

Robert Filmer

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No Picture Available

Born: 1525 Kent, England

Married: Frances Chester

Died: 31 Aug 1585 Kent, England

Parents: James Filmer & Marjorie Raynor

He is mentioned in his father's will dated 1552 and proved in 1571.

Robert, born 1525, a prothonotary of the Court of Common Pleas, purchased Little Charleton manor from the family of Kempe. In 1564 at the age of 39 he married Frances CHESTER, daughter of Sir Robert Chester of Royston, Hertfordshire, a Gentleman Usher to King Henry VIII, at St. Dunstan's in the East. He died in 1585. His son, Edward, later knighted, married Elizabeth ARGALL.

Robert was sent to London where, in 1561/2, he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn. He clearly made a success of the legal profession in London. Whilst at Lincoln's Inn he had met and married Frances Chester at St. Dunstan's in the East, when he was aged 39. This marriage clearly improved the standing of the whole family and the Chester family clearly influenced the thinking and activities of the Filmer family from then on.

Frances Chester was the daughter of Sir Robert Chester of Royston in Hertfordshire, who had previously been a Gentleman Usher to King Henry VIII, and his wife, Catherine, daughter of John Throgmorton of Corse in Gloucestershire. She had brothers, Edward, Oliver and Robert and one sister, Catherine, who married John Forte.

Robert and Frances Filmer had some nine children: Edward, Robert, James, Katherine, Mary, Afrey, Henry, Anthony and Francis. They were probably brought up in the manor of Little Charlton in the parish of East Sutton which their father acquired from the family of Kempe, although they would certainly have frequently visited London where he became a prothonotary of Queen Elizabeth's Court of Common Pleas.

Robert Filmer, took steps to get confirmation of the arms of the Filmer family. In 1570 Cooke, Clarenceaux, confirmed the arms, viz. sable, three bars and in chief as many cinquefoils or, and the crest 'on a ruined tower or, a falcon, wings expanded proper, beaked and bellied or'. These arms and the crest are noted in the Visitation of 1574, wherein the family is recorded starting with James Filmer and Marjorie Raynor. It is interesting that the arms are of extreme simplicity - usually a feature of only very early arms. Many of the deeds from around this time referring to the Filmer family are sealed with a seal showing three cinquefoils.

Robert died in 1585 and was buried in the north aisle of East Sutton Church where a monument was erected as follows:

"Here liethe the bodie of ROBART FILMER, Esq. who this lyfetime married Fraunces, the daughter of Sir Robart Chester, Knight, and had issue by her sixe sones, Edwarde, Robarte, James, Henry, Anthony, Francis, and three daughters, Katherine, Mary, and Affera, who departed this lyfe the last day of August, 1585, being then 60 yeares of age. (The rest is illegible)

His will dated 28 March 1584 was proved on the 19th November, 1586 and is summarised below:

WILL of ROBERT FILMER, of East Suton, Co. Kent, Esq.

Dated 28/3/1584 Proved 19/11/1586

ROBERT FILMER's will is summarised below:

'To the poor of East Sutton, Otterden, Whichling_.

'To mother (unnamed)

'To sister MARGARET Â£10, and to every one of her children 20/-.

'To sister AGNES Â£5, and to every one of her children 20/-.

'To every of my brother JOHN, his children, 20/-.

'To brother REYNOLD (REGINOLD) 20 marks, and to every one of his children 20/-.

'To JAMES FILMER, son of my brother GEORGE FILMER, Â"10 at 21.

'To sister FRAUNCIS, a ring of gold.

'To cousin ROBERT COLLYER, my godson, Â£10 at 21.

'To sons - EDWARD, ROBERT, HENRY, and ANTHONY, and daughter FRANCES (under 21)

'To cousin JOHN COLLYER, Â£20

'To brother WILLIAM FILMER Â£20

'Residue to said EDWARD FILMER, he and JOHN COLLYER to be executors

'Brothers WILLIAM FILMER and friend ZACHARY SCOTT to be overseers.'

and to every one of her

In a codicil to the will dated also the 28th March 1584 he mentions some of his property:

'Mentus lands in Yalding, Kent, also lands in Stallefield and Bordfield, Kent, Stockbury and Hucking, Co. Kent; Stonehall and lands belonging thereto; houses and lands in Headcorne; Houses and lands in East Sutton, Sutton Valence, Chart, Borton, Munchelsea, Detting and Boxley, Romney Marsh; house in Maidstone; house, lands woods in Chartham, Chilham, Borton, and Blean; land in Whitstaple and the Blean.

and makes the following dispositions:

'To REIGNOLD FILMER and WILLIAM FILMER my parts of the house and lands in Otterden and my house and lands in Wychling which was JAMES FILMER's, our late father, to be had by them and their heirs. And also my house and lands at Warren, Fleet, in the parish of Lenham and my house and all my lands in Stalleford or elsewhere which I bought of AVERYE GILES I give and bequeath to _____. and his heirs.

Manor of Wichling with apps. and lands in Doddington 'to remain to my heirs in fee simple'.

Note. Decribed in the margin as 'ROBERT FILMER, Armiger'

Ref. PCC Will (Windsor '60) (Gen. Society)

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When he died in 1585 he held property in a dozen parishes and was so well off that he was able to leave Raynold and William that part of the house and lands in Otterden and Wychling which he had inherited from his father. He expressly mentioned, however, that the Manor of Wychling with appurtenances and lands in Doddington should remain to his own heirs. It is possible that in the subsequent division between Raynold and William, Raynold took the Payden Street (Wychling) portion and William the lands and tenements in Otterden. At some unknown date Hurst itself was again acquired by Robert's descendants, probably after the death of George's son James, in 1617.

Apart from the manor of Little Charlton he also seems to have possessed Cleyndon Manor (ex Darent Manor) in Axtame Hundred, the Manor of Witchling¹³, and other property in Yalding, Stallisfield, Bordfield, East Sutton, Stonehall in Headcorne, Sutton Valence, Boxley, Detling, Chart. Borden, Munchelsea, Chilham, Blean and Whitstaple. He presumably also had an interest in the manor of Herst. In his will he left a house and lands in Otterden, and lands at Wychling, formerly his father's, to his brothers, Reginald and William.