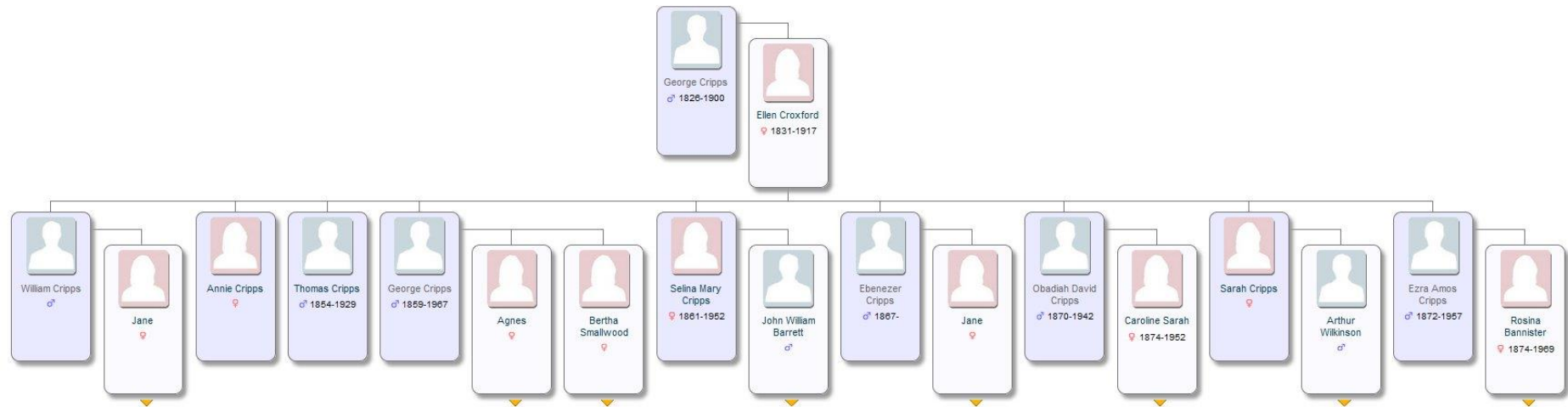


Cripps Family

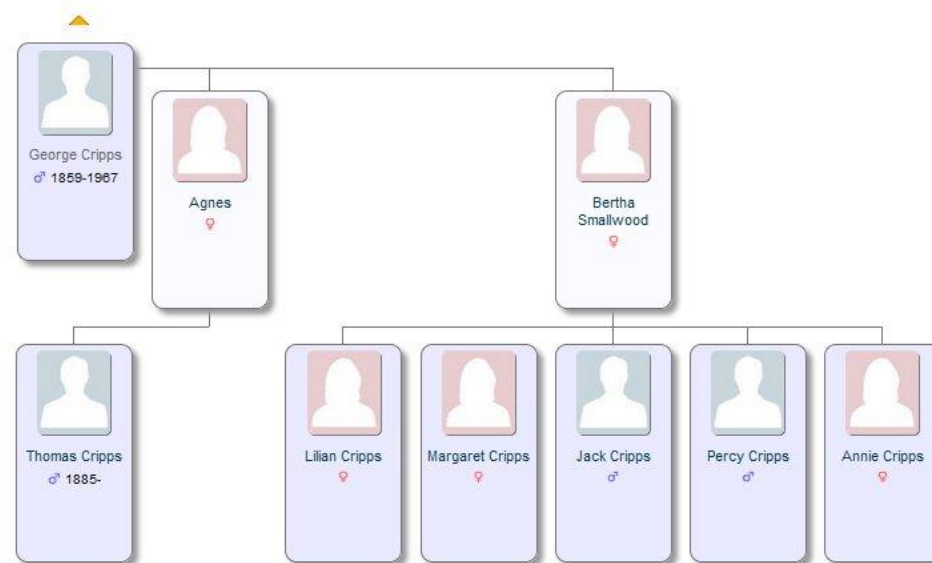
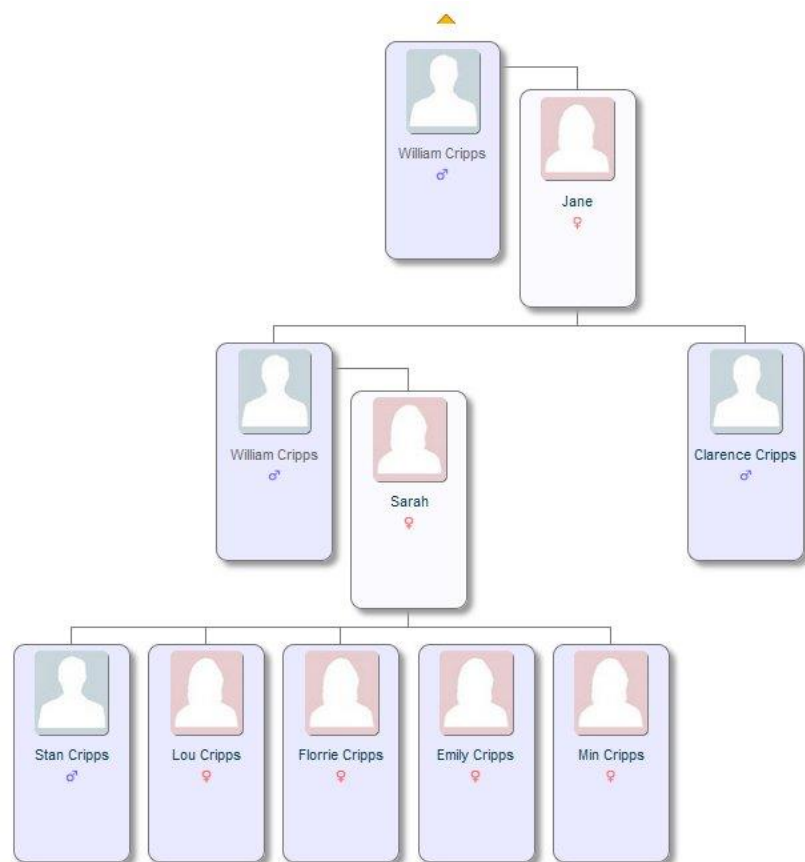


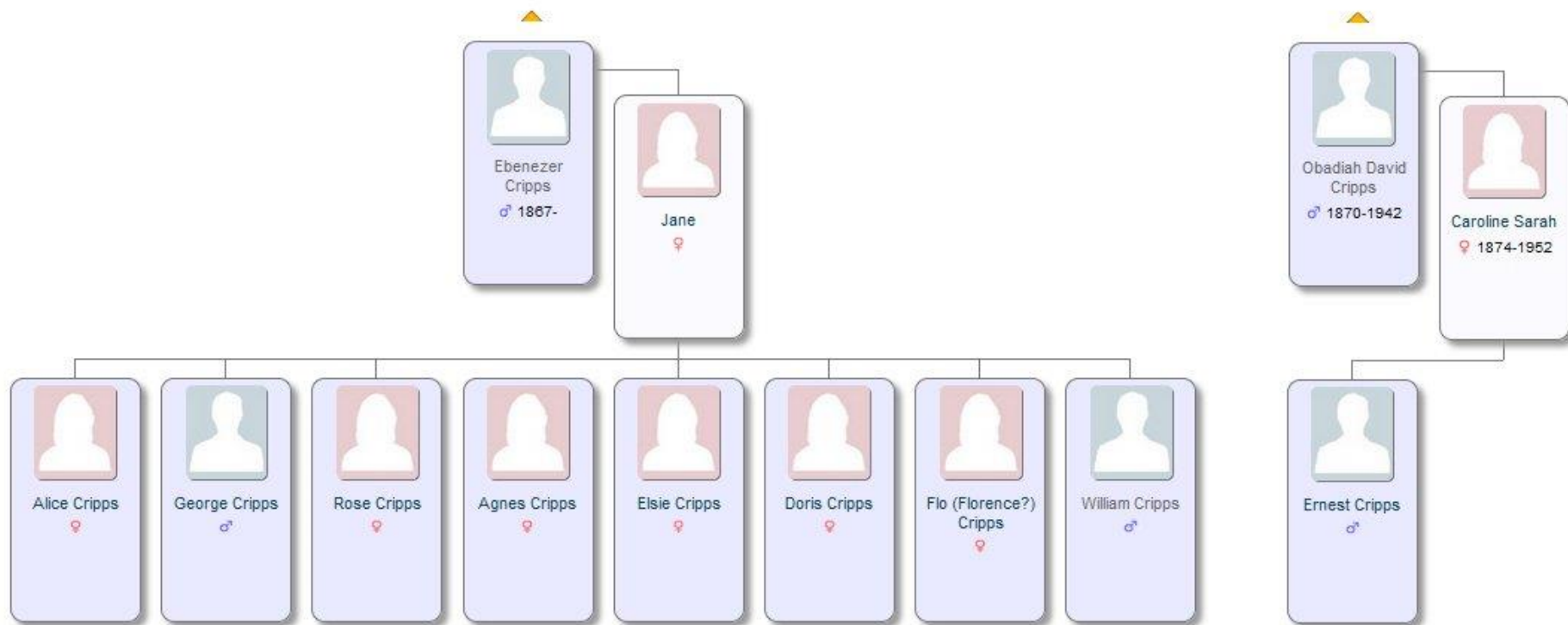
On 14 June 1857, George Cripps (the elder) bought the windmill from William Lamburn for £150 subject to the existing mortgage of £420. On 3 September 1874, this mortgage, now in the sum of £600, was held by the Liberator Permanent Building and Investment Society ('Liberator'). Cripps defaulted on the repayments, and 'Liberator' took a first hit of £150 by selling the property on 10 May 1878 to Thomas Dugard of Wheatley and another. It seems from other references that grinding ochre was then the main role of the windmill as Rev. Edward Elton referred to it in 1870 and there were two people noted as involved in the ochre business in the 1881 census. This business had ceased before 1900. The repayments were again defaulted so, on 2 February 1881, 'Liberator' sold the property to Cripps for £300, having lost half of their initial investment. Cripps did a good deal!

George Cripps died on 2 January 1900. The probate of his Will shows that his estate was valued at £330 and his Will left all his property to his widow Ellen Cripps.

Ownership of the windmill passed through his youngest son, Ezra, and thence down to his grandson, Leonard Ezra, see below







As stated on the first page, ownership of the windmill passed through his youngest son, Ezra Amos Cripps (1872- 1957) and Rosina Bannister (1874-1969).

Ezra Amos (1872-1957) was a miller. Although he ground corn for many of the local farmers in his own mill at Wheatley, until the First World War he was chiefly employed as the miller at Grubb's Mill (Castle Mill) in Oxford. He walked to and from Oxford every day. However, Mr Grubb gave up the business when his son, Sid, was killed early in the First World War, and Ezra had to find alternative employment elsewhere.

Like many of the young men in Wheatley, Ezra went to work in Cooper's brickyard in Littleworth, where he looked after the big traction engine. When Coopers Brickworks closed after the war, Ezra went to work for Cullum's, the builders and stonemasons and, once again he was responsible for the traction engine in the stonepit. Ezra was a talented violinist and he ran a dance band which played for special events in Wheatley and the surrounding villages. They were a very musical family: Uncle Obadiah used to make violins in the windmill, and Uncle George at High Wycombe made them as well.

Len Cripps was born on 19th September 1907, at the Windmill. There had been an older son (not shown on the family tree) who died before



Len was born. He had a sister, Rosa Catherine, known as Cassie, who played the piano, accordion and organ. When he left school Len used to deliver newspapers; then he worked in a market-garden in Littleworth. Later he was employed as an apprentice electrician for Bannisters in Cowley, before moving to the Pressed Steel Company. Len had inherited the windmill, but it was last used regularly in 1914. Len married Phyllis Shurmer of Littlemore in 1934. At first they lived with his family at the Windmill, but then moved to Gidley Way, Horspath, in 1939. The photograph shows Len Cripps one month before his 100th birthday seated with his son, Roy. Under a new owner since 2020, the windmill continues to be maintained by the Wheatley Preservation Society.

