



Received: 25 March 2021  
Accepted: 6 April 2021

**Keywords:** genealogy; origins; Cornwall; Morley; Pearce; antecedents

## Genealogy of the Morleys in South Wales: Tracing the Pearce Connection in Cornwall

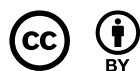
John O. Morley

**Abstract:** The origins of individuals or families who moved to Glamorgan from Cornwall during the Industrial Revolution are often unknown, as official records did not appear until 1838 and often the older parish registers are incomplete. This study is concerned with the study of the origins of one such family, called Morley, which was well established in Glamorgan by the mid-nineteenth century. In 1848 in the parish of Michaelston-super-Avon, Thomas Morley, a roll turner in the Copper Miners Tinplate Company located there, married an Anne Pierce who came from Ludgvan in Cornwall. The lineal descendants of their large family, and the antecedents of his family, have been discussed in detail previously, but very little is known about the origins of Anne's family in Cornwall. This account attempts to correct this omission by exploring her antecedents using the accepted English genealogical practice of tracing the family by following the sequence of family Christian names. This process has enabled the antecedents of her family to be unearthed in southwest Cornwall. Her father, John Pearce (M)<sup>1</sup> has been unequivocally identified as a miller from Ludgvan, who was born in 1766 and died in 1827. He married Margaret Winnan of St. Erth in 1800 and they had nine children most of whom were born in Ludgvan. Tracing the identity of John's father has proved more difficult, as there are several possible candidates born in the expected timeframe. With, it is thought that he was a William Pearce of Gulval who married Elizabeth Gilbert of Helston in 1765. His father in turn was a John Pearce (L) who married Triphosa Donithorne of Gulval in 1727 and they had nine children. The identity of John's father has not been established with the same degree of certainty and there are two possible contenders, both called John Pearce (K), one born in Lelant in 1692 and the other born in Paul in 1699. On balance, it is thought that the person born in Lelant was the antecedent of John (L) and it is suggested that his father in turn was a John Pearce (J) who was also born in the same parish.

### Introduction

Two previous articles have dealt with the genealogy of the Morley family in south Wales during the eighteenth<sup>2</sup> and nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> A more recent account has discussed the antecedents of this family who lived in Carmarthenshire and Worcestershire.<sup>4</sup> This article, in contrast, is concerned with a study of the more recent English roots of this family which arose from the marriage of Thomas Morley of Lantwit juxta Neath, to Ann Pearce of Ludgvan in Cornwall, in the mid-nineteenth century. By profession, Thomas was a roll turner, a specialist occupation in the tinplate industry which was rapidly expanding in south Wales at that time. While many details of his family are known, there is little information on the family of his wife Ann Pearce. Unfortunately because her surname was ubiquitous at this time in Cornwall, tracing her lineage is fraught with difficulty especially before the advent of official records in 1837, and other methods have to be employed. By the time of the 1881 National Census, the Pearce surname, or a variant of it, was the sixth ranked surname in Cornwall and first ranked in the parish of Uny Lelant, which features later.<sup>5</sup>

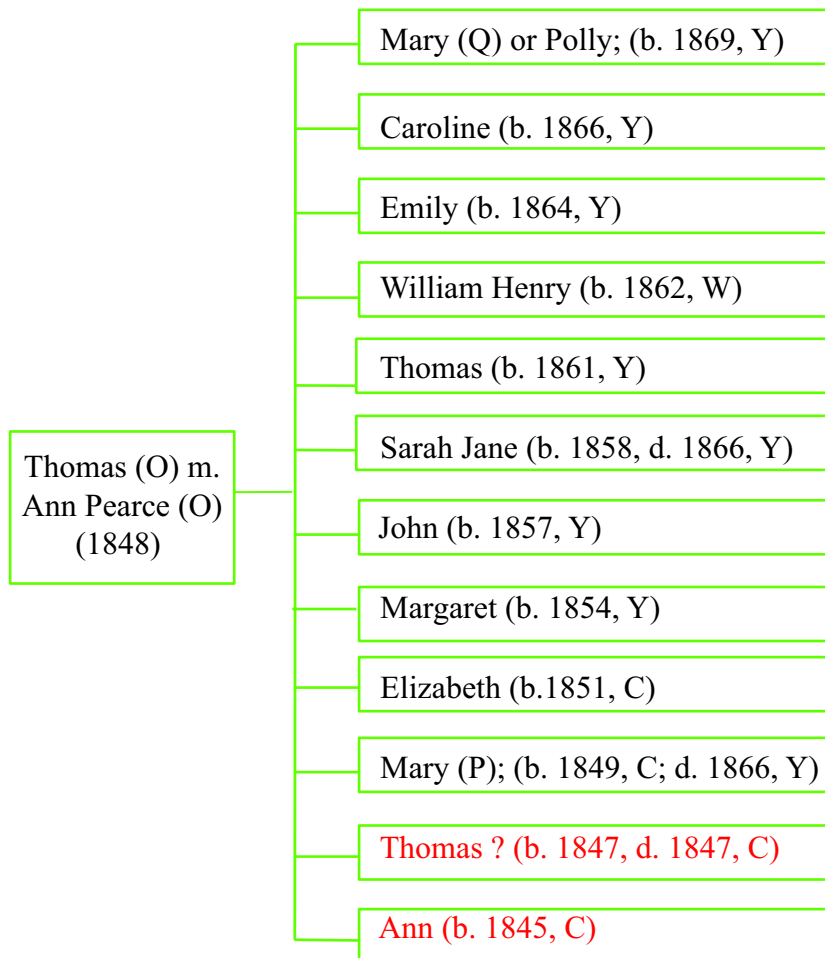
This present account describes an investigation of the antecedents of Anne Pearce in Cornwall in the eighteenth century using the well-established English genealogical practice of tracing the family by following the sequence of family Christian names. As previously pointed out by the author, it was the tradition at this time, to name the first son of a marriage after the father's father, the second after the mother's father,



the third after the husband, and the third and fourth sons were named after the father's oldest brother(s) or sometimes after the father's uncle or mother's oldest brother(s).<sup>6</sup> A number of very important caveats should be added: if the father's father and his father-in-law shared the same name, the second son, not the third would be named after the husband; if the husband and his father shared the same name then the third son of the marriage would be named after the eldest brother. Similarly, the first daughter of a marriage was named after the mother's mother, the second named after the father's mother and the third after the mother and so on with the same caveats as before. In the unlikely event that the husband, his father and his father-in-law all shared the same name then the second son would be named after his brother. Furthermore, in a situation where the parent's father or mother was deceased at the time of the child's birth, the child would not always be named after them (as it was thought by many that this might be a bad omen), but instead called directly after the parent or the parent's eldest brother or sister. This approach has difficulties however, as the normal sequence is often disrupted when a child has been named after a grandparent, but it dies before it has been christened, so that the name does not appear in the parish registers. Under these circumstances, the first child recorded is not called after the father's father or the mother's mother but is the next in sequence. This situation can often be detected when there is a significant lapse of about three years either between the date of marriage and the birth of the first surviving child or between the dates of birth of two consecutive surviving children. Following the premature death of a child in this manner, the name was very often re-used for a later child.

As previously reported, Thomas (O) was born on 18 October 1818 and he moved from Llantwit to Cwmavon in the parish of Michaelston-super-Avon in 1825 because his father Thomas (N), who was born in Cadoxton juxta Neath, had taken a job at the Copper Miners Tinplate Company there.<sup>7</sup> Thomas (O) was educated at a school run by his father's employers, and later became an engineer or roll turner in the same tinworks. Thomas (O) married his first wife, Margaret(te) Benjamin, of Michaelston, on 31 March 1844 at St. Michael's Church. Her father is identified as Richard Benjamin on her marriage certificate as previously reported, but the only person alive at the time, of the right age and with this name in south Wales, lived in Aberdare. However, as he had a daughter called Margaret, aged 5, at the time of the 1841 census,<sup>8</sup> he cannot be her father. It seems more likely that Margaret was the daughter of a Richard Benjamin, who was born in Cadoxton in 1786, and who died there in 1836, aged 50.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, this Richard Benjamin may be an unrecorded son of a Rees Benjamin, who is thought to have had five sons and three daughters born in Cadoxton during the period 1779 to 1792.<sup>10</sup> Margaret may have been the person working at the Parade Castle Hotel in Neath in 1841 as a housemaid,<sup>11</sup> but this is by no means certain.

Thomas and Margaret's first daughter, Ann Morley (Scheme 1), who was born in 1844,<sup>12</sup> was probably named after her mother and his mother. It is thought that they may have had another child two years later, called Thomas, who did not survive (see later), though it is also conceivable that this putative child was the William Morley who died in Cwmavon on 25 February 1848, aged 13 months.<sup>13</sup> Tragically Margaret contracted influenza and tuberculosis four years after her marriage and she died on 27 April 1848 aged 26 years after suffering for three months.<sup>14</sup>



**Scheme 1. Family of Thomas Morley (O) and Ann Pearce (O) together with the children of his first marriage to Margaret Benjamin (shown in red) [C = Cwmavon; W = Workington; Y = Ystalyfera].**

Following Margaret's death, Thomas (O) had become acquainted with Ann Pierce (O), who was born in Cornwall, and they married on the 4 December 1848. On their marriage certificate ([Figure 1](#)),<sup>15</sup> Thomas is described as a widower and an engineer by occupation, while Ann is described as a spinster, both living in Cwmavon in the parish of Michaelston. Although her surname is recorded as 'Pierce' in the register, this is a variation of its usual spelling of 'Pearce' found in Cornwall. Thomas (O) and Ann (O) had ten surviving children over the course of their marriage ([Scheme 1](#)). Their first daughter was named Mary, possibly after the name of both Thomas and Ann (O)'s eldest surviving sisters (see later). That Thomas named his *second* son after his father Thomas (N), who was still living, strongly suggests that there was an earlier son called Thomas who died shortly after birth.

Ann (O) was born in Cornwall. Significantly her father John Pierce (M) is described as a miller on her marriage certificate, a fact which has helped to identify her father from the many John Pearces who lived at that time in Cornwall (see later). Thomas (O) was clearly literate as he signed his name on his marriage certificate ([Figure 1](#)) reflecting the good education he received from his father's employers.<sup>16</sup> It is not clear exactly how Thomas and Anne met but it seems likely that either he had travelled to Ludgvan in connection with his trade (Cornish tin was used in tinplate manufacture at the Copper Miners Tinplate Company), or more likely, she had moved to Cwmavon to seek work (see later).

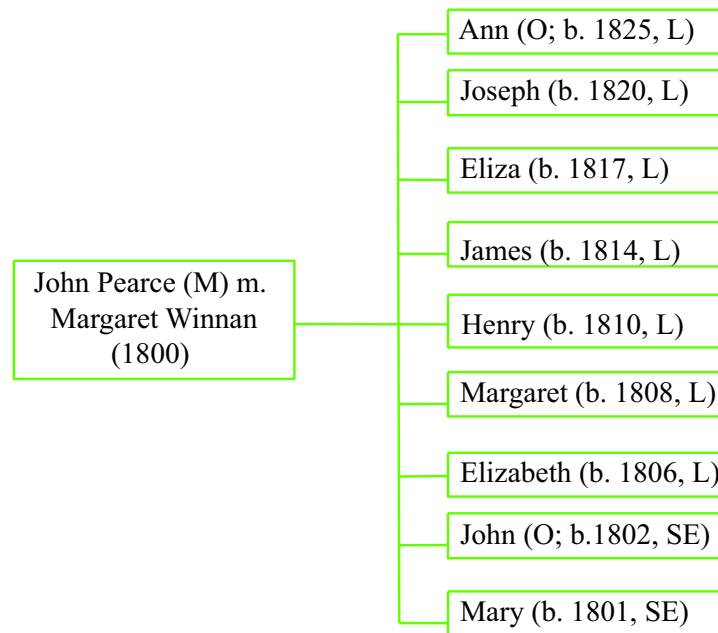
No. Rhif 170		Marriage solemnized at Pridodas a weinyddwyd yn } The Registrar Office		in the district of yn nosbarth } Neath		in the yn } County of Glamorgan and Brecon	
1. When married Pryd y prydwyd	2. Name and surname Enw a chyfenw	3. Age Oed	4. Condition Cyflwr	5. Rank or profession Safle neu broffesiwn	6. Residence at the time of marriage Preswyfya adeg pridi	7. Father's name and surname Enw a chyfenw'r tad	8. Rank or profession of father Safle neu broffesiwn y tad
Fourth of December 1848	Thomas MORLEY	6 Full Age	Widower	Engineer	Cwmavon in the parish of Michaelstone Super Avon, Glamorganshire	Thomas MORLEY	Labourer
	Ann PIERCE	6 Full Age	Spinster	—	Same place as Above	John PIERCE	Miller
Married in the Pridodwyd yn This marriage was solemnized between us.		} Registrar Office Thomas Morley		in the presence of us.		} by me. deu Before ganaf fi. James Kempthorne Registrar	
Gweinyddwyd y briodas hon rhyngom ni.		} X The Mark of Ann Pierce		yn ein presenoldeb ni.		} X The Mark of Thomas Evans Alexander Cuthbertson Jones Registrar Superintendent	
Certified to be a true copy of an entry in a register in my custody. Tystiolaethwyd ei fod yn gopi cywir o gofnod mewn cofrestr a gedwir gennyf i.				} Deputy Superintendent D. Lewis (Signature Llofnod)		} Registrar Cofrestryydd Alexander Cuthbertson Jones Registration District Dosbarth Cofrestru	
						} 21. 02. 2002 Date Dyddiad	
WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.				RHYBUDD: NID YW TYSTYSGRIF YN PROFI PWY YDYCH CHL.			

Figure 1. Marriage Certificate of Thomas Morley (O) and Ann Pierce (O).

There is no evidence to show that any other members of Ann's direct family moved to Glamorgan but the Pearce name was fairly common in Glamorgan at the time of the 1851 census with 161 occurrences in total with 21 of those born in Cornwall.

**Tracing the Identity of Ann Pearce (O)**

There are several women with the name Ann Pearce, or a variant of the surname, born in Cornwall in 1825, but the identity of the person who married Thomas Morley (O1) is unequivocally confirmed by her christening record.<sup>17</sup> The detailed entry shows she was born on 24 August 1825 and baptised on 18 September in Ludgvan,<sup>18</sup> and reveals that her father, John Pearce (M), was a miller, and that her mother was called Margaret. As previously reported, she appears in both the 1851 and 1871 National Censuses of England and Wales as Ann Morley from Ludgvan.<sup>19</sup> Her father is almost certainly the same John Pearce (M) who married Margaret Winnan on 3 May 1800 at St Erth in Cornwall,<sup>20</sup> which lies adjacent to the parish of Ludgvan (see later), where Ann Pearce (O) was born. The parish register discloses that both John and Margaret lived in the parish of St. Erth at this time, and he is identified once again by his occupation as a miller. Sadly, John (M) died in 1827, aged 61 (see later), when Ann (O) was only two years old, placing his birth to 1766, and demonstrating that he was 14 years older than his wife Margaret, who was christened in St. Erth on 21 May 1780.<sup>21</sup> Unhappily, Margaret also died while Ann (O) was a child of only 13 years old, on 24 July 1838 aged 58.<sup>22</sup> Ann (O) then went to live with her married sister Elizabeth Reseigh and her four children in Crowlas, Ludgvan,<sup>23</sup> as previously reported by this author. Her brother-in-law, William Reseigh, was a tin worker and it may be that he was instrumental in finding her a job in Cwmavon.



**Scheme 2. Family of John Pearce (M) and Margaret Winnan [SE = St. Erth; L = Ludgvan].**

John (M) and Margaret Pearce had a large family over an exceptionally long period of time for this era. Following their marriage in 1800, their first two children were born in St. Erth with their first, Mary, baptised on 28 June 1801,<sup>24</sup> and the second, John (O), on 18 July 1802.<sup>25</sup> The next seven children of the marriage were all born in Ludgvan, and baptised at St. Paul's Church in Ludgvan (**Figure 2**),<sup>26</sup> with their last child Ann (O) baptised in 1825 (**Scheme 2**). None of their sons was called after Margaret's father, Edward Winnan (M), who had died on 9 January 1796 at St Erth,<sup>27</sup> possibly for the reason given earlier (page 1). Their first daughter Mary was almost certainly named after Margaret's mother<sup>28</sup> in line with the usual naming convention described above. Similarly, their first son John (O) is thought to be named after John's father, John (L). However, it is conceivable that if his father had died directly prior to his birth, their first son would be named directly after his father; under this scenario, John (M)'s father could have almost any name, and there are two possibilities, a William Pearce and a Richard Pearce, who are discussed later. Edward Winnan and Mary Michell were married at St. Hilary on 10 November 1770,<sup>29</sup> they had six children born between 1771 and 1783 named Mary, Elizabeth, Edward, John, Margaret and Francis.<sup>30</sup> Mary was possibly the person born in Illogan on 14 March 1741<sup>31</sup> as her parents were called Mary and John, supporting the naming convention which had been used for her children.



**Figure 2** St. Paul's Church, Ludgvan.

The four year gap between the birth of John (O) on 18 July 1802 and Elizabeth on 17 August 1806<sup>32</sup> strongly suggests that another child may have been born around 1804, who did not survive, perhaps a son named after Margaret's father, or a daughter named after John (M)'s mother, who would then be difficult to trace. It is also possible that John (M)'s mother had the same name as his wife's mother, Mary, but in both these cases, the next daughter would have been named Margaret, after his wife. However, this child was called Elizabeth (Scheme 2), and it follows that this was most likely the name of John (M)'s mother, who must have been alive at this time, assuming the usual naming convention

applied. This notion is reinforced by the name of the next child, who was baptised on 11 December 1808,<sup>33</sup> and called Margaret, after John (M)'s wife, suggesting that the convention was indeed followed. The next son of the marriage was called Henry, born in 1810, and under the usual circumstances he would have been called after one of John's family (but see later).



**Figure 3 Parish Map of West Cornwall.**

Their son, John Pearce (O), was the person (Scheme 2) who married Ann James in Ludgvan in 1826.<sup>34</sup> By the time of the 1841 National Census, they had five surviving children with their only son at that time also called John,<sup>35</sup> named after his father as his grandfather had died in 1827. Their first daughter, Ann (P), was born on 5 December 1830 in Ludgvan,<sup>36</sup> and the second was called Mary, born on 22 June 1834 again in Ludgvan, with her father described as a miner.<sup>37</sup> The possibility that Ann (P) was the person who married Thomas Morley (O) rather than her aunt, Ann (O), who was also born in Ludgvan, but in 1825, can be safely discounted as her marriage certificate (Figure 1) reveals that her father was a miller and not a miner and she would not have been of "full age in 1848" as described. Furthermore, a trawl of the parish registers reveals that Ann (P) married a William Uren in Ludgvan on 14 December 1850.<sup>38</sup> Prior to this event, Ann (P)'s father, John (O), had sadly died in 1848,<sup>39</sup> leaving her mother to fend for their family. By the time of the 1851 National Census, Ann (P) and her husband and daughter were all living with her mother in the same household in Ludgvan.<sup>40</sup>

Ann (O)'s family tree (Scheme 2) helps to explain the names used for her own children born in Glamorgan (Scheme 1). Her first daughter would normally be named after her mother Margaret, but because she had died over 10 years previously in St Erth, it is thought that the child would have then be named after Ann (O) herself, except Thomas (O) already had a daughter by this name by his first wife. Accordingly she called her child Mary after her eldest sister (Scheme 2) in line with the usual naming convention. The next daughter would usually be called after Thomas (O)'s mother, Ann, but again the name had already been used. It follows that he would then possibly name the child after his eldest surviving sister, but she was called Mary,<sup>41</sup> and again that name had also been used. It is likely that the next daughter was probably called after Ann (O)'s second eldest sister, Elizabeth, who she had lived with and who had looked after her following the death of her mother. Her third daughter was named Margaret probably after her third eldest sister but possibly after her mother also who had died some 16 years earlier. Her fourth child and first son would normally have been named after Thomas (O)'s father, Thomas (N). That he was named John, not Thomas, suggests as indicated earlier, that a child of this name may have been born to his first wife and had not survived. Accordingly this first son was named John, after Thomas (O)'s eldest surviving brother, and also Ann (O)'s eldest brother (Scheme 2). This idea is supported by the knowledge that Thomas (O)'s brother, Hopkin, did indeed name his first son after their father Thomas (N).<sup>42</sup>

All of the information in Cornwall suggests that John (M)'s father had married someone called Elizabeth, a few years prior to the date of John (M)'s birth in 1766, but clearly *not* in the parishes of Ludgvan or St Erth. There is no record at all of the birth of a John Pearce in either of the extant parish registers during the period 1750 to 1770, nor indeed the marriage of anyone called Pearce, or a variant of that name, to Elizabeth. As it was the custom to marry in the bride's parish at this time, it follows that John (M)'s father was married elsewhere in Cornwall, but because his son John (M) was married in the parish of St. Erth, and then moved to the neighbouring parish of Ludgvan, it is thought that his father would have been married somewhere in south west Cornwall, as there was little personal or family migration in this era, and most people spent their entire lives in one area.<sup>43</sup>

### Tracing the Identity of John Pearce (M) and his Father

John Pearce (M) of Ludgvan was buried in the parish of Gulval on 28 August 1827, aged 61, according to the unambiguous handwritten entry in the register,<sup>44</sup> placing his birth to around 1766. An Administrative Bond dated 22 October 1827,<sup>45</sup> names his widow Margaret Pearce as the administratrix of his estate and identifies him as a miller of Ludgvan. William Pearce, a yeoman of the parish of Gulval, and William Clarke, a miller of the parish of Uny Lelant, provided a surety of £100 for the administration of the bond, which they both signed. William Pearce was probably a relative of John Pearce (M) otherwise he would not have provided the surety, as John (M)'s father was deceased. William Clarke, was possibly John (M)'s working associate perhaps at the corn mill which was located at the boundary of the contiguous parishes of Ludgvan and Lelant (**Figure 3**).<sup>46</sup> This building is now known as the Watermill Inn, and located on the Old Coach Road, just inside the modern parish of Ludgvan on a current map.<sup>47</sup> As there were other mills in the parish, such as the Truthwall Mill,<sup>48</sup> the precise mill cannot be identified with any certainty.

Assuming that the register entry for John (M)'s age of 61 at death on 28 August 1827 was entered correctly, it follows that he was born between September 1765 and August 1766 with his parent's marriage occurring at least a year, or longer, before these dates. A search of baptisms in the parish registers of Cornwall from 1 January 1765 to 31 December 1767 shows the births of fifteen people called *John Pearce* or a variant of the name. This reduces to six people if a mother called *Elizabeth* (or an abbreviation of this name) is included in the search (Table). However, there are two further instances of the birth of a John Pearce in this timeframe where no mother is recorded; the first occurred in Madron in 1765, but as he is named John *James* Pearce he is highly unlikely to be John (M). The second birth occurred in Launceston in 1766 to a William Pearce but because this parish is located a considerable distance from Ludgvan, he is again unlikely to be John (M) either (see later). Clearly John (M)'s father was married by 1765, and given that the mean age of marriage from 1600 to 1750 in England was 28 for men,<sup>49</sup> it suggests that his father would have been born sometime after 1730 and married probably after 1750.

The parish registers also disclose that there are only a limited number of marriages recorded in Cornwall, between a groom with a surname "Pearce" and a bride with a forename "Elizabeth", including possible variations of the two names, with a son called John (Table). Although the first six of the twelve marriages shown between a Pearce and his wife Elizabeth produced a son called John (Table), he was not born in the approximate timeframe for him to be considered as John (M). For example, the marriage of a John Pearce to Elizabeth Richards occurred in the parish of Perranuthnoe (only three miles from Ludgvan) on 29 June 1759.<sup>50</sup> They had a total of three sons born there but their first son, John, was born on 27 December 1759,<sup>51</sup> and so he cannot be John (M). However, he is the only John Pearce with a brother called Henry who was referred to earlier in connection with the naming conventions used for his children (**Scheme 2**), though this Henry was a younger brother, who was baptised on 12 June 1764.<sup>52</sup> These assumptions then leave six possible candidates as John (M).

**Table 1. Marriages between a Pearce and his bride named Elizabeth in Cornwall 1750 to 1765 and the date of baptism of their son John**  
[<https://cornwall-opc-database.org/search-database/>]

Parish	Pearce (fore-name)	Elizabeth (surname)	Date of Marriage	Date of their son John's Baptism and place reference		John's ID
Camborne	John	Gilbert	19 Sep 1750	17 Mar 1752	1	
Paul	John	White	5 Aug 1751	5 Apr 1752	1	
Cury	John	Freeman	26 Oct 1751	21 May 1755	1	
Perranuthnoe	John	Richards	29 Jun 1759	27 Dec 1759	1	
St Austell	John	Nancollas	16 Jun 1753	5 Feb 1762	1	
Falmouth	John	Stephens	22 Jan 1761	29 Jul 1764	2	
Linkinhorne	John	Wadge	26 Nov 1764	6 Oct 1765	1	M1
Whitstone	John	Hambly	8 Dec 1755	26 Oct 1665	3	M2
Mullion	John	Harry	5 Jan 1761	12 Aug 1767	4	M3
Illogan	John	Bryant	23 Aug 1762	6 Sep 1767	1	M4
Sithney	Richard	Moyle	18 Oct 1754	6 Apr 1766	1	M5
Mawgan	William	Gilbert	18 Aug 1765	21 Mar 1766	5	M6

Key: (1) Born in the same parish. (2) Born in Illogan. (3) Born in North Petherwin. (4) Born in Cury. (5) Born in Mawgan in Meneage.

In the parish of Linkinhorne, a John Pearce married Elizabeth Wadge on 26 November 1764,<sup>53</sup> and their son John (M1) was baptised there on 6 October 1765,<sup>54</sup> making him 61 in August 1827. In Whitstone, another John Pearce and Elizabeth Hambly, both of the parish of Boyton, were married on 8 December 1755.<sup>55</sup> As Boyton lies less than three miles away from North Petherwin, it is likely that they were the parents of a John Pearce (M2), christened there on 26 October 1665,<sup>56</sup> who would also have been 61 years old in 1827.<sup>57</sup> While this information suggests that either of the last two candidates could be John (M) based on their dates of birth, this would seem to be highly unlikely because both parishes lie well over 60 miles north east of Ludgvan. Confirmation is provided by the record of the marriage of John (M1) to Martha Kelly on 30 September 1792 in Linkinhorne,<sup>58</sup> and the birth of their son, John, there on 8 March 1793.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, because his father is referred to as John Pearce, *senior*, in the land tax returns for Linkinhorne in 1799,<sup>60</sup> it implies that his son, John (M1), was still present in the parish at that time. This person is clearly not John (M). The other candidate, John (M2), may be the person who married Frances Daw on 2 November 1787 in North Petherwin,<sup>61</sup> but there are other possible candidates there also with the same name. This John Pearce (M2) may be the person who moved to North Tamerton, about five miles away, where their son, John, was baptised on 1 March 1789,<sup>62</sup> followed by the births of their five further children in the same hamlet.

In the parish of Mullion (about 18 miles from Ludgvan), a John Pearce from Illogan married Elizabeth Harry on 5 January 1761.<sup>63</sup> They are thought to have had two children born in nearby Cury: Elizabeth, on 5 September 1763 and John (M3) on 12 August 1767,<sup>64</sup> making him 60 by August 1827 and a possible candidate as John (M). His wife, Elizabeth Harry was born in Madron on 20 September 1741.<sup>65</sup> However, it is

unlikely that he was John (M) as the England and Wales Census of 1841,<sup>66</sup> reports that a John Pearce was alive in Cury at that time, aged between 70 and 74; and furthermore, a person with this name was buried in the same parish on 1 August 1846, aged 78,<sup>67</sup> indicating that he was born almost exactly at the time of John (M3)'s birth.

In the parish of Illogan, John Pearce, a miner, married Elizabeth Bryant on 23 August 1762.<sup>68</sup> It is thought that she was baptised on 27 December 1736, also in Illogan, with her father named as William Bryant.<sup>69</sup> Their first child was probably called Catherine, born on 31 July 1763 in Illogan, and named after Elizabeth's mother, but there is no record of her in the register of births and only her father is recorded. Their next child is thought to have been William, born around the expected time for a second child, on 24 March 1765. He would be expected to be named after John's father implying that William was his name also. Their next child, John Pearce (M4), was born over two years later and named after his father, as the name of Elizabeth Bryant's father, William, had already been used. John (M4) was christened in Illogan on 6 September 1767,<sup>70</sup> making him almost 60 by August 1827 and another possible candidate as John (M). However, the parish records for Illogan show that a John Pearce, a miner like his father, married Alice Dunstone on 27 September 1792,<sup>71</sup> and he is probably John (M4) born in 1767, making him 25 years old at the time. They had two children born in Illogan: John born on 19 May 1793 and Alice on 24 June 1798. The name of his first son tends to confirm that John (M4)'s father was called John.

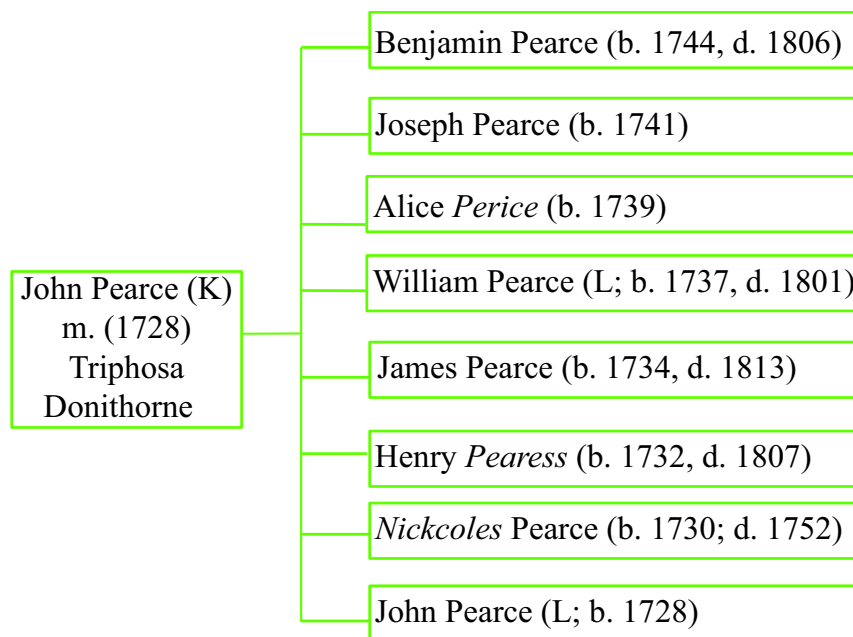
Very confusingly, the parish registers for Illogan show that there were *thirteen* children born to parents called John and Elizabeth Pearce over the period 1760 to 1790, but none at all over the previous twenty years. The first of these, Grace Pearce, was born on 3 January 1762,<sup>72</sup> some eight months *prior* to the date of marriage of John Pearce and Elizabeth Bryant, and it follows that she cannot be their daughter. Furthermore, the short time intervals between the baptisms of another John Pearce in July 1764 and the William Pearce (above) in March 1765 on the one hand, and the baptisms of a Simon Pearce in May 1767 and John (M4) in September 1767 on the other, conclusively demonstrate that these children were the products of two different marriages but with the same named father and mother. It is possible that the second couple were a John Pearce, a widower, and Elizabeth Stephens, who were married on 22 January 1761 by licence,<sup>73</sup> in the parish of Falmouth. He is possibly the son of John and Thomasine Pearce, born in Falmouth on 23 March 1733,<sup>74</sup> but if so, he had not been a widower very long and there is no record of his first marriage. As Illogan is only 11 miles or so away from Falmouth, it is suggested that they may have moved there and were the parents of several children including Grace, John and Simon mentioned above.

As indicated earlier, it is possible that John (M)'s father was not called John, but for this idea to be entertained, it would be necessary under the naming convention discussed earlier, for his father to have died before the birth of John (M)'s son on 18 July 1802. Under these circumstances, John (O) would then be named after his father John (M). There are two instances under this scenario found in the parish registers (Table). Firstly, a Richard Pearce married Elizabeth Moyle on 18 October 1754 in Sithney,<sup>75</sup> which lies about 9 miles from Ludgvan. They had five children born there including two sons, the first named Richard, who was born on 25 May 1760, and the second named John (M5), who was born on 6 April 1766,<sup>76</sup> which would make him 61 in August 1827. Elizabeth is thought to be the person born in nearby Wendron on 25 January 1734.<sup>77</sup> It is possible that this Richard Pearce is the person who died in nearby Breage (about a mile from Sithney) on 30 Jan 1802 aged 71,<sup>78</sup> corresponding to his birth also in Breage on 19 April 1731.<sup>79</sup> If so his father was called Thomas Pearce.

Secondly, a William Pearce (L) married Elizabeth Gilbert of Helston on 18 August 1765 in Mawgan in Meneage,<sup>80</sup> which lies about 16 miles from Ludgvan. Their son John Pearce (M6) was born there on 21 March 1766,<sup>81</sup> which would make him 61 in August 1827. He was almost certainly named after William's father and also Elizabeth's father, John Gilbert. Elizabeth was born in Breage in 13 May 1744,<sup>82</sup> as she is the only recorded person born with this name in southwest Cornwall during the period 1735-45. They may have had a second son as a William (M), with the same named parents, was baptised at nearby Grade on 11 September 1767, but this is by no means certain. There are no other register entries for any other children of theirs in southwest Cornwall up to 1780, excepting for the baptism of a Benjamin Pearce on 29 June 1777 in Grade,<sup>83</sup> who again had the same named parents, but the ten years gap between him and William (M), implies that this was a different family. The parish registers show that William Pearce (L) could be one of only two possible people with a father named as John in the expected period of 1730 to 1740 in southwest Cornwall. As some of the people now discussed here were born prior to 1752, to avoid confusion caused by the change from the Julian Calendar into the Gregorian Calendar in 1752, all dates of birth have been converted from the former to the latter to ensure consistency.<sup>84</sup> The first William (L1) was born in Gulval on 16 January 1737,<sup>85</sup> and he may be the person who died there on 25 May 1801,<sup>86</sup> though his age is not disclosed on the register entry. The second William (L2) was born in Helston on 7 December 1737,<sup>87</sup> and he is probably either the person who was buried in nearby Breage on 21 March 1791, aged 53,<sup>88</sup> or the person buried there on 11 July 1801, aged 63.<sup>89</sup> Although William (L2) would appear to be the favoured candidate as William (L) because his place of birth lies close to Helston, and only three miles from Mawgan, there is strong evidence to suggest that he was not.

### Tracing the Identity of John Pearce (L)

The William Pearce (N) of Gulval named on the Administrative Bond referred to earlier, died in Gulval on 2 July 1844, aged 67.<sup>90</sup> The parish registers show that he was born in Gulval on 13 July 1777, with a Benjamin Pearce (M) named as his father.<sup>91</sup> Benjamin's father in turn, was a John Pearce (K) of Towednack (which lies about three miles northwest of Ludgvan), who married a Triphosa Donithorne at Gulval on 26 January 1728.<sup>92</sup> While there are a number of people named John Pearce, or a variant of the name, born in Cornwall during the expected period of roughly 1690 to 1707, none were born in Towednack and very few were born in south west Cornwall (see later). However, there seems little doubt that Triphosa was the person born in Gulval on 4 March 1699,<sup>93</sup> who died there on 11 May 1770.<sup>94</sup> They appear to have had seven sons and one daughter born between 1728 and 1744, although three of their children's names shown in the parish register for Gulval are thought to be erroneously entered (shown in italics in Scheme 3).<sup>95</sup>



**Scheme 3. Family of John Pearce (K) and Triphosa Donithorne.**

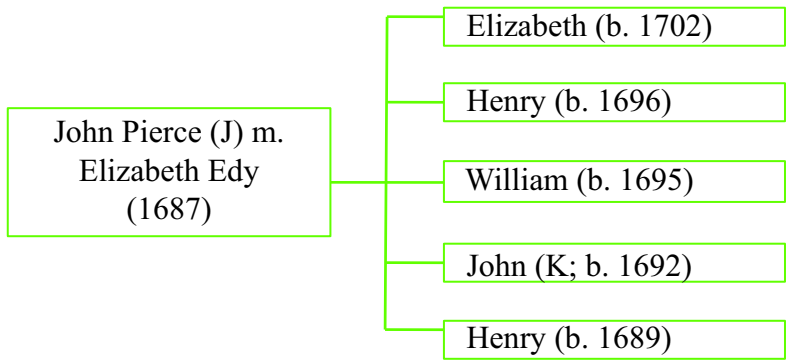
Their first son John (L) was born on 16 December 1728 and probably named after John (K)'s father (see later). Their second son born, on 2 May 1730,<sup>96</sup> was almost certainly named Nicholas, rather than the register entry of Nickcoles, and he is most likely to be the person who was buried in Gulval on 20 June 1752,<sup>97</sup> and named as the son of John Pearce. This son was possibly named after Triphosa's father, but as she was illegitimate, he is not named on the parish register, and only her mother's name, Janettae Donithorne, appears with a footnote "notha" on her record.<sup>98</sup> It is possible that he was the Nicholas Donithorne, who was born in Gulval on 12 January 1668,<sup>99</sup> and if so, the parish would have expected him to provide for his daughter.<sup>100</sup> It appears that it was the custom of the time to assign the father's surname to the child and its mother, and in an analogous case in the same parish, a Tryphena Donithorne, who was born on 1 November 1694, was the illegitimate child of Roger Donithorne, who was Nicholas's brother, and took his name.<sup>101</sup> The succeeding sons of John and Tryphosa Pearce would be expected to be named after John (K)'s brothers. However, Henry, thought to be their third son, born on 6 February 1732,<sup>102</sup> is described as the son of John *Pearess* of Gulval, and Alice, their sixth child, born on 11 February 1739,<sup>103</sup> is named as the daughter of John *Perice* of Gulval; these are probably original transcription errors as there are no other people with these surnames found anywhere else in Cornwall at this time. It is suggested that their fifth son William (L1), who was born on 16 January 1737, was the person who married Elizabeth Gilbert, and if so, their son John (M6) was the first cousin of Benjamin's son, William (N). This would neatly explain why William (N) appears as one of the suretors on the Administrative Bond referred to earlier.

It is thought that John (M6) was probably the only son of William (L1), and the reason he did not name his first son, or indeed any of his subsequent sons, after his father is because the latter is thought to have died in May 1801, about a month before the birth of his first child. However, after the birth of his first son, John (O) in July 1802, who he named after himself, he appears to have named his subsequent sons after his father's brothers in order of seniority (Scheme 3), but clearly not after John (L), his father's eldest brother, as that name had been used, nor Nicholas, as he had died before John (M) was born and he would not have known him. Thus John (M) named his second, third and fourth sons after his father William's brothers, Henry, James, and Joseph (Scheme 2). This strongly suggests that John (M6) had no other brothers with

the possible exception of William (M) referred to earlier. It may also indicate that because he was an only child, his family were better off than most, and they were able to furnish him with enough money to establish a mill.

All of this information strongly indicates that John Pearce (M), miller of Ludgvan, was the son of William Pearce (L) of Gulval. His father, in turn, was almost certainly called John Pearce (K), primarily because William called his first (and possibly only) son by this name. Nevertheless, the identity of John Pearce (K) himself is more contentious as indicated earlier, as there several possible candidates with this name who were born in the expected timeframe in southwest Cornwall. That John (K) called his first son John (L), implies very strongly that John (K)'s father also would be called John (J). It follows that any candidate as John (K) would have a father named as John, but unfortunately, there are four instances of people meeting this criterion born in roughly in the vicinity of Towednack where he was living at the time of his marriage. For example, a person thought to be John Pearce (K1) was born in Paul on 25 January 1699,<sup>104</sup> another John Pearce (K2) was born in Lelant on 16 October 1692,<sup>105</sup> a third John Pearce (K3) was born in St. Hilary on 6 October 1695,<sup>106</sup> and a fourth John Pearce (K4) was born in Illogan on 26 November 1692.<sup>107</sup> However, the names of John (K)'s children are known (Scheme 3), and as they were almost certainly named after his brothers, it should be possible in principle to narrow down the options, by exploring the siblings of these four candidates, born from 1680 to 1710, all of whom had a father named as a John Pearce (J1-J4).

This process eliminates two of the candidates immediately as neither the John Pearce (K3) born in St Hilary nor the John Pearce (K4) born in Illogan had any brothers whose names correspond to any of those shown (Scheme 3). Each had two brothers only with those of the former called Charles and Thomas, and those of the latter called Thomas and Cristophar.<sup>108</sup> However, both John Pearce (K1) and John Pearce (K2) born in Paul and Leland respectively did have brothers with names corresponding to the children of John (K) shown in Scheme 3. Thus John Pearce (J1) in Paul, had several sons, the first thought to have been called John (K1) though this is not absolutely certain (see above), who was born on 25 January 1699; then another child, who may have been called J(ames) who was born on 24 March 1702;<sup>109</sup> followed by Nicholas, who was born on 17 September 1704;<sup>110</sup> and finally William, who was born on 25 February 1707.<sup>111</sup> Although this order of births for Nicholas and William does follow the order of John (K)'s sons shown in Scheme 3, the second son, if indeed he was called James, is out of sequence, and there is no Henry recorded at all. As the parish of Paul lies about eight miles south of, and is not contiguous with, Towednack (Figure 3), it seems unlikely that this family was that of John (K), though this idea cannot be dismissed entirely. In contrast, the John Pearce (J) in Lelant did name his first son Henry, and he was born on 22 September 1689.<sup>112</sup> He was followed by John (K2), who was born on 16 October 1692,<sup>113</sup> then William, who was born on 13 May 1695,<sup>114</sup> and finally by another son also called Henry, who was born on 30 August 1696,<sup>115</sup> suggesting that the first son with this name had died within the first few years of life. This order of births does follow the order of John (K)'s sons shown in Scheme 3, but there is no James recorded at all, though he did have a daughter called Elizabeth (Scheme 4), who was born on 13 August 1702.<sup>116</sup> As the parish of Lelant and Towednack (Figure 3) are contiguous, the balance of probability is that this was the family of John (K). Given that Henry was John (J)'s first son, it suggests that he would have married a year or so earlier, and in all likelihood, he is the John Pierce who married Elizabeth Edy on 9 April 1687<sup>117</sup> in the nearby parish of Philack (Figure 3). Elizabeth may be the person born in St Just in Penwith in 1667<sup>118</sup> but this is by no means certain.



**Scheme 4. Family of John Pearce (J) and Elizabeth Edy.**

It would appear that John Pearce (K2) of Lelant had a brother living there also, called Nicholas Pearce. He was married and had three sons, the first was called Henry, the second James and the third John. This suggests that the father of both John (K2) and Nicholas was a Henry Pearce who may be the person who was born in Ludgvan on 5 January 1640 though there is no proof of this.<sup>119</sup> John Pearce (J) is thought to have died in Uny Lelant on 18 January 1733.<sup>120</sup>

## Conclusion

There seems little doubt that Ann Pearce who had married Thomas Morley in Michaelston super Avon in 1848 belonged to a large family which had been well established in southwest Cornwall for at least two hundred years. This study has identified many of her antecedents who lived in that region including her father John Pearce, who was a miller in Ludgvan, and her mother Margaret Winnan of St. Erth, who had married him in 1800. By a process of deduction and elimination John's father has been identified as a William Pearce of Mawgan in Meneage who was the son of a John Pearce of Gulval. John's father in turn was a John Pearce of Uny Lelant and the earliest antecedent of this family is thought to be a Henry Pearce who was born around 1640.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Morley was born in the Swansea Valley, educated at West Monmouth Grammar School in Pontypool, the Welsh College of Advanced Technology in Cardiff and the University of Manchester, where he obtained his PhD in 1967 and DSc in 1989. His early career was spent in industry with ICI, first at Grangemouth in Scotland and later at Blackley in Manchester. In 1984, he became visiting Professor of Chemistry at the Queen's University of Belfast and was later appointed to the senior management position of Research Associate in ICI. He left industry to take up an appointment as a Professor of Chemistry at Swansea University in 1994 and he is the author of around 140 publications in Chemistry. He was appointed Emeritus Professor at Swansea University following his retirement, and has since taken a keen interest in genealogy. He has published over a dozen articles on this theme (see: <https://jmorley9.wixsite.com/website>) and he is a direct descendant of the people referred to in this article.

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