

THE ORIGINS OF WISEMAN HOUSE OR SAWBRIDGEWORTH.

Early Days – 1850's

Imagine standing in front of Wiseman House in 1850. You would be standing in the centre of a square mile of farmland known as 'The Glenroy Run'. It was given that name by the Cameron brothers after the little village in Scotland from which they came. As you looked around, the only building you would see is the Cameron's farmhouse.

Now let your imagination bring you forward to 1886. The Glenroy Run is now owned by William Mc Culloch and as you looked around, you would see two buildings, Mc Culloch's farmhouse and his bullshed. This was a large building to house the shorthorn cattle that Mc Culloch imported. The building later became the Glenroy Public Hall and it is where the first Anglican Church service conducted by Rev. RH Rodda was held. The building, in Cromwell St, is used today as a Scout Hall. .

The Wiseman Family

The passenger list of arrivals from the SS Rodney on 9th October 1882 listed names and descriptions of cabin passengers. There were nine members of the Wiseman family and three Stricklands (relations of the Wisemans) recorded on the list. Two other brothers Albert and Walter were by then already in an established business in Flinders Lane, Melbourne and were living in Hawthorn.

This property in Hawthorn was purchased by Albert Wiseman in 1874. He named the property 'Widford' after an adjoining village to Sawbridgeworth in Hertfordshire where the Wiseman brothers lived as children. At the same time the neighbouring property was purchased by Walter Wiseman who named his home 'Kent' (In 2007 the Widford property in Hawthorn was sold for \$4,010,000)

The Land Boom

In 1886 at the height of Melbourne's great land boom Mc Culloch's farm was bought for 100,000 by the Glenroy Land Co. The plan was to subdivide the farm into building blocks and create a thriving suburb with a sweeping view of the growing city of Melbourne. The principals of the Company were Frank Stuart, William Mc Cutcheon and brothers Arthur and Albert Wiseman. The Wiseman Brothers ran a business in Flinders Lane, as woolen warehousemen and importers of tailor's trimmings.

The land was to be auctioned in 1887 and 1888. To make the plan more attractive, the company built three double storey shops, come dwellings, in Wheatsheaf Road. One of these buildings is still standing.

These were to form a shopping centre for the suburb that the Directors ambitiously advertised as "The Toorak of the North."

The Wisemans in Glenroy-1885

To further encourage the success of their enterprise, the Principals agreed to build their own houses in Glenroy. Arthur and Albert Wiseman built two imposing double storey mansions on adjoining 15 acre sites in Widford St.

The one, now known as Wiseman House, was built by Arthur who named it "Sawbridgeworth" after the little English village in Hertfordshire where the Wisemans had lived for hundreds of years.

The two mansions, built in 1887, were mirror images of each other. Albert's house which was to the south of Arthur's was named Ashleigh. Both houses fronted Widford Street.

The Mansion and Buildings

The most interesting feature of the building was the ballroom, open to the roof soaring 30ft above.

A gallery at the side of the ballroom at first floor level gave access to the bedrooms for family and servants.

The main rooms, two on each floor were at the front of the house.

The broad main staircase was at the front while the servant's narrow staircase was hidden away at the side of the house.

Formal balls, in traditional style were held.

In 2000, descendants of the Wiseman family visiting the house on one of the Open Days revealed that they have an original dance program, the family bible and other pieces of memorabilia that had been passed down to them from the family.

A feature of the main staircase was a large stained glass window halfway up the stairway (no longer there). There were other stained glass windows in the west wall of the ballroom and also one upstairs. Stained glass panels were also located above doors at the front of the house and leading onto the balcony.

At the front of the first floor, near the door to the balcony, there is a narrow staircase that led up to the roof where there was a fenced in platform which gave a splendid view of Melbourne. Although this platform is no longer there it can be seen in the photograph "Sawbridgeworth 1895"

(Photo) **A Program for a ball held at Sawbridgeworth**

Two-storied brick stables at the rear housed the family carriage and horses, and provided living quarters for the grooms and the stable-hands.

The Gas House was situated in the back garden where acetylene was generated to light the house.

(PHOTO) Sawbridgeworth 1895 Carriage and Family

The lifestyle of the Wisemans was typical of the landed gentry. An event to which local people looked forward to each year was the spectacle of the Wiseman families driving off in carriages with footmen and grooms to the Melbourne Cup, along old Sydney Rd which today is Pascoe Vale Road.

The first paved footpath in Glenroy was built along the east side of Widford St for the benefit of the Wisemans.

(Photo) The Gas House

The Depression -1890's

As land developers, the Wiseman brothers were severely affected by the collapse of the land boom and were made bankrupted in the depression of the 1890s.

Arthur died in 1892 but his wife and children still owned and continued to live in Sawbridgeworth until 1912.

World War 1

(PHOTO) Ashleigh with Sawbridgeworth in the background

During World War 1 the two Wiseman houses were used as military hospitals for infectious diseases. One was for officers and one for lesser ranks. The ballroom was also used to farewell enlisted soldiers of the area and to welcome them home.

A World War 1 Honour Roll Board found in Wiseman House in 1988 was expertly repaired and refurbished. It is now displayed in the Narthex of the church.

David Mc Cullock, a descendent of the Wiseman family remembers-

“My mother Minnie Wiseman was a granddaughter of Albert Wiseman of ‘Ashleigh’ (the house next door). His son Albert was her father. She had 3 children and 9 grandchildren and had an encouraging influence on her three children particularly throughout the depression when life was difficult for most parents.

In her younger years she used to keep her riding crop in the hall cupboard (underneath the stairs) and if we had been really naughty she would rush to the cupboard and get it and give us a switch around our bare legs. The bottom of the leather crop had leather straps, so it really hurt.

On one occasion I suggested to my younger sister that we provoke our mother by being naughty and I would hide in the cupboard armed with the riding crop. As she arrived at the cupboard I jumped out which gave her an awful shock and I don't remember her ever using it again. It was a great joke to remind her of that occasion many times in later life."

David's Mother died in April 2001 at the age of 103 years.

The Church of England Trust Corporation

In 1923 the Church of England Trust Corporation bought Sawbridgeworth for the Mission of St James and St John. Sawbridgeworth was renamed St Agnes Girls Home. For a short time it also housed young boys, until in 1925, the Mission bought another home, a two-storey house (now demolished) in Melbourne Ave. This house called Hilton became St Nicholas Boys home. For 40 years Sawbridgeworth was known as St Agnes Girls Home.

St Agnes Girls Home

(photo) **St Agnes Dining Room** (Formally the Ball Room)

In 1941, another building was constructed adjacent to St Agnes Girls Home that was called Lamble cottage. It was named after Archdeacon George Lamble from the Mission of St James and St John and it provided a smaller, more intimate setting for senior girls and marked a major turning point away from congregate care.

PHOTO of the house with Lamble Cottage from Billy Lids page 14

A letter from a little girl at St Agnes to her mother (1 Sept,1927)

The location of St Agnes meant that if families wanted to visit, it was some distance from the city and the surrounding suburbs. The letter does not tell us of the frequency of visits, it tells us only that the children missed their immediate and extended families and is poignant comment that is consistent with children in care.

Dear Mother,

*I am just writing this letter to let you know we are all well and I hope you are well and happy also. I hope Ruby and Jessie got home all right on Sunday .
The days seem to be flying so it wont be long before you come out again. I like this little writing pad, don't you? If you see Ruby tell her I send my love to her. Tell Jessie I might write to her next week. I have a pretty yellow pansy coming out in my garden. It is very wet and muddy out here. If you see Auntie Gert and Laley tell them I send my love, wont you tell them all I send my love I will try and send you the yellow pansy in this letter. I have still got the clip Jessie gave me on Sunday.
If you see Auntie Violet of Auntie Myrtle tell them I would like to see them again. I hope Granma is well, tell her I send my love to her also. Millie went to the hospital on Monday about her eyes. It will soon be show week won't it, will you be going?*

There are 54 children in our home now. I meant to give you my doll to get fixed up if you could but I forgot so I will give it to you next time. Tell Keith we send him our love and thanks for the cards he gave us.

Albie is only going to wear his watch on Sundays. It had been a very nice day out although we had some rain a few days ago. I will have to be going to say good bye now I will close now with fondness and love and kisses from your ever loving daughter Maggie.

Millie and Albie send their love to all at home. Sophie sends her love to you. Xxxxxx

Living at St Agnes Girl's Home in 1954 –1955 A personal recollection by Judith Aljian

Living at St Agnes children's home in 1953 –1954 was very different for me, being an only child who had never been away from her mother, to living with many other girls of all ages. This was also just after doctors had told my mother that she would die in three months, I had no contact with family or anyone outside the home, except for school. There would have been about 50 to 60 residents.

The buildings were incredible, with the main house, where most of the girls were accommodated, and the cottage, which was to the south of the main building. To the east were stables, at the north of this was the housekeeper's residence and to the south were the laundries, over the top was storage and the shoemaker's repair rooms. These stables were built with blue stone blocks, solid and beautiful.

The main area was the dining room, which had a surrounding gallery on the upper floor. Personal lockers for the children were up against the east wall. Doorways on the north were entrances to the scullery, storage rooms and bathroom/infirmery. To the south, were kitchens, back stairs, also a back entrance to the library.

Sleeping was accommodated in the upstairs bedrooms, the sleep out, which could be entered from either end of the gallery, also the cottage, which was new at that time. Each room had a head girl and younger children. The nursery accommodated very young girls, with a much older girl in charge.

The food provided was unchanging, of good quality and abundant.

A matron controlled the home with the assistance of a younger matron and limited various staff. There was no communication between the staff and children except for supervision of cleaning duties and discipline.

Cleaning was performed by the residents, each girl had responsibilities for cleaning an assigned area, this was policed continuously and failure to comply brought physical punishment. Laundry was performed by the older girls, before and after school.

Each resident had three sets of clothes, one for church, one for school and one for home. If any of these clothes needed repair, the dressmaker was in her room after school and she would instruct the child on repairing the garment, I learnt to darn my two pairs of socks, very well.

Though the Mission to Streets and Lanes ran this home, the girls were taken to church most Sundays and grace was said before and after each meal, the only real religion that was taught came with the visits of deaconesses. In my time at the home, about a year, I saw them twice.

Judith Aljian.

(photo) **Girls of St Agnes Home**

(Separate page use photo of) St Agnes Girls Home

The opening of the G.E. Lamble Cottage at St Agnes 4th May 1941

Much of the building cost was donated by Mr and Mrs G.J.Coles

In the Story of the Mission of St James and St John, 1919 to 1954, the following note appears:-

'One of the biggest problems faced in the early years was overcrowding. St Agnes ' Girls Home by the 1940's could recall times when its sides have almost bulged and the verandahs have been weighted down by an overflow of beds.'

More Recollections of Living at St Agnes .

Marie Graham (nee Smith,) born in 1926, was placed in foster care with the Children's

Welfare Department from an early age and in 1935 a letter of request was sent from the Superintendent of that Department to the Matron of St Agnes requesting a placement for her. She was recovering from having taken caustic soda that had burnt her mouth. Marie has many memories of her life at St Agnes which have been supplied by her daughter Sue Graham. Following are some of these letters. Other letters have been kept for our records.

The St Agnes Marching Band

After washing up each evening, the scullery girls were given a tray with a brush to remove all the crumbs from the table tops. "thought it would be fun to form a marching band, and suggested to the other girls that we bang our brushes on the trays, and march around the tables. This went over very well with the girls but I have very clear memories of Mrs.50 Rock (the Matron) standing on the balcony and saying with a very stern look on her face-

*"just because we have an inane person, do you all have to follow her?"
our band was short lived, and the crumbs removed very quickly. "*

"Have a banana Dearies"

Fond memories of Annie Wiseman who lived in her own home nearby. Each week 2 or 3 girls would have the job of walking to Annie Wiseman's home and collecting the keys to the church. This was a treat we all looked forward too.

*Annie was kind and generous to us girls and I will always remember Annie saying to us each time we went to get the key "Have a banana Dearies"
She seemed to have a never ending supply on hand. To this day I love bananas'*

Tripe for lunch

*'On a school day we always returned to the home for a cooked lunch. On this particular day we were to have tripe!!!!
However, tripe was something I could not eat, and usually fed it to the cat (who loved it), when nobody was looking. One day I was seen feeding the cat and was told to sit at the table until I finishes my meal.
Knowing this would make me late for my return to school I decided I would run away. I was about 12 years of age and had no money and no idea where to go to. I seemed to walk for miles and I think I ended up in Marybyrnong when it started to get quite dark. I went into the local grocers shop and he phoned the home. Shortly after Mr Treloar came in his big truck and took me back. My punishment was to mow the BIG front lawn out the front of the home.*

I never attempted to run away again however I STILL DON'T LIKE TRIPE

Garden Plots

*'Many of the girls at the home were given garden plots of their own. Each year there was a competition to see who had the best plot. I knew without doubt that my plot was the best! I had befriended the gardener who gave me plants and showed me how to set the plants out in order of height. Imagine my horror when I didn't win the competition.
There were no secrets at the home, everybody obviously knew I had gotten a lot of help to make my plot look attractive. However to this day I still think I had the most 'beautiful garden' even if I did have a 'little help'*

PHOTO FROM BILLY LIDS OF GARDEN page 15

The School of Handcrafts

In December, 1937, a request was made to the Children's Welfare Department for placement for 3 girls, one of which was Marie Smith, who was then aged 14 ½ years. Placement was requested for transfer to our school of Homecrafts at Berry St. East Melbourne for further training. The letter implies the concern that the girls were in moral danger and therefore not ready to be sent out to work.

In Service

Most girls, if they didn't return to their homes went into service. In 1939 Marie was placed in service at a home in Healesville. She later moved to East Melbourne. Conditions of employment were negotiated by the Deaconess and most of the money earned was kept in trust. Letters have been supplied that give the details. One particular letter from Marie to the Deaconess was for money to buy new clothes as she had grown taller. She also

requested permission to go with her aunt to visit her mother at Beechworth whom she had not seen for 4 years and prior to that when she was 5 years old.

A later letter requests the money owing to her from her trust account be forwarded to her because she had married. She was 17 years at the time. These letters have been kept for our records.

Judy Moran's Story

From the age of 10 years old, I attended St Augustine's Moreland. Over the next 8 years, we were lucky enough to have a deaconess at our church. One Sunday she preached about a Children's Home in Glenroy. After finding out more information a girlfriend and I rang and asked if we could take some of the children out for day. This was in 1961 and we were 16.

We went to Glenroy for a few Saturdays and played with and got to know the children. We were allowed to bath them at evening time and get them into their pyjamas. Barbara and I made plans to go to Fitzroy Gardens and Captain Cook's Cottage. Whilst on the tram in Collins St the children were asking many questions and were very excited by the journey. A gentleman leant over and asked where we were from and where we were going. On being told he opened his wallet and gave me 2 pounds and said to get the children an ice cream during the day. Considering I only earned seven pounds a week myself, this was a very generous offer.

We were able to take the children out a few more times but the end of the day was always the saddest! When it was time for Barbara and I to leave the children would stand on the balcony crying out "bye Mummy, come back soon". This tugged at our hearts and eventually we stopped going as it was painful for all of us. (Judy also remarked about how cold the home was!)

Judy Moran (nee Williams) of West Brunswick

Closure of St Agnes

In 1963, it was decided to move the girls to more modern accommodation and subdivide the St Agnes land into building blocks. The people of St Matthews felt that the property should not pass out of the hands of the church, and bought the part of it (approximately 12 acres), that included the old Wiseman home, the Lamble cottage and the old two storey stable, a brick building at the rear. The stables later burnt down.

(photo) The Stained Glass Windows above the front door An Open Day

In May 2000, the Parish held an Open Day of Wiseman House. Visitors from the local community along with a number of people who had once lived in the house when it was St Agnes Girls Home attended on this day

One gentleman, who attended the Open Day was there before St Nicholas was established in 1931. He remembered sleeping in the ground floor front room with five

other boys. During his visit to the house he was invited to go upstairs but he replied that as a resident the boys were never allowed upstairs as that was where the girls slept and it was 'out of bounds'

A further Open Day was held in 2003.

Myth or Legend?

Is there a ghost? Visitors and users of Wiseman House often ask 'Is it possible that this old house might have a ghost'. Reports of noises in the night were heard from a couple who once stayed overnight to guard some art works that were on show the next day. The gentleman, who lived in the upstairs flat, when there was one, was horrified when he discovered his chisel with chips out of the blade one morning, when the previous evening there were none. Eventually, one of the priests with some parishioners went around to each room and performed an exorcism. Any noises heard now we believe are just because of 'old age'

(photo) A view of the rear entrance of Wiseman House

ST MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH AND ITS CONSTRUCTION

St Agnes Girls Home (formerly known as Sawbridgeworth) was re-named **Wiseman House** because of the long association with St Matthew's of the Wiseman Family, and particularly that of Miss Annie Wiseman.

In 1963 the Rev'd Randall Deasey and the Vestry proposed that the original St Matthew's Church and Vicarage in Plumpton Avenue be sold. St Matthew's moved to the present location in Widford St and the first services were held in the ballroom of Wiseman House in February 1964.

The conversion of Lambie cottage into the new vicarage was completed one year later. Archbishop Sir Frank Woods laid the foundation stone of the new church in June 1965 and dedicated the completed building in November of that year.

In the construction plan, St Matthew's and Wiseman House share a common eastern wall.

(photo)

The Foundation Stone of the Church being laid beside Wiseman House

(please do not add any details)

Wiseman House Management Committee

The Wiseman House Management Committee was formed in 1988. In the 5 years to May 1993 the WHMC assisted in promoting community use of the building and managed the booking -hiring of the hall.

In 1993 the repair and renovation of the front verandah marked the beginning of a more intense program of refurbishment for Wiseman House. Funds were obtained from a variety of sources including from loans and gifts.

Additional funds became available in 1998 (through the sale of St Martin's church in Hadfield and the sale of the land adjacent to the old vicarage, that was Lamble cottage.)

A major task was to replace the decayed timbers on the balcony. Renovations included re-roofing, re-plastering of the upstairs rooms and stair case area, carpeting, painting of the inside and outside of the house, the renewal of panels of lace work on the balcony, refurbishment of the kitchen and toilets and the renewal of some of the floor in the ball room. Much of this work was undertaken by tradesman with the assistance of volunteers.

Changed Usage of Wiseman House

The room that was believed to be the Breakfast room of the Wiseman family is now the Vestry of the church.

The two front rooms are now Parish offices.

The original kitchen, with a wood fire stove (now covered,) is currently used to house the gas furnace, which supplies ducted heating to the parish hall.

From this room the original access doorway to the current kitchen has been bricked up (probably during the days of the girls home.)

Nearby is a narrow staircase that was used by the staff to service the upper bedrooms.

Hooks used for hanging meat can still be seen in, what was the cool room (at the rear of the house).

The original ball room is now the Parish Hall. It is used for major parish functions.

(A separate page here with photos of Front Door of St Matthew's etc as well as the photo showing a north western aspect of the vicarage, the church and its link with Wiseman House)

Community use of Wiseman House

The Parish use of Wiseman House includes major parish functions such as meetings, lectures, fund raising events, dinners, parish receptions, fetes and fairs.

As well as being used by the church a number of community organizations have made use of Wiseman House. Greenvale Hospital for the Aged ran a Day Centre from Wiseman House using the ground floor to enable wheel chair access. The balcony, which ran around three sides of the upper level was removed and additional floor space was created. Other occupants of this upper level have included Broadmeadows Community Services and Anglicare Youth Services. These first floor rooms that once were bedrooms are now used as offices.

The various community groups that have used Wiseman House include :-

- YWCA activities for women and young people,
- Interchange,
- Preston College of TAFE classes
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- The Mission to Streets and Lanes,
- Psychiatric day support service
- Health and fitness groups,
- Combined Churches of Glenroy used the hall and kitchen to provide community meals for a period of 4 years
- Ballroom dancing classes
- Play groups
- Broadmeadows and District Garden Club

The Wiseman Brothers and South Wandin

The following information on the Wiseman Brothers has been provided by Wayne Knoll who lives in Silvan (South Wandin). Wayne is a descendent of the Parker/Suckling families.

This extract is from the material he provided for this publication. It is not printed in its entirety here, however the full document is held in our records. The Wiseman Brothers, Albert and Arthur whilst initially settling in Glenroy also assisted with the development of properties in the South Wandin area.

Wayne writes:- *“Over the threshold of one often open door in one home in Widford, Hertfordshire, came all those who became the original pioneers of South Wandin. The home belonged to James and Rachel Parker.*

Here, about 1850, Rachel (nee Suckling) opened the door to her deceased brother Charles Suckling’s orphaned children, Charles, Elizabeth, Eliza & George Suckling, who had knocked in trepidation after they had escaped a Dickensian orphanage in London, and trod upcountry to meet these unknown relatives.

They were embraced as family. It was there, in this ‘big’ family that scions of the Wiseman family of Widford were also welcomed, to become intimately linked with the Parker/Suckling families.

As that door in Widford had welcomed friends and relatives it also saw some of them leave for other parts. Family members went around the globe to found new settlements. Here, eldest son, George Parker courted Ann Hampton Wiseman to marry in London in 1856. From here

the youngest daughter Elizabeth Parker, would follow Ann's brother Arthur Edward Wiseman out to Australia, to marry him in Collingwood in the new colony of Victoria on the last day of 1859.' The document continues.

Wayne has also provided a Reflection on the Wiseman Brothers activities as follows:-

'What becomes obvious to me is that Albert Wiseman and family played a significant part in the early pioneering of South Wandin (Silvan) in exactly the same year as he was playing a significant role in the pioneering and fabrication of Glenroy.

Even there, he acted as a catalyst and became the agent of cultural, social, spiritual and personal development of an area. There seems to be some quality in him and his wife which causes the action of settlement (and peace) to take cognisance of the needs of a place in true heart and concern for real needs of the people there.

I even wonder if this was partly why the venture in Glenroy failed. His putting of himself into the breach by building his family house as an example of the type of community he wished to found in Glenroy stood at sharp odds to the typical pattern of land boom developers of the 1880s as presented by Michael Cannon in his (book) 'The Land Boomers'.

Maybe that commercial faithfulness, that personal commitment, that exemplary model, was his downfall, and his redemption, in terms of the possibility of being involved in really gross profiteering. He was not a mysterious figure behind the scenes, he did not hide his intentions. Albert Wiseman seems to have been morally unable to make money without his scruples rising to cause him to give a good amount of it back to the place of that wealth's source. Most property developers had no such ethic.

Certainly, in Glenroy, he spent a lot more of his personal wealth on his own than he did in South Wandin. Maybe it is in that indulgence of a family pile where his story flounders.

Yet, in Glenroy, Wiseman helped to finance the actual and practical solid infrastructure in roads, railways etc. in an interesting analogue to the way he was seen to act in South Wandin where he built modestly, but financed a wider philanthropic infrastructure in the Try Boy's Society at Fernydale House, and a social and educational and spiritual infrastructure in the South Wandin Anglican Church, and the Mechanics Institute and Free Library.

My guess is it is quite likely the wealth to build Wiseman's Glenroy mansion came from Crown land selected and sold, and so, at least in part from the land that George Parker and my ancestor Hubert Hollis, selected and improved for Wiseman in Middle Creek Valley.

Yet, the fact that there is no memory of family regret, no sense of resentment, no word of having been cheated or fobbed off without much for much, meant that Albert Wiseman had the grace or wisdom to act for the betterment of others as part of his own betterment.

Only the fact that there is no South Wandin (Silvan) memory or knowledge of your Widford Road (street) mansions makes me wonder about a wealth kept secret from folk living tough, to appease a hidden sense of disquiet in the breast of one or another built body in the House of Wiseman."

Wayne Knoll

(Must be a new page)

**ARTHUR & ALBERT WISEMAN OF
SAWBRIDGEWORTH HERTFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND
and of
GLENROY VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA**

Wiseman Ancestors

There are records of the Wiseman family in Hertfordshire and Essex going back to the 1500s. They were Lords of the Manor at Great Canfield and John Wiseman (d.1558) was Auditor to Henry VIII. Brasses set into the chancel floor in Great Canfield church show him and his wife, Agnes Joscelyn, with figures of their four sons and six daughters. Their great-grandson became Sir William Wiseman (b. 1600 d.1643) when he was created a baronet in 1628. He was High Sheriff of Essex in 1638/39 and married Elizabeth Capel (b.1612 d.1660) heiress to the wealthy Capel family of Hadham Hall in Hertfordshire. Their son Sir William Wiseman, 2nd baronet (b.1630 d.1685) married Arabella Hewett of Sawbridgeworth, and there is a memorial to them in the church at Great Canfield and on the Hewett memorial in Sawbridgeworth. We have yet to prove without doubt that Arthur and Albert were descended directly from this branch of the Wiseman family, but the probability is quite high.

Parents

William Wiseman, son of George, was born in 1796 in Wormley, Hertfordshire, and was christened on 20th October 1796. He died on 15th March 1852 in Widford, Hertfordshire aged 56. He is buried in the family grave in Widford.

William married **Mary Hampton**. Mary was born in 1801 in Widford and died on 25th February 1873 aged 72. She is buried in the family grave in Widford.

Brothers and sisters

William and Mary had the following children:

Mary Wiseman was christened in 1822 in Widford, Hertfordshire.. She married Robert Neave and they had one son Frederick John Neave.

William Wiseman was christened on 20th June 1824 in Widford and died on 7th March 1877 aged 52. He is buried in the family grave in Widford. He married Sarah Neave and they had the following children: Frank Wiseman, William Robert Wiseman, Arthur Wiseman, Ellen Wiseman, George Wiseman, Amy Wiseman.

George Wiseman was christened on 26th November 1826 in Widford and died on 18th December 1852 aged 26. George married Sarah who died in 1888. They are both buried in the family grave at Widford.

Ann Wiseman was christened on 10th January 1830 in Widford.
Ann married George Parker and they had the following children: Walter R. Parker, William J. Parker, Elizabeth A. Parker, Harriett M. Parker.

Francis Wiseman was christened on 30th September 1832 in Widford. He died on 17th September 1847 aged 15.

***Arthur Wiseman** was born on 5th August 1835 and christened in Widford on 30th August 1835.
(see separate entry)

***Albert Wiseman** was christened in Widford on 23rd September 1838.
(see separate entry)

Harriet Elizabeth Wiseman was born in 1842.
Harriet married William Henry Harris in 1862.

Walter Wiseman was born in 1846. Walter married Kate Eastdown.

ARTHUR WISEMAN BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

- 1835 Born to William and Mary Wiseman in Widford, Hertfordshire on 5th August. Christened on 30th August in St. John the Baptist church, Widford.
- 1859 Married Elizabeth Parker in Collingwood, Victoria, Australia on 31st December. Elizabeth was born on 25th May 1836 in Widford, Hertfordshire, and was christened there on 19th June 1836.
- 1861 Birth of Arthur George Wiseman on 11th January in Windsor, Victoria, Australia. He died on 21st January 1862 aged 1 year and is buried in Old Melbourne Cemetery.
- 1863 Birth of Ernest Albert Wiseman on 28th July in East Collingwood, Victoria, Australia. Ernest married Emily Antionette Thomas in 1894 and they had the following children: Arthur Cecil Wiseman, Adrienne Lorraine Wiseman, Lorne Wiseman.
- 1868 Birth of Annie Rose Wiseman on 14th November in Collingwood, Victoria, Australia. She died on 12th September 1952 in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.
Annie married Thomas Parker Strickland on 8th April 1890. Thomas

was born on 21st May 1862 in Braughing, Hertfordshire. He died on 10th March 1936 in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. They had the following children: Alice Rose Strickland, Olive Beatrice Strickland, Arthur Leonard Strickland, Mabel Phyllis Strickland, Victor Reginald Strickland, Wilfred Thomas Strickland, Eric Wiseman Strickland.

1869 Birth of Lilian Mary Wiseman on 17th May in Collingwood, Victoria. She died on 28th November 1951 in Glenroy, Victoria and was buried on 30th November 1951 in Fawkner Cemetery, Melbourne. Lilian married Edward George Strickland on 22nd April 1891 in Camberwell, Melbourne, Victoria. Edward was born on 23rd April 1865 in Widford, Hertfordshire and died on 17th May 1950 in King Island, Tasmania, Australia. They had the following children: Edward Arthur Strickland, Harry Wiseman Strickland, Beatrice Lilian Strickland, Frank Arnold Strickland, Phyllis Elizabeth Strickland, Thomas Hugh Strickland.

c.1870 Sometime between the births of Lilian in Melbourne in 1869 and Flora in Sawbridgeworth in 1871, Arthur and his family returned to Hertfordshire with daughters Annie and Lilian and lived in London Road, Sawbridgeworth.
(see 1881 Census entry)

1871 Birth of Flora Wiseman on 6th June in Sawbridgeworth Hertfordshire. Flora married James Paget Beatty.

1872 Birth of Minnie Wiseman on 11th December in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. She died on 30th September 1955..

1874 Birth of Harry Wiseman 3rd July in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. He died on 26th September 1934. Harry married Margaret Alice Wright in 1903.

1878 Birth of Alice Wiseman 9th July in Sawbridgeworth. She died in September 1944. She married her cousin, Arthur Ernest Wiseman (Albert's son) on 24th August 1910. They had the following children: Lorraine Audrie Wiseman, Lance Rowland Wiseman, Roy Geoffrey Wiseman, Stanley Arthur Wiseman, Phyllis Vivien Wiseman, Ivo Murray Wiseman.

Four panels showing the Lord's Prayer, The Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments were presented to Great St. Mary's Church, Sawbridgeworth. The letters were all cut out of cardboard, covered with gold silk thread and then nailed on to blue velvet - by the family of A. Wiseman, Esq. Vicar's Warden. They were mounted above the chancel arch and restored by National Trust conservators in 1999.

1881 Census return for Sawbridgeworth in 1881 has the following entry for two houses in London Road:

Arthur Wiseman, aged 45, Australian Merchant, born in Widford
 Elizabeth Wiseman, aged 44, wife, born in Widford
 Ann Rose Wiseman, daughter, aged 13, born in Melbourne Australia
 Lilian Mary Wiseman, daughter, aged 11, born in Melbourne Australia
 Flora Wiseman, daughter, aged 9, born in Sawbridgeworth
 Minnie Wiseman, daughter, aged 8, born in Sawbridgeworth
 Harry Wiseman, son, aged 6, born in Sawbridgeworth
 Alice Wiseman, daughter, aged 2, born in Sawbridgeworth
 Alice Emily Hartham, aged 20, Governess/Teacher, born in London
 Sofia Strickland, aged 20 (domestic? nursemaid?) born in Widford

One house occupied the two eldest daughters with their Governess and Sofia the domestic/nursemaid, and Arthur, Elizabeth and the younger children occupied the other. Presumably the houses were adjacent.

There was no entry for Albert and his family.

(Stained glass window in Great St Mary's Sawbridgeworth)

- 1882 A stained glass window was presented to Great St. Mary's Church, Sawbridgeworth, by A. Wiseman, Esquire before he returned to Australia.
- 1883/84 The family returned to Melbourne. The brothers ran a business as woollen warehousemen and importers of tailors' trimmings, in Flinders Lane.
- 1887 Sawbridgeworth and Ashleigh were built by Arthur and Albert Wiseman
- 1890's The Wiseman brothers were bankrupted in the depression of the 1890's. A final ball was held in *Sawbridgeworth* on 22nd April. Arthur Wiseman died on 20th September 1892 aged 57 and is buried in the Old Melbourne Cemetery. Elizabeth and their children continued to live in *Sawbridgeworth* until 1910. Elizabeth was buried with Arthur in the family grave in Melbourne.

ALBERT WISEMAN BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

- 1838 Born to William and Mary Wiseman and christened in Widford church on 23rd September.

- 1864 Albert married Hannah Parker on 6th August in Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia.
Hannah was sister to Arthur's wife Elizabeth Parker, and to Ann's husband George Parker. She was christened in Widford on 12th February 1832.
- 1865 Birth of Minnie Rose Wiseman on 25th September in Collingwood, Victoria. She died on 29th May 1895 and is buried in Old Melbourne Cemetery.
- 1867 Birth of Arthur Edward Wiseman on 10th August in Collingwood, Victoria. He died on 21st May 1868 aged 9 months.
- 1869 Birth of Albert Thomas Wiseman in Collingwood, Victoria. He married Alice Marion Wilson on 26th August 1896. He died on 14th October 1935.
- 1870 Birth of Laura Mary Wiseman on 25th May in Collingwood, Victoria. Laura married Roland Arthur Barrett on 29th August 1894.
- 1873 Birth of Arthur Ernest Wiseman on 19th November. He married his cousin Alice Wiseman (Arthur's daughter) on 24th August 1910. They had the following children: Lorraine Audrie Wiseman, Lance Rowland Wiseman, Roy Geoffrey Wiseman, Stanley Arthur Wiseman, Phyllis Vivien Wiseman, Ivo Murray Wiseman.
- 1875 Birth of Annie Constance Wiseman on 4th July in Collingwood, Victoria. She died on 13th November 1938 and was buried with her niece, Phyllis, daughter of Arthur Ernest Wiseman and Alice, in the Old Melbourne Cemetery.
- 1883/84(?) Brother Arthur returned to Melbourne. The brothers ran a business as woollen warehousemen and importers of tailors' trimmings, in Flinders Lane.
- 1906 Albert died on 22nd October and was buried in Old Melbourne Cemetery.
- 1938 Hannah died on 28th August and was buried with Albert in Old Melbourne Cemetery.
- 1939 Annie and her niece and Phyllis Wiseman were murdered on 12th November

THE MURDER OF MISS ANNIE WISEMAN AND HER NIECE PHYLLIS WISEMAN

(extract from *Broadmeadows : a Forgotten History* by Andrew Lemon 1982)

Miss Annie Wiseman, in her early sixties, normally lived alone in a quite large house she built for herself on the corner of Salisbury Street and Melbourne Avenue [in Glenroy]. It was one of the modern villas of the 1920s, in a large garden. Paddocks and yards separated the house from its few neighbours. Annie Wiseman was one of the daughters of the late Albert Wiseman, co-founder of Glenroy, and one of whom we heard so much in the 1880s. Her married sister lived in the suburb, as did other relations. Everyone in the district knew of the Wiseman family, and she was reputed to be a wealthy woman. She was particularly known for her church work, and each Sunday she discreetly placed a £1 note in the collection plate at St Matthew's.

At the end of October 1938 her seventeen-year-old niece Phyllis came to Melbourne, and spent part of each week staying with her Aunt Annie. On Saturday night, 12th November, an intruder broke into the house. It was deduced that he believed Miss Wiseman to be in the house alone; that he was surprised by one of the women in attempting to find money to steal; and that he murdered both of them to make good his escape. His takings amounted to the £1 intended by Miss Wiseman for church the next day.

The murders naturally horrified the district. The motive was so pathetic, although the police soon decided that the murderer was in some way known to one or both of the women. As the *Age* police reporter wrote, "In view of this there is strong belief that the murderer belongs to the district, where the Wisemans are well known and Glenroy slept uneasily at night.

Soon afterwards an arrest was made. George Green, 38, a chimney sweep of West Heidelberg, was charged with the murders. At a five-day trial in February the next year, he was found guilty and sentenced to death. The evidence was extremely circumstantial but very strong. There were witnesses to say that he had cleaned chimneys for Miss Wiseman in the past, though he denied it. He could not deny having worked at other houses in the area. Most incriminating was a note belonging to Green which was found at the scene of the crime and which had alerted police to him in the first place. There was some supporting forensic evidence. Green had a hopeless alibi for the night in question. Though the Judge warned that some of the evidence was not good enough, the jury had little doubt in delivering the verdict.

Appeals were heard on Green's behalf in March. There was some nervousness about hanging a man on circumstantial evidence, however clear. But the appeals were lost, and Green was executed on 17th April 1939

Murder photo

The above information on the Wiseman family and the biographical details about Arthur & Albert Wiseman were obtained from:

The Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) personal Ancestral File web pages on the internet. This Research was undertaken by Mary Hilton, Sawbridgeworth England who also provided information on the monuments in, and church histories of, St. Mary the Virgin, Canfield, Essex, Great St. Mary's, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, and St. John the Baptist, Widford, Hertfordshire.

- Grave stones in Widford, Hertfordshire, and Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.
- Parish Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths in Widford, Hertfordshire, and 1881 Census returns for Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, all on microfilm at the County Archive Library, County Hall, Hertford.
- Glenroy, Victoria from Australian Places web site on the internet.
- The Origins of Wiseman House or Sawbridgeworth by Beverley Lacock and Ian Keeble

(photo)

A Tablet from the first St Matthew's Church in Plumpton Avenue