

Clarence in Much Hadham and his nephew Grosvenor – a mystery solved

By Marcus Bicknell, November 2019. Copyright © 2019 Marcus Bicknell
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Clarence's sketches of Much Hadham

I have been haunted for 20 years by two nice sketches by Clarence Bicknell of Much Hadham, a quiet village in Hertfordshire, northeast of London and now under the departing flight path of Stansted airport.

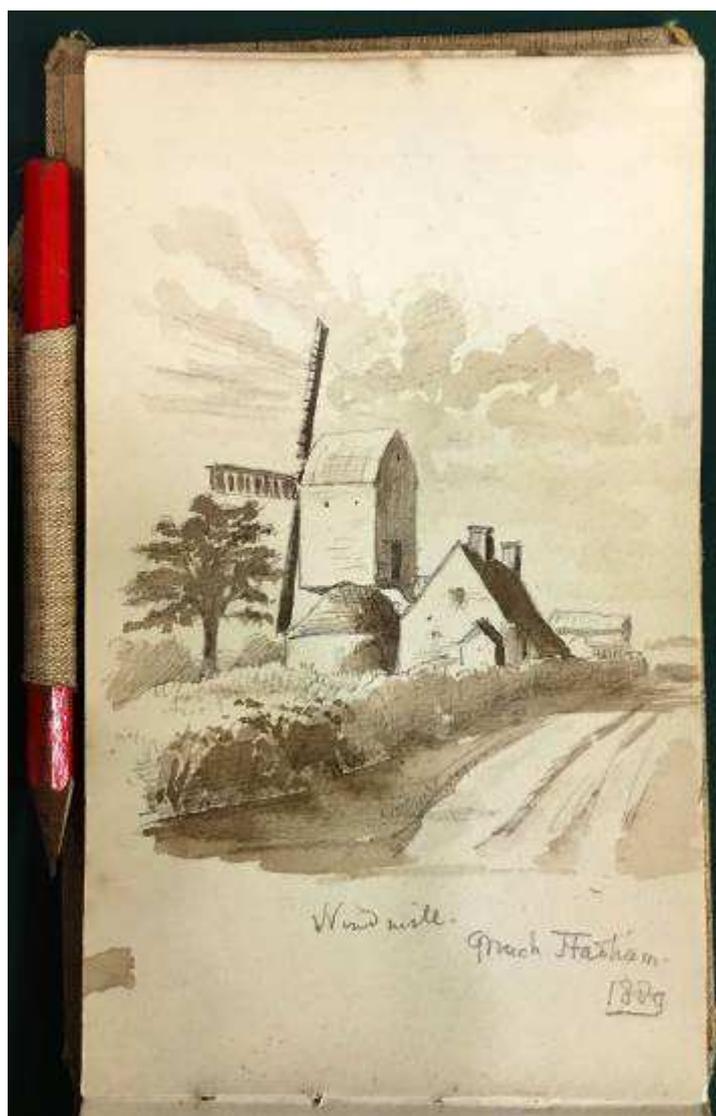
One sketch is of the windmill at Much Hadham (below right) and the other of The Palace at Much Hadham, the latter titled by Clarence in a hand-styled font, a cross between 12th century medieval and contemporary arts-and-crafts (on page 3 below). Both are dated 1889; he visited Much Hadham in July of that year.

But we never knew, until today, why Clarence went there.

He had moved to Bordighera ten years earlier, so this trip was not a casual one, not just touristic. He would have had an objective.

Thanks to the keen interest of a present inhabitant of Much Hadham, a descendant of Charles Adams and a regular follower of Clarence Bicknell's Facebook page, we have the answer. Much Hadham was the home of Ada Berry née Bicknell (1831-1911), Clarence's favourite sibling, 11 years his elder. He visited her in London and Kent throughout his life.

Our Much Hadham source also made the link with Ada's son Grosvenor Berry who lived and farmed in the area for there for 65 years.



Ada Berry née Bicknell

Ada Bicknell married Edward Berry¹ (senior) in 1857. He had trained as a solicitor in Leicester and became a successful shipowner. He lived in Croydon (not far from Ada's home in Herne Hill) but his business took him for much of the time to Canada, so Ada moved with him to Kingston, Ontario shortly after their wedding. For this reason James (1860) and Edward Elhanan (1861) are known to have been born in Canada, possibly others. There is little to find about Edward's career and business; don't confuse him with Rear Admiral Sir Edward Berry, 1st Baronet, KCB (1768 – 1831), Nelson's right hand, and several other Berrys in the shipping business in the 19th century.

Grosvenor Berry

This brings us to the story of Grosvenor Berry, a character largely and wrongly ignored. He was dedicated to farming his whole life and he broke the world record in 1928 for the most milk produced by a Jersey cow in a year.

In 1863 (or 1870, see below), Grosvenor Berry born in Avranches, northern France. Other data show that Ada moved back to London probably in the late 1860s. The fact that Grosvenor was born in Europe not Canada adds weight to the argument that he was not born in 1863 but in 1870.

Ada's address was 27 Upper Bedford Place, London W.C., now called Bedford Way, which is also the address given at the time for the Froebel Society (an international forum for the development of the principles of educational theory and practice associated with the child-centred philosophy of Friedrich Froebel, formed in 1874) in which Ada became active. The family was Unitarian, like her grandfather William Bicknell.

Father Edward died young, aged 58, in Croydon. That is why, in the census of 1881, Ada is living as a widow in 27 Upper Bedford Place, London, with all the children and some domestic staff. Grosvenor is transcribed as 11 years old when he was already 18 (if indeed he was born in 1863).

Grosvenor Berry is listed in the University of London Student Records in 1887, then in the Cambridge University Alumni records of 1888 when he started at King's College.² These records state his school as University College, London, and there is indeed a University College School then and now. He got his B.A. at Cambridge in 1891 which would have converted automatically to M.A. in 1895. In the meantime he got a Diploma at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. Diploma in 1893 and continued to an Agricultural and Science Master at Devon County School of Agriculture, Ashburton, 1893-7.

¹ Edward's father Rev. Charles Berry was a Unitarian like Ada's father Elhanan (s. wiki)

² He was 25 when he went up to King's; either he started at quite a late age or doubt is cast over his birth year; if indeed he was 11 at the time of the census of 1881, then he was born in 1870. He would have been 18 when starting at Cambridge, which is a more likely starting age, and 27 when he finished his agriculture masters rather than 34 years old.



In 1888, Ada and her family moved from London to Much Hadham³ and lived there for about 5 years. Records show that the house belonged to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners since 1868 and was sold as a private house in 1888, most likely to Ada Berry. How could she afford such a purchase? Her rich father Elhanan Bicknell's collection of Turners and works by other celebrated artists was auctioned at Christie's in 1863 and the proceeds, plus the rest of his estate, divided among the children. We know that the amount Clarence received was enough not only to sustain a good life style for all his life but also to endowing hospitals and homes for the poor in Stoke-upon-Tern and Bordighera. It is tempting to think that Ada helped Grosvenor acquire land for farming; the plethora of places⁴ where Grosvenor subsequently farmed suggests he did well enough to be able to buy other farms on the profit of the first.

³ Much Hadham Palace is a manor house adjacent to the church in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, England, formerly belonging to the Bishops of London. It is a Grade II* listed building. The house was originally established as the home of the Bishops of London before the Norman conquest of England in 1066. The home of Owen Tudor and his wife, Catherine of Valois, it became the birthplace of their son, Edmund in about 1430. The present house, which dates to the early 16th century, was sequestered during the English Civil War in 1647 and then reverted to the Bishop of London at the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. It became a lunatic asylum in 1817 until it passed back to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1868. It was sold as a private house in 1888 and after World War II it became the home of Major Sir Edward Beddington-Behrens. The house is now a terrace of three homes, Palace House, Palace East and Palace West which are today in private ownership.

⁴ The censuses and City & Country Directories show he lived or practiced at Chaldeans, Much Hadham (1899, 1901 1902, 1908), Bromley Hall, Hertfordshire (1912, 1914), Wither's Norton's Farms, Essex (1933, possibly the same place as Mount Bures), Mount Bures, Bures, Suffolk (1937). See timeline in annex.

It was in 1889 that Clarence Bicknell, Ada's brother, visited Much Hadham. His sketch of "The Palace, Much Hadham", Ada's home, is dated 27 July 1889. His sketch⁵ of the windmill at Much Hadham is dated 1889 without a month or day. We know from letters⁶ that Clarence was in Ireland and England in July and August 1889, and he even gives *The Palace, Much Hadham* as his forwarding address. Grosvenor Berry would have been on vacation after his first year at Cambridge University, only 30 miles away, and it is possible he met his uncle Clarence. Grosvenor was later a farmer and breeder of Jersey cows and his life in nature, and his interest in botany and botanising, would have appealed to Clarence.

When Ada moved to Fairseat, near Wrotham in Kent, in about 1893, Grosvenor stayed in Much Hadham and made his life in the area. He forged a longstanding friendship with James Adams, another farmer in Much Hadham

Grosvenor Berry married quite late in life, aged 41, to Jessie Augusta Lewin on 4 Dec 1911 at St Andrew, St Marylebone, Westminster, England⁷. They had no offspring according to the family that knew about him in Much Hadham.

Grosvenor and Jessie travelled to Bordighera to visit Clarence Bicknell and signed the visitors' book in his mountain house the Casa Fontanalba on 1st August 1913. Clarence liked Grosvenor enough that he dedicated a page of his hand-drawn Book of Guests in Esperanto, probably drawn while they were there (the page is dated 1913). It reads, in Esperanto, "Grosvenor Berry, M.A. Cantab. M.R.A.C., M.R.A.S.E., M.E.J.C.S., M.B.D.F.A., k.t.ϕ, mia nevo, farmisto in en Anglujo"... *my nephew, a farmer in England*. Best of all is illustration to the page; Grosvenor's initials encircled by icons of trees and cows, all drawn by Clarence (image, right). The initials for qualifications after his name are Member of the Royal Agricultural College, Member of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, Member of the English Jersey Cattle Society and Member of the British Dairy Farmers Association.⁸



Mr Berry and the Adams family moved together from Much Hadham in 1921 or 1922 to Mount Bures where Withers and Nortons Farms are. One of Mr Adams' daughters was born in 1922 and her birth was registered in Colchester and not Hertfordshire so the move must have happened in either 1921 or 1922. Mount Bures is a village 40 miles east of Much Hadham, on the Essex/Suffolk border⁹. The reason for the move is not known.

⁵ Clarence's sketchbooks are in the Bicknell Collection with Marcus.

⁶ Clarence had written to his friend Emile Burnat in April to say he planned to go to England in July. He wrote in early July "...et puis le 10 je partirai. Mon adresse en Angleterre sera C.B. chez Mrs Berry, Much Hadham, Herts". On 15th July he wrote from the Simplon Pass in Switzerland, on his way to England. He wrote to Burnat 13 and 22 August from Gurteen, Shinrone, Ireland, the home of his brother Percy Bicknell (1836-1911), Marcus's great-grandfather.

⁷ Grosvenor's wedding (he was 41 years old) took place in the same year his mother and uncle Sidney died. Ada was living at Fairseat, Wrotham, Kent in her old age (Clarence visited her there several times) but the date of the move from Much Hadham is not known).

⁸ The initials k.t.ϕ mean today the torque developed by a DC electric motor, which cannot be pertinent here. What kind and well-informed reader can interpret it?

⁹ OS map reference TL 91386 31529

Memories of Grosvenor Berry in Much Hadham

We have been informed in October 2019 by our source in Much Hadham and Mount Bures, a descendant of James Adams, that Grosvenor Berry and his wife Jessie forged a very close relationship with James Adams, neighbour, farmer and probably co-worker. The Adams family, who lived at The Ford, Much Hadham until 1921, considered Grosvenor and Jessie as part of their own family, indeed Grosvenor left much of his estate to James Adams.

"Grosvenor Berry (photo, right) bequeathed the majority of his estate to my great grandfather James Adams as he never had any children with his wife. My great grandfather had spent most of his working life working alongside Mr Berry and our family has always considered Mr Berry as part of our own.



"Mr Berry was a dairy farmer. He broke the world record in 1928 for the most milk produced by a Jersey cow in a year. Mr Berry was interested in botany like his uncle Clarence Bicknell. An Adams family member can remember seeing an album that had neatly labelled grass specimens in it.

"Mrs Berry was a doctor in a hospital founded by the Scottish Women's Hospital and had to deal with some of the most horrific injuries as it was very near the front line. She suffered severely with her mental health because of it and I think Mr Berry may have taken her there [to visit uncle Clarence in Bordighera and the Casa Fontanalba] for a bit of respite."

Grosvenor died in Mount Bures in 1953 at the age of 90 – he spent his whole life, at least 65 years of it, farming alongside the Adams family. "*Grosvenor Berry of Withers and Nortons, Mount Bures, Essex died on 7th January 1953 at the Prested Hall Nursing Home, Feering, Colchester. Probate was accorded in London 4th March to Henry Lanceolot Hare, solicitor. Effects £9228 1s. 4d*"¹⁰

"The term *effects* in probates and wills I believe refers to everything a person owns, property, land, stocks and shares etc. My great grandfather inherited Withers Farmhouse and land and Norton's Farm which I believe was 2 semi-detached cottages,

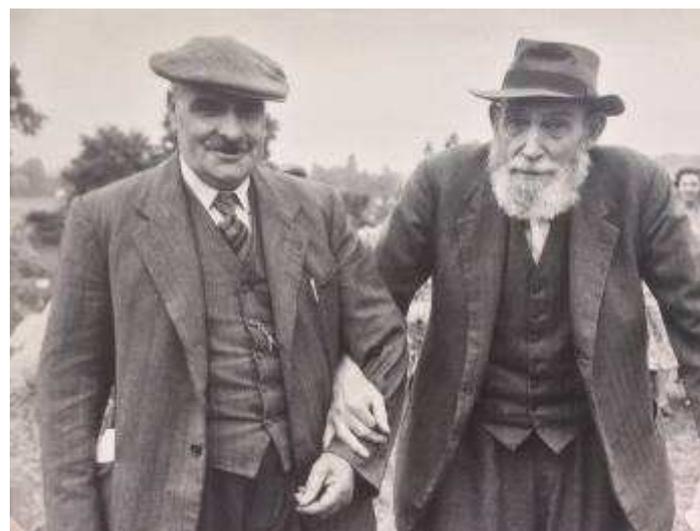
¹⁰ England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995

and any livestock and machinery etc. Any other personal effects of Mr Berry's and any money or shares etc. were given to his family.

“Mrs Berry (3rd from the left in the photo, below) was still alive then although I believe she was in a home due to her mental health. I didn't know Mr Berry was married until a few years ago; nobody ever spoke about his wife. My dad's cousin said there was a scorch mark on one of the beams at the farm where Mrs Berry tried to set the room on fire. I don't think she came to the farm after that.”



James Adams (left) gives a supporting arm to his friend Grosvenor Berry in old age, (right) probably around 1950.





The Palace, Much Hadham, today

This is how Withers Farm looks today, the concreted portion with the building at the top of the pictures is now separate from the farm and is a horse stud



Withers Farmhouse as it looks today

Annex 1: Further references to Grosvenor Berry

https://www.clarencebicknell.com/images/downloads_news/casa_fontanalba_visitors_books.xls. Grosvenor and his wife signed the Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book.

https://www.clarencebicknell.com/images/downloads_news/clarence_bicknell_his_art_Susie_Bicknell.pdf mentions the illuminated initials

<https://www.clarencebicknell.com/en/the-man/biography/marvels-index-of-the-book>
Grosvenor is covered in Valerie Lester's bio of Clarence

<https://www.genealogy.com/forum/surnames/topics/berry/10252/>

Grosvenor Berry c.1863 living 1932 was an Essex farmer and breeder of Jersey cows. He had siblings - Edward Elhanan, Sir James (medical doctor), Arthur (Prof Maths Kings Coll. Cambridge) and Maud (spinster). His father was Edward Berry (1817-1875) who married Ada Bicknell.

<http://www.dsthorne.com/tree/gp6089.html> Jessie Lewen's family tree

Angels of Mercy: A Women's Hospital on the Western Front 1914-1918
By Eileen Crofton via Google books, details of Jessie Lewen Berry.

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/38660/page/3384/data.pdf> , 1949 notice of claim upon the death of Maude Berry, Grosvenor's sister

<https://www.davidlay.co.uk/auction/lot/187-William-ETTY-1787-1849/?lot=5171>

William ETTY (1787-1849). Portrait of Miss Mathilda Bicknell, as a Girl. She was Grosvenor's aunt. This auction posting triggered the contact between the descendant of Charles Adams and Marcus Bicknell. ETTY was a favourite artist of Grosvenor's grandfather Elhanan Bicknell

Annex 2: Grosvenor Berry – a timeline

Drawn from notes in Marcus's family tree software Family Tree maker 2012, and added to from Bicknell Family Collection documents

GROSVENOR BERRY was born about 1863 in Avranches, Normandy, France. It is likely that in fact he was born in 1870 (see census info). He died on 07 Jan 1953 in Essex, England. He married Jessie Augusta Lewin on 04 Dec 1911 in St Marylebone, London (No offspring). Grosvenor Berry was an Essex farmer and breeder of Jersey cows and died in 1953. He had siblings - Edward Elhanan, Sir James (medical doctor), Arthur (Prof Maths Kings Coll. Cambridge) and Maud (spinster). His father was Edward Berry (1817-1875) and his mother Ada Bicknell (1831-1911).

1857 Ada Bicknell married Edward Berry (senior) in 1857. He had trained as a solicitor in Leicester and became a successful shipowner. He lived in Croydon (not far from Ada's home in Herne Hill) but his business took him for much of the time to Canada, so Ada moved with him to Kingston, Ontario shortly after their wedding. For this reason James (1860) and Edward Elhanan (1861) are known to have been born in Canada, possibly others. There is little to find about Edward's career and business; don't confuse him with Rear Admiral Sir Edward Berry, 1st Baronet, KCB (1768 –1831), Nelson's right hand, and several other Berrys in the shipping business in the 19th century.

1863 or 1870 Grosvenor Berry born in Avranches, northern France. Other data show that Ada moved back to London probably in the late 1860s. The fact that Grosvenor was born in Europe not Canada adds weight to the argument that he was not born in 1863 but in 1870. Ada's address was 27 Upper Bedford Place, London W.C., now called Bedford Way, which is also the address given at the time for the Froebel Society (an international forum for the development of the principles of educational theory and practice associated with the child-centred philosophy of Friedrich Froebel, formed in 1874) in which Ada became active. The family was Unitarian, like her grandfather William Bicknell.

1875 Edward Berry (senior) died at Park Hill Road, Croydon, Surrey, England

1881 British Census: "Grosvenor Berry, Age: 11. Estimated birth year: abt 1870. Relationship to Head: Son. Mother: Ada Berry. Gender: Male. Where born: Aerauches (BS), France. Civil Parish: St George Bloomsbury, London, England. Street address: 27 Upper Bedford Pl. Occupation: Scholar. Household Members: Ada Berry 49 Maude Berry 22 Ward C. Berry 20 Arthur Berry 18 Ada K. Berry 12 Grosvenor Berry 11 Ellen Montgomery 45 Elizabeth Hitchcock 20 Ellen Kennedy 20 Margaret Kennedy 17 Sara Newcombe 26".¹¹

1887: Grosvenor Berry listed in University of London Student Records, 1836-1945

1888: Grosvenor Berry listed in the Cambridge University Alumni, 1261-1900, College: KING'S, entered: Michs. Adm. at KING'S, Sept. 29, 1888. S. of Edward.

¹¹ Note by Marcus Bicknell. Other sources list Maude Berry as Maud without the "e". "Ward C. Berry" listed here must be Edward Elhanan Berry as the age 20 corresponds to his birthdate 1861. Ward is short for Edward and the "C" could be a typo for "E". Ada K. Berry aged 12 is not listed on our family tree records; my initial assumption is that this is the same person as Clara Berry (b 1865) listed in our family tree. The K could be for Klara, and maybe the family adopted Klara or Clara for her as Ada would be so often confused with her mother. James Berry (later Sir James Berry, surgeon) is not in the census; he was educated at Whitgift School, Croydon and St Bartholomew's Hospital so, aged 21, he was probably boarding away from home.

School, University College, London. Matric. Michs. 1888; B.A. 1891; M.A. 1895. Agricultural and Science Master at Devon County School of Agriculture, Ashburton, 1893-7. Diploma, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. Diploma, R.A.S.E., 1893. Breeder of Jersey cattle. Of Mount Bures, Bures, Suffolk. Brother of Arthur (1882). (King's Coll. Adm. Reg.; Reg. of the Senate, 1937.)

Sometime between 1881 and 1889, Ada and her family moved from London to Much Hadham¹² and lived there for about 5 years.

1889 Clarence Bicknell, Ada's brother, visited Much Hadham. His sketch of "The Palace, Much Hadham", Ada's home, is dated 27 July 1889. His sketch¹³ of the windmill at Much Hadham is dated 1889 without a month or day. We know from letters¹⁴ that Clarence was in Ireland and England in July and August 1889, and he even gives The Palace, Much Hadham as his forwarding address. Grosvenor Berry would have been on vacation after his first year at Cambridge University, only 30 miles away, and it is possible he met his uncle Clarence.

1891: Census lists all of Ada Berry's family, living at The Palace, Much Hadham. Our "Clara" is listed as Ada Katherine Berry (See my notes to 1881 census above) and I have added these names to her record.

1899: In the UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946, Grosvenor Berry is listed as Occupation: Chaldean's farmer, Hertfordshire, England

1901: British Census; Grosvenor Berry, Age: 31, Estimated birth year: abt 1870, Relation to Head: Head, Gender: Male, Birth Place: -. Address, Cladeans, Much Hadham, Bishop Stortford, Hertfordshire

1902: in the UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946, GB Residence Place: Hertfordshire, England, Occupation: Chaldean's farmer

1908: In the London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943, Grosvenor Berry is listed at Chaldeans Farm, Much Hadham but Residence Place: London, England.

1911: Grosvenor Berry, Male, Marriage to Jessie Augusta Lewin, 4 Dec 1911 at St Andrew, St Marylebone, Westminster, England. Son of Edward Berry Parish Register in the London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1932.¹⁵

1912: in the UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946 GB listed at Bromley hall, Hertfordshire, England. Occupation: Farmer

1914: In the UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946, GB is listed at Bromley Hall, Hertfordshire, Occupation: Farmer

¹² Much Hadham Palace is a [manor house](#) adjacent to the church in [Much Hadham](#), Hertfordshire, England, formerly belonging to the [Bishops of London](#). It is a [Grade II* listed](#) building

¹³ Clarence's sketchbooks are in the Bicknell Collection with Marcus.

¹⁴ Clarence had written to his friend Emile Burnat in April to say he planned to go to England in July. He wrote in early July "...et puis le 10 je partirai. Mon adresse en Angleterre sera C.B. chez Mrs Berry, Much Hadham, Herts". On 15th July he wrote from the Simplon Pass in Switzerland, on his way to England. He wrote to Burnat 13 and 22 August from Gurteen, Shinrone, Ireland, the home of his brother Percy Bicknell (1836-1911), Marcus's great-grandfather.

¹⁵ Grosvenor's wedding (he was 41 years old) took place in the same year his mother and uncle Sidney died. Ada was living at Fairseat, Wrotham, Kent in her old age (Clarence visited her there several times) but the date of the move from Much Hadham is not known).

1921: Amy Adams; "I know Mr Berry and my family both moved from Much Hadham in the early 1920's to Mount Bures where Withers and Norton's are. I have checked the records I have for my family and one of my great aunts was born in 1922 and her birth was registered in Colchester and not Hertfordshire so the move must have happened in either 1921 or 1922. Mount Bures is on the Essex/Suffolk border, I have found the farms shown on the ordinance survey website. Norton's on the right, Withers at the top and Wellhouse Farm on the right where my Grandparents ended up living and where my father was raised."

1928: Grosvenor Berry broke the world record for the most milk produced by a Jersey cow in a year.

1933: In the UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946, GB is listed as "farmer, Wither's Norton's farms, Essex"

1937: The Kings College records list him as "Breeder of Jersey cattle. Of Mount Bures, Suffolk".

1937: Kelly's Directory, GB is listed as living at Mount Bures, Bures, Suffolk

1937: In the UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946 GB is listed as Occupation: farmer, Wither's, Essex

1953: Wills and probates: Grosvenor Berry of Withers and Nortons Mount Bures, Essex died 7th January 1953 at the Prested Hall Nursing Home Feering Colchester. Probate London 4th March to Henry Lanceolot Hare, solicitor. Effects £9228 1s. 4d. (England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995)

2019: Amy Adams reports... "Grosvenor Berry bequeathed the majority of his estate to my great grandfather James Adams as he never had any children with his wife. My great grandfather had spent most of his working life working alongside Mr Berry and our family has always considered Mr Berry as part of our own. Mr Berry was a dairy farmer, he broke the world record in 1928 for the most milk produced by a Jersey cow in a year. Mrs Berry was a doctor in a hospital founded by the Scottish Women's Hospital and had to deal with some of the most horrific injuries as it was very near the front line. She suffered severely with her mental health because of it and I think Mr Berry may have taken her there for a bit of respite."

2019: Chaldean Estate is a 1,155 hectare arable farm in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire.
<https://www.chaldean.co.uk/estate/>

Does anyone know if Grosvenor Berry had any descendants? Adams contacts say no descendants <http://genforum.genealogy.com/berry/messages/10252.html>