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DESMAISTRES AS THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME DEMETRIUS IN THE JAMES FAMILY OF IGHTHAM

G.C.R. MORRIS, M.A., D.M., M.R.C.P.

The eldest son of William James (1601?–61) was christened at St. Peter's Church, Ightham, on 20th April, 1629, with the name Demetrius. Perhaps because he was given a knighthood in 1665, his name was repeated for two of his grandsons (the second replacing the first, who had lived only seven months) and then through at least five subsequent generations. Yet no memory of the origin of this unusual Christian name apparently survived in the family. The pedigree by Green and Colyer Fergusson¹ gives no clue; nor does the one by the Rev. Walter Francis James, himself a descendant.² A suggestion that it came from 'some Dutch relative' was made by the Rev. Thomas Frederick Charlton, another descendant.³ More recently, Bowra tentatively linked it with the introduction of the arms of Van Haestrecht, ancestor of James, to those of Demetrius James in the 1663 Visitation of Kent.⁴

The key to an answer lies concealed in the will of the Henry Kule or Cule who appears in the Visitation pedigrees of 1619 and 1663 as the father of Jane, the wife of the first William James (1570–1627) of Ightham and grandmother of Sir Demetrius (1629–78). Having appeared in the registers of the Dutch Church in London (Austin Friars) by 1561 as Henrick Küle and Hendrick Kuel, he became a denizen of England in 1562 as

¹ E. Green and T.C. Fergusson, 'Pedigree of James and Grevis-James of Ightham Court, co. Kent', *Misc. Gen. Her.*, 4s., v (1912), 105–112.

² W.F. James, *Notes on the History of that Family known as James in England* . . . (1931).

³ T.F. Charlton, *The Family of Charlton of Wrotham* (1951), 29.

⁴ E.V. Bowra, 'The Dutch James Family of Ightham Court', *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiii (1968), 111–124.

Henry Kule. He was buried at St. Dunstan in the East on 14th August, 1585, as Henrick Cueill, leaving a will made eight days earlier as Henry Kuell or Kuel. Proved on 17th September following,⁵ it has lain hidden in the published index under the name of Knell.

Translated from German, the will said he was born in Bremen but was now of London, merchant. He and his wife 'Mystres Johane Demaistres' confirmed their marriage contract made in the Imperial City of Colen (Cologne) on 27th April, 1574. She was the widow of John Stanier and daughter of 'Mr John Desmaistresse' and his wife Mary, each of whom was to have cloth for a cloak; her uncle 'Mr Peter Desmaistres' was to have a silver bowl. Their two children, Henry and Jane, were to share the residue with their mother according to the laws of Antwerp, she having had all clothes, jewels for wearing, household goods and plate, as well as the first 1,000 pounds 'great Flemyshe'. She was recorded as Johanne Desmaistres when she proved the will. Surviving her husband by nearly thirty years, she made her own will on 7th May, 1613, as Jane Kule, widow of Henry Kule the elder. One witness was James Desmaistres, her much younger brother. Her son-in-law, William James of Ightham, was her executor and proved the will on 18th May.⁶

Henry Kule the younger, son of Henry and Jane, was baptized on December 11th, 1575, at Austin Friars, with Doctor Pieter Demeter and Katheryne Demeter as witnesses (godparents).⁷ He grew up to enter into partnership as a brewer with his uncle James Desmaistres by 1597, when the two began to appear together in the Court Minutes of the Brewers' Company.⁸ James had been admitted a brother for £20 in July 1596, when his name was spelt Demetrius. It varied over the years through Desmeitrius and Desmeistres, which was the form when he was elected Master for the first time in 1622, to Desmaistres when he was again Master in 1634, as for the Visitation of London in the same year and at his death in 1649. He and 'Henrie Cuell' were fined £16 for brewing beer that was too strong and too costly in 1597; they were also among those who frequently brewed on Sundays. Uncle and nephew were married within five years of each other at Austin Friars: James de Maistres of Ceulen (Cologne) and Mary le Grand of Antwerp on 7th October, 1595; Henry Cuijl and Mary Godtschalk, both of London, on 20th May, 1600. Henry and his wife

⁵ PCC: Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), PROB 11/68, f. 42.

⁶ PCC: PRO, PROB 11/121, f. 43.

⁷ Register: Guildhall Library, MS 7381.

⁸ Guildhall Library, MS 5445/10.

were witnesses at the baptisms of James's third and fifth daughters, respectively, Mary in 1599, Sara early in 1603, but were themselves childless. Henry Cule was of East Smithfield, brewer, in his will dated 27th August, 1603, and proved 11th October following by his mother Jane, the sole executrix; his uncle James Demetrius was an overseer.⁹ Henry's widow married secondly Nicholas Houblon in 1605.

The younger Henry's sister thus became sole heiress of their father, the Henry Kule who had died in 1585. She was baptized Jane (Johanna) at Austin Friars on 14th October, 1582, with (besides her father) three witnesses from her mother's family: Peter van den Walle, whose wife was the Katheryne Demeter at young Henry's baptism in 1575; Anna de Meister; and the wife of John (Hans) van Hulst. This last was Susanna, sister of the child's mother and of James Desmaistres, who went on after the death of John van Hulst in 1601 to marry Sir Richard Swale (1545?-1608) and then Sir Francis Hildesley, surviving him, too, and dying aged over eighty in 1640 – as a Roman Catholic, to the distress of her family. It was she who had cared for her young niece Sarah Oeils (1575-1638) in London from 1584: the Sarah who was to marry in 1599 the elder Dr Baldwin Hamey (1568-1640).¹⁰ Sarah's mother Anne Demaistres (spelt so by the younger Baldwin Hamey, her grandson), wife of Peter Oeils, was very likely the Anna de Meister who witnessed the baptism of Jane Kule in 1582 and the Anna Desmaistres who (with Sarah wife of Baldwin Hamey) was a witness at that of Judith, fourth daughter of James Desmaistres, in 1601.

Before pursuing the history of Jane Kule the younger, born in 1582, it is worth noting that John van Hulst, whose wife was at Jane's baptism, provided a close link with the brewing family of James. Susanna Desmaistres was his childless second wife, but by a previous wife he had had a daughter Mary who married Arnold James (1569-1607), the second surviving son of Roger (1524?-92). Roger James and his brothers William (*d.* 1596) and Dericke (*d.* 1590) had all come to London from Holland and established themselves as brewers of beer. Like Dericke's widow and sons, Roger's sons continued with the family business. His eldest surviving son, also Roger (1565-96), became Third Warden of the Brewers' Company in 1591, although he often brewed on Sundays; he was the ancestor of the James family of Reigate. Two younger brothers, Arnold and Henry (1571-93), appear in the Company's books as Sunday brewers. Arnold paid £12 to be sworn a brother of the Company in 1592. His

⁹ PCC: PRO, PROB 11/102, f. 76.

¹⁰ J.J. Keevil, *Hamey the Stranger* (1952).

marriage to Mary van Hulst has not been found, but it had already produced children when John van Hulst made his will on 23rd May, 1600;¹¹ there were seven living and another due in April 1607 when Arnold James wrote his.¹² John van Hulst described himself as a merchant, but he had been assessed as a large-scale brewer in 1591 and was a regular contributor to the poor of the Company: the younger Dr Baldwin Hamey (1600–76) called him a famous brewer (*'viro frugibus in potum coquendis celebri'*).¹³ It is likely that he introduced his wife Susanna's young brother James Desmaistres to brewing. James Desmaistres's partnership with his nephew Henry Kule would naturally lead Henry's sister Jane Kule to acquaintance with William James (1570–1627), next younger brother of Arnold.

William James and Jane Kule were married on 11th December, 1598, at St. Mary Abchurch (where her mother was to be buried fifteen years later). They were established at Ightham at least by 1607, when their son John was baptized there. William was buried there on 19th April, 1627; Jane followed on 13th August, 1659. During the thirty-two years of her widowhood her eldest son William (1601?–61) had married and produced a large family at Ightham, the eldest son being baptized Demetrius in 1629. The infant was evidently given the Latin version of the maiden name of his grandmother's mother, Jane Desmaistres. She, who was buried at St. Mary Abchurch on 25th May, 1613, as Jane Kule, left a will that provided a reason for her maiden name to be recalled sixteen years later in the James family.

Jane Kule's daughter Jane, wife of William James (the executor), was the residuary legatee. Moreover, their daughter Jane James was to have £500 on marriage and the other grandchildren (William, Susanna, Thomas and Christina) £50 each. The wife and three children of Jane Kule's son by her first marriage, David Stanier, were to have £50 and £150 each, respectively. There was £25 for her niece Judith Oeils (daughter of Peter Oeils and Anne Desmaistres) and £5 for a ring for her niece Susanna, wife of John James (himself a witness).

This last bequest introduces a further connection with Ightham and between the families of Desmaistres and James. John James was the sixth or seventh surviving son of Roger (1524?–92). He was of Grove in the parish of Woodnesborough (near Sandwich) in the 1619 Visitation, but it was at Ightham that he married Susanna van der

¹¹ Proved 15th May, 1601, PCC: PRO, PROB 11/97, f. 35.

¹² Proved 31st May, 1607, PCC: PRO, PROB 11/109, f. 35.

¹³ B. Hamey, *Bustorum aliquot Reliquiae*, 29: Royal College of Physicians, MS 307.

Wall on 24th August, 1601, and nine of their ten children were baptized there in the years 1603–23. His family, therefore, occurs in the Ightham register even earlier than his brother William's. His wife Susanna was a daughter of Peter van der Wall, of Antwerp in the Visitation, but who died in London (buried 21st February, 1597, St. Stephen Coleman Street), intestate, administration being granted to his widow Katherine.¹⁴ She was the Katheryne Demeter who attended the baptism of Henry Kule in 1575 and had married Peter van der Wall by 1582, when he was at the baptism of Jane Kule. Katherine's granddaughter Susan (1606–43), daughter of John James of Ightham, was a bridesmaid at the marriage in 1627 of her second cousin, the younger Dr Hamey, and soon after married William Nutt of Chigwell, Essex; she died a week after giving birth to a son, confirming an aphorism of Hippocrates.¹⁵

The origin of the Desmaistres family whose modified surname became a repeated Christian name in the James family of Ightham is uncertain. Jane Desmaistres, whose son David Stanier by her first husband was born in Cologne, and who married Henry Kule there in 1574, was the daughter of John and Mary, both living in 1585; Mary was still alive in 1600, when her daughter Susanna's husband John van Hulst left her a gown. John and Mary had at least two other daughters: Anne, wife of Peter Oeils in Antwerp before 1575, and Katherine, whose marriage to Peter van der Wall probably took place between 1575 and 1582. The only son of John and Mary Desmaistres who can be firmly identified is James, the brewer, who was born in Cologne, married Mary le Grand in London in 1595, was naturalized in 1607 and died in 1649. For the Visitation of London in 1634 he recorded his father John only as 'of . . . in Holland' and gave no parentage for his mother Mary. His arms were differenced by a martlet, the mark of cadency for a fourth son, so he must have had three elder brothers (perhaps including the Dr Pieter Demeter who was at Henry Kule's baptism in 1575): it seems that he was much younger than his sisters Jane, Anne, Katherine and Susanna. James Desmaistres had a son who died young and five daughters, of whom only the eldest, Jane (1596–1661), wife of Dierick Hoste (1588–1663), was still living at James's death in 1649 in the parish of St. Mary Abchurch, where his wife had been buried eight years before.

This Desmaistres family is distinct from that of Emanuel van Meteren (1535–1612), the historian of the Low Countries, born in Antwerp, whose name was rendered as Demetrius when five of his

¹⁴ London Commissary: Guildhall Library, MS 9168/15, f. 83.

¹⁵ *Bustorum aliquot Reliquiae*, 43.

children were baptized at St. Dunstan in the East and St. Dionys Backchurch (1567-73). At the baptisms of five more at Austin Friars from 1578 to 1586 the witnesses did not include any member of the Desmaistres family. However, one of these baptisms (27th December, 1579) was of Abigail, who was to marry David Stanier, son of Jane Kule by her first husband, at Austin Friars in 1601. She was the daughter-in-law who figured, with three children, in the will of Jane Kule in 1613.

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