

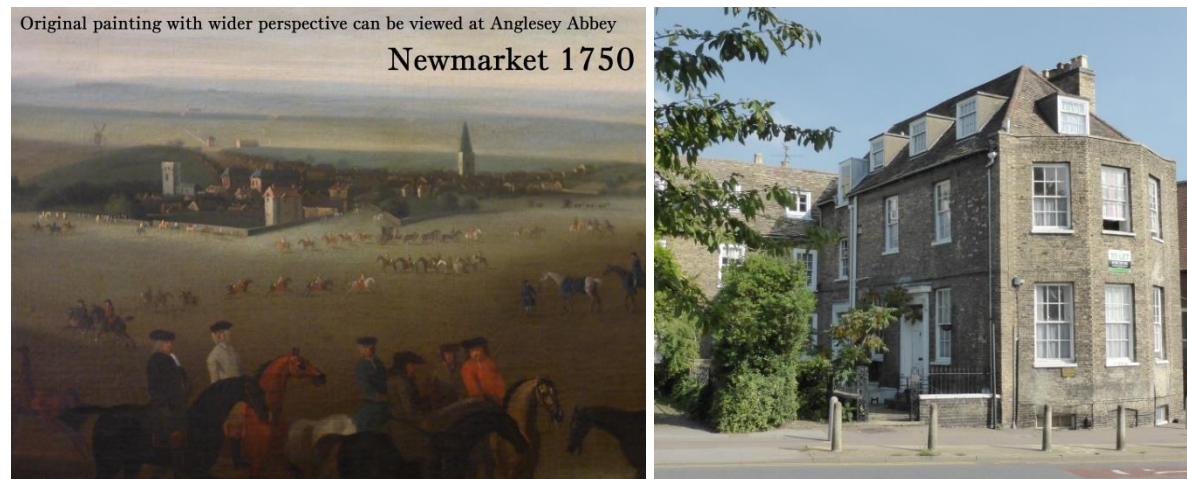
# Three centuries of medical practice in Newmarket

This surgery can trace its origins back through nearly 300 years of medical practice in this town. Our earliest identifiable link is to the strangely named Wotton Braham. He is first mentioned in Newmarket on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1716, at his son's baptism (also named Wotton) at All Saints' church. The National Archives apprenticeship tax records, quoted below, show that 10 years later Wotton Braham had an apprentice named William Sandiver:-

*'Wotton Braham Newmarket Surgeon Will son of Ju' Sandiver 23 Feb 1726'*

You will note that he is described as a 'surgeon'. This term, together with 'apothecary' or 'surgeon-apothecary' is how the forerunners of GPs were referred to in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, although the phrase general practitioner gradually became more prevalent as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed. Their training tended to be a combination of both surgical and medical/pharmacy (apothecary) experience. Most did not possess any qualifications as such, rather they would have served some form of apprenticeship to a surgeon/apothecary. Their surgical practice was very limited by lack of anaesthetic etc. (skin and limb!) and they would have advised on and usually dispensed various medical remedies based on their apothecary training. This terminology lives on in our buildings still being called GP 'surgeries' today.

We don't know much about Wotton Braham, who died in 1735, but a lot more is known about William Sandiver. In fact there were two William Sandivers practising in Newmarket, father then son. There are memorials to both inside St Mary's church, and the Sandivers lived in a house in St Mary's Square, which is still called Sandiver House today (below right):-



Both William Sandivers had at least one apprentice, and the son is recorded in many sources as a Newmarket surgeon/apothecary. He was the local medical attendant to the Prince Regent, including treating him using blood-letting, and he had an assistant called John Pease.

Four days after the second William Sandiver died in 1813, another strangely named medic arrived in town, called Woodward Mudd, advertising in the local newspaper that he was taking on the patients of William Sandiver. Other early newspaper records show that he was soon joined in partnership by Robert James Peck. The Society of Apothecaries' archives suggest that Robert Peck was probably in Newmarket by 1815, consistent with the first provincial medical directory of 1847, which states that he was in practice before 1815:-

**PECK, ROBERT JAMES, Newmarket—Gen. Pract.; in practice prior to the Act of 1815; Assistant-**

This comment is where his qualifications should be listed. The Apothecaries Act of 1815 was the first time that it became compulsory for those practising medicine to have qualifications. Those in established practice before 1815 were exempt from this requirement.

Unfortunately Woodward Mudd died in 1818 aged only 34. He was described as 'tender, sympathizing and benevolent' in his obituary. However, Robert Peck did not continue in practice alone. Aside from apprentices (five in total between 1815 and 1839), he had at least two assistants; Francis Charles Pyman from about 1826 to 1828, and in the 1830s Andrew Ross, who became a partner in 1833, gained an MD qualification in 1834 and left in 1837.

Mudd and Peck's location in Newmarket between 1813 and 1841 is not known. However, the 1841 census shows that Robert Peck lived between the Crown and Waggon & Horses pubs, presumably in Mentmore House – see then (middle red building) and now below. He would almost certainly have worked from his residence there, as with most of these early medical practitioners, a convention that continued until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Robert Peck's fifth apprentice (1834-1839) was his son, Floyd Minter Peck. After gaining 18 months further experience at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, Floyd obtained the qualifications LSA (Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries) and MRCS (Member of the Royal College of Surgeons) in 1841. These were the standard GP qualifications of the day, MRCS being very different from the modern MRCS, which is a specialist surgical qualification now. After qualifying, Floyd seems to have worked in both his father's practice in Newmarket and with his mother's relatives (the Minters) in Folkestone, back and forth. The Newmarket section of White's Directory of 1844 lists: *Peck Rt. James and Son* as 'surgeons'.

GPs at the time of writing: Hannah Green, Melanie Jackson, Daniel Knowles, Fiona Le Quesne, Shruti Patel, Lynwen Phillips, Emma Ramsay, Paul Saban, Amit Sethi and Malini Wace; Registrars: Rebecca Janickj then Olivia Versluys; Nurse practitioner (our first) and senior nurse Nicola Jones; Practice Manager: Scott Burley; (plus over 30 other staff).

Images used by kind permission: HORSES EXERCISING ON NEWMARKET HEATH attributed to John Wootton - Anglesey Abbey, The Fairhaven Collection (The National Trust) <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey/>, Medical Directory entries (The Society of Apothecaries), Mentmore House postcard extract (Roger Newman), Floyd Peck photograph (Ann Synan), BMJ article extract and Jimmy McNeill photograph (the BMJ), Newmarket Journal article extract (the Newmarket Journal), Clement Gray photograph (Liz Barraclough), Jimmy McNeill photograph (the McNeill family), Rookery GPs group photograph (Kumar Sriskandan); other images by Paul Saban.

Floyd returned from Folkestone full time after his father's death in 1848 and he ran the practice for the next 10 years. There's some evidence that the surgery continued trading under the name Robert Peck for a few years after his death, and was run briefly from Railway Street, at the top end of All Saint's Road (their High Street house was sold in 1850). It appears that during Floyd Peck's time the practice was run mainly from leased premises (perhaps partly because he was planning emigration – see below). During this time he had at least one assistant, named Pennington, and a 'student of medicine' called Thomas Kennett, who is recorded in his household on the 1851 census. On that census, Floyd Peck and his household appear to reside somewhere between where the Post Office is now and the bottom of The Terrace, at the west end of the High Street. His exact location was very likely the building on the east corner of the now High Street / The Avenue junction, later named Cardigan Lodge after Lady Cardigan, then thought to be known simply as 3 Park Terrace.

(Floyd Peck and his likely residence/surgery – and that of his successor until 1861):-



By late 1857 William Henry Day had arrived in town and was in partnership with Floyd Peck, as shown by William Day's entry in the 1858 Medical Directory:-

**DAY, Wm. Henry, 3, Park-terr. Newmarket, Cambs. (Peck and Day)—M.D. St. And. 1857; M.R.C.S. Eng. 1854; L.S.A. 1857; late Asst.-Surg. H.M. 3rd Foot.**

Seemingly this partnership was a brief planned handover, since also in 1858 Floyd emigrated to Australia, following other family members who had emigrated in 1849/50. Unfortunately he died just a few years later, but William Day continued the Newmarket practice. A local newspaper article from 1858 describes him as the 'successor' to Floyd Peck's practice.

Initially William Day's residence was 3 Park Terrace, but by 1862 he had made the significant move to Lushington House, as shown by his entry in the 1862 Medical Directory:-

**DAY, WILLIAM HENRY, Lushington House, Newmarket, Cambs. — M.D. St. And. 1857; L.R.C.P. 1861; M.R.C.S. Eng. 1854; L.S.A.**

Lushington House is further west along the High Street, on The Terrace. The practice continued to be run from there for the next 64 years, initially leased (from the Lushingtons):-



Although in 1854/5 he had been an assistant surgeon at the siege of Sebastopol in the Crimean war (which would have been quite surgical!), William Day was more inclined to medical practice. He moved on to London in 1866/7, becoming a Member of the Royal College of Physicians, and working as a hospital physician and paediatrician (and also as an anaesthetist to the famous gynaecologist Sir Spencer Wells). He went on to become quite eminent himself, and is regarded as one of the founding fathers of paediatric neurology, but whilst in Newmarket he wrote several academic papers, including one published in the BMJ, April 16<sup>th</sup> 1864. It gives a fascinating insight into 19<sup>th</sup> century medical practice in the town:-

**On the 26th of February, she was ordered five grains of citrate of iron and quinine with half a drachm of aromatic spirits of ammonia twice a day; an ointment composed of one part of extract of belladonna and nine**

**parts of extract of white poppy, to be applied, on linen rag, to the abdomen; six ounces of port wine daily, and strong beef-tea.**

As William Day left in 1866/7, Frederick Clement Gray arrived in town, succeeding him in the Lushington House practice. Frederick Gray came to Newmarket quite late in his career. Born in Alton, Hampshire in 1812, he qualified in 1834, LSA MRCS (later obtaining an MD from Jena in Germany!). He worked in various places before finishing his career in Newmarket, founding a medical dynasty of Grays, who ran the practice for about 90 years over three generations of the family. He bought Lushington House in 1875, initially leasing it like William Day.

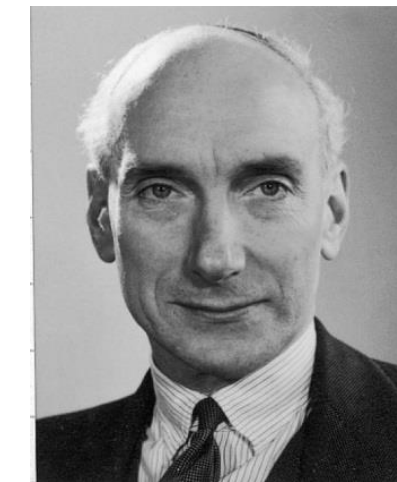
Frederick Clement Gray died in 1888 but the practice was continued by his like named son, Clement Frederick Gray:-



It is with profound and sincere regret—a regret which will be fully shared by everyone in Newmarket and district—that we record the death of Dr. Clement Frederick Gray, who passed away at his residence, Lushington House, High Street, Newmarket, on Saturday. He had attained the great age of 96 years, and had been in feeble health for a considerable time. Dr. C. F. Gray was the son of the late Dr. Frederick Clement Gray, of this town, who died in 1888, and, after obtaining his medical qualifications, joined his father in practice. For some-

Clement Gray qualified in 1870, joining his father in practice shortly afterwards. There are hints that initially he took on a series of assistants after Frederick Gray's death, e.g. in 1895 he bought Clifton House, next door to Lushington House; shortly afterwards a Dr James Grieves moved in – a newspaper report implies that he was one of Clement Gray's assistants.

Clement retired in the mid 1920s, but by then his two sons had joined him in partnership, Gilbert Gray (in 1910) and Norman Gray (in 1915). He lived to the ripe old age of 96, when a glowing obituary appeared to him in a 1943 edition of the Newmarket Journal, an extract from which is shown above. After Clement's retirement, the practice started to take on partners from outside of the family, first a Dr Hendley in 1925, then in 1932 Dr Smith and the long serving Dr James (Jimmy) McNeill:-



A few years before his arrival the surgery had moved to Alton House – shown above, and visible in the background of the Lushington House picture. The Grays built Alton House on a neighbouring plot of land, naming it after Frederick's birthplace. Jimmy McNeill served until 1980, including working from our current surgery in The Rookery, which we have leased since 1974. He would have seen many changes in his half a century in practice, not least the introduction of antibiotics and creation of the NHS! Gilbert Gray, suspicious of the proposed NHS, retired early in the mid 1940s. Norman, the last of the Grays, retired in the mid 1950s.

During this period the practice was expanding rapidly as the population of Newmarket grew from just a few thousand in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and as more useful things could be done and became freely available on the NHS from 1948. By 1950 we had 5 GPs serving; now we have 10, plus those in training, and a lot more staff than the practice had in days gone by.

Since the 1930s many more GPs have come and gone, too many to detail here, adding their names to this long chain, passing the baton on, including Drs: Brookman, Randall, Savory, Barber, Dale-Bussell, Walker (Gilbert Gray's nephew), Athene Cochrane (first female, 1952), Dossator, Anderson, Porter, Wallace, McLean, Baxter, Wiggins, Abel, White, Longman, Short, Slowe, Kumar, Wilson, Glasby, Selby, Yull and Li, not to mention many trainees.



The Photograph above was taken in 2011 at the emigration of Dr Yull to Australia (following in the footsteps of Floyd Peck 153 years on!) and retirement of Dr Longman. It shows 17 Rookery GPs past and present, from the oldest Dr Dossator to his granddaughter Dr Strobridge, who was our registrar (trainee – apprentice of sorts) at the time – in the period between her Bachelor of Medicine with Bachelor of Surgery degrees (the basic qualifications of all modern doctors today) and her Membership of the Royal College of General Practitioner exams (the postgraduate qualification modern GPs take at the end of their period of further professional training). Left to right: Drs Kumar, Saban, Slowe, Yull, Phillips, Wiggins, Abel, White, Ramsay, Knowles, Wace, Longman, Orrow (back row, another registrar), Strobridge (front row), Jackson, Baxter and Dossator.