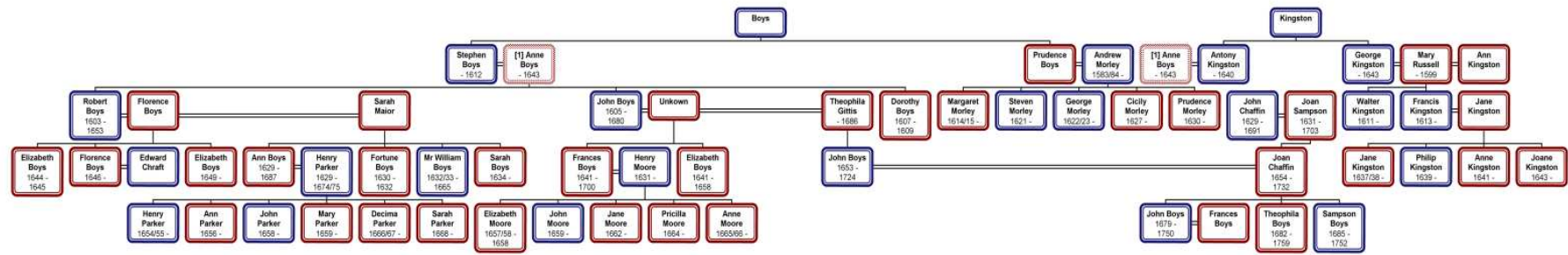
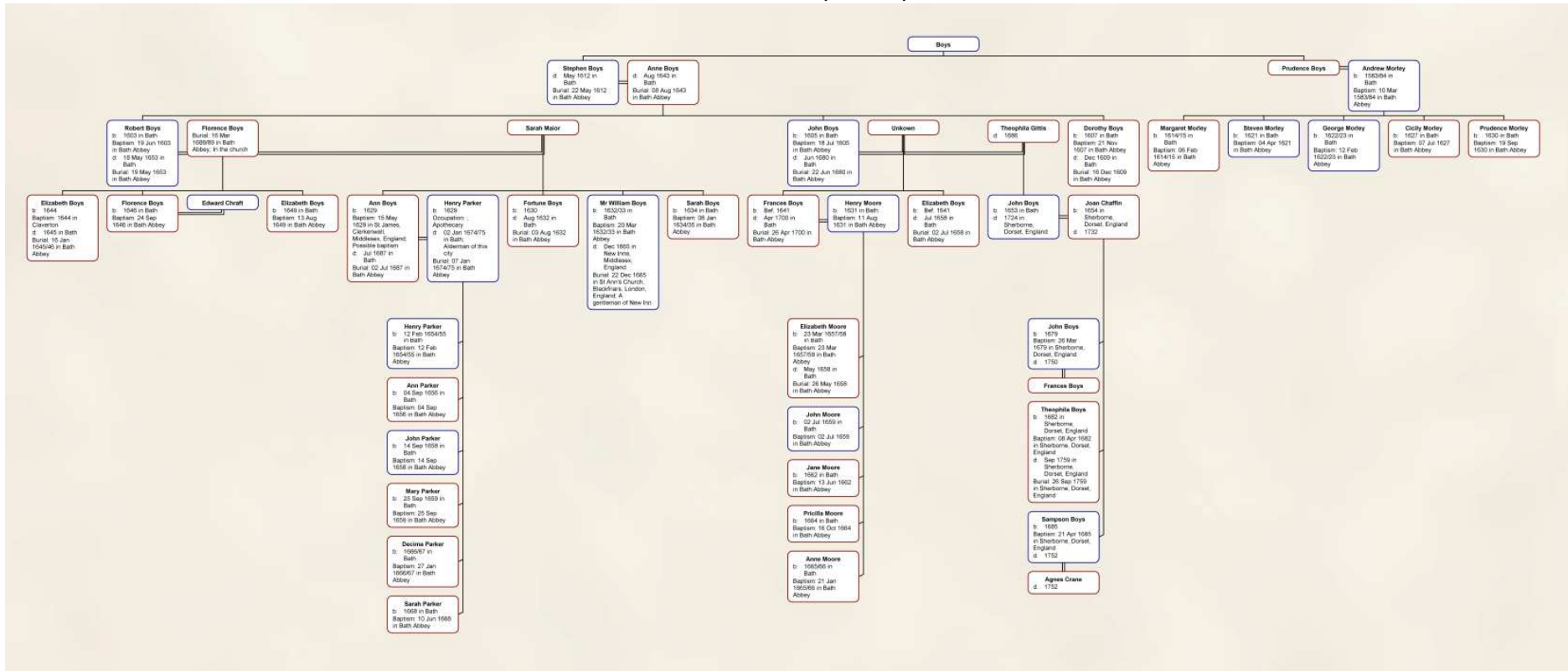


# JOHN BOYS (MAYOR OF BATH 1656) AND HIS FAMILY



## The extended Boys Family<sup>1</sup>



## Boys Descendants

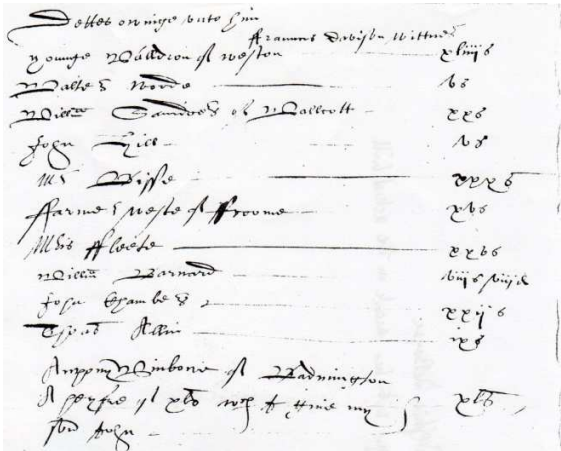
<sup>1</sup> This image and the one below are available as scalable images as downloads if they are not legible in this document

In his excellent book 'A Community at War' (Lansdown Press 1992) Dr. John Wroughton writes on page 50: 'John Boyce, aged 37, who completed the original membership of this pro-parliament faction in 1642, is a much more obscure figure'. In his later book 'Stuart Bath' (Lansdown Press 2004) Dr. Wroughton corrects this (pages 26 and 126-129) by providing some detail about John Boyse's involvement in the contentious affairs of the City authorities and in the Post Office, and he kindly acknowledges the unpublished material which I provided and which is again referred to with his permission in this paper. I try to throw some additional light on my 7xgreat grandfather and his family, based on amateurish research conducted mainly in the 1980s-early 1990s and helped by Robin More and several other Bath historians such as Mrs. Aubrey Emonet, Colin Johnston, Elizabeth Holland, Mrs. M. Oliver and, later, John Wroughton.

First I must point out that the name of the family evolved in the seventeenth century from deBoyse or deBoyce pre-1615, through Boyse, Boyce, Boyes, Bois until about 1660 when Boys became more standard, John himself signing Boys on many documents though his brother Robert's family preferred Boyse. In a few places John writes 'Boys' with two dots over the 'y', not quite 'Boijs', which may possibly suggest a continental influence ?

I can find no trace of the family in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and suspect that John's father Stephen (Steeven) may have come from the continent, deBoyse being found in early Huguenot records. There were Huguenots at Glastonbury in the 1550s but no records survive. (The Great Red Book of Bristol shows a William de Boys in 1508). The registers of St. Peter & St. Paul (Bath Abbey) and St. Mary-at-Stall (a nearly defunct church very near by) show the baptisms of Robert in 1603 and John in 1605, sons of Stephen and Anne DeBoyse. A daughter Dorothy was baptized in 1607 but buried in 1609. Stephen died in 1612, presumably fairly young because Anne remarried later that year to Anthony Kingston, vintner and later alderman, and survived to 1643.

Stephen left a Will, (inventory shown) which he signed, identifying himself as a cook. He left each of his two sons £13 6s.8d. and sundry beds, bedding, brass and pewter crocks, etc.(but not silver) stating in which rooms they could be found. He left 10s. to his servant Margaret Hobbes, and 10s. to Prudence deBoyse who was presumably his sister or possibly his niece. Prudence married Andrew Morley in 1615 and they with their children receive occasional mention in subsequent Bath records. Attached to the Will is a list of 11 people who owed Stephen money totalling £11 3s 8d, two of them being farmer Weste of Frome and Anthony Winborne of Badmington (sic). All of this suggests that Stephen was, at a modest level, a prosperous tradesman, rather more a caterer than just a cook, with widely scattered clients.



For many years after 1612 no records have been found, in Bath or elsewhere, for Robert and John. Stephen's will makes some provision for their upkeep and education if their mother Anne remarries to a husband unwilling to take them on, but it is clear that Anne and Antony Kingston remained in close contact until their deaths. There is no evidence of either of the brothers being labelled with a trade description. In 1622 there is a Lease Indenture by the Mayor and Aldermen of a tenement in Westgate Street to George Kingston vintner and Ann his wife and Francis their son, with Anthony Kingston and John Godden representing the lessors. George and Francis appear in Anthony's will, 1641, as his brother and nephew. Much more important is a Lease Indenture dated 1623 by the Mayor and Aldermen to Anthony Kingston vintner, Anne his wife, and Robert son of the late Stephen Boyse cook; this refers to a tenement lying in the corner of the churchyard of St. Mary Stall, between the tennis court to the east, the tenement of Robert Fry south, the tenement of the said Anthony Kingston north, and opening onto the churchyard west. This document is the first in a series referring to this property which prove the later Boys family connections and about which more follows later.

Robert's first marriage, to Sarah Maior, appears at Claverton in 1628/9. Fortune Boys buried in Bath in 1632 may well have been an infant daughter, and Sarah baptised and buried at St. Peter and St. Paul in 1634/5 certainly was. William, their son, was baptised in 1632/3. They also had a daughter Ann who married Henry Parker apothecary in 1654; her baptism in Bath is not found but there is a baptism for Ann daughter of Robert and Sara Boys in 1629 at St. James Clerkenwell (London) which might be relevant. At some time around 1640 Robert married again, to Florence (surname unknown); in 1644 a daughter Elizabeth was baptized at Claverton (parents Robert Boyes (sic) gent and Florence) but she was buried in Bath in 1645/6; a daughter Florence was baptized in Bath in 1646 and in 1675 she married Edward Chraft there; a second Elizabeth was baptized in Bath in 1649. The Boys line descending from Robert soon became extinct because his son William died in London in 1665, probably of the plague. There is no evidence that Robert was involved in local politics and he probably lived in Claverton evolving towards the status of 'gent'! He did however acquire a grant for lives on the Bath House in Stall Street in 1645.

William's will (proved PCC Jan 1665/6) is written at the New Inn, Middle Temple, where he was studying law. He names his late father Robert, his stepmother Florence, his stepsisters Frances (should be Florence) and Elizabeth, his sister Ann Parker and her son Henry who is principal beneficiary, Ann's husband Henry apothecary who is executor, and Anne Wiche servant to his late aunt Maior who must be his mother Sarah's sister or sister-in-law (there are other Maior references in the documents); also he mentions property in Bath. This property is identified in a Lease Indenture 1661/2 by the Mayor and Aldermen to William; it names two tenements joined into one adjacent to that of John Boys and the tennis court described above, and appears to be the one formerly occupied by the Kingstons.



Robert himself, now described as 'gent', is named (deceased) with his wife Florence and son William in another Lease Indenture 1657, relating to a property in Lincombe/Widcombe where there is a shared interest with William Colthurst and Thomas Gibbes the elder. Robert had died in 1653 leaving a nuncupative will (PCC) naming his wife Florence as executrix and his son William. Anne Boyse was a witness along with William Bissell and 'Clonnie' Boyse which must surely be a nickname for Florence. There is a memorial plaque for Robert Boyes (sic) gent of this city, ob.18 May 1653, in the Abbey (found in Miscellanea Genealogica 1884); there is another for Henry Parker apothecary and alderman, ob.2 January 1674 aged 44. Florence, as a widow paid Hearth Tax in 1664/5 on a property in Stall Street, and she was buried in 1688/9 at St. Peter & St. Paul.



Anthony and Anne Kingston have appeared several times above. Anthony was a vintner and an alderman who was Mayor of Bath in 1634 but he had died before the Matthew Clift and Henry Chapman factions developed in 1642 at the outbreak of the Civil War leading to many years of confrontation in the City Council. There are infrequent references to Antony in the Council Books and Chamberlain's accounts. In 1640 Anthony died and Anne followed in 1643, both leaving wills proved in the PCC in 1640/1 and belatedly in 1647 respectively. Anthony wished to be buried near his step-daughter- in-law Sarah Boys's grave. In Robert's family he mentions Florence, William (godson) and Ann(e) as identified above. In the Kingstons he names brother George and his son Francis, grandsons Anthony, William, George and Thomas, also three unnamed granddaughters. Robert's brother John and his two unnamed daughters are included, and the executors are his wife Anne and Robert. He names five servants one of whom, Theophila Gittis, will prove to have an important role as this history unfolds.

In her will Anne mentions most of the individuals named by Anthony, plus 'cousin' Margaret Parker widow and her sons George and Thomas, also a mostly different list of servants but including Theophila Gittis again. These Parkers, plus Margaret's then living husband George, a carpenter, are the lessees in a Lease

Indenture of 1634. Margaret was buried in 1661 at St. Peter & St. Paul; the sons George and Thomas were baptized in 1628 and 1632, and George senior's marriage at Claverton in 1627 gives Margaret's surname Ball. There is a will dated 1637 of Christopher May Esq. of Hartham near Corsham which mentions Mrs. Margaret Parker, perhaps the same. There are entries in the 1641 Survey of Leases for Kingston, Parker, May and Ball. All this suggests but does not prove that Anne's maiden name could have been Parker or Ball or May.

There are half-a-dozen Gittis entries in St. Peter & St. Paul. registers, but no Theophila. Gittis does not show in the 1641 Survey, but Thomas is in the 1661 Subsidy Roll. In fact nearly all the people mentioned so far still living (but not William Boys in London) are included in this Roll. That also applies to almost all the witnesses to all the wills referred to, though I have not here named them, and this applies also to the 1664 Hearth Tax lists. The Chamberlains accounts for 1651, when John Boys was in charge of the postal service, show a payment to Gittis for going to Marshfield which was the collecting point for the Bath mail using the London-Bristol route.

Now at last I return to the subject of John Boys himself. I have told of his baptism in 1605, but for the next 35 or so years I can find no written mention of him. However at some time and place he married, but to whom I cannot discover. She was probably dead by 1641 because she is not mentioned in either of the Kingston wills, which do however as previously stated name their daughters Frances and Elizabeth. In 1657 Frances married Henry Moore apothecary whose father of the same name was a member of Matthew Clift's faction on the Council. At some time before 1653 John married Theophila whom he had 'adopted' from his late mother, and they had a son John junior, but I must delay this part of the story until John's career has been sketched. This marriage and the son's baptism are not recorded, but this was regularly the case during the Commonwealth; indeed John as a Justice of the Peace could almost have legitimized his own marriage as he did for several other couples!

John was an ardent puritan and he reappears as a member of Matthew Clift's parliamentary faction from 1642, also he is mentioned in Popham/Smyth correspondence in 1640. Alexander Popham was then Commander of the Bath Regiment of Trained Guards and Member of Parliament for Bath. By 1642 John was a Council member, and in 1643 he took refuge in Bristol during an occupation by royalist soldiers, but became a Constable later that year and gained his freedom in 1644 when John Parker was Mayor. From 1645 to 1655 he paid rent for his lodgings, in 1645/6 he paid for his seal, and right up to his death in 1680 he paid rent for his bath-door, while in those years he was an Overseer of Bath Common (agricultural land north and west of the City). In 1647 there was a payment for wine when Mr. Boys and Mr. Abbott came from Littlecote (the Wiltshire home of Mr. Popham). In 1646/7 he was a Bailiff; in 1648 there is a receipt for John and Mr. Longe for £13 baileywick. In 1648 he started to take responsibility for the Post and was officially appointed postmaster in 1652. There are many references in the Chamberlain's accounts to postal charges and expenses relating to the post, some referring to post-horses (three generations of his successors in Sherborne, Dorset, were also involved with post-horses as can still be seen today in the notice placed over the lintel of the former Angel Inn when occupied by Sampson Boys junior (1726-1790): 'Licensed to Hire Post-Horses'). In 1650/1 he was on a committee (which included his brother Robert) charged with investigating improvements to navigability on the river. In 1653 he was cosignatory of a letter to Mr. William Prynne who had been appointed Recorder (or legal adviser) in 1647, and was later elected Member of Parliament for Bath in 1660. In 1654 and 1655 John Boys was paid for entertaining Mr. Stidman and Mr. Harrison. In 1654 he was an alderman, in 1655 mayor elect, and in 1656 he became Mayor. He was also a Justice of the Peace. In 1661, when still an alderman, he and his faction were arrested and imprisoned briefly at the instigation of Henry Chapman's royalist faction. But he was back in office as a J.P. and alderman in 1662 (for the details of all this I refer the reader to Dr. Wroughton's books mentioned in the first paragraph). However, later in that year, he and the other members of Clift's old parliamentary faction were expelled from the Council under the terms of the Corporation Act. This enabled royal commissioners to remove not only those who failed



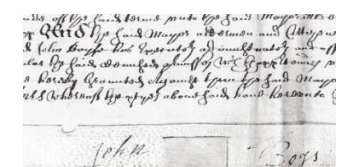
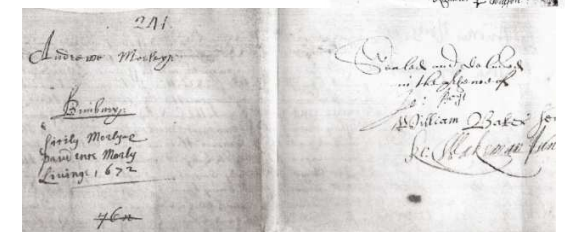
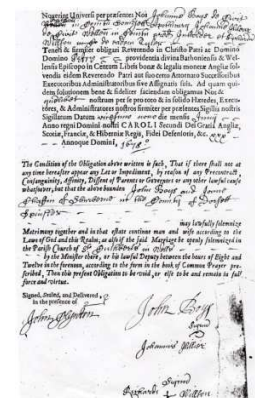
to take the oath of allegiance to both king and church, but also those deemed to be a threat to 'the safety of the public'. Chapman and his old royalist faction therefore were now in an unassailable position to control the Council. Later in 1662 John and others were again arraigned by Henry Chapman and others concerning £29 3s 5d owed to the Abbey, and from that point onwards he left the Council and remained in obscurity in his tenement by the King's Bath until his death and burial, without surviving will or memorial, in 1680. He was however briefly arrested in 1663 for alleged treason; the Council paid £1 4s. 0d to have him arrested and 5s .0d. for horses to carry witnesses against him to the Assizes. He was assessed for Hearth Tax in 1664/5 on ten hearths (perhaps amalgamated) in Cheap Street, and he paid for his Bath lodging licence in 1663 and 1673. It is clear that he was a man of some wealth but he is never referred to as 'gent'; the title 'Mr.' is however applied to all the males in the family over succeeding centuries.

First a brief comment on the tenement involved in all these leases. There were two tenements which stood at the corner of the King's Bath next to the tennis court (of course decades before the Pump Room was built). John had control over the access to the Queen's Slip with steps leading to the Bath which I believe are still visible, and also over access to the tennis court. (It is a strange coincidence that the writer, also John Boys, lived within a few feet of a real tennis court in Dorset from 1958 to 1968 and played regularly until 2001!). There is a licence granted to demise the tenement in 1673 in addition to the Indentures. For part of the time the two tenements appear to have been more or less merged into one.

I was fortunate to inherit genealogical material identifying my 6 x great grandparents as John Boys, postmaster and apothecary of Sherborne, and his wife Joan nee Chaffin. John was supposed wrongly and on flimsy evidence to stem from the great Boys family of Kent. He first appeared in Sherborne in 1678 and he died there in 1724 leaving a will. Joan was born in Sherborne in 1654 and her father John Chaffin was also intermittently the postmaster. The Chaffin and Sampson (Joan's mother) families are traceable in Sherborne back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. I found a marriage licence and then the marriage record for John Boys of Bath and Joan Chaffin at Wells St. Cuthbert in 1678. This started my research in Bath for this John's parentage, and the coincidence of postal responsibilities suggested that the John of Bath and John of Sherborne could possibly be father and son. John junior witnessed a Chancery Deposition in 1703 giving his age as 50, but for reasons already given no baptism record in 1653 could be found in Bath. Further strong evidence appeared when I found that John junior had paid for the tolling of the bell at Sherborne Abbey (vestry accounts) for his mother Mrs. Theophila Boys in 1686. The final proof that the Johns were father and son was found in the Bath City Lease Indentures.

All the following Indentures clearly refer to the same tenement by the King's Bath and tennis court. 1623: Grant to Anthony and Ann Kingston and Robert Boyse. 1633: Grant to the same persons of two adjacent tenements, rent 30s. 1656: Grant to John Boys to demise 25 years for 42 years, taking him and his assigns to 1698. 1661/2: Grant to William Boyse gent of New Inn, son of Robert, for 21 years lease of two tenements now joined into one. 1695: Grant to John Boyse (junior since senior was deceased) to drown (cancel) 3 years and take a new 99 year lease on the lives of himself, his wife Joan and John their son (my ancestor, baptised in 1679 and later apothecary of Cerne Abbas). 1705/6: The Council agree to recover the lease from Mr. John Boyse of Sherborne (so stated) for £140, while also acquiring neighbouring properties from Mr. John Amor for £400. The purpose was to dismantle the buildings and make way for the new Pump House. I note also that payments for rent of the tenement continue almost annually 1680-1705 in the name of Mrs. Boys or John Boys.

That completes the story for which this essay is intended. I should perhaps mention that there was a Samuel Boys (Boyce)



innkeeper in Westgate Street and a William Boys (Boyce) in Bath into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, apparently from Marksbury, (William son of Samuel and Elizabeth Boye (sic) baptised 1675), and also an unidentified Mrs. Catherine Boys widow buried in 1664 – none of these has proved connections to my family. I can find no link to the much researched armigerous Boys family of Old Sock near Yeovil (1623 Visitations etc.).

© John V. Boys M.A. 2014.

Sources:

Parish Registers and Transcripts: St. Peter & St. Paul, Bath (Harleian Soc.); St. Mary-at-Stall (Dwelly); Claverton; Marksbury; St. James, Bath; Sherborne Abbey (also vestry records); Wells St. Cuthbert (also Marriage Licences, Jewers).

Bath City Documents and Transcripts (Record Office, Library): Council Minutes (Shickle), Chamberlain's Accounts (Shickle); Lease Documents (Furieux) and 1641 Survey (Jean Manco); Bath Abbey M.Is. (Abbey records and Miscellanea Genealogica and Heraldica 1884); Hearth Tax 1664/5 (PRO Class E179); Lay Subsidy Roll 1660/1. Also Chancery Depositions: Warry v Abbott 1656; Martin v Hayne 1704.

Wills: Stephen deBoyse (PRO 1612) (also Somerset Wills Index, Medlycott); Anthony Kingston (PRO 1640), Anne Kingston (1643); Robert Boyse (PRO 1653); William Boyse (PRO 1665); John Boys (Dorset RO 1724); Joan Boys née Chaffin (Dorset RO 1731).

Printed material: Visitation 1623 (Harleian Soc.); Somerset Record Society; Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries; The Chaffin Family (P. & S. Drake); various Bristol publications; Huguenot Society Publications. Books: 'A Community at War' (Wroughton 1992); 'Stuart Bath' (Wroughton 2004);

Sundry letters and m/s communications: R. H. More extensively 1980s; Mrs. A. Emonet; Mr. C. Johnston (Bath Guildhall); Mrs. E. Holland; Mrs. M. Oliver; Dr. J. Wroughton; others.

For members of ancestry.co.uk the Boys family tree is available at <http://trees.ancestry.co.uk/tree/1090825/family?cfpid=-1513572004>