

Grave of the Month

Richard Wickens 1851-1926

Richard Wickens was born in Speen to a family who lived in Newbury. In 1874 he married Eliza Bridgeman in Kingsclere. Richard's father was a Carpenter. Richard and his brother Charles also became carpenters.

Both brothers lived most of their lives in Trafalgar Place, behind Eight Bells Inn, Bartholomew Street. Richard and Eliza had three children Emily, Winifred and Richard.

Eliza died in 1918. Richard had moved to 10, Kimbers Almshouses by 1921. At that time these almshouses were in what is now the main Post Office car park.

On Christmas Eve morning in 1926 Richard went for a walk along by the canal. He had bad arthritis and

used a stick. No-one saw the accident, but local schoolboys spotted the body in the water. The body was still warm when they pulled him out of the water. The verdict was "Accidental death from shock following immersion through falling into Kennet and Avon Canal"

His son Richard went on to be Mayor of Newbury in 1949.



Wickens family: Eliza, Emily, Richard, Winifred, father Richard