

Previous generations of the Cullum and Barnard families

William Cullum senior came from Wantage. Born in 1798, he was the son of John Cullum, (whom J.H.H. believed to have been a 'coal factor'), and his wife Mary nee Barnard. He was a wheelwright, but where he learnt his skills is not known. It was probably in the Wantage area, as the very first mention *at all* of the name Cullum in the Wheatley or Cuddesdon registers is when William's Banns of Marriage for his forthcoming marriage in Kingston Bagpuize were read out in 1831, when William would have been 33.

This rather contradicts the old 1809 Enclosure map of Wheatley, which shows "Cullum's yard (Wheelwright yard)" as if it then existed. Either it *did* exist and Cullums were there but had no reason to have any births, marriages or burials recorded there between 1809 and 1831, (unlikely), or they commuted to and from Wantage, (even more unlikely), ~~or it is a bit of 'licence' on the part of the whoever drew up the map.~~ But at least we know exactly where they were in the town.

Earlier details of the Cullum family have proved impossible to trace. There are variations in the name, for example 'Culham', 'Cullom' and 'Cullern' all appear in various local registers. William's parents, John and Mary, married in Wantage in 1797, and William's baptism is the *only* birth attributed to a 'John and Mary Culum' at Wantage in the following 20 years. Either he was an only child or they moved somewhere and have not been found.

There is circumstantial evidence that the town of Wallingford may have figured in the family's travels. One of the letters that has survived in the family, dated June 12th 1823, is from the 'Williams' side, and this William Cullum was to marry Elizabeth Williams in 1831. The letter, actually two letters in one, is from a John Hobson of Newbury to 'Dear Cousin' (not named), and it has been forwarded on August 8th, with additional text, to 'Dear brother Wallingford' (i.e. a brother *in* Wallingford) from 'your loving brother John Williams'. Elizabeth Williams had a brother named John, and it could be a letter to her other brother James, although James has not been traced to Wallingford.

The Cullum connection to Wallingford is found on the 1841 census. There are no Cullums *at all* on that census for Wantage and Charlton, and there are no Cullum baptisms at all in Wallingford, but in the parish of All Hallows Wallingford on 'the 184T one finds William Cullum aged 70, John Cullum aged 60, and Ann Cullum aged 24 at one address in Castle Street, all of 'Independent means', and at another address in Castle Street is a John Cullum, aged 25, an ostler, and his wife Susan.

The John Cullum mentioned *could* be William's father. The age is correct, bearing in mind that the 1841 census would round ages off to the nearest five years, and the 'independent means' can possibly be explained by not only his own efforts but also the wealth of the family into which he had married, the Barnards, and, since there is no sign of his wife in 1841, money that he may have inherited. Also, as noted previously, J.H.H. believed he was a 'coal factor', and, if so, he may have done very well when the Wilts & Berks Canal, which runs past Wantage, opened in 1810 and started bringing coal from the Somerset coalfields, via the Somerset Coal Canal and the Kennet and Avon Canal, to this part of the country.

There was also an incident in Wallingford in November 1841 when a 'William Cullum the younger' of All Hallows Wallingford was 'summonsed' on November 13th to appear before the local magistrate charged that he '*did throw a lighted firework called a Serpent in a public place or street there situated, called the Market Place*'. This 'William Cullum the younger' was not on the 1841 census for Wallingford taken just a few months before. Could it have been the then eight year old William Cullum from Wheatley, who would later marry Matthias Hunt's sister, visiting his grandfather and getting up to mischief around November 5th? It's possible.

The Barnard family hailed from the outskirts of Wantage, in particular the hamlets of Grove and Charlton. This modern map shows Wantage, Charlton and Grove in the bottom left-hand corner, Wallingford over on the right edge, and Kingston Bagpuize and Longworth top left. For an idea of scale, Wantage to Wallingford is just ten miles.

The probable medieval origin of the name Cullum can be seen just to the south of Abingdon showing the village of Culham (map not included). They would have been 'men of Culham.'