

No common ancestry can therefore be predicated for families bearing so ancient a name.

In England, Crispe became the most usual form of the name, and that it became a very common surname is evidenced by the fact that between 1510 and 1760 no fewer than 266 wills and administrations were probated in the cases of decedents of this name in the prerogative court of Canterbury alone. In the court of the Archdeacon of Suffolk, between the years 1454 and 1800, the number was 132, to say nothing of the numerous other probate courts of the country.*

Owing to the prevailing illiteracy of early times, and to proper names being written mostly from sound, great variations are found in the spelling of this as well as other surnames. In the wills alluded to, as registered in the court of the Archdeacon of Suffolk, for instance, thirteen different spellings occur. These are as follows :

Cryspe.	Chryspe.	Kyrsp.
Crysp.	Chrispe.	Curspe.
Crispe.	Chrisp.	Cripps.
Crisp.	Cresp.	Cryppes.
Kryspe.		

* A transcript of one of the earlier wills, omitting legal verbiage, will be of interest. Here is one, proved Dec. 2, 1535 :

"I Thomas Cryspe of Erwarton in the disc off Norwyche, Carpenter"—"to eche of my godsons beryng my name oon Lambe of the next yere ffalle"—"to John Clouer oon Lambe of the next yere"—"to Roger Jenning of eche of my Tole pte that longythe to Carpentrys Work"—"I will that Margaret my wiff shall have all that myn honse or ten't to dwell in wt all the londs as well Arabyll pasturs and Medows sytting and lyeng wt in the Towne of Erwerton aforesaide," &c. "And all other my stuff of Houshold Cornys and Cattalls excepte xx shepe The whych I bequeth to John my son & a Mylke Cowe the which I bequeth to Johan Cryspe the Doughter of John Cryspe of Ipswyche," and after said wife's decease the house and lands "shall remayne to John my son and to the heyers of his body laullye" (begotten) and in default of such issue the same shall be sold—"to eche of my Doughters chyldren John & Anne vjs viijd And Agnes Card my doughter xijs iiijd And to Margaret Brome my doughter vjs viijd And to Anne my doughter xxxs. Itm I bequeth to the said Anne oon ewe shypp"—After said wife's decease "all myn aboute reherayd stuff of Housholde Cornys & Cattalls shall be solde"—"to Agnes Carde my doughter my ten't wt a pece of Lond," &c., "in Erwerton aforesaide callyde Sprotts"—"John Cresp & John Cryspe my son" Executors.