

THE CHAMOND MEMORIAL

The monument to John Chamond in the south-eastern corner of St Swithin's church, Launcells, is an intriguing edifice.

John Chamond was born in 1550 and died in 1624. He was the third son of a family of five sons and two daughters. Little is known about his life, save that, like two of his brothers, he was educated at Hart Hall (now Hertford College) in the University of Oxford. But he came from an important and wealthy Cornish gentry family.¹

The family were of Norman origin and first came over to England with William the Conqueror. Their surname was originally de Calvo Monte, but it was later Anglicized, via Chaumont, to Chamond. The family first settled in Yorkshire, where it became prominent. A branch of the family appears to have moved to Cornwall in the 13th century, most likely after Bartholomew Chamond married Isabella de Alet in about 1245. Isabella's dowry included a number of Cornish manors².

John's father, Richard Chamond (1514 – 1599), served as sheriff of Cornwall three times and was an MP for Cornwall five times between 1545 and 1572³. He also served as a Justice of the Peace for almost 60 years⁴. In about 1538, he married Margaret Trevenor, the widow of John Arundell of Tolverne in Philleigh. They had seven children:

Gertrude (c. 1540 - 1620)⁵

Degory (d. 14 December 1611)⁶

Richard (d. 1609)

John (1550 – 1624)

Charles (1552/3 – after 18 July 1608 and before 1 November 1623⁷)

¹ The inventory of goods and chattels taken on John's death put a value on them of £1681 10s, a not insignificant sum in the early 17th century. The Chamond family also founded and endowed, with a rent charge of £2 2s per annum issuing out of an estate in Holsworthy, an almshouse in Launcells for four persons: see F. Hitchins & S. Drew, *The History of Cornwall* (2 vols., Helston, 1824), ii, 408.

² Charles Henderson: *The Topography of St Keverne* (1931).

³ <http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1509-1558/member/chamond-richard-1509-99>.

⁴ Richard Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall* (1602), p118.

⁵ Some ancestry websites give her date of birth as 1539 or 1540 but it has been difficult to verify this. She seems to have been born in Kilkhampton. Gertrude married Walter Porter, who was born about 1549, in about 1575. The gravestone of Walter, who died on 17 January 1581, is also in the church. Two thirds of it is on the floor of the nave at the chancel end and the other one third is on the floor of the nave near the door to the vestry. They had five children, seemingly in very quick succession: Margaret, Mary, Peter, Richard and John.

⁶ <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/chamond-digory-1611>. Degory was MP for Camelford in 1559 and Sheriff of Cornwall in 1606. Degory's date of birth is unknown. Generally MPs in the 16th century had to be of at least the age of majority before election (ie 21) which would put his birth year at 1538 at the latest, but it was also not unknown for MPs to be minors, in which case his birth year would probably be 1542 at the latest (making him 17 in 1559).

⁷ The first of these dates is provided by Richard Chamond's will, in which he is named as a beneficiary; the second is provided by John Chamond's will, in which he is not named. Charles was also educated at Hart Hall, Oxford.

Emanuel (1552/3 – before 26 September 1603⁸)

Jane (c. 1560 - 1625)⁹

In 1553 Richard joined with Roger Prideaux in purchasing from the Crown a number of manors in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Essex. One of these, taken by Richard as part of his share, was the manor of Launcells. He died in his mid 80s, having received, in the words of Carew, 'an extraordinarie favour of long life'¹⁰. Degory, as the eldest son, inherited Launcells from his father, and it seems that the property eventually passed to his sole surviving brother, John.

Richard Chamond's father, John's grandfather, was Sir John Chamond (c. 1488 – 1544), a lawyer and Justice of the Peace, who served as sheriff of Cornwall in 1529 and later as sheriff of Devon. He was the chief steward of three priories: Bodmin, Launceston and Tywardreath (near St Austell) until their dissolution and served as MP for Cornwall in 1539 and probably at other times during the reign of Henry VIII, though the records on this are unclear¹¹. At the time of his death he was Custos Rotulorum (Keeper of the Rolls) for Cornwall, the highest civil office in the county. It was Sir John who first established the connection with Launcells: from 1537 he leased the manor, which was a former cell of Hartland Abbey, from the Crown. In about 1513, he married his second wife Jane, the daughter of Sir Thomas Grenville of Stowe and the widow of Sir John Arundell of Trerice (who died in 1512). They lived on the Arundell manor of Ebbingford or Efford (as it was later known)¹². Their one child was Richard. According to Carew, Sir John was knighted, as a knight of the Order of St John of Malta, in Jerusalem at the Holy Sepulchre.¹³ In a number of publications the monument is said to commemorate Sir John¹⁴, but it is in fact his (unknighted) grandson that is commemorated.

The presence of three members of the Chamond family at Hart Hall is of particular interest. Hart Hall, founded in the thirteenth century to house undergraduates at Oxford University, was soon annexed by nearby Exeter College for teaching purposes. It gained independence in the sixteenth century under its Principal Philip Rondell, whose Catholic leanings were no

⁸ Emanuel is not named in Degory Chamond's will, made on this date, and was presumably dead by this time. He was, like his father and grandfather, another lawyer, and was also educated at Hart Hall, Oxford. He had chambers in the Middle Temple in London and was MP for Bodmin (1586 and 1589), for Camelford (1584) and for Launceston (1593): <http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1558-1603/member/chamond-emanuel-1553-1611>. That Emmanuel and Charles were born either in the same year or within about 15 months of each other is confirmed by the years of their matriculation at Oxford University and their ages at matriculation. They may have been twins.

⁹ According to *The Heralds' Visitations of Cornwall of 1530, 1573 & 1620*, ed. J L Vivian (Exeter, 1887), Jane married an unnamed member of the Taverner family. Jane was over 40 at the death of her father Richard: Carew, *Survey of Cornwall*, p. 118.

¹⁰ Carew, *Survey of Cornwall*, p. 118.

¹¹ <http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1509-1558/member/chamond-sir-john-1488-1544>.

¹² John Leland, *Itinerary*, ed. L. T. Smith (5 vols., Oxford, 1964), i, 176.

¹³ According to one website Sir John was buried at St Andrew's, Stratton, although, because St Swithin's was also originally dedicated to St Andrew, old references to St Andrew's may in fact refer to St Swithin's.

¹⁴ E.g. Pevsner, *Cornwall* (Harmondsworth, 2001), p. 95.

secret; the hall accordingly attracted a large number of Catholics and Catholic sympathizers¹⁵. John Chamond himself seems to have been in attendance between the years 1568 and 1572.¹⁶ His brother Emanuel matriculated at the same institution in October 1572, followed by his other younger brother Charles a year later¹⁷. One of those matriculating alongside Emanuel was Francis Throckmorton, from the Catholic family of the same name in Warwickshire, who was executed in 1584 for his part in a plot to install Mary Queen of Scots on the throne; his brother, Thomas, also matriculated that year, but unlike his brother managed to evade capture. Other notable students at this time included the Jesuits Richard Holtby and Alexander Briant, who both matriculated in 1574. Both went to the Continent to train in the Jesuit Order, only recently founded, and returned to proselytise in England. Holtby lived on until the eve of the English Civil War; Briant was less fortunate, suffering execution in 1581, along with Edmund Campion¹⁸. Perhaps most famous of all Hart Hall alumni from this period was the English poet John Donne, who matriculated in 1584; Donne was, of course, from a Catholic family, though he later converted to Anglicanism.

This raises the question of whether the Chamonds were themselves Catholic. Not all those who passed through Hart Hall were; and the long-standing association with Exeter College, which had been founded by a West Country prelate and drew many of its pupils from the same area, may have affected the geographical make-up of the incumbents. But there is some confirmation of the Chamonds' Catholic orientation in a Puritan survey of the the State of the Church in Cornwall of 1586¹⁹. Richard Chamond was the patron of the living of Launcells and the incumbent was described as 'a suspected fellow of religion [ie a papist], most wicked of life' and 'verie superstitious and wicked'. The calibre of man Richard was installing at Launcells may shed light on the religious predilections of the man himself; but the question must remain an open one²⁰.

Let us now turn to the monument itself.

The monument, at its apex, depicts the family's coat of arms: argent (silver), a chevron between three fleurs-de-lis gules (red). It also has these words engraved on a slate tablet:

¹⁵ The hall's reader in divinity was one Antonio Carrano, a Spaniard (and presumably a Catholic) often in trouble for his religious opinions.

¹⁶ *Register of the University of Oxford*, ed. C. W. Boase & A. Clark (Oxford, 1885-89), ii.2, 29, 35. The university colleges and halls did not keep formal records at this time, but individual surveys of college members do survive; such a register allows us to place John Chamond at Hart Hall at this time. Matriculation records started to be kept from the early 1570s, and this is where Emanuel and Charles appear.

¹⁷ *Register of the University of Oxford*, ii.2, 52, 55.

¹⁸ Both Briant and Campion were canonised in 1970.

¹⁹ See *The Seconde Parte of a Register, a calendar of MSS under that title intended for publication by the puritans about 1593, and now in Dr Williams's library, London*, ed. A Peel (Cambridge, 1915), Volume II, pp. 106, 107.

²⁰ Cornwall was generally reticent in accepting Protestantism, being a notable centre of resistance to the new Prayer Book in 1549: see A. Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* (1941), pp. 253-90. The strong Catholic sympathies of Simon Morton, the vicar of Poundstock (not far from Launcells), were sufficiently well-known to be immortalised in a Protestant ballad circulating in London: Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*, p. 283.

A MEMORIAL FOR THE ERECTERS
OF THIS MONUMENTE

ANA GRAMMATA

JOHANNES CHAMONDUS
NOS IN DEO CANAMUS
QUI OBIIT 14 OCTOB 1624

At the lower left of the monument, also engraved on a slate tablet, are the words:

EDWARDE ARUNDELL
READ AND RULED WEL

This wording raises a number of interesting questions. 'A memorial for the erecters of this monumente' is, at least to modern ears and eyes, oddly phrased. But remembering that a 'memorial' is something that is intended to preserve the memory of someone, what this seems to mean is that the monument was erected by 'the erecters' in order to preserve **for them** the memory of John Chamond.

Who then were 'the erecters'? One of them may well have been Edward Arundell, as his name also appears on the monument. In John's will, Edward is described as his 'ward' and the son of Thomas Arundell of Tamerton. He was appointed one of John's executors along with John's nephew Richard Porter, the second son of his sister Gertrude, and was also one of the two residuary beneficiaries of the will, sharing jointly with Richard Porter. The Arundells were a large Cornish family and Edward seems to have been a descendant of a minor branch who lived at North Tamerton. There is a record of an Edward Arundell marrying a Jane Carminowe in St Winnow on 25 November 1625 and of an Edward Arundell who lived at North Tamerton and died in about 1676²¹. They may both have been our Edward. It is not fanciful to suppose that the two kneeling supporters at John's head and feet on the monument represent Edward and Richard, especially as on a slate tablet under the one on the left Edward's name is engraved²².

Next come the words 'Ana Grammata'. These two words, originally from the Greek, comprise the Latin word for 'anagrams'. But why do they appear on the monument? It must be because the monument in fact contains two anagrams: Johannes Chamondus = Nos In Deo Canamus and Edwarde Arundell = Read and ruled wel. The former is not a

²¹ See *The Heralds' Visitations of Cornwall*.

²² The slate tablet under the right hand supporter is blank. Should this have had Richard Porter's name engraved on it?

perfect anagram as it misses out the two letters “h”, but there is a logic to this, since in Latin the letter “h” was only used as an initial letter²³.

According to H G Wheatley’s *Of Anagrams* (1862) anagrams became ‘a fashionable amusement’ upon their revival in this country in the 16th and 17th centuries; and of particular interest was the making of words or phrases from people’s names which revealed their character or their fortunes. In *Fame’s Roll* (1637) by Mary Fage, there are over 400 poems praising various members of the royal family and the nobility, each prefixed with an anagram of their name. King Louis XIII of France (1610-1643) apparently even appointed a Royal Anagrammatist, on a salary of £1200 pa.

The use of anagrams on gravestones and memorials was also not uncommon. T J Pettigrew’s *Chronicles of the Tombs* (1857) gives a number of examples from the 17th century, including one from the memorial to Maria Arundell, in St Cuby’s church, Duloe (also in Cornwall). Maria died in 1629; the anagram “Man a dry laurel” is made out of her name and precedes a short poem on the shortness of life. Other examples from the same century that appear in the book are Hester Manfield - Mars fled in thee (1617); Katherine Lougher - A lower, taken Higher (1631); and Christine Wright - Right in Christ (1661).

Coming from a family of lawyers, it is perhaps not unlikely that John Chamond himself was fond of this type of word game. But the fact that anagrams were clearly of some significance to the family, as highlighted by the prominence given to the words ‘Ana Grammata’ on the monument itself, gives an intriguing and very personal insight into a now distant family.

Although his sisters Gertrude and Jane both married, and, at least in Gertrude’s case, had children, neither John nor any of his brothers seem to have either married or borne any male issue²⁴, so John died the last male heir of his line. This may well have been the reason for such a grand monument, in memory not only of John personally but of the Chamond name more generally²⁵.

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²³ It is also the case that in the 17th century letters were treated more freely than they would be today, with, for example, I being interchangeable with J and Y, U with V, W with two Vs or two Us and some letters being ignored completely.

²⁴ It appears from Richard Chamond the Younger’s will that he had an illegitimate daughter, Elizabeth.

²⁵ Evidently John was also well aware that the family name would die out on his death. In his will he left legacies to six godsons each of which bore the Christian name of “Chamond”.