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## Connecting our Lancashire Cockshutts with the Canadian Cockshutts

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Sorting out the pedigree  
of Ignatius Cockshutt

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## **Who was James Cockshutt, the patriarch the Canadian Cockshutts?**

In the search for the ancestors of my paternal grandmother, Alice Flack, nee Cockshutt, it was discovered that my 5\* Great Grandfather, Edmund Cockshutt "of Ball Greave" (born 1729-1821) left a substantial sum of money in his will to his daughter Ann Cockshutt and to her "natural son" James.

Several Cockshutt family historians have tried to find out more about James Cockshutt's parents and there is some doubt about which of their findings is accurate.

James Cockshutt was the grandfather of Henry Cockshutt (1868-1944) who became the 13th Lieutenant Governor of Ontario Canada. A book has been recently published in Canada detailing the life of the Cockshutt family. There is strong evidence that my Cockshutt family is related to the Cockshutts of Lt Gov. Henry Cockshutt.,

In this paper I first set out what has been written by two of James Cockshutt's descendants, one written by Nicholas Cockshutt (1863-1938), a great great grandson of Edmund Cockshutt, and one written by Charles Roberts then go on to the available historical records to describe the evidence available. Finally, I draw some new conclusions.

### **Starting with Ignatius' Memoires, what can we learn?**

In 1903, Frank Cockshutt (1857-1938), Ignatius Cockshutt's (1812-1901) son and James's grandson, published a history of his family entitled "Memoirs of Ignatius Cockshutt", in which he wrote in the introduction that:

- Ignatius Cockshutt was born in Bradford, Yorkshire on 24<sup>th</sup> of August 1812;
- his father was at the time engaged in a manufacturing business, in partnership with Joshua Cockshutt, a cousin;
- the firm J.& J. Cockshutt was "abandoned in 1816", the year after Waterloo and James Cockshutt went to reside at Warsaw Hill, near Clitheroe, Lancashire, where for six years he managed a farm, the property of his grandfather, Edmund Cockshutt;
- From Warsaw Hill, James Cockshutt removed to Colne, his native town and there engaged in business till 1827;
- In 1810, James Cockshutt married Mary Nightingale the daughter of a large tenant farmer of Yorkshire and became involved in the Inghamite Church;
- James and Mary had two children, Jane and Ignatius;
- James had inherited a very moderate sum from his grandfather;
- Following industrial unrest in Colne, James' family decided to emigrate to North America, leaving by the barque "Lady Digby" from Liverpool to Quebec in July 1827.

In October 2017, William Henry Cockshutt (living) authored a new history of the Canadian Cockshutts titled "Merchants Exchange: Ignatius Cockshutt, 1812 - 1901 Canadian Entrepreneur". William H Cockshutt is the great-grandson of Ignatius Cockshutt and the new book borrows extensively from his great-grandfather's book but also adds to it. He adds the following comment about his sources:

*"Most of the genealogical information in Chapters 1 and 2 was supplied to me by Dr Edwin Capstick of Padiham, Lancashire, England...Data is from Colne library and is based on old church records."*

In the chapter headed "Ann's Inheritance", the author states:

- "His (Edmund Cockshutt the Elder) will appears to break the old tradition where the eldest son inherits everything. Instead his estate was left in trust for ninety-nine years, a good decision as Joshua appears to be the only financially responsible cousin";
- On 10 January 1826, Ann died, leaving James as the beneficiary of the provision in the will for his mother;
- Quoting from Edmund Cockshutt's Will, "...given to my sister Ann the wife of Blakey Tilltson.."
- When the estate passed to James upon his mother's death, James now had the funds to migrate to America;
- Uncle Edmund's coach took them to Liverpool....a barque with three masts and square rigged sails named Lady Digby...sailed on 12 July 1827".

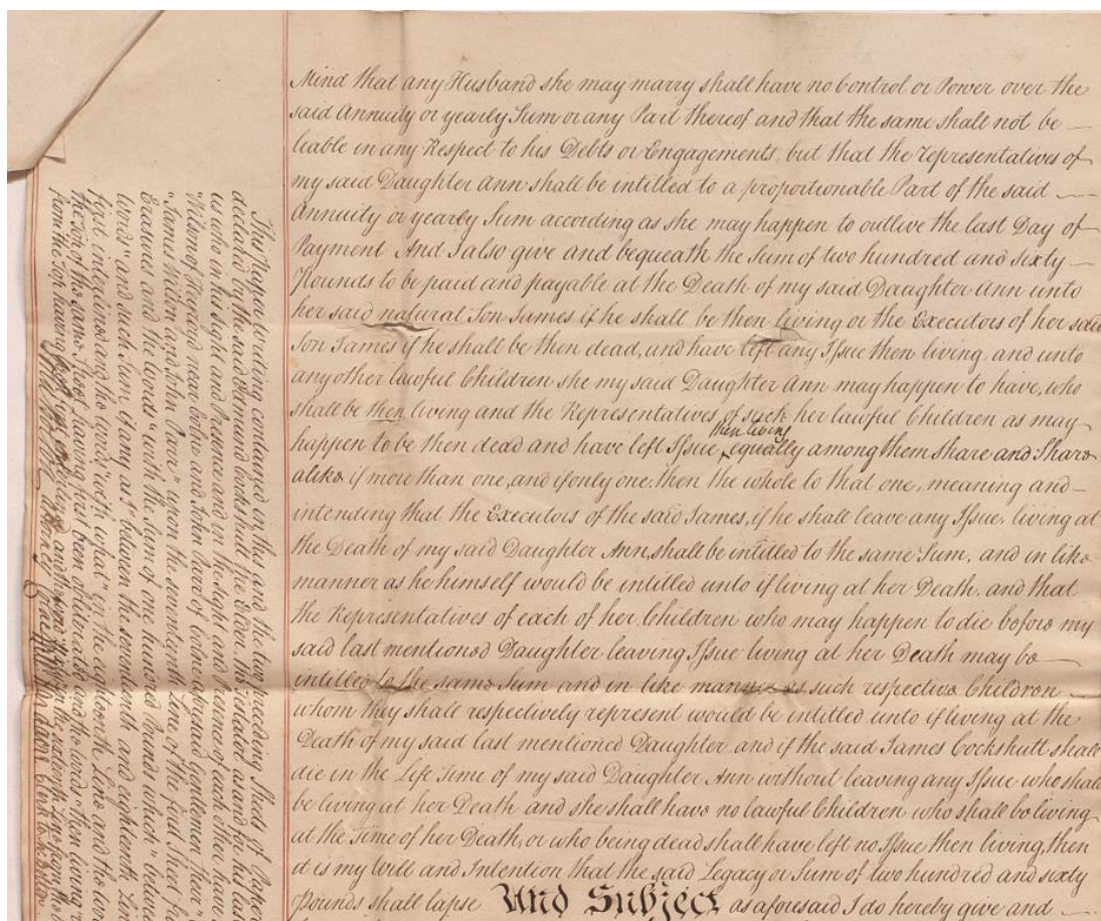
### What can we learn from the original of Edmund Cockshutt's Will?

Since both Ignatius Cockshutt and William Cockshutt refer to James' inheriting from his grandfather's will, I start by examining that will and the relevant provisions. The following clippings are from the Will of Edmund Cockshutt "the Elder of Bellgreave" near Colne dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 1803:

*I give and bequeath to my two granddaughters the children of my late son John the sum of thirty pounds to be divided equally between them. I give and bequeath unto my Daughter Betty her Executors or Administrators such sum of Money as together with what I have already advanced <sup>with the sum of one hundred pounds which</sup> and such sum if any as I shall or may hereafter advance to her or her Husband as part of her portion or fortune and ~~have taken~~ shall or may hereafter take a Receipt or Acknowledgment for the Payment of accordingly will make up the sum of two hundred and sixty pounds to be paid at twelve Months next after my Death with Interest from my Death.*

*I give and bequeath unto James Cockshutt the natural child of my Daughter Ann the sum of one hundred pounds to be paid to him upon his attaining the age of twenty one years without Interest in the mean time and if he shall happen to die before he attain that age the said Legacy so given to him shall lapse and fall into the residue of my personal Estate. I do hereby give and bequeath the annuity or yearly sum of eleven pounds and fourteen shillings unto my Daughter Ann for and during the term of her natural life to be paid and payable without any Deduction by two equal half yearly Payments, to wit, at May Day and Michaelmas during her Life and the first of such Payments to be made at the first of those Times which shall happen after my Death and I write that the said Annuity or yearly sum and all Payments in respect thereof shall be made and paid by my said Executor to the proper Hands of my said Daughter Ann during her Life and her Receipt and Receipts from Time to Time notwithstanding her Marriage or Coverture shall alone discharge my said Executor from the Payment thereof, it being my Will and*  
*Edmund Cockshutt*

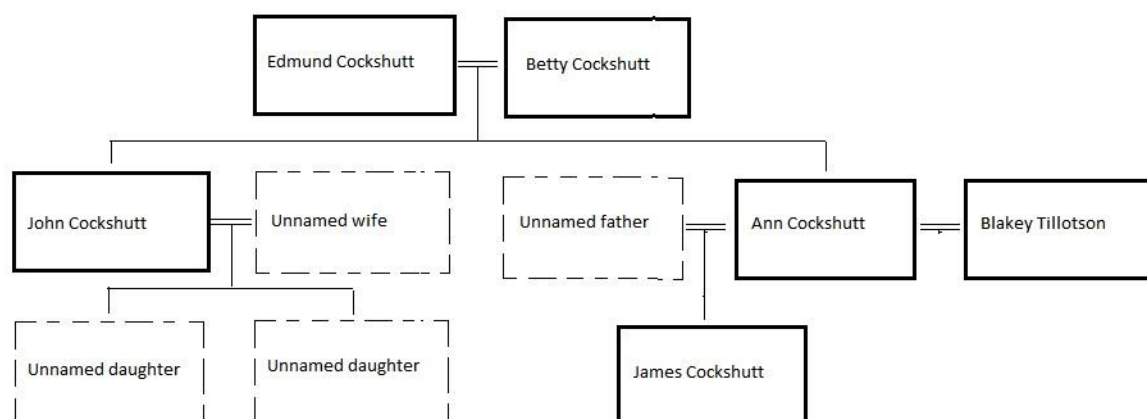
*Is of age*  
*Ann married to Mr. Tilltson*  
*J. H.*  
*M. H.*  
*C. L.*



### What can be learned about the family from the extracts from the Will?

1. The Will refers to Edmund Cockshutt (the Elder's):
  - a. "two granddaughters, the children of my late son John".
  - b. "daughter, Betty"
  - c. "James Cockshutt the natural child of my daughter Ann"
2. The use of the term "natural child of my daughter" suggests that James Cockshutt was the illegitimate child of Ann rather than an adopted child.
3. At the time the Will was written, Ann would have been 56 years of age and James would have been 20 years old.
4. It will be noted that there are two pencilled notes in the margin of the Will as follows:
  - a. Opposite the section of the Will which refers to James, the words "Is of age". If his self-reported date of birth is accurate at 1783, James would have been 20 years old at the time the Will was written, but by the time of his grandfather's death in 1821, he would have been 38 years old.
  - b. Opposite the section of the Will which refers to Ann, the words "Ann married Blakey Tillotson".
5. It seems likely that these notations were added at the time of the administration of the Will following Edmund Cockshutt's death on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1821.

So from the provisions in the 1803 Will, the following family tree can be constructed:



### What can we learn from Nicholas Cockshutt's (1863-1938) "The Cockshutt Pedigree"?

Nicholas Cockshutt was a solicitor and in his retirement, a keen family historian. In the "pedigree" that he researched and shared with his relatives he wrote:

This latter named Edmund Cockshutt (baptized at Colne in 1729 and died aged near 92 years) lived at Ballgrove, Colne, and possessed the following properties:-

Ballgrove Estate  
Emot Lane Estate  
Cotton Mills in Boulgh Gap in the Forest Trawden.  
Angram Green Estate at Worston.  
Warsaw Hill Estate.  
Hewarth Estate.  
Lawkland, in the County of York.  
Share of Mill at Halham Dale, York.  
Shares in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.  
Halifax Cloth Hall. Etc;

He had five children namely:-

John.  
Ann, who died in 1826 and was the mother of James Cockshutt who went to Canada in 1825. James apparently retained his Mother's name- not an unusual event in Country places and where, say, the Mother belongs to a family well-known and long established in the District and perhaps married a new-comer.  
Jinny, who married John Roberts of Hunterholme.  
Betty, (married name Windle).  
Edmund, who died in 1825 and is buried at Colne and who married Thomasin Walker, a descendant of the Gregson family Alderhouse, Nr. Bolton at Bowland, situate on the borders of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

It appears highly likely from the contents of the book regarding the family properties, that William H Cockshutt and Nicholas Cockshutt had access to Edmund Cockshutt's will and the provisions in it for Ann and James. Nicholas Cockshutt's pedigree contains no indication as to whether or not he had been able to locate a record of the birth or baptism of James.

William H Cockshutt acknowledges in his book that this pedigree, authored by Nicholas Cockshutt, had been sent to Ignatius Cockshutt in Canada when Ignatius and his son Frank were researching the book.

Whether the author conducted further research himself or whether he collected information from other sources, the origin of the following statement regarding James' father in the book is not known.

William H Cockshutt states:

*"Next, we found an earlier marriage to a Stephen Heaton, plus another listing for James' birth, which tells us that his father was William Cockshutt. It will take additional digging to be certain of our information, so for now we have to believe what James tells us, that he was brought up in his grandfather's home." (Cockshutt, 2017, page 11.)*

### **What can we learn from Charles Robert's (1905-1978) family tree?**

In the family history records passed down to the author by my Step, Great Uncle Charles Roberts (1905-1978), step-brother of Alice Flack nee Cockshutt (1890-1955) in 1973, Charles Roberts wrote:

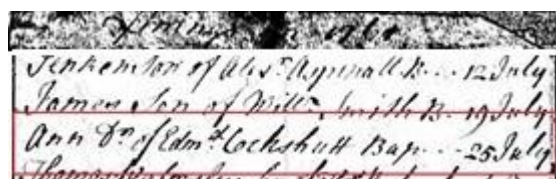
*I cannot find any record of James. There are no baptisms at all of a James Cockshutt in Colne Parish Church Register or in any I have so far come across. Joseph and Joshua are sons of Edmund Cockshutt of Ball Grove Mill Cotton Spinners and as James was at Wibsey about the same time as Joshua, one would suppose them to be related.*

Ann Cockshutt, Edmund Cockshutt's daughter, is recorded in the family tree drawn up by Charles Roberts as having been baptised on 17 December 1790 at St Bartholemew Church, Colne. However, a search of the original Baptism Register, an image of which is available through Ancestry, reveals that the baptism on that date is for a "Nancy" Cockshutt, daughter of Edmund (1753-1825) and Thomasine Cockshutt. This baptism refers to the daughter of Edmund Cockshutt's son, Edmund Cockshutt, the brother of Ann Cockshutt.

Since no entry could be found in Lancashire, Yorkshire or Cheshire for an Ann Cockshutt, born 1790 +/- 2 years, daughter of Edmund Cockshutt (1729-1821), it seems clear from the findings below that the suggestion that Ann Cockshutt, James' mother, was baptised Nancy Cockshutt in 1790 is not correct, an error likely caused by her father and her brother both being named Edmund and both regular attendants of St Bartholomew Church, Colne during the period.

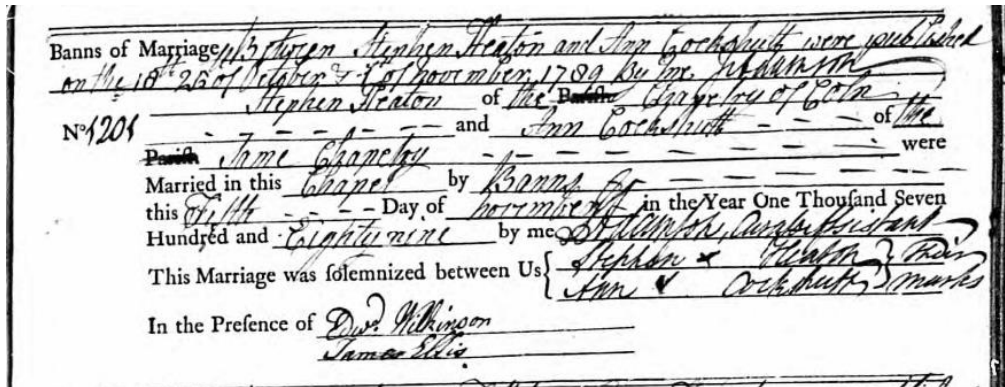
### **What historical records are available to substantiate this tree?**

First, we can establish that Ann Cockshutt, the daughter of Edmund Cockshutt (1729-1821) was baptised at Clitheroe, Lancashire on 25 July 1761 (St Mary Magdalene Clitheroe Parish Register, Lancashire, England).

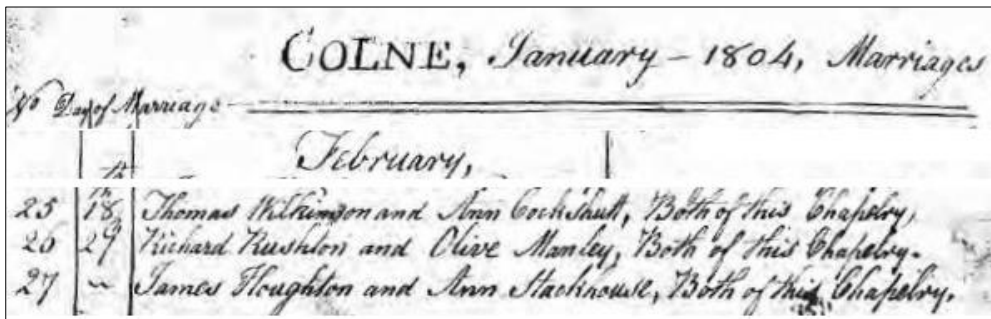


There are three marriages recorded in the local parish registers in the name of Ann Cockshutt which might assist in identifying James' father's name. Because there are several persons of that name appearing in the Lancashire parish records during the relevant period it is not possible to be sure that all are referring to the marriages of Ann Cockshutt, daughter of Edmund Cockshutt, although all three refer to Ann Cockshutt of Colne.

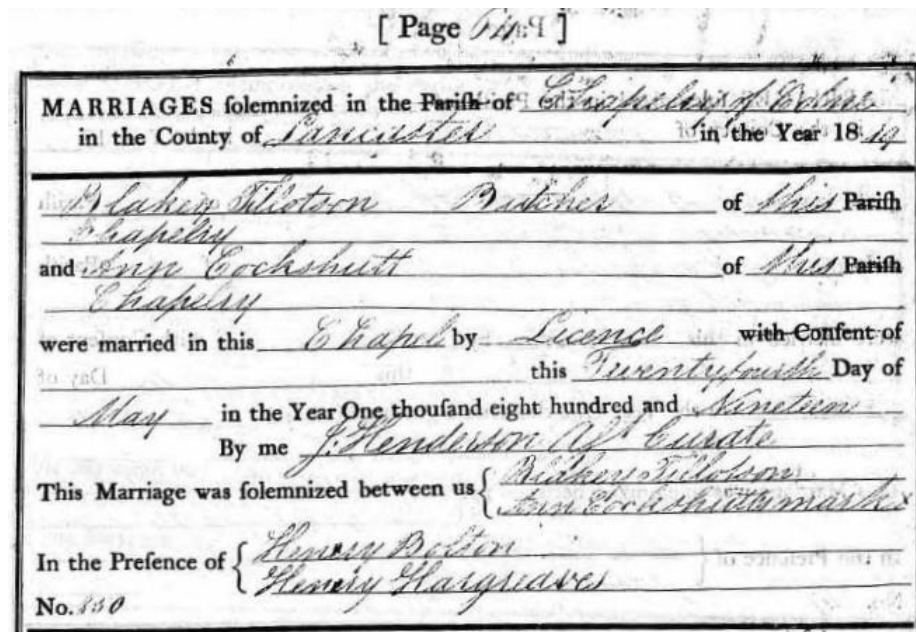
1. Ann Cockshutt married Stephen Heaton on 5 November 1789 at St Bartholomew Church, Colne, aged 28;



2. Ann Cockshutt married Thomas Wilkinson on 18 February 1804 at St Bartholomew Church, Colne, aged 43 years;

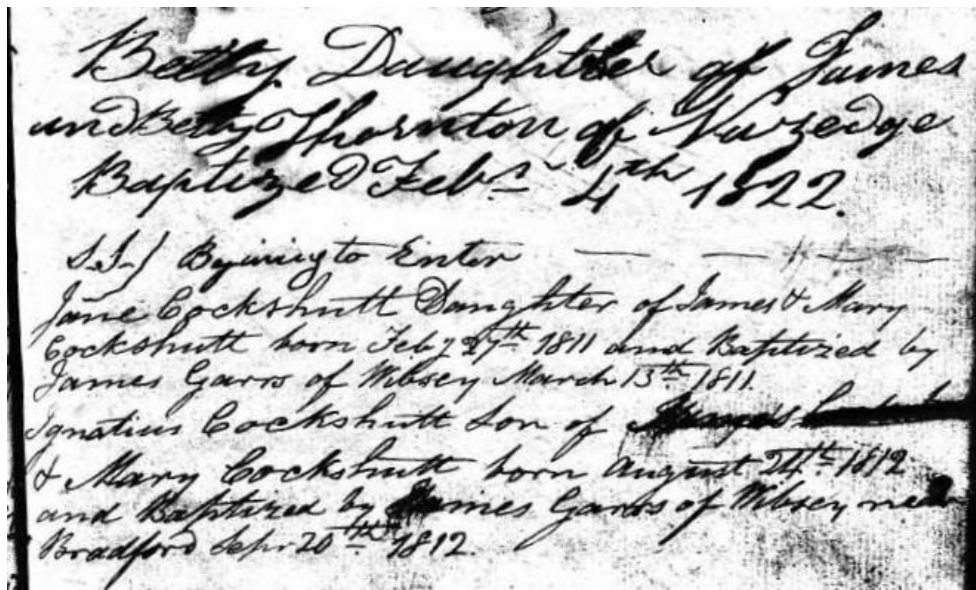


3. Ann Cockshutt married possibly for a third time on 24 May 1819 to Blakey Tilotson at St Bartholomew Church, Colne aged 58 years;



4. Extensive searches under the names Wilkinson, Heaton and Cockshutt could find no certain record of a birth or baptism of James Cockshutt, son of Ann Tilotson, formerly Wilkinson, formerly Heaton, nee Cockshutt located in the available on-line records.

5. Records of the baptism in the Wine Wall (near Colne) Inghamite Chapel of Jane and Ignatius Cockshutt were located as follows:



These record the baptisms of “Jane Cockshutt, daughter of James & Mary Cockshutt, born February 27<sup>th</sup> 1811 and baptised by James Garrs of Wibsey March 13<sup>th</sup> 1811 [and] Ignatius Cockshutt, son of [crossed out] & Mary Cockshutt born August 24<sup>th</sup> 1812 and baptised by James Garrs of Wibsey near Bradford Sept 20<sup>th</sup> 1812”.

These entries are unusual in that they appear to have been entered in the Register out of date order and refer to baptisms officiated by James Garrs of Wibsey near Bradford and not by the minister of the Inghamite Chapel at Wine Wall.

6. It will be noted that in William H Cockshutt’s recent book, it is stated that there is “another listing for James’ birth, which tells us that his father was William Cockshutt”. An extensive search of on-line Lancashire and Yorkshire Parish Records and other records available from Ancestry and Find My Past, could find no record of the birth/baptism of a James Cockshutt, son of William Cockshutt and Ann Cockshutt in the period between 1776 (when Ann would have been 16, and 1789, when she married Stephen Heaton).
7. Shortly after the date of Ann’s marriage in 1789, the St Leonard Church, Padiham, Baptism Register includes the record of a James Cockshut (sic), born 25 July 1790, son of William Cockshut. No mother’s name is included in the Register. Further enquiries reveal that this James Cockshut is probably identical with James Cockshut, son of William Cockshut and Nanny Cockshut, who is recorded in the St Leonard Church, Padiham, Burials Register as having been born in 1791 and who died on 8 January 1813. It seems likely that this baptism registration may have been incorrectly assumed to be the missing baptism record of Ann’s son, James.
8. Similarly, the record of a James Wilkinson, born 11 Jul 1787 at Lindley in Yorkshire, son of a John Wilkinson and Ann Wilkinson and baptised at the Quarmby-cum-Lindley, Salendine Nook Meeting House, Huddersfield (Baptist) is of interest because of the connection with the non-conformist church, however unlikely, as the father’s name is recorded as John Wilkinson, not Thomas Wilkinson.

9. Two further baptisms of a James Wilkinson born between 1776 and 1789, with a father Thomas Wilkinson, but with an unknown mother, were located:
  - a. James Wilkinson, baptised 5 June 1786 at All Hallows Huddersfield, Yorkshire, son of Thomas Wilkinson, Clothier of Almondbury Yorkshire; and
  - b. James Wilkinson, baptised 18 March 1786 at Guiseley, Yorkshire, son of Thomas Wilkinson.

It has not been possible to link either registration with Ann Cockshutt.

### What have other researchers found?

There are at least 17 Cockshutt family trees published on the Internet that include references to James Cockshutt, born about 1783, son of Ann Cockshutt of Colne, Lancashire.

1. Jane Lachs has created a Cockshott One Name Study website at <http://www.janelachs.de/index.html> in which she links to Rootsweb in Ancestry.com to publish Edmund Cockshutt's (1729-1821) descendants as follows:

1. [Edmund COCKSHUT](#). He married [Jenet](#) BEF 1753 in England.

Children of Edmund COCKSHUT and Jenet are:

- + 2 i. [Edmund COCKSHUT of Ball Grove](#) was christened 14 JAN 1753 in Downham, Lancashire, England, died ABT 30 SEP 1825 in Ball Grove, Colne, Lancashire, England.
- 3 ii. [Betty COCKSHUT](#) was christened 26 JUL 1767 in BTs, Colne, Lancashire, England.

Child of Edmund COCKSHUT is:

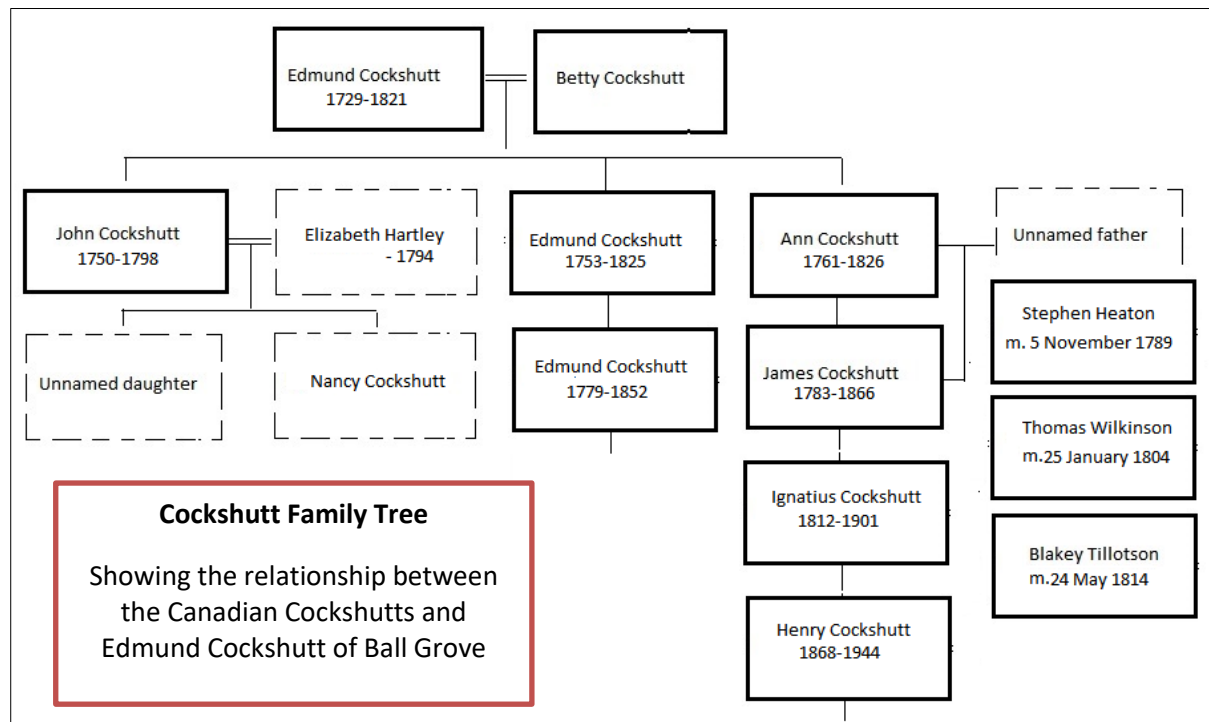
- 4 i. [Ann COCKSHUTT](#). She married [Blakey TILLOTSON](#) 24 MAY 1819 in Colne, Lancashire, England.

2. The [Cockshutt Family Tree](#) for Ignatius Cockshutt published on Ancestry.com shows James Cockshutt born, 1783 in England, son of Stephen Heaton (b.1760) and Ann Cockshutt Cockshott (sic) (1749-1826). No sources are provided for James' birth/baptism.
3. The [Irving Family Tree](#) for James Cockshutt contributed by Carole Greensill and published on Ancestry.com records James Cockshutt born "abt 1783" in Colne, son of Stephen Heaton and Ann Cockshutt Cockshott.
4. The [Fayne Ambrose Family Tree](#) and published on Ancestry.com also records that James Cockshutt was born in 1783 at Colne, Lancashire, the son of Stephen Heaton and Ann Cockshutt (born "ABT 1749" in Colne).
5. The [Fowler Family Tree](#) contributed by "40Trish" and published on Ancestry.com adds an interesting record of a baptism for James Cockshot (sic) on 29 Aug 1784 at Rivington, Parish Church, Lancashire, England - son of John Cockshot of Anderton (Register: Baptisms 1730 - 1812, Page 38, Entry 9 Source: LDS Film 1408886).

Comment: It is not clear on what grounds this baptism has been included in the tree as there is no mother's name included in the transcription and the father's name is John. I am unaware of any Cockshutt family connection with Rivington which is some distance from Colne and not adjacent to any of Ann's father's properties which tend to west of Colne.

## So what can we now say about James Cockshutt's family tree?

The following partial Cockshutt family tree (focussed on Ann Cockshutt and the references to family members in Edmund Cockshutt's will) brings together the results of searches in the available Parish records. It will be noted that several members of the Cockshutt family were adherents of the Inghamite sect of the Methodist Church and, as a result there may be registrations of baptisms, marriages and burials missing from the historical record.



## Conclusions

It appears highly likely that James Cockshutt (1783-1866) was born out of wedlock to Ann Cockshutt, daughter of Edmund Cockshutt of Ballgreave. The evidence for this finding is based on the following arguments:

1. Ann Cockshutt's father described James Cockshutt as "natural child" of his daughter Ann – a phrase that was in common use to describe illegitimate children in legal documents at the time he wrote his will in 1803;
2. At the time that Edmund wrote his will in 1803, James' mother Ann had been married for some 13 years to Stephen Heaton. It would have been normal practice for Edmund Cockshutt to have referred to his grandson James as a legal heir, rather than a natural child, if he had been the son of Ann and Stephen.
3. Despite extensive searches in the available Parish records in the areas where the Cockshutt families were known to have lived in Lancashire and Yorkshire, no record can be found of James' baptism in the years 1780-1790.
4. It appears that at least one professional genealogists (Dr Edwin Capstick of Padiham) and one other experienced family historian (Nicholas Cockshutt, 1863-1938) have made every effort to discover the identity of James Cockshutt's father to no avail.

