

Fairford Flyer

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FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY

We hope you are enjoying these online newsletters. If anyone has anything they would like to contribute or have any local history questions please email enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk.

Rob Winney

It was with sadness we learned of the death of former FHS member Rob Winney this week. He had been a stalwart of the Society for many years and was always ready to help with information. He will be best known for his work as Town Council member for many years, as mayor from 2011 to 2013, and for his invaluable involvement with the Royal British Legion. He will be missed.

Caldicott Family in Fairford



Caldicott Family at the back of the house in the 1890s

Backrow standing

Agnes Rose (1883- 1964); Frederick William; Lillian Mary, Walter Edwin; Charles Henry; Alice Maud

Middle row sitting

Francis Richard, 1851-1932, Percival Cowley, Mary Ann (nee Couling) 1850-1925; Annie Louise

Front row sitting

Eva Emily, May, Victor, Winifred Amy

In September we learnt of the unfortunate fire that damaged Caldecott House in Milton Street. The Caldicott family who are now dispersed throughout the country regard Caldecott house in Fairford as the ancestral home. It is to be hoped that the repairs can be completed in a few months.

Richard Caldicott came to Fairford from Leominster. Herefordshire, in the first half of the 19th century, his father Edward was a baker and by the 1841 census Richard (age 20 painter) was living in the Crofts; he married Emma Cowley in February 1846. In the 1856 trade directory he was listed as a plumber, painter and glazier. By 1861 they had 7 children at home employing 3 men and 1 apprentice and were then living in Milton Street, in the 1871 census the property is described as a painter's shop.

To Plumbers, Glaziers, and Painters

Wanted immediately, for a permanence – A THREE-BRANCH HAND, or a GLAZIER and PAINTER. None need apply but steady good workmen - Address R Caldicott, plumber &c Fairford Gloucestershire

Jackson's Oxford Journal Saturday June 28 1862

Richard died at a comparatively early age of 57. He was mentioned in Sarah Thomas's Diary as decorating the 'back parlour' of her house in August 1865.

An amusing quote from the Farmor's School boys Log Book of July 16, 1873 is

W Hammond, H Shurmer, C Miller, A Turner, H Faulks, J Wakefield and W Caldicott [son of Richard, age 12] started off just before nine o'clock to bring W Boulton (a noted truant) back to school without permission. They did not bring him, nor come back all morning.

Augustus Caldicott, the eldest son of Richard and Emma deserves a mention because although he left the family home (not going into the plumbing and decorating business), he did become the post master in Fairford in 1879 until his death in 1905, first in London Street and then moving to the High St where it was part of Lloyd's Bank from about 1901. His wife Esther continued with the Post Office after he died until the 1920s.

Richard's sons Arthur and Frederick carried on with the painting and plumbing business and then Frederick and William, the eldest of the 14 children of Frederick Caldicott, continued the business. Perhaps Arthur was not quite as successful as his father because he was declared bankrupt in 1888, but this was quite common at that time and the business soon carried on.

BANKRUPTCY ACT 1883

RECEIVING ORDERS

Arthur Richard Caldicott, Fairford, Gloucestershire

Painter, plumber and glazier

Bristol Mercury and Daily Post Saturday 25 1888

However, two cousins Richard (son of Arthur) and Henry (son of Frederick) went off the rails

Henry Caldicott, 18 and Richard G Caldicott, 18, painters were brought up in custody charged with breaking and entering the house of William T Stoneham, and stealing therein £5 10s in money, a silver watch and other articles of the value of £10 10s, at Fairford on January 24th. Both prisoners pleaded guilty. Prisoners who are cousins were sentenced to six weeks and one month's imprisonment respectively.

Gloucestershire Quarter Sessions

Bristol Mercury and Daily Post Thursday April 9 1896

Before the Caldicotts lived in the house in Milton Street, it was lived in by several families (it may have been rebuilt). The property appears to have been owned by the Fairford Park Estate and sold to Frederick Caldicott in 1923 when there was a huge sale of Fairford Park Estate property.



Mona and Doris
Caldicott outside the
property in the 1920s

The Caldicotts continued living at the premises, the last Caldicott, Edith, who had married William Caldicott (great grandson of Richard), leaving around 1972 and moving to Bettertons Close. Edward Czopek, a Pole who had been at the Polish Hostel and had lodged with the remaining Caldicott family and had been at The Polish Hostel, also moved to Bettertons Close. It was then that the premises Caldicott Cottage and Caldicott House were sold, it was perhaps at this time that the variant spelling of Caldecott appeared.

Tony Malin, FHS's contact with the Caldicott family, is the grandson of Agnes Rose Caldicott one of those 14 children, (see picture above) she married Edward Harris and had 15 children. They had moved to Birmingham in the early 1900s and were subsequently bombed out in World War 2. By then they had lost contact with the Fairford family. A newspaper advertisement brought them back together in 1954. Tony Malin remembers visiting the family at Caldecott House in Fairford. Some years ago members of the family held a Caldicott family reunion in Fairford and we met a few of the them. (Tony Malin with black hair, centre back in the blue jumper)



Syd and his ramblings

Our landscape detective Syd Flatman has been on patrol again. We all know about the road works in Milton Street that has disrupted our movements for the last few weeks (or is it months?). He has discovered that the former layers of the road can be seen. The road was much lower in 1900 and raised several times over the years the road being crushed stone and sprayed with tar, the layers of which can be seen.



Milton Street roadworks, October 2020

The future Irish President visits Fairford - briefly!

In Fairford Flyer No. 21 of July 2015 (available on the FHS website) there is an article about the arrival of a group of 10 Irish deportees who were transferred to Fairford from Oxford on 19 March 1917. The men had all been involved in the Easter Rising in 1916 and had been arrested and deported to England along with others who were sent to various other locations. Under the mistaken assumption that they were agricultural labourers it was originally intended to lodge the Irishmen in various farms in and around Fairford until the county's Chief Constable realised that they were all well-educated, professional men, some of whom were well-known Irish intellectuals who had been availing themselves of the delights of the Bodleian Library whilst in Oxford. Better lodgings were found in Fairford and the men signed a paper pledging them not to try to escape back to Ireland, although some of them subsequently did just that. The 10 men were not permitted to move more than five miles radius from Fairford Post Office without written permission.

At the time the original story appeared we did not know the names of the 10 men who were sent to Fairford. Recent research shows that one of the 'Fairford 10' was Mr. Sean Thomas O'Kelly, a founder member of Sinn Fein, General Secretary of the Gaelic League and a future President of the Republic of Ireland. He and his colleagues had been arrested following the Easter Rising and spent some time in Reading Gaol before being transferred to open lodgings in Oxford.

The other detainees were John Joseph O'Kelly, Joseph McBride, Barney Mellows, Michael Foley, Darrell Figgis, Peter Healy, Frank McCabe, Liam Pedlar and Dr. Patrick McCartan.

The poet Darrell Figgis was probably one of the men who absconded from Fairford as he was present at the Ballymahon by-election in early May with a fast car standing by in case the police tried to re-arrest him. Four others from Fairford also arrived back in Ireland at about the same time as Mr. Figgis. In fact the cancellation of the deportation order had been signed on 23 April but nothing had been done to assist the men to return home and they received no money to do so after that date. Some of the deportees were still in Fairford as late as June.

Letters and articles were published in the Irish Independent newspaper by Mr. J J O'Kelly who referred to Fairford as "some drowsy wayside in Gloucestershire". He was editor of the Catholic Bulletin and complained of the lack of promised Government maintenance funding for the deportees and, more especially, for their families left behind in Ireland. The deportees also claimed that they had been purposely denied access to Irish newspapers although it is very unlikely that such newspapers would have been available in Fairford in any case. There is no record of any trouble in Fairford during the enforced stay, in fact the Irish Independent of 26 March states "A local magnate said: 'If gentlemen and men of culture like you can be shipped out of your country in this way without any charge, then there is something very wrong with the running of things in Ireland.'"

Sean T O'Kelly served as the Minister for Finance during the Second World War and was elected as the second President of the Republic of Ireland from 1945 to 1959. He was a popular leader of the country and a close friend of his successor Eamon de Valera. He died on 23 November 1966, hopefully without too many regrets about his brief sojourn in this "drowsy wayside in Gloucestershire".



The 'Fairford 10' - this picture may have been taken in Fairford Park