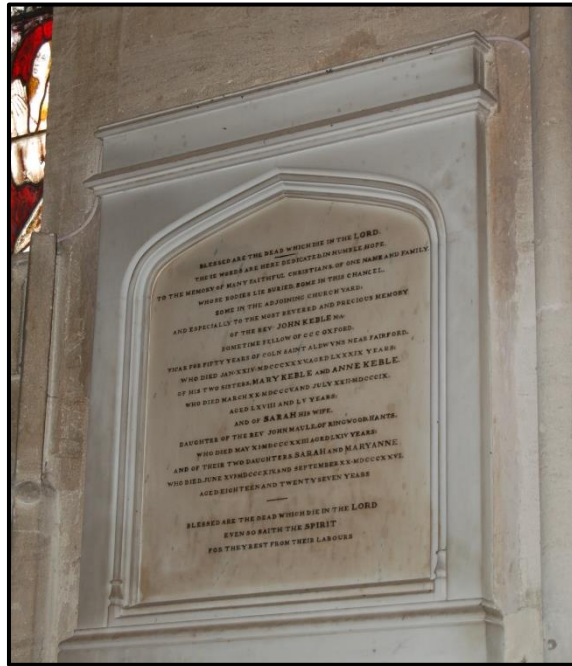


THE MONUMENTS OF St MARY'S CHURCH, FAIRFORD - 7

THE KEBLE FAMILY



The name of the Reverend John Keble is well known as a poet, a theologian, and the co-founder of the Oxford Movement which had a major influence on the practices of the Church of England during the 19th Century. This monument commemorates John Keble's parents, aunts and sisters.

The John Keble recorded on the monument near the altar in St Mary's church can be traced back to Thomas Keble of Eastleach who died in or about 1560. This particular line of Kebles moved from Eastleach to Lechlade, and then to Fairford. The first record of a Keble in the Fairford parish register does not appear until 9 February 1742 with the baptism of Mary, the daughter of John and Elizabeth. This John Keble was a wealthy maltster and it was he who built Keble House (then called Court Close) on London Road in Fairford in about 1772. John died on 7 July 1780 and his wife Elizabeth 11 years later, after which their son John (the first Keble mentioned on this monument) inherited his parent's estate.

John Keble junior was baptised on 12 June 1745 at Fairford. He was in fact the second son named John born to John and Elizabeth; a child was baptised John on 21 October 1743 but died in May the following year. It was not unusual in the 18th and 19th centuries to name a subsequent child with the same Christian name as a child who had died very young. John presumably attended Farmor's School in Fairford before enrolling at Corpus Christi College, Oxford in January 1763. He was awarded a BA in 1766 and an MA three years later. John was ordained deacon on 11 March 1770 and priest 26 May 1771, however, it was not until September 1776 that he was given his first parish when he was appointed the rector of Little Staughton in Bedfordshire. In 1781 he became vicar of Blewbury near Didcot but on 13 June 1782 he was instituted as vicar of Coln St Aldwyns where he stayed for 53 years, while still remaining vicar of Blewbury until 1824.

On 8 December 1785 the Reverend John Keble married Sarah, the daughter of John Maule the rector of Ringwood in Hampshire. Between 1790 and 1799 Sarah gave birth to five children: Elizabeth, John, Thomas, Sarah and Mary Ann. Both John (junior) and Thomas were educated at Corpus Christi



Commemorative window to
 Revd. John Keble
 1745-1835
 Coln St Aldwyns

College like their father and both became very well-known clergymen. John was appointed as curate at Eastleach Turville in 1816 while Thomas started his career as curate at Sherborne before becoming vicar of Bisley. John was appointed as a curate at Hursley in Hampshire in 1825 and was appointed stipendiary curate to his father at Coln St Aldwyns in 1831. A pair of windows in the chancel of St John the Baptist in Coln St Aldwyns commemorate father and son's ministry.

Two of John (senior) and Sarah's three daughters are also commemorated on the monument at Fairford. Both girls, like their siblings, were privately baptised (presumably by their father) soon after birth and were publicly baptised a few months later.

The eldest daughter, Elizabeth, suffered from ill health for much of her life and spent her final years living with her brother John and his wife Charlotte at Hursley until her death on 7 August 1860.

John Keble senior's sisters Mary and Ann are also mentioned on the monument but their dates of death are at variance with their burials recorded in the Fairford parish register. On the monument it is stated that Mary died on 20 March 1805 at the age of 68 but her burial is recorded in the parish register as 25 March 1809. As she was 68 when she died and she was baptised on 9 Feb 1742 then this would confirm the year of her death as 1809. Similarly her sister Anne is recorded on the memorial as dying on 22 July 1809 at the age of 55 whereas the parish register lists her burial as 27 July 1804 which tallies better with her baptism on 4 April 1750.

The text of the monument at Fairford reads:

**BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD.
 THESE WORDS ARE HERE DEDICATED IN HUMBLE HOPE,
 TO THE MEMORY OF MANY FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS, OF ONE NAME AND FAMILY,
 WHOSE BODIES LIE BURIED, SOME IN THIS CHANCEL,
 SOME IN THE ADJOINING CHURCHYARD:
 AND ESPECIALLY TO THE MOST REVERED AND PRECIOUS MEMORY
 OF THE REV JOHN KEBLE M.A.
 SOMETIME FELLOW OF CCC OXFORD.
 VICAR FOR FIFTY YEARS OF COLN SAINT ALDWYNS NEAR FAIRFORD.
 WHO DIED JAN. XXIV. MDCCCXXXV. AGED LXXXIX YEARS:
 OF HIS TWO SISTERS, MARY KEBLE AND ANNE KEBLE,
 WHO DIED MARCH XX. MDCCCXV. AND JULY XXII. MDCCCXIX
 AGED LXVIII AND LV YEARS:
 AND OF SARAH HIS WIFE,
 DAUGHTER OF THE REV JOHN MAULE, OF RINGWOOD, HANTS.
 WHO DIED MAY XI. MDCCCXXIII AGED LXIV YEARS:
 AND OF THEIR TWO DAUGHTERS, SARAH AND MARY ANNE
 WHO DIED, JUNE XVI. MDCCCXIV. AND SEPTEMBER XX. MDCCCXXVI.
 AGED EIGHTEEN AND TWENTY SEVEN YEARS
 BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD.

 EVEN SO SAITH THE SPIRIT
 FOR THEY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS**

A more recent memorial to the Reverend John Keble (1792-1866) can be found above the choir stalls.