

The Bassett Family of Sussex

The earliest mention of this Bassett Family is in the parish records of St Thomas a Beckett at Cliffe, Lewes, Sussex which record the baptism of Benjamin Bassett, a son of Henry Bassett and Ann. Attempts to find details of Henry and Ann have been met with failure. There was a Henry Bassett who had the tenancy of 5 St John Street in Southover, Lewes in 1773 but the date of Benjamin's birth was thirty four years later.. Other couples with the correct names and local residence were not old enough to have had children at the time of his birth. So his ancestry remains a mystery.

According to the parish record Benjamin was born on the 19th August 1807 and baptized on the 4th October the same year. There seems to be no evidence of his existence between then and birth of his daughter to Elizabeth in 1835. The family was then living at Chailey Common, near Lewes and Maria was baptized at the ancient church of St Peter, Chailey. There were a number of Bassett families in Chailey but it is not certain that they were connected with Benjamin and Elizabeth and the family occupations were quite different. Most of the Chailey Bassetts were carpenters or wheelwrights whereas Benjamin and his descendants were traders and carriers.

Benjamin and Elizabeth had six children, some of whom remained in Chailey while others moved out into other Sussex villages or went into service many miles away. His grandchildren were born variously in Chailey, Barcombe and Isfield.

There are a number of Bassett family members seeking their roots in Sussex and attempts are being made to establish possible links between the various Bassett families in early nineteenth century Chailey as well as to trace the ancestry of Benjamin.

Chailey is a village said to lie at the very centre of Sussex and was once considered to be one of the poorest in the county. It has its own website at <http://www.chailey.net/>

Bassett websites include-

"A Fractured Bassett Family History" at <http://www.communicate.co.uk/sussex/thebassetts2/>
and <http://www.bassettbranches.org/>

There is also a Bassett Family Forum at <http://genforum.genealogy.com/bassett/>