iveston.

John was clearly a man willing to stand up and fight for what he believed!

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<sup>7</sup> TNA. C 5/403/84

## LANCELOT HOPPER

In a bargain and sale agreement of 2 March 1651/52<sup>8</sup> the real estate below was transferred by Lancelot Hopper of Iveston, Yeoman, to John Hopper of Newbiggin<sup>9</sup>, Durham, Taylor.

- Messuage or tenement in Iveston, Co. Durham
- 16½ acres of land meadow and pasture with gates or pasture for 5 beasts.

This is the same property later sold by John and Margaret Hopper to Thomas Hutchinson.

No money appears to be involved in this transaction which was “in consideration of the natural love and affection which he (Lancelot) beareth unto the said John Hopper”

In return John Hoper undertakes “from time to time during the natural life of the said Lancelot Hopper to provide for him and allow him all necessary comfort, house room, lodging, meat, drink, clothing, walking clothes, necessary food as he shall stand in need of at the charge of John Hopper”.

This definitely reads as if it is a father passing on property to his son in return for looking after him in his old age! So in the absence of other information it appears that Lancelot was the father of John senior.

Lancelot Hopper, son of Christopher Hopper, was baptised at All Saints, Lanchester on the 25 October 1585<sup>10</sup> and Lancelot Hopper of Iveston was buried at the same church on the 10 April 1654<sup>11</sup>. Lancelot would have been ca. 69 years old when he died.

Lancelot’s marriage and the baptisms of his children will have happened during the 1603-1653 period for which Lanchester parish registers no longer survive. Thus, this bargain and sale agreement may be the only surviving clue that he was the father of John Hopper.

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<sup>8</sup> Durham Record Office D/Co 31/21(4)

<sup>9</sup> Newbiggin is a farm/group of cottages to the west of Lanchester village

<sup>10</sup> Record Number: 289786.0 [www.durhamrecordsonline](http://www.durhamrecordsonline). 19/3/2018

<sup>11</sup> National Burial Index. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition and [www.durhamrecordsonline](http://www.durhamrecordsonline). Record Number: 225944.2 9/3/2018

## CHRISTOPHER HOPPER

A grant<sup>12</sup> and a bargain and sale<sup>13</sup> from 9 April 1612 passes the message or tenement in Iveston, Co. Durham and the 16½ acres of land meadow and pasture with gates or pasture for 5 beasts from Christopher Hopper of Iveston, tanner, to his son, Lancelot Hopper. The language used is very similar to that used for the transfer of the same property from Lancelot to John.

Christopher Hopper married Margaret Taylor at All Saints, Lanchester on the 17 September 1581<sup>14</sup>. This date coincides well with the birth of their first child in 1582.

Christopher had the following children baptised at All Saints, Lanchester<sup>15</sup>:

- John Hopper            8 July 1582
- Jane Hopper            2 August 1584
- Lancelot Hopper       28 October 1585
- Christopher Hopper   20 May 1589
- Cuthbert Hopper      8 April 1592
- William Hopper       8 April 1592

An unnamed daughter of Christopher Hopper was buried in Lanchester on the 10 March 1586/7.

There was also a marriage of Christopher Hopper to Allison Me..rre (unreadable) in Lanchester on the 15 May 1589. This could represent a second marriage for Christopher – making Allison the mother of Cuthbert and William – or the marriage of Christopher, son of Robert Hopper, baptised in Lanchester on the 25 February 1573<sup>16</sup>. However, there is no burial for Margaret in ca. 1589, therefore it is likely that the second theory is correct.

The burial of Christopher Hopper in Lanchester on the 10 August 1597 may be for this Christopher – others noted are too early – although it is possible he left the area or was buried during the 1603-1653 gap in the records. No will has been identified.

Christopher was probably baptised before the start of the Lanchester parish registers in 1560.

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<sup>12</sup> Durham Record Office D/Co 31/21(2)

<sup>13</sup> Durham Record Office D/Co 31/21(3)

<sup>14</sup> Record Number: 187867.1 [www.durhamrecordsonline.com](http://www.durhamrecordsonline.com) 9/3/2018

<sup>15</sup> [www.durhamrecordsonline.com](http://www.durhamrecordsonline.com) 9/3/2018

<sup>16</sup> Record Number: 261511.0 [www.durhamrecordsonline.com](http://www.durhamrecordsonline.com) 9/3/2018

## PICTURES OF IVESTON

The following (and the cover photo) are some pictures of Iveston and the fields around the village to give a flavour of where the Hopper family lived and worked.







## CONCLUSIONS

The Hopper family lived in Iveston for over 200 years, at times holding and farming significant amounts of land, as shown by the land transfers between members of the family. These have been used to show likely family relationships in the absence of existing parish registers or other documents.

Many of the Hoppers were some of the earliest converts to the Society of Friends – they were already Quakers within 10 years to the founding of the movement. Since George Fox is known to have visited the region it is likely that they met him and may have even been amongst his personal converts.

Unfortunately, of the 5 children of John and Elizabeth Hopper who stayed in England, only George appears to have had children. Of these, the boys at least, moved away from Iveston – perhaps contributing to the decline of the Quaker community in the area.

Benjamin Hopper appears to have been the adventurous member of the family, travelling to Pennsylvania in America in its early days. However, this rebellious nature then got him into trouble with the local Quakers and he was condemned for making an unsuitable marriage. He had at least two sons but then died young, according to the will of his sister, Rachel.

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