

Thomas Milner



Thomas Milner, born 1837, was a recent immigrant from England arriving here in 1872 with his wife Sarah and three young children. They lived first on Pleasant Street and then moved to the newer more fashionable developing area of Maple Avenue. Milner was employed in the card clothing department of Davis and Furber, a trade handed down from his father. Extremely capable, he rose to the position of supervisor of that department, and the devotion of his employees was noted in the overwhelming turnout at his funeral.

Thomas Milner attended the first organizing meeting and served on the first Executive Committee. He served on the committee for subscription, for funding the new church. Later in his service, he was elected Junior Warden, a position he filled from 1894 until his death on Dec 3, 1896.

The Shepard Family

Joseph Shepard (Shephard)

Joseph Shepard, as the church records record his name, born 1826, was the son of an early immigrant to Lowell. His father Robert brought the family there sometime prior to 1830 and undoubtedly worked in the Lowell mills as they were first being developed. The name is spelled several ways in the records – Shepard is the most common.

Joseph Shepard in his early days was a spinner and moved several places to improve his employment lot. He married his wife Elizabeth (last name not known); also an English gal in about 1858 and they lived in Ward 6, Lowell. From there the family moved to Rochdale, near Worcester, where he continued to work in a woolen mill. Sometime in that decade he again moved his family, this time to North Andover where he lived at 9 Stevens Village, and likely worked in the Stevens Mill.

Joseph Shepard also had an interest in a lot on Howard Street in Lawrence where he held a mortgage on the property. Whether this also involved some business venture or was just a lending transaction is not known, but obviously he had prospered more than many of his fellow mill workers.

Joseph Shepard was at the first organizing meeting of the mission and was on the first Executive Committee. He served on the liaison committee with Grace Church. He is noted as being part of the first music committee and on occasions the choir would practice at his home, before the chapel was built.

Charles J Shepard

Charles J Shepard, son of Joseph, was born in 1862 and was apprenticed to a machinist in North Andover, probably at the Davis and Furber shops. Taking a different route, he became a watch tool maker and about 1885 moved to Waltham, the center of the Massachusetts watch making industry. He was a tool maker for American Watch Tool Company. He married Elizabeth (last name not known) in the early 1890's, a newly naturalized English girl. He became the postmaster of Waltham by 1903 and rose to the position of superintendent of the post office by 1915. He died there sometime before 1920. His widow Lizzie continued to live in Waltham. While the records generally record no occupation for Lizzie, the 1915 City Directory lists her as the Vice President of the Waltham Baby Hospital. They had no children. She disappears after 1920.

Charles Shepard was at the organizing meeting of the mission and noted as the organist in the early mission. His early move to Waltham cut short his service to St Paul's.

Sarah Shepard

Sarah Shepard, oldest daughter of Joseph was born 1860, and was a dressmaker by trade, and apparently rather successful at it. She followed her brother to Waltham and there opened a dress making shop eventually located at 27 School Street which she operated into her 70's. She never married.

Miss (Sarah) Shepard was the organist at the organizational meeting of the mission in 1880. The family was apparently very musical.

.....Cunningham (first name is not written)

Robert Cunningham was also a newly arrived citizen of North Andover, moving from Vermont around 1877, and was also an iron moulder by trade. He and his wife Jessie and young son Willis lived in Paul Horne's boarding house, along with many other machinists and iron workers. Their names appear in the church records but briefly, and with the notation of "moved to Haverhill", undated. It would seem that they did not last long in North Andover. There are no 1900 records for the family, except their son Willis J Cunningham is a music teacher in Salem ward 5.

Robert attended the first organizing meeting of the mission. He too, hosted the choir for practice at his home. His name is not found in any of the other records except for the sponsorship in the Christiansen baptisms. His wife was on the first sewing committee.

Abraham Kershaw

One early unofficial saint of note was Abraham Kershaw. All the saints written previous were at the first organizing meeting of 1880—but Abraham missed that meeting. Abraham, born 1826, was an English immigrant wool sorter in the Steven Woolen Mills living in Stevens Village, and was included in the recording of the first congregation. He is unique in that he is the only person who did not attend the first meeting to become a leader in the church. He was elected to the first Executive Committee, served on the Committee for Subscription to raise the building money, acted as auditor and became the second Clerk of the Executive Committee in 1883. His youngest daughter Jennie was one of the first Sunday School teachers. His wife is also noted in a number of women's committees.

Abraham Kershaw died 17 Dec 1896, exactly 2 weeks after Mr. Milner mentioned above. Local newspapers noted that St Paul's had lost two important members of their congregation within two weeks.