

Daniel BAXTER of Avening And Stonehouse, Gloucestershire

Daniel, the fourth child and only son of John and Ann Baxter, was born 25 May 1792. All of the children were baptized at the Rodborough Tabernacle – Mary (1787), Ann (1789), Elizabeth (1790), and Daniel (1792).¹

The great non-conformist George Whitefield preached at Minchinhampton Common in 1739 and this inspired others to build the Tabernacle in 1749. It subsequently “became an important and successful congregation, and people walked for many miles to attend services here.”² A Sunday school was established at the Tabernacle in 1780.³

No marriage has been found for John and Ann Baxter and there are few clues as to where the family were living. The baptism record for their daughter, Ann, in 1789, recorded that she was born in the parish of Stonehouse. Census records for 1851 and 1861 record the birthplace of their son Daniel, in 1792, as Brimscombe in the parish of Minchinhampton. Nothing further is known for the other two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth.

In the Land Tax records a John Baxter is listed as an occupier of land owned by “Mrs Little for Benjamin Coles” in the parish of Bisley in 1781 and 1782. After this the dwelling appears to ‘vanish’ as there are no equivalent entries in the 1783 and 1784 returns.⁴

When Daniel Baxter married Elizabeth Spearing by Licence on 10 December 1815 he was of the parish of Minchinhampton⁵ and was working at the Longford Mills.⁶ The witnesses, Harriet and George Spearing, appear to be Elizabeth’s siblings. Both George and Elizabeth are mentioned in their father’s 1839 will – Thomas Spearing of Stonehouse – but no mention of Harriet.⁷ On 26 June 1834 a Harriet Sperring, spinster, aged 33 years was buried at Cirencester.⁸

The first three children of Daniel and Elizabeth Baxter were baptised at Minchinhampton – George (1819), Mary (1822) and Elizabeth (1823). A baptism record for another daughter, Harriet, born at Minchinhampton about 1821, has not been found.⁹ During this period Daniel was a ‘Dyer’ at Longfords¹⁰ and this involved colouring fabric prior to weaving.¹¹ At the time Longford’s was one of the largest suppliers of cloth to the East India Company.¹²

¹ Non-Conformist Baptism Register for Rodborough Tabernacle (Calvinistic Methodist)

² History of the Rodborough Tabernacle - <http://www.rodboroughstab.org.uk/history/>

³ Stroud Local History Society – Rodborough Tabernacle - <http://www.stroudlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/research/rodborough-tab/>

⁴ Gloucestershire Archives Reference Q/REL/1/Bisley

⁵ Minchinhampton Marriage Register

⁶ Gloucester Journal 01 Jan 1816 Marriage Notice “Last week, at Stroud, Mr Baxter, Jnr., of Longford Mills, to Miss Sperring, of Nailsworth, in this county.”

⁷ Gloucestershire Archives – Consistory Court of Gloucester – Probate Documents No.93 Ref 65232 dated 05 May 1840 Thomas Spearing of Stonehouse

⁸ Cirencester Burial Register

⁹ Harriet first appears in the 1851 census with her sisters Ellen and Olive. When she died in 1868, she was a spinster and probate was granted to her father, Daniel Baxter of Longford’s, Cloth Manufacturer.

¹⁰ Minchinhampton Baptism Register

¹¹ World Through The Lens – Obscure Old English Census Occupations <http://www.worldthroughthelens.com/family-history/old-occupations.php>

¹² History of Longfords Mill by Ian Mackintosh <http://stroud-textile.org.uk/history/history-of-longfords-mill/>

By 1827 the family had moved to Horsley where Daniel worked as an accountant. Two more children were baptised there – Edward (1827) and Ellen (1828).¹³

In 1830 Daniel is listed as the occupier of a house at Avening that belonged to Mary Overbury. In the same return a John Baxter, “late Grange Abbot”, is the occupier of a Mill, Shops and land that also belonged to Mary Overbury. In addition John occupied another Mill and a house owned by William George.¹⁴

This John Baxter was described in the 1830 Pigot’s Directory as a Woollen Manufacturer of Avening Mill. He was working in partnership with George William Saunders and William Mansfield and they also had premises at No.61 Aldermanbury in the City of London. The partnership was dissolved by mutual consent on 25 February 1833.¹⁵

On 20 February 1833 Daniel Baxter witnessed the last will and testament of John Baxter. Relatives named in the will were his wife, Mary, and his “two eldest children Marianne and Edwin” who were asked to “do the best they can for the rest of my family.”¹⁶ John and Mary had three younger sons and they were baptised at Horsley – Charles (1816), Alfred (1818) and Frederic (1821).¹⁷ John was buried at Avening on 30 March 1833 aged 49 years.¹⁸

Under the terms of the will the estate was to be converted into money and divided equally between his wife Mary and the two eldest children. The sale of the “Avening Great Mill” was advertised for the 30th day of July 1833 and to view the property “apply to Mr Daniel Baxter, at the Dwelling House adjoining the Meeting-House at Avening.”¹⁹ The relationship between this John Baxter and Daniel is unknown.

Another four children of Daniel and Elizabeth Baxter were baptised at Avening – Fanny (1830), Daniel (1832), Ann Olive (1836) and John Henry (1838). Daniel was a clothier and innkeeper.²⁰

The tithe apportionment map dated 27 September 1838 records that Daniel Baxter and Thomas Bradshaw were the occupiers of Plot No.451 at Avening and that the land was owned by William Playne.²¹ From 1835 to 1840 Daniel was entitled to vote for the local parliamentary candidate by virtue of a “freehold house and garden” at Shortwood Green in Avening.²²

On 30 December 1839 Daniel was a witness at the wedding of Marianne Baxter to Edmund Browne Kibble at Minchinhampton.²³ Marianne was the only daughter of the late Mr John Baxter, of Avening.²⁴

Daniel’s youngest son, John Henry, was buried at Avening on 12 March 1840 aged 21 months.²⁵

¹³ Horsley Baptism Register

¹⁴ Gloucestershire Archives Land Tax Registers 1830-1831 for Avening – Ref Q/REL/1/Longtree. The 1829 return shows Mary Overbury as the owner and occupier of the land.

¹⁵ London Gazette 03 March 1833 page 452

¹⁶ Prerogative Court of Canterbury Will – National Archives Ref Prob 11/1814

¹⁷ Horsley Baptism Register

¹⁸ Avening Burial Register

¹⁹ Gloucester Chronicle 06 Jul 1833 Sale Notice

²⁰ Avening Baptism Register

²¹ National Archives Reference IR29/13/2 Tithe Apportionment Map for Avening 1838

²² Gloucestershire Electoral Registers: Shortwood Green listed under Horsley 1835-1836 and Avening 1837-1840 (Longtree Hundred)

²³ Minchinhampton Marriage Register

²⁴ Gloucester Journal 04 Jan 1840 Marriage at Minchinhampton – Edmund Kibble to Marianne Baxter

²⁵ Avening Burial Register

In the 1841 Census the family were living in Bell Street, Avening. Daniel was a woollen cloth worker and only the four youngest children were present.²⁶ No definite trace has been found for three of the five elder children – George (22 years), Mary (19), and Elizabeth (18). Harriet (20) may have been an assistant draper living with the family of James and Anne Downing at Cheltenham.²⁷ Edward, a 15 year old apprentice, was with the family of his maternal uncle, George Spearing, at Stonehouse, Gloucestershire.²⁸

In December 1842, Edward, recorded as 'Edwin' of Ironmonger-lane, London, married Fanny Whittard, the youngest daughter of Mr Whittard, hatter of Cheltenham, at London.²⁹

Edward's older brother, George, married Emma, the eldest daughter of Charles Prouse, at the Zion Chapel in Bristol on 24 November 1847. George was a grocer at Bristol-bridge.³⁰

Their sister Mary married James Foxwell, a French Polisher and son of James Foxwell, a musician, at Leckhampton, east of Gloucester, on 07 July 1850. The witnesses were John Fletcher and Mary Ann Birt.³¹

In the 1851 Census Daniel and Elizabeth were living at "Jackalls" in Avening with their youngest son, Daniel Jnr and four lodgers. Three unmarried daughters, Harriet (30), Ellen (22) and Olive (16) were lodging with the family of Elijah and Hester Glastonbury nearby. Both Daniel and Olive were involved with the cloth factory. No trace has been found of Elizabeth (28 years).

Ellen Baxter married Noah Essex, a schoolmaster of Camberwell, Surrey and son of Samuel Essex, shoemaker at Cheltenham St Mary on 05 January 1853. Her address at the time was Osmond Terrace and the witnesses were Daniel Baxter and Elizabeth Baxter.³²

Elizabeth Baxter married James Warner, a baker of Gloucester and son of George Warner, shoemaker, at Cheltenham St Luke on 24 February 1861. Her address at the time was Landford Street. Daniel was a Factory Foreman and the witnesses were James Foxwell and Sarah Warner.³³

In the 1861 Census Daniel and Elizabeth were living at Longfords in Minchinhampton with their two youngest unmarried children – Daniel Jnr and Ann Olive. Both Daniels were described as "Overseer at Woollen Cloth Factory". Their older daughter, Harriet, also unmarried and a draper's assistant, was living with James and Annie E. Thompson in High Street, Minchinhampton.³⁴

Daniel's eldest daughter, Harriet Ann, of Minchinhampton, was buried at Avening on 24 March 1868 aged 49 years. Daniel's wife, Elizabeth, was also buried at Avening on 19 February 1870 aged 74 years.³⁵

In the 1871 Census Daniel, unemployed and a widower, is living with his unmarried housekeeper daughter, Olive, and a lodger, at Thrupp in the Frome Valley slightly southeast of Stroud.³⁶ Daniel Jnr, still unmarried and a manager at Avening, was visiting Mary Ritchie, an unmarried 60 year old annuitant, at Ham Mills in Stroud.³⁷

²⁶ 1841 Census Avening, Gloucestershire

²⁷ 1841 Census Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

²⁸ 1841 Census Stonehouse

²⁹ Bristol Mercury 17 Dec 1842 Marriage notice

³⁰ Bristol Mercury 27 Nov 1847 Marriage notice

³¹ Leckhampton St Peter Marriage Register

³² Cheltenham St Mary Marriage Register

³³ Cheltenham St Luke Marriage Register

³⁴ 1861 Census Longfords, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire

³⁵ Avening Burial Register, Gloucestershire

³⁶ 1871 Census Thrupp, Stroud, Gloucestershire

³⁷ 1871 Census Stroud, Gloucestershire

In the 1881 Census Daniel, now 89 years of age, is living at Fort William Butter Row, Rodborough with his children, Daniel Jnr and Olive. Daniel Snr is “formerly Woollen Cloth Manufacturer” and Daniel Jnr a “Commission Agent”. Olive is a “Housekeeper and Washerwoman.”³⁸

Daniel died at Fort William on 31 August 1881 in his 90th year³⁹ and was buried at Avening on 05 September 1881.⁴⁰

³⁸ 1881 Census Fort William Butter Row Rodborough, Gloucestershire

³⁹ Gloucester Citizen 03 Sep 1881 Death notice

⁴⁰ Avening Burial Register