

Alfred Groves and Sons Ltd. are pleased to be associated with the following article, which records the history of the Groves family from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century. Rarely has one family been associated with the stonemason's craft for so long a period and contributed so much to the appearance of the present-day Cotswold towns and villages. The next two hundred years of the Groves family history will appear in a future issue of this journal.

The Groves Family of Milton Cotswold Stonemasons for 400 Years

NORMAN FROST

Introduction

After a life in the armed forces, I came to Milton under Wychwood in 1968 to run the post office and grocery stores. I was able to pursue my interest in local history and old buildings, thanks to the kindness and interest of the people of Milton, and soon became aware of the firm of Alfred Groves and Sons, specialists in high-quality building and restoration work. This had been founded by members of a family who had lived here since the time of the first Queen Elizabeth. Although the family name no longer exists in the village, many people living in Milton now are direct descendants and the company is still owned by the family of Samuel Groves, the last of that name in the business. My search for information has also led me to contact many people bearing the Groves name in the USA (where a Groves Society exists), Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

With so many local people employed in the building trade, the Groves family has had a great influence on village life over the years, as well as on buildings for many miles around. They were not a titled family with a large estate. Their history is that of a family of artisans, farmers, often farm

labourers and house servants, some of them even receiving assistance under the provisions of the Poor Law. But they were always at the core of village life, along with other equally old families such as Rawlins, Seacole, Barnes, Burson, Silman, Shayler and Mace, some of whom married into the Groves family.

Since the fortunes of the family and of the firm are based solidly upon the local building stone, a brief consideration of this is relevant.

Milton Stone

The Cotswold Hills make up the central part of the Jurassic limestone belt which runs north-east south-west from the Yorkshire Wolds to Portland. From the earliest times this has provided valuable stone for building and other purposes. In the past, many local quarries were quite shallow and only used intermittently, producing stone for walling and road surfacing as required. Few of these are used today and they survive as shallow, grassed depressions in many fields adjacent to the A361 between Burford and Chipping Norton. The much more valuable stone, freestone, was to be found on Milton Downs to the east of A424 between Burford and Milton; similarly, west of A424 and north of Taynton lay a group of quarries known collectively as Taynton quarries. Several more freestone quarries were in use in the area but these two groups are the ones with which this account is concerned.

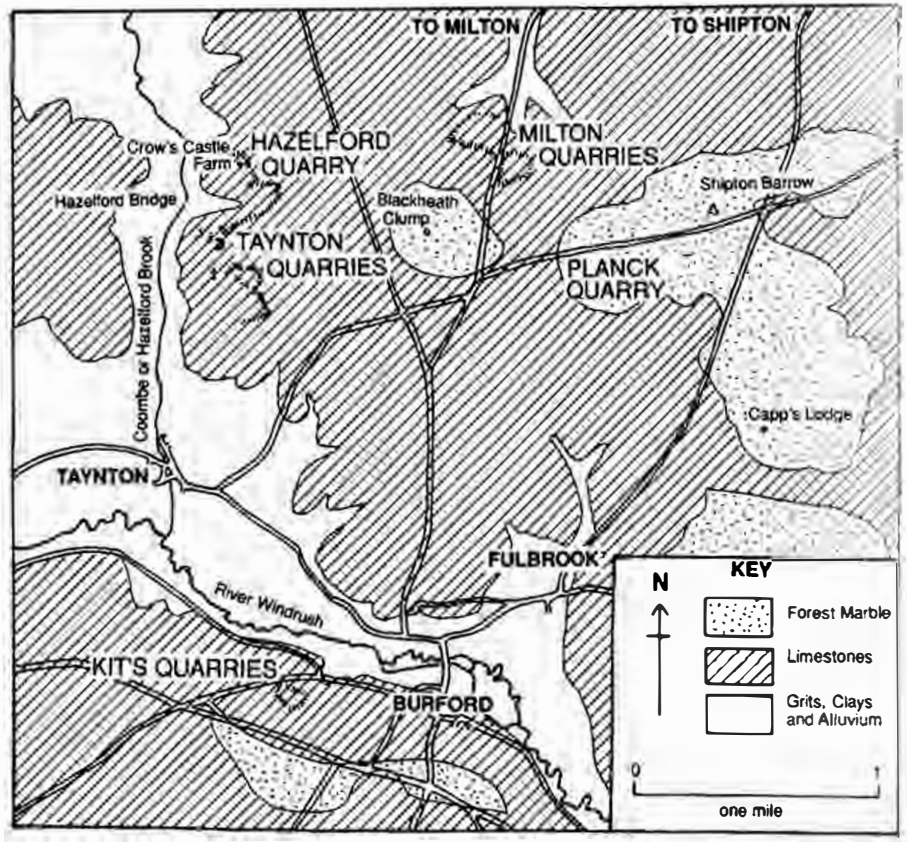
From the Merton College Rolls of 1307 we see that Hugo Gryffyn had the Milton quarries, and he is mentioned again in 1310. The name Griffin is still found locally as well as among the slatters in the Stonesfield quarries. Headington quarries near Oxford supplied much of the stone for the Oxford colleges and churches but the demand was so great that additional stone had to be bought from Taynton and Milton, for Magdalen and Christ Church colleges, as well as St. Mary's church, Thame and St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

Over the years it was found that, despite their proximity, Milton stone was inferior to that from Taynton. Although it was a good colour and carved well, when used for exterior work the surface of Milton stone hardened and flaked off thus needing replacement after a relatively short time at no little cost. This fact was sometimes forgotten in Oxford with the passage of years and some heavy expenses for repairs were incurred. The eventual unpopularity of Milton stone may have been a contributory factor in the closure of Milton quarries. Another reason was the depth at which the freestone lay, as forty-five feet of overburden had to be cleared before the stone could be quarried. As we will see later, Alfred Groves and Son were well aware of the deficiencies of Milton stone and by 1720 were leasing Hazelford Quarry which lies right alongside Taynton Quarries. Hazelford was still producing stone for Groves in the early years of the present century.

The earliest records – John and Alice Grove

By the reign of Queen Elizabeth the First in the second half of the sixteenth

Map showing the position of Groves' quarries (Milton, Planck and Hazelford) in relation to Burford and Taynton quarries



century, great families no longer felt the need to live protected by castle walls, but demanded more comfortable accommodation in fine houses. The bigger and grander the house, the more it added to the family's standing. Many old houses were rebuilt in stone and many new ones constructed: the building of the present Shipton Court belongs to this period. The demand for building stone was immense and there was plenty of work for masons in areas like the Cotswolds. Local legend has it that the Grove (or Groave) family came to Milton from Chipping Norton to work in the Milton quarries. So far I have not been able to verify this as an ordinary artisan family left few traces, but on 15 January 1576 the Shipton parish register recorded the baptism of a daughter Agnes to John and Alice Grove. This was the first appearance of the family name since the keeping of the parish records had begun in 1538. The records appear in Shipton parish papers since Milton at

that time was a township within the great ecclesiastical parish of Shipton.

Over the next quarter-century, eight more children were born to John and Alice Grove, making a family of four boys and five girls altogether (see family tree A). The eldest boy John died only four weeks after his baptism, while only the death is recorded in 1600 of the youngest child Frisses, an abbreviation of the name Frideswide. The surviving eldest son Andrew evidently married in another parish, probably that of his wife Elizabeth but the Shipton baptismal records show them living at Ramsden, which also formed part of the parish of Shipton, at the birth of their three children William, Andrew and Katherine. Family tree A shows that between 1629 and 1635, all five of this family had died, the children in their teens, with Andrew and Katherine being orphaned first.

With the exception of Leonard, there are no further entries in the parish registers pertaining to the children of John and Alice Grove. John is described as 'an old blind man of Milton' in his burial record of 29 March, 1627, and his wife Alice as 'an old poor widow of Milton' when she was buried four years later on 8 April 1631. From the baptismal records of their children one could deduce that John and Alice had been born around 1550, so that at their deaths they could both have been in their late seventies, thus meriting the description 'old'.

Leonard Grove and his family

Leonard (1594-1662), sometimes spelled Lennord, was John and Alice's youngest son (family tree A). Once again we have no local record of his marriage so his wife probably came from another parish. (It is still common practice, as it was then, to be married in the bride's home town or village.) What is so strange to us is that not once when Leonard registered the baptism of his four children was the name of his wife recorded. His eldest daughter Elizabeth, born in 1622, had an illegitimate daughter Ann when she was thirty-two and died three years later. Little Ann was probably raised by Leonard and his wife, and died a spinster at the age of forty-four. Their second daughter Katherine married Richard Clift of Shorthampton, where they then lived. Clift appears later as executor of Leonard's will. Leonard's third child, a son, William was baptised in 1630 and married Elizabeth Phipps (alias Weaver) of Milton when he was thirty-one. It is through this marriage that the Groves family line continues to the present day. (Several members of Elizabeth's family seem to use the alias Weaver, for reasons unknown.) Leonard's last child, Marie was born in 1635 and died a spinster at the age of twenty-five, being buried at Shipton.

In February 1641 by order of Parliament, all men were asked to sign a document to make known their opposition to the King's attempts to further catholicise the church services. 'Lennord Grove' with 91 other Milton men (just about the whole male population of the township) duly made their protests. Leonard's life of sixty-eight years must have seemed quite eventful, having lived during the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I, the Civil War

and the Commonwealth, as well as the restoration of Charles II. It must have been a terrifying day during the Civil War when the King's soldiers came to Milton and shot Thomas Rawlins, who had added his name to Leonard's on the Protestation Rolls three years before.

It is through Leonard Groves' burial record that we have our first definite clue as to his trade: he is described as 'a mason of Milton'. As was customary, an inventory of Leonard's possessions was made after his death, and a copy of this list still exists in the Probate Record Office. It reads:

Leonard Groves, of Milton paroch' de Shipton, his Enmetary made the 27th day of September in the yeare of oure lord God 1664

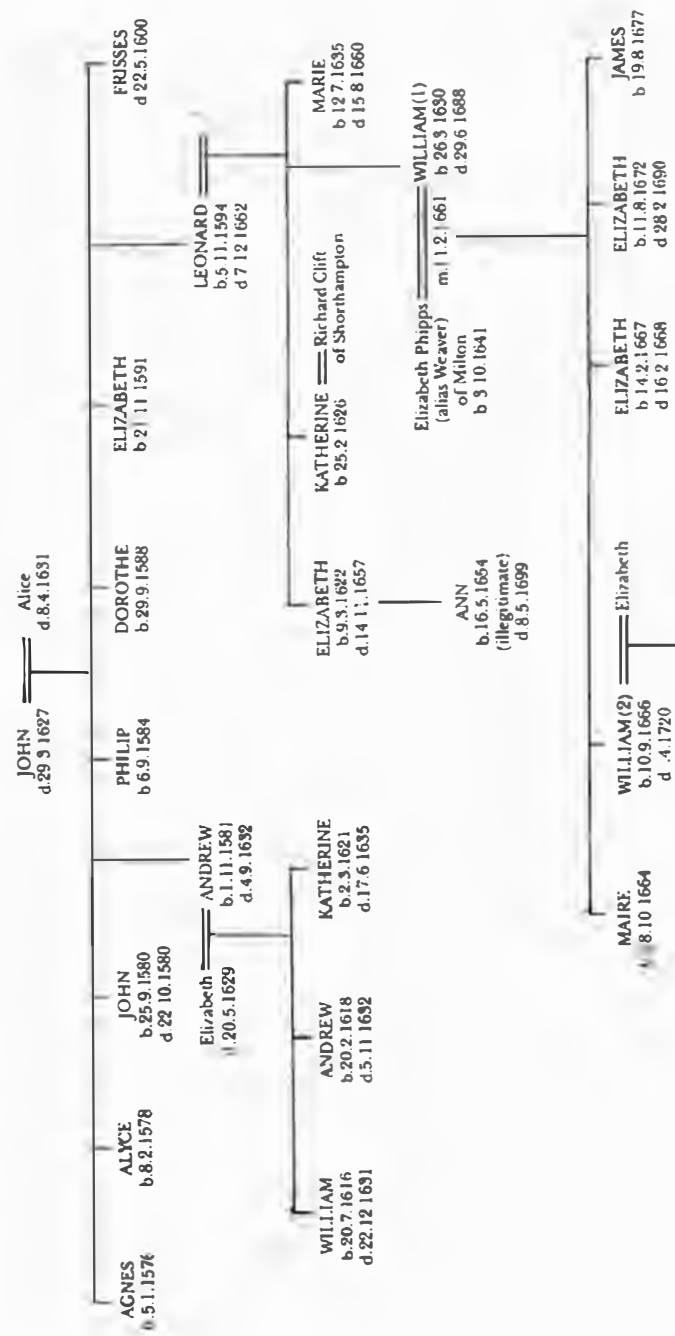
his purs and Gordell and wearing Clothes	0- 3- 4
Item the lease	3- 0- 0
In the hall one Cobard one tabell bord	
to Cottels one pewter platter one flaging	
to potes	0-[illegible]
In the Butterry	
one drinke Barrill one donbener(?) one Ceaver	0- 3- 0
Item for one cow	1- 0- 0
one Bedsteed one flocke bed one feather pellow	
one sheet to Blancotes to Coverleds	0-18- 0
and all other lomber what soever	0- 0- 6
The whole sum is	5-19-10

Nicolas Perry
Robert Patten
John Bailies

(Note: gordell = girdle, cottels = kettles, flaging = flagon, donbener = a dough-trough?, ceaver = sieve).

From this inventory, some insight into Leonard's life and condition may be deduced. The residual value of the lease of his dwelling was £3, indicating that it was probably a stone cottage. It seems to me that one would not pay such a large sum as this was in those days for anything other than a stone structure. It had at least two rooms. Today there is considerable evidence of these former two-room structures in the village of Milton, dating back to the mid-sixteenth century. A timber structure of this period would be light and flimsy, probably lasting only for the lifetime of the occupants; any evidence of it would only remain if the timbers were incorporated into the house later rebuilt in stone. I know of only one example still existing. Leonard probably lived in the type of cottage typical of this period with a central cross-passage, unglazed shuttered windows to front and rear of each room and with a small lean-to building at the back for cooking purposes. We just do not know where

A. THE FAMILY OF JOHN AND ALICE GROVE



b = date of baptism
d = date of burial

this cottage was in Milton, which even a hundred years later can be seen on Jefferys' map of 1768 to have been still a very scattered village, with four isolated groups of dwellings, Upper End (now Upper Milton), Lower End (Frog Lane), Green Lane and Dick's Lane (High St.)

The contents of Leonard's cottage seem sparse enough but in comparison with some of his village neighbours he would have lived in fairly comfortable circumstances as befitted a craftsman, a little above the peasant level. One must also take into account that fact that the inventory was taken nearly two years after Leonard's death. In the way of human nature I am quite sure that many small but useful items would have disappeared in that time, including the tools of his trade which would have been very useful to his family. It is unfortunate that no information exists about his wife so her part in his life is quite unknown.

William Grove(1) and Elizabeth Phipps

Returning now to Leonard's son William(1), he married Elizabeth Phipps (alias Weaver) on 11 February, 1661 and they went on to have five children: Maire, William, two girls called Elizabeth and James. From family tree A it will be seen that the baptismal dates of William and the first Elizabeth are less than six months apart, so the boy must have been already several months old at the time. The first Elizabeth died a year and two days after her baptism and the second at age eighteen. No further records have been found of Maire and James, leaving only the eldest son William to continue the line in Milton

At this period, the mid-seventeenth century, the family's records can be quite confusing as we have grandfather, father and later, son, all called William Groves. Two of these Williams married an Elizabeth, furthermore the same two christian names appear at almost every stage throughout the continuing history of the Grove/Groves family.

William Grove(2) and Elizabeth

William(2) was baptised on 10 September 1666; the approximate date of his death is presumed from his will dated 13 April 1720 in which he describes himself as sound and perfect in memory but weak in body. A copy of the will is shown in the Appendix. It would seem from this will that he had prospered and was living in greatly different circumstances compared to his great grandfather John Grove. William not only owned a small farm in the Lower Heath at Milton but also a further house described as 'a house and ground sold to one Forde and bought back again'. He also had a lease on two quarries and owned a third. This is important information for several reasons. It shows William to be first of all a farmer; in keeping with the times farming provided the food and living for the family, a lifestyle which continued for at least four or five more generations. Apart from being a stonemason, William was also a quarryman. While quarrying and masonry were skilled trades which yielded a much better standard of living than farming alone, they were occupations which could only be pursued while work was available. Although

many stone buildings in the Cotsweld villages date from around this time, there were masons in every village, and most places had one if not several small quarries near at hand. Horse cartage was costly, so the nearest quarry that could provide the stone would be used.

From his will it is seen that William owned Planck Quarry. Planck is the term for the large flat stone slabs used for flooring in many old cottages. It was also employed to make garden walls and is still in evidence today. Planck has not been quarried since the later part of the nineteenth century and is derelict and overgrown, but it is still in the ownership of a member of the Groves family.

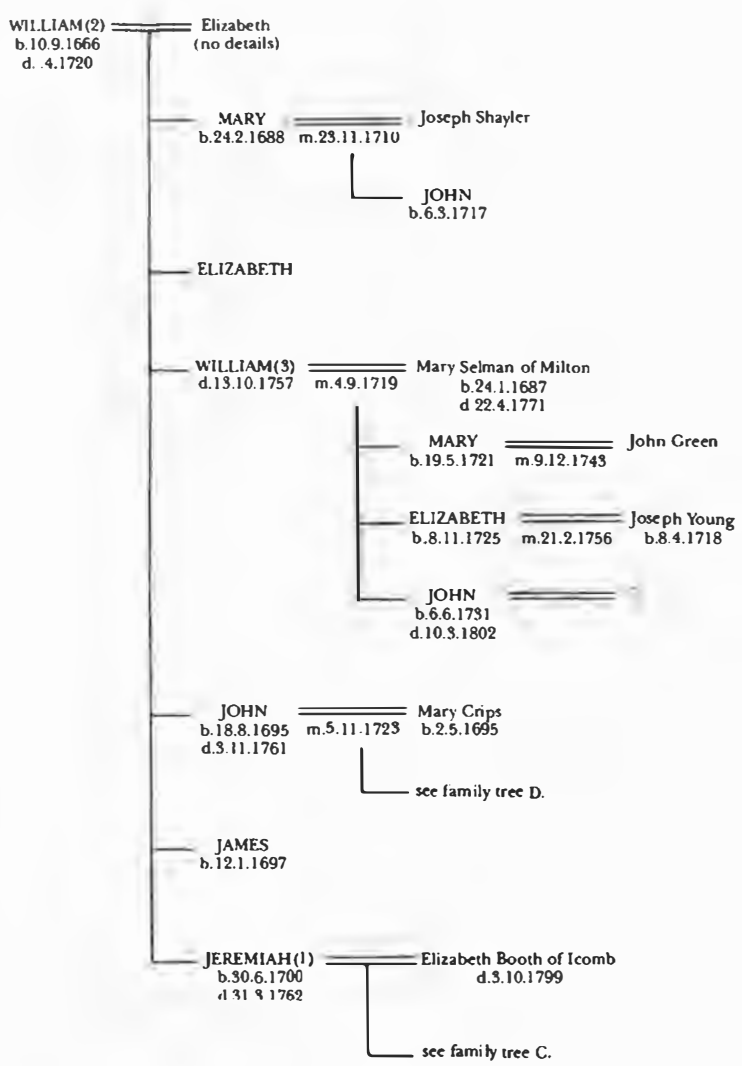
The name 'Pavement Quarry' is difficult to identify but could refer to what is now known as Milton Quarries. These are two quarries on Milton Downs quite near to Planck, said to cover twelve acres and are known to have been worked by the Groves family for many years. They have been disused since early this century, one part being now filled and returned to agriculture and the rest quite overgrown.

The other quarry leased by William was Hasleford, lying just inside the south-west boundary of Milton parish and immediately to the north of Taynton Quarries. These were freestone quarries, the best and most valuable of building stone which was hand-quarried in large blocks for later shaping by hand. The Taynton stone was always said to be superior to Milton stone which did not weather so well, although the latter was quarried only a short distance over the hill from Taynton. From this will we now know that Groves did quarry from the Taynton beds and local knowledge maintains that this continued until the beginning of the present century. Perhaps the old stories of Groves supplying inferior Milton stone as Taynton stone may not be true after all.

William's will also provides an interesting comparison with the condition of his grandfather Leonard, although money hardly figures in William's will except for four small bequests of one shilling each. The document describes his family, giving their order of birth as well as the disposal of his property. William and his wife Elizabeth had six children (family tree B), quite remarkably for those times they all appear to have survived to adulthood. Mary his eldest child was baptised in 1688 and in 1710 married Joseph Shayler, a local man whose family name still survives in this area. Seven years later they had a son, John. Mary is the only child not mentioned in William's will, although her husband Joseph received one of the shillings, which leads me to suspect that Mary may have died in or soon after childbirth. So far, no further reference to this family has been uncovered.

The next two children were Elizabeth and William(3). Their baptisms were not recorded in the Shipton parish register until much later, but as their father's will clearly indicates the order of his sons' birth they must both have been born between 1689 and 1694. In the will Elizabeth was due to receive £10 from her brother William 'at the end of twelve month next' after the decease of her mother, also named Elizabeth. (In this family of mother, aunts

B. THE FAMILY OF WILLIAM GROVE(2) AND ELIZABETH



Note: The births of Elizabeth and William(3) are recorded after the event on 11.3.1698. As the will of William(2) clearly defines the order of his family, their actual birth dates must be between 1689 and 1694.

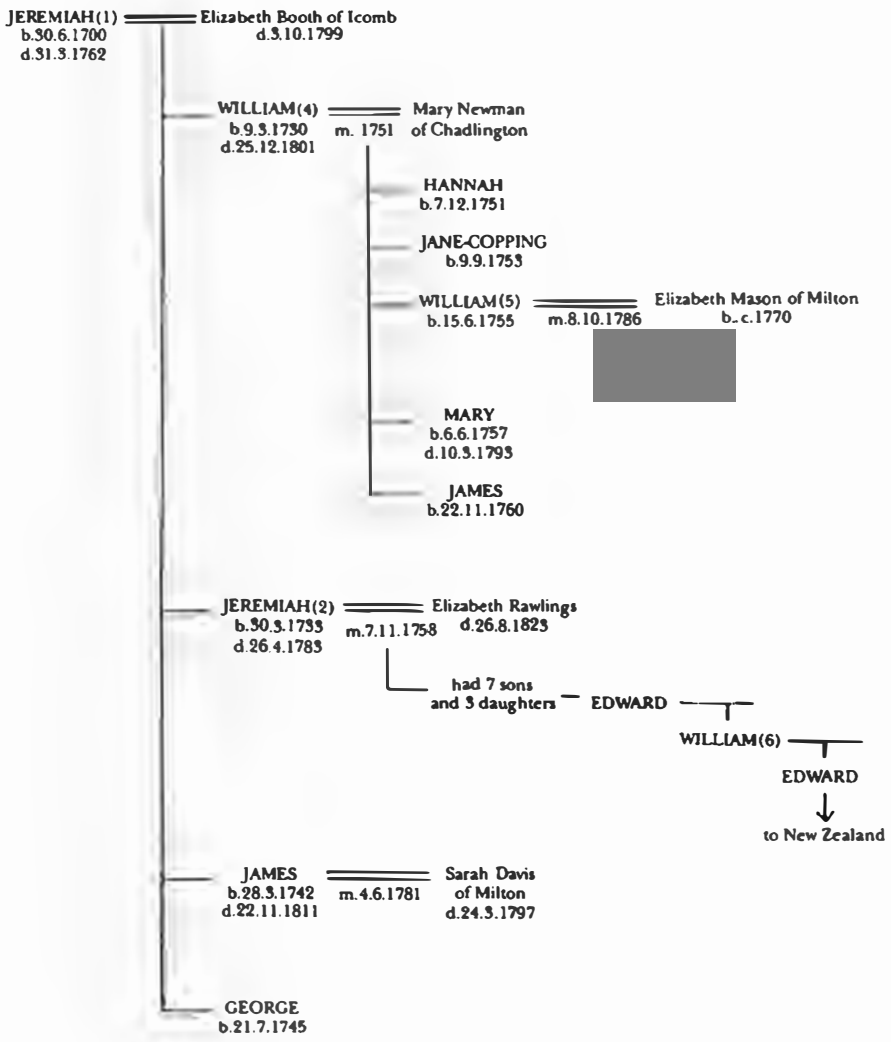
and daughters there were five Elizabeths and four Marys.) William(3) as the eldest son clearly has the lion's share of the estate. He received the house and farm in the Lower Heath and also, together with his younger brother James, a half-share each in the Pavement and Planck quarries. In 1719 he married Mary Selman (otherwise Sylman or Silman), the daughter of Richard Silman. This was a long-established Milton family whose descendants still live in the area. They had three children, the eldest of whom was Mary who married John Green in 1743. They and their descendants continued to live in the Lower Heath Farm until the mid-nineteenth century. Returning to the will of William Grove(2), he next leaves his remaining lease in Hasleford Quarry to his second son John, to be owned jointly with his mother during her lifetime and thereafter in John's sole tenure. As John and his family continue the main line of descent down to the present day I will return to them later. The third son James who, we have already seen, received a half-share with his elder brother in the Planck and Pavement quarries, was also left the other house in Milton which had been sold to the man Forde and then bought back. He was to receive the house when he had done two years' service to his mother, during which time she would find his maintenance. To date this is the last mention of James.

The youngest son of the family was Jeremiah, baptised in 1700. He was nineteen years old at the death of his father. Like his elder sister Elizabeth, he was to be paid £10 by his eldest brother William(3), twelve months after the decease of his mother. As I have so far found no record of their mother's death, I do not know when or if ever they received their ten pounds. Jeremiah did however remain in Milton and became moderately prosperous. He described himself as a yeoman although perhaps he did not technically qualify for that description. It appears that he did not rent or own enough land to be registered in the Poll Book of Freeholders of Oxfordshire of 17 April 1754 and was in fact a husbandman. His elder brothers William and John are so registered and both are recorded as having voted for Viscount Parker and Sir Edward Turner, the Whig candidates. Nevertheless, Jeremiah was a respected member of the Milton community and was an overseer of the poor. A framed document hanging in the offices of Alfred Groves and Sons dated 1740 was signed by Jeremiah in that capacity and records the binding of a poor boy of Milton to twelve years apprenticeship to a Burford broad weaver. In short, Jeremiah was continuing the family tradition as a mason and husbandman just as his brothers were doing. He was not averse to making a living where he could as Shipton records show payments to him for the supply of lime. Somewhere on his property he was operating a small lime kiln and had access to a supply of limestone, which would be a simple matter in an area where small quarries abounded.

The Family of Jeremiah Grove and Elizabeth Booth

Jeremiah Grove married Elizabeth Booth of Icomb early in the eighteenth century and had four sons, thereby creating a family line which is traceable

C. THE FAMILY OF JEREMIAH GROVE AND ELIZABETH BOOTH



to the present day as far away as New Zealand (family tree C). Their youngest son George was born in 1745 but so far no further mention of him has been found in local records. The third son James, born in 1742, married Sarah Davis of Milton.

The eldest son William(4) married Mary Newman of Chadlington in 1751 and produced two sons and three daughters. Their eldest son, another William(5) married Elizabeth Mason of Milton in 1786. Ann, the elder of *their* two daughters, married William Mullis, a wheelwright of Milton. After her husband William(5)'s death Elizabeth lived in her cottage at the far end of Green Lane where she was later joined by her grandson, William Mullis(2) and his family. After the death of his grandmother he moved to premises in the High Street where he was still continuing the wheelwright's trade in 1881. William(5)'s younger daughter Hannah married another wheelwright, William Couling (or Coulting) who also traded in Milton High Street near the Butcher's Arms. His descendants were still there at the time of the 1881 census.

Jeremiah and Elizabeth's second son Jeremiah(2) was born in 1733, married Elizabeth Rawlings in 1758 and had ten children. Very few details of them have been found but at least two daughters died in infancy. However their seventh child Edward (1770-1878) married Ann Rawlings in 1796 and had six children, two again dying in infancy. Their eldest son William(6) (1806-1878) married Ann Preston of Condicote and they lived in part of a small cottage which is still to be seen today in Upper High Street just beyond Westfields. The occupant of the other part of the cottage at that time was also named William Groves (a distant cousin) and he and his wife Catherine raised seven children. I would imagine that the rest of the village had just as much difficulty sorting out the two families as I did since both Williams were agricultural labourers or masons depending on what work was available.

William(6)'s fifth child Edward, born in 1837 and an agricultural labourer, married Eliza Ann Ryman, a dressmaker from Fifield. On the 22 November 1873 they and their five children sailed to New Zealand on the SS Invererne. Two daughters were born in New Zealand, the family prospered and their descendants still live there. The widow of one of their descendants has visited this country on several occasions and in 1990 I was able to show her the former family home and describe the old village to her. No doubt Edward's letters home persuaded his elder brother to follow them and in February 1874 Alfred Groves and his wife Leah Cox, daughter of William and Rachel Cox of the Green, Milton, sailed for New Zealand on the SS Ballochmyle together with their six children. This family too continues to live in New Zealand and together with their cousins form a large group of Milton ex-patriates.

I am sorry that this was such a long diversion, but at the time, the family of the original Jeremiah and Elizabeth Grove formed the greater part of the Grove family. I was extremely fortunate to be able to trace them through to the present day and eventually correspond with them and meet them. Now

it is time to return to Jeremiah(1)'s elder brother, John who was the second son of William Groves(2) and his wife Elizabeth (family tree B).

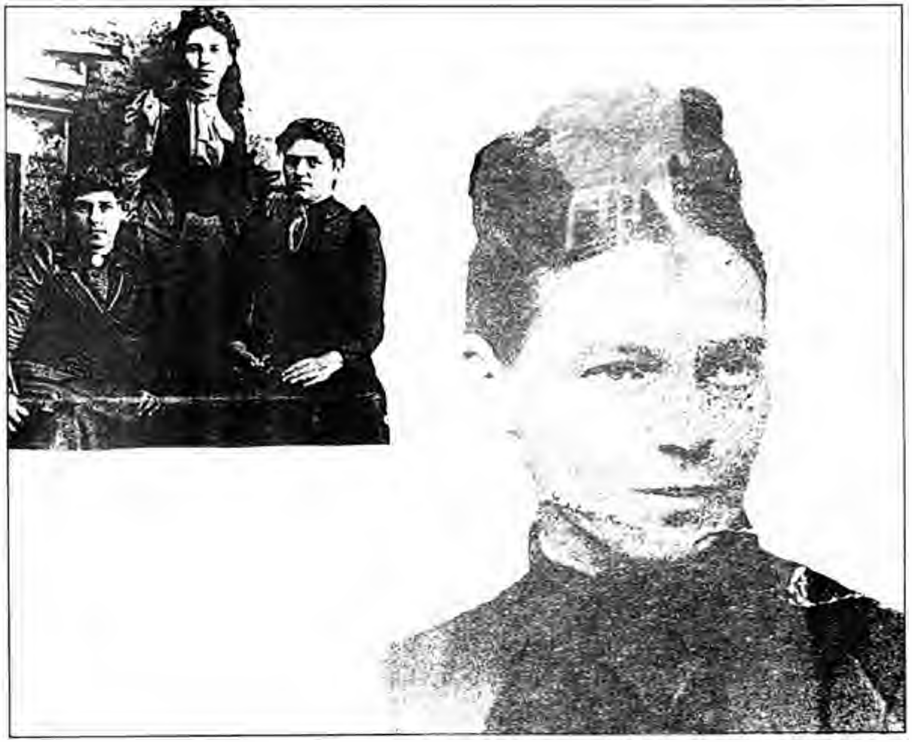
John Grove (1695-1761)

William Grove(2) in his will bequeathed to John his time and lease in Hasleford freestone quarry, modern spelling Hazelford. This lies near Crow's Castle Farm, just within the southern boundary of Milton parish. There is no doubt that this quarry was the basis of John's business. He is reputed to have been the builder of the stables at Shipton Court in 1727, quite a large undertaking for the time and there is no doubt that John called upon other members of the family to work with him. This family cooperation was normal practice since we know of actual examples. The Shipton parish records show various out-payments for works done between 1737 and 1804 by William, John and Jeremiah Groves. For instance on 14 April 1737 Shipton parish paid John 8s 6d for 'macking the bridge at Little Hill'. This must refer to the bridge in Church Road, Milton and is probably a sum for repairs only, not for building the whole bridge. In April 1746 'William Groves' was paid



An old cottage in Upper Dick's Lane (now High Street, near Westfields) Milton. In the mid-eighteenth century it was subdivided and occupied by William and Ann Groves with their six children and William and Catherine Groves and their seven children. It is now lived in by a single family.

Gertrude, Lucy and Eliza Ann Groves, daughters of Edward and Eliza Groves. The family emigrated to New Zealand on 22 November 1873 on the SS Invererne. Gertrude and Eliza Ann were born in Milton, Lucy after their arrival in New Zealand. Their father Edward was the great great grandson of Jeremiah and Elizabeth Grove. The widow of Eliza Ann's grandson visited Milton in 1990 to see the family home.



Eliza Ann Groves in later life when she was Mrs Enoch Walker of Woodville NZ

4s 0d for work done on Stoke Bridge, which may have been the same bridge that John was paid for i.e. the bridge over the Little Stoke or Littlestock stream. It was the parish responsibility to maintain the bridges within its own boundaries; according to the Milton Brooking Wardens' minutes during the nineteenth century they had the upkeep of eight bridges, most of which are readily identifiable today. On 19 April 1759 Shipton parish paid John his bill for stone supplied, and on the same day they also paid 'William' for his share of the bill: 9s 6d. In fact most of the entries refer to half bills.

W.J.Arkell in his book *Oxford Stone* states that 'there is no record of Milton stone being used in Oxford between 1525 and 1850 but about the middle of



Shipton Court Stables, reputedly built by John Groves in 1727 and restored by Alfred Groves and Sons in 1910

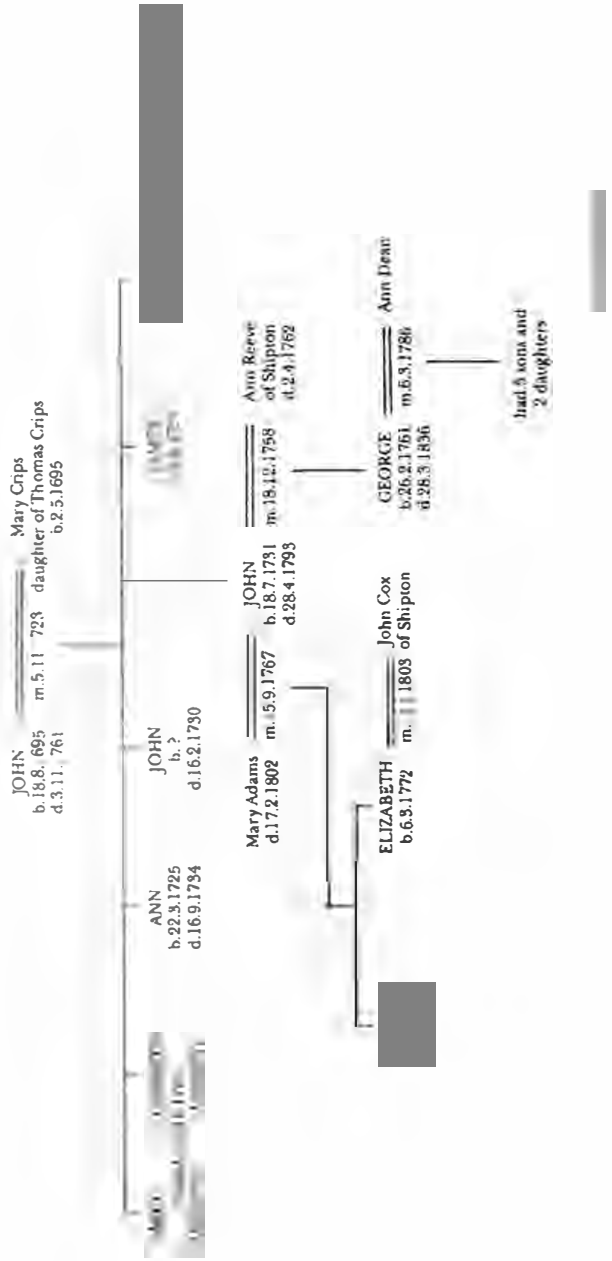
the nineteenth century great activity seems to have broken out in Milton Quarries and the stone began to come into Oxford in large quantities'. Given the fact that we know these local quarries were only worked as required it is fortunate that we have these records of the supply of Milton stone during much of the period when Milton stone was out of favour with the Oxford masons.

The 'William' receiving the earlier payments could have been John and Jeremiah's elder brother William(3), although he died in 1757 before the last payment quoted. The work done in 1759 was probably carried out by William(4), John's nephew, his brother Jeremiah's eldest boy, who would have been twenty-nine at the time. John died in 1761 but payments continue to be made to *his* eldest son John and then to his grandson George, a very good record of three generations of Milton masons. The not-so-pleasant aspect of the contemporary parish records is that seven years after William(3)'s death his widow Mary was receiving poor relief, the payments of which went on until June 1769. She died in 1771 at the age of eighty-four.

The family of John Grove and Mary Crips

John Grove had married Mary Crips, the daughter of Thomas Crips, in 1723 and they went on to have seven children (family tree D). The eldest were

D. THE FAMILY OF JOHN GROVE AND MARY CRIPS



twins, Mary and Elizabeth; Mary died unmarried at the age of thirty and Elizabeth at twelve, while a younger sister Ann died at age nine. A son John died in infancy. James married and had eight children. His three daughters died spinsters and two sons died in infancy. I have found no record of any marriage of the other sons, two of whom were buried at Shipton while the other disappears from our records.

John's youngest child Alice married Thomas Yatman of Cheltenham in 1762 where they lived afterwards. They are not featured again locally although there is an entry in the Gloucestershire Probate Records for Thomas Yatman husband of Alice Yatman (nee Groves) being granted probate of the will of the late John Groves of Milton under Wychwood on 11 April 1763. To date I have not established any relationship between Thomas Yatman and the family of that name then living in Milton although such a relationship is possible.

John's eldest surviving son born in 1731 and also named John, continued the family tradition as a mason and continued to work Hasleford Quarry. It is a pity that no records are known of these old quarries if indeed any were kept. I have however been told by Mrs Kitchen of Chipping Norton that her father Samuel Miles of Milton told her that he worked in this quarry up to the early part of this century. It is also known that the Milton quarries came into the possession of this line of the Groves family about this same time and I have documentary evidence of their being worked about the middle of the nineteenth century.

John(2) married twice: first to Ann Reeve of Shipton in 1758. They had a son George just over two years later but unfortunately Ann died the following year. In 1767 John married Mary Adams of Shipton and by her had two children, Matthew (1768) and Elizabeth (1772) who married John Cox of Shipton in 1803.

As we have already seen, both John(2) and his son George featured in the parish accounts, receiving payment for work carried out for the parish, thus carrying on the family business as stonemasons.

To be concluded

Appendix

The Will of William Grove(2)

In The Name of God Amen this thirteenth day of April one Thousand Seven hundred and Twenty I William Grove of Milton in the parish of Shipton under w.chwood in the County of Oxord (sic) Mason being wake in body

but of Sound and perfect memory thanks be given to Almighty God do make and ordaine this my will and Testamt. in manner and forme following (that is to say) first I committ my Soul into the hands of almighty God my Creator hopeing through the death and Meritts of my Saviour Jesus Christ to have for giveness of all my Sinns and my body to the Earth to be deciently Buried at the discretion of my Excetrix herein after named and As for my wordly Estate which it hath pleased God to bestow upon me I give and devise as followeth my debts and funerall Expense being first discharged Item I give and devise unto my Eldest Son William Grove the House wherein I now dwell with the outhouses backside orchard and Garden ground Cows Common and fewell in the Lower heath of Milton w.th the Appurtenences thereunto belonging at the death of his Mother he paying to my youngest Son Jeremiah Grove of Lawfull money tenn pound to him and his heires for ever at the end of twelve month next after her decease and to my Daughter Elizabeth Grove tenn pounds of Lawfull money at the end of twelve month next after her decease Itm I give unto my Son John Grove my time and Lease in Hasleford free Stone Quarry to pay himselfe the money he hath Laid down for me And when Such money So laid down Shall be to him raised there out, that then my Said Son John Grove and his mother shall have the Said freestone Quarry between them dureing the Said Lease if She Shall So long live and at the decease of his Said Mother It Shall be and remaine to my Said Son John Grove Itm I give and devise unto my Son James Grove the the House and Ground belonging thereunto which I Sold to one Forde and bought it againe of the Said Forde when he Shall have done his Mother two years Service She finding him maintenance for the Said terme to him the Said James Grove and his heires for ever. Itm I give and devise unto my Said Eldest Son Willm Grove and my third Son James Grove my time in my pavemt. Quarry Equally between them and in my planck Quarry Itm I give unto my Son in Law Joseph Shayler one Shilling of Lawfull money at twelve months end next after my decease Itm I give unto my daughter in Law Mary Grove one shilling of Lawfull money at twelve month end next after my decease And Lastly I doe make constitute and ordaine my Loveing wife Elizabeth Grove Whole Execritrix of this my will and testamt. and all my Goods Cattle of what nature and kinde soever undevised I doe give and devise unto her my Said wife and all wills by me made heretofore I do utterly revoke and do publish and declare this my will to be my Last will and Testamt. In witness whereof I have hereunto Set my hand and Seale the day and year above written Signed Sealed and published by the Testator in the presence of us

George White
Mary M Hollis
her marke
Tho Morton

April 1720

Willam Grove

Granted Probate 27 April 1720 to Elizabeth Grove.

Acknowledgements
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I would also like to thank the staff of Alfred Groves and Sons who have done so much to help me prepare this history of the family who were so important to the economy and welfare of Milton under Wychwood.

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This curious stone vessel standing 8in high is the largest of a set of three found in Milton Quarries by a labourer, George Groves in 1814. Their origin and use were unknown but they were illustrated in Skelton's Antiquities of Oxfordshire, 1823. They were presented to the Revd Phillimore, then Vicar of Shipton.

Death by Misadventure

TOM MCQUAY

During the hundred years 1568-1668 the Shipton under Wychwood burial register [1] was kept with great care and the vicars' notes and comments are the source material for this paper. At that time Shipton parish also included Milton, Lyneham, Leafield, Langley, Ramsden and Bruern. The total parish population, assessed by multiplying the decennial averages of baptisms by thirty,[2] appears to have been 800 in 1568 and 1250 in 1668, an average of approximately 1000. There were 2980 burials in that hundred years with thirty seven entries indicating a violent death.

Eleven people died as the result of falls. Six drowned including two possible suicides and there were three other probable suicides. Five were slain, three died travelling, two were scalded, two defy classification and there were five Civil War fatalities.

Falls
Carting accidents at harvest time account for five of the eleven deaths in this group, such as 'a husbandman that tooke his death by a fall from his carte' and 'Thomas Greene of Shipton who tooke his death by the fall of corne upon hym from a carte'. One of these accidents was in the month of June, three in August and one in September. And in September 1618 'falling downe from a lofte dyed immediately' records yet another harvest fatality.

Master John Ardes 'was kild by a faul from his horse gallowping from Chippingnorton late in the evning' and John Lea 'tooke his death by the fall of a skaffould whereon he stoode as hee was building an house', while another 'householder who as hee was digging stones out of the myne the earth fell doune upon hym and kild hym'.

Two appear to have been drunk when they fell. One unfortunate gardener 'fell downe a pair of stayers being as it is reported drunke and brak his head and so died' and Leonard Price in 1620 'being drunked fell doune on his taylers sheres and so was slaine'.

Drowning and Suicide
Of the six deaths from drowning, two were children: a three-year-old was found drowned at Bruern and little Anne Rafe 'drouned in a payle of water' at Lyneham in 1639. Two were bathing fatalities in the Evenlode in summer, one at Chilson, and in July 1625 'a youth of Shipton who venturing to farr