

This will is dated 14th March 1567/8, 5 years before his burial. Although Anselm makes provision for the unborn child Alice is carrying, there is no baptism record for a BROWNING baby for the year of the will-making; his wife either miscarried or the child was stillborn. There is a final baptism record for the BROWNINGs as their last child, Joan, is baptised in 1572. I cannot find a burial entry for Anselm, who died sometime after the christening that year. This appears to leave Alice in charge of the farm with nine children ranging from 21 to new-born. The two eldest sons are now young men, capable of helping her run the farm. The fourth son, Thomas, is only 9; he will eventually take a leasehold of a farm in the neighbouring parish of Brookthorpe, where he would establish himself as a well-to-do yeoman and live to be a nonagenarian.

There was always a boy christened Anselm for the next five or so generations.

If readers are interested to read the original will, it can be accessed at Gloucestershire Archives 1572/1 Standish.

Rugby Pedigrees: A Study Based on Birth, Marriage and the Love of the Game

By Martin and Teresa Davies

One of the projects at the Gloucestershire Archives, the Gloucester Rugby Heritage project, researches the history of the Gloucester Rugby Club from its formation in 1873. Initially the research was based on 31 boxes of old documents and photographs discovered beneath the main stand during the redevelopment of Kingsholm Stadium, but it now encompasses all available sources. The project has been running since 2007 as a partnership between Gloucester Rugby, the Gloucestershire Archives and the Friends of Gloucestershire Archives. The project is on-going with a considerable amount of research still to be conducted. One of the newer research strands initiated has been to look at the relationships between the players based on birth and marriage.

The phrase 'rugby family' has often been used when referring to the Gloucester Rugby Club to describe a unity and camaraderie amongst the players and the club over the past 150 years, but it now appears to include an element nearer to the real meaning of the word 'family'. It has always been fairly straightforward based on birth to find brothers and fathers, sons and grandsons who have played for

the Club simply by searching for information based on the players' surnames. Many of these relationships have been previously highlighted, particularly in the obituaries published in the *Citizen* and *Gloucester Journal*. But recently a systematic study began which has extended the simple 'rugby pedigrees' to include non-playing family members, especially female relatives, which has enabled a wider view to be taken which now encompasses a marriage element; this has led to the pedigrees expanding in an almost exponential fashion. The latter has been particularly aided by the online Gloucestershire BMD Indexes which provides the mother's maiden name on the birth facility, thus enabling continuity to be maintained through the female line. The results are not surprising as sisters and daughters of Gloucester rugby players married other Gloucester rugby players possibly because brothers and fathers were supported on the rugby field by sisters and daughters amongst the spectators.

Relationships based solely on births have frequently been reported in the local newspapers, primarily the *Citizen* since the founding of the Gloucester Rugby Club, but this was hardly ever extended beyond father-son and brothers' relationships; occasionally in-laws were highlighted and are known simply because of their rarity. However, whereas by focusing on the females within a pedigree can potentially extend the pedigree, it has the downside of resulting in a lot of 'unproductive' work scouting for matches to names that occur on the players directory which has been compiled by the Rugby Heritage Project dating from 1873 until the present day and containing almost 2,000 players.

The basic approach, with the usual issues associated with dates and the misspelling of names, will be familiar to all genealogists with the fundamental family information derived through *Ancestry* and *FindMyPast* and the rugby career information derived from sources developed by the Rugby Heritage Project. The rugby player information is also beset with the further problem associated with the use of nicknames which is favoured by sporting institutions and which confuses many researchers – for example, Bernard Arthur Fredrick Roach was only known at the Club as Peter Roach! However, this approach becomes problematical when trying to establish a link between the genealogical data and the rugby data where a piece of linking information (*killer* information) must be found otherwise, for this exercise, all the data is rendered useless. The *killer*

information can be found in two main sources. The first source is the local newspapers available through the Gloucestershire Archives and also partially available through *FindMyPast*. Of particular usefulness are obituaries and wedding reports which often contain not only biographies of the main person which references his career at the Gloucester Rugby Club, but also lists those in attendance – especially if they were his rugby team mates; other events including accidents and trouble with the police are also a good source of information. The second major source is relatives who have been alerted to the current exercise either through the Rugby Heritage Project website or by the pedigrees which have been created within *Ancestry*.

The pedigrees, both the simple ones (based only on birth) and the more complex ones (based on both birth and marriage) as they become available, are published on the Rugby Heritage website:

www.gloucesterrugbyheritage.org.uk/content/category/people/families-in-gloucester-rugby

The pedigrees based on births and marriages are referred to as 'Extended Families', the largest of which published to date consists of 12 discrete families with 29 Gloucester rugby players. The surnames within this Extended Family will be familiar to those interested in the history of the Gloucester Rugby Club – HALFORD, BAGWELL, MANLEY, DIX (father, son and two grandsons), MACE, GEORGE (three brothers), PEGLER, KEYS (two brothers), STEPHENS (three brothers, two sons, one grandson and two nephews), HAMBLIN (two brothers) and GODDARD (two brothers and two cousins); between them they made 2,945 appearances for the Gloucester First XV. The pedigree spans multiple generations beginning in 1859 through to players who are still alive, with rugby playing careers spanning almost 100 years from 1883 to 1977. Some of the players are contemporary with each other and often played in the same teams, but other players within the pedigree would not have been aware of their 'rugby heritage/relations'. The pedigree began with Tommy BAGWELL (1859–1943) who made 247 appearances for the Gloucester First XV between 1883 and 1895, but continued his association with the Club variously as a committee man, a coach, a baggage man and a groundsman. Although three players in the pedigree are still alive, the rugby ended in 1977 with the last of John DIX's 217 games.

The major issue with pedigrees which marry together disparate sources of information is that the finding of the required *killer* linking information can be a totally random event with the availability of searchable online resources. The 19 pedigrees already published together, with those currently being researched, therefore have a *Sword of Damocles* hanging over them in that *killer* information could unexpectedly be discovered which could extend the pedigreed or even link several of the published pedigrees together. This was aptly demonstrated recently in an in-progress pedigree which linked three rugby players when it was sent to a known relative for perusal; he suggested on the basis of family 'knowledge' that there could be a link to a fourth player. This proved to be the case and ultimately led through the female line to the expansion of the pedigree which now links eleven rugby players; this will shortly be published.

In order to reduce the randomness of the information, we would be keen to hear from relatives of rugby players who know of other players within their family, either by leaving a comment on the Rugby Heritage Project website or by contacting the authors directly on martin191418@hotmail.co.uk.



Gloucester Rugby Club (1900–1901 season)