

of rough-hewn timber framework, the walls infilled with wattle and clay daub, and the roof of thatch.

Wills have also survived for Thomas's grandson, John Soden of Sibford Gower and his wife Elizabeth (nee Ayres), both proved in 1578, and for William Soden of Burdrop, another of Thomas's grandsons, proved in 1583. Both men were farmers, and that they had prospered compared with their grandfather is shown by John's legacy to his wife of as much as £60 (apart from his land) and to his wife's legacy to her father of £55, as well as a small legacy to her maid. The value of John's goods is not stated, but his wife's was given as £60. William Soden of Burdrop cannot have done so well, his goods being valued at no more than £20.0s.2d. It is interesting that he specified the gift of two trees apiece to his three children, for at that time timber played a significant part in Swalcliffe's economy, and was often quite a valuable asset to be left to one's children, being essential for house-building and furniture-making.

We must now turn to Swalcliffe parish registers for information about Thomas's children. All of course were born before the first baptismal register entries were recorded in 1558. His daughter's name, Alice, we know from his last testament, but the sons' names and those of their wives can be deduced from the fact that only three male Sodens are mentioned as having their children baptised before their own or their wives' deaths; these were Gregory, who married Joan (Treadwell); Geoffrey (who was