

# The DeLaunes of Blackfriars

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Gideon DeLaune and his Family Circle revisited

Lesley Russell



Gideon DeLaune, Royal Apothecary, founding member and benefactor of London's Society of Apothecaries, the best-known and longest-lived scion of a significant Huguenot family. Born in France, he lived almost all his life in England, arriving as a small boy with his family as they sought refuge from religious persecution, a family that was to grow and to experience both success and tragedy as they established themselves in their new home. Whilst his life is the main focus of this telling of the story, it cannot be told without consideration of his siblings and descendants, or something of the times in which they lived.

## Acknowledgements

F.N.L. Poynter's *Gideon DeLaune and his Family Circle* has been the main point of reference for any study of Gideon DeLaune's life since it was published after he had delivered the Gideon DeLaune Lecture at Apothecaries' Hall on 23 April 1964. It was the foundation and inspiration for this revision, which is written with the full benefit of the vast resources available via the internet to anyone with a home computer in addition to the more traditional research sources that Dr Poynter knew.

Special thanks are due to Dr Helen King, Professor of Classical Studies, the Open University, for her interest and encouragement when I first opened the door into the DeLaune and Chamberlen world and to Dr John Ford for suggesting I revisit Gideon's life and family more fully. Anne Carmichael led me to the connection to George Heriot and Chris Laoutaris' help with the map of Blackfriars was invaluable. Malcolm Adams from the DeLaune Cycling Club was a great sounding board, always interested in the minutiae of DeLaune history. I am very grateful to Charles Reede, archivist at St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin for his assistance and especially to Mairéad Cullen Mhic Dhonncha (a descendant of Gideon DeLaune through his daughter, Anne Sprignell) for all the discoveries she has shared and the encouragement she has offered. Finally, thanks to my husband Julian Russell for his patience and forbearance when I was totally lost to the 17th century, and for regularly being my feet on the ground in London while I was at home in Australia.

## Illustrations

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### **Names and dates**

Although DeLaune is the accepted spelling of the name now, both William and Gideon signed themselves De Lawne and that spelling is seen throughout contemporary records, though the vagaries of 16th and 17th century spelling mean that any number of variations can also be found - DeLann, DeLone, Delonone, and more.

The spelling of Chamberlen used throughout here was first used by Dr Peter Chamberlen and has since become the accepted spelling of the name. Earlier records typically use any number of phonetic variations. In the original French it appears to have been Chambrelain.

Until 1752 the legal year in England began on 25 March. The convention used here is to write February 1590/91, recording the year as it was known at the time/the year as we know it now.

*Refugee* - We read and hear the word constantly today as the flow of those who have been forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution or natural disaster swells into a flood of misery and desperation that seeks sanctuary in an often alien land. There have always been refugees - nameless, faceless millions throughout history - but the word comes to us from the 17th century when it was first used to describe the thousands, and tens of thousands, who fled their homes to escape the fury of religious persecution that swept across the Low Countries and France as the ideologies of Calvin and other reformers took hold of the hearts and minds of those who sought to worship God according to different principles from the old established orders. Using an Old French verb *refugier*, "to take shelter, protect" the word entered the lexicon of the English language and they became known as *refugié* - refugees.

Encouraged by the Protestant rule of Edward VI and Elizabeth I, there had been a steady stream of skilled artisans and merchants across the English Channel and the North Sea for much of the 16th century as the Reformation spread through Europe. When the St Bartholomew's Day massacre on 24 August 1572 triggered a wave of violence against Protestants all over France, that stream became a flood. Joining the exodus following the massacre, Guillaume (William) DeLaune brought his family to England.

William's is not the first appearance of the name DeLaune in London, though the first mention of his name comes in the records of the Dutch Church at Austin Friars where *Gualterus Delaenus* had been a minister some twenty five years earlier though a more correct translation of *Delaenus* is probably DeLeen than DeLaune. A theologian and preacher, Walter Deleen and his son, Peter, arrived in England from the Low Countries in about 1535. When Edward VI granted Letters Patent for the first Dutch Church at Austin Friars, Walter was named as one of the ministers. Edward's death in July 1553 brought his Catholic sister, Mary, to the throne and the welcome extended to the continental Protestants was rapidly withdrawn. The signing of the Queen's marriage contract to Philip of Spain was followed by an order that all foreign Protestants were to leave the country within twenty four days. Walter and Peter sailed from Gravesend on 17 September 1553 with 36 members of the Austin Friars congregation. By the time Elizabeth I's accession in 1558 permitted their return Walter had died. Peter assumed his position, remaining in London until his death from plague. He was buried at Austin Friars on 3 September 1563.<sup>1</sup> Although no record links them with William DeLaune, Dr Poynter suggested there is a strong family likeness to be seen between Gideon and Walter in a painting which records the granting of the Letters Patent for the Church. As the painting was completed c.1750, and given the erratic standard of 17th century spelling, the likeness is almost certainly a case of the artist basing his portrayal of Walter on an assumption and existing portraits of Gideon rather than any image made during Walter's lifetime



*Edward VI Granting Permission for the foundation of a Congregation for European Protestants in London in 1550 (Johann Valentin Haidt c.1752-53)*



### William DeLaune

Born in Normandy in about 1530, William DeLaune spent eight years studying medicine in Paris and Montpellier under Duret and Rondelet, France's leading professors of physic at that time. Not only was Montpellier's medical school regarded as one of Europe's best, the city was a major centre of the French Reformed Church. After completing his medical studies there, William became an ordained minister of the Reformed Church in 1558 and subsequently served that church in Générac and Beauvoisin in Lower Languedoc in addition to his practice of physic. His wife, Katherine des Loges, is thought to be the daughter of the Reformed Church minister at nearby Uzès; their first son, Gideon, was born in Nîmes in 1565. The death of Katherine's father found William assuming responsibility for the des Loges family, such a financial burden that, in 1570, pleading dire poverty, William asked to be relieved of his church duties in Languedoc and to be permitted to return to his home 200 *lieues* (leagues) away<sup>2</sup> where, presumably, there were family contacts - des Loges is also a Norman name. A second son, Isaac, was certainly born sometime before the flight to England, and it may well be that there was a third son, Thomas, also born in France.

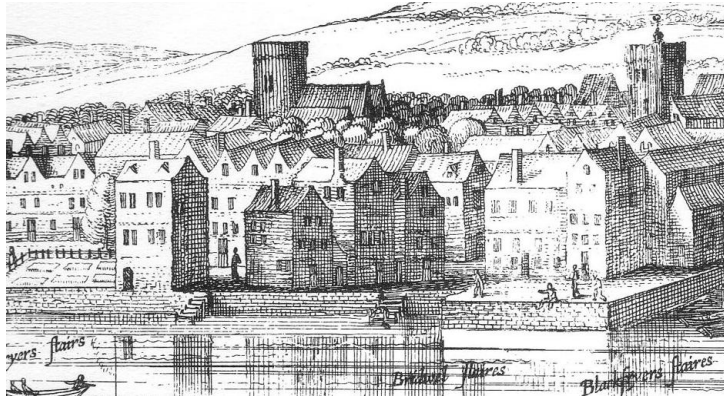
The autumn months following the massacre brought thousands of refugees to ports all along the south coast of England, more than six hundred landing at Rye.<sup>3</sup> The DeLaunes were presumably among them; William DeLaune's first position in England was an assistant minister at Rye's French Church. Another son, Pierre, whose enrolment at Leiden<sup>4</sup> confirms his English birth and whose later career in the Church of England was surely enabled by it, was born about this time.



*Rye, East Sussex (Hendrick Danckerts (1625-1680) Rye was the largest port in Sussex in the late 16th century and a major destination for those fleeing religious persecution. By 1582 more than half the population, some 1500 people, were Huguenots but thousands more had passed through the town in the preceding decades, most moving on quickly to other places such as London, Canterbury, Southampton and Norwich, but the numbers were so great at times they put such a strain on the town's resources that appeals for provisions were sent to the Queen.*

By 1575 William had moved the family to London, to live in the precinct of St Ann Blackfriars, within the liberty of Blackfriars, an area noted for its mixed population that included aristocratic Englishmen, highly skilled foreign artisans and a large sub-community of French protestants drawn to the area both by the freedoms it offered its inhabitants and its record of freedom from anti-alien violence. . Blackfriars' liberties, inherited from the friary, included freedom from arrest by City of London officials within the precinct, exemption from City taxes, freedom to practice crafts and trades without Guild memberships, freedom from searches except by liberty constables and freedom from serving in City offices. Whilst rejecting the City's interference or involvement in their affairs, the liberty remained subject to the authority of the Crown, Parliament, and the bishops of London. Notable residents (apart from those who feature in the DeLaune's story) included English playwright, Ben Jonson, Dutch painter Antony van Dyck and Italian master of fencing, Rocco Bonetti. From its beginning the parish was a Puritan stronghold, led for more than fifty years by two of the times most prominent Puritan clergymen, Stephen Egerton and William Gouge.

By the time the DeLaunes settled there, Blackfriars had become home to a large number of London's most eminent aliens as well as native-born notables.



*Blackfriars from the river (Claes Visscher (1586-1652). The Visscher panorama is an engraving depicting a view of London drawn from a combination of maps and map-views. First published in Amsterdam in 1616.*

The precinct had been the domain of the great Dominican priory of Blackfriars until the Dissolution, after which a very large portion of the monastery buildings and land was sold to Sir Thomas Carwarden, Henry VIII's Master of Revels. Carwarden divided the major part of this property into tenanted *messuages* (a combination of dwelling house, outbuildings and adjacent land necessary for the function of the dwelling). Following his death in 1559 many of these properties were acquired by Sir William More and it was one of More's *messuages* that William first leased for his large and growing family. Situated in the south-east corner of the original kitchen yard, the building had been part of the Upper Frater, the monastery's Parliament chamber, the grand hall that in 1529 was the place where Queen Katherine of Aragon appeared before Cardinal Wolsey and the Papal legate, Cardinal Campeggio, as Henry VIII sought to have their marriage deemed unlawful. Grand indeed, the total area covered was 109 x 52 feet, now divided into seven rooms reached via a large pair of winding staircases coming up from the yard; no wonder James Burbage had his eye on it for his second Blackfriars theatre. For now though, it was the DeLaune's home.

The first mention of William DeLaune's presence in London appears in the records of the Dutch Church at Austin Friars where he took the abjuration of their faith from a group of Walloon Anabaptists at Easter 1575<sup>5</sup> after he had become an assistant minister at the French Church in Threadneedle Street. Once the chapel of the by-then-defunct St Anthony's Hospital, the Threadneedle Street building had been leased to the Dutch and French Protestants in September 1550. When the Dutch congregation moved to a larger church at Austin Friars shortly after this, the two congregations often used each other's rooms. The Threadneedle Street chapel was destroyed in the Great Fire; its replacement, funded entirely by the French community, was one of the first churches to be rebuilt in the City and continued in use until 1840 until it was demolished to make way for the approaches to the new Royal Exchange.



*Corporation of London plaque: 52 Threadneedle Street*

A short distance away, part of the site of the nave of the Dominican friar's church became the burial ground of St Ann Blackfriars. The monastery's church and its chapel of St Ann used by the precinct's lay residents had been demolished by Sir Thomas Carwarden and for several years the congregation gathered in upstairs rooms that became more and more decrepit until the total collapse of the stairs leading to the rooms prompted a collection to be made for a church to be built where the Priory's Provincial's Hall had stood. The new church was dedicated on 11 December 1597 and William DeLaune was granted a pew immediately beside the pulpit<sup>6</sup> - a clear indication of his standing in the parish. The parish records of St Ann Blackfriars<sup>7</sup> show DeLaune family baptisms, burials and marriages all taking place there. Burials certainly did as the French Church had no burial ground of its own, but the earlier baptisms and marriages would have been registrations in the English church with the sacrament performed at Threadneedle Street - a common practice among the Stranger Protestant communities. Not only did St Ann Blackfriars' notably Puritan ministry suit the Calvinistic Huguenots, one of the church's leading parishioners, the Lady Elizabeth Russell, was a both a supporter of the Threadneedle Street Church and a very near neighbor of the DeLaunes.



*Elizabeth Russell, nee Cooke (1542-1609). Late 18th century enamel on copper portrait. Artist Henry Bone (1755-1834) After a posthumous portrait that hangs in Bisham Abbey, home of her first husband, Sir Thomas Hoby.*

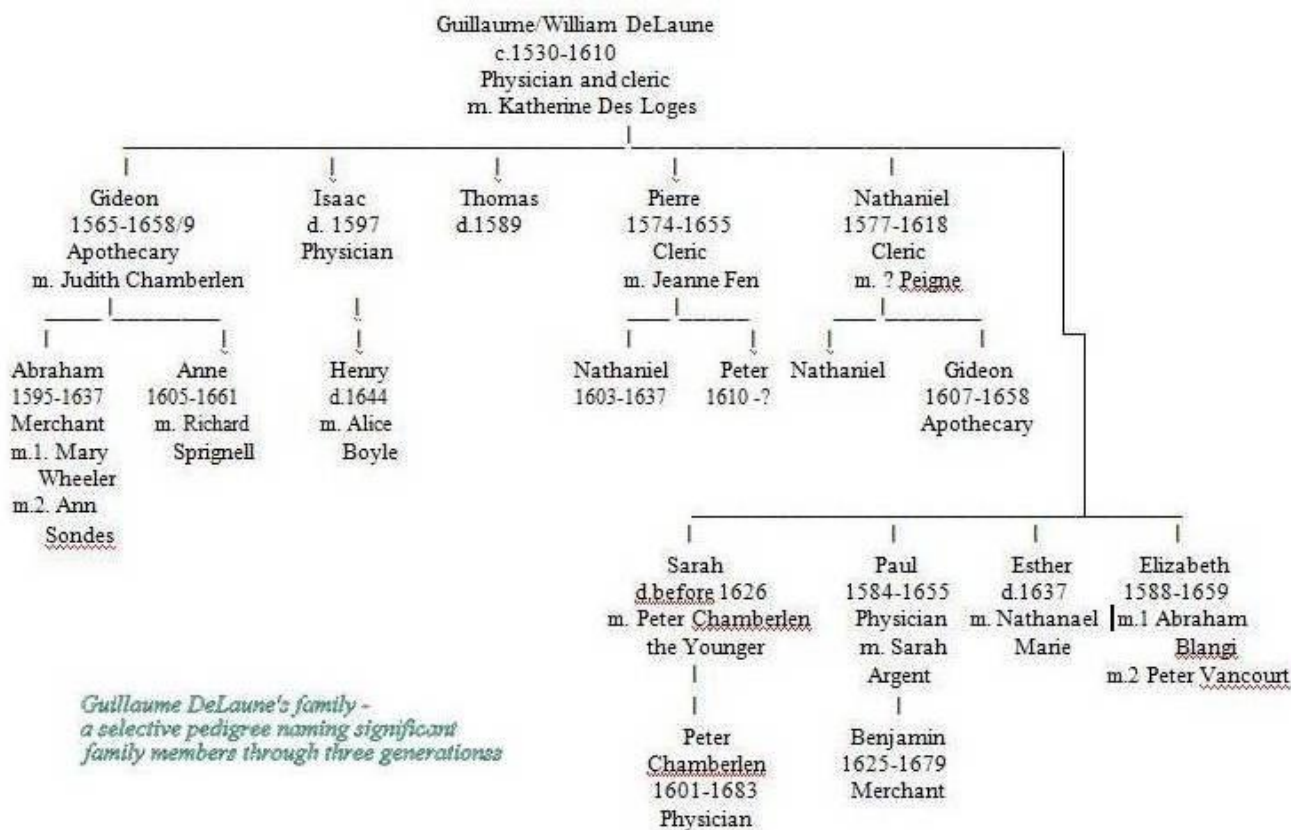
Daughter of scholar, humanist, committed Protestant and sometime tutor of Edward VI, Anthony Cooke, wife firstly of Thomas Hoby, Elizabeth I's Ambassador to France in 1566, and then of John Russell, heir to the Earl of Bedford, Elizabeth Russell was an extraordinary figure in her own right, acknowledged as one of the most formidable female intellects of her time. She and her sisters were given a first rate education, made brilliant marriages and were at the very forefront of Puritan influence and intellectual debate. One sister, Mildred, was married to William Cecil, Lord Burghley; Anne married Nicholas Bacon who became Elizabeth I's Lord Keeper of the Great Seal and Katherine married diplomat Henry Killigrew. All four women were notable linguists, poets and translators, all were deeply committed to religious reform and Elizabeth and Katherine were known to be supporters of the French Church. Not only was she a neighbor who was sympathetic to William's religious beliefs, she was one who had both intellect and influence.

As they became more assimilated into their life in England, the DeLaune family attended and served both the French and English church until succeeding generations, now well and truly acculturated, left both Blackfriars and the French church behind.

William's family grew – Nathaniel in 1577, Sarah, Paul (1584), Esther and Elizabeth (1588). In giving his children biblical names at their baptisms, William was following the Reformed church's rejection of the Catholic belief in the protection and intercession of the saints. He and his wife had names that reflected their

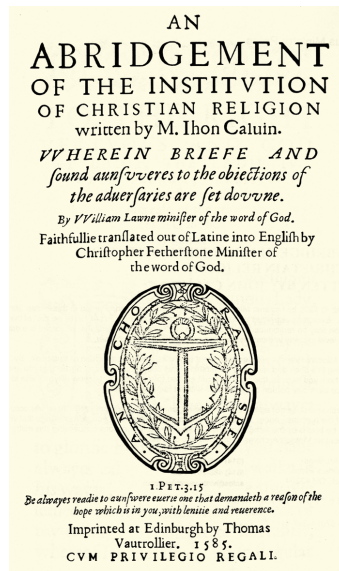


French Catholic heritage; their children's names told the world of their Protestant identity. Each child would have been baptized at Threadneedle Street at the end of the regular service, probably on the Sunday following their birth, the usual practice in the French church. The last child, Elizabeth, was registered at St Ann Blackfriars, but, with the existing French Church records only dating from 1595, the birthdates of William's sons can only be estimated from their ages given in other records, such as university entrance; Sarah and Esther's are unknown. Thomas, who was buried at the Blackfriars church in 1589, may well have been born in France as the Blackfriars Subsidy Roll of 1582 lists *Gillan the lame, French Preacher and three men children (a- 2 children)*.<sup>8</sup> This twice-yearly poll tax of fourpence imposed on aliens (double the rate imposed on native-born Englishmen) was payable for the head of the household and each male child over the age of seven - William, Gideon, Isaac and Thomas. The two additional children are presumably English-born Pierre and Nathaniel, the tax being payable on males only.



The expense of his growing family led William to resume medical practice in combination with his church duties. Practising medicine whilst a preacher was forbidden at this time in England and he was summoned to appear before the College of Physicians on 22 December 1582. Pleading eloquently with the College for their consideration of both his long experience as a physician and the needs of his large family, "*O most humane and blessed doctors a suppliant fifty-two years of age, beseeches you by your charity to bestow your privilege and license as a favour to an experienced man, either until he is able to live without the need to practise medicine or until ecclesiastical authority recalls him to fulfill his duties as a clergyman again.*"<sup>9</sup> he gained their permission to continue his dual activity and was made a Licentiate of the College the same day. A period of residence in Cambridge in 1583 suggests that his French degree was incorporated there at about this time.<sup>10</sup>

Medicine did not entirely take over his religious works however - 1583 saw DeLaune publishing an abridged version of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Written in Latin and published by Thomas Vautrollier (William's neighbor, another French Protestant, considered one of Elizabethan England's best printers), a French translation, published in 1584, was followed by no fewer than three English editions, in 1585, 1586 and 1587 and one in Dutch in 1650. William's preface gives us an indication of the many years he must have devoted to this work: "*When at such times as the harvest began to waxe white in France in times past, I was called backe from the course of phisicke which I had already ended, addressing myself to the practice thereof, unto the entrance of divinity, and to take upon me the ministerie, I made choice of that work especially, next to the Holy Bible, to be read and remembered by me.*" <sup>11</sup>



Title page of William DeLaune's *Epitome of John Calvin's treatise on the Christian religion*. This summary rendered the original more accessible to a wider readership and became the major source of reference and a handbook for debate on Calvin's work throughout the seventeenth century.

Referring to the work as "*a nosegay from the pleasant garden of divinity*" DeLaune dedicated it to Richard Martin, sometime Master of the Mint and Lord Mayor of London in 1589 and 1594, and his wife Dorcas, ardent Puritans and members of the influential circle of fellow-Puritan Elizabeth Russell, William's near neighbor, writing: "*I would have this simple testomonie of my thankfull minde to be extant for that your unwearied studie in bestowing benefites, which i have often tryed.*" Addressing Dorcas, he wrote: "*Againe seing that you will your gorgeous howse to stand open to all the godlie as a common Inne.*"



Sir Richard Martin and his wife Dorcas Eglestone. Cast copper double-portrait medal, 1562, by Steven van Herwijck [Stephen of Holland] (c.1530-1565/7)

A translator of French Protestant works herself, Dorcas Martin's welcoming of the "godlie" to her home would have seen William included in the discussions of the work of her close associates, major figures of the Protestant Reformation such as theologian Thomas Cartwright, controversial preacher Edward Dering and Dering's widow and translator of Calvin's sermons, Anne Locke. His printer, and fellow Reformed Protestant, Thomas Vautrollier, another Blackfriars neighbor, was also member of the Martin circle, as was the Protestant Venetian bookseller, Escanius de Renialme, whose apprentice, Adrian Marie, was the younger brother of Nathanael Marie who was to become William's fellow-preacher and future son-in-law.

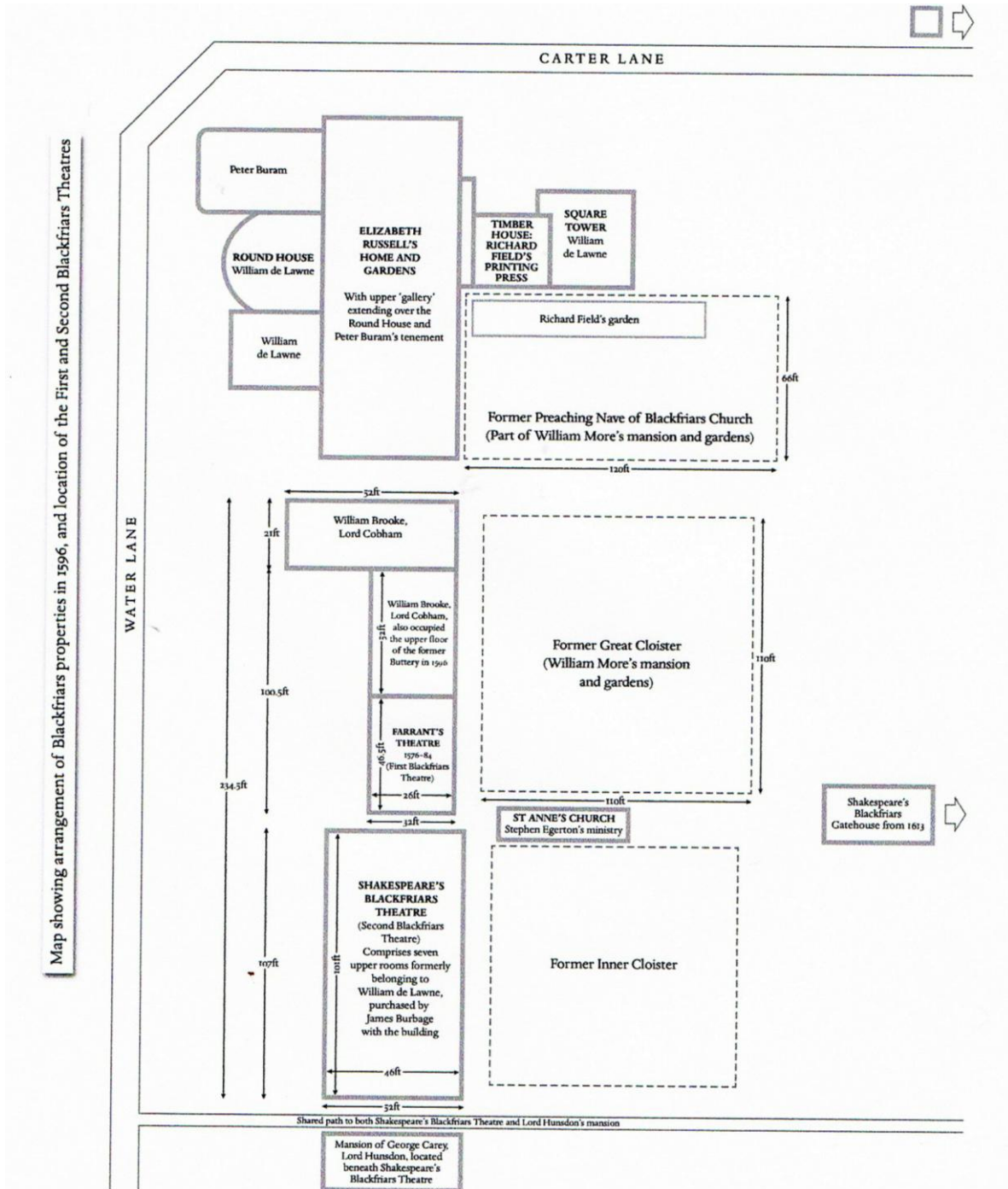
The precinct of Blackfriars, part of the ward of Farringdon Within, with its extraordinary and fashionable mixture of influential English residents, Puritan church and foreign artisans - goldsmiths, printers, cordwainers, clockmakers, booksellers, apothecaries and more - stood outside the jurisdiction and control of the City of London, a situation its residents were as anxious to maintain as the City's Corporation was to rescind.

April 1579 found a determined group of Blackfriars residents campaigning to maintain their liberty's independence and immunity from the City's jurisdiction and taxation. Sir William More, now the major owner of property in the precinct, wanted the law within the liberty to be governed and enforced by its own courts and Justices and to that end a list of names of Blackfriars residents deemed suitable to be appointed as commissioners for the peace within the precinct was submitted to the Lord Keeper, Nicholas Bacon, Elizabeth Russell's brother-in-law. The candidates included Lord John Russell (Elizabeth Russell's husband), William More (William DeLaune's landlord), Lord Cobham (a member of the Privy Council), Elizabeth Russell's kinsman, Sir Thomas Browne, and William DeLaune.<sup>12</sup> Exalted company indeed and evidence that William had very quickly established himself within a circle of influential and powerful people. More's hopes for an independent Blackfriar's court came to nothing but the petitioner's desire to protect the rights of the liberty's artisans and craftsmen by allowing them to practice their trades freely was realized when the Lord Mayor was ordered to refrain from interfering in any of the liberty's affairs and the precinct was left to manage itself, with William More and John and Elizabeth Russell and their circle taking a leading role in the community, ensuring the security of its residents and businesses, the cleanliness of its alleys and stairs and the upkeep of its church. This was a community whose leading residents worked together for the mutual benefit of all.

These must have been busy years for William and his growing sons. Before 1583 was out, William's medical work had increased so much he was obliged to ask to be excused from his position at the church. His fortunes continued to rise through the following years. In March 1585 he was able to lend £300, a not inconsiderable sum, to one Adam Rayneshawe, a carpenter - the money to be paid back in two payments by March 1587. The indenture for this loan states that William was dwelling in a house "*known by the sign of the three starres scituuate and being within the precincte of the Blacke ffriers nere Ludgate in London*"<sup>13</sup> By 31 October 1593 he was in a position to buy outright a large tenement in Blackfriars, some of which had been leased in Gideon's name the previous year., paying Sir William More £360 and adding considerably to the premises that included a dwelling known as the Square Tower and the small gate room adjoining it which had once been leased to Thomas Vautrollier. This purchase may have been why in February 1593/4 the College of Physicians recorded that William struggled to pay his annual licensing fee of £3 and granted him a reduction to 38/6 providing he paid his arrears.<sup>14</sup>

The 1593 purchase of the Square Tower had included the adjacent Round Tower and, squeezed between these two buildings, a small timber house (the little gate room) - which was by then leased to Richard Field, Thomas Vautrollier's former apprentice. His own master now, married to Vautrollier's widow, Jacqueline, Field had printed the first of William Shakespeare's works - *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* - that same year. Hard work and good fortune had made William DeLaune his landlord. Their nearest neighbor was the redoubtable Lady Elizabeth Russell, by now a widow but still immersed in local affairs.

On 4 February 1596 More sold "those seven great upper rooms as they are now divided, being all upon one floor, and sometime being one great and entire room, with the roof over the same covered with lead, late in the tenure of William DeLaune, Doctor of Physic" <sup>15</sup> to James Burbage, who had plans to turn William's old rooms and some others below them that had once been leased to Rocco Bonetti into an indoor playhouse, similar to the one he had operated in another of the old priory buildings from 1576 to 1584.



This map showing the area immediately around William DeLaune's Blackfriars' property was drawn up by Dr Chris Laoutaris and first published in his biography of Elizabeth Russell, Shakespeare and the Countess. It draws on information obtained from Lady Russell's descriptions of her property, various contemporary tenancy and sale records and Dr Laoutaris' own exploration of the precinct as it stands today. When Gideon DeLaune facilitated the Society of Apothecaries' purchase of Lord Cobham's house in 1633 his home, church and professional life were centred in this one small area.

Burbage's plans were thwarted by the determined protests of the local residents, led with fierce determination by Lady Elizabeth. Puritan disapproval of the playhouse was only one of the factors in her opposition. Applying through her friend, Richard Martin, now Alderman of Farringdon Within, she had recently requested permission to create a new passage in the precinct to gain entry to additions she had planned to her already large house. The parish was at last getting a proper church. She was determined that the amenity of both her home and her church should not be intruded upon. The effect on business of large numbers of play-goers coming and going through the precinct concerned others. The residents in the immediate vicinity of the proposed theatre, all members of Lady Russell's circle and no doubt mindful of her influence as well as their own interests, William DeLaune among them, Richard Field another, all had their own reasons for supporting her petition to the Privy Council with its claim that the Playhouse would "*grow to be a very great annoyance and trouble, not only to all the noblemen and gentlemen thereabout inhabiting but also a generall inconvenience to all the inhabitants of the same precinct, both by reason of the great resort and gathering together of all manner of vagrant and lewde persons that, under cullor of resorting to the playes, will come thither and worke all manner of mischeefe...and besides, that the same playhouse is so neere the Church that the noyse of the drummes and trumpetts will greatly disturbe and hinder both the ministers and parishioners in tyme of devine service and sermons.*"<sup>16</sup>

The petitioners won the day when, despite the advanced state of the work on the playhouse at considerable cost to Burbage and his backers, William Shakespeare among them, the Privy Council granted their appeal, banning the use of the theatre. James Burbage, left bankrupt and embittered, died the following year and although his sons were granted permission to open the playhouse in 1608, just a few short months before Elizabeth Russell died, they too suffered financially because of the legacy of outstanding debt from the venture.<sup>a</sup>

William's fortunes however continued to improve. By the time he died in February 1610/11 he was able to leave a new house that he had built to his son Paul and equal shares of the value of other houses to be divided between all his sons. With a growing family, sons who had attended universities in England and in France, his practice as a physician, theological writing and friendships with influential and learned men and women, William DeLaune had come a long way in the years since the family had faced poverty and an uncertain future as they fled from terror. Refugees no longer, they were still aliens but life was comfortable and secure and the DeLaune family was well on its way to establishing a prominent place for itself in its adopted home.



*The doctor's dispensatory ..... by William Faithorne. Engraving published as the frontispiece to P. Morellus, The Expert Doctor's Dispensatory (1657)*

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<sup>a</sup> Elizabeth Russell's son led a second, unsuccessful, attempt to close the playhouse in 1619 and it remained in operation until 1642. After falling into disrepair, the playhouse was demolished on 6 August, 1655. Playhouse Yard, close to Apothecaries' Hall, commemorates the site





..... and apothecary's shop in the 17th Century

### Gideon DeLaune

Aged about seven when the family fled France, Gideon's early years in England were no doubt affected by his father's financial and professional difficulties. Necessity rather than choice was perhaps the reason he became an apothecary, enabling him to not only assist his father but also to contribute to the family's income from a relatively young age rather than spend years studying at university as his younger brothers were to do. No records exist of an apprenticeship to an English apothecary so it may well be, as Poynter suggests, that he learned his skills from his father and some of his friends such as the herbalist John Gerard.<sup>b</sup> It seems the wholesale supply of drugs took place from their Blackfriars home as in his will, dated 1610, William refers to apothecary goods kept in a new house.<sup>17</sup> However and wherever he obtained his knowledge of the apothecary's mysteries, Gideon DeLaune was to achieve great success, becoming both influential and spectacularly wealthy in the course of his long life.

The first record identifying Gideon as an apothecary appears on a lease, dated 20 September 1592, between Sir William and George More and "*Gedion de Lawne apothecarie*". Extensive as the accommodation was: "*all those romes ...called or known by the name of the square Tower sometyme called the Church porch....that is to saye all that there great shop now in the occupation of the said Gideon & also those there three pairs of stairs one above another leading out of the entry there adjoining to the said great shop up into the stone chambers now covered with lead ...And also that there one other little garret adjoining westward*"<sup>18</sup> with its various rooms, shops, stairs, etc, there were inconveniences as well. The lease did not include a small dwelling that was sandwiched between the DeLaune apartments but allowed Gideon as tenant "*free access to use the privy or wydraft now being within the second timber house ... And ffree passage & course for the rayne water falling from the howses or buildings above by theis p'sent demysed into the yard there nowe in the occupacion of Richard ffeild.*" Both Gideon and Field were bound to share the cost of cleaning the privy and not to renovate their own entry in any way that would restrict the other's access. They were also bound to pay towards the maintenance of precinct's church and its minister.

Just as there are no records of Gideon's apprenticeship, there is no record of his marriage. The first appearance of his name anywhere is found in the Baptism register of St Ann Blackfriars with the registration entry for his first-born son, "*Gedeon sonne to Gedeon delawne.*" on 14 February 1590/91. The child's mother was Judith Chamberlen, the English-born daughter of Henry and Magdalen Chamberlen, members of a large and

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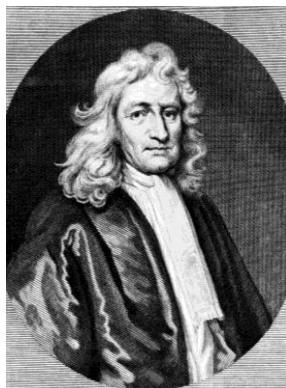
<sup>b</sup> With plants being the source of so many drugs, physicians and apothecaries were often well versed in botany. Gerard's Great Herball preface included verses written by William DeLaune; botanist John Goodyer listed drugs supplied to him by Gideon in 1617, some plant-based (rhubarb extract), some animal and vegetable (coral dissolved in pomegranate juice) while others (pearl dissolved) were even more exotic. (R. T. Gunther., Early British botanists and their gardens, based on unpublished writings of Goodyer, Tradescant, and others. p.19 1922)

influential Huguenot family who were well established in London by this time. This marriage, the first of several DeLaune-Chamberlen unions, produced thirteen children whose births and burials are to be found in both the records of St Ann Blackfriars and the French Church Threadneedle Street. The joy of the birth of that first son was not to last, the babe was buried on July 29 the same year." Gideon and Judith were still childless by the time the 1593 Return of Aliens recorded "*DE LAUNE, GIDEON and Judith, his English wife, Frenchman, born in Nimes in Languedoc in France, apothecary, no children, one stranger apprentice; no stranger maid servant; dwelt in England 18 years; denizen; of the French Church; keeps two English apprentices and one maid; sets no English person to work.*"<sup>19</sup> Gideon had actually been in England for twenty-one years by this time but it was to be another forty before he was granted denization.

Life at Blackfriars continued. The birth of another son, Abraham (named for his Chamberlen uncle, Judith's brother, a city merchant living in Bread Street) was registered at St Ann Blackfriars on 6 July 1595. More children followed, all similarly registered with the parish but baptized in the French Church<sup>20</sup> and all too many buried at St Ann Blackfriars. The first family event to be found in the surviving Threadneedle Street records is the baptism of a second Gideon, on 11 May 1600. This Gideon, like the first lived only a few weeks and was buried on 9 June. More births followed - Isaac in 1602, Esther (1603), James (1604), Ann (1605), Elizabeth (1606), William (1607), Mary (1609), Henry (1611) and, in 1613 and 1615, two unnamed infants, the first a *chrysom* (a child who died before it could be baptized) and, finally, a stillborn babe. Of these thirteen children, only two, Abraham and Ann, were to live to adulthood. James and William died in childhood, aged five and seven, all the others died in infancy.

### **Sarah DeLaune and Peter Chamberlen**

The Blackfriars apartments must have been quite a nursery in these years. Gideon's sister, Sarah, married Peter Chamberlen the Younger in 1598 and had nine children in much the same time frame as Gideon and Judith. Sarah's husband was one of two brother surgeon-accoucheurs, both somewhat confusingly named Peter. Refugees like the DeLaunes, the elder Peter had been born in France, the younger in Southampton where their father, William, was a surgeon and, in a French rather than English practice, an *accoucheur* (a man-midwife). By the time of the marriage the brothers were well established in London, Peter the Elder a royal surgeon and accoucheur, Peter the Younger with a licence to practise midwifery from the Archbishop of London. Peter the Elder is considered to be the inventor of the first safe and effective obstetric forceps, an invention the brothers went to great pains to keep a family secret, one which remained so for more than a hundred years as sons followed fathers through four generations of this medical family. Although Sarah and Peter the Younger suffered the loss of three children in infancy, they saw six live to adulthood, two of whom - Peter and Nathaniel - became physicians.



*Dr Peter Chamberlen 1658: .Line engraving by Thomas Trotter after Robert White (pub. 1794).*

Peter, their second born but eldest surviving son, was an original, creative thinker, and decidedly eccentric. In his long life (1601-1683) he was to serve three Stuart monarchs as Royal Physician, beginning as his uncle Peter the Elder's assistant at the court of James I and, finally, with the Restoration in 1660, reminding Charles II that he was the only surviving Physician to their Majesties from before the Commonwealth. In 1634 he tried, and failed, to organize a College of Midwives – with himself as Governor – and further attempts to have himself appointed Vicar General of London's midwives also failed. In these ventures he may not have been only seeking his own advantage: he seems to have been genuinely concerned to make reforms that would benefit both birthing women and their attendants. His fame spread as far as Moscow from where the Tsar, Michael Romanov, wrote to Charles I requesting that he be allowed to leave England and come to Russia to serve at the Court there. The request was refused.

An inveterate petitioner, Peter Chamberlen spent most of the Commonwealth years in self-imposed retirement at his country house in Woodham Mortimer, Essex, during which time he continued to bombard Parliament and the Lord Protector with ideas for diverse schemes to improve society, ideas that ranged from *Powring Oyle and Wyne into the Wounds of Nation* and *The virtues of public baths and bath-stoves for the benefits of health, cleanliness and prevention of disease they provided and for their aesthetic appeal in beautifying city environs* to improving the lot of the common soldier, land reform, electoral reform and reducing taxation among other things, while all the while becoming and more involved in his belief in Seventh-Day Sabbatarianism, accepting adult baptism on 1 February 1652 and becoming the leader of London's first Seventh-Day congregation at Mill Yard for a time.<sup>21</sup>

### Isaac DeLaune

Gideon's other siblings were also making their way in the world during these years. Isaac studied at Leiden<sup>22</sup> and became a physician, spending some time in Norwich<sup>23</sup> before taking a position at the Hotel-Dieu in Tonnerre, Burgundy, at that time one of the largest hospitals in France. While there he sent gentians to his father's friend, John Gerard. Gerard recorded the gift in his book *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes*, published in 1597. "*Gentian groweth in shady woods and the mountains of Italie, Slavonia, Germany, France and Burgundie; from whence master Isaac de Laune, a learned physician, sent me plants for the increase of my garden.*"<sup>24</sup>



*Hotel-Dieu, Tonnerre*

The gentians made it safely to England, Isaac was not so fortunate. He died in Tonnerre, in April, 1597, where, despite the service he had given the town and the respect any burial deserves, his body was subjected to outrageous indignities. Drawn from a letter sent to Robert Cecil, Queen Elizabeth I's Secretary of State, this report tells the story:

*"On Sunday the 19th of April M. Isaac de Laune, Doctor of Medicine, residing at Tonnerre, in Burgundy, of the Reformed religion, died, respected by all right-minded men. His widow then sent to the "Administrateur" of the Hospital to ask leave to bury him in one of the burial grounds within that Hospital, where several*

*Protestants had lately been buried; and this was freely granted. When this came to the ears of the Dean of the parish of Notre Dame, he went to the "Administrateur," with some monks of the Hospital, and protested, although the dead man had been familiar with them in his life and was the usual and official doctor of the Hospital. The widow and friends accordingly decided to bury the body by night to avoid giving any occasion for complaint. But when in the evening the funeral party were met, both Catholics and Protestants, news was brought that the monks of the Hospital were prepared to resist by force the burial of the body, and that the Dean with a lot of bad characters was at the town for the same purpose. Accordingly it was agreed to make a formal complaint the next day, and that the widow should have the body taken to Fielz, an estate of which she is part-owner, to be there buried. And so the party went away leaving only two women in the house. But the Dean and the mob, being disappointed by this decision, about midnight broke into the house, dragged the corpse into the market place up to the pillory, broke open the coffin, wounded the body with pointed sticks, put cards in one hand and dice in the other, and were about to put the body into the pillory if they had not been prevented from doing so by some disapprovers. They then took to insulting the body, threatening to throw it into the river with a paper on its back that this was Huguenot on his way to England, and abusing it in other ways. In the morning the police and the "Echevins" came, most of whom had been violent partisans of the League; and, to show how little they cared for such matters, they had the body taken up by some peasants, and buried without more ado in a dunghill, and did not even allow it to be first placed in the coffin. And then they went back to the widow and demanded payment for their trouble, threatening her that otherwise they would dig up the body, and throw it to the dogs to eat. And they even contrived that no justice should be had, without appealing to the King'.<sup>25</sup>*

William DeLaune's will named Isaac's son, Henry. The only indication of him having another child comes from Ireland, where W. M. Brady's *Clerical and Parochial Records of Cork, Cloyne and Ross* notes that "an unknown Miss DeLaune, probably the sister of Henry DeLaune of Gurtmore, Co Cork, who married a daughter of Richard Boyle, abp of Tuam"<sup>26</sup> had married Louis Vigors, a Devonshire vicar, and was the mother of Urban Vigors, who married Catherine Boyle. Louis Vigors married again in 1610, so we must presume that Henry's unnamed sister died before this date, quite possibly in childbirth - all of which might seem very incidental but when Henry's uncle Gideon transferred to him his share of land granted during the Irish plantations, another uncle, Paul DeLaune, procured a position for him with Lord Falkland, Lord-Deputy of Ireland and he married Alice Boyle, it began a connection to Ireland and the hugely influential family of Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Cork, that was to continue through several generations.

## Pierre DeLaune



*The Norwich Walloons used St Mary the Less as their church from 1637 until 1832. New buildings in the city now surround the church completely so that only the entrance gate bearing the red plaque can be seen from the street.*

Pierre married Norwich-born Jeanne Fen in 1602 and became a father of four - Nathaniel in 1603, Susanne (1606), Samuel (1608) and Peter (1610). Samuel died in 1617. Nathaniel married but left no heir. In 1649 Peter was to be the cause of apparent embarrassment to his uncle, Gideon DeLaune but this was in the future

and will be considered at a later stage. Pierre DeLaune's long career brought honour, controversy and conflict. In 1613, the City fathers wrote of him: "*Mr Peter de Lawne, their minister, whom we know to be a learned, grave, and discreet preacher.*"<sup>28</sup> His translation of the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer into French (the first such translation) was published 1616. Although published anonymously, this led to his developing increasingly close links with the Church of England, so much so that he was appointed Rector of Redenhall, a parish within the Diocese of Norwich, in 1629.<sup>29</sup> At this time, the various Reformed churches, although administered by their own Consistory ( a council of elders and deacons charged with implementing the policies of the synod; their responsibilities included the governance of finance, charitable causes and members; deciding cases of "immoral conduct;" choosing pastors; and electing and appointing church officials - a considerable commitment of time and energy), came under the general jurisdiction of the local Church of England bishop and such appointments were possible, though not common, despite the absence of an Episcopal ordination. Further recognition for this work came on 5 February 1635 when Cambridge awarded him the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Royal Mandate on the visit of Charles, Count Elector Palatine (Charles I's nephew and godson) to the university. Pierre gave £25 to the Peterhouse College Chapel to mark the occasion.

The Bishop of Norwich may have been comfortable with his Calvinist rector, saying of Pierre's appointment "*Re-ordination we must not admit, no more than rebaptization ...if you will adventure the orders that you have, I will admit your presentation.*"<sup>30</sup> Pierre was pleased to have the benefice and believed he could be both Reformed pasteur and Episcopal rector concurrently. His Walloon congregation had more misgivings but accepted the situation, albeit reluctantly, for several years. The arrival of a new assistant *pasteur* in 1643 changed things however and the next few years were ones of great difficulty and conflict for both the congregation and their long-serving leader. The newcomer was Pierre D'Assigny, the husband of Pierre DeLaune's niece, Elizabeth Marie. An ardent presbyterian and anti-Royalist who had been forced to flee his parish at St Helier in Jersey where he had been a leader in a failed anti-Royalist uprising,<sup>31</sup> D'Assigny found favour with many of the congregation who disapproved of DeLaune's Episcopal connections and Royalist leanings. The next several years saw support from the French Reformed Church's regular colloquies swing from one to the other and back again as they declared first one and then the other the rightful incumbent. D'Assigny had the support of the majority through most of this time and remained the minister in Norwich despite the rulings of his superiors. It was not until 1650 that the congregation finally recognized DeLaune as their rightful minister and D'Assigny was dismissed. Everyone must have heaved a great sigh of relief when Parliament finally gained control of Jersey and D'Assigny returned there.<sup>c</sup>

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<sup>c</sup> Pierre D'Assigny's return to Jersey lasted as long as the Interregnum. Appointed rector of St Martin in 1650, his living was sequestrated in 1660 and he returned to England, seemingly back to Norwich. Nothing more is heard from him until June 1667 when Lord Arlington, the Post Master General issued a pass for Peter D'Assigny to travel from England to Holland. When his third wife, Marguerite Nicolle, died and was buried in St Martin in December 1688, the parish record named her as the widow of Pierre D'Assigny, nine years Rector of St Martin. The careers of his sons by Elizabeth Marie, Philippe and Marius, were every bit as colourful as their father's. Marius became a Church of England clergyman. His varied career saw him become a chaplain to the forces in Tangiers, a country vicar and chaplain to Rear-Admiral Sir George Byng as well as being the author and translator of several books of history, geography, poetry and more. He also offered advice to Robert Harley, Secretary of State, urging upon him the importance of fortifying Gibraltar, having lived near there for three years and knowing its weakness; and offering several new inventions in gunnery of his own. Philippe became a pirate. Based in the Yucatan Peninsula, he had an island (now known as Chatham Island) in the Galapagos named for him by fellow-buccaneer Captain William Cowley who visited the archipelago in 1684 and named the islands for various Englishmen, noble and otherwise. His translation of an immensely important captured *deterro* (a description of Spanish ports and possessions in the Pacific with maps and sailing directions) is held in King's Maritime Collection in the British Library. The final statement in the book reads: "*Dated the 23rd Oct 1682. The aforegoing Journalls of the South Seas was translated out of the Spanish Originall for the use of your most Sacred Majesty by the care of Philip Dassigny 1682.*"



Pierre DeLaune remained in Norwich for six more years, though by 1655, when the Consistory voted to pay him a stipend of forty shillings a month as long as he remained among them, he was eighty three. He left Norwich within a year and, by the time the payment of the stipend ceased in June 1657, he was living with his son-in-law, William Dale, the vicar of Hagworthingham, Lincolnshire, where he died a few month later. The burial register records "*Peter DeLaune, Doc: of Divinity, was buried ye sixteenth day of October, 1657. Late Pasteur of ye French congregation in Norwich.*"<sup>32</sup>

### **Nathaniel DeLaune**

The last years of the sixteenth century brought many changes to the DeLaune Blackfriars enclave. With Pierre in Leiden and soon to be in Norwich, Nathaniel was the next to go, travelling from London to Geneva in 1599 to begin studying for the ministry before moving on to Leiden where he studied theology from 1600-1602.<sup>33</sup> The Consistory of the Reformed church in Dieppe had agreed to sponsor his studies in exchange for his service following ordination. He was appointed *pasteur* there in 1604.

In 1613, by then married to Katherine Peigne, the daughter of the church's receiver, and the father of five children, he applied to the Consistory for permission to leave France and return to England. The congregation was reluctant to release him and refused the request. He did not accept the decision gracefully and for the next two years "*sa mauvais humeur jeta tant de trouble et d'èsdordre dans le consistoire*".<sup>34</sup> Finally, in 1615, the church was ready to release him, with which he returned to England and sought placement in the Episcopal clergy. On consideration of the testimonials received from France telling of his thirteen years exemplary service in Dieppe, his application was accepted and he was admitted into the ministry of the Church of England. He preached at St Paul's Cross, on Trinity Sunday, 15 June 1617, a singular honour. Sermons delivered at St Paul's Cross, the open air pulpit and preaching cross in the grounds of Old St Paul's Cathedral, were held in the highest regard as the most able preachers of the day attracted large audiences. Although Nathaniel DeLaune's sermon, *The Christian's Tryumph*, manifested by the certitude of salvation, was later printed, the belief at the time was that being present at such sermons was as important as the message that was delivered and members of the Privy Council and the city's Corporation were regular attendees. It must have been at about this time that he at last was granted an appointment to an English church, St Sepulchre-without-Newgate.



*St Paul's Cross and Cathedral. Engraving after John Gypkin 1614, pub. Cassell's Illustrated History of England, 1865. While the preaching of strongly anti-Catholic sermons had long been common, an increase in vitriolic attacks on Puritanism once Charles came to the throne led to the demolition of the pulpit and cross by Puritans in 1643.(M. Morrissey: Politics and the Paul's Cross Sermons, 1558-1642 (2011) )*

Although he refers to himself as a Minister of the Word of God at St Sepulchres in his will, dated 17 March 1617/18<sup>35</sup> his name is not recorded in the Clergy of the Church of England Database and it would seem that his death occurred before he could take up the appointment. Of his five children we know the names of only

three - Nathanael, John and Gideon, all of whom were named in Gideon DeLaune's will. We catch a glimpse of young Nathanael when his name appears on a petition signed by London's sixteen resident clock and watch makers complaining about the presence of thirty two "foreigners" - i.e. non-Freemen of London, including French Huguenots and Englishmen - working in the clock trade and requesting the formation of a Clockmaker's Company. Nathanael DeLaune is listed as one of four apprentices in the house of Cornelius Mellin in Blackfriars.<sup>36</sup> John is even more elusive, appearing only in 1635 when he sought a position with the East India Company as a mariner<sup>d</sup> and then again in his Uncle Gideon's will, though he could be the progenitor of a James DeLaune, Clerk of the Green Cloth in the Royal Household during the 1740s. Their brother Gideon on the other hand, has left quite a trail but has been the subject of mistaken identity and the cause of confusion for many years.

With no other Gideon of a near age in the family at this time, Nathaniel's son is surely the Gideon DeLaune of whom the Society of Apothecaries' Minutes recorded on 11 March 1636/7 "*Gideon de Laune being examined and found sufficient was made free and gave a spoon*".<sup>37</sup> He married Jane Johnson at St Ann Blackfriars on 31 May 1649. Only one of their six children, Anne, was still living when he was buried at St Ann's on 20 November, 1658: "*Mr Gidion DeLaune died in his churchwardenship*". By the Old Style calendar November comes before March so when Gideon Senior died three months after his nephew and was buried, also at St Ann Blackfriars, on 3 March: "*Mr Gidion DeLaune Senior*", according to the record it was still 1658. The inclusion of their wills in a compendium of English wills published by an American genealogist in 1901<sup>38</sup> only increased the confusion as the brief biographical note included refers only to Gideon Senior. The result has been the two wills being read as one, leading to the misapprehension that Gideon Senior married twice - had that been the case, he would have been eighty four at the time of the second marriage, his wife just twenty three, and his last child born when he was ninety two.

Whilst the younger Gideon became no more than a minor note in the records of the time, Gideon Senior's name lived on.<sup>e</sup> In his *Present State of London* (1681), Thomas DeLaune's account of the Society of Apothecaries included "*Among many worthy members [was] Dr. Gideon de Laune, apothecary to King James, a man noted for many singularities in his time ... particularly to the foundation of the Apothecaries' Hall in Black-Fryars, where his statue in white marble is to be seen to this day, and to whom I have the honour to be nearly related<sup>f</sup>, which is not the reason that I mention him, but to perpetuate his memory as well as others, as is due to his desert. He lived piously to the age of ninety-seven years, and worth (notwithstanding his many acts of publick and private charity) near as many thousand pounds as he was years, having thirty-seven children by one wife, and about sixty grandchildren at his funeral*",<sup>39</sup> and for many years this was the

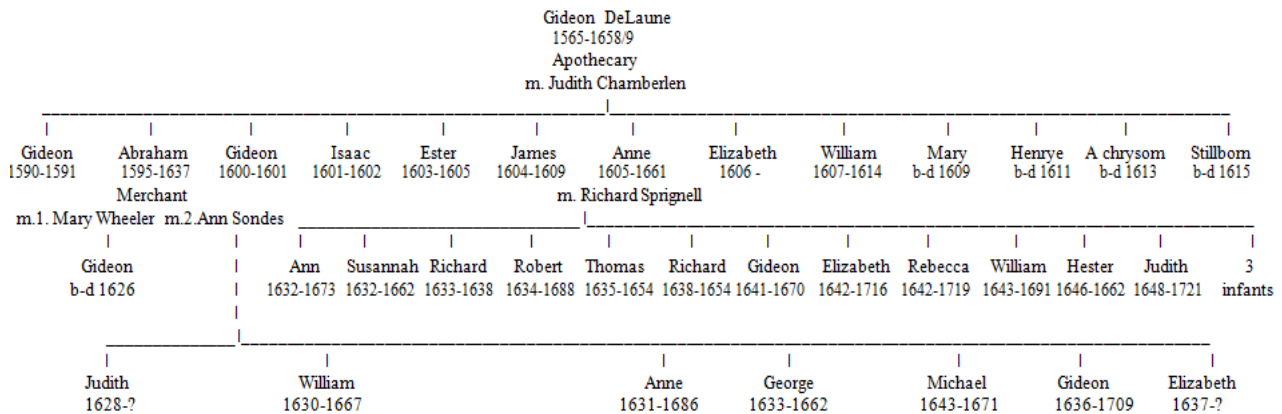
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<sup>d</sup> 'John de Lawne kinsman of Gideon de Lawn, referred to Captain Styles and the other Committees for his entertainment as a mariner.' (East India Company; E.B.Sainsbury, W.Foster (eds) A calendar of the court minutes, etc. of the East India company, 1635-1639 p.19. 1907 Online: University of California Libraries <https://archive.org/details/calendarofcourtm00eastiala>)

<sup>e</sup> In his novel *The Man Who Laughs*, (pub 1869), Victor Hugo writes "*the famous winters at the beginning of the seventeenth century, so minutely observed by Dr. Gideon Delane — the same who was, in his quality of apothecary to King James, honoured by the city of London with a bust and a pedestal.*" These descriptions of winter are actually the work of Thomas DeLaune. Hugo, like many others since, clearly found the DeLaunes confusing.

<sup>f</sup> The likelihood of Irish-born Thomas DeLaune being related to Gideon is highly dubious, despite the descendants of his brother Isaac having settled there. Thomas is known to have been the clever son of an Irish Catholic tenant farmer whose education was sponsored by a wealthy local landowner. Following his becoming a Baptist, he moved to London where he became a translator, writer and teacher. The publication of his *Plea for the Nonconformists* in 1683 led to imprisonment in Newgate and a fine of 100 marks (67/-), a sum he found impossible to raise. His destitute wife and two young children were imprisoned with him. All four died in prison, his wife and children first from starvation, Thomas a few weeks later, broken in health and spirit.

accepted version of Gideon's age and family. More recent research reveals a truer account. There was more than a slight touch of exaggeration in Thomas DeLaune's assertions. His fortune may well have matched his great age but only his daughter, Anne, and thirteen of his twenty-two grandchildren lived long enough to attend his funeral and he even outlived the majority of his nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews.



*Gideon DeLaune's children and grandchildren.*

### A new century

1601, the year Pierre went to Norwich, was one of mixed fortunes for Gideon and Judith. A family quarrel between them and Judith's mother and brother, Magdalen and Abraham Chamberlen, escalated over several months to become so publicly acrimonious the consistory of the church in Threadneedle Street became involved and they were called upon to appear before a General Assembly at the church on April 25. In a public reprimand, all four were bound to swear to cease their quarrel; if they could not do this and live peaceably together, they would be brought before a magistrate.<sup>40</sup> It seems one such reprimand was enough and there is no further mention of the matter in the records.

Family squabbles behind them, the ensuing decade brought many changes. Gideon and Judith's third son, Isaac, was baptized at the French Church on 31 May 1601, In 1603, Esther, the second of Gideon's sisters, married English-born Nathaniel Marie, her brother Pierre's fellow student at Leiden and now a minister at the French Church Threadneedle Street. The marriage produced ten children, five of whom were still living at the time of Esther's death in 1637. It was their second daughter Elizabeth whose husband, Pierre D'Assigny, was to cause so much trouble for Pierre DeLaune in Norwich. Paul, the youngest brother, was admitted as pensioner to Emmanuel College, Cambridge at Easter, 1604. 1607 began with a family celebration in April - Elizabeth DeLaune married another English-born Huguenot, Abraham de Blangi, a city goldsmith, by whom she bore six children, Widowed in January 1617, she then married Peter Vancourt, son of Huguenot family who had settled in Canterbury, and had three more children. Elizabeth was buried at St Anne Blackfriars on March 4, 1658/9, the day after her brother Gideon. Katherine des Loges died in November 1607 and was buried at St Ann Blackfriars: "*Mrs DeLoune y<sup>e</sup> Drs wyfe.*"

This decade of momentous family events, during which Gideon was to bury four more children - his second Gideon's death in 1600 was followed by Isaac in 1602, Esther in 1605, and James and Mary in 1609 - ended with the death of William DeLaune in February 1609/10. Gideon was now the head of the family. Named as executor of his father's will together with his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Marie, his first task was to bury his father according to the instructions in his will as "*nere unto my late deere wife yf it be possible.*" The will tells of the successful life he had forged in his forty years in England. Gideon was named his heir, inheriting "*all my messuages landes etc. (except what I give to my sonne Paule deLaune) in precinct called blackeffryers nere Ludgate of London, which I late purchased of Sr. William More*" but in order to execute

the will and before he could claim his share he had first to pay into the estate the value of this property and, then within six months, use that money to pay bequests to the poor of the French Church and St Ann Blackfriars, his sons' churches in Norwich and Dieppe, poor family members living "*beyonde the sea*" and his widowed sister-in-law. After this there were bequests for his own children, more for the sons than the daughters - they had received dowries on their marriages and money from their mother. Paul, "*for the good service he hath done me*" was also left "*the newe house which I built with the greate courte and the house of office therein, and also one of the chambers which he shall chose ready furnished, and also the Apothecarie stufte and furniture in the said newe house - paying unto Gideon deLaune his eldest brother, the somme of fiftie poundes.*" For Gideon's son, Abraham, there was the "*great silver salt seller*" but for Peter Chamberlen, Sarah's husband, there was only the instruction that "*he repaire the entrye of my howse wherein he nowe dwelleth as it was when he first entered as ought to by judgement of honest men, before he receive any benefitt.*" If Gideon refused to execute these legacies the task was to pass to each of his sons in turn. If he refused to execute the will, Gideon's inheritance would be just £150.<sup>41</sup> William DeLaune was buried at St Ann Blackfriars on 19 February 1609/10.

### **William's youngest son**

William's will included the bequest of a house for his youngest son, Paul. Perhaps it was his intention to ensure Paul had a place of his own to return to once his studies were over and he began the arduous route to becoming a physician, or perhaps he was just the old man's favourite son. Having completed his Cambridge B.A. in 1608 and being awarded his M.A in 1610/11 he then went to Padua to study medicine. This was quite common practice at this time, many students studying abroad and then having their degree incorporated at Oxford or Cambridge rather than spending four years practising medicine in England - the alternative requirement for admission as a Fellow of the College of Physicians. On graduating M.D. from Padua on 13 October, 1614, he returned to England and began the next stage of his medical career - admittance to the College. He appeared first before the College's Board of Censors on 8 September, 1615 and had his degree incorporated three months later on 19 January 1615/16. There followed a period of examinations after which he was admitted a Candidate of the College of Physicians on 25 June, 1616 and, finally, a Fellow on 21 April, 1618.<sup>42</sup> Before gaining his Fellowship he married Sarah Argent, the daughter of John Argent (eight times President of the College of Physicians) at St Ann Blackfriars, on 22 November, 1610.

### **A Scottish friend**

Evidence of Gideon's widening circle of contacts lies stored away in the National Records of Scotland where an "*Account of goods, including spices, supplied by Gedeon de Laune to George Heriot*"<sup>43</sup>, dated 29 September 1602 (some months before James I's arrival in London on 3 May 1603) can be found. Edinburgh-born George Heriot, goldsmith and jeweller to James and his wife, Anne of Denmark, and effectively the Queen's banker, is known to have loaned her considerable sums of money as well as selling her equally considerable quantities of jewels, for which she had a prodigious taste - jewels that were often used as security for a yet another loan. Heriot came to London with the King and remained in the city for the rest of his life. His Calvinist sympathies saw him stand godfather for several children at the French Church, the first Gideon's daughter Ester on 14 July 1603, only weeks after his arrival in London.

When and however the friendship began, it endured and, at the end, Gideon "*my loving and kind friend*" was named one of the executors of George Heriot's will, written in December 1623. As well as leaving Gideon and his fellow executors 100 marks for their efforts, Heriot left "*Mrs DeLaune, wife of the aforementioned Gideon DeLaune, one gilt bason and ewer, which I had formerly from her said husband.*"<sup>44</sup> Heriot died on 12 February 1623/4, a very wealthy man with no surviving legitimate heir. After providing for his two illegitimate daughters (appointing Gideon one of their guardians) and leaving various legacies for family members, there were bequests for the French Church - a generous £20 to the poor of the parish (there was just

£10 for the poor of his home parish of St Martin in the Fields) and £30 for Gilbert Primrose, one of the French Church preachers. Finally, when all was done, debts recovered and legacies paid, the residue of the estate, some £23,625/10/3<sup>1/2</sup> was left to the city of Edinburgh, to establish a hospital for the free education of the "pure fatherless bairnes, friemenes sones." Construction of the hospital began in 1628 and was completed in 1650, just in time for it to be commandeered by Oliver Cromwell's invading English army during the Third English Civil War at which time the building was used as a barracks and horses were stabled in the chapel. The hospital opened its doors to thirty boys in 1659, the year Gideon DeLaune died. Today 1660 students, boys and girls, are enrolled there.

Gideon's devotion to his friend continued long after his death and the duties of an executor were done. A request from Edinburgh in 1637 for the loan of a portrait of George Heriot he owned so that a copy could be made brought this response: "And because my Lord Register would have borrowed Mr Heriot his picture, to have made another by it .... I have entreated his Lordshipe to accept this Originall for your Honours, which I dedicat gladly to that use. It may pleasure him that never saw him; in me his remembrance cannot die."<sup>45</sup>



George Heriot (1563-1624) - artist unknown. (detail) A copy of the portrait painted by Scottish artist, John Scougall, that hangs in Heriot's Hospital, that painting itself a copy said to be "after Paul van Somer", presumably Gideon's "Originall"

### Apothecary to the Queen

The first mention of Gideon DeLaune's Royal appointment comes with his name appearing on a list of payments made to the Royal Household prior to 18 March 1606.<sup>46</sup> One of four apothecaries, his remuneration was 100/-, the same as Ralph Clayton but considerably less than the £20 paid to John Rumler and £28/6/8 to George Sheires.<sup>g</sup> The combination of his own interest in matters of health and science and the need to maintain several households<sup>h</sup> meant James employed dozens of medical practitioners during his reign. His Calvinist upbringing in Scotland undoubtedly worked to the benefit of the French Protestants and there were

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<sup>g</sup> Sheires, appointed Royal Apothecary in November 1603, served the King throughout his reign. He was also the Household Apothecary for which he was paid an additional £60 a year. He remained a member of the Grocers after the schism. Rumler, twice the Master of the Society of Apothecaries similarly served through the entire reign, supervised the embalming of the King's body prior to his elaborate funeral, claiming £282 for the supplies needed (Gideon had charged a far more modest £23/13/10 for the embalming of both George Heriot and his wife combined) and went on to serve Charles I. Clayton was Prince Henry's Apothecary. He continued to be paid an annual salary after the Prince's death in 1612 until he died in 1625 although he had had no further royal duties.

<sup>h</sup> James and Anne were estranged from 1606 and kept separate households. Henry, the heir to the throne, and his sister Anne had their own households and there was also the court in Scotland. (E .Lane Furdell. *The Royal Doctors, 1485-1714: Medical Personnel at the Tudor and Stuart Courts.*(2001) Chap. 4)



several who served his various households. Peter Chamberlen the Elder attended the Queen's two English confinements and remained in her service thereafter. Théodore Turquet de Mayerne who like William DeLaune had studied at Montpellier and who had been physician to Henri IV, became her physician

Mayerne first came to England in 1606 at the invitation of an English nobleman he had treated in Paris. On that visit he met the King, treated the Queen and had his French degree incorporated at Oxford before returning to France. The assassination of Henri IV on 14 May, 1610 brought France's Catholic/Protestant tensions to a head once more and when James invited Mayerne to return to England, appointing him physician to both himself and the queen, he accepted, this time remaining permanently to hold his royal appointment through the reign of Charles I and, in name at least, Charles II.<sup>47</sup> Mayerne was a noted advocate of pharmaceutical remedies for illness and that, combined with his being both a member of the French congregation and a fellow graduate from Montpellier would surely have brought him and the DeLaunes, William the physician and Gideon the apothecary, together.



*Portrait of James I (1566-1625) and Anne of Denmark (1574-1619) title page from the 'Book of Kings', engraved by Renold Elstrack (1571-c.1630) 1618*

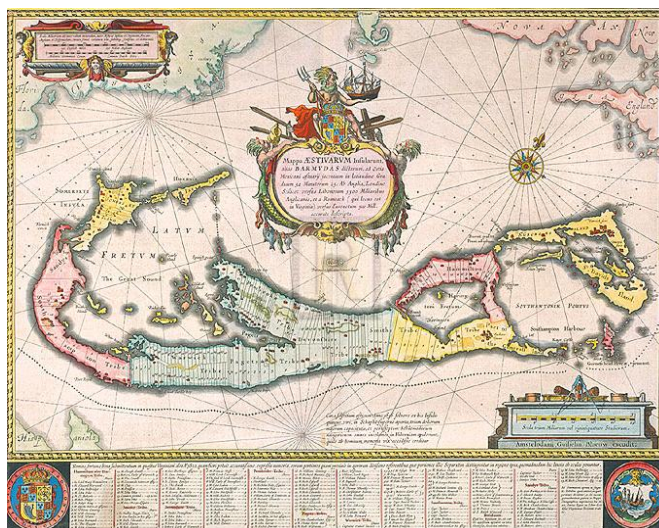
Gideon's annuity was later increased to £20 a year, still less than some of the King's other apothecaries and only the same as Clayton's pension. Of course, it wasn't the annuity that made the appointments so lucrative; contemporary accounts for the supply of drugs involve quite startling amounts, sums of £250 being quite usual and £1000 not unknown. A warrant issued to the Exchequer on 17 February 1611 required to be "*paid unto William DeLawne drugs delivered for the Queen's use £400*".<sup>48</sup> William was dead by this time but such late payments were by no means unusual.

### **Gideon the adventurer**

Gideon DeLaune died possessed of immense wealth. Whilst his patent pill is said to have made his fortune and the opportunities offered by his royal appointment must have been a factor, other prospects presented themselves at this time. The great sea voyages of discovery of the sixteenth century had opened the door to potential wealth through trade and colonization to anyone who was prepared to invest their money in speculative ventures. Gideon's brother-in-law, Abraham Chamberlen was one such "Adventurer". An established City merchant, he invested widely in these companies. In April 1610 he was one of the first to

invest in Henry Hudson's search for the north-west passage to the Pacific. When that led to the founding of the North West Passage Company in July 1612 and he was one of the Company's charter committee, Gideon became a secondary investor,<sup>49</sup> but there was no fortune to be made here. Like Abraham and many other wealthy Huguenots in England, Gideon also invested in the Virginia Company in 1609 and its offshoot, the Somer Isles Company in 1612. Shares in the companies were set at £12/10/- each, Gideon bought three shares in the Virginia Company and two in the Somer Isles.<sup>50</sup>

Instead of the promised riches flowing their way as the settlers strove to exploit the natural resources of Virginia (manufacturing potash, glass, pitch and tar were some of the early industries - all failed as the settlers struggled to survive the sickness, inadequate supply of food, Indian attacks and lack of water that beset them) the Company incurred more and more debt in its attempts to keep the enterprise afloat. Some reprieve came when tobacco proved to be a successful cash crop but it wasn't enough to pay the investors monetary dividends and provide the stocks and land owed to the original settlers when their initial service was completed. After seven years, the investors, Gideon among them, received fifty acres of land for each share they held. The following years saw things go from bad to worse. As word of the unpaid dividends made new investment difficult to get, the Company's debt rose inexorably. 1622 brought unimaginable horror when the Powhatan Indians rose up against the settlers and a quarter of the European population was slain. On 23 March, 1623, Gideon transferred two of his shares to his son Abraham.



*This map of Bermuda by Dutch cartographer Willem Janszoon Blaeu (drawn first in 1630 from Richard Norwood's survey chart of 1618)) shows the divisions of land and lists the names of all the adventurers. Gideon DeLaune's allocation in Devonshire tribe was almost exactly in the middle of the island, a narrow strip extending from the north to south coasts. Each tribe contained about 1250 acres. Land ownership was restricted by law to 250 acres, or ten shards, as the 25-acre allotments were called, for each individual in a given tribe.*

The Somers Isle investment gave Gideon two plots of 50 acres in the Devonshire "tribe", one of the island's nine administrative areas, but there were no great rewards to be found there either. Despite the Company's warnings against dependence on a single-crop economy and the poor quality of the leaf produced on the island's very different soils, the Bermuda settlers chose to make tobacco their sole crop. The returns were woeful. It was not unusual for an entire shipment to be completely unsalable on arrival in England, or for the wooden chests it was shipped in to fetch a higher price than the leaf they contained. The settlers lived well enough on the food they could grow in Bermuda's temperate climate but the limited amount of arable land available and the poor returns from it saw many turn from farming to the sea for an income. The system of licensing for ship builders helped reduce the Company debt but it paid no dividends to investors. Slavery had very little presence in the early days and the first Africans brought to Bermuda mostly worked as household

servants or tradesmen while indentured workers from Britain provided almost all the island's agricultural labour. In time they had to have their indentures paid out - another liability. After seventy years of settlement that brought very poor returns for most of the adventurers, the Company was finally dissolved in 1684.<sup>51</sup> Gideon's heirs may well have inherited land and shares in the New World venture but it seems very unlikely that they reaped any great benefit from the legacy.

Whilst these particular ventures failed to produce any real riches, Gideon was well placed to take advantage of the opportunity to make speculative investments in the ever-expanding ventures into trade with far-flung places such as the East India Company and the Company of Merchants Trading to Guinea. With several City merchants in his close family<sup>i</sup> and his own involvement in the rapidly expanding world of exotic imports for the apothecaries' trade (East India Company minutes in March 1645 record a shipment of amber for Mr De Lawne) there must have been many opportunities for him to increase his wealth. Just as some investments failed, others would certainly have succeeded.

### **The Society of Apothecaries**

Dabbling in overseas investment was just one of Gideon's activities at this time however. London was the scene of much more important matters for him and his fellow apothecaries through the second decade of the seventeenth century. The expansion of trade with the Far East and into the Americas was bringing new products to the market and control of the potentially huge profits was something they wanted to control themselves. In 1610, some three years after an order from King James that, as part of the Grocers Company, the apothecaries were to be subject to its control, Gideon and a like-minded cohort of fellow-practitioners decided the time had come to push for change. With Gideon as their driving force, they prepared a Bill for Parliament that would allow for the establishment of a new and completely separate company. The Grocer's reaction was outraged and immediate. Seeing the separation as a loss of control of an important section of their association, a threat to their standing in the city and a significant loss of income, they were utterly opposed to the change.

The would-be separatists were called before the Grocer's Court to answer for their stand for independence. Being French-born, an "alien" and thus denied membership of the Company, Gideon was dismissed from the Court before there was any discussion. The apothecaries included well respected and expert practitioners who, like Gideon, wanted to see their knowledge and skills recognized, and to have the autonomy to regulate both practice and practitioners according to their own standards. Without their leader there to speak for them however, they bowed to the opposition of the Court, withdrew their appeal for independence and requested only that there be a more stringent attention to the regulation of the trade. The minutes of the meeting record Gideon's displeasure at all of this, noting "*with great indignation and threatening terms against the Court and Company DeLaune departed*".<sup>52</sup> No doubt Gideon made it clear they had not heard the last of the matter, and indeed they hadn't, but it was to be 1614 before another move was made to end the association with the Grocers.

Before that, 1613 brought distinction and honour with a grant of arms on 7 March. Recognizing him and his brothers as sons of William DeLaune, descendants of the family of DeLaune of Belmesnil in Normandy and entitled to bear their arms, the grant awarded to "*Gideon Launey, the King's servant*"<sup>53</sup>,

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<sup>i</sup> Gideon's son Abraham, and grandsons William and George were all City merchants as was nephew Benjamin, who died in China in the service of the East India Company. Abraham Chamberlen was a major investor in the Company of Merchants Trading to Guinea whose hugely profitable trade in gold was augmented by such exotic and lucrative imports as ivory, animal skins, pepper and sugar. Between 1636-1644 the value of the gold the Company imported was estimated at £500,000. Slaves were also traded, though at this stage the Portuguese had by far the greatest involvement in this trade. (R. Porter: *The Crisp Family and the African Trade in the seventeenth Century. In: Journal of African History* 9, 1, 1968, pp 57-77.)

included an augmentation of a golden lion passant and the French fleur-de-lis, a mark of special regard from the King.<sup>j</sup> Coupled with his connections to Peter Chamberlen and Théodore Mayerne, this honour can only have improved Gideon's already favoured position with the King and Queen.



*DeLaune arms: Visitation of London 1633, Vol 1, (Harleian Soc.1869, p. 225) "Exempl: by pattent vnder y<sup>e</sup> hand and seal of S<sup>r</sup> William Segar dated anno d<sup>o</sup> 1612 10 Jac. Regis."*

It is not surprising then that the next move towards establishing an independent body was to petition the King directly. Seeking to emulate the existing French model whereby apothecaries, usually working under the supervision of the physicians but with their own governing bodies, were afforded professional status, the petition asked for a royal charter to establish an independent Society of Apothecaries in London. The King's response was gratifyingly prompt and positive, ordering consultation between the Crown's law officers, Sir Francis Bacon and Sir Henry Yelverton, his personal physicians, Mayerne and Henry Atkins, and the apothecaries. Gideon's considerable contribution to the resultant draft of the sought-after charter, written in terms that were careful to find favour with the King and displaying a sound knowledge of the status of apothecaries in countries other than England, is borne out by Apothecaries' Society's Minutes recording in 1648 that he had been a principal means for the procuring of the Company to be made a corporation. The proposal, having gained the approval of Sir Francis Bacon, the Lord Keeper, was put before the College of Physicians and the Company of Grocers. Atkins' advocacy of the move encouraged his fellow physicians to grant their general approval. The Grocers, seeing nothing in the change but the loss of valuable income and a potential loss of status in the highly structured world of the London livery companies, continued to protest but theirs was a lost cause. Taking advice from Gideon, Atkins and Mayerne that a professional body of Apothecaries would benefit the health and well-being of his subjects, and with Bacon's approbation, the King gave his approval for the next step towards the establishment of a separate company.

Three years of negotiations followed until finally, after protests and hostility from the Grocers, drafts and redrafts, and even the scandal of some of the city's leading apothecaries being caught up in a murder trial, the charter was granted and the Letters Patent were delivered to "the Master, Wardens and Society of the Art and Mystery of Apothecaries of the City of London"<sup>54</sup> on 6 December 1617. While only Freemen of London were entitled to membership of the Grocer's Company, the names of five foreigners were included on the list of the 122 founder members of the new Society - Gideon DeLaune was one of them.

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<sup>j</sup> No medical practitioner was honored in this way for another three hundred years until Sir Francis Laking and Sir Frederick Treves, King Edward VII's physician and surgeon, were awarded similar Royal augmentations to their arms after they treated the King for the appendicitis that delayed his coronation.



*The original Charter of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, granted by Letters Patent from King James I, and held now in Apothecaries Hall. The two faces of the now-damaged original seal are displayed in replica on either side.*

The Charter allowed for the recognition of pharmaceutical practice as a profession with apothecaries sharing control of pharmacy with the physicians, albeit under their supervision and guided by an approved pharmacopoeia provided by the College. As well as allowing its members to make, buy and sell drugs, it charged them with, among other things, the proper and rigorous training of apprentices, supervising the quality of drugs made and sold by its members, prosecuting and punishing frauds and advancing the science of therapeutic medicine. It also included a clause that all royal apothecaries were to be Freemen of the Company by virtue of their appointment, although it was only in 1622 that Gideon was excused from paying dues to the Company as a foreigner.

Despite his dedication to the founding of the Company over many years, and the influence he so obviously had in both the success of the move for change and the governance and responsibilities of the Society, Gideon's first role in office was not as Master but rather as a member of the Court of Assistants which met for the first time on 16 December, 1617 at Gray's Inn where they took their oath before the Attorney General Francis Bacon, and Physicians Dr Atkins and Dr Mayerne. When the required *Pharmacopoeia Londinensis*, published in May 1618, was withdrawn almost immediately due to the inadequate listing of current medications and the many mistakes in the prescriptions it did include, he was appointed one of a committee of four to draw up a schedule of all medicines available for the Apothecaries' use. Their enlarged and revised edition of the book was published in December that same year.



*Title-page to 'Pharmacopoeia Londinensis' published by John Marriott in 1618. Engraving by Renold Elstrack, English-born son of a Dutch Reformed immigrant from Liège who had arrived in England in 1552.*



This was not the only trial to beset the new Company - the years ahead brought many disputes and challenges, misunderstandings and controversies as the Society negotiated its way into a place in the fiercely guarded hierarchy of London's livery companies that was itself facing the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Having been so involved in the preliminary moves to see the Company founded, Gideon remained just as committed in these early years but it wasn't until he was made a Freeman of the City of London in 1623 that he was able to assume the high offices he so richly deserved.

### **Middle age**

As occupied as he must have been with the Society at this time, church affairs and other matters needed Gideon's attention too. There were obligations of service to the French community where, serving as both deacon and elder on the Consistory and attending the Colloquies at different times, he was expected to play a role in the affairs of his fellow parishioners. Consistory minutes for 30 July 1612 record: "*Christopher Montjoye having been sued by his son-in-law Etienne Belot for a certain marriage portion which he claims is owed to him, viz. £10, for which he has neither proof nor witness, the Court requested us by letter to put the case to arbitration, which was done, for which purpose were elected Abraham Hardret and Gideon de Laune for Montjoye, and David Carperau and Pierre Beauvais for Belot.*"<sup>55</sup> This was a lawsuit that had been taken to the Court of Requests (the Court of Small Claims of its day) and passed on to the Consistory for resolution when the Court found itself unable to decide for either party. It was December before Gideon and his fellow elders handed down their decision ordering Mountjoye to pay his son-in-law just 20 *nobles* (£6/13/4), a mere fraction of the £200 he had claimed was owed him when the case was first begun. No doubt they had spent some considerable time deliberating over the depositions of the litigants and their witnesses, one of whom was a certain Mr Shakespeare who had been a lodger in Mountjoye's house at the time of the betrothal.

As a prominent resident of the precinct, there were also responsibilities to be met within the parish of St Ann Blackfriars. Here the population had grown considerably through the first decades of the 17th century and by 1617 the church built only twenty years earlier was too small for its ever-expanding congregation. Gideon's two terms as churchwarden in those years would have meant a considerable involvement in the planning and rebuilding of the church, complete with a burial vault, that replaced it. When the pew he had inherited from his father was given to another parishioner on completion of the new building, his commitment to church affairs through thirty nine years was rewarded with the granting of a new, private pew close to the pulpit for the exclusive use of himself and his family "*to sitt and remaine in at the tymes of divine service and sermons,*"<sup>56</sup> The new vault provided a place where he could be sure his family could be together in death also, unlike his father who could only ask to be buried as near as possible to his wife.

Attendance at two churches was not unusual at this time. More than forty years had passed since the DeLaune family and so many thousands like them fled to safety; by now the one-time strangers had become increasingly comfortable in their adopted home as second and third generations of English-born children grew to adulthood. While attending the 1621 London Colloquy of the French Churches where his brother, Pierre was the Moderator and he the Recorder, Gideon put his signature to a petition to the Privy Council that stated "*...most of our Company are members thereof and have borne offices in the same and conformed ourselves to the discipline of the same Church [of England].*"<sup>57</sup>

Family life was changing too. Gideon's son, Abraham, matriculated at Emmanuel in March 1610/11 then spent more than a year at Leiden as a student of philosophy before going up to Cambridge where he gained his BA in 1614/15 and MA in 1618 before finally having his degree incorporated at Oxford in 1619. His youngest brother, Paul, married now and a Fellow of the College of Physicians, was appointed physician to the controller of the royal household, Sir Henry Cary, in 1617. Nathaniel's death left his widow with five young children. He had named his brothers Gideon and Paul as executors of his will - no doubt Gideon accepted a

great deal more responsibility for the family than simply ensuring his brother's bequests were distributed according to his wishes.

On his own account, there was more involvement in property investment, beginning with the purchase of part of the Great Hall and the Cloister from the son of William Bannister (the owner of a large part of the old priory) in 1616 which was then sold on to a builder, Jacob Hardrett, the following year. Hardrett built three new houses on the site, one of which Gideon purchased in November 1619.<sup>58</sup>

### **Paul DeLaune in Ireland**

Paul left London in 1622 with his wife and two year old daughter, Alice. Prior to that two sons, Abraham and Peter, had been born and buried, both within a week of their baptism at Blackfriars. No records of when the rest of his children were born seem to exist but, given that he accompanied Henry Cary, now 1st Viscount Falkland, to Dublin when he was appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland and Dublin's Genealogical Office records "*Argent Sarah – husband Paul Delaune. Buried Dublin 1629*"<sup>59</sup>, and he did not remarry, we must assume Anne, Elizabeth and Benjamin were all born in Ireland. All three survived, all married and all are mentioned in their father's will; Alice is not and can be presumed to have died before her father.

Whilst in Dublin, Paul added his support to a group of influential Irish physicians who, in 1626, petitioned the King for permission to establish a College of Physicians in Ireland. Charles, acknowledging that the health and lives of his Irish subjects were put at risk daily by "*wandering ignorant mountebanks and empirics*"<sup>60</sup> directed Falkland, the Lord Chancellor and the Irish Privy Council to establish a college in Dublin with the same rules and privileges as the London College of Physicians and gave permission for the purchase of property in the college's name. Added to this approval, he allowed for the future granting of considerable independent authority in governance, supervision and management of all aspects of the college's affairs. All looked set to proceed but when a request to the London College for copies of their various documents dealing with its foundation and governance met with a refusal to help in this way and the suggestion that the Irish send a representative to London to see how the College operated, things fell apart as none of the Irish protagonists was either able or willing to make the commitment of time and money to go to London. With that the bid for an Irish college was abandoned.

Paul refused to let the matter drop. Still seeking to improve the standard of Irish medical knowledge and practice, in 1628 he approached William Bedell, the provost of Trinity, with a suggestion that the university's small and disregarded faculties of physic and law should be enlarged and improved to a standard approaching that of the prestigious faculty of theology. The suggestion appealed to Bedell, who admitted in a letter to the Bishop of Armagh it had been an error to neglect these faculties and, with a little more labour and a few privileges granted, many more good scholars might have been induced to study in areas other than theology. In January 1629 Bedell wrote to the Master of Sydney College, Cambridge asking for information about the costs of Sydney's chairs of these studies and the conditions of conferring doctoral degrees but there the matter ended. By the end of this year that had begun so promisingly Bedell had been appointed Bishop of Kilmore and was no longer at Trinity; a clash of personality and interests between Falkland and the Irish Lord Chancellor had resulted in the Lord Deputy being recalled to London and retiring from public life, and Sarah Argent had died. Not only had his ambition to see a Irish College of Physicians come to nothing<sup>k</sup>, his seven years in Ireland had left him a widower with a family of small children, without a patron and largely unknown or forgotten in London where he had to begin to establish himself all over again.

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<sup>k</sup> Dublin's College of Physicians was finally founded in 1667, receiving its Letters Patent from Charles II. Trinity opened its first English-style university college in 1631 and by the 1650s Dublin had a well established coterie of Trinity-educated physicians.

### Freeman of London

Blackfriars' status as a liberty ceased with its annexation by the City of London in 1608; the ensuing years brought changes to Gideon's life also. Like his father, he was destined to live to a great age and now, although more than fifty, there were still many years ahead. His royal appointment ended with the Queen's death from dropsy on 2 March 1619. Having cared for her throughout her last illness, his last task was probably to provide the materials for the embalming of her body in readiness for its several weeks of lying-in-state at Somerset House prior to her funeral on 13 May (the viscera were buried in a separate ceremony on 5 March)<sup>61</sup>, doubtlessly charging a good deal more for the materials used than the £23/13/10 he had charged for George Heriot's embalming.

The part he had played in the establishment of the Society of Apothecaries made him deserving of being elected Master but the Society was wary of the possibility of difficulties arising with a Master who was not a Freeman of London, which Gideon's foreign birth precluded. Aliens such as Gideon could only become free of the City by an Act of Common Council passed in the Court of Aldermen. In April 1623, the Master and Wardens of the Apothecaries addressed a petition to the King begging his recommendation to the Lord Mayor and the Court that such an Act be passed. The King replied with a request to the Lord Mayor and Court that such an Act should be passed in order that Gideon DeLaune, in recognition of his faithful service as the late Queen Anne's Apothecary, should be made a Freeman. The Court complied with the King's request and Gideon subsequently served the Society as Under Warden in 1624-25 and Upper Warden in 1627-28 before being elected Master by a majority in a contested ballot in August 1628. He served a second term as Master in 1636, at which time he was described as "*the strongest man as far as wealth and influence went, in the whole Company.*"<sup>62</sup>

The grant of Freedom of the City meant service to the community could now be added to Gideon's longtime service of his churches and his fellow apothecaries. He can have wasted little time in being elected to the Court of Common Council, effectively the City's legislating body and, with 234 members, second only in size to the House of Commons. Commoners, as the councillors were known, were elected by their ward's householders at an annual meeting held on 21 December. Aldermen (one for each ward and, at this time, not required to be residents of the ward they represented) were appointed for life. They were elected by a complicated procedure whereby the vacated ward's householders put forward the names of two commoners and two existing aldermen to the Court of Aldermen who decided whether the senior alderman could transfer to the vacated seat or a commoner should be elevated to the position.<sup>63</sup> When Gideon's name was included as one of the nominees for election as alderman for Dowgate Ward he can only have been a member of the Court of Common Council for two years at most. Gideon's wealth and standing saw him duly elected on 17 January 1625/6 but when it was found his alien status meant he could not be admitted he was excused the following week but had to pay a fine by way of a gift of £30 to Christ's Hospital.<sup>64</sup>

### Marriages and manors

Abraham DeLaune married Mary Wheeler, daughter and granddaughter of London goldsmiths, Edmond Wheeler and Richard Hanbury on 8 January 1624,<sup>65</sup> in Datchet, Buckinghamshire<sup>m</sup>, the Wheeler country home.. This was the time Sharsted Court, near Doddington, Kent, came into DeLaune hands, alienated to

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<sup>1</sup> Gideon would seem to have had a longer connection to Christ's Hospital than simply paying this fine - his bequest of £100 to the poor of the Hospital matched the sum he left to the poor of his French congregation and his bequest of £10 to the children of the Hospital who attended his burial suggests a kindly concern for them that exceeded that of the poor of the parish of his Bedfordshire estate - they were left just £5.

<sup>m</sup> A sermon "*appropriate to the occasion*" was preached by John Cosin, a staunch Royalist and high church man who was nonetheless sympathetic to Huguenots. After spending the years of the Interregnum in Paris where he acted as chaplain to members of the Royal Household in exile, he was enthroned as Bishop of Durham in 1660.

Abraham but no doubt paid for by Gideon, perhaps as a wedding gift.



*Sharsted Court - the hall house Gideon acquired in 1624 was probably built in the 14th century, replacing an even older house. Gideon's great-grandson, William, remodelled the house extensively in 1711, adding to the wings on either side of the original hall and adding the facade we see today. Further building in the 19th century created two inner courtyards, the larger of which dates back to the original house. The chimney, walls and gable seen from this court reveal the house's mediaeval origins.*

As was the custom at the time, Mary Wheeler returned to her family home at Datchet for the birth of her first child, a son baptised Gideon on 7 May 1626. Neither Mary nor the infant Gideon survived and they were buried together in the Wheeler vault in the chancel of the church of St Mary the Virgin, Datchet. Abraham erected a memorial to Mary, a fine marble bust with a Latin inscription high on the chancel wall. Abraham's marrying again did not preclude him from being remembered as a brother by Mary's brother, John Wheeler, in his will in 1636.



*Mary Wheeler and her son Gideon DeLaune's grave and memorial in Datchet church.*

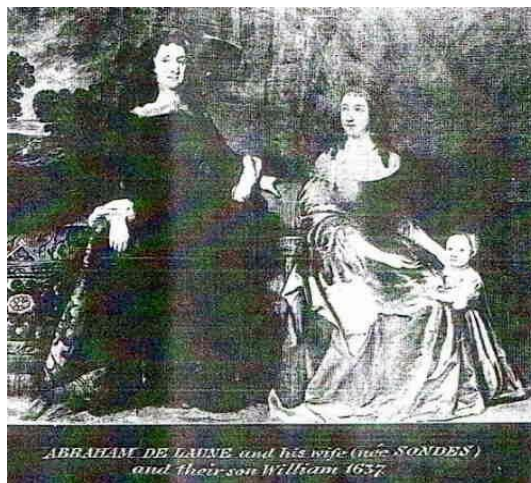
Before Mary died, there was a second wedding at Datchet in September 1625 when Anne DeLaune married Richard Sprignell, son of Robert Sprignell of Copmanforthe, Yorkshire and Highgate, and grandson of barber-surgeon Richard Sprignell of London, several times warden of that Company and excused from serving as Master in 1599. Eleven of their fifteen children survived to adulthood but the family was to be marked by tragedy and the baronetcy awarded to Richard in 1641 was to become extinct in the next generation. This was all in the future however; at the time of the marriage Richard was his father's heir and it must have been a source of pride for Gideon to see his daughter so well married.

Richard Sprignell came into possession of his father's Highgate property in 1627. Ten years later he began construction of the splendid mansion now known as Cromwell House and on 9 March 1638/9, he settled on himself and Anne the "*capital messuage lately erected, and 19 acres of pasture, late of George Crowther and now in the tenure of Richard Sprignell.*"<sup>66</sup> Gideon DeLaune was to die in this house.



*Cromwell House, Highgate. Regarded by Pevsner as one of London's best surviving artisan-built houses of its time, the main staircases' wooden panels carved with military trophies that allude to Richard Sprignell's soldiering days. Today it is the home of the High Commission of Ghana.*

There was little room for sentiment in the Stuart world. Widowed spouses remarrying was a well-accepted expectation, a duty even and accordingly, in July 1627, Abraham DeLaune married Anne Sondes<sup>n</sup>, daughter of Sir Richard Sondes, MP, of Throwley, Lees Court and Shelditch near Faversham in Kent and granddaughter of Sir Edward Montagu of Boughton Castle, Northamptonshire.



*Abraham DeLaune with his wife Anne Sondes and son (artist unknown). This photocopy of a photograph of a portrait (and the portraits of William DeLaune and his wife also included here), now in the archive of the DeLaune Cycling Club, is the only record of the original paintings that were sold with all the contents of Sharsted Court in 1952.*

Sharsted was not the only property Gideon DeLaune acquired during this period. As well as purchasing two Bedfordshire manors, Roxton and Netherbury, he invested in the Irish plantations under the Irish Adventurers' Act of 1643, paying £50 for two shares in two installments, on 9 August and 7 October 1643. In October 1653 he was granted land in Limerick that had been allocated to his nephew Henry. This, together with land in Carrickfergus Co. Antrim he had received through the initial ballot, he transferred to Henry's son, Henry DeLaune of Gurteen Roe, Co. Cork in 1654.<sup>67</sup>

When Abraham died in 1637, he left his widow with eight young children, five sons - William, George, Michael, Peter and Gideon, and three daughters - Judith, Anne and Elizabeth. All survived infancy but Peter's death in 1644 was only the first of the family tragedies that were to come. Meanwhile, when Anne Sondes

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<sup>n</sup> Poynter, among many others, wrongly names Anne as the daughter of Sir Edward Sandys. Gideon's will spells out very clearly whose daughter she was, naming both her father and details of the marriage contract.



married again in 1643, her second husband, Abraham Chamberlen, was her husband's cousin. Four years later, in 1647, her eldest daughter, Judith, married her stepfather's son, Abraham Chamberlen the Younger. Widowed a second time in 1651, Anne married William Hugessen in 1652. Her youngest son, Gideon, married Hugessen's widowed daughter in 1673, the year his mother died. By the time she died, Anne Sondes DeLaune Chamberlen Hugessen had outlived almost all her children.

### **Apothecaries' Hall**

Gratifying as the acquisition of these country estates for his heirs must have been, there can be no doubt that Gideon's greatest, and longest lasting legacy was his contribution to the founding of the Society of Apothecaries and to the purchase of the property in Blackfriars that has been home to the Society since 1632. Whilst it is mistaken to consider him the Society's founder, it is quite certain that his drive and determination was crucial to its founding, a point made clear in a memorial written into the Minutes in July 1648: "*It is hereby declared and so thought fit by the Court to be acknowledged that the same Mr DeLaune was a principal means for the procuring of the said company to be made into a corporation and for the purchasing of the capital messuage now belonging to the said company called Apothecaries' Hall*"<sup>67</sup> The property referred to in the memorial was Cobham House, conveniently positioned between the new house Gideon had acquired from Jacob Hardrett in 1618, and Blackfriars Playhouse, once the DeLaune's family home.<sup>o</sup>

As a life-long resident of Blackfriars, , Gideon was asked to provide information about the costs and responsibilities of ownership of property in the liberty <sup>p</sup>and he must surely have played a considerable part in the negotiations between the trustees of the property and the apothecaries. The result was an agreed price of £1800 for the house, some other tenements and a parcel of land stretching down to the Thames. Prior to this, the Society had met in the hall of the Painter Stainers' Company, paying rent while all the time setting aside money for the eventual purchase of a property of their own. When the moneys saved were not sufficient to meet the cost of the new purchase and it was necessary to borrow substantial sums from senior members, Gideon was chief among them. It was hoped that rents from parts of the premises leased to third parties, such as the part of the yard leased to Cuthbert and Richard Burbage, sons of James Burbage who had inherited the now-functioning theatre, would add to the funds, though Dr John Argent's application for one such lease was refused when it was found constructing the cellar he required would weaken the Hall's structure.

The first meeting in their new premises took place on 11 December 1632. The Minutes of 7 June 1633 note that Mr DeLaune delivered all the deeds and documents concerning the estate and these documents were to be kept in a chest in the Hall. The property was enlarged further when the Society was able to purchase the yard that had been used as access for theatre-goers coaches and in 1649 Gideon himself made them a gift of a messuage together with its outbuildings and some vacant land lying adjacent to the Hall<sup>q</sup> "*in testimony of his great love and good affection to the said Company.*"<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>o</sup> See the map of Blackfriars on p.12

<sup>p</sup> While Blackfriars tenants were required to maintain their property in good order, effecting repairs as deemed necessary by their landlords, owners and tenants alike paid for a "scavenger" to keep the precinct's alleys and stairs clean and a porter to open and close the liberty's gates each day. They also ensured the thoroughfares were lit at night, the water conduit was kept clean and, in times of plague, infected houses were sealed and the dead were removed as well as funding poor relief, keeping the peace and supporting the parish church and its minister.

<sup>q</sup> When that first Apothecaries Hall was all but totally destroyed in the Great Fire in 1666, the Society was able to acquire more space to enlarge its premises with the purchase of an adjacent piece of land from the newly-widowed Lady Dorcas DeLaune, co-executor of her husband, Gideon's grandson, William's will. Although only a gutted shell remained of the original hall, it was enough for its replacement to be built to the same floor plan.

## Denization

In 1635 - his children well married, heirs born, wealthy - Gideon DeLaune had reason to feel satisfied with the life he had made for himself and his family. He was still an alien however and, despite the Freedom of London granted to him in 1623, this had indeed caused the occasional difficulty that he and his fellow-Apothecaries had sought to avoid. One such incident occurred after his aborted election as Alderman of Dowgate Ward. His alien status meant he could not be admitted but the Society, wishing to salute his election, proposed that he still be seated at table as if he were an Alderman. Edmund Phillips, the Society's first Master and newly appointed Sheriff of the City would not accept this and he made a formal objection. Gideon, surely as stubbornly tenacious as the rest of his family over many things but mindful of the need to tread a diplomatic path through this English world, gave up the seat, graciously acknowledging "*he [Phillips] was of the same rank with him and had been the first Master of the Company, and had been so created by His Majesty,*" and also because he had held the office divers years hereafter."

There were other occasions when Gideon's alien status caused similar "difficulties", notably in August 1631 when Steven Higgins, Master in 1621 and now Assistant, after refusing to give Gideon priority of place over him was found to be in the wrong and was ordered to comply with the Company's decision. Higgins refused and obstinately continued to pursue his grievance over several months, with the Court finding in Gideon's favour each time they appeared, until finally, in April 1632, due to his obnoxious behaviour, Higgins was expelled from his position.<sup>70</sup> By this time the dispute had become a public affair and quite a scandal, a situation Gideon would surely have wished to avoid but, although he was ever mindful of the need for discretion his foreign birth imposed, others were not necessarily so inclined.

Despite such difficulties it wasn't until 1635 that he finally applied for denization, the precursor to the modern act of naturalization. Denization was not a process to be undertaken lightly; each grant required royal approval by way of letters patent and a separate Act of Parliament. It was also an expensive process. Denizens were not citizens, but they did have rights not given to aliens, most particularly the right to own land that their direct heirs, and only such heirs, could inherit. By now, Gideon was a considerable land owner with property in Blackfriars, Kent, the Bedfordshire manors and his overseas holdings. Old age and the possibility of legal difficulties after his death were likely factors in Gideon finally seeking denization.

## Troubled times

Although Gideon did not have a son follow him into the mysteries of the Apothecary's arts, two of his nephews set off on that path. First came Peter, son of Pierre, born in Norwich in 1610. Bound to Gideon as an apprentice in 1625, he did not finish his apprenticeship and, according to Barrett, the Minutes of 11 July 1648 record Gideon's request that his nephew should be made free without any payment of the fees that such an action would normally require. The Court acceded to the request for freedom but imposed a fine of £10, which was not paid. A terse entry of "*Nothing done*"<sup>71</sup> ended the matter.<sup>s</sup>

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<sup>r</sup> The Society of Apothecaries was founded in James I's name and he referred to it as "his" Company. In 1624 his reply to a petition from the Grocers that the Society's Letters Patent be void and not put into execution was both terse and disparaging. "*Another Grievance of mine is that you have condemned the Patents of the Apothecaries in London. I did myself devise that corporation, and do allow it. The grocers who complain of it, are but merchants; the mysteries of these apothecaries, were belonging to apothecaries, wherein the grocers are unskillful; and therefore I think it fitting they should be a corporation of themselves.*" (P. Hunting. *A History of the Society of Apothecaries*. p.35)

<sup>s</sup> It may well be that Peter had died. The register of Marriage Bonds and Allegations 1597-1921 held by the London Metropolitan Archives (MS10091/20) records the marriage of Peter DeLawnne and Anne Westburie, maiden, on 8 July 1639. The same register records the marriage, of Anne DeLawnne, widow, to Thomas Morecott on 24 September 1640. Poynter's assumption of him being Peter DeLannoy, dyer, alderman and MP for Southwark is mistaken - the DeLannoys were a Walloon family of dyers who came to Bermondsey from Norwich.

Where or to whom Nathaniel's son, Gideon, was apprenticed is not known. The spoon he presented on having been made free would have been placed in the chest that held the deeds and documents Gideon Senior had placed there in 1633. Beginning in 1620, it was a requirement that each member on being made free should present a piece of plate to the value of one mark (about 2/3 of a pound) to the Society. Gideon Senior gave rather more substantial gifts of silver on more than one occasion as well as loaning the Society £100 in 1643 to avoid the necessity of selling some of the gifted plate at a time of dire fiscal constraint.

The accession of King Charles in 1625 brought many changes. He retained Joliffe Towers, a member of the Grocer's Company who had been his Apothecary as Prince of Wales as his first Apothecary and later appointed John Rumler his Apothecary for life. The Queen had brought her own man, M. Plancy, with her from France and his son, Pierre, succeeded him, holding the position for the rest of the Queen's life.<sup>72</sup> Despite being a sickly child, unlike his parents, Charles and his wife, Henrietta Maria, experienced good health; he had no great belief in the benefits of chemical medicine and he had no sympathy for Calvinists - there were Royal appointments for other men but none for Gideon.

Charles' conviction of his divine right to rule and Parliament's equal determination to maintain some control over a monarch they did not trust, holding suspect his sympathy towards the Catholics and spending of taxation moneys when he was effectively the ruler during his father's last year of life, set the two parties on a collision course that was to lead eventually to civil war. Supply became a major issue right from the start with the Commons refusing to meet the King's demands for funding in 1625. When they then voted to grant him tonnage and poundage (the customs duties traditionally granted for life on accession) for just one year, he dissolved the parliament and took the duties without their authority. Further disputes followed and on 15 June 1626, before it had voted for any taxation, Parliament was again prorogued. This situation was repeated in 1628 and again in 1629, after which Parliament was not called again for eleven years. The question of supply became paramount as only Parliament had the legal right to raise taxes. Among the many actions the King took to raise the money he needed was a series of highly unpopular forced loans.

Gideon DeLaune's name was on the list of targeted lenders but, like many others, he was not prepared to give without protest. On 29 October 1625 he wrote to Sir Robert Pye, Auditor of the Receipt of the Exchequer, claiming he was unable to satisfy a Privy Seal sent to him as he had "*given his little property to his children, reserving a stipend to himself and his wife*"<sup>73</sup> and profits from his apothecary shop had fallen due to the deaths of his servants of the plague. A letter written on 3 January 1625/6 by John Hay, a messenger from Edinburgh city council who was deputed to liaise with Gideon and George Heriot's other executors in London on the council's behalf confirms some of Gideon's claims. Hay reported that he could not enter Gideon's shop as it was "infected" and two of his apprentices were dead: "*I come to London upon the thretteine [December 1625] in the foirnone and stayed thair till the sexteine during the which tyme I delyvered my letters to W Johnstoun bot could not have the occasioun of meting with the rest for they were scarce sett down and Mr de Lawney his chop was infected and his twa prenteissis deid, swa that he wald not admit any albeit he come him selffe and spake with me.*"<sup>74</sup> No reason is given in Sir Robert's report of a refusal on 26 September 1626<sup>75</sup> but there was no escaping the demands.

Judith DeLaune died in July 1631, her burial on 26 July the first DeLaune burial in the church's new vault. The Minutes of the Society record Gideon's gift of a silver college cup on 22 September when he formally thanked the Society for the attendance of members at the funeral. The decade that began with the sorrow of the death of his wife and the satisfaction of the purchase of its own premises for the Society in 1632 continued to swing back and forth between high points and low. A bitter dispute between the Society of Apothecaries and the College of Physicians over just how much supervision the Apothecaries should be subjected to by the Physicians dragged on and on. There were financial worries - as a city company they were expected to meet demands for loans and taxes from both the City and the Church, and there were lawyers' fees

to be paid after it was decided the Company would bear the cost of defending its members who were being sued. There were good years too - denization in 1635, a second term as Master in 1636.



*Dated 1637, this portrait is attributed to Cornelius Janssen van Ceulen (1593-1661), the English-born son of Dutch parents who is known to have had his studio in Blackfriars before moving to Canterbury sometime in the mid-1630s. It remained at Sharsted until the house was sold in 1952 since when it has found a new home at Apothecaries Hall.*

1637 began with the small pleasure for Gideon of seeing his nephew become a member of the Society of Apothecaries and it must have been about this time that he sat for the fine portrait painted by his former Blackfriars neighbor, Cornelius Janssen van Ceulen, who had moved to Canterbury by mid-1630 but its end must have brought great grief when Abraham, his heir and only surviving son, died at Blackfriars on 23 January 1637/8 and was buried at St Ann Blackfriars three days later. With old age drawing ever nearer, his family's future vested in a boy of nine, Abraham's son William, and his even younger brothers, the Company's problems and the unsettled religious and political climate of the country increasing as the differences between the King and his subjects grew ever wider, there must have been more than a few sleepless nights for Gideon as he contemplated the future for his family, friends and colleagues.

### **Paul DeLaune's final years**

Paul DeLaune returned from Dublin in 1629 and spent the next several years practising as a physician in London, apparently without any great financial reward, but nor was there a sense of grievance if Ward's description of him in his *Lives of the Professors* is a true one. "[He] was naturally of an easy temper, and chearful with a small fortune; temperate and frugal himself, tho indulgent to his children."<sup>76</sup> We hear nothing of him until 1642 when he was appointed an Elect of the College of Physicians, and then in 1643, their Senior Censor. He also gave lectures in anatomy at the College. In June the same year, the influence of Thomas Chamberlen, Master of the Company of Mercers and very probably a family connection, led to his appointment as Professor of Physic at Gresham College. His predecessor, Thomas Winston, openly an anti-parliamentarian, had fled to France six months earlier, seemingly from necessity rather than choice in these troubled political times. Paul remained at Gresham until 1651 when Winston, having finally made peace with the government of the day, felt it safe to return. The college, in compliance with an order of John Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, recommended his being appointed one of three physicians (his nephew, Nathaniel Chamberlen was one of the others) to the parliamentary army under Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex. On 1 July 1651 Parliament ordered "*that Dr. Paul de Laune, and Dr. Nathaniel Chamberlaine, Physicians, shall be forthwith sent to the Army, for the Service of the Army*".<sup>77</sup> Each was to be advanced £100

and their physician's chests were to be furnished with necessary equipment to the value of £20.<sup>t</sup> The Master and Wardens of the Apothecaries were ordered to inspect the chests to ensure they were suitable equipped.

Service to the army over, back in Blackfriars, Paul was elected an elder of the French Church but he was not to stay there long.



*The Western Design expedition 1654/6. Cromwell's efforts to establish a colony of settlers in the West Indies were largely unsuccessful and by 1670, when Spain ceded the island to Britain, Jamaica had become a pirate stronghold.*

Still at a disadvantage, both financially and professionally, nearly seventy but fit and healthy still, in 1654 he accepted the appointment of Physician General to the expedition that the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, was sending to challenge the Spanish presence in the Caribbean. Having been appointed one of the very first army physicians, his naval appointment put him in charge of the Royal Navy's first true hospital ship.<sup>78 u</sup> Sailing from Portsmouth in December 1654, the fleet, eighteen ships of the line and twenty two supply ships carrying a force of 3000 marines, arrived in Barbados a month later. There they took on some 3000 extra troops raised from the island's indentured servants and freemen before sailing for Hispaniola. When their attempt to take that island from the Spanish by siege was defeated, the fleet sailed to Santiago de la Vega, the Spanish settlement on what is now Jamaica, where they succeeded in taking the town and, eventually, the island. Santiago taken, the fleet sailed again and from that point Paul vanishes. On its return, the fleet could give no word as to where or when his death occurred.<sup>v</sup>

<sup>t</sup> Provision for the army's sick and wounded on both sides was hopelessly inadequate at this stage. Two or three Physicians General, such as Paul DeLaune and Nathaniel Chamberlen, were attached to the army's headquarters and each regiment had a surgeon and two surgeons' mates. The allowance for their physician's chests was the first time such provision was made for army physicians. The navy had fared a little better with Charles ordering the provision of medicine chests for all naval surgeons almost twenty years earlier, in 1626. Their chests, valued at £17, were prepared by the Company of Barber-Surgeons who was responsible for the "making, compounding, fitting and ordering of all the medicines, as well physick as chirurgicall, together with all other provisions belonging unto the Surgeon's chests." (W.R.E.Smart. - see ref. 61)

<sup>u</sup> In 1608 the *Goodwill* was designated a hospital ship and sailed to Algiers with the fleet but, once in action, sick and injured men were put ashore to fare for themselves. Paul DeLaune may well have had two ships for his invalids; Adjutant-General Jackson (the commander of the marines) was sentenced "to be made a Swabber to keep the Hospital Ships clean for the Health of those who by his evil conduct and cowardice were wounded." (J.J.Sutherland Shaw M.A.Ph.D.(1936) *The Hospital Ship 1608-1740*, *The Mariner's Mirror*, 22:4, 422-426: DOI:10.1080/00253359.1936.10657206)

<sup>v</sup> The mystery surrounding Paul DeLaune's death is almost certainly the result of the animosity that developed between the expedition's two commanders, Robert Venables, leader of the land forces, and General-at-Sea, William Penn. Whilst both were competent and experienced men, with neither one given overall command, friction led to mutual hostility that reached its peak when both set sail for England separately and without orders soon after the taking of Jamaica. Both were charged with desertion and relieved of their commands following a short period of imprisonment in the Tower of London. With the fleet split into three (a squadron was left behind under the command of Vice-Admiral Goodsonn to continue harrying the Spanish) and communications between them no doubt difficult in the extreme, one man's unexplained demise becomes somewhat less inexplicable.



Paul DeLaune's will, written on 13 December 1654 and proved in 6 June 1657, indicates just how small his fortune was - after bequests of 20/- each to the poor of his two churches and his personal effects of books, letters, clothing, linen and his signet ring to his son Benjamin, such that remained of his estate was to be divided equally between Benjamin and his sisters, Elizabeth and Anne.<sup>7</sup>

### **Pierre and Paul DeLaune's families**

The death of his son in July 1637 must have brought much grief to Gideon, grief that his brother Pierre had experienced when his elder son, Nathaniel, died the previous January. Nathaniel had followed his father into the ministry, though in the Episcopal Church rather than Pierre's French Reformed discipline. Admitted a scholar to Corpus Christi, Cambridge, in 1618 he gained his B.A. in 1622 and M.A. in 1625. Prior to being appointed vicar of Broadhempston in Devon in 1629, he published a translation of "Elements of Logick", the work of French-born Anglican theologian and staunch Royalist, Peter du Moulin, whose notable family, Huguenot refugees like the Delaunes, included his father, philosopher Pierre du Moulin, and brother Louis, a physician who became Camden Professor of History at Oxford. Although he married, he died childless as his brother Peter was to do, both men pre-deceasing their father.

Benjamin DeLaune outlived his father. Over the twenty years following Paul's death he became a wealthy and distinguished City merchant, as witnessed by his being one of fourteen signatories to the 1674 anti-French Scheme of Trade, all "*men of wealth and established position in the City.*"<sup>80</sup> during which time he also formulated a plan for fire insurance, and made a study of the plague.<sup>81</sup> Marriage to Margaret Coney in 1656 saw the birth of twelve children between 1657 and 1673, only three of whom survived infancy - all boys. Benjamin and Richard appear briefly in a statement made before justices at The Greyhound, Croydon about a dispute between Benjamin and Ric. Delawne and one Luke Bird.<sup>82</sup> Although dateless, it tells us that they survived to young manhood at the very least. Their elder brother, William DeLaune DD (1659-1728), became Chaplain to Queen Anne and President of St John's College, Oxford, a post he held for thirty years.<sup>w</sup>

Benjamin and Richard were only small children when their father sailed to China in 1678 having been appointed Chief of the East India Company's new factory in Amoy (now Xiamen) in China, at a salary of £80 per annum,<sup>83</sup> The stipend was generous but the East India adventurer's real wealth was made from trading in their own right while there. Benjamin DeLaune died in China in September 1679 first having made his will appointing friends in Amoy and London trustees to ensure that his wife and family benefitted from his endeavours in the Indies.<sup>84</sup> What those rewards might have been remains unknown.

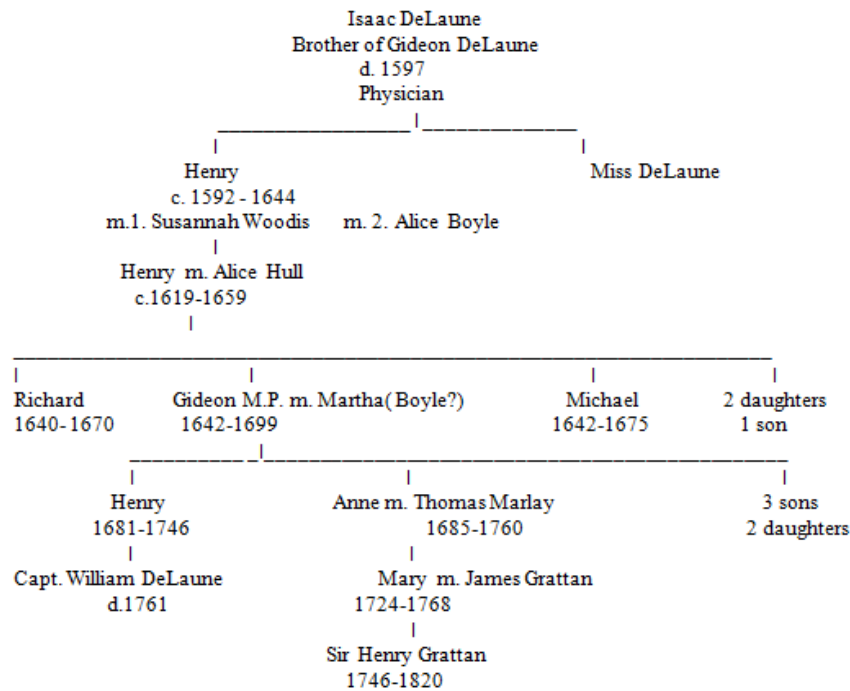
### **The Irish connection**

Pierre DeLaune presumably had accepted some of the responsibility for his dead brother Isaac's son, Henry, whose Cambridge record shows he was schooled in Norwich before entering Caius aged eighteen in 1610. Granted denization in 1627 he was then appointed agent for Lord Falkland in Dublin - Paul DeLaune had been Falkland's personal physician for many years at this stage. When Falkland was recalled to England he became one of Viscount Conway's secretaries. Marriage to Alice Boyle, daughter of Richard Boyle, Archbishop of Tuam, brought a connection to the most influential family in Ireland - the Earls of Cork. Investment in the Irish Adventurer's Act of 1643 added an allocation of land in Co Antrim to the land he held in Co Cork while a

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<sup>w</sup> William DeLaune D.D.'s reputation today is based on reports of gambling, venality, laziness and the writings of pamphleteer Nicholas Amherst who, having been expelled from St John's after several warnings from DeLaune became his bitter opponent. Amherst was not the only one upset by DeLaune; his strict enforcement of St John's statutes meant many Fellows lost their places. The Non-Jurors also bore him a grudge as he did not join them in their refusal to sign the Oath of Allegiance to William and Mary. Such grudges beg the question of how much truth there is in the slurs cast on the character of a man who was noted for the quality of his sermons, elected Margaret Professor of Divinity a canon of Winchester, prebendary of Worcester and Chaplain to the Queen.

letter of recommendation from Falkland to the Admiralty gained him the position of Registrar for the Vice Admiral of Munster, Sir William Hull<sup>x</sup>, in 1633. His commitment to Ireland is evidenced in both actions and word - he wrote to the King, Charles I, about improvements to Irish commerce and, in 1642, he was commissioned Captain in Lord Kerry's Adventurer's Regiment for the Army of Ireland, raised to fight the Irish Confederate force. He entered the Civil War on the Royalist side and is said to have died during the Siege of Lostwithiel in 1644.



*Isaac DeLaune's descendants: The story of Isaac DeLaune's family in Ireland is study in itself, one that has been a fascinating trail to follow and still has far to go. The pedigree included here shows only those names relevant to this brief account. The burial of Gideon DeLaune M.P.'s wife in the Earl of Cork's vault in St Patrick's Cathedral gives credence to naming her a Boyle.*

Henry's son, also Henry, married a cousin, Alice Hull, daughter of William Hull's son and his mother's sister, Jane Boyle, and remained at Gurteen Roe. His oldest grandson, Richard, was secretary to the Earl of Orrery, heir to the Earl of Cork; the second, Michael, went to Dublin's Trinity College and became Archdeacon at St Patrick's Cathedral, while the third, Gideon, became MP for Blessington, a seat in the Irish Parliament controlled by Michael Boyle, Archbishop of Dublin and Chancellor of Ireland. One of this Gideon's descendants, his great grandson, Henry Grattan, was a towering political figure in the late 18th century who campaigned ceaselessly for legislative independence for Ireland in both the Irish and English parliaments, whilst a second heroic figure, Captain William DeLaune, friend and companion of James Wolfe, leader of Wolfe's forward band, the Forlorn Hope, at the Heights of Abraham in 1759, who accompanied Wolfe's body back to England, seems likely, though not yet proven, to be this Gideon's grandson. Captain DeLaune was killed in Augsberg in January 1761 when an outpost of 400 allies led by him was attacked by a superior force and all were killed or captured. DeLaune would not surrender and was killed in his quarters.

<sup>x</sup> Hull was a rogue. A pirate in all but name, his role was to protect the southern Irish coastline against piracy. Instead, given a free hand to control the far south-west corner of the coast, his collaboration with the North Atlantic pirates benefitted both himself and the Admiralty most handsomely.

## Old age

By mid-17th century our Apothecary Gideon was an old man who must have outlived almost all his contemporaries and his name appears only rarely in the Society's minutes. In 1642 he presented a portrait of himself to the Company; it hangs in Apothecaries' Hall today. Said to be after the Cornelius Janssen van Ceulen portrait at Sharsted, it disappeared when portraits and plate were moved to safety during the Great Fire in 1666, only resurfacing in 1751 when one John Barnard bequeathed it back to the Society. A brief entry on 18 August 1648 about the indenture of an apprentice, Isaac Taylor, revealing the fact that Gideon was blind "*Mr Delaune was to seal at home, he being blind and not able to come.*"<sup>85</sup> came the year after the odd affair of his nephew's apparent refusal to pay the fine for non-completion of his apprenticeship. The last entry in his lifetime was the fulsome vote of thanks offered in August 1648, recording all he had done for the Society, the gifts he had made and the benefits that had accrued from his efforts on their behalf.

One friend who did not forget Gideon in his old age was Poet Laureate, playwright and theatrical producer, William Davenant. Gideon had befriended Davenant when he was still in his teens, the page of the Duchess of Richmond.<sup>y</sup> Despite forty years difference in their ages, it was a friendship that speaks rather better of Davenant's care for the old man than that of some of his family. Davenant's Royalist loyalties led to years of exile in France before misadventure and capture in 1650 found him imprisoned in the Tower of London for more than a year. Released in 1652, he took up residence in Rutland House, near Aldersgate, and visited the by-now aged Gideon. His recall of their friendship became the basis of Gideon's appearance in John Aubrey's *Brief Lives*: "*Sir William Davenant was his great acquaintance and told me of him, and that after his return into England he went to visit him, being then octogenary, and very decrepit with the gowt, but had his sight and understanding. He had a place for him in the kitchen chimney and non obstante he was the master of such an estate (Aubrey put his wealth at £80,000), Sir William saw him slighted not only by his daughter-in-law (Anne Sondes) but by the cook-mayde, which much affected him - misery of old age.*"<sup>86</sup>

Henry DeLaune died for his King. Gideon's heir, William DeLaune, was a Royalist too, his name appearing among the two hundred and fifty Englishmen to be honoured as Knights of the Royal Oak, a reward for their loyal support during Charles' years in exile.<sup>87</sup> Gideon's allegiance is not quite so clear, but despite his understandable reluctance in the matter of the King's forced loans and their different religious observance, unlike most Huguenots, it would appear he too was a Royalist. He paid a financial price for his loyalty when in 1650, a debt due to him from the Royalist Earl of Cleveland was paid with land in the manor of Toddington in Bedfordshire. Some of this land he sold to two of the manor's tenants, Thomas Peddington and Jeffery Wildmarsh, but the Committee for Compounding<sup>z</sup> ordered a parcel to the value of £2084/8/6 to be transferred by to one Nich. Harding of Grays Inn in 1654.<sup>88</sup> Following the Restoration, most of the land sequestrated by the Committee was returned to its original owners. Gideon's death before the return of the King would have meant any claim for such a return would have to have been made by his heirs.

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<sup>y</sup> Davenant seems to have enjoyed telling the tale of how he and Gideon first met and was known to repeat it often. By his telling, the elderly Duchess, newly married for the third time, sent her young page to "*a famous apothecary*" to collect an order of powdered unicorn horn - a reputedly universal cure-all, protector from poison and a preserver of youth, vigour and complexion to old age. The Duchess, almost certainly seeking only an elixir of youth, was prepared to trust the claims for the fabled powder, Davenant was rather more sceptical and carried out several tests on its supposed poison-protection powers, proving for himself that it was all a nonsense. (A.H.Nethercot, *Sir William D'Avenant, poet laureate and playwright-manager*.(1938) pp.42-4)

<sup>aa</sup> 1643 saw the establishment of two Parliamentary committees, one for ordering the sequestration of Royalist supporters' estates and the second, the Committee for Compounding of Delinquents, to assess the claims of Royalists whose estates had been sequestrated to "compound" for their estates, i.e. to pay a fine to recover them so long as they pledged not to take up arms against Parliament again. The value of the estate and the perceived level of support for the Royalists dictated the amount of the fine.

### Gideon's grandchildren

William DeLaune was born at his mother's home and baptized in Throwley church on 8 May 1629. Following his schooldays in Caen, France and Bromley he went up to Sydney College, Cambridge in 1648 but no record exists of his having completed a degree. He married heiress Anne Hayward, the only child of Thomas Hayward of Granch Manor, Gillingham. Hayward had died in 1637 and so Granch came directly to William on the marriage. William and Anne buried their son, Abraham, on 1 January 1651/2; the only other child of the marriage, a daughter, Anne, inherited Granch on William's death.



*William DeLaune and his first wife, Anne Hayward*

Widowed in November 1660, William married Dorcas Barking who bore him two children, Mary and William. A City merchant like his father, he was made Knight of the Bath in 1663, the proposed order of the Royal Oak having been abandoned as it was deemed likely to keep old wounds festering. Despite his inherited wealth - the annual value of his estate of £2500 given in the list of potential Knights of the Royal Oak made him the richest of the Kentish candidates and in the top thirty in all England - when he died in 1667 he left a legacy of debts and legal cases that was not resolved until years after his death<sup>89</sup>. His widow and brother, Michael, a woollen draper, were named executors of his will. The combination of debts and the destruction wrought on the Blackfriars property by the Great Fire probably made the decision to sell some of that property to the Society of Apothecaries an easy one. When Dorcas remarried in 1669, her husband, Sir Edward Dering, negotiated the lease of more of the DeLaune Blackfriars property to the Society.



*Apothecaries Hall. The purchase of the Delaune property from William's widow allowed a considerable expansion of the Society's premises that was completed by 1672, making it the first of the fire-destroyed city's livery halls to be rebuilt. To this day it retains much of its original structure with the Great Hall, Court Room and Parlour remaining just as they were when the new building was completed.*

Gideon's second grandson, George DeLaune, a Freeman of London and member of the Company of Mercers, died with his wife, Dorothy Allen, daughter of Thomas Allen, one time Lord Mayor of London, and their young son when his house in Lothbury burnt in a fire in 1662. The tragedy was noted by Samuel Pepys and word of it even spread to Wales where another diarist, the Rev. Phillip Henry recorded the terrible story - with an embellishment or two.<sup>aa</sup> Michael was killed by a fall of bricks in a London street in 1671. Where their London home had stood was now tenemented housing, the church that had seen so many family events was demolished - there was no place in Blackfriars for Gideon's heirs to regard as home.

The youngest brother, Gideon, seems, quite sensibly, to have stayed in Kent. Appointed a King's Commissioner for the county in 1677, he married Anne Hugessen (widow of Rudolph Weckerlin, who had accompanied Charles II into exile) in his mid-thirties, was knighted and died childless in 1709, remembered on a memorial placed in Lynsted church by his wife as '*...a man possessed of Piety, Probity and a Pleasing and good-natured sense of duty*'.

It is to be hoped that his extreme age and blindness protected Gideon from the scandal that beset the family during his last years. Sometime in 1654 -55, his granddaughter, Anne DeLaune, eloped with her cousin, George Sondes. George's father's insistence on him denying the union prevailed and the pair were parted, though the marriage was attested to in a sworn statement by her mother and brother, William, executors of Gideon DeLaune's will, in 1659.<sup>90</sup> Whether it was the elopement that set the ensuing tragedy in motion is a matter for speculation, but tragedy there was when George Sondes was murdered by his younger brother, Freeman, at their home, Lees Court, near Faversham, on 7 August 1655. Their father's response to his immediate confession was just as immediate and Freeman was delivered to the authorities without delay. Coincidentally, the Kent assizes, a once or twice only a year event, were sitting at just that time. Freeman was brought to trial and hanged just two weeks after the murder, on 21 August 1655. This terrible event brought such notoriety and condemnation on the Sondes family that George Sondes published a long and impassioned explanation of the whole affair.<sup>91</sup> Anne DeLaune married Henry Peck, a lawyer, in 1659. According to Gideon's will she was to inherit four hundred pounds on the day of her marriage; whether she received it by virtue of the first or second marriage is not known though the existence of the sworn statement suggests all efforts were made to have the first marriage recognized legally.

Life in these later years also brought trials to Gideon's daughter, Anne Sprignell. Her marriage, no doubt considered a good match when it was made, produced fifteen children, nine of whom lived to adulthood. Richard Sprignell's handsome house, a grant of arms in 1639 and a baronetcy granted in 1641 - Gideon would have taken great pride in his son-in-law's achievements. The marriage of Richard's heir, Robert Sprignell, to Anne Livesey, daughter of Sir Michael Livesey, High Sheriff of Kent (the man who had condemned Freeman Sondes), one of the signatories to the death warrant of Charles I<sup>bb</sup>, may have not have been so celebrated among the family's Royalists. Even more difficult for the family, Richard Sprignell was certified a lunatic in November 1658 after several years with periods of madness.<sup>92</sup> He died just a few months before Gideon. Anne Sprignell remained in Highgate where she died and was buried in 1662, Robert Sprignell died childless in 1688. Having spent most of his married life at his Yorkshire estate, he sold his beautiful Highgate house soon after his mother died and when both his younger brothers, Gideon and William, died unmarried and

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<sup>aa</sup> Pepys wrote, "1662, Dec...29. ...the strange burning of Mr De Laun, a merchant's house in Lothbury, and his lady (Sir Thomas Allen's daughter) and her whole family; not one thing, dog nor cat, escaping." By 7 January Henry's account told of how George had "*perisht himself, wife children and servants to the number of 10 or 12.*" (D. Agnew, *Protestant Exiles from France*. p.231)

<sup>bb</sup> The marriage took place sometime in the latter years of the Interregnum. For a regicide, the return of the King in 1660 was a death sentence, and Livesey fled to the Netherlands. There were reports that he was hacked to death by a Dutch mob when his identity was revealed.



childless, there was no heir to the Sprignell title. None of the Sprignell children born after 1642 married - an effect perhaps of the taint of their father's lunacy.

### **Death and the last of Gideon's line**

Gideon made his will on 19 June 1654 leaving clear instructions and £1000 to pay for his burial "*in the rank of Alderman of London in the church porch of Blackfryares of London under the stone that place where it is written in good letters SEPULCHRUM LAUNEORUM*".<sup>93</sup> He died at the Highgate home of his daughter and was buried at St Ann Blackfriars on 3 March 1658/89. An alderman's burial was quite a performance and would have taken every penny of the £1000 Gideon left to pay for his, not to mention the extra £10 he left to the children of Christ's Hospital. Such civic funerals were governed by strict rules of precedence and formality and, as it was Gideon's request that he be buried in the rank of Alderman, there is every likelihood that all the required formalities were observed. Family, friends and colleagues would have had their place in the funeral procession, together with representatives of both the French and English community, rich and poor. Gideon also left

With the protocol for such funerals firmly set by the heralds, it is quite easy to imagine the scene. Poor men of the parish led the procession of mourners - possibly as many as Gideon had years, all robed in black at his expense. Following them would have been minor officers of the parish and figures such as the beadle of the Society of Apothecaries. The representatives of distinguished acquaintances not attending themselves came next, followed by kinsmen and friends. Members of the Society of Apothecaries and other guilds would have swelled the numbers, all placed individually according to their rank rather than together as representatives of their profession. Placed in reverse order of seniority, the City's aldermen were next with the Lord Mayor the last of this august group. The clergy came immediately before the coffin (no doubt for Gideon this meant both Church of England and French Reformed ministers) together with banners bearing the DeLaune coat of arms. The coffin, borne aloft by six of the Lord Mayor's officers and probably escorted by more men carrying the arms of the Society of Apothecaries and any other affiliations Gideon may have had, was followed by close male family members, more officials and, finally, the women of the family, all the household servants and any such residents of the parish and the city as wished to be present.<sup>94</sup>

As such burial honours were granted to common councilmen - which office Gideon must have held for him to have been elected Alderman - and also to the wives and widows of Aldermen, it is possible that Gideon's wife, Judith, was buried with similar formalities. Elizabeth DeLaune, his sole surviving sibling, was buried at St Anne the day after her brother, undoubtedly in a far simpler manner.



*Blackfriars Burial Ground, Ireland Yard. St Ann Blackfriars was destroyed in the Great Fire, just seven years after Gideon DeLaune's burial there. The church was not rebuilt; instead the parish was combined with St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe and the land it occupied added to the existing burial ground, itself originally part of the nave of the friary church. The early DeLaune graves and Gideon's vault lie somewhere beneath the paving stones of Ireland Yard.*

Gideon's death passed unremarked in the Minutes of the Apothecaries' Society, the only mention an order in the Minutes for Election Day in August 1659 that a debt of £200 was to be paid to the executors of the "*late Mr DeLaune.*"<sup>95</sup>

There are signs of the forgetfulness of old age in the will. Proved on June 20 1659, it contained errors and left room for confusion. He rightly named Anne Sprignell's eldest son Richard, but her first-born Richard was long since dead and Robert was the heir; the shares in Virginia that he had signed over to Abraham, he left to William who had already inherited them from his father. Judging by the number of contested suits held in the National Archives, there were disputes over just who got what in some of the transfers of land. Anne Sprignell was left property in Blackfriars. William was his main heir and was to inherit Sharsted (which in his will Abraham had left to his wife, William's mother), a house in Blackfriars and such parts of the Bedfordshire estate that were not settled for her life on his mother in her contract of marriage. His grandchildren were left generous sums of money and there were smaller bequests to his own siblings and his brother Nathaniel's widow. Cousins, nieces and nephews were all remembered as were both the ministers and the poor of his two churches and Roxton. Money was left to provide for "*a silver bason to the value of ten pounds or thereabouts ... my Arms engraved thereon*" to be purchased for the Society of Apothecaries.<sup>cc</sup> It is generally accepted that the estate was worth in excess of £90,000, a figure akin to about £6,000,000 today though, with the difference in market values between Gideon's 17th century world and ours almost unknowable, such comparisons are rather spurious.

William and Dorcas DeLaune's son, William, was the last of Gideon's immediate family to carry the DeLaune name. When this William died childless in 1739, his sister Mary's son, Gideon Thorneycroft, inherited the estate, only to die two years later at which point it passed to his mother (who had also inherited the manor of Granch, her half-sister Anne having died unmarried) and from her it passed to her two unmarried daughters and then to their cousin, Alured Pinke, before finally coming to the family of Pinke's wife, Mary Faunce. Adding the name DeLaune to that of Faunce in 1864, the Faunce DeLaunes remained owners of Sharsted until 1952 when the house and all its contents were sold. An Australian descendant of the family who visited the house before it was sold recalled seeing portraits of Charles II and Oliver Cromwell as well as Gideon and various members of the DeLaune family there.<sup>dd</sup>

### **Gideon's pills**

And what of Gideon DeLaune's famous pill? To this day accredited with being the basis of his fortune, it was still selling long after his death with a succession of glowing testimonials and recommendations being published into the early 18th century. The main ingredient is thought to have been colocynt (a gourd known variously as bitter apple, desert gourd and vine of Sodom, native to the eastern Mediterranean and Turkey) and perhaps scammony ( a variety of convolvulus from much the same regions). Both are powerful purgatives.

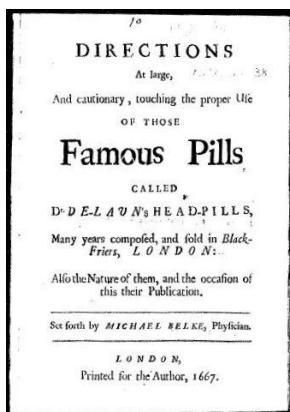
One "*student of physic*", Nathaniel Lomax, seems to have made a career out of promoting the pill, his claims for its curative powers published in a pamphlet that he reproduced over many years. His first foray came in 1675: "*Launæus redivivus: or, A true narrative of the admirable effects of Delaun's pill: that ancient & excellant Galenick medicine, approved of, and sold for above fifty years, in Black-Fryers, now newly reviv'd,*

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<sup>cc</sup> The two college cups given by Gideon were included in a list of plate deemed useless and old fashioned in October 1759. The Master agreed they should be sold and more useful table plate acquired with the proceeds of the sale. A knife and fork, thought to be the gift of James I, given to the Society by a member of the Faunce DeLaune family, are the only possessions of Gideon's held by the Society today.

<sup>dd</sup> An inventory taken in 1678 records William DeLaune's ownership of fifty six paintings

and exposed to sale, at the signe of Delaun's Head there, for the good of all " and again in 1680: 'Delaun reviv'd, vix. A plain and short discourse of that famous doctor's pills, their use and virtues : With choice receipts for the cure of the scurvy, dropsy, jaundies, venereal and other diseases" and still in 1702, complete with an endorsement reputedly from William Harvey who, the pamphlet claimed " having experimented this Pill, commended it to the world, as the most friendly to Nature, and effectually in sweetening the blood, and maintaining its Circulation, whereof to England's glory, he was the true author."<sup>96</sup>



Pamphlet, published for Michael Belke, Physician, in 1667

Not everyone was convinced of their efficacy, or of the probity of the rewards of such remedies reaped by their creators. A little book, first published in 1669, entitled *A Short View of the Frauds and Abuses Committed by Apothecaries*, by Christopher Merrett Dr. in Physic, Fellow of the College of Physicians, and of the Royal Society, offers some scathing criticisms of the potions, pills and practices of some of his contemporaries. This pithy comment is his view of Gideon and his pills: "Some of them get private and worthless receipts, and sell them at what rate they please; Mr. Delaune by one Pill alone, though not a very safe one, got some thousands of pounds."<sup>97</sup> The same could be said of the many alternative medicines and cures sold today, despite the several centuries of advancement of medical knowledge since Gideon's time.

As well as the two portraits of Gideon DeLaune that now hang in Apothecaries Hall, he is depicted in one of the Hall's stained glass window and in Nicholas Young's marble bust that the Society commissioned in 1676, the Latin inscription of which reads:

*"Gideon DeLaune, gentleman, Apothecary to the most serene Anne, wife of King James I, and sometime Master and most generous Benefactor of this Society*



Marble bust of Gideon DeLaune - Nicholas West, 1676

### **Endnote**

Recorded aspects of the lives of Gideon DeLaune and his family are to be found in many different places, details that come together to paint a picture of a family whose story reflects their experience and involvement in and with the events and concerns of the 17th century. When William DeLaune stepped ashore at Rye in 1572 he was seeking a safe haven for his family and freedom to worship according to his beliefs. He could never have imagined where the family's flight would take them.

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**Abbreviations:** BHO - British History Online

EEBO - Early English Books Online

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### Selected reading:

Following is a short list of books of general interest that provide a background to some aspects of Gideon DeLaune's world.

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