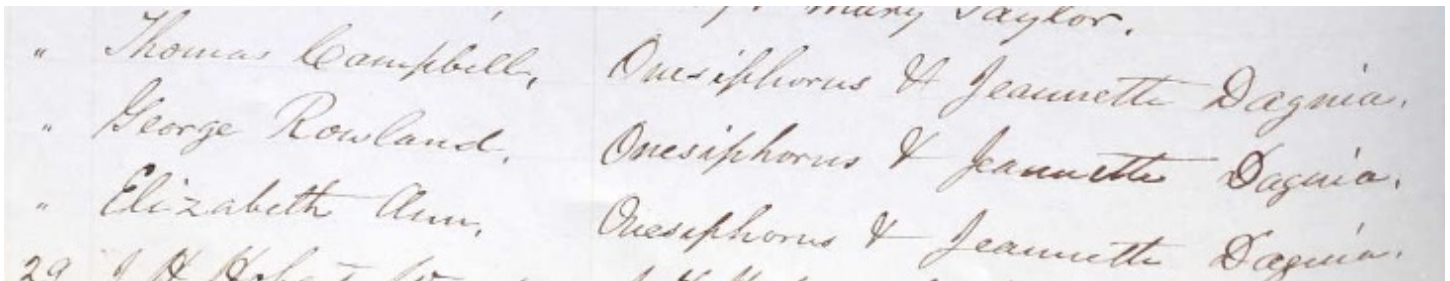


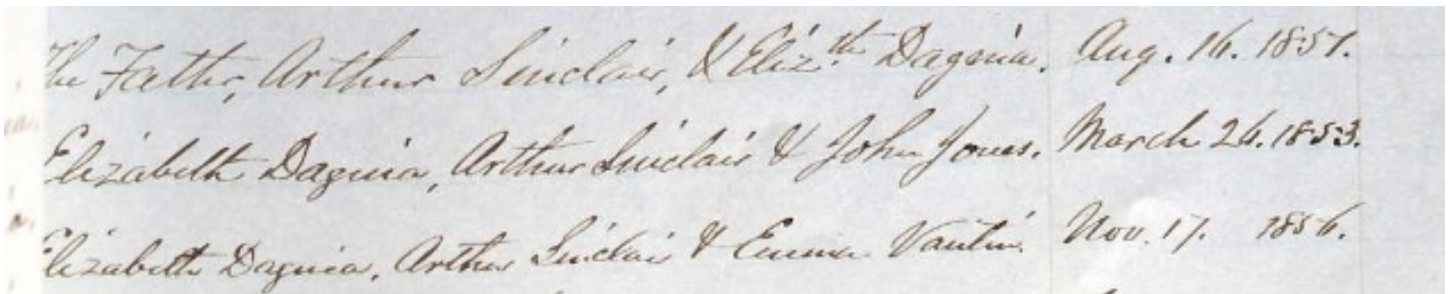
THE DAGNIAS  
Compiled by John Hutchinson  
March 27, 2017

The father of my grandmother Mary Elizabeth Connor (Bess, 11/29/1884 – 11/30/1972) is George R. Dagnia. From family and census records it is known that he was born around 1854 in New Jersey, his father was born in England and his mother in Scotland. He disappeared about 1887, sometime between the birth of his daughter Louise Beatrice Dagnia in October of 1886 and the remarriage of his wife Mary McGrath Dagnia in September of 1888 to Frank P. Manley.

Until now (March 2017) I have found no information on George R. Dagnia's ancestry. The baptismal records of the New York, Episcopal Diocese provide some clues. The baptisms for July 4, 1858 show the following:



Left page



Right page godparents

The family of Onesiphorus and Jeanette Dagnia baptized three children - Thomas Campbell, George Rowland, and Elizabeth on July 4, 1858. George Rowland was born March 26, 1853. This matches well with the name George R. and the birth date of "about 1854". There is census data for George's brother Thomas Campbell Dagnia that gives a birthplace of New Jersey with parents born in England and Scotland. Since Dagnia is such an unusual name and because the data match so well we probably have the correct George R. Dagnia.

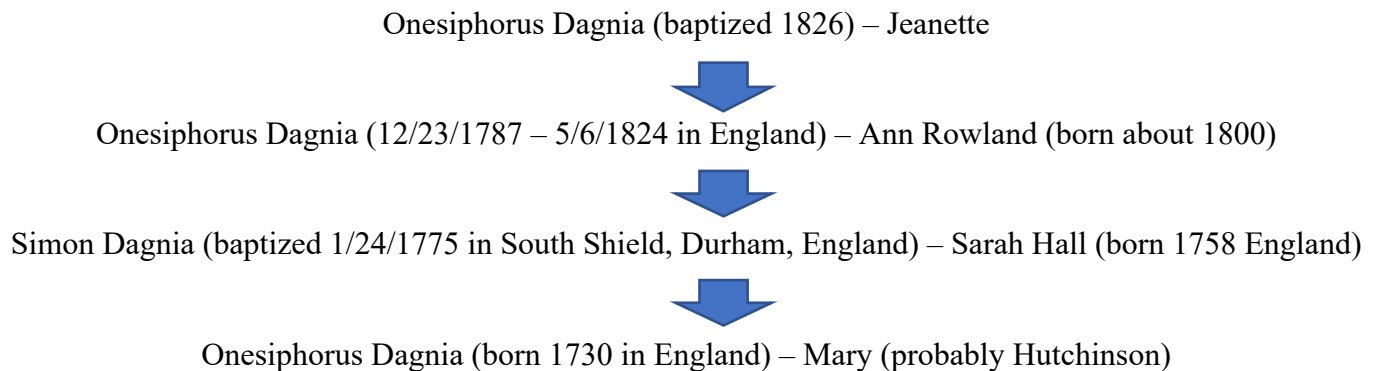
George Rowland Dagnia had a brother and an uncle named Thomas Campbell Dagnia. His uncle was born April 22, 1824 in Liverpool, England and died November 17, 1872 in Tasmania, Australia. He married Elizabeth O'Connor. She was born in 1831 in England and died in 1870 in Tasmania, Australia. Thomas and Elizabeth left Liverpool and arrived in Australia July 3, 1842 on the ship *Orleana*. All of their eight children were born in Tasmania (mostly Hobart). Perhaps when George disappeared in about 1887 he joined his brother in Tasmania. This would account for completeness of his disappearance.

George's godparents are listed as Elizabeth Dagnia, Arthur Sinclair, and John Jones. Since his aunt Elizabeth left for Australia in 1842 she is probably not the godparent. In the 1855 New York City census there is a John Jones aged 38 living in the same household as his cousin Elizabeth Dagnia aged 27. John's wife is also Elizabeth in the 1880 Federal Census. In a November 26, 1907 obituary in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle there Elizabeth Dagnia is listed as 81 years old and the widow of John Jones. This makes Elizabeth born in about

1826 and John born in about 1817. Elizabeth is probably an aunt of George Dagnia; perhaps the daughter of Onesiphorus Dagnia and Ann Rowland.

George's sister's godparents are Elizabeth Dagnia, Arthur Sinclair, and Emma Vautin. Arthur Sinclair is the son of John Sinclair (1786-after 1851) and Elizabeth Dagnia (1786-1864). Elizabeth is the daughter of Simon Dagnia and Ann Rowland. This makes Elizabeth a cousin of George's father Onesiphorus.

Assuming that Onesiphorus and Jeanette Dagnia are the correct parents for great grandfather George Dagnia Ancestry.com gives the following:



Onesiphorus Dagnia and Mary Hutchinson had a child named Hutchinson Dagnia and the next source gives Mary Hutcherson of Kelloe, England as the wife of Onesiphorus.

The remaining narrative relates to Onesiphorus Dagnia and Mary Hutchinson and their ancestors. Both the Dagnias and the Hutchinson families were glassmakers. The Dagnias were possibly not vessel glass makers. A number of references mention that Edward Dagnia glass maker was working in Bristol in 1651. The original quote from which this comes is given by D.R. Guttery in his book *From Broad Glass to Cut Crystal*, and this refers to an Edward Dagnia glass maker then living in Bristow. It had been assumed that Bristow meant Bristol, but an alternative interpretation that would be more consistent with the quote is that it meant Bridstow close to Newent and Gloucester, in an area which had been a centre for glass making (particularly bottles) since the 16th century. During 1662-1664 Edward Dagnia senior was recorded as working in Scotland; dying between December 1664 and October 1665. His son John Dagnia was also recorded there in 1665 and son Edward Dagnia jun. in 1664. On 2 March 1672 Edward Dagnia had son John christened at St Nicholas church Gloucester. Edward's third son Onesiphorus was working at the Closegate glasshouse in Newcastle, probably before January 1680. All three sons had probably moved to Newcastle to make bottles by 1684.

The website

<https://books.google.com/books?id=uB1AAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA165&lpg=PA165&dq=dagnia+glassworks&source=bl&ots=QCfIRDCJhj&sig=tyGq3L301Y7UIna5L25Ekxtrgeg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjx-MiOjvDSAhUOx2MKHWrPBLyQ6AEIIZAB#v=onepage&q=Dagnia%20&f=false>

is a google scan of the proceedings of the British Society of Antiquaries. In its May 1894 minutes there is a paper by Rev. C. E. Adamson. This paper is mostly about the glass industry in England but contains a further history of the Dagnias and extends the ancestry three more generations.

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES  
OF NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

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Vol. VI.

1894.

No. 22.

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The ordinary meeting of the society was held in the library of the Castle, Newcastle, on Wednesday, the 30th day of May, 1894, at seven o'clock in the evening, Mr. John Philipson, a vice-president, being in the chair.

JOHN DAGNIA OF SOUTH SHIELDS, GLASSMAKER.

The Rev. C. E. Adamson read the following paper, remarking that he was greatly indebted to Mr. J. Crawford Hodgson of Warkworth for several valuable notes, and also to Mr. Richard Welford of Newcastle for the references to the Newcastle glasshouses.

During the earlier part of the eighteenth century a leading name in the Tyneside glass trade was that of Dagnia. In 1684 Onesiphorus Dagnia, John Dagnia, Benezar Durant, and others took an assignment for a term of 999 years of a messuage near the Close Gate, Newcastle, and thus our first notice of the Dagnias finds them establishing themselves near the spot where the Henzells, the Tyzacks, and the Tytorys, the refugees from Lothringen of the preceding century had worked at their trade of glassmaking. Seven years later the two brothers had become entitled to the premises by survivorship, and they entered into a deed of co-partnership which seems to have been renewed in 1695 and 1701. In 1702 Mr. Thos Hilton and Mrs. Sarah Dagnia were married at St. John's, Newcastle, and I think that we may conjecture that she was a daughter of Onesiphorus or John Dagnia, and, therefore, a sister or cousin to the subject of our notice. The assignment in 1710 of ye white glasshouse by Edward Dagnia to John Dagnia suggests that there was a third brother either in the first or the second generation. The first Onesiphorus Dagnia, however, only mentions in his will two sons, John and James, and therefore for the present I assign him to the first generation. I may remark also that the persistency with which the names Onesiphorus and John occur makes it impossible in many cases to be absolutely sure of the identity of the individual intended. This is particularly the case in the marriage entries of 1718 and 1740.

John Dagnia would be about four years old at the date of the assignment of the Close Gate messuage. As he appears in after years to have voted at Newcastle elections as a skinner and glover, we may presume that in 1701 he was just finishing his apprenticeship to that trade. But in 1707 his son Onesiphorus was baptized in St. Hild's Chapel, South Shields, where he is described as living in the West Panns. From that date we have a regular series of entries of the baptisms and burials of the children of Mr. John Dagny, and from the very first he is marked by the prefix Mr. which he shares with the salt officers and a few other inhabitants of the chapelry. Under date June, 1712, we have the Will of Onesiphorus Dagnia, by which he leaves two third parts of freehold and leasehold promises at glasshouses, of his cash, glass bottles, stock-in-trade, etc., to his son John, and the remaining third part to his son James. But in 1718 we have the following entry in the marriage register of St. Hilda's, South Shields w.p., April ye 25, Mr. Onesiphoris Dagny and Mrs. Margery Foster. The banns had been called at Durham for Onesiphorus Dagnia, N.C., gent, and Margt. Forster. If this is not the original Onesiphorus Dagnia, it is a member of the family of whom we do not seem to have any other notice. Perhaps he may have

been the Onesiphorus whose will is dated September, 1724, possibly a son of John Dagnia of 1684. In the mean time James Dagnia had died, and by his Will, dated April 1717, he devised his share of the glasshouse to his brother John, subject to the payment of £500 to his son Onesiphorus, and £25 a year to his wife Ann Dagnia. This latter Onesiphorus however, can hardly have been old enough to be the Onesiphorus who married Margery Forster.

At this time then—whether under his father's will or not, at any rate under that of his brother—John Dagnia, who had been settled at the West Panns in South Shields for many years, is from 1717 the proprietor of a glasshouse, and the question arises where was this glasshouse? Was it in Newcastle or in South Shields? My own impression is that just as their predecessors at the Close Gate, the Henzells and their partners had found it necessary to remove into larger premises as their business increased, so also for the same reason the Dagnias had removed to South Shields. There is unfortunately no record of the glasshouses in South Shields at this date. The earliest information I can gain is from the 'Cosa book' of St. Hilda's chapel. It begins in 1760, when there appear to have been only two glasshouses in South Shields, vis :—

	£	s.	d.
Cookson and Deer (paying)	1	0	3
John Cookson Esq (paying)	0	15	6

In 1782 these rates are £1 0s. 3d. and £1 5s. 6d.

In 1783 there is only one entry: J. Cookson & Co. 2 glasshouses.

Deer married one of Dagnia's daughters, but how the Cookson. came into the South Shields glass trade I do not know. John Cookson bought Dagnia's property at Cleadon 1753, and perhaps we may conclude that he bought his glasshouse; the late Mr. J. B. Dale is said to have stated that this was so, but I do not know what his authority was. At the same time there appears to be evidence that the Cookson. owned a glasshouse in South Shields in 1650. Perhaps therefore we may conjecture that Dagnia's glasshouse may have been that known lately as the bottle works in Holborn and not the crown glass works at the Mill Dam. The late Mr. J. C. Abbe connected Dagnia with what is now Cookson's glassworks near the Mill Dam in South Shields.

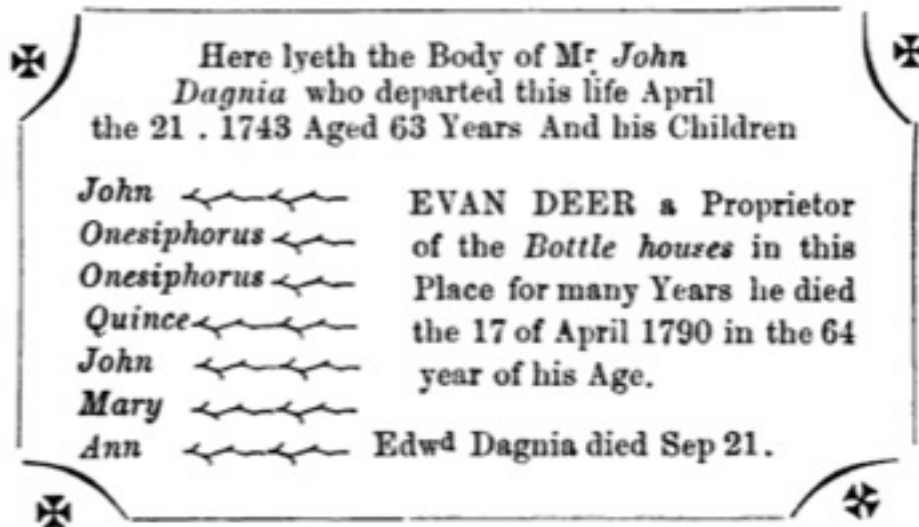
In 1738 Dagnia acquired property at Cleadon, of which Surtees in his history of Durham says —The principal mansion and a small estate in Cleadon belong to Bryan Abbe, Esq. In 1738 Thomas Wood (of the city of London, mariner, related to the Woods of Beadnell in Northumberland) conveyed to John Dagnia of South Shields, gent, for £550. James Dagnia, the eldest son of John, who built the present mansion, purchased the shares of his brothers, Edward, John and Onesiphorus, and of his two sisters. On October 24, 1753, the estate was sold by auction for £2,000 to John Cookson of Newcastle, Esq, who again conveyed 1st June, 1755 to Dame Hannah Grey for 1,900l.

There is a tradition that two bevelled panes of plate glass in the garden door of the house at Cleadon were the first manufactured in England; and also that in one of the old bottle house cones broad glass was made, i.e. what is now called plate or rolled glass. Mr. J. C. Abbe used to point these panes out to his visitors and relate how the builder of the hones had introduced the manufacture into this country. He used also to point to some larch trees in the grounds as the first planted in England. He said that Dagnia had brought fourteen trees from Italy and that five still survived (in 1865).

Of John Dagnia's wife I find no record except the following obituary notice and the entry in St. Hilda 's register: “ Saturday night died Mrs. Dagnia relict of John Dagnia Esq. a considerable glassowner at Shields. She was a lady of great piety, a friend of the poor and a worthy pattern of humility and social virtues. 1759 July 10 Hannah Dagnia.” There is an entry of the marriage in 1740 of John Dagnia and Elisabeth Kelly which I was inclined to regard as a second marriage of our John Dagnia, but on further consideration I felt obliged to conclude that we have here another John Dagnia. Whoever the husband may have been, we have no difficulty

about the wife. She was a daughter of William Kelly of West Whorlton by his wife Dorothy, daughter of Ralph Sonsby. This Mrs. John Dagnia by her will (Probate 1787) leaves £5 as a token to her eldest son John Dagnia, share of lands at Chevington to younger son William Dagnia. share of lauds at Annitsford to daughter Dorothy Fish. In 1788 William Dagnia of London, younger son of Elizabeth Dagnia, sold her lands at Chevington. He voted in 1777 and 1780 as of London merchant.'

John Dagnia himself died on the 21st April, 1743, and was buried in St. Hilda's chapel yard where an altar tomb bears the following inscription on its southern face:



On the western end has been a coat of arms and a crest too much weathered to decipher, on the opposite end some carving now completely destroyed, the northern side is blank. Evan Deer married Dagnia's younger surviving daughter Sarah, and the top is occupied by the record of Evan Deer and his family as follows: "HERE lieth interred the Body of EVAN DEER I who died 17 April 1790, aged 64. Also Sarah wife to the said EVAN DEER. She died the 26th of December 1791 aged 73. SARAH JACKSON daughter of Evan & Sarah Deer died March 25th 1802 Aged 42 years. JANE DEER Second Daughter of the above named EVAN c& SARAH died I the 21st March 1827 I Aged 67 years."

The Dagnias are said to have been Italians, and their skill in glassmaking carries our thoughts to Venice. The business connection with Benzer Durant and the scripture name Onesiphorus suggests to our minds that the family were Protestant refugees who sought and found a home in our land. It is evident that they prospered in business, and the subject of our memoir is uniformly honoured with the (at that time) dignified title of Mr. in the South Shields registers. He was able to buy the estate at Cleadon and to build a very handsome mansion upon it, and his son James was wealthy enough to purchase from the Jennisons the estate of Woolsington, four miles north of Newcastle. If it be the case that he introduced the manufacture of plate glass, we may presume that he had scientific and inventive genius as well as business capacity. The introduction of the larch would suggest that he was an observant traveller, and the house at Cleadon shows him to have had an appreciation of the beautiful in nature and art. The arrangement of the bedrooms with an alcove for the bed and a dressing closet at each side also gives us an idea of refinement of manners.

It now remains to give some account of the children of John Dagnia, who survived him. James was known as the famous gentleman glass blower, and the gentleman painter. Mackenzie in his Northumberland calls him a celebrated amateur in painting. Spearman—letters to Sir Cuthbert Sharp, Sharp MSS. vol. 71—says that he figured in Rome as count Dagnia, and that he was patronized by earl Mallox, afterwards earl of Rockingham, the earl of Denbigh, and the duke of Cleveland. He adds Miss Deer, niece of Dagnia, has his bronze bust

executed in Rome by --, and the Rev. —Griffith of Newcastle, his nephew and heir at law, if she is dead, may have some curiosities collected in his travels. Mr. Deer, commissioner of dockyards to George II., left a daughter, a witty, eccentric character. She had lent Jimmy Dagnia £500, and followed him to Newcastle about it. She afterwards married Ter. Knight a captain in the navy and died 1806 or 1807. She published a book by private press called *The adventures of Jemmy Gosemore Dagnia'* similar to *The adventures of a Guinea*. As already stated he purchased the Woolington estate from the Jennison, but very soon afterwards he sold it to the Bells.

Edward (baptized at St. Hilda's on the 19th April, 1720) voted as a skinner and glover at the Newcastle elections in 1741, 1777, 1780. In 1777 he seems to have been living at St. Anthony, and in 1780 at South Shields, but the baptism on 2 Dec. 1756 of Ben. Clayton son of Edwd. and Hannah Dagnia is recorded in the Sunderland register.

John (baptized 1722) voted in 1777 and 1780 as of Newcastle Merchant. He had a son and a grandson each named John, and a granddaughter seems to be the lady who in 1799 married Capt. Wm. Major of North Shields.

Onesiphorus married on 26th Jan, 1752. Mary Hutcheson of Church Kelloe, and two of their children were baptized at St. Hilda's, Simon in 1751 and Mary in 1753.

Jane may have been the second daughter mentioned by Burton as joining in the sale of the Cleadon property to James Dagnia.

Sarah became the wife of Evan Deer who shares Dagnia's tombstone, and apparently had two daughters, Sarah and Jane. Sarah married Anthony Thomas Griffith, merchant in Newcastle (who died at Houghton-le-Spring in 1790), and had issue three daughters and one son, Rev. Henry Deer Griffith, sometime incumbent of St. Andrew's, Newcastle (see pedigree of Griffith of Houghton-le-Spring in Surtees's Durham). She must have married again since she was buried as the wife of Henry Dalton Jackson, gent. Cookson and Deer were associated in the glasshouse, in certain salt paus, and in a brick garth. Mr. Deer was rated in 1773 and 1784 for one fourth of a farm. In 1793 time Deer is rated for a tenement and Mr. E. Deer for Caldwell field, for (the Barnes?) house and for brickyards. He had a pew in the south gallery of St. Hilda's.

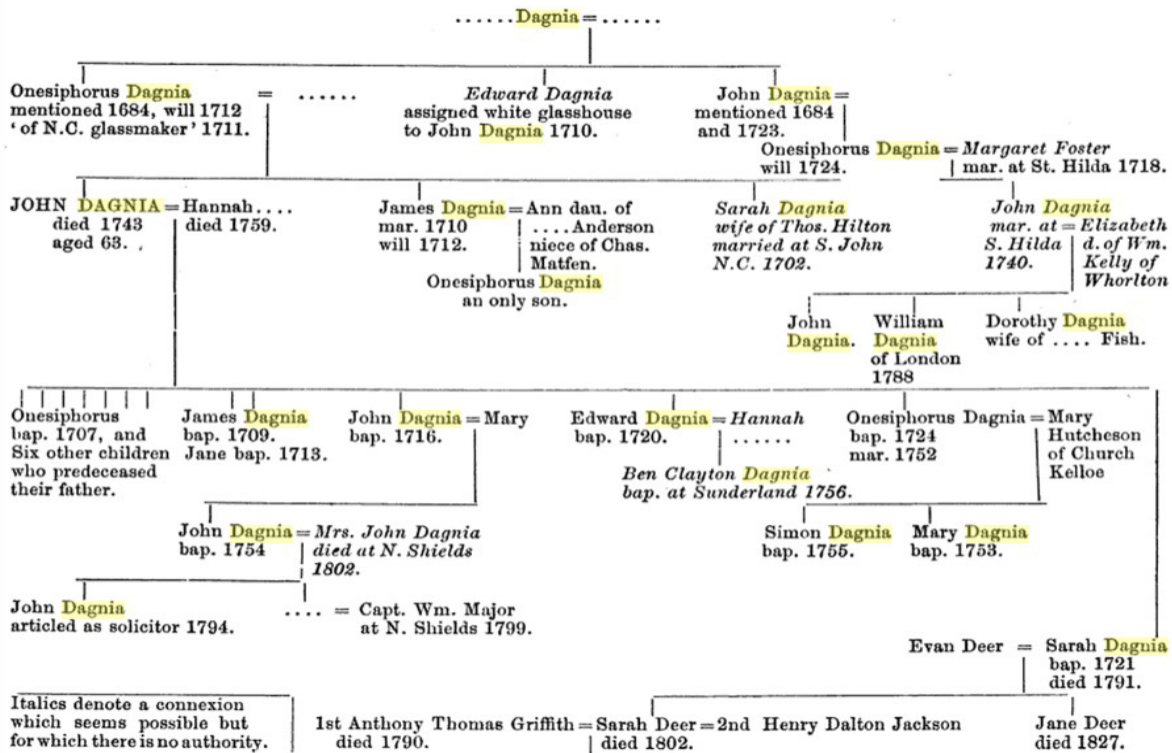
Thanks were voted to Mr. Adamson for his interesting paper.

*Proc. Soc. Antiq. Newc. VI.*

To face p. 166.



JOHN DAGNIA'S HOUSE AT CLEADON.  
(from a photograph by the Rev. G. Fybus.)



## Notes

1. A message is a dwelling house with outbuildings and land assigned to its use.
2. Larches are conifers in the genus *Larix*, in the family Pinaceae.
3. An assignment (Latin *cessio*) is a term used with similar meanings in the law of contracts and in the law of real estate. In both instances, it encompasses the transfer of rights held by one party—the assignor—to another party—the assignee.
4. In order for co-owners of property to realize the right of survivorship the property must be owned in joint tenancy.
5. Beveled glass is usually made by taking thick glass and creating an angled surface cut (bevel) around the entire periphery. Bevels act as prisms in the sunlight creating an interesting color diffraction which both highlights the glass work and provides a spectrum of colors which would ordinarily be absent in clear float glass.
6. Relic is an archaic word for widow.

## Web referrence for baptisms

[https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/61224/46919\\_420302988\\_0053-00059?pid=376842&backurl=http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?\\_phsrc%3DJme%26\\_phstart%3DsuccessSource%26usePUBJs%3Dtrue%26gss%3Dangs-g%26new%3D1%26rank%3D1%26msT%3D1%26gsfn%3DELizabeth%2520Ann%26gsfn\\_x%3D1%26gsln%3DDagnia%26gsln\\_x%3D1%26MSAV%3D2%26MS\\_AdvCB%3D1%26cp%3D0%26catbucket%3Drstp%26uidh%3Dn93%26pcat%3DROOT\\_CATEGORY%26h%3D376842%26dbid%3D61224%26indiv%3D1%26ml\\_rpos%3D1&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=Jme3&\\_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/61224/46919_420302988_0053-00059?pid=376842&backurl=http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc%3DJme%26_phstart%3DsuccessSource%26usePUBJs%3Dtrue%26gss%3Dangs-g%26new%3D1%26rank%3D1%26msT%3D1%26gsfn%3DELizabeth%2520Ann%26gsfn_x%3D1%26gsln%3DDagnia%26gsln_x%3D1%26MSAV%3D2%26MS_AdvCB%3D1%26cp%3D0%26catbucket%3Drstp%26uidh%3Dn93%26pcat%3DROOT_CATEGORY%26h%3D376842%26dbid%3D61224%26indiv%3D1%26ml_rpos%3D1&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Jme3&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true)