Local Families

This collection of family histories and reminiscences give a snapshot of what life was like for families in the parish from different backgrounds from the latter part of the nineteenth century. The focus is on health, welfare, education, childhood and family life. Whilst it has been impossible to obtain first-hand experiences of nineteenth century residents, their descendants have shared 'passed down' memories which, combined with documentary sources, has built up pictures of life some hundred or so years ago. Family experiences that span several generations also illustrate a range of cultural changes.

Family archives and memories, census information, local history books and other documentary sources have all been used. Thanks are especially due to the relatives of the families concerned who have been generous with their time and contributions.

Map references, e.g. F57, refer to the area and grave number given on the maps of the churchyard produced by the Oxfordshire Family History Society in 2003 and reproduced from their CD-ROM with permission.

Families:

- Gray
- Jeffery
- Kempson, Bruce, and Yeates
- Loxley
- Pieritz

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Gray family

Please see below for dates and census information.
Information collected through family documents has been courtesy of Sharon Strange.

Thomas Gray, (1804-1858), a carpenter and wheelwright, married Mary Ann Coventry (1808-1865) on the 29 November 1831 at Chalgrove in Oxfordshire. They had seven children, of which three came to live in East Oxford in the mid-nineteenth century. The three children were Matthew (b 1834), Thomas (b 1839) and Abednego (b 1845) who were carpenters and builders. Rural migration was common during this time as the cities offered more employment opportunities. This was particularly so in the developing East Oxford suburb.

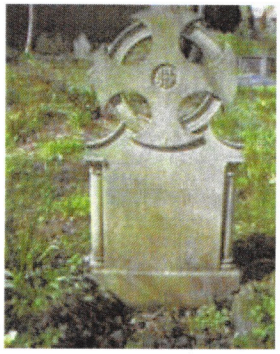
1. Matthew Gray, a carpenter, according to the 1861 census lived in Bath Street, Cowley. He later moved to Pembroke Street (now Rectory Road). At this time Mathew was married to Harriet Quartermain and there were two children, William born on 8 March 1859, and Harriet born in 1861. The 1871 census lists more children Walter (10), Joseph (8), Charles (6), George (4), Albert (2), and John (1). The family built up a successful building business from Rectory Road. Building workers were needed in the developing area. By 1881 Mathew Gray had moved to 200C Cowley Road. He was a widower aged 46 years and his daughter Harriet was listed as his housekeeper. William (22), Joseph (18) and Charles (16) were carpenters. Albert (11) Agnes (8) and Alice (4) were the younger children in the household.

William Gray, the eldest son, attended school in Iffley Road and was a chorister at the Iron Church in Stockmore Street. When he left school aged 14 he worked as a carpenter in his father's business. He married Elizabeth Ann Steventon in 1881 and the 1891 census reports that the family lived at 114 Bullingdon Road with six of their children: William Henry (9), Alice Harriett (7), Matthew Frederick (6), Harry Joseph (4), Frank Arthur (2), and Dorothy Kate (4 months) along with Mr Mathew Gray aged 56, who was living with them. He built up his own builders' and funeral director's business at 6 Rectory Road, (known later as W.M. Gray & Son Ltd). By the time of the 1901 census the family had moved to 125 Bullingdon Road and had increased, now including Leigh Richard (8), Victor Charles (6), Arthur John (3), and Elizabeth Agnes (1). William (19) and Matthew (15) were both carpenters and joiners. Elizabeth Gray died in 1906, and in 1907 William married Fanny Katherine Axtell, by whom he had four more children (fourteen altogether). (See www.axtell-surname.org.uk/fam1903.html for further information on the Axtell family. The stone cross memorial B86 bears the mason's mark 'Axtell & Son')

In 1903 William Gray then a relatively successful business man stood as a progressive candidate for East Ward and was duly elected. He went on to be chosen as Sheriff of Oxford and elected Mayor in November 1910. When he died in 1931, large crowds lined the funeral route from St Clement's Church to Rose Hill cemetery.

2. Thomas Gray senior (1839-1889) also worked as a carpenter. On 25 March 1860 he married Charlotte Walton in Banbury. In 1861 aged 21 years (given as 24 years on the census) he lived at Bath Street, Cowley. The family lived in various homes in east Oxford including Princes Street, Robin Hood Terrace and 99 Catherine Street. By 1881 the couple were living at 1 Catherine Street with their nine children, Emma Gray (21), Thomas (17) Carpenter, Esther Ann Gray (16), Mary A Gray (14), Harriet Gray (12), Ernest G Gray (10), Frank Gray (8) Benjamin Gray (6) and Joseph Gray (4).

Thomas Gray senior ran his carman's business from No 1 Catherine Street. There were stables out the back for the horses and carts. Descendants of Thomas Gray report that Thomas was also a builder who built No.1 Catherine Street and a cottage named Tysoe Cottage (his wife Charlotte was born in Tysoe, Warwicks.) Relatives also owned No 17 Catherine Street and 'a few others' in the street.



Thomas & Charlotte Gray

Thomas Gray senior died of bronchitis in 1889 aged 49. He is buried in Ss Mary & John churchyard with his wife Charlotte in D241. Thomas' will left his Carman business to his wife, to be managed by his sons Frank and Joseph who would inherit the property at No.1 following Charlotte's death. Meanwhile, Charlotte was to receive "monies and interest arising from my Freehold property and land situated in Katherine Street Donnington Road Maudlen (sic) Road".

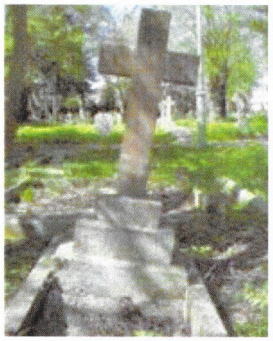
The eldest son Thomas Gray junior inherited the building portion of his father's business as his trade was also carpentry. He was instructed to complete the works in hand in Magdalen Road and to build on two plots of land in Katherine Street adjoining Tysoe Cottage. In 1891 Thomas Gray junior and his family were living at 110 Magdalen Road (possibly 'the works' referred to).

After Frank's death in 1912 Joseph continued with the carman's business, gradually transferring from horses to lorries. Relatives remember seeing their lorries about town so the business was still going until at least the 1950s.



Benjamikn, Frank & Esther Ann (Archebutt) Gray

Several of Thomas Gray senior's children are buried in the churchyard in the same grave B35: Esther Ann Gray (married name Archebutt) who died on 10 March 1927 aged 61 (she was living in Pimlico SW1 in London at the time and either brought back to be buried at Ss Mary and John or died suddenly whilst visiting the area); Frank who died in 1912 aged 39; Benjamin who died in 1901 aged 21yrs.



Harriet Evans nee Gray

Mary Ann Gray, one of Thomas Gray senior's daughters, married William Charles Simmonds who as a youngster lived at 121 Cowley Road. When they married, Mary and William lived at 117 Magdalen Road. Three of their young children died in 1890, 1892 and 1901. Mary Ann died on 28 Oct 1926 aged 59 and William died on 23

April 1931 aged 67. They are buried in Ss Mary & John Churchyard (C10).



Mary Ann Simmonds nee Gray

Harriet Gray, another daughter, married Francis Evans who in 1881 lived at 126 Bullingdon Road with his family. Harriet died in 1929 as did Francis and they are both buried in the graveyard (B49).

Thomas Gray junior married Emily Henrietta Cox (b 1864) on 2 June 1884. They had four children, Emily Henrietta (baptised as a Cox at Ss Mary & John Church on 20 April 1882), Ellen Harriet Gray, b 1890, Lucy Clementine, b 1892 and Maud Beatrice Gray b 1896. They had two other children who died when they were young, Eveline Dora in 1890 and Florence Mary in 1895. These children were buried in the churchyard but the location is not known. In 1885 the family were living at 3 Howard Street. By 1890 they had moved to 110 Magdalen Road, and in 1895 were living at 4 Hertford Street. Medical records report that Thomas had a mental health illness and was admitted to Littlemore Asylum on 12 May 1896 after suffering from melancholia and having an 'attack'. Thomas died in Littlemore Asylum in 23 April 1897, aged 34, of 'general paralysis over 2 years.'

Health and welfare

The early death of Thomas junior, the major bread winner, meant that the family went from a comfortable (within working class terms) position into 'living hand to mouth.' There was no welfare state to support the family. His youngest child (out of nine) was 12 years old at the time of his death. Emily Gray married Alfred Berry a boilermaker, (1873-1924) on 30 July 1898 at Cheltenham. Their first child was born in Cheltenham in 1899, but in 1901 they were living in Grimsbury near Banbury. The birth of their third child Aubrey was registered in Headington district (which incorporates Cowley) in 1903 and the family lived at 13 Barnet Street. Emily had to take in washing to make ends meet, despite not having a water source in the house. Emily Berry died in 1939.

The Grays appear to have been doing well in their businesses but the menfolk seemed to have died prematurely (except Joseph and Ernest). Thomas senior aged 49 from bronchitis, Benjamin aged 26, Frank aged 39 and Thomas junior aged 33. Although two of Thomas junior's children died, those that survived into adulthood, despite being poorer, lived much longer than their uncles.



Abednego Gray

3. Abednego Gray, the youngest of the three brothers who migrated into Oxford, was born in 1845 at Great Milton. By 1861 Abednego was working as a 16 year old apprentice carpenter living in the centre of the village of Waterstock with his widowed mother and his younger brother Joseph, a servant. The family appear to have been primarily supported by an older sister Ann, a school mistress.

Abednego married Emily Oliver (born about 1842 in Great Milton) in 1864. He continued to follow the primary

family occupation of carpentry, and also settled in East Oxford. In 1871 they were living at 19 James Street. By 1881 they had moved to 66 James Street. He too died at a young age, 40 years old in 1885, just after the birth of his 10th child. He is buried in the churchyard: D138. Abednego's widow was still living at 66 James Street in1891.

Susanne Shatford and Trevor Williams, *The Changing Faces of St Clements and East Oxford, Book One* (Robert Boyd Publications, 1997)



Emily Henrietta Gray nee Cox



Lucy Clementine GRAY (born 1892) is the bride. Seated 2nd left is Ellen Harriet GRAY, 4th left is her mother Emily GRAY. Maud Beatrice GRAY is in the back row, 2nd left. Probably the eldest sister, named Emily Henrietta after her mother, and her husband are 4th and 5th left on the back row.

Thomas Gray b 1804
Mary Ann Coventry b 1808

1. Elizabeth Gray b 1832

2. Matthew Gray b 1834
3. Emma Gray b 1836
4. Thomas Gray b 1839
5. Ann Gray b 1842
6. Abednego Gray b 1845
7. Joseph Gray b 1848

1881 Census

200C Cowley Road
Matthew Gray b 1835 (46) builder (Widowed)

1. William M Gray b 1859 (22) carpenter
2. Joseph Gray b 1863 (18) carpenter
3. Charles Gray b 1865 (16) carpenter
4. Harriett Gray b 1861 (20)
5. Albert Gray b 1870 (11)
6. Agnes Gray b 1873 (8)
7. Alice Gray b 1877 (4)

1881 Census

1 Catherine Street
Thomas Gray b 1840 (41) Carpenter
Charlotte Gray b 1839

1. Emma Gray b 1860
2. Thomas Gray b 1864 (17) Carpenter
3. Esther Ann Gray b 1865
4. Mary A Gray b 1867 (14)
5. Harriet Gray b 1868 (12)
6. Ernest G Gray 1871 (10)
7. Frank Gray 1873 (8)
8. Benjamin Gray 1875 (6)
9. Joseph Gray 1877 (4)

Pre 1881:
Princes Street
Robin Hood Terrace
99 Catherine Street

William Matthew Gray 1859
Elizabeth Ann Steventon 1881

1. William Henry b 1882
2. Alice Harriett b 1884
3. Matthew Frederick b 1885
4. Harry Joseph b 1887

5. Frank Arthur b 1889
6. Dorothy Kate b 1891
7. Leigh Richard b 1893
8. Victor Charles b 1895
9. Arthur John b 1898
10. Elizabeth Agnes b 1900

Married Fanny Axtell 1907
Four more children

1881 Census

66 James Street
Abednego Gray b 1846 (40) Carpenter
Emily Gray b 1843

1. Alfred Henry Gray b 1865 (16) apprentice shoemaker
2. Fredrick William Gray b 1866 (15) apprentice carpenter
3. Edwin Gray b 1868 (13)
4. Elizabeth Emily b 1870 (11)
5. Louisa Jane b 1873 (8)
6. Florence b 1877 (4)
7. Edith Annie b 1879 (2)
8. Rosa Ellen b 1881 (1 month)

Thomas Gray b 1863
Emily b 1864

1. Emily Henrietta Gray
2. Ellen Harriet Gray b 1890
3. Lucy Clementine b 1892
4. Maud Beatrice Gray b 1896

1885: 3 Howard Street
1890: 110 Magdalen Road
1895: 4 Hertford Street

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Life in East Oxford for the descendants of George and Harriet Jeffery

(1833-1909 and 1834-1910 respectively, grave B113) based on the memories of their great-granddaughter, Margaret.

Please see the foot of this page for dates and census information.

At the turn of the century, the Jeffery family were living in Sydney St. According to the 1881 census, George (a whitesmith) and Harriet Jeffery were living there with four children: William (born1860) a fireman and gas fitter, Eva (b 1865) a school teacher, Julia (b 1869), and Charles (b 1874). By the **1901 census**, George and Harriet were living at No 22. Alice Doman was also living with them. She was the daughter of a family friend from Little Milton where they had lived previously.

George and Harriet Jeffery's youngest son Charles, who had married Ellen, was living next door at No 20. They had three sons: William (4), George (3) and Frederick (1). There was also a boarder which was common practice at the time, despite the small houses, as this provided extra income for families. George and Harriet's eldest son, William Jeffery, had married Lucy and they were living the other side at No 24 with their children: William (17 years old), an apprentice gas fitter, Harry (16), a watchmaker, Walter (12), Alfred (10), Lucy Gertrude Eva (8) and Arthur Leonard known as Len (4). Lucy Jeffery took in washing, another way to raise the family income, and had a washhouse at the back of their home in Sidney Street. As a young child Len would take the washing back to the customers in areas of the city such as St Ebbes.



Taken in about 1900.
George and Harriet Jeffery sitting in the middle on the front row.
William and Lucy behind. Arthur Len standing in front.

Len attended Ss Mary & John School,, was taught by Mr Irvine and by all accounts was a model student. He won prizes at school for being well behaved and a good scholar. The family attended Ss Mary & John Church until St Alban's was built. His sister Lucy and his mother were active members of St Alban's Church. Len and his brothers were members of the Boys Brigade run by the church. Len left school at 13 years old which was usual for working class children. His mother had found him a job at a printers firm in Cowley but Len found his own job as a teaboy at Thorntons Accountants in King Edward Street, off the High Street, as he wanted to be an accountant not a printer. Len studied for his exams in accountancy in the cold bedroom that he shared with his brothers while they played cards downstairs. He worked his way up from a teaboy to be an accountant at the firm and eventually became the Chairman of the Board. Len went to the war when he was 17 years old (he was tall and would pass for 18 years) and joined the Kings

Royal Rifles and became a crack shot. He was in the trenches in France and later sent to Macedonia. In the mid 1920s he married Florence Annie Andrews (b in 1892) at her suggestion, so that he could study in peace.

The Andrews family had lived at 4 East Ave (1881 census) and then 118 Cowley Road (1891 census). By the time Florence Annie was born in 1892 they were living at 5 Bartlemas Road. Her father, Edward (Ted) Andrews, who was from Gloucester, was a carpenter and had moved to the developing area to find work. He bought two plots in Bartlemas Road (Nos 3 & 5) and built a house on one and made an orchard and workshop on the other. He and his friend Mr Bunce (who bought No 7) built their houses adjoined and Ted did all the carpentry for both houses – floor, windows, doors and cupboards. He also made furniture which has remained in the family.

John and Frances Streaks lived at 116 Cowley Road (1881 and 1891 census) with their four daughters. Frances was Florence's aunt, sister to her mother (their maiden name was Williamson). The youngest daughter Mignonette was a pupil teacher at Cowley Road Infants School.

Florence went to Cowley St John School and later to Central School for Girls in St Ebbes. (The building later became Oxford Art School where Mary – one of her two daughters - attended in the 1940s). She talked to Margaret (her eldest daughter) about her memories as a schoolgirl. The headmistress' office (who was one of the Sisters of the Holy Childhood E195) was at the centre of the school. From here she could see everything that went on including latecomers who were reprimanded. Children in the school had to curtsey to the headteacher.

When she left school Florence went to work at a tobacconist in Turl Street. During the Great War she had several other occupations including work as a telephonist and an assistant postmistress. Florence went to work as a clerk at Thorntons in the 1920s and there met her future husband Len who was a trainee accountant at the firm. When they were first married they lived in lodgings in Aston Street. Len was able to study for his accountancy training in a quieter environment. Soon after their marriage Florence's father, Ted Andrews, saw that there was a house, built in 1904, for sale in Cowley Road. Len and Florence were able to purchase this through a Council mortgage.

Margaret

Florence and Len had two children, Margaret, born in 1929 and Mary, born in 1931. Other family members also lived in the area. Florence's parents lived nearby in Bartlemas Road. They had moved from the Cowley Road and built the house in 1892. Margaret visited her maternal grandparents regularly and remembers playing in the garden with her little sister. Her paternal grandmother, who was widowed by the time Margaret was born, had moved with her unmarried daughter Lucy to Cricket Road. Margaret remembers her grandmother giving her a comic called *Pip, Squeak and Wilfred* which came with the local paper every week. Other relatives living nearby included Mignonette Beckley (née Streaks) who lived in Southfield Road and was now quite deaf. Mignonette's other sisters moved to Goosey. The family also had a lot of contact with Aunty Lucy, Len's sister, who never married. Aunt Lizzie who was married to Uncle Harry (Henry) came to stay with the family when she was ill. Uncle Harry was a watchmaker who trained at Paynes in Oxford but moved to Market Harborough where he owned his own business.

When Margaret was a young child in the 1930s the part of the Cowley Road where she lived was just being developed. Opposite her home were fields owned by the university that stretched from the Regal up to 'White City' (further up towards Shelley Road area). Behind Margaret's house was an orchard where horses were kept and also allotments. She would go and catch grasshoppers in the allotments and play on other green spaces nearby where there were streams and grass. Sometimes she would venture up to the golf course. She would sometimes visit her friends in Howard Street and they would have pigs and rabbits in the back garden (common in those days) which the families would use for food.

Margaret's family spent a lot of time walking. They went on long walks at weekends to places like Shotover and Wolvercote. The family would also walk along the rivers up to Sandford and the girls would

fish for tiddlers. Sometimes they would explore the Oxford colleges. Every year they would go and see the pantomime at the New Theatre. Margaret and her sister would play at home playing marbles, doing gymnastics, skipping or drawing indoors on rainy days.



1898. Ss Mary & John School. Lucy Jeffery 2nd row 5th from left.

School

From the age of 4½ years Margaret attended Ss Mary & John School. When she was at Ss Mary & John School she came home for dinner everyday at midday. Her mother had help in the home – Miss Payne – known as Auntie Payne, who worked from 8am until 3pm nearly every day. Miss Payne made the lunch for the family. Parents would wait for their children outside the school. One day, when she was quite small, about five years old, she rushed across the road and was run over by a pony and cart. The cart wheel ran over her leg and the pony stepped on her fingers. She was not badly hurt but had to see the doctor for emergency treatment. (The owner of the pony and cart, Mr Bricknell, kept his pony in a small field behind what is now the bakery in Hertford Street. Margaret's father's cousin, Harry Smith (called Uncle Harry by Margaret), a painter and decorator, lived the other side of the bakery.) Her father also came home for dinner but not until 1pm. In the summer months her mother would take Margaret and her sister Mary for a walk to the nearby grounds of Lincoln College until her father came home. Here they learnt the names of wild flowers and other wildlife information. She also remembers playing marbles in the gutter all the way home from school.

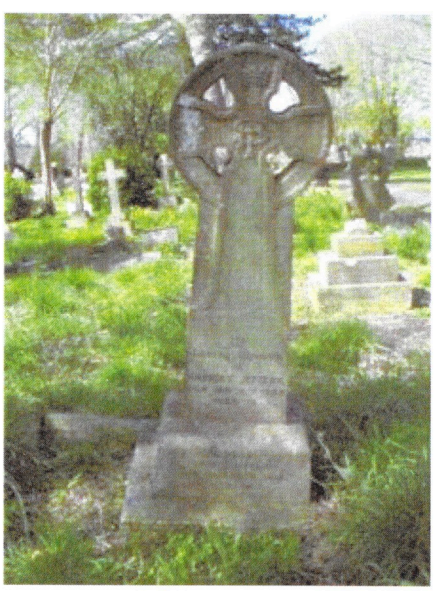
Margaret remembers poor children at school. Some of them came from quite rough homes. Head lice and impetigo were common amongst the children and spread very easily. Childhood diseases such as chicken pox and measles, which could be very serious, were also very contagious. Inoculations to prevent some of the diseases spreading had not been developed at this time. She does remember lining up to have injections in school and always volunteered to be first to get it over and done with. One lad in Margaret's school had polio and was left with a bad leg so he had to wear a calliper. Margaret recalls that the calliper seemed to be very heavy as he always dragged it around.



Theatrical production. Lucy Jeffery (Margaret's aunt) in the centre.

During her time at Ss Mary & John School Margaret was a noisy, curious and sometimes naughty child. She remembers spending a considerable amount of time outside the classroom as she had been sent out as a punishment and had to listen through the door to the lessons. When Margaret took the 11 plus she had to sit part of it in the Town Hall along with at least another hundred children. She had to use a 'dip pen' (pens that were dipped into an inkwell) and recalls making a dreadful mess on her paper. Margaret passed the exams and attained a scholarship place at the Oxford High School.

When she was a bit older Margaret helped out at the Sunday School in St Albans Hall. The children drew pictures and learnt from the bible and she spent time helping them. She remembers the children at Sunday School were also from poor backgrounds and had similar problems such as head lice and impetigo. One of the medical books available at the time was *The Universal Home Doctor, Illustrated,* Odhams Press Ltd, London, published in the 1920s. In this book head lice were treated by applications of paraffin oil being rubbed into the hair and sleeping in a bathing hat overnight, then washing the hair. Or washing the hair in vinegar and water, or applying oil of sassafras to the head for 24 hours. Treatments recommended for impetigo at the time were lotions such as a lead and spirit lotion or powders such as boracic, zinc or talcum. Thick calamine lotion combined both lotion and powder. Children would come to school with purple dabs on them. Margaret caught erysipelas (a very contagious, acute streptococcus bacterial infection in the skin) from the children when she was in the middle of taking the school certificate and had to be isolated from the rest of her classmates while she took the exams. The treatment was applications of tincture of iodine.



Harriet & George Jeffery memorial

Health

Margaret had school medicals whilst at Ss Mary & John School. Her father had taken out health insurance for the family as there was no National Health Service and medical treatment was expensive. The family doctor was in James Street – this practice later moved to the Cowley Road Health Centre. She had an operation for a TB gland in the early 1930s before she went to school but this did not develop further. This operation was performed at the local doctors' surgery on the Cowley Road on the corner of Bartlemas Road. Before she went to the Oxford High School Margaret had another medical. At this medical she was found to have curvature of the spine and had to wear a brace all through the summer which was very uncomfortable. Her mother took her for another opinion to a specialist at the Wingfield-Morris (now Nuffield Orthopaedic) Hospital and to Margaret's relief said that she did not need to wear the brace anymore.

One of Margaret's cousins (Aunt Lizzie and Uncle Harry's daughter) contracted diabetes as a teenager. When Aunt Lizzie was ill and staying with Margaret's family, she was visited by Miss Solace a Christian Scientist counsellor.

Jeffery family

1881 census
Sidney Street
George Jeffery b 1833 (Oxford), whitesmith
Harriet Jeffery b 1834 (Little Milton)
William Jeffery b 1860 fireman and gas fitter
Eva Jeffery b 1865 school teacher
Julia Jeffery b 1869
Charles Jeffery b 1874

1901 census
20 Sidney Street
Charles Jeffery
Ellen Jeffery
William (4)
George (3)
Frederick (1)

boarder

1901 census
22 Sidney Street
George Jeffery (68)
Harriet Jeffery (69)
Alice Doman (boarder)

1901 census
24 Sidney Street
William Jeffery, gas fitter
Lucy Jeffery
William (17) apprentice gas fitter
Henry (16) watchmaker
Walter (12)
Alfred (10)
Lucy Gertrude Eva(8)
Arthur (4)

Andrews & Streaks

1881 census
4 East Avenue
Edward Andrews b 1849 (Winchcombe, Glos) carpenter
Kate Charlotte Andrews b 1855
Edward b 1876
Sydney b 1878
Rose Kate b 1880

1881 census
116 Cowley Road
John Streaks b 1844 (Oxford)
Frances Streaks b 1842 (Oxford)

Alice b 1869
Helen b 1872
Kate b 1875
Mignonette b 1878

1891 census
118 Cowley Road
Edward Andrews (42)
Kate Charlotte Andrews (36)
Edward (15) Railway agents clerk
Sydney Walter (13) carpenter
Rose Kate (11)
Ernest Victor (9)
Arthur Herbert (4)

1891 Census
116 Cowley Road
John Streaks
Frances Streaks

Alice
Helen
Kate - Milliners/dressmakers
Mignonette (13) - pupil teacher at Cowley Road Infants School
Margaret Lucy
Harry Albert

1901 census
5 Bartlemas Road
Edward Andrews (52)
Kate Charlotte Andrews (46)
Rose Kate (21)
Ernest Victor (19)
Arthur Herbert (14)
Florence Annie (9)

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Kempson, Bruce and Yeates families



Richard Kempson, Sheriff, Oxford City Council, 1902

Richard Kempson (1844 - 1929)

Richard Kempson was a prominent member of the East Oxford community and had a significant involvement in the development of the area in the late 1880s and early 1900s. He was a builder by trade and many of the houses in the area, principally in Howard Street and Hurst Street were built by him. Richard's practice was to borrow money to finance each house as it was built and repay the mortgage with the rent it produced In this way over the years he built well over 100 houses primarily in East Oxford with a few at Headington.

Richard was born in St Clements, Oxford on 29 July 1844. He was the seventh child of John and Maria Kempson. John had been a stone mason born in Broadway, Worcestershire. Richard was just 17 years old when his father died. He was initially a carpenter and later progressed to be a master bricklayer and builder.

In 1874 Richard married Ellen Thornton and they had four children. The first, Alice Katherine, died in infancy. There were two sons, Archibald Richard, and Frank (born 1880), and one daughter Agnes Ellen. The two boys joined their father in his building business with Archibald as a carpenter and Frank as a bricklayer.

In 1881 the family were living in Henley Street and later moved to Hurst Street. At one stage they lived at No.78 Hurst Street and that house was subsequently occupied by Archibald and his family. A plaque can be seen on the front of the house identifying it as Eason Cottage – Eason being the maiden name of Richard's mother, Maria.

Richard and Ellen moved to No. 89 Hurst Street in the early 1900s and remained there until Ellen's death in 1922 and subsequently Richard's seven years later.

Apart from his work as a builder Richard was very active politically and socially. In 1889 he stood as a Liberal Candidate for the East Ward and was elected a member of the City Council. He served on the

Council from 1889 to 1908 and during 1902 was Sheriff of the City. During his term of office as Sheriff he represented the City with the then Mayor, Sir Walter Gray, at the Coronation of King Edward VII.

At the time of his death Richard was referred to in the Oxford Times as "the man who refused to be Oxford's Mayor". The office of Sheriff was normally the prelude to becoming Mayor but Richard declined the invitation to become Oxford's chief citizen. It is believed that this was principally due to the declining health of his wife Ellen who for many years was a partial invalid.

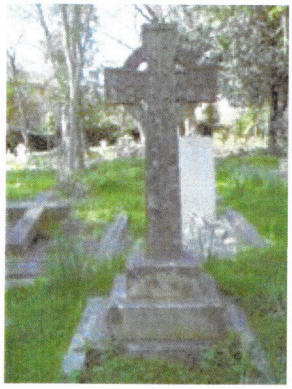
In his early days Richard was a staunch trade unionist and was the secretary of the local Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. He was a very active member of the Liberal party and as such a founder member of the East Oxford Liberal Group. His sympathy for struggling wage earners was always practical and on the Council he was a pioneer in the allotment movement becoming a guarantor in helping to form the East Ward Corporation Allotments Association. He was a keen supporter of the East Oxford Cricket Clubs.

Richard's three children all remained in the area after their marriages. Archibald lived at Eason Cottage in Hurst Street. Frank lived initially in Howard Street, and later Charles Street. [Frank married twice. His first wife, Kate née Yeates, died in September 1915. Frank subsequently married Ann Wilson in 1915 in Ulverston, Lancashire.]

Agnes married Walter Bruce, a local tailor, and they lived in a house at the corner of Leopold Street and Hurst Street. Adjacent to the house was kept the family pony, Billy, and two traps. These were used for many family outings. The pony and trap is shown in the photograph below which was taken around 1915. A tired looking Billy is proudly held by Richard's grandson, Roy, together with six of his granddaughters. The house was subsequently replaced with a group of flats.

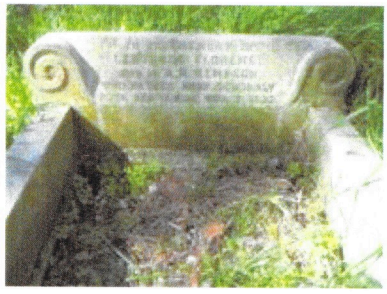


The Kempson and Bruce Family Pony and trap, Leopold Street, c. 1915



Richard Kempson

Richard Kempson died on 17 February 1929 and was buried with his wife, Ellen, in St Mary & St John's churchyard (C14).



Gertrude Florence Kempson

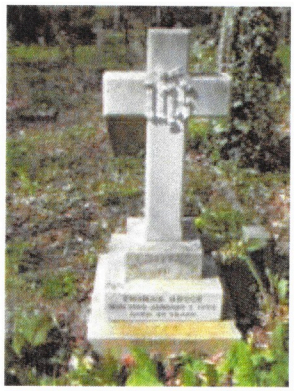
Also buried in the churchyard are Richard's daughter and son-in-law, Walter and Agnes Bruce (C116), and both of Richard's daughters-in-law, Gertrude Florence (wife of Archibald) (C7) and Katherine Emily (Kate, first wife of Frank) but this grave has not been located.

Further reading

Malcolm Graham, On Foot in Oxford, no 12 East Oxford, Oxfordshire County Council Libraries Service, (1987)
Susanne Shatford and Trevor Williams, Changing Faces of St Clements and East Oxford, Book One, Sutton Publishers, Witney, 1997

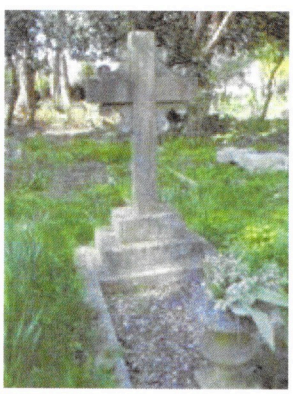
Bruce family

Agnes Kempson married Walter Bruce on 20 Sept 1899 at Ss Mary & John Church. Walter was a tailor and he had a display case showing a sample of his work at the front of his house on the corner of Leopold Street and Hurst Street. This can be seen to the left of the trap in the photo above (under the Kempson family).



Thomas Bruce

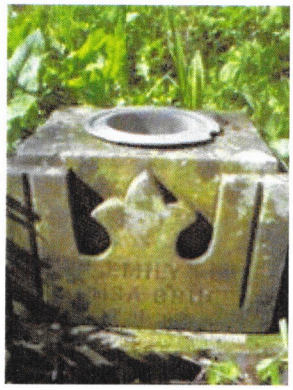
Walter was one of the younger children of Thomas and Priscilla Bruce. Thomas Bruce was a local publican and licensed victualler (in the 1871 census he was described as a whitesmith and publican) and from 1870 until his death in 1883 (aged 43) was licensee of the New Inn at its original location of 52 Cowley Road. After his death in July 1883 (he is buried in the churchyard: D109), his widow Priscilla married Frederick Joseph Valentine Hall in the Marylebone Registry District in the December Quarter of that year. The 1891 census shows them living at the New Inn, where Frederick was then the innkeeper, together with three of Priscilla's children: Frank, Walter and Emily Bruce. In 1895 the license of the New Inn was transferred from its original location at 52 Cowley Road to its new position at 119 Cowley Road. Frederick Hall died in 1897 and the 1901 census shows that the publican/ licensee was now John Bruce, the second son of Thomas. Priscilla was living with her daughter Emily and son in law John Benson at 38 Divinity Road.



Agnes & Walter Bruce

Walter died aged 68 in 1945. Agnes had died aged 63 in 1941 and they are buried together in the churchyard (C116).

Walter's younger sister, Annie Bruce, who died in 1889 aged just 21 years, is buried in the same grave (D109) as her father.



Emily Bruce

Frank Bruce, the fourth son of Thomas and Priscilla, was a tailor like his younger brother Walter. He married Emily Louisa Francombe, b. 1871, on 18 April 1892. In 1901 Frank and Emily were living at 42 Regent Street with their daughters Edith aged 8 and Annie aged 2. Emily is buried in the churchyard (B280).

Reference

Derek Honey, Encyclopaedia of Oxford Pubs, Inns and Taverns, The Oakwood Press, 1998.

Yeates family

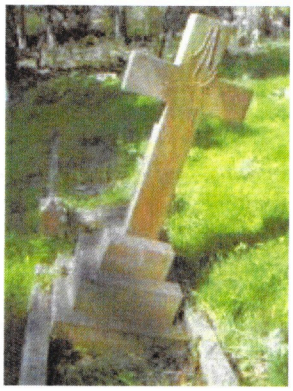
William Yeates (1825-1915) married Ann Harvey (1825-1892) on 20 Jan 1849 in Warborough, Oxon. Their two eldest sons were were born in neighbouring Benson, Thomas, born in 1849, and George Harvey Yeates.

Thomas Yeates moved from Benson to Beckley where he can be found in the 1861 census as a boarder at the Beckley Industrial School. In 1871 he was living at the Croft, Old Headington where he is recorded as a schoolmaster. He became the Master of Headington National School, which was then a mixed school, in January 1871, and continued in charge of the Boys when the Boys and the Girls School became separate in 1875.

In 1877 Thomas moved to Sutton Courtenay School, Berks where he was the Master for nearly 40 years until his retirement in April 1916. Thomas married Harriet Hall (b. 1845) on 19 Aug 1873 in Beckley, Oxon. The census records the family living in Sutton Courtenay in 1881. Then the family household consisted of Thomas Yeates, a schoolmaster aged 31, Harriet Yeates aged 36, Annie aged 5, Katherine Emily (Kate) aged 2 and a baby sister Amy who was 5 months. A male lodger aged 17, from Headington, also lived in the household and was listed as being a pupil teacher. A nursemaid domestic help aged 12 was also recorded as living in the household.

Thomas died in 1940 aged 91. Harriet died in 1893 aged 48 years, a year after her mother-in-law and 22 years before her father-in-law. Harriet's daughter, Kate, married Frank Kempson in 1904. They lived at 45 Howard Street until Kate died in 1915.

George Harvey Yeates (Thomas' brother) married Harriet Crozier in 1877 in the Headington Reg District. Harriet Crozier was the mistress of the Girls School when Thomas Yeates was in charge of the Boys School. Presumably George Harvey and Harriet were introduced to each other by Thomas.



George & Harriet Yeates

The 1881 census lists the George Harvey Yeates family as living in High Street in Headington with a one year old daughter Margaret. Two sons followed, William A Yeates born 1882 and Sydney born 1893. In 1891 and 1901 the census lists the family as living at 30a Bullingdon Road (recorded in 1901 as 'Welcombe House'). George is recorded as a brewers clerk and Harriet as a schoolmistress. An obituary to Sydney in the 1955 City of Oxford High School magazine recalls that 'he came of a much respected family in Oxford, already connected with teaching, his mother having been headmistress of the Cowley St John Infants School for many years'. George died in 1921 and was buried in the churchyard (C20).

After studying at Pembroke College Oxford, Sydney Yeates became a teacher. In 1920 he took up a position as an inspector of schools at Lagos in Nigeria. From 1923 until 1937 he worked first as an assistant head teacher, then he was promoted in 1926 to head teacher at the Grammar School in Tientsin, China. He returned to England in 1937 because of ill health and worked as the Headmaster's Secretary at the City of Oxford School until his death in 1955.

Reference

City of Oxford High School magazine 1955

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Loxley family

William Frederick Loxley was born in Warwickshire in 1854. He was apprenticed as a carpenter in Oxford, working there from 1875. He married Mary Elizabeth Howkins, a farmer's daughter, in 1880. Three of their children, Jane Ethel Sarah, born 20 March 1881, Frederick Lionel Keith, born 9 June 1882, and Cyril Roland Sherwood, born 17 May 1886, all lived to maturity.



Loxley children's graves

William and Mary had three other children. Hannah Gertrude Gladys was born on 16 October 1884, Wilfrid Philip Soloman on 7 December 1887 and Ellen Sophia on 1 March 1889. Gertrude died aged 3 on 26 February 1888. Just a year later Mary died on 10 March 1889 after giving birth to Ellen, who survived only three days and had died on 4 March. Within a few days, on the 15 March 1889, Philip died aged 15 months. The three children are buried together in the children's area (F115) and their mother, Mary Elizabeth Loxley separately in what is now a Garden of Remembrance and Thanksgiving (D225).



Mary Loxley's grave & Graham

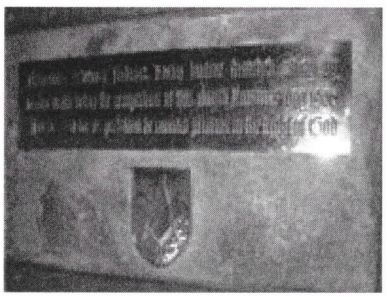
William Loxley married his first cousin Sophia Loxley a year after Mary died. They had one child, Clement Bernard Chester on 5 June 1891.

Shortly after coming to Oxford William Loxley met a fellow carpenter George Edward Benfield whilst working on the restoration of the roof of New College Chapel. They subsequently became friends (Ss Mary and John Church records show that on two occasions one of their boys were baptised together) and also business associates. They founded the firm of Benfield and Loxley with premises in Bullingdon Road. Its first major building contract was for Magdalen College School (boarding) house, 'The Willows', designed by A W Blomfield, completed in 1894.The firm prospered, as further substantial work followed, much of it for Colleges and University.

George Benfield built himself a house in Iffley; the firm built its own brickworks at Sandford. William Loxley sent his sons to the City of Oxford (High) School and built himself a large Horton stone house on Rose Hill, complete with a sprung floor for dancing in the large room on the second floor. It overlooked the City and it had sufficient grounds to house outbuildings, shielded from the main house, that could

accommodate a pony and trap.

William Loxley took particular interest in the work on the Chapel for St John's Hospital (now the Convent Chapel of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor) which the firm was building in 1906 under the direction of Ninian Comper. But before it was completed, he died suddenly, apparently from food poisoning aged 52 years, shortly before he could move to his new house.



Loxley memorial plaque

He is buried in Rose Hill Cemetery. The Sister Superior of the Hospital sent a wreath and he is commemorated by a brass plaque in the floor of the Chapel which reads:

> *Remember William Frederick Loxley, builder snatched away by /*
> *sudden death before the completion of this church Lammas day 1906 /*
> *May his zeal for its perfection be counted precious in the sight of God*

Below this is a Masonic crest with compasses and square.

After William Loxley's death the family moved to his house, Cingaltree (so called because of a large tree that stood by the gate, since felled when the Littlemore road was realigned). Ethel kept house for her stepmother. Keith trained as a pharmacist in London and later owned chemists shops in St Giles and North Parade; he died in 1930 and was buried in North Oxford Cemetery. Roland became a farm manager and died in 1935. Bernard joined the 9th Battalion London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles) in 1916. He went out to France with the regiment in February 1917, serving in France and Belgium. He was at the battle of Arras, also at Passchendaele in September 1917. He left the army after the war, first living in Divinity Road, and he owned an ironmongers and builders business in St Giles. He married and had two sons now living in other parts of the country. Having moved outside the City he returned to North Oxford after he retired and died in 1975.

William Loxley's wife Sophia died in 1931 and was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery (as was Ethel who died in 1947). Ethel moved to another house and Cingaltree was let to the Hon Frank Pakenham (who later became Lord Longford). He lived there until 1939 when he inherited family property. Having no further use for it, he permitted Oxford City Council to requisition the house for evacuees from London. Later it was used for other purposes, then compulsorily purchased in about 1949 and is now at the centre of the Singletree sheltered housing complex.

The Loxley family connection with Benfield and Loxley ended when William died in 1906. George Benfield's son William H. and grandson William G. were, in turn, directors so retaining their family interest until the 1970s. Later it was taken over and the premises in Bullingdon Road sold for housing (the Bramwell close development). However, even after several changes of ownership, the name of Benfield and Loxley continues to be used for a building firm of high repute.

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Pieritz family

The history of George Wilden Pieritz is an interesting story because he started his early life in the Jewish faith and later converted to Christianity.



The inscription reads:
Rev George Wildon PIERITZ MA
In early life a Jewish Rabbi
baptized 1834
[Ord]ained a priest in the church of England 1847
[ ] some time a missionary both in Jerusalem
and in India
[Di]ed at Pitney Som July 24 1884
aged 76

George Wilden Pieritz was born in 1809 in Prussia into the Jewish faith. He was a made a Rabbi at the age of 18 years and was a keen student of Hebrew. In 1834, when he was aged 25 years he converted to Christianity. His baptism was sponsored by the King of Prussia and the historian Neander. Once established as a Christian he became a very committed missionary.

In 1837 Father Pieritz went to Jerusalem, actively participating as a layman in the work of the 'London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews' and helping to establish the first Protestant church in the Holy Land. In 1840 he went to Damascus for four months 'to intercede with the consuls on behalf of the persecuted Jews' (their persecution had followed on the 'Blood Accusation' that they had been involved in the murder of a Capuchin monk) and 'he made a full report on the circumstances'. In 1841 he went to Bucharest for a few months exploring the possibility of the Society working with the Jewish community there. (Gidney, pp 180, 181, 229, 254)

He came to England in 1840, studied at Cambridge and was ordained in 1846. After this he served as a curate in Stanningly for two years. He married his wife Sarah, (born in 1817 in Rochester) in 1846. Following their marriage they went to India where Father Pieritz was a missionary for four years from 1847 to 1851. Their daughter Ann L Pieritz was born in India in 1851.



Pieritz memorial

When the family returned to England in 1851 Father Pieritz taught pupils at Cambridge until he was 'presented to the living of Hardwicke' in 1865. He came to Cowley St John in 1870 and taught Hebrew. The Parish magazine notes that he gave a talk on Christian mission at the Cowley St John Girls School in the spring 1871. The 1881 census records him living at 33 Iffley Road with his wife Sarah and daughter Ann.

During the vacations he would often provide relief cover for vicars in other parishes. In fact he died on July 24 1884 aged 76 years of heart failure whilst away in Pitney in Somerset providing cover for the local vicar. (See obituary Cowley St John Parish Magazine, August 1884).

Ann Pieritz, his daughter, was an active member of the community and organised the St Agnes Guild. In January 1885 she was presented with a clock as a token of gratitude for all the organizing she had contributed. In January 1886, when she was seriously ill, she spent some time in St John's Hospital and died soon after.

Further reading:

Rev W T Gidney, *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews from 1809 to 1908* (London: London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, 1908).

Cowley St John Parish Magazine, August 1894

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