

# Quest for the Crest



The Crest and Motto illustrated above have been familiar to several generations of the Wilkinson family. The Crest was used on cutlery and, with the Motto "Praesto et Persto" appeared on a Bookplate made for Rev Alfred Wilkinson (1810-1868).



Bookplate



Crest on tableware



Plaque with Crest

In more recent times Plaster of Paris plaques carrying the Crest were made to give as presents to several family members.

Until recently however the origin of the Crest remained unknown to the family. In November 2012 Joanna Guariglia, who is linked to the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies (IHGS), contacted me. She was researching the family for a family friend, the Rev Canon Simon Wilkinson a descendant of Rev Alfred Wilkinson. I provided Joanna with some family material and she found a reference to the award of the crest to William Wilkinson in 1564 (see below).



## Wilkinson "Arms" and "Crest"



Somewhere around the year 1455 Roger Wilkinson (d 1547), a tanner, was born in Barnsley, Yorkshire. Whether he was our direct ancestor is uncertain but he, along with his son John Wilkinson (c1485 - 1556) and his grandson, William Wilkinson (c 1510 - c 1570), appear to have links to our forebears?

During a similar time period (late fifteenth / early sixteenth century) a John Wilkinson (d 1521) was a draper and alderman in London. He had Arms (see Branche family below) which were described in heraldic terms as "Gules, a fess vair, in chief a unicorn passant between 2 mullets or,". The word "Gules" indicates a red shield. "In chief" refers to the top third of the shield and "unicorn passant" describes a unicorn walking across the shield with head facing forwards. "Fess" is a transverse band across the middle of the shield and "Vair" is a variegated pattern, usually blue and white, in this area of the shield. The 2 "Mullets" refers to two five pointed stars (said to resemble a "spur"). The "or" indicates that the Mullets are coloured gold.

The grant of Arms to John Wilkinson took place in 1519. It is not known when an earlier grant of similar arms had been made to this family, but there is documented evidence of similar Arms held by Wilkinsons during the previous century. This John Wilkinson did not have any surviving sons to inherit the arms and the arms passed to his daughter Joane Wilkinson, who married John Branche. Their son, Sir John Branche, was a Lord Mayor of London in 1580. Curiously the Grant of Arms has some differences from the description given above - the Unicorn was "courant" (e.g. running) rather than "passant".

The relevance of these very clearly described Arms is that they are for practical purposes the same Arms as those which were confirmed as being held by William Wilkinson of Bolton upon Dearne, at the time that he was given the Crest (see below). This makes it probable that John Wilkinson in London was related to Roger Wilkinson of Barnsley. The implication from this is that the

Arms were awarded in an earlier generation and passed down several branches of the family, with some minor changes in detail (referred to as "differencing"), as usually occurred when Arms passed to other sons than the eldest (who was allowed to retain the original Arms).

The link is through the fact that in 1563/4 a new Crest was granted to William Wilkinson, of Bolton upon Dearne, and a Coat of Arms was confirmed as being owned by the family. The Coat of Arms had evidently belonged to the family earlier, but the Crest appears to have been new. The Crest - a Fox's Head with a Bird's Wing in its mouth is one which is very familiar to our family. It may be assumed that it was "inherited" by Joshua Wilkinson (upholder) and his father, Joseph Wilkinson (clothier from Leeds). Certainly this crest has been known to multiple descendants of William Wilkinson (1763 - 1833) and it seems reasonable to assume that he had acquired it from his father and from earlier generations of Wilkinsons. The origin of the Motto "Praesto et Persto", on the other hand, remains completely unknown. This Crest, with some "differencing" appears to have been used by several branches of Wilkinsons in the West Riding of Yorkshire and in Derbyshire in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Several pedigrees exist that document branches of Wilkinsons in Pontefract, Manningham (Yorkshire), and in Blackwell in Derbyshire. Unfortunately the linkages between these various pedigrees are not established, but all these branches of the family used the same (or very similar) Arms and Crest - making it probable that they were all closely related? Another linked family, with a pedigree that starts in Yorkshire, but with descendants in Berkshire, is "Wilkinsons of Lawrence Waltham". This family also used similar Arms and Crest. The first of the family was Thomas Wilkinson of Eland in Yorkshire and his wife Isabel Wilkinson, who may have been a cousin? Isabel was said to be daughter and heiress of Christopher Wilkinson of Eland. The Arms might have come from Thomas Wilkinson or his wife's family? If they were cousins both might have had the right to carry similar Arms. Both Thomas's father (supposedly Robert Wilkinson) and Christopher Wilkinson would have been born around 1530 - 1550 and hence might have been sons of William Wilkinson to whom the Crest was given in 1564?

They are not specifically mentioned in the pedigree of the Wilkinsons of Bolton upon Dearne, which appears to have been provided by Francis Wilkinson at the time of the Herald's visitation of Yorkshire in 1584 (only Francis and his brothers Patrick and John were shown, along with a sister Elena). At any rate the fact that this family carried similar Arms and Crest makes it probable that the families are linked?

### **Vicars of Halifax:**

Further research on these Arms reveals that an even earlier Wilkinson who carried very similar Arms was Thomas Wilkinson, "Vicar of St John the Baptist Church" in Halifax from around 1437 until his death in about 1480. He was responsible for much restoration of the church and for the installation of the East Window. His Arms were painted on the church ceiling. He was probably born in around 1410? The description of the Arms is: "Gules, a fess varie, in chief an unicorn currant, argent, between two roses or, in a bordure ---" Insofar as his period as "vicar" was before the reformation one assumes that he was a Roman Catholic priest and would probably have inherited the Arms from his father? This suggests that the grant of Arms to an earlier Wilkinson may have gone back even earlier - perhaps into the late fourteenth century?

Two centuries later another Vicar of the same church, Joseph Wilkinson who was born about 1651, carried very similar Arms, which were also painted on the church ceiling after his death in 1711. His Arms are described: "Gules, a fess vaire, in chief an unicorn passant or, in a bordure. ...". He had previously served as a minister in churches in Dublin and in Wiggington in Yorkshire, before being appointed as Vicar of Halifax by King William III in 1691. This Vicar would have been a Protestant minister and is known to have had a number of children, one of whom also carried the name Joseph. It is probable that both these priestly Wilkinsons came from related families, albeit separated by many generations.

Though at this stage only a matter of speculation, it is possible that the son of Rev Joseph (1651 - 1711), who was also named Joseph and who was probably born around 1680, may have been the same individual who went on to become a clothier in Leeds and fathered Joshua Wilkinson and his brother William?



Arms of Wilkinsons of Hilcote Hall,  
Derbyshire

Wilkinsons of Bolton upon Dearne,  
Yorkshire. 1564

Illustration assembled from Heraldic  
description of Arms (1564)



Grant of Arms to John Wilkinson (of London) 1519  
(note the 'Unicorn Courant' {running})

# Wylkynson.

Roger Wylkynson of Barnsley. = . . .

John Wylkynson son & heyr of Roger. = Elsabeth daughter of John Snell of Rotherham. William Wylkynson 2 son. Thomas 3 son a Clerke.

Thomas Wylkynson	} dyed all sans issu.	Dorathe.	Elsabeth wyff to William Oke of Rotheram.	Ellen wyff to	John Jacson of Ederthorpe son & heyr of Rychard Jacson.
John and Henry		Ursula.	—	—	
		Fraunces.	Anne wyff to Robert Reyney of Wombwell.	—	

John Jacson son & heyr. Thomas Jacson 2 son. Ellen. Elisabeth. Edyth. Kateren.

William Wylkynson 4 son maryed to = Brydget daughter to William Sacheverell of Henshall.\* Adam 5 son. Rychard 6 son. George 7 son.

Frauncis Wylkynson son & heyr. Patryarke Wylkynson 2 son.

Note.—A new crest granted 1564, Sept. 13, per W. Flower, Norroy. Visitation 1584, p. 366.

366 VISITATION OF YORKSHIRE IN 1584/5 AND 1612.

## WILKINSON, OF BOLTON.

ARMS:—Gules, a fesse vaire, in chief a unicorn passant between 2 mullets in fesse or, all within a border engrailed of the last, entoyre of pellets.

CREST:—On a torce, argent and gules, a fox's head per pale, vert and or, holding in its mouth a wing argent.

Confirmatio amorum et concessio novæ cristæ Willmo. Wilkinson per W. Flower, Norroy, per literas patentes. Dat. 1564, 13 die Septembris, anº sexto Reginæ Elizabethæ.

Roger Wilkinson, of Barnsley. =

John Wilkinson. = Elizabeth, dau. to John Snell, of Rotheram.

William Wilkinson, of Bolton-upon-Dearne. = Bridget, dau. to William Sacheverell, of Hemshall, co. Derby.

Francis Wilkinson, of Bolton, and of Hickleton, now living, 1585. 2, Patrick. 3, John. Elena.

FRANCIS WILKINSON.

18,011, fo. 220b. 1487, fo. 130. 1394, p. 282. 1415, fo. 35b. 1420, fo. 201b. 1571, fo. 178. 6070, fo. 28b. See Dugdale's Visitation, p. 255.



Wilkinson  
Pontefract, Yorkshire

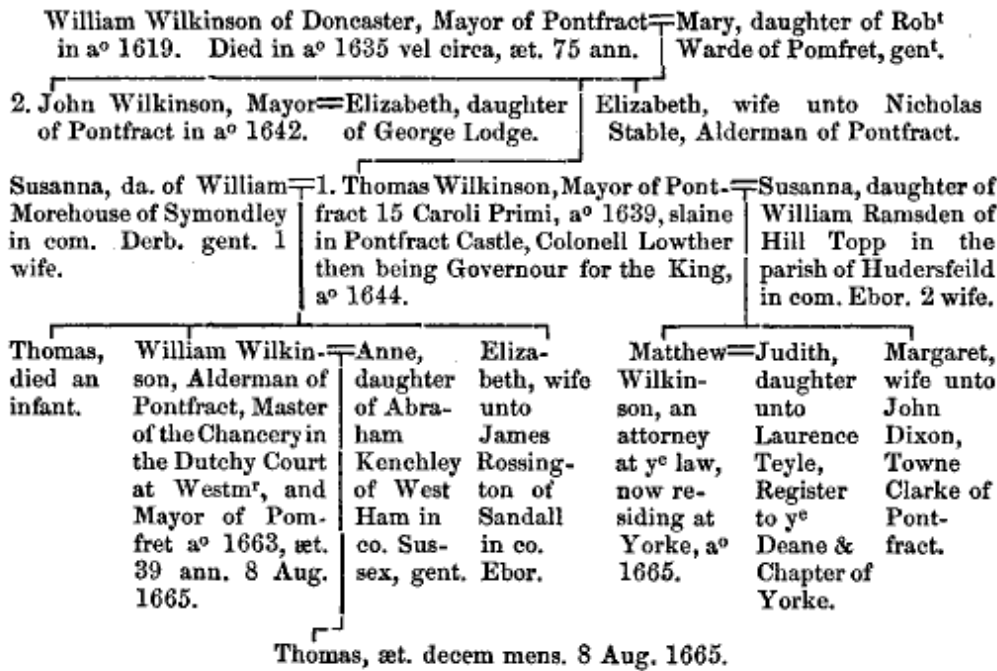
OSGODCROSSE WAPENTAKE.

*Pomfret, 8 Aug. 1665.*

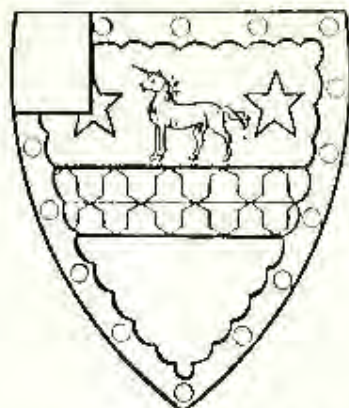
WILKINSON OF PONTFRACT.

ARMS.—Gules, a fess vair, in chief a unicorn passant or, all within a bordure engrailed of the last pelletée.

CREST.—A fox's head erased, per pale wavy vert and or, in the mouth a wing argent.



Aldbrough and Morley Wapentake.

Hallifax, 2<sup>o</sup> Apr. a<sup>o</sup> 1666.

Wilkinson  
of  
Manningham.

ARMS:—Gules, a fess vair, in chief a unicorn statant between two mullets Or, all within a bordure engrailed of the last and pelletée, a canton Azure.  
CREST:—A fox's head crested, per pale wavy Vert and Or, charged with a trefoil slipped Gules, in the mouth a wing Argent.

- I. *RICHARD WILKINSON*, of Manningham, in com. Ebor., a branch of the family of the Wilkinsons of Bolton upon Dearne, in com. Ebor., died in anno 1648 or thereabouts, ? bur. at Bradford 16 Sept. 1647; mar. Anne, daughter of John Mortimer, of Clayton, in com. Ebor. They had issue—
    1. Thomas (II).
    2. William Wilkinson, had issue.
    3. Nicholas Wilkinson, had issue.
  1. Anne, wife of Thomas Ellison, of Shipley, in com. Ebor.
  2. Mary, wife of Thomas Killingberk, of Ollerton-Gledho, in com. Ebor.
- II. *THOMAS WILKINSON*, of Manningham, æt. 66 annorum 6 Apr. 1666; mar. Martha, daughter of Thomas Mullison, of Bradford, in com. Ebor., ? bur. at Bradford 11 May 1663. They had issue—
  - III. *THOMAS WILKINSON*, of Manningham, ætatis 35 annor, 2<sup>o</sup> Apr. a<sup>o</sup> D. 1666; mar. Anne, daughter of Ellis Nutter, of the Forest of Pendle, in com. Lanc. They had issue—
    1. Thomas (IV).
    2. Ellis.
    3. John.
 Martha, ? mar. Francis Wright.
  - IV. *THOMAS WILKINSON*, æt. 8 annor, 2<sup>o</sup> Apr. a<sup>o</sup> 1666.





*Pedigree of WILKINSON, of Hilcote Hall,  
in Blackwell, Co. Derby.*

ARMS. *Gules*, a fesse, *Vaire*, in chief, a unicorn, passant, *Or*, all within a border, *Sable*, bezantee.

CREST. A fox's head, couped, per pale, *Vert* and *Or*, holding in his mouth a dragon's wing, *Argent*.

John Wilkinson, sen. of Hilcote-hall, gent. buried at Blackwell, 21st January, 1706.

John Wilkinson, of Hilcote hall, gent. died 3rd Nov. 1725, æt. 72, buried at Blackwell. — Anne, dau. of ..... Margaret, mar. to Mr. George Wilcock, of Brassington, yeoman; mar. settlement dated 2nd and 3rd Nov. 1688.

John Wil- Hannah Or- Anne, bapt. Olivia, bapt. Willoughby, 2nd Katherine, Stephen Wil-  
kinson, of didge, mar. 11th July, 25th Jan. son, bapt. 30th bapt. 19th kinson, esq-  
Hilcote before 1729, 1708. 25th Jan. April, 1711, obt. June, 1713. 3rd son, bap-  
hall, gent. buried 21st Feb. 1747. æt. 17; buried at Blackwell. 1719; died 16th Oct. 1793, æt. 74.

Stephen Wilkin- Zechariah, Frances, Hannah, bapt. John, eldest ..... dau. ..... Wilkin-  
son, gent. 2nd son, bapt. bapt. 30th bapt. 5th 24th Septem- son, was married, at  
29th December, Jan. 1735; March, ber, 1741; mar. Mr. William disinherited, at  
1732, brought from bur. 25th 1729. Mr. William bapt. 11th Charles Mellors, esq.-bank-  
at Blackwell, 15th June, 1774. Jan. 1736. Boot, of Black- well, whom she survived, and was buried at Blackw. 23rd Feb. 1825. and in 1785 assumed the name of Linley, of Skegby, co. Notts. ham, about 10 or 11 years ago, and was buried at Blackwell.

John Wilkinson, esq. — Frances, dau. of Mr. ..... Lavinia, married at Blackwell,  
of Hilcote hall. Slater, of Wheatley, living, 6th of August, 1780, to Robert  
a widow, anno 1850. Dodsley, of Mansfield.

John Slater Wilkin- ..... dau. of ..... Frances, born 19th Lavinia, born 13th  
son and heir, a capt. in the Derbysh. militia, dead. and bapt. 25th No- and bapt. 19th  
born 24th, bapt. 26th Feb. 1777, living 1830. vember, 1779. March, 1780.

John Wilkinson, eldest son, Stephen Wilkinson, aged about 25 years, — ..... dau. of .....  
died S. P. anno 1829, has three sons and a dau. of Doncaster.

**Wilkinson, of Laurence Waltham.**

[MS. Ashmole 851, p. 231.]

*Original Paper, MS. Rawl. D. 865, fol. 81<sup>b</sup>, marked Gratis.**Cf. facsimile of a Grant 3 Aug. 1519 (Miscel. G. et H., 2nd series, ii., 200).*

Wargrove hundred.

Thomas Wilkinson of Eland in Com: Eborum obiit 1603. = Isabell da: & heire to Christopher Wilkinson of Eland aforesaid.

Gabriell Wilkinson of Vpper Winchinden & Byshopps Wooburne in Com: Bucks obiit 17: Dec: 1658. = Margery da: of Richard Baker of Vxbridge in Com: Midd.

5. Gabriell.	4. Mathew married Elizab: da: of . . . . Baker.	3. Rich: marr: Kath: da: to Tho: Holmes of Wexham in Co: Buck.	2. John marr: Susan da: of . . . . Greene.
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1. Thomas Wilkinson Vicar of Laurence Waltham in Com: Berks ætatis 55: anno 18: Feb: 1664.	= Hester da: of William Hawteyn of Cookham in Com: Berks.	Mary wife to Thomas Collier of Fullpluck in Com: Oxon.
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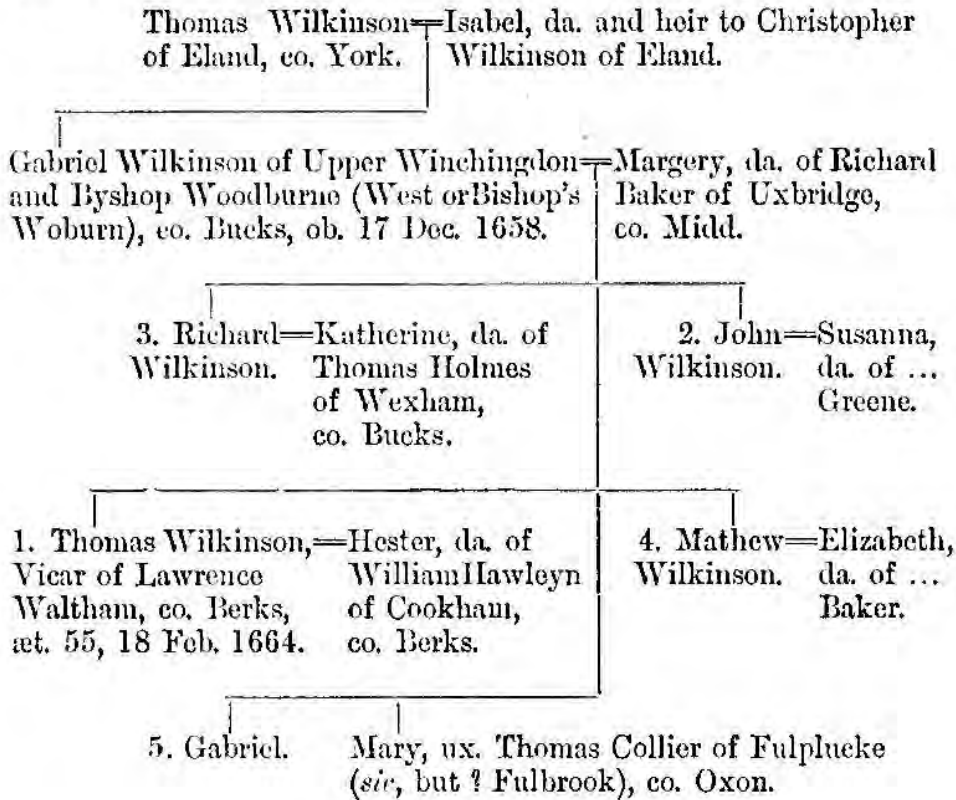
Thomas borne 13: Jan: 1661.      Elizab: borne 20: July 1659.

Certified by THOMAS WILKINSON senior.

WILKINSON of Lawrence Waltham.

ARMS.—*Gules, a fess Vair in chief a unicorn courant Or.*

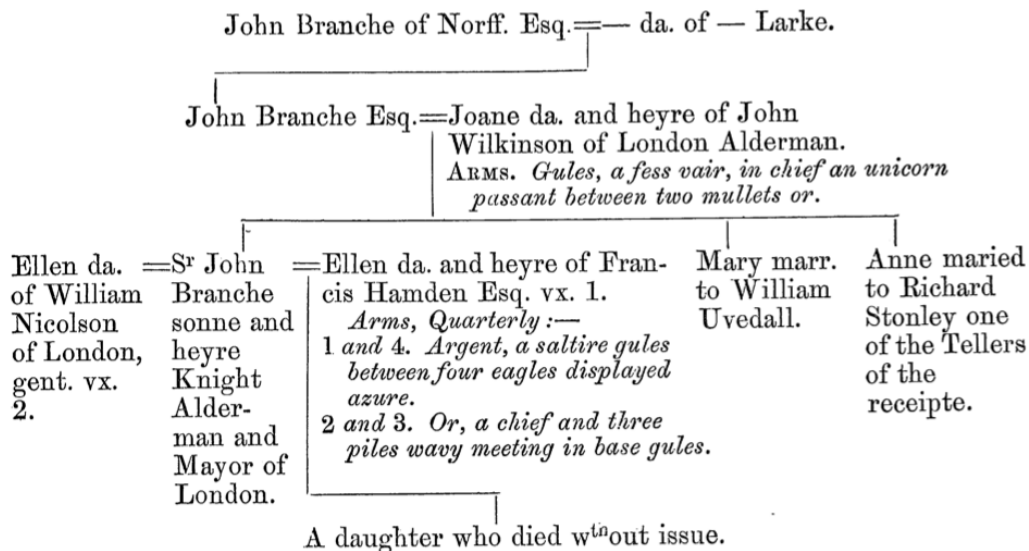
CREST.—*A wolf's head Or holding in the mouth a wing erased Argent.*



**Branche.**

ARMS. *Quarterly*:—1 and 4. *Argent, a lion rampant gules, debruised by a bendlet sable.* 2 and 3. *Gules, a fess vair, in chief an unicorn passant between two mullets or.* (WILKINSON.)

CREST. *Out of a ducal coronet or a cockatrice's head azure beaked or, combed and wattled gules.*



Whilst John Wilkinson, Alderman of London in 1517 and Sheriff in 1519, is not known to have had links with Yorkshire the following provides a link through Thomas Wilkinson, who seems to have been his cousin:

From RootsWeb - letter from Tony Houghton-Brown (New Zealand). ahbrown@nznet.gen.nz

"I have a copy of the will of Thomas Wilkinson, vicar of Harrow on the hill and Orpington, canon of Ripon, and 2nd President of Queens' College, Cambridge 1485-1505, etc, died 1511. -  
----- Thomas was a Yorkshireman, probably originally from Elland. -----He also had a cousin, John Wilkinson, who was a draper & alderman. ----- died at Orpington where there is said to be a brass monument."

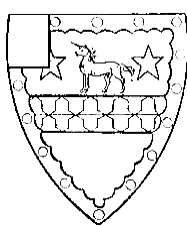
THOMAS WILKINSON, M.A., B.D. Fellow of Michaelhouse. PRESIDENT 1485-1505. Vicar and Rector of Harrow, Middx., of Orpington, Kent., of Wimbledon, Surrey, of Ecton, Northants, Dean of Shoreham, Kent, Canon of Ripon. d.1511.



Arms and Crest as held by William Wilkinson 1564



John Wilkinson  
1519



Manningham  
Wilkinsons



Lawrence Waltham  
Wilkinsons



Hilcote Hall  
Wilkinsons

**Illustrations of different arms (and crests) held by various Wilkinson families**



## Wilkinsons in West Riding of Yorkshire (c 1400 - 1711)

Map of "West Riding" of Yorkshire 1720 (Emanuel Bowen & John Owen Britannia Depicta)

1. Barnsley - Roger Wilkinson (c1455 - 1547)
2. Bolton upon Dearne - William Wilkinson (c1510 - c 1570)
3. Pontefract - William Wilkinson and descendants (c 1560 - 1635)
4. Manningham - Richard Wilkinson and descendants (c 1570 - c1648)
5. Elland - Thomas Wilkinson (c 1550 - )
6. Leeds - Joseph Wilkinson (c 1690 - c 1750)
- 7, Halifax - (Vicars) Thomas (c 1410 - 1480), Joseph (1651 - 1711)