

## OCCUPATION HISTORY OF 19 MARKET PLACE

To the many melancholy accidents which have happened through an improper use of guns, the following dreadful one we add to the catalogue too frequently recited:—Sunday evening in the forenoon, one Thomas Culley, aged nineteen, servant to Mrs. Richmond, farmer, at Bingham, in Nottinghamshire, was sent with a gun along with another youth to shoot the birds which preyed upon the standing corn; but unfortunately meeting with another acquaintance, who likewise had a gun, it was agreed to shoot some pigeons; in order to do which effectually, they augmented the quantity of shot already in their pieces, which had only been loaded for the destruction of sparrows: and in doing so, having previously set down, whilst Culley was in the act of reaching a screw ramrod from his own gun, in order to draw the paper out of that which lay across one of his companion's knees, with the muzzle pointed towards, and within a few inches of his (Culley's) left side, the piece, which very inadvertently was cocked, went off, and lodged the whole of its contents in his belly, the shot having entered below his left ribs, in a strong inclination towards his lungs: the unfortunate youth fell on his back, the blood issuing in a stream from the wound, and, after uttering a short ejaculation, exclaimed, 'I'm a dead man!' yet, notwithstanding the shocking situation he was in, he was conveyed home, where he lingered in excruciating torture until the following Tuesday morning, when he expired.

In 1776 the plot was occupied by Francis Culley. Parish registers show him to have been a labourer and married to Mary but the marriage is not in the Bingham parish register. Francis died in 1788 (aged 76) and Mary in 1789 (82); they had several children, none of whom outlived them (except possibly Elizabeth). In 1795 one son, Thomas (servant to Mr Richmond of Bingham) was reported in the Northampton Mercury as having accidentally shot himself. He died two days later at home in Bingham.

The first record of Thomas Wood, gravestone engraver, in the trade directories for Bingham, is for 1793, five years after the Culleys had died. Thomas Wood died in 1841.

In 1841 the tithe map appointment shows the house to be occupied as a house and garden by Ann Wood, but the census of the same year shows the occupants to be George and Ann Oakes. The Parish registers show that Ann had previously been married to John Wood, the son of Thomas Wood, gravestone cutter. He was responsible for a large number of the gravestones in the parish churchyard. John had partnered his father in the business and one might reasonably assume this was carried on from number 19, given Ann's apportionment listing and the fact that she did not hold any other property described as a workshop. 91 gravestones in the churchyard carry the mason name Wood; three of them carry dates prior to Thomas' birth in 1763. Son John predeceased both Ann and Thomas, and she married George Oakes, a painter, in March 1841. He also cut gravestones, 22 carry his name, including that of Thomas Wood (the other half of the stone was cut by Thomas himself for his wife). They lived in Market Place next door to the inn kept by Hannah Whitworth (directories show as the Kings Arms (later the Crown)).



Thus we might assume Oakes had worked for the Woods, perhaps as an apprentice. Ann was ten years his senior and died in 1865. Her three surviving children by John lived with her and Oakes in 1841 but there is no trace of them after that. She and Oakes had three children too. Oakes and his second wife Arabella are recorded living in Market Place until the 1871 census – he died in 1878 and is buried in the churchyard – his tombstone was cut by Thomas Beet. He was last described in the 1871 census as a painter and auctioneer.

In 1881 the house was occupied by John N Langley, a painter. This was house number 80 for enumerator 4. Number 79 was the Crown inn, next door. His father George had been a live-in apprentice with Oakes in 1841 along with Thomas Beet. George Langley's father, also George, had

married Thomas Wood's niece, Mary, in 1813, which means the business remained in the extended Wood family. The Langley family moved to Burslem before the 1871 census which shows George as a plumber and painter employing 8 men and 3 boys. They had 8 children living with them including John Newton. But by 1881 John Newton was back in Bingham as a painter at the premises in Market Street. What brought him back to take over what had been his great grandfather Thomas Wood's business?

Unfortunately for him, John Newton Langley died in 1885 aged only 35. 13 stones in the churchyard carry his name. It seems likely that he and maybe Oakes', main business had been house painting, as is implied by most census entries. Each had only produced one or two per year for Bingham Churchyard.

By 1891 William Gray was in occupation of number 19, again listed as a house painter, but with no gravestone carvings listed. The 1901 census show the Grays located next door to the Crown Inn. The 1891 census shows them several house numbers apart, but this is likely to be a consequence of the enumerator's erratic movements rather than a physical distance.

The 1891 census shows William and Alban as cousins, both at number 19. However, William, despite being born in Bingham, does not appear in previous censuses. Alban was the illegitimate son of Frances Gray, daughter of George and Hannah. George was successively a framework knitter, letter carrier, Royal Artillery pensioner and in 1861 a framework knitter again. Alban being William's cousin, one would expect him to have been the son of one of George's other children, but he does not appear in any record. However, George was married to Hannah Bradley from Whitwell in Derbyshire. Their eldest daughter was Harriett, shown in the census as being born out of the county. She is not in the 1851 census, but a Harriett Bradley, 21 years younger than Hannah, also born in Whitwell, is listed in 1851 as living with her married sister Sarah Bacon, nee Gray. She must have been Hannah's daughter, either illegitimate or by an unknown first husband. In 1856 she had a son, William Bradley who is in the 1881 census as a painter but not in the 1891 records. He is the same age as William Grey, and it would seem more than likely that William changed his name to Gray. He then ran the business in 1891 and by 1901 had married Caroline C. Alban married Elizabeth and in 1901 and was in Union Street. By 1901 William Gray, 45, painter and employer, was living at No. 19 Market Place. He was still there in 1911 but by 1930, according to a newspaper advertisement in the *Nottingham Evening Post*, his cousin Alban Gray ran the business. Later views of Market Place show the name H.W. Gray on the sign over the front door of No. 19. This must refer to William Gray's nephew Horace William who in the 1911 census was residing with William and Alban; all three were then described as house decorators. Mrs Gray ran the shop as a paint retailer up until the 1970s. It currently houses a pizza business, with two rooms on the uppermost floor used as lodgings.