Brickett One-Name Study [as of 7 Jan 2018]

Study details

**Study:** Brickett

**Variants:** Bricket, Brykket, Breket, Brikits

**Category:** **3 -** *A study where research using core genealogical datasets and transcriptions is well under way on a global basis.*

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About the study

The Brickett One-Name Study was registered with the Guild in 1988 and grew out of an interest in my great grandmother Harriet Ann Brickett’s family. Her family originated in SW Bedfordshire in the 16th century, migrated into Hertfordshire then across London to Surrey and Essex, with a branch emigrating to South Africa.

The aim is to collect data on everyone recorded with this fairly rare surname and assemble them into pedigrees on PAF (Personal Ancestral File) as far as possible. These are being added to FamilySearch online with sources in the Notes so they are widely available. A sideline is a small collection of pedigreed horses, dogs, goats, ships, businesses, places and fictional characters named Brickett. *Caveat:* The following remarks are based on information gathered so far, and reflect the availability of original, transcribed and indexed records.

Variant names

There are two variant spellings, BRICKET and BRICKETTS, as well as the early forms BRYCKET(T)(S) and BRIQUET, and some variants without the C, the BRIKETT(T)(S). The spelling has largely settled (about 95%) as BRICKETT in the 19th-20th centuries.

 A major problem with this study is the frequency of deviant spellings caused by illiteracy and poor hearing. These include Bickett, Briggett, Prickett, Rickett (my great grandmother couldn’t read and her name is so written on her son’s birth certificate).

 Even greater problems occur with mis-transcription:

* Vowels are changed resulting in Birkett, Birkitt, Brackett, Breckett, Breeket, Brikitt, Brickot, Buckett etc.
* K may be read as H giving Brichett.
* T may not be crossed, resulting in Brickell (a West Country name) and Brickelt.

As a result of deviant and mis-spellings:

* large numbers of post-1837 Brickett parish register entries are not matched by civil registration entries and vice-versa.
* A survey of the eight decennial census transcriptions on FindMyPast found that from 7% (1841) to 69% (1861) of those transcribed as Brickett were not such on the original.

Conversely, it is a major job to search for the real Bricketts under all possible deviant and mis-spellings: the most common culprits seem to be Birkett, Brickell, Buckett, Prickett and Rickett.

Name origin

The standard sources (Guppy 1890, Bardsley 1901, Reaney 1976) see Brickett as a metathesized version of Birkett, which indicates ‘someone living near birch trees’ (*birk* in Scottish); or possibly ‘son of Burchard’. The conflation of Brickett with Birkett ignores the fact that Birkett originated and is still most common in northern England whilst Brickett is a southern name. Brikett occurs in the north of England and the midlands, probably as a metathesized deviant of Birkett: note both are without the C.

Some early English Bricketts include John BRYKHEDE in Close Rolls 1443/4, Robert BRICKETT of Thornfield, Herts’ legacy in 1517, Adam BRYKET of Windermere, Westmorland will 1522, Thomas BRYCHETT of Rye, Sussex will 1523, Henry BRIKKET or BYRKETT Suffolk Subsidy Rolls 1524, William BRICKETT christened at St Botolph, Colchester, Essex 1528, Robert BRYKKETT of St Sepulchre, London & Emelton, Cumbs will 1537, Elisaunder BRICKET married at St Peter Cornhill, London 1539, Mylis BRICKET married at St Stephen Coleman Street, London 1539 and Arthur BRIKET of Woking, Surrey held copyhold cottage 1540.

 There were several concentrations of Bricketts in England when parish registers commenced in 1538. This could suggest multiple origins for the surname. Amongst early Bricketts in SE England a number of Flemish/Dutch/French given names have been noted, suggesting that the name may be derived from the Low Countries or France. These non-English given names include Evance in 1579, Hercules in 1591 and 1659, Jerbona in 1575, Josan in 1611, Josian in 1588, Josinke in 1599, Mees in 1592, Verten in 1714 and Vidna in 1593.

 In French Briquet means a tinder box as well as an infantry short sword. It also forms the root for words associated with brickmaking such as briquette, a little brick made of compacted coal dust. The term bricket was also used in English for gold and silver blocks. Makers or sellers of these products could have acquired this surname, however it is not known whether these terms were current in the 15th century by which time surnames were established. There is also a place called La Briquette situated in Valenciennes Nord, Pas de Calais close to the current Belgian border. Pas De Calais is the closest Department to Dover in Kent. It may be significant that La Briquette is not far east of Douai, the location of the college for training Catholic priests for England founded in 1568. There are certainly French surnames Briquett, Bricquet and De Brecquet and French names came to southern England in three waves:

1. Walloons (French speaking people from Low Countries) about 1500 e.g. Sandwich, Kent and some East Anglian towns were 25% Walloon in 1575.
2. Huguenots (Protestant refugees from France) 1680-1700.
3. French Revolution 1789. Aristocrats with their servants and tradesmen. The kings of France lived in Marylebone from 1793-1815. Weavers settled in Clerkenwell & Spitalfields & many trades settled in West End.

 The place in Hertfordshire called Bricket Wood derives its name from two old English words meaning *bright*and *an islet* (a little piece of marshland). Older spellings of this place name (with dates) are Bruteyt (1228), Broteghte (1314), Brutethte (1342), Brygteyght (1436) and Briteygtwod (1505). Probably coincidentally the Romans used the wet boulder clay here for making bricks and tiles, and the word brick derives from the French*brique*(broken piece) and Teutonic *brek*(break). And ...... there has been a Brickett family in the area since the 16th century at least. Are these facts all red herrings ?

 Other possibilities include derivation from later foreign imports such as Bricketts born in Germany (1851 census) and Brickits born in Hungary (1871 census).

History of the name

 Thomas Brickett was mayor of Salisbury, Wiltshire in 1519 and founded a ‘Hospital (almshouse) for Six Poor Widows’ there. It was rebuilt in 1780 and is still in service.

John Brykket or Breket was ‘master cook for the king’s mouth’ for Henry VIII in 1536-1541.

The Brickett family in West Wickham, Kent were largely killed by the plague in 1609-1610.

Samuel & Caroline Brickett of Derby were convicted at Newgate in 1881 of stealing 329 pairs of boots !

In 1789 seaman Thomas Brickett/Burket/Burkitt became infamous as a prominent member of Fletcher Christian’s gang who mutinied on Captain Bligh’s ship Bounty. He was court martialled and hung at Spithead in 1792.

Nathaniel Brickett (c.1648-after 1711) emigrated to USA from England settling in Newbury, Massachusetts. It is likely that he emanated from Bedfordshire as the only other early Nathaniels are there. His descendants are very numerous across the USA and were described in the Essex Antiquarian (Massachusetts) in 1907-1908. They included Lt. Nathaniel Brickett (1731-1805), Dr. James Brickett (1738-1818) brigadier general of the forces sent to Canada in 1776, Col. Moses Brickett (1742-1813), Dr. Daniel Brickett (1761-1835), Dr. John Brickett (1774-after 1808) and Edward Montgomery Brickett (1898-1961) a mechanical engineer and authority on concrete and concrete design having published a number of papers. Several other Bricketts emigrated in the 19th century to North America and Australia where their descendants now live.

Walter Septimus Brickett (1865-1933), by trade a pianoforte maker, was the British Olympic Swimming Trainer in 1908 and 1912 and held the world record for the sexathlon: 1 mile each of walking, running, hurdling, cycling (3 miles), rowing and swimming all in under 1 hour. His son, Walter Sidney Brickett (1889-1945) was also a noted swimmer and trained the Women’s National Team in 1936 and 1937. His son, Peter Sidney Brickett (1919-1990) kept up the family swimming tradition and was awarded a Royal Humane Society Ward for bravery in saving three lives at Clacton, Essex in 1939.

George Brickett (1868-1904) became a professional cricketer in Surrey after 12 years army service including in Egypt and the Sudan.

And we mustn’t forget that the Daily Telegraph of 1903 called attention to the Rover Company's new eccentric Brickett chain adjustment !

Name frequency

 The number of Bricketts is difficult to assess because of the frequency of mis-transcription. I have found only 101 Bricket(t)(s) in the 1881 census and there were 338 births registered 1837-2005 (with only 5% not spelled Brickett). Only 11 researchers have contacted me in 25 years. Excluding the North American families, I have 3,250 individuals on my PAF database, many of which are probably duplicates.

Distribution of the name

I have concentrated my research on the English families, but Bricketts are found in North America, Australasia and South Africa and probably elsewhere. The *parish registers* have concentrations of Bricketts in towns in several southern English counties.

**Major centres of Bricketts**

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| **County** | **Towns** | **Dates** |
| Bedfordshire | Dunstable  Harlington  Toddington  Sharnbrook | 1558 - 1793  1634 – 1781  1687 – 1763  1721 – 1774 |
| Berkshire | Reading  Steventon | 1567 – 1687  1598 - 1792 |
| Hertfordshire | St Pauls Walden  St Albans | 1563 – 1594  1571 – 1781 |
| Kent | West Wickham | 1560 – 1610 |
| Middlesex | Enfield | 1566 – 1890 |
| Northamptonshire | Floore | 1653 – 1838 |
| Surrey | Richmond  Esher | 1843 – 1937  1868 – 1939 |
| Wiltshire | Salisbury  Corsham | 1561 – 1683  1612 – 1638 |

The *censuses* from 1841 to 1911 show movement into Greater London especially Middlesex and Surrey as well as general dispersal of the population.

*Civil registration* births 1837-2005 show greatest numbers in Edmonton, Kingston, Lambeth, Richmond, St Pancras & Wandsworth registration districts, all in Greater London.

Data

The Brickett Archives contains all English civil registration BMD 1837-2005 and census 1841-1911 together with a large collection of parish register and miscellaneous entries from England. Probate 1858-1997 is detailed as well as most PCC 1383-1858, Death Duty Registers 1796-1903, and county collections. Scottish, Irish and British Overseas civil registration indexes are covered. FindMyPast, Deceased On Line, SoG, FamilySearch and Ancestry collections are monitored. Marriages have been submitted to the GOONS Marriage Index and I shall soon be uploading more data to be archived with the Guild. I should like to pass along this study to another interested researcher now.