

ARNOLD GEORGE BEAVER

1853 Born Syderstone Norfolk.

1858 Living at East Rudham.

1861 Aged 8 living at East Rudham with parents and sister Adeline (4) and Alfred (2).

1876 – 1880 Rawdon College Yorkshire.

1881 Census, staying at 509 Blackburn Road Accrington Lancs

“a divinity student (Theological Baptist) age 27”.

1881 -1889 Baptist Minister at Walton on the Hill Liverpool.

1888 Married Catherine Richardson Gooch, Hackford next Reepham.

SEE GOOCH

Arnold and Cathering living at 30 Yew Tree Road Walton on the Hill.

1889 Resigns as Baptist Minister.

1890 first child Daisy born, dies eleven months later from whooping cough.

1891 Return to Norfolk. They live with Catherine's parents. Robert Parker Gooch

Catherine's father acquires the property at 5 Hackford Road, now Norwich Road.

The Beavers stay in the property for the remainder of their lives.

As there was no living for a Baptist minister in Reepham George opened a shop at 5 Hackford Road dealing in grocery, drapery, home furnishings and teas. Harry Hawes is thought to have built the shopfront.

1892 Born Reepham Reginald Parker Beaver 28 December 1892.

Married Jennie Archer Dean.

1894 Born Reepham George Heslop Beaver 28 February 1894.

Married Mildred Alice Cross: issue Heather Normand nee Beaver.

1897 Born Reepham Leslie Beaver 27 June 1897- died France 18 September 1918.

1901 Census. George (48) Catherine (41) and three sons living at 91 Norwich Road.

Ethel Lambert (16), born Kerdiston, live in servant. (At some point between 1891 and 1901 street naming and numbering changed.)

1905 -1931 Assessor of Taxes for Reepham.

1922 Justice of the Peace for Reepham Branch of the Eynsford Division Norfolk.

1941 George dies (88) 17 January at Beaver House. Buried Whitwell Cemetery.

1956 Catherine dies (97) Buried Whitwell Cemetery.

1983 Blanche Bacon who had worked for the Beavers since she was fourteen was provided for by the surviving sons and continued to live at Beaver House until her death in 1983, at which time the property was sold. Bought by Jane Benstead.

George Heslop Beaver was the second of three sons of Arnold George Beaver of Beaver House Norwich Road Reepham. In the early 1900's Georges father ran a grocery and drapery shop from the premises now occupied by "Hamptons". The property remained in the family, largely unchanged, until 1983.

George fought in France during the First World War and left with the rank of captain, his younger brother Leslie Arnold was killed in September 1918 aged twenty-one.

George returned to Reepham and went into partnership with his cousin Sidney Eglinton as suppliers of agricultural machinery. Sidney Eglinton took over his father's agricultural business in Randalls Yard, he was also chief of the Fire Brigade and undertaker. George made "many a coffin" and laid out corpses. Georges daughter (Heather Normand) recalled "He told me he put a little make-up on a young girl to make her look less ghastly!"

He later joined The International Harvester Company as their representative in the Middle East where he was based in Cairo. He met his American wife Mildred Alice Cross in Geneva and they lived in Cairo for thirteen years before moving to Beirut in The Lebanon in 1948, he continued to work for I.H.C. until he retired in 1959.

George and Millie stayed on in West Beirut throughout the civil war of 1979 and the 1982 Lebanon War, when West Beirut was under siege by Israeli troops. In 1985 French and U.S. barracks were bombed three hundred servicemen and six civilians were killed by suicide bombers. The bedroom wall of the Beavers home was pierced by shrapnel while Shi-ite gunmen rampaged around the hillside suburb where they lived! Despite the turmoil all around them George and Millie refused to leave the city even when offered free passage.

On the 28th February 1984 George celebrated his ninetieth birthday. Here the story ends on "cliff hanger". How does George and Millie's story end? If anyone knows the end of the story tell me or one of the other volunteers at the Reepham Archive.

Chris Peakome The Reepham Archive. February 2015