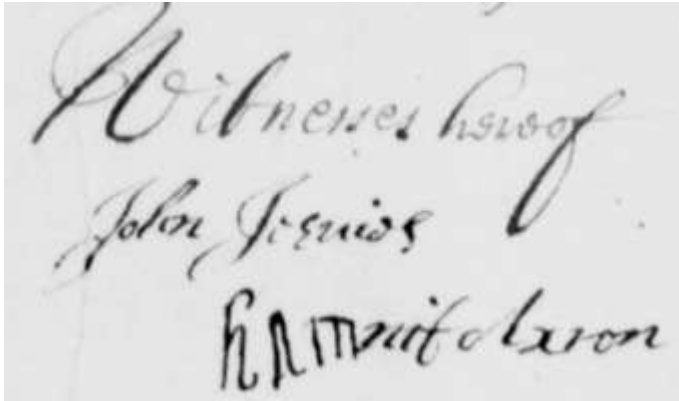


The following notes are part of research into the Jarvis (or Jervis) family of Cheshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire. To see other documents about the family, go to http://www.bhsproject.co.uk/x_jarvis.shtml

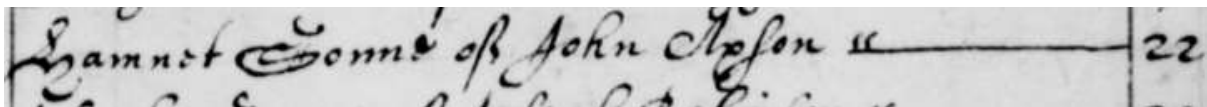
Hamnet Axson of Nantwich, Cheshire



A handwritten signature in cursive script. The text reads "Witness hereof John Jervis Hamnet Axson". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Hamnet Axson (carefully) signed a document prepared by Elizabeth Jervis on 1 Nov 1680. The document was concerning obtaining letters of administration for Elizabeth's husband's estate. The first witness was John Jervis.

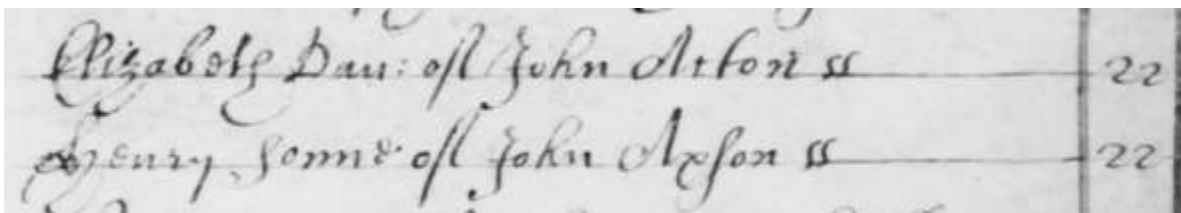
Who was Hamnet Axon? Finding out more about him may reveal information about the Jervis family. Searches for the baptism of Hamnet Axon found an entry in the parish registers of Nantwich to John Axson 22 Apr 1649. Hamnet was 31 in 1680 and a contemporary of Elizabeth, perhaps rather younger than John Jervis.



A handwritten entry from a parish register. The text reads "Hamnet Sonne of John Axson" followed by a double line and the number "22".

The name Axon or Axson is unusual and there are other, similar-looking and sounding names. Baptisms to families headed by John Acton and John Axson took place in Nantwich during 1640s and 1650s. There were also baptisms of Amson, Ashton and Aston children in the 1660s.

The entry below shows Elizabeth Acton and Henry Axson were both baptised 22 Jan 1653/4.



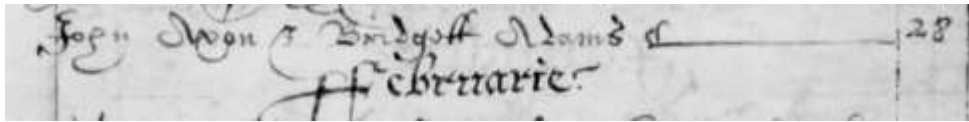
Two handwritten entries from a parish register. The first entry reads "Elizabeth Dau: of John Acton" followed by a double line and the number "22". The second entry reads "Henry Sonne of John Axson" followed by a double line and the number "22".

The clerk appears to have made efforts to distinguish the Acton and Axson families by using the spelling Axson consistently.

Focusing on just the Axson entries, father = John: the first baptism was **John**, 5 Jul 1640. A second son **Thomas** Axson was baptised 24 Apr 1642 (on the same day as Richard Acton baptised son Richard). Then **Nathaniell** Axson 16 Mar 1644/5, **Randell** Axson 28 Feb 1646/7 and **Hamnet** 22 Apr 1649.

After this string of boys, younger siblings were baptised: **Mary** Axson 2 Nov 1651, **Henry** Axson 22 Jan 1653/4 (above), **Elizabeth** Axson 7 Apr 1656, **Charles** 22 Jul 1658¹ and finally **Rupert** 8 Jan 1660/1; ten children in all.

The block of baptisms was preceded by the marriage of John Axon to Bridgett Adams at Nantwich 28 Jan 1639/40, around 7 months before their first child John was baptised.



The entries offer no clues as to John's occupation; the baptisms to John Acton include more information: Mary Acton daughter of Capt John Acton Aug 1648; Elizabeth, 1 Dec 1661 to John Acton mercer. Perhaps John Axson had no trade?

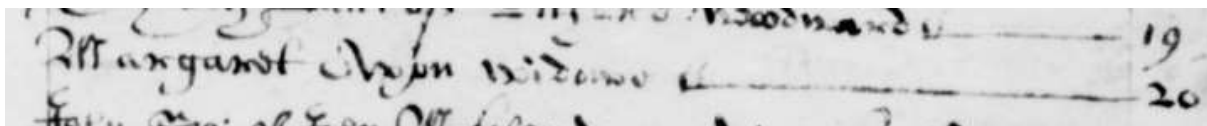
So, Hamnet was part of a large family and his parents were in Nantwich by 1640 and stayed until at least 1660. His father John is not linked to any trade or profession but Hamnet was able to read and write, although his signature in 1680 suggests writing was not a part of his day-to-day work. Hamnet was living in Nantwich in 1680 (the administration paperwork describes him as being of Nantwich).

What happened to his siblings?

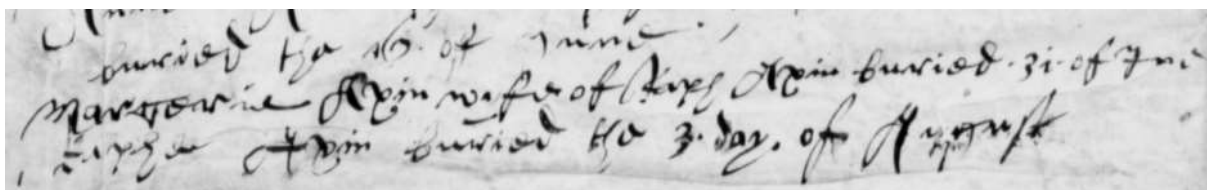
Axson burials

A search for Axson burials, 1640-1670, Nantwich found:

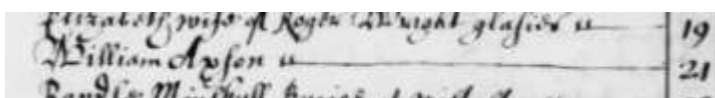
On 20 May 1639 a widow named Margaret Axon was buried at Nantwich:



The following year, '3i' June and 3 August 1640, two burials at Ashton upon Mersey, around 30 miles north of Nantwich, on the southern side of Manchester, of interest as it is a couple, **Raphe** and Margerie:

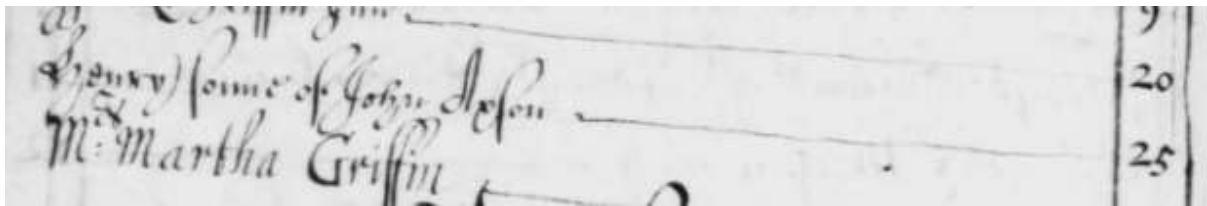


William Axson, presumably adult, was buried at Nantwich 21 Jul 1660:

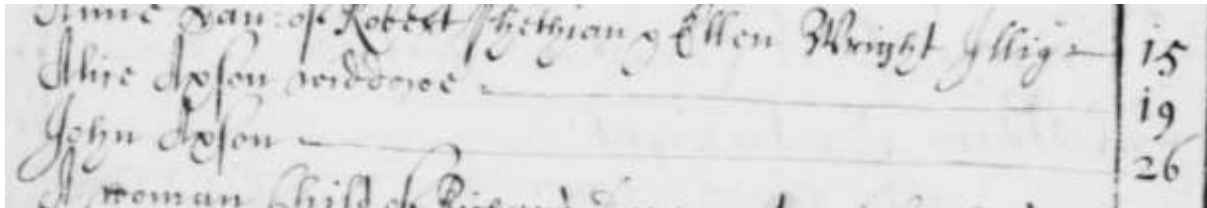


¹ Not included on Findmypast index, located through FamilySearch

20 Feb 1664/5: Henry son of John Axson, presumably the child baptised 11 years previously:



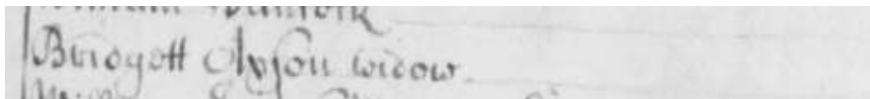
Later in 1665, two Axson burials a week apart 19 and 26 Jul; more of these later:



Burial records suggest Hamnet's siblings survived to 1670 at least, with the exception of Henry. They also show other adult Axson were living (actually dying) here in this period.

In the period searched there are also other Cheshire parishes recording Axson burials: not investigated apart from the Ashton upon Mersey pair.

Regarding burials of John and his wife, there is a burial of Bridget Axson, widow, in Nantwich 19 Feb 1710/11; this is rather later than expected – John and Bridget married 70 years previously and she would be approaching 90. However, the name combination is unusual – it may be her.



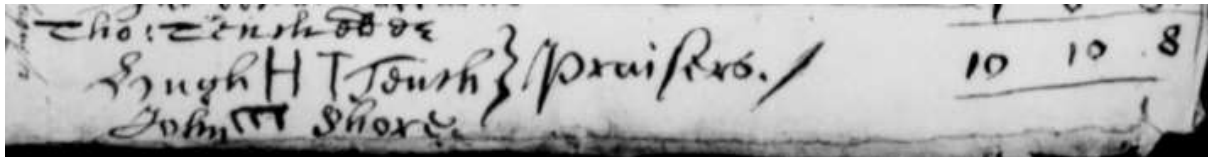
There is only one burial in Nantwich of a John Axson and it is the one noted above, 26 Jul 1665.

If this is the John the father, it left Bridget with nine children, age 5 to 25, including Hamnet who was 16.

Alice Axson aside

A week before John Axson was buried, Alice **Ackson**, widow, was. Her will dated 10 Jul 1665 and inventory of goods survive. She was 'aged and weake of body'. The will mentions a kinswoman Susanna (no surname) 'that lately dwelled with me', cousin Thomas Powell, refers to her **last** husband's will and her husband's son-in-law Michael Mulliner (a form of Mollineux found in previous Staffs/Salop searches?) who was appointed executor. The will was witnessed by Joane Henshawe and another Henshaw (forename initial not included). Bequests were in shillings rather than pounds.

The inventory was appraised by Thomas Tench the elder, Hugh Tench and John Shore and her goods valued at £10 10s 8d:

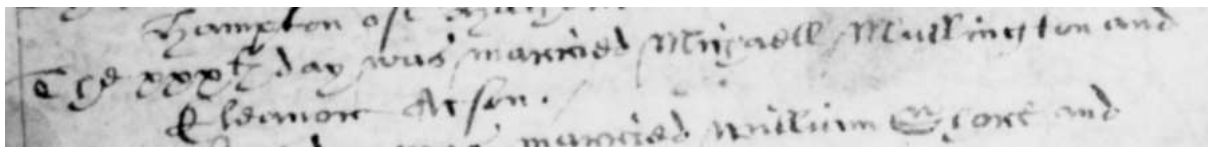


There is nothing in the will to link Alice and John Axson apart from a shared surname/location/burial a week apart. Even so, worth checking a bit further...

The name Tench also occurs in the will of Roger Comberbach, tanner, 1678 – he had a niece named Elizabeth Tench who had four children.

A search for the will of Alice Axson's husband failed to find it. The will of Thomas Axon of Betton, on the northeastern outskirts of Market Drayton, has an inventory dated 26 Jun 1640, but he mentions his wife named **Joan** and around five children. A different family. The inventory was appraised by Richard Dawson, John Morrey, Frances Pitchford and Evan Allcroft.

A marriage at Wybunbury between 30 Jun 1634 may be relevant as it is between Eleanor **Acson** and Michael Mullington: the latter could be Michael Mullinger.



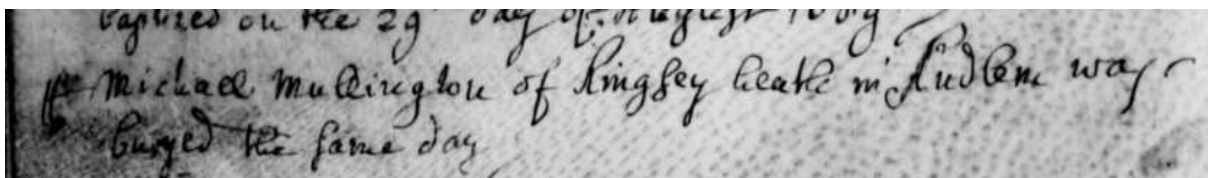
There is a baptism at Audlem 6th April 1609 of Ellenor Acson, timing consistent with a marriage in 1634, but it gives just her name and baptism date, no other detail.

In October 1606 a William Acson married Anne Blackhurst at Audlem:



These could, in theory, be the parents of Eleanor. It is possible this is the William Axson who was buried at Nantwich in 1660, although he would be around 80.

Michael Mullington was buried at Audlem, 29 Aug 1689:



Summing up, Alice Axson's husband may be from Audlem, but more in-depth research is required to get a fuller picture of her family. So far just a few tantalising details have been found and although they can be fitted together, they may not do so in reality.

As the will of Alice kicked off an interesting aside, probate records are considered next.

Probate records

Did any Axson leave a will or inventory proved at Chester?

There is an inventory for John Axon, felt maker of Frodsham dating from 1685, but no will. The inventory was appraised by John Hughes, Phillip Rogerson, William Millington and the value was £15 9s 4d: a relatively modest sum.

There is not enough detail in the inventory to link this John Axson to the father or elder brother of Hamnet.

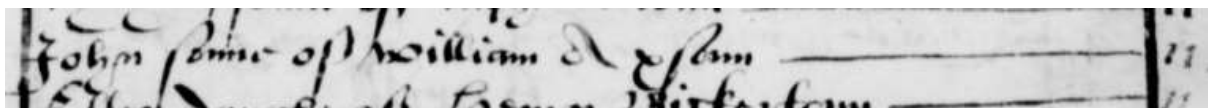
There are six other Axon/Axson wills proved at Chester, the earliest dating from 1612; the list shows just those to 1756:²

First name(s) ▾	Last name ▾	Probate year ▾	Occupation ▾	Residence ▾
Thomas	Axon	1612	Husbandman	Aldford
Thomas	Axon	1668	Husbandman	Great Neston
John	Axon	1685	—	Frodsham
Edmund	Axon	1690	Yeoman	Hough
Richard	Axon	1711	Yeoman	Calveley
Samuel	Axson	1741	Carpenter	Northenden
Mary	Axon	1756	—	Over Knutsford

The wills do not appear to be members of the family of John Axson. It seems the Axson living in Nantwich did not have sufficient possessions or property to necessitate preparing a will, or having an administration drawn up after their death.

Where did Hamnet's parents come from?

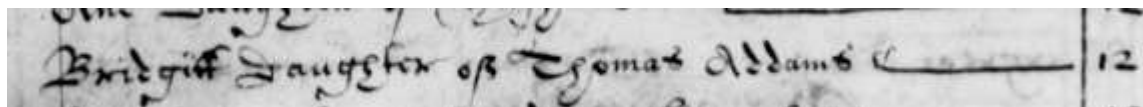
There is one baptism of a John Axson in the period 1600-1620 in Cheshire and it was at Nantwich, 11 Jul 1613:



² Ackson, the name Alice's will was recorded under, appears to be a one-off

Could the father be the same William Axon as married at Audlem in 1606? It is possible but cannot be proved. The baptisms at Audlem did not include any details of parents in this period and there are later baptisms of the surname Acson or similar at Audlem after John's baptism at Nantwich.

Hamnet's mother Bridget nee Adams may have been born locally too:

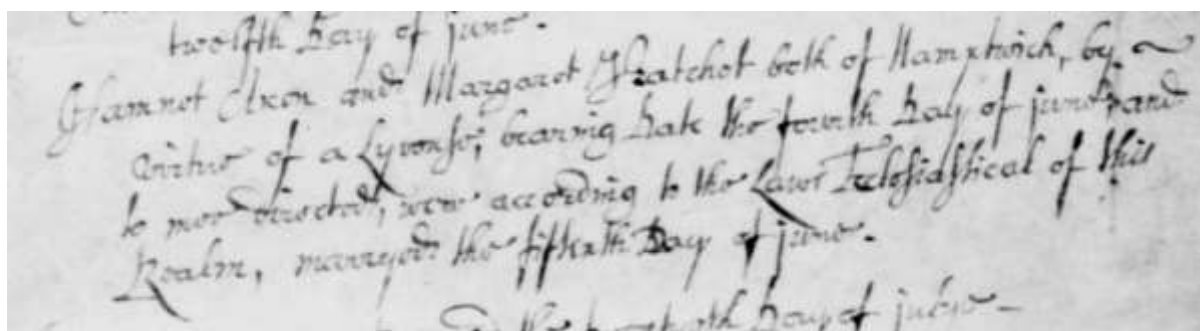


A baptism at Nantwich 12 March 1619/20, daughter of Thomas Addams is at the right time and place: this would make her about 20 when she married and her last child was baptised when she was around 41. The burial in early 1711 makes her around 91 at death – just about feasible.

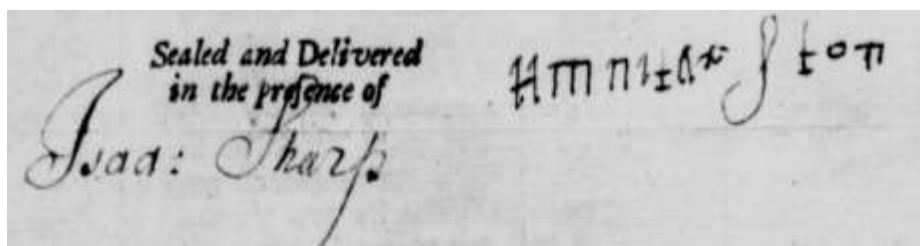
Returning to Hamnet, can any evidence be found of his life apart from his baptism and signature in 1680?

Hamnet – marriage

Hamnet married Margaret Pratchet 15 Jun 1690 by licence at Wistaston, both being of Nantwich.



The licence describes him as 'agricolam' – farmer – and includes his distinctive signature, a good match to that from ten years previously:



No evidence has been found of any children to this marriage (but if he was a non-conformist the records may not be online).

The unusual forename Hamnet occurred locally once in conjunction with Axson: William Axson buried a son named Hamnet in 1720 in Nantwich.

Hamnet Axson was buried at Nantwich in 1728; he was a carrier:

William Son of Joseph Lant wid	21
Mary wife Brocke widow - Pau:	21
Calherine wife of John Parker Breaker	22
Etill Bankes Apothecary	28
July.	
Hamnet Axson Farmer	3
Jobs Rowley Shomaker	10
Ricard Son of Thomas Dumberton	12
Ann Hamork widow	13
Deborah Cookson widow	15

Is this the same Hamnet as the farmer? It is possible he rented land and transported goods too.

The excerpt from the PR above includes a burial of William son of Joseph Lant (possibly a descendant of, or the individual, who helped value John Jervis' goods in 1680); also Deborah Cookson.

There are later PR references to Hamnet **Ashton** in Ince, Cheshire in the mid-18th century, also similar forenames: Hamlet(t) and Hamblet appear in this period onwards.

As to Hamnet's wife Margaret, no convincing burial has been found in the period 1690-1740. However, searches did show the name – Axon – occurs at Maer, Staffordshire in the 17th century. This is where Louise's Jervis family lived.

Axon & Hamnett distribution:

Is Axon a local name, or does the name suggest origins elsewhere? The following searches are not exhaustive but are relatively easy to carry out.

First, a search for where the earliest Axon baptisms took place in England.

Baptisms 1538-1578, Ax*n, in FamilySearch:

Forms without a 't' - Axon, Axson, Axn, Axen - 27 in total

- Much Wenlock, Salop (2)
- Drayton in Hales, Salop (7)
- Taunton, Somerset (4)
- Audley, Staffordshire (3)
- Malpas, Cheshire

- Boughton under Blean, Kent
- London (8)
- Cirencester, Gloucestershire

Forms which include a 't' - 7 in total

- Kingsnorth, Kent
- Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire
- Kenn, Devon
- Aswarby, Lincolnshire (2 - Axten and Axlen)
- London (2)

[Plus 3 where surname not a form of Axon, entries occurring twice: 3 to make up to a total of 40]

Around half the forms of Axson without a 't' are in the counties of Shropshire (9), Staffordshire (3) and Cheshire (1). The forms with a 't' are mainly in the southern half of England.

The National Archives

Discovery catalogue has no **Axon** entries prior to 1700. It has five entries for **Axson**, 1500-1599.

1. Reference: DCH/D/356

Description: FINAL CONCORD (contemporary copy) between Humphrey Axson plaintiff, and William Bykerton and Alice, his wife, deforceants --- 1 messuage, 6 acres of land and 1 acre of meadow in SONDE. Cons. £10. Parchment.

Date: 1544, 21. Apr

Held by: Cheshire Archives and Local Studies, not available at The National Archives

Language: Latin

'Sonde' could be Sound, around 3 miles southwest of Nantwich

2. Reference: DCH/D/264

Description: GRANT in fee, by Humphrey Axson of Butterleyhay, yeoman, to Robert Axson, his son - -- a messuage, 6 acres of land and 1 acre of meadow. Seal: red, illegible.

Parchment.

Date: 1553, 24. Nov

Held by: Cheshire Archives and Local Studies, not available at The National Archives

Language: Latin

The same land and probably individual as in 1., Butterleyhay may be a farm name; or possibly Baddiley Hulse, a small settlement in the same area, south side of Nantwich.

3. Reference: WISTON/2227

Title: Conveyance (bargain and sale), in consideration of £50, from John Younge of Rye, yeo., to Henry Gaymer of Rye, jurat, and Robert Gaymer, his son and heir apparent, in respect of a moiety in the above property.

Description: Witnesses: John Dounynge, Peter Axson, Thomas Frere.

Date: 1 Oct 1574

Held by: West Sussex Record Office, not available at The National Archives

Language: English

Rye, Sussex - too far from Cheshire to be of interest

4. Reference: PROB 11/72/276

Description: Will of Arthur Axson, Weaver of Hoo, Kent

Date: 22 March 1588

Held by: The National Archives, Kew

Legal status: Public Record(s)

Closure status: Open Document, Open Description

Kent - too far away

5. Reference: STAC 5/D34/28

Description: Dale v Smethurst, Gasken, Axson.

Date: 37 Eliz (1594 or 1595)

Held by: The National Archives, Kew

Legal status: Public Record(s)

Closure status: Open Document, Open Description

The names Smethurst and Gasken sound northern - possibly Lancashire or Cheshire.

The next TNA catalogue entry for Axson is from 1636.

There is one further item at Cheshire Archives, dating from 1601:

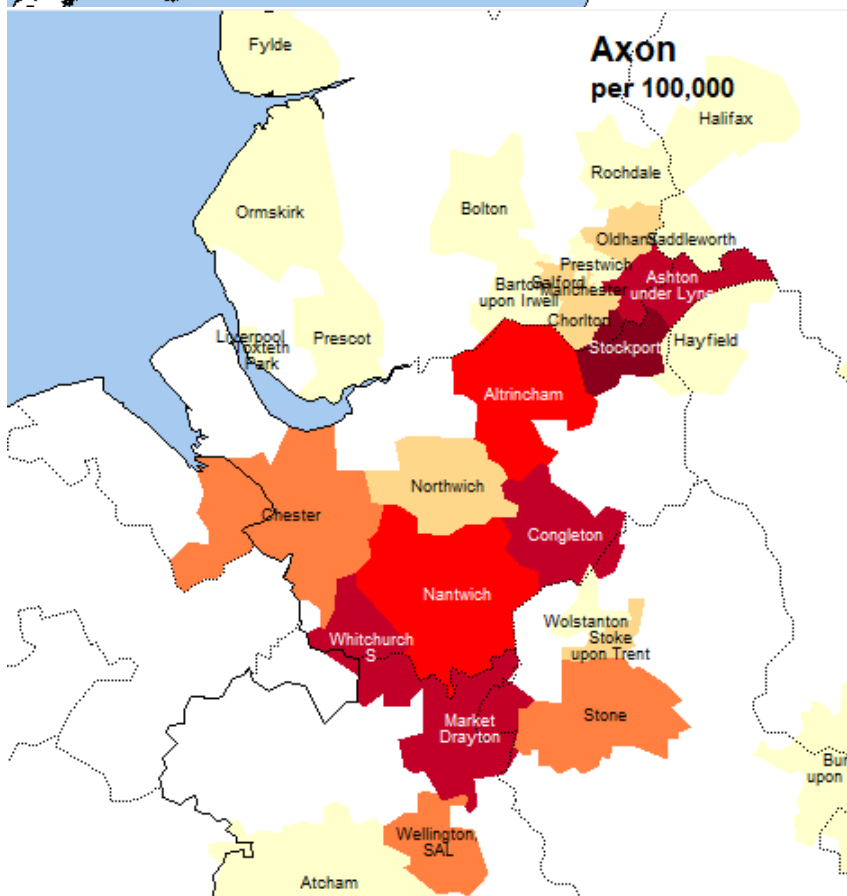
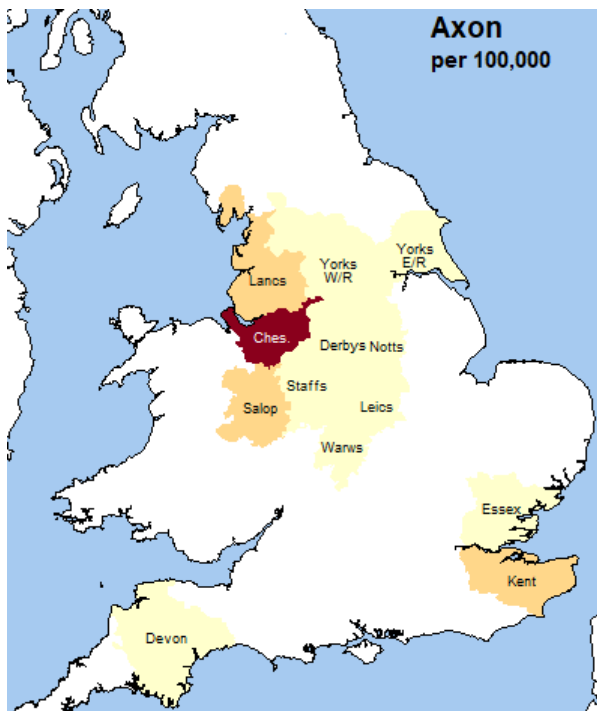
Repository	Cheshire Record Office
Level	Item
Reference	P 21/4943/54
Title	Confirmation
Date	18 Apr 1601
Description	1) David Edowe of Chorlton, yeo, Richard Axson of Chorlton, husbandman and Edward Mylton of Chorlton, husbandman 2) John Dee of Chorlton and Randle Mylton of Overton, husbandman 3 tenements in Chorlton and in Horton £500

Density of Axson in 1881

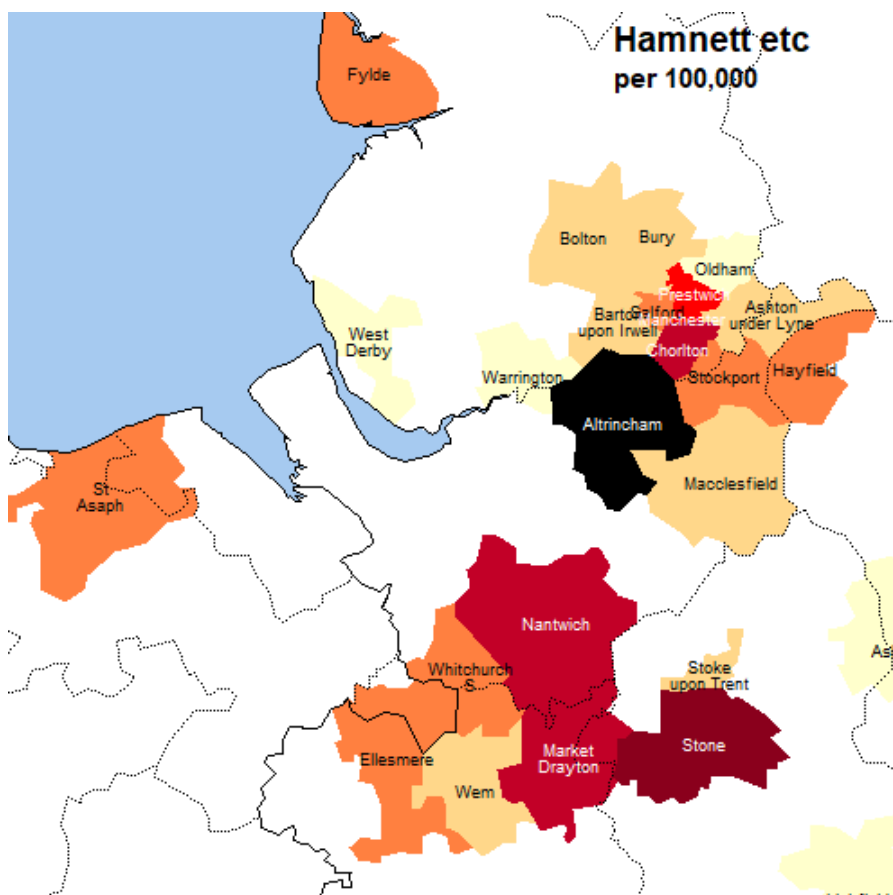
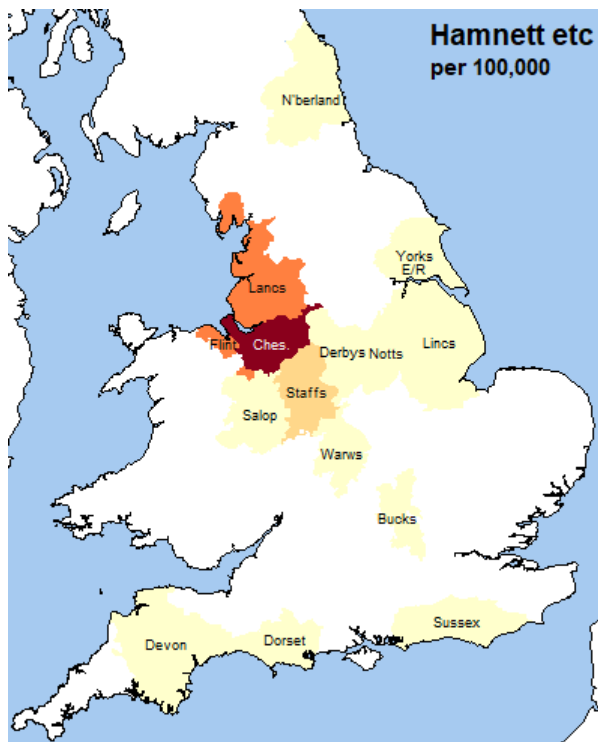
The 1881 census shows where the name was most common.³ This could be where the name originated, but also could be where, by chance, more males survived.

³ Surname Atlas, Archer Software

The following maps chart the extent of the surname Axon (including Axson) from the 1881 census and also the surname Hamnet(t), which may be the origin of the forename. Both Axon and Hamnet are strongest in Cheshire.



Hamnett as a surname:



Hamnet the surname may come from the forename in the same way as Roberts, Williamson etc. Shakespeare's only son was named Hamnet.

Summing up

It has been possible to establish some facts about Hamnet Axson: he is now more than just an unusually-named individual. He was part of a large family and his father probably did not have a trade. There was sufficient money for Hamnet to receive basic schooling and he could read and write. Hamnet remained in Nantwich throughout his life and was a farmer at marriage, later a carrier. His family were not well-to-do – no evidence has been found that they left wills.

No other links between Hamnet Axson and John Jervise (or his wife) have emerged, but there may well be some network at play here. It remains possible Hamnet was related to Elizabeth, but as her surname is unknown this will be difficult to establish. So far, no evidence has been found that Hamnet or his family were Quakers. He and his siblings were all baptised at a CoE church and Hamnet married and was buried in the same church(yard).

It is possible Hamney happened to live near to Elizabeth Jervis and was called upon as a neighbour to witness her paperwork in 1680.

The surname Axson was present in Cheshire in the 16th century and survived into the late 19th century here.

Family names that come out of the Axon research (with the proviso these may simply be common names in Nantwich and area):

Adams (Hamnet's mother, whose forename Bridget hints at Irish links; this

Pratchett (the name of Hamnet's wife, although his marriage in 1690 post-dates the death of John Jervis); William Pratchett was a cousin of Roger Comberbach d. 1678.

Tench links to Axson (through Alice Axson – admittedly not known to be a relative of Hamnet) and **Comberbach**. Roger Comberbach was a wealthy tanner who died in 1678 and his will of many bequests mentions many individuals, including a niece named Elizabeth Tench.

Thomas Tench the elder was an appraiser of the inventory of William **Burscoe** in 1660: Burscoe, another form of this surname, was the name of the wife of James Jervis, the first known Jervis in Nantwich.

Thomas Tench senior (the same person?) was an appraiser of the inventory of John Hussey, 1660, along with Roger and Richard Comberbach. John Hussey was an instrument maker of Nantwich, and his daughter married William Burscoe.

A Briscoe / Tench marriage took place 11 Oct 1631 (or 1630) at Nantwich

