

Who Was Isabell Baylie?

The Correct Identity of the Mother of Judith (Gater) Perkins, Wife of John¹ Perkins of Boston and Ipswich, Massachusetts

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John¹ Perkins of Hillmorton, Warwickshire arrived in New England on the ship *Lyon* in 1631 with his wife Judith (Gater) Perkins and five young children.^[1] He and his wife were admitted members of the Boston Church in early 1631, before eventually settling in Ipswich.^[2] Judith Gater was baptized in Hillmorton 19 March 1588/9, daughter of Michael Gater;^[3] Michael had married “Isabell Baylie” there 13 November 1576.^[4] The general assumption since these details were first published has been that “Baylie” was Isabel’s birth name, but newly discovered evidence shows her correct identity and parentage.

Mrs. Isabel Gater and the Bailey Family

Isabel, the wife of Michael Gater, has long been assumed to have been a Bailey from birth.^[5] However, newly found records indicate that Isabel’s birth name was *Smythe*, not *Bailey*. Before her marriage to Michael Gater in 1576, “William Baylye and Isabell Smithe” were married 9 May 1572 in Hillmorton; and the Hillmorton registers record in 1574 that “William Baylye was buried ye 20 of June.”^[6]

¹ Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620–1633*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1995) [hereafter *Great Migration Begins*], 2:1431–1433; Walter Goodwin Davis, *The Ancestry of Dudley Wildes, 1759–1820 of Topsfield, Massachusetts* (Portland, Me., 1959) [hereafter *Dudley Wildes*], 81–90.

² *Great Migration Begins*, 2:1431: “John Perkins and Judith his wife” were members #107 and #108.

³ Registers of St. John, Hillmorton, Warwickshire (images on FindMyPast.co.uk) [hereafter *Hillmorton PRs*]: Judeth gater daughter of michael gater.

⁴ *Hillmorton PRs*: Michael Gater and Isabell Baylie. Judith’s baptism and the marriage of her parents were first published in *Dudley Wildes*, 87.

⁵ The spellings of both first names and surnames varied widely in original records. In this article, the standardized spellings of *Isabel*, *Michael*, *Bailey*, *Perkins*, etc. will be used except in direct quotations. Because the pronunciation of Isabel’s birth surname is unclear, it is standardized as “Smythe” rather than “Smith” (the most common forms of the name in these records being “Smythe” and “Smithe”).

⁶ *Hillmorton PRs*. He died intestate, apparently the day before his burial. On the cover sheet for his inventory there are three dates, “1574 June 19,” “[1574] Dec 8,” and “1574/5 March 21,” followed by the name of the deceased (“William Bailie Hillmorton”), then “Inventory made 7 March 1574/5” (Consistory Court of Lichfield, original wills, admsn., and inventories, B 1573–1578; FSL DGS 7620637 image 135). On the actual inventory (image 136), that last date is given as the actual inventory date. The most likely interpretation of the first three dates given are that 19 June

That the widow Isabel (Smythe) Bailey was the woman of that name who married Michael Gater two years later can be seen from records generated by the Bailey family, in particular a lawsuit brought against Michael Gater by the sister and brother-in-law of William Bailey. On 16 June 1594, Richard Beridge of Kibworth Harcourt, Leicestershire and his wife Elizabeth brought suit against Michael Gater of Hillmorton, Warwickshire, to which Gater replied on 15 October 1594.^[7]

The Beridges claimed the following: (1) by the will of Richard Bailey of Hillmorton, yeoman, his daughter Elizabeth Bailey^[8] was to receive £12 when 21 or married, and Richard's eldest son William Bailey was to enter bond to make that payment when due; (2) after Richard's death and by the terms of his will, William Bailey entered bond of £20 to make that payment of £12 to Elizabeth; (3) Elizabeth then married Richard Beridge,^[9] at which point the payment became due; (4) William Bailey had died, at which point his widow, as administratrix of his estate, became accountable for payment of the £12; (5) William Bailey's widow then married Michael Gater of Hillmorton, yeoman, who thus became accountable for that payment.

In Michael Gater's answer to the complaint, he acknowledged several of the points advanced by the Beridges, namely that William Bailey, son of Richard Bailey, had in fact entered bond of £20 to make the £12 payment to Elizabeth Bailey when 21 or married; that William had died before making that payment; and that William's widow Isabel then married the defendant Michael Gater. However, he disagreed that any of this was due to the terms of Richard Bailey's will, as William Bailey had predeceased his father and had thus entered the bond for payment to his sister Elizabeth before his father's death.^[10] He further stated that William Bailey had in fact entered into bonds for payments to all of his siblings when they turned 21 (with the note that William's father Richard Bailey had had seven sons and five daughters), and that he (Michael Gater) had since made most of those payments himself to his own loss, as the amount he had already paid was greater than the money he had received in marriage to Isabel.

The Smythe Family

It is clear that the wife of Michael Gater was Isabel (Smith) Bailey, but who were her parents? She would have been born too early for her baptism to appear in the extant Hillmorton registers, but fortunately evidence for her parentage survives in the will of John Smythe of Hillmorton, dated 10 December 23 Elizabeth (1580) and proved 15 February 1580/1:

1574 was the death date (one day before the burial); 8 Dec. 1574 was when the inventory was ordered; and 21 March 1574/5 was when the inventory was received by the probate court.

⁷ The National Archives (UK) C 2/Eliz/B25/38, Beridge v. Gater.

⁸ The baptism of "Elizabeth Baylye daughter of Richard Bayly" was recorded 16 Oct. 1569 in Hillmorton (*Hillmorton PRs*).

⁹ The marriage of "Rychard Beridg & Elizabeth Bayly" was recorded 23 Oct. 1592 in Kibworth Beauchamp, Leicestershire (Registers of Kibworth Beauchamp, Leicestershire, 1574–1725; FSL DGS 102278660 image 16).

¹⁰ "Richard Bayly" was bur. 28 Feb. 1577/8 in Hillmorton (*Hillmorton PRs*), more than 3 years after his son William's death. His will, if it existed, has not yet been found extant.

“John Smythe of Hilmerton in the Countie of Warr[wick] beinge verie sicke in bodye”; to **son Thomas** lease in Newenham, 3 horses, 40 sheep, cart, and plow, he to pay to 3 of my children £60 total (£20 to **son John** when 24 and £20 each to **daughters Susanne and Agnes** over the next two years); son Thomas also to observe a pair of indentures made between me and Goerge Ferrers, gent., and Mary his wife; to **son William** my land in Palmiston and to the heirs of his body, failing which to my **son Nicholas** and the heirs of his body, failing which to my **son Luke** and the heirs of his body, failing which to my right heirs; to **son Francis** my messuage in Dayntrie [Davenport] and to the heirs of his body, failing which to son Luke and the heirs of his body, failing which to my right heirs; to daughters Susan and Agnes third of my brass, pewter, and sheets, a coffer, and two 3-year-old heifers; to son John Smythe 2 bullocks; inventory and appraisal to be made of my livestock, crops, and household stuff (except that given to daughters Suzanne and Agnes), that to be given to **Agnes my wife** and the **5 children we have between us (William, Francis, Nicholas, Luke, and Judith)** equally divided, when 18; to wife Agnes lease of the farm where I now dwell (from Mr. Astley), she to educate and bring up my children, with all of its appurtenances except certain closes and meadow grounds (the Netherstrettons, the Overstrettons, the Hill Close, and a piece of meadow ground called Oxlesue[?], which are to go to my **son Richard**, he to be executor); to children William, Francis, Nicholas, Luke, and Judith 50 sheep (10 each); to my man Thomas a hosecloth from Agnes my wife; wife Agnes to pay the wages or money due to Edward Brakely and the rest of my servants; son Richard to pay to my son John Smythe and daughters Suzanne and Agnes £40 equally divided; to **Michael Gater** a cow; to my **daughter Elizabeth** a year-old heifer; to **Richard Baylie** 2 sheep; to **John Gater** one sheep; to William Greene £3-6-8 for the use of Sybil Jones (John Bucknoll not to trouble William); to **brothers Clement and Edmund** all my apparel equally divided; to the cottagers of Hillmorton 40s; to maintain their common “if the same doe come to triall of lawe”; to Thomas Russell lease for 7 years, paying 20s. yearly; to brother Edmond’s children 4 sheep among them; to Robert Dalton one sheep; to son Richard (executor) all my lands and tenements in Hillmorton; to brother Edmund lease of the messuage he now dwells in for 10 years, paying his usual rent; residue to son Richard, he to be executor; overseers William Greene, Rowland Griffin, Thomas Smithe, William Eyles, and Michael Gater; witnesses Thomas Smythe, Rowlande Griffyn, William Eyles, Edmonde Smythe, and John Eyeles.^[11]

The terms of this will indicate that the testator John Smythe was married at least twice, most recently to Agnes; he and Agnes had five children together (William, Francis, Nicholas, Luke, and Judith); by a previous marriage or marriages John had children Thomas (named an overseer), John (not yet 24), Susan, Agnes, Elizabeth, and Richard (named executor); and John had at least two brothers who survived him (Clement and Edmund, the latter of whom had children). The bequest to and position of John’s daughter Elizabeth seem to indicate that she was actually his daughter Isabel (the names *Isabel* and *Elizabeth* were often interchangeable). Her smaller bequest would seem to indicate that she had already received her main portion (probably at her marriage), and her position in the list of bequests makes perfect sense if she was Isabel (Smythe) (Bailey) Gater—after all of the other children were listed,

¹¹ Prerogative Court of Canterbury 7 Darcy (PROB 11/63 folios 53–54).

the next legatee was Michael Gater, followed by Elizabeth, then Richard Bailey (Isabel's son by her first marriage), and then John Gater (Isabel's son by her second marriage).

Genealogical Summary

The known ancestry of this family begins with John Smythe of Hillmorton, Warwickshire, the testator of 1580. Though his parentage is not yet known, his will indicates that he had at least two brothers who survived him, Clement Smythe and Edmund Smythe.

1. **JOHN SMYTHE**, born say 1520; buried Hillmorton 24 December 1580;^[12] married first _____. He married secondly in Hillmorton 30 April 1565 **AGNES JONES**.^[13]

Children of John Smythe by his first wife or wives (order uncertain):

- i. **THOMAS SMYTHE**. Thomas was an overseer of and witness to his father's will; he was also a legatee in and witness to his brother Richard's will.^[14]
- 2 ii. **ISABEL/ELIZABETH SMYTHE**, b. say 1552; bur. 26 Oct. 1617; m. (1) **WILLIAM BAILEY**; m. (2) **MICHAEL GATER**.
- iii. **RICHARD SMYTHE**, d. between 16 and 27 Feb. 1584/5;^[15] m. **ALICE** _____.

Richard was the executor of his father's will. His own will, dictated on his deathbed and written down by Michael Gater, was dated 16 Feb. 1584/5 and proved 31 March 1585, with an inventory taken 27 Feb. 27 Elizabeth (1584/5):

“recharde smethe of Billte[n] in the countie of warr[wick] yoman seke of Boddy”; **wife Alice**; **son John** (one of my executors), **daughter Agnes**, and **daughter Goodith** (all when 21); wife Alice to “p[er]fform and keep all soche artekilles covenantes and agreymentes as are Betwext my fater Thomas [*sic*] Smeythe and me as are comprised – a pare of Indentors betwixt us”; **brother Thomas Smeythe** [*portion concealed by crease*]; houses in Hillmorton “wheir Allce Smethe widow now dwelleth”; to wife “all my entreste and tytell that I have in...The ovar strettons neytha[r] strettons and they hill close wth hallffe the pece of medo that I have in Kellmars callyd the oxle lessos”;

¹² *Hillmorton PRs*: John Smithe.

¹³ *Hillmorton PRs*: John Smithe and Agnes Jones. The bequest in John Smythe's will of money to the use of Sybil Jones suggests a connection of some sort.

¹⁴ There were two different wills of Thomas Smythes of Hillmorton, either (or neither) of which might have belonged to this man. The first is dated 19 May 17 Elizabeth (1575) and proved 27 Sept. 1586 (Consistory Court of Lichfield, original wills, S 1585–1589; images on FindMyPast.co.uk); he named wife Alice Smythe, son John Smythe, second son Thomas Smythe (when 21), daughters Susanna, Elizabeth, and Alice Smythe (all when married); witnesses were Robart Wigston vicar, Thomas Smyth, John Smyth, Edmond Smyth, and Richard Smyth. The second will of a Thomas Smythe of Hillmorton is dated 28 March and proved 28 Aug. 1590 (Consistory Court of Lichfield, original wills, S 1590–1593; images on FindMyPast.co.uk): he named wife Alice, sons William, Elias, and Edward (his son Edward), daughters Frances and Elizabeth (her daughter Alice), and Thomas Smythe and Margaret his sister; witnesses were Willm Smyth, Edward Smyth, Elyes Sturman[?], Elyzabeth Weles, and Elyeus Smyth.

¹⁵ From the dates of his will and inventory (see below).

wife to pay all legacies due to my brothers and sisters “geyvin unto them by **my father John Smeythe** hys laste well & testayment”; “**my unckell Edmond Smeythe**” to enjoy the house where he now dwells for the term of 16 years, paying to my brother Thomas Smeythe 12s. yearly; Thomas Clarke and his wife Margary to enjoy the house with yardland where they now dwell for their lives, paying my wife Alice 20s. for it yearly; to **sister “sheusans proctur”** a coffer; residue to brother Thomas Smeythe for payment of debts; witnesses meghill gatur [*Michael Gater*], thomas smethe, wyllyam Gylles, Edmond smethe, Edmund Emmones[?] Clarke, and Jhon Fauxe.^[16]

- iv. JOHN SMYTHE, b. after 1556 (not yet 24 when his father’s will was written).
- v. SUSAN SMYTHE, bur. Hillmorton 5 Oct. 1586;^[17] m. before 16 Feb. 1584/5 _____ PROCTOR. Susan was named in her father’s will; she was called “Sheusan Proctur” in her brother Richard’s will.
- vi. AGNES SMYTHE, named in her father’s will.

Children of John and Agnes (Jones) Smythe (bp. Hillmorton):

- vii. WILLIAM SMYTHE, bp. 2 Feb. 1567/8;^[18] named in his father’s will.
- viii. FRANCIS SMYTHE, b. say 1570; named in his father’s will.
- ix. NICHOLAS SMYTHE, bp. 20 Dec. 1572;^[19] named in his father’s will.
- x. GOODITH SMYTHE, bp. 11 Jan. 1574/5;^[20] not named in her father’s will.
- xi. JUDITH SMYTHE, bp. 4 Sept. 1575;^[21] named in her father’s will.
- xii. LUKE SMYTHE, bp. 16 March 1577/8;^[22] named in his father’s will.
- xiii. (prob.) MICHAEL SMYTHE, bp. 15 May 1581;^[23] bur. Hillmorton 10 Sept. 1581.^[24]

2. **ISABEL SMYTHE** (*John*), born say 1552; buried Hillmorton 26 October 1617;^[25] married there first 9 May 1572 **WILLIAM BAILEY** (buried there 20 June 1574). Isabel married there second 13 November 1576 **MICHAEL GATER**.

Isabel was probably the daughter “Elizabeth” named in her father’s will, in between Michael Gater and her two oldest sons.

¹⁶ Consistory Court of Lichfield, original wills, S 1581–1585, no. 4 (images on FindMyPast.co.uk). Making up the probate packet were the will, inventory, and two depositions as to the writing of the will, one by Thomas “Smithe” of Hillmorton that he witnessed the testator dictating the will to Michael Gater, and Gater reading back to the testator what he had written for his confirmation; and the other by Michael Gater testifying that he had done so at the request of the testator.

¹⁷ *Hillmorton PRs*: Susanna Porter Prockter.

¹⁸ *Hillmorton PRs*: Willia[m] Smithe sonne of John Smithe.

¹⁹ *Hillmorton PRs*: Nicholas Smith sonne of John Smythe.

²⁰ *Hillmorton PRs*: [*first letter lost in margin; could be “G”*]oodeth Smithe daughter of John Smith.

²¹ *Hillmorton PRs*: Judeth Smithe daughter of John Smith.

²² *Hillmorton PRs*: Lucke Smithe sonne of John Smithe.

²³ *Hillmorton PRs*: [*lost in margin*]chaell Smithe sonne of John Smithe. Assuming Michael’s father was the John Smythe in question, Michael was likely John’s posthumous son, as he was baptized less than 5 months after his father’s death.

²⁴ *Hillmorton PRs*: Michaell Smith.

²⁵ *Hillmorton PRs*: Isabell Gater.

Child of William and Isabel (Smythe) Bailey:

- i. RICHARD BAILEY, bp. Hillmorton 6 Nov. 1573;^[26] named in John Smythe's 1580 will.

Children of Michael and Isabel (Smythe) (Bailey) Gater (bp. and bur. Hillmorton):

- ii. ALICE GATER, bp. 6 Feb. 1576/7;^[27] bur. 23 March 1576/7.^[28]
- iii. ELIZABETH GATER, bp. 19 March 1577/8;^[29] bur. 9 July 1578.^[30]
- iv. JOHN GATER, bp. 20 April 1579;^[31] named in John Smythe's 1580 will.
- v. AGNES GATER, bp. 1 Jan. 1580/1.^[32]
- vi. MICHAEL GATER, bp. 16 July 1583.^[33]
- vii. FRANCIS GATER, bp. 15 Aug. 1585.^[34]
- viii. MARGARET GATER, bp. 11 March 1586/7;^[35] bur. 30 June 1606.^[36]
- ix. JUDITH GATER, bp. 19 March 1588/9;^[37] d. after 1654;^[38] m. Hillmorton 9 Oct. 1608 JOHN¹ PERKINS^[39] (bp. there 23 Dec. 1583, son of Henry and Elizabeth (Sawbridge) Perkins;^[40] d. Ipswich, Mass. between 28 March and 26 Sept. 1654).^[41] For the children of John¹ and Judith (Gater) Perkins, see the works cited at the beginning of the article.
- x. ERASMUS GATER, bp. 6[?] May 1592;^[42] bur. 22 March 1592/3.^[43]

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²⁶ Hillmorton PRs: Richard Bayly sonne of William Baylye.

²⁷ Hillmorton PRs: Alice Gater daughter of Michell gater.

²⁸ Hillmorton PRs: Alice Gater.

²⁹ Hillmorton PRs: Elizabeth Gater daughter of michael Gater.

³⁰ Hillmorton PRs: Elizabeth Gater.

³¹ Hillmorton PRs: John Gater sonne of michael Gater.

³² Hillmorton PRs: Agnes Gater daughter of michall Gater.

³³ Hillmorton PRs: Michael Gater sonne of michael and of Isabell his wyfe.

³⁴ Hillmorton PRs: Francis Gater sonne of michael Gater and of Isabell his wyfe.

³⁵ Hillmorton PRs: Margeret Gater daughter of michell Gater and of Isabell his wyfe

³⁶ Hillmorton PRs: Margeret Gater daughter of Michael Gater.

³⁷ Hillmorton PRs: Judeth gater daughter of michael gater.

³⁸ She survived her husband (see *Dudley Wildes*, 87).

³⁹ Hillmorton PRs: John Pyrkyns and Judith Gater.

⁴⁰ Hillmorton PRs: John Perkyngs sonne of Henry Perkins and of Elizabeth his wyfe was baptiz ye 23 of December 1583[;] Henry Perkyngs and Elizabeth Sawbrydge were married ye 29 of November [1579].

⁴¹ *Great Migration Begins*, 2:1432.

⁴² Hillmorton PRs: Erasmus ye sonne of Michael Gater. Before the "6" in the date there is a blotted mark that could be a "1" or a "2" (making this date 16 or 26 May).

⁴³ Hillmorton PRs: Erasmus Gater.