

Note on Names

Members of the family are identified in the text as Micajah (or Micaiah) Perry I, II, III, and Richard Perry I, II, III, IV. This usage is for historical clarity only and does not imply that such enumeration was used by the individuals concerned.

In the sixteenth century, the Exeter family and many of their kin most commonly spelled their name Pery or Perye. The spelling Pery has been continued by the Limerick branch to the present day. During 1615–1660, the London branch spelled their name both Pery and Perry (the spelling used by an unrelated family of a contemporary Lord Mayor of London). After 1660, Micaiah Perry I and his descendants uniformly spelled their name Perry as did his brother John and the Clonmel-Tipperary branch.

In the sixteenth century, the family name appears to have been pronounced “Püry,” “Pirry,” or “Peery,” pronunciations similar to that now preferred by the family of the earls of Limerick. We do not know how the London family pronounced their name but suspect that by the eighteenth century it was commonly sounded to rhyme with “berry.”

The founder of the major Perry firm in London signed his name Micaiah, corresponding to the spelling of the name of the prophet in the Authorized or King James version of the Bible (I Kings 22; II Chronicles 18). His grandson, however, spelled his given name Micajah, perhaps only because he preferred a distinctive signature for business purposes.