

Alfred May



Born in the Apr-Jun quarter of 1860 at Burneston,ⁱ Alfred made his census debut as a one year old in 1861, and he remained with his family for the next 3 census collections, being listed as a scholar in 1871, as a nurseryman in 1881, and promoted to nursery foreman by 1891 at which time he was 30 years old.ⁱⁱ

By the time of the 1901 census Alfred had married and had moved to Halifax where he had set up house at 20 Westbourne Terrace, Skircoat, and where he had found work that utilised his particular talents. We know he was married as he was listed thus in the census return.ⁱⁱⁱ

Alfred May	40	Nursery Propagator	Burneston
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But who and where was his wife? A check on the FreeBMD Index provides the answer. In the Jun-Sep quarter of 1899, in the district of Bedale, Alfred, aged around 38, married Caroline Richmond.^{iv} A further check of the census records indicates that Caroline was born in Carthorpe (or alternatively Masham) about 1875, so she was considerably younger than her husband. She was the daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Richmond but for the 1881 census was staying with her maternal grandparents at Brickyard Cottage, Carthorpe.^v

James lanson	60	Small farmer of 12 acres	Tanfield, Yorks
Elizabeth lanson	55		Thornton le Moor, Yorks
William lanson	13	Scholar	Carthorpe
Richard lanson	10	Scholar	Carthorpe
Elizabeth Richmond (Grandaur)	7	Scholar	Carthorpe
Caroline Richmond (Grandaur)	6	Scholar	Carthorpe

Caroline was back with her parents for the 1891 census, living a couple of doors down from the Burneston vicarage.^{vi}

Henry Richmond	41	Grocer and Labourer	Bramley, Yorks
Elizabeth Richmond	32		Kirton in Lindsey, Lincs
Caroline Richmond	16	Scholar	Masham
Maude Richmond	6	Scholar	Sowerby
Arthur Richmond	4	Scholar	Boroughbridge
Alfred Richmond	2	Scholar	Boroughbridge

The 1901 census confirms, with the birth of another daughter, that the Richmonds were a fairly mobile family before they settled in the Burneston area. This census also solves the mystery of where Alfred's wife was so soon after their marriage. She was with her parents and some of her siblings, at the same address as for the 1891 census. The work of labouring and shopkeeper is allocated respectively to mother and father.^{vii}

Henry Richmond	52	General Labourer	Grewelthorpe*, Yorks
Elizabeth Richmond	42	Grocer Shopkeeper (own acct at home)	Kirton in Lindsey, Lincs
Arthur Richmond	14		Boroughbridge, Yorks
Alfred Richmond	12		Boroughbridge, Yorks
Edith A Richmond	10		Burneston
Caroline May (Daur)	26		Masham
Ethel B Ross (Vis)	1	Darlington, Durham	

* Note, Grewelthorpe is the more likely place of birth as it tallies with the 1871 census, when Henry was at home with his parents.^{viii}

So why was Caroline not with her husband? She may just have been making a family visit. The family may have needed her help at that particular time – for instance who is the one year old visitor? Maybe Caroline was at home awaiting the birth of her own child? But at this stage it is not known if Alfred and Caroline had any children. Hopefully the 1911 census will provide some answers.



ⁱ FreeBMD Birth Index.

ⁱⁱ RG9/3665/p11; RG10/4866/p11; RG11/4871/p10; RG12/4028/p8.

ⁱⁱⁱ RG13/4125/p4.

^{iv} FreeBMD Marriage Index.

^v RG11/4871/p12.

^{vi} RG12/4028/p3.

^{vii} RG13/4598/pp5-6.

^{viii} RG10/4278/p22.