

Old Axminster Surnames

Introduction

This document is mainly aimed at those who are researching Axminster in the 16th to 18th centuries for the purposes of family history.

It draws together in one place information on those surnames which are most frequently associated with Axminster in three publicly-available sources: parish registers, wills and apprenticeship records.

Surnames found most frequently in Axminster's Parish Registers, 1559 to 1812 (covering baptisms, marriages and burials)

The information below is based on the hand-written Transcription / Index of the Axminster Parish Registers made by Robert Cornish of Cedar House, Axminster in 1898, as held in the Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter.

Good quality scans of the original registers can also be found on the Members' section of the Devon Family History Society website.

Until the 19th century most Church of England registers, including Axminster's, include many entries for Catholic and non-conformist individuals, but once these other churches were granted the right to deal with baptisms, marriages and burials the Church of England registers become noticeably less representative of the parish as a whole. The counts reported here, however, end at 1812, and therefore provide a good indication of the most common surnames found in the parish up to that point.

The surnames

All 201 surnames listed below fill at least 7/8 of a page in the consolidated Index. Where they fill 3 or more pages this is noted (and this accounts for 62 of the names in total). Those surnames which are highlighted are the ones which occur most frequently (25 of the 62 names occupy at least 5 pages each; 10 of those 25 occupy at least 8 pages each).

Although (1) not every page of the consolidated Index contains exactly the same number of entries, and (2) there are gaps in the original Register in the middle of the 17th century (at the time of the Civil War), and (3) the handwriting is not always clear, this simple method (of counting the number of pages) provides a reasonable indication of the most frequently-encountered surnames.

Whereas the most common surname variants are identified below, it would be prudent to assume that some further variants will be found if and when the original Registers are consulted.

<i>Surnames</i>	<i>Pages filled</i>
Allen or Alling	
Allson	
Andrew or Andrews	3 ½
Anning	3

Surnames	Pages filled
Arnold	
Atkins	
Blackaller	4
Baker	
Bates or Bats	
Baysley or Beasley	
Beare or Beer	
Beavis or Beviss	
Bishop	
Blatchford or Blachford	
Board	
Bobbett	
Bond	4 ½
Bowdige or Burnidge	3
Bowring or Bowering	
Bragge	3
Brewer	
Brocas	
Bryants	4 ¾
Bucknole or Bucknoll	
Budge	5 ½
Bunson	
Burch	
Butter	
Calley or Cawley	
Camplin	
Capern or Capon or Capron	
Carter	
Champ	7
Chapel or Chapple	3
Charles	
Cheek or Chick	6
Clarke	7
Cleave or Cleeve	
Cloud	
Collier	
Collins	
Cook or Cooke	
Coombs or Coombes	
Copp	4
Cott	
Cox	3 ½

Surnames	Pages filled
Cross or Crosse	9
Crow or Crowe	
Daniel	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Dare	3
Davis or Davies	
Dean or Deane	
Denning or Dining	5
Dight	6
Dimond or Diment	
Dodge or Doidge	
Dommett or Dummett	
Drake	3
Drower	4
Dunster	
Dunk	
Ebdon	
Edwards	
Endacott or Enticott	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Farrant	
Farthing or Varden	
Flood	
Forward	
Fowler	
Franklin	
French	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Fry	
Gamis or Gammes	
Gamon	
Gatch or Gauch	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
Gibbs	
Gigge	3
Giles	
Gill	
Gillett	
Goddard or Gothard	
Gosling	
Gould	
Gray or Grey	
Guppy	
Hallett	
Hamlin or Hamblyn	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Hannard or Harner	

Surnames	Pages filled
Harris	
Hart	
Harvey	3
Hawkins or Huckings	
Haycraft	3
Hayman or Heyman	
Hellier or Hillyar	
Henley or Handley	3 ½
Hewes or Hewish	
Hill	4
Hoare	9 ½
Hodge	
Honeybourne or Honibun	3 ¼
Hopper	
Hoskins	
House	
James	3 ¾
Jones or Joans	
Keate	
King	
Knight	
Lane	4 ½
Larcomb or Larcombe	
Lee or Ley	
Legge	
Liddon	10 ¾
Lock	
Lombard or Lumberts	
Long or Longe	3 ¼
Loring or Loaring	9 ⅓
Love	
Loveridge	
Lucas	
Mallack or Mallock	
Manley or Mandly	
Manning	3 ¼
Miller	
Mills	
Mitchell or Michel or Michael	
Moore	
Morey or Mooring	
Morgan	7 ¾

Surnames	Pages filled
Mussell	
Newbery or Newbury	7
Newman	
Newton	6 ¼
Norman	
Oliver	6 ½
Osborne	
Palfrey or Parfrey or Paffery	
Palmer	3 ½
Parratt or Parrett or Parrott	
Parsons	
Pavey	
Payne	
Pearce or Pearse or Pierse	
Peream or Perham	5 ¼
Philips	
Pigeon or Pidgeon	
Pike or Pyke or Pick	6 ½
Pinney or Pynny	3
Pole or Poole	
Pook	
Prosser	
Quick	
Read or Reed	4
Restorick	
Rice or Rise	
Rockett	4
Rowe	3
Rugg	
Russell	
Salter	
Seward or Seaward	8 ⅓
Searle	
Sellwood or Sellar or Sellod	
Seymour or Seamore	
Sibley	
Silk	4 ½
Smith or Smythe	8
Spillar or Spiller	
Sprague or Sprake	5 ⅓
Spurvie or Spurway	
Stedham or Steadham	

Surnames	Pages filled
Steward or Stewart or Stuart	
Stocker	
Storm	
Street	
Sweetland or Sweatland	
Symes or Sims	
Tanner	
Taylor	3 ½
Thatcher	
Thomas	3
Tomkins or Thomkins	
Tomson or Thomson or Tamson	
Towt	
Tucker	9 ½
Turner	9 ½
Uppington	
Vicary or Vickery	
Warren or Warring	
Warry	
Way or Wey	
Welch or Welsh	
White	4
Whitty	4 ½
Wieth or Wyatt	
Williams	4
Willmott	7
Wills	
Wolmington or Woolmington	
Woolley	11 ½

Early Axminster wills

The National Archives holds a searchable database of all those wills which can be purchased by interested parties. By their very nature, such wills were generally made by persons who were richer than average. In the case of people who are identified as being from Axminster these cover the date range from 1415 to 1857.

The spreadsheet which is linked below contains basic details of all 319 of these 'Axminster wills'. To save your time, the 193 surnames which appear there are listed below, and those surnames to which three or more wills are attached are shown in bold.

The Findmypast.co.uk website has a much larger database of 'Devon wills', for those who are particularly interested in this topic.

The surnames

Adams, Alexander, Anning, Anstice, Apsey, Ashwood, Bagwill, Baker, Barber, Barrow, Bartlett, Belmye, Bevan, Bilke, Bishop, Boalch, Bobbet, Bond, Bonner, Bowden, Bowdige, Bowditch, **Bragg**, Bridge, Brown, Bryne, Buckland, Bull, Bunter, Burroughs, Case, Cawley, Cazalar, Champ, Chapple, Chare, Charretie, Chase, Chast, **Clarke**, **Cogan**, Cole, Collier, Come, Conder, Coombs, Cooper, Copleston, Cort, Cossens, **Daniell**, Davie, Deane, Dight, Dimment, Domett, Dowell, Downe, **Drake**, Drew, Dymond, Eastabrook, Edwards, Evans, Eydmann, Farrant, Finnemore, Fisher, Fletcher, Follett, **Forward**, **Fowler**, Frye, Gamis, Gamon, Gill, **Goule**, Gray, Grone, Gudhill, Guise, Guppy, **Hallett**, Hancock, Harner, Harris, Harte, Harvey, Hawkins, Hayman, Hembery, Hill, Hitt, Hollard, **Hore**, Hoskins, House, Hutchins, Jackson, **Keate**, **Kentsbeare**, King, Knight, Lawrence, Legge, Lendey, Lewes, Liddall, **Liddon**, Long, Loren, Lovelass, Lucas, Lugge, Lumbard, **Mallock**, Manfield, Marshall, Masselhayes, **Miller**, Mitchell, Mussell, **Newbery**, Newman, Newton, Northmore, Northover, Northren, Orchard, Osborne, Owsley, Palmer, Parratt, Parson, Pearce, Pearse, Pell, Pering, Pett, Phelps, **Pinney**, Plummer, Poole, Raymond, Reed, Robertson, Roper, Rowe, Rydon, Sandford, Sellwood, Seward, Shore, Slade, Small, **Smith**, Spence, Spiller, Staples, Steer, **Stevens**, Stocker, Street, Stringfellow, Strong, Sumption, **Symes**, Tanner, **Taunton**, Thomas, Throne, **Tomkins**, Trisshe, **Tucker**, **Turner**, Verier, Warden, Warren, Warrey, Watts, Waye, Weare, Wheeler, White, **Whitty**, Willan, Williams, Willmott, Wills, Woolley, Wright, Wyett, Younge.

Apprenticeship registers

The surnames below are drawn from 'Country Apprentices 1710 to 1808' from the Society of Genealogists, which is accessible in full via the findmypast.co.uk website.

These were all apprenticeships where money changed hands (i.e. where skills were required to be taught, and where the pupil was not simply from a poor family placed with a master to prevent him or her from becoming a charge on the parish).

The surnames below are those of the 'masters' (i.e. skilled tradesmen) who were from Axminster. Many of the surnames appear more than once, but in many cases this reflects multiple apprenticeships rather than multiple individuals.

The surnames

Abbot, Anning, Balman, Banfill, Bare, Beere, Bell, Bilke, Bond, Bragge, Bryant, Bull, Bunter, Butcher, Callard, Cartwright, Case, Champ, Champs, Charles, Chick, Clarke, Cloud, Coleman, Collyer, Coombes, Couch, Crowe, Dare, Dight, Drawer, Duer, Edwards, Enticott, Farthing, Finn, Flood, Forward, Franklin, Frankland, French, Fry, Games, Gammes, Gould, Grose, Gyles, Harner, Harvey, Hawkins, Haycraft, Haycroft, Hill, Hitt, Hoare, Hutley, King, Legge, Liddall, Liddon, Mallock, Mills, Morgan, Mullins, Newbery, Newton, Pain, Paine, Palmer, Pear, Pinn, Pinney, Ramson, Reed, Rice, Robertson, Russell, Seymour, Smith, Spence, Spencer, Symes, Thomas, Tout, Tucker, Turner, Welsh, Whitty, Willmott, Woolly, Woolmington, Woven.