

The Jeffreys' lands.

The new owner was Jeffrey Jeffreys, of the Jeffreys family in Brecknockshire, south Wales (he is recorded as Geoffrey Jeffreys in his admission to Inner Temple in 1670ⁱ).

Brecknockshire is across the border from Herefordshire in England. It is described as 'rural and mountainous'. Rainfall is high, farm land is mainly pasture and transport is along the river valleys. The county town of Brecon is 20 miles inland from the south Wales coast. In 1809 Theophilus Jones published a History of Brecknockshire, updated in 1909 by Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, in two volumes. It draws together older records and more recent oral history and knowledge. Following the eighteenth century interest of gentry in heredity, the History also contains trees for the Brecon families of Jeffreys and Morgan.

Brecon Priory in the centre of Brecon is next to the church of St John, built by the Normans. The Priory was into private hands by Henry VIII in the Dissolution. Two different lines of Jefferys inhabited the Priory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Jeffreys of Abercynrig were first: their family home Abercynrig is a fine house built in the sixteenth century and still Grade II listed. The second family, the Jeffreys of Llywel, were from higher up the river beyond Brecon, at the town of Trecastle. Their wealth was not built on farming but from trade in London.



Llywel Parish Church of St. David. The church tower is 65 feet high and dates from the late 14th or early 15th century. "Three giant, ancient yew trees adorn the church yard." The Jeffreys family are included in the parish register from 1694, and on monuments inside and outside the church.



The Jeffreys family crest as it appeared circa 1700

In the Llywel line, three brothers from a family of eight created the wealth. Thomas Jeffreys' sons Jeffrey and Lewis; John who did not marry; and Watkin Jeffrey' sons including Jeffrey and John.

It was Thomas' son Jeffrey who bought the lease of Cantlowes in 1682 from Sir George Ent. Jeffrey was of middle age and a barrister at the Inner Temple in London. But early in the next year Jeffrey died, leaving all his estate to his older brother, Lewis Jeffreys, whom he also made his executor. Lewis found that the funds for the lease on Cantlowes had been lent by their uncle, Alderman Jeffreys. He therefore transferred the lease to Alderman Jeffreys, who paid a further £2500 'in full absolute'.

Lewis Jeffreys is (literally) a footnote in the History of Brecknockshire, as he is recorded on the Jefferys family tree as having died suddenly on a journey from Wales to Hereford. He made a nuncupative (that is, oral and unsigned) will, leaving his estate in trust to his children and a 'great guinea' to his wife, with his unmarried uncle Alderman John Jeffreys named as executor. The Welsh National Library retains a letter of October 1687 to the Mayor of Brecon from Alderman Jeffreys, including discussion of the witness statements and an inventory of Lewis Jeffreys' possessions valued at more than £100. And at the bottom, he writes a footnote describing 'a bottle of oyle sent by morning carrier which I hope come well to your hands, though not so large as I would have it, for all favours returned my thanks and as a small acknowledgment please to accept it'.

Alderman John Jeffreys (1614-1688) is a key figure in the Cantlowes history. He was not a first son, and went to London at the age of 17, to be an apprentice for the Grocer's Company. He is recordedⁱⁱ as being a Lt. Colonel in Royalist army, a prisoner

in 1645 at Dublin Castle and “compounded for delinquency in 1646/7”. By 1655 he was living in Clement’s Lane – an address which continued within his estate down to Mrs Frances Jeffrey’s death in a hundred and twenty years later. He was one of the early London merchants to take up the tobacco trade with Virginia, and by 1661 was elected Master of the Grocer’s companyⁱⁱⁱ and respected enough to be elected Alderman for Bread St ward, as well as of sufficient wealth to lose £20 000 worth of goods in the 1666 great fire of London without long-term harm. He is referred to as ‘Alderman Jeffreys’ here because that term of address was used by others, reflecting his sense of personal achievement: City aldermen more usually came from well-established families. On the other hand, also as others, he himself paid a sum of £800 quite quickly to be discharged from these Aldermanic duties.

Alderman Jeffreys did not marry, but adopted two nephews, Jeffrey and John, sons of his brother Watkin Jeffreys from Llywel. It was a successful business partnership, and both nephews were subsequently knighted and became Aldermen themselves. At Alderman Jeffrey’s death in 1689 his will (of 1686) divided his substantial estate mostly between his two nephews. Both received property in the City, particularly at St Mary Axe where they lived. Most of the lands in Wales and west of England went to Sir John, while lands in the Home Counties and London, including Cantlowes, went to Sir Jeffrey.

After Alderman Jeffreys’ death in 1689, the two brothers used their wealth to enter national politics for the Tories, and were successful in different ways. Sir Jeffrey was MP for Brecknock for most of 15 years from 1690. Sir John did not keep a seat for long in Wales, but took up with the politics of Marlborough in Wiltshire. Sir Jeffrey therefore was more directly engaged with local affairs in Brecon. And to establish his connection, he bought the Priory from the Jeffreys of Abercynig.

Colonel John Jeffreys, the head of the Abercynig Jeffreys family, died in 1689, the same year as Alderman Jeffreys. Colonel Jeffreys was a little older. He had had a successful early career with the Royalist army, and gained positions of authority in Ireland. His daughter Catherine Flower, married within an Anglo-Irish family that was heir later to Lord Palmerston. But after his death, against her father’s expressed wishes, Catherine and her husband Thomas Flower sold the Priory of Brecon to Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys – the Llywel Jefferys. Brecon was prosperous at that time. A history in 1698 celebrates a walled town with streets ‘handsome and broad’, four gates and, of seven arches across the River Usk, ‘one of the strongest and fairest stone bridges in the kingdom’^{iv}. And the Priory, ‘for its greatness and inclosures, looks more like a town than a private residence’. Sir Jeffrey, knighted in 1699, was MP for Brecon county for almost twenty years.

Yet both Sir Jeffrey and Sir John, the brothers, lived mainly in England rather than Wales. And they had jointly inherited from their uncle 'a large town house on unusually extensive grounds in St Mary Axe' where they both lived. This land is nowadays one of the most expensive places in Britain. It is the site where the Baltic Exchange stood for much of the twentieth century; where the "Gherkin" office tower was built; and adjacent there is soon to be the latest-highest tower in the city, the 72-floor 'Trellis Tower' for 10 000 city workers^v. Sir Jeffrey also bought a large estate at Roehampton.

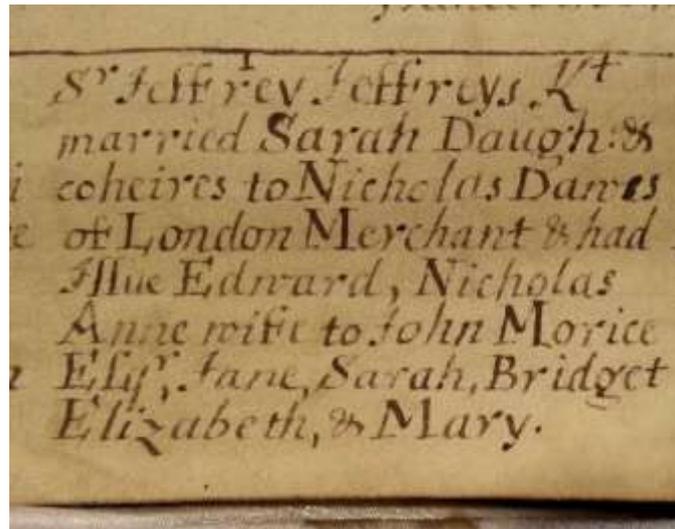


Jeffreys Square, St Mary Axe; : ^{vi}

Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys married Sarah Dawes, only child of City goldsmith and merchant Nicholas Dawes. (The Jeffreys' business interests included gold dust bought in the Gold Coast of Africa and used for currency trading in the West Indies.) There were eight living children: six daughters and two sons. At his death in 1709, Sir Jeffrey's will described properties in "Brecon, Oxford, Suffolk, St Mary Axe, Mark Lane, Middlesex, St Clements Lane, Kentish Town and Cornwall"^{vii}. He gave £6000 each to the unmarried daughters, and placed the residue of his estate with his elder son Edward Jeffreys. But, in a very clear choice, he directed properties "in Mary Axe and lands called Cantlows alt Cantlers alt Kentish Town" to his second son, requiring that Nicholas provide an annuity of £400 to 'my dear wife Sarah'. Dame Sarah died fourteen years after Sir Jeffrey, in 1723. Her will gives her residence as Kensington, and provides only modest sums (£40 each) to her two sons and (then) five daughters. The will states that she has 'given my son Nicholas Jeffreys upon his

marriage [1717] a considerable real estate exceeding £140 a year and have but a small estate to dispose'; and 'considering the circumstances of my eldest son Edward Jeffreys ... and for many other reasons, I bequest to him the residue of my real and personal estate'.

But there's more complication through family intermarriage. Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys had eight children.



Anne married (1705) John Morrice, a merchant of Quendon in Essex; Sarah married (1711) Sir Joseph Eyles, merchant in the East India company; Nicholas married (1717) Sir Joseph's sister Frances Eyles; and Elizabeth married John Pratt, the eldest son of Chief Justice Sir John Pratt (and who inherited the Pratt family home of Wildernesse at Seal near Sevenoaks, Kent).

Frances Eyles, who married Nicholas Jeffreys, was of another merchant family. Her grandfather had been Lord Mayor of London. Her father, Sir Francis, began with his older brother in trading sugar from Trinidad. He contributed to government finance of the French wars, and became a director of the Bank of England, City Alderman and, in 1714, one of the first Hanoverian baronets. Her two brothers, John and Joseph, extended the family company in a third generation, developing trade with the Levant and supporting the government as Whigs through their Wiltshire parliamentary seats. In 1711 Joseph Eyles, at the quite young age of 22, married Sarah Jeffreys – daughter of Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys; and Frances repeated the family links when, in 1717 she married Sarah's older brother Nicholas. The wedding was at St Botolph's in Bishopsgate. Nicholas Jeffreys had been admitted to the Inner Temple in 1699 and the new family lived in Bedford Row (now barrister's chambers). Nicholas was a churchwarden and active towards the Commission for Building Fifty

New Churches in Queen Anne's reign. Sir Christopher Wren rebuilt (in stone) the tower of the parish church of St Andrew's, Holborn and Nicholas Hawksmoor contributed designs for the nearby St George's, Queen Square, for which Nicholas Jeffreys was a proponent to Parliament. Nicholas' uncle John Jeffreys also negotiated to sell land at Aldgate in the east of the City to the Commission^{viii}; but his ownership of the land was disputed as wasteland belonging to the Tower.^{ix}

Frances Eyles' elder brother John, later Sir John, married Mary Styles and lived at Gidea Hall, near Romford, Essex; while Joseph, later Sir Joseph, married Sarah Jeffreys, daughter of Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys and therefore more closely allied with Frances' interests. Frances' older sister Elizabeth married John Clarke of Brickendonbury manor in Hertfordshire, but she died young in 1696; Mary, her younger sister, married William Richardson of Somerset, and they lived in Ireland. Her friendships included the writer Jonathan Swift. Later, as a widow, Mary returned to London and lived with – or near to – Frances, also then widow.

Frances Eyles married Nicholas Jeffreys in 1717. For the marriage settlement, Lady Sarah, widow of Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys, released to Nicholas one third (£140) of the annuity she received on the Cantlowes and Mary Axe estates that was due to her in Sir Jeffrey Jeffrey's will. But Edward Jeffreys, Nicholas' elder brother, had inherited most of Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys' estate. He was also named inheritor in 1709, by David Jeffreys, a cousin who had no sons and had died 'in the Madoras' with his will 'lost at sea'. Edward had been to Eton and Oxford, but he did not take on his father's business. (His personal tutor at University College, Oxford in 1694, was John Arbuthnot, and he there would have met the variety of scholars then teaching mathematics and medicine, including Dr John Radcliffe, Isaac Newton, and Samuel Pepys. Dr Arbuthnot, later a satirist and polymath in London is remembered for his contributions to mathematics, his membership in the Scriblerus Club, where he inspired both Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* book III and Alexander Pope's *Peri Bathous, Or the Art of Sinking in Poetry, Memoirs of Martin Scriblerus*, and possibly *The Dunciad*), and for inventing the figure of John Bull^x.



John Arbuthnot

Edward Jeffreys was an MP for several years, for his uncle's Marlborough parliamentary seat and for Brecon from his father's death in 1709 to the next election in 1713^{xi}. Yet apart acting as executor of his father's will (including litigation of debtors^{xii}) some property transfer (^{xiii}), there is little subsequent record of him in Britain.

And whereas Edward is described, within the will Nicholas wrote in 1734, as being of The Priory, Brecon, in 1736 it was Nicholas rather than Edward who made a donation to the new incumbent of the church of Mythyr Cynog, near Brecon ("a poor village of 900 people"^{xiv}). Possibly Edward lived out of Britain for a time: records from 1720 indicate that an 'Edward Jeffries' owned 14,000 acres of land along the Rappahannock River, north Virginia: possibly he gained this from his father, Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys, who had traded through Jamestown and had been a representative of Virginia to the British Parliament. ("Agents in Jamestown: Merchants in London associated with residents of Jamestown were also heavily involved in the slave trade. John Jeffreys, one of these merchants, owned part of a rowhouse in New Towne, and historians speculate that slaves were sold in front of the building on a wharf.")^{xv} He had no children recorded. His will was apparently made in April 1740, with probate three months later. Apart from £20 which for his servant Thomas Frasier 'in case he be living with me at my death', he gave all his estate (undescribed) to his brother Nicholas, whom he also appointed executor. In that role, Nicholas sought to pass on to his own son Jeffrey Jeffreys (Jnr) "an unspent portion" of the inheritance for the maintenance of Dame Sarah Jeffreys, before meeting debts to a certain Henry Furnese [^{xvi}] (presumably, the merchant, by then an MP, who had – with the Eyles brothers also – become rich in the 1720s through supplying British garrisons in Malta and Gibraltar^{xvii}). This would match the portion of Nicholas' marriage settlement otherwise drawn on the Cantlowes and St Mary Axe estates.

A little more can be found for Nicholas, both in London and Wales. In 1719 he had a 'farm', of 35ft by 195 ft, on 950-year lease in Albion or Jockey fields near Holborn; in 1724 he had a £2500 mortgage on Welsh properties 'in the names of John Pratt and Herbert Jennings'; and in the same year, Nicholas and Edward Jeffreys also together managed a transfer for Bridget (now Sherlock) and Mary Jeffreys (spinster), two of their sisters. There is also information about Cantlowes^{xviii}. In 1717, when Nicholas and Frances Eyles married, 'Nicholas Jeffreys did sell to John & Joseph Eyles within their actual possession the capital messuage, mansion place and manor house' of 'Cantlowes als Cantlers als Kentish Town'; that in 1727 John and Joseph Eyles, "in pursuance of the trust in them" surrendered the lease to Revd Edward Oliver (prebend), and re-gained a new lease for the lives of Edward Jeffreys, Nicholas Jeffreys and Jeffrey Jeffreys for £43 10s^{xix}; and on 9 July 1740, Rev Robert Tyrwhit,

prebend 1732-1742, renewed the lease in 'Kentish Town in middle', again for £43 10s. A schedule, dated 23 May 1744, prepared for Nicholas Jeffreys' will, lists estates in Brecon, Oxfordshire, Middlesex, London (Mark Lane) and Westminster inherited from Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys, with dates of specific transactions in the previous thirty years.

Another merchant family emerges in these years. John Morice came from an influential family at Launceston, Cornwall. His brother, Sir William Morice, was MP for Plymouth, and after the Restoration became Secretary of State to King Charles II. His sister Anne, married to Sir John Pole, still has her portrait in the national trust mansion of Anthony, near Plymouth. John Morice was a Turkey merchant and a member of the Royal Africa Company^{xx}; and his wife, Mary, was daughter of Robert Lowther, an Alderman of the City of London. Confirming their business connection, John Morice's oldest son, also John Morice, married Anne Jeffreys, daughter of Sir Jeffrey Jeffreys. The son was able to buy the manor of Newman Hall at Quendon, near Saffron Walden in Essex, in 1717; from 1722-1727 he was MP for his family's parliamentary seat at Newport, Cornwall; he died in 1735. However, the family's wealth was challenged. Humphry Morice, John Morice's cousin, who had built a substantial City trading and political reputation, and was a director and finally Governor (1726-27) of the Bank of England, was revealed at his death in 1731 to have falsified many of the trading credits he had held at the Bank over many years, and was bankrupt. His family was ruined after a series of lawsuits. Only from 1750, on inheriting the Morice family estate in Cornwall from his deceased second cousin, could his son, also Humphry Morice, rebuild a political career as MP for Newport, before retiring to his favoured city of Naples in later years. [A 1786 portrait at Hartwell shows him 'in an easy, reclining attitude, resting from field sports, with his dogs and gun, in a fine landscape scene'^{xxi}.]

Mary's father John Morice made a will in 1731 which left his estates in London and Essex in trust for his wife Anne for her life and then to be sold for his children. John Morice died in 1734; but Mary's brother, third generation John Morice, died in 1737 before the age of 21. Mary's older sister, Anne, had married Arthur Barnardiston, a Levant merchant whose father had bought the manor of Brightwell near Ipswich. But Anne died in 1731, leaving two young daughters, Mary and Anne; and though Arthur remarried, he died in 1737, while his wife lived on to 1788 in Hayes (near Hounslow), Middlesex. This left Mary and her nieces Mary and Anne, still children, litigants against the remaining extant trustee John Moyle, a cousin, and her mother Anne^{xxii}. Amid this family financial turmoil, in 1740, Mary Morice married her cousin Jeffrey Jeffreys – who had some of the Jeffreys inheritance but was proved shortly afterwards as a 'lunatick'.

A sidelight at this time is given in the sale, in 1740, of the contents and house of Sir Joseph Eyles at – literally – the same time as the contents for Edward Jeffreys: they were brothers in law through Nicholas and Frances. Sir Joseph's house was near the Bethlem hospital at Bishopsgate on land that is now Liverpool Street station and within the same ward as St Mary Axe.

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<http://www.innertemplearchives.org.uk/date.asp?surname=jeffreys&firstname=&sort=byname&date1=1547&date2=1940&submit=Search>

ii http://www.marinelives.org/wiki/John_Jeffreys

iii https://archive.org/stream/listofwardensofg00groc/listofwardensofg00groc_djvu.txt

iv The history of Brecknockshire, p51.

v <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/nov/28/trellis-1-undershaft-skyscraper-london-green-light-building>

vi Hugh Barty-King, The Baltic Exchange, London Hutchinson, 1977.

vii U840/T142 Whole estate title.

viii <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol23/pp146-158>

ix Jeffreys find refs. PRO. MS 2712 Lambeth Palace Library, not seen

x https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Arbuthnot

xi <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1690-1715/member/jeffreys-edward-1680-1740>

xii 14--C 11/12/21 29NovPRO – JeffvEyles1-4

xiii T188N

xiv History of Brecknockshire, vol2, p197:

xv <https://www.nps.gov/jame/learn/historyculture/the-royal-african-company-supplying-slaves-to-jamestown.htm>

xvi U840/T188B1

xvii <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1715-1754/member/furnese-henry-1688-1756>

xviii T188Cc

xix T188V

xx <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1715-1754/member/morice-john-1661-1735>

xxi [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Morice,_Humphry_\(DNB00\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Morice,_Humphry_(DNB00))

xxii 5--C 11/351/19 Short title: Moyle v Jefferys