

## **WILLIAM COSTAR OF THE CROWN AND HIS SONS, WILLIAM AND RICHARD**

William Costar	1760 – 1820
William Costar	1786 – 1834
Richard Costar	1788 – 1858

William Costar was born in 1760, the natural son of Kety Costard and the Earl of Abingdon, Willoughby Bertie. They never married so William was given his mother's name. Kety Costard was born in 1736 and her father was a Benson wheelwright, whose ancestors lived in the village since the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

William was destined for a career in the law, but chose instead to become a herald painter. A herald painter usually had a workshop in which all manner of heraldic devices and coats of arms were created for status conscious local gentry and nobility. These would be painted on boards for display on special occasions. A hatchment, a lozenge shaped board, would be carried at a funeral and then hung above the tomb.

William married Sarah Pleasant in 1785, whose family had once been innkeepers of the Crown Inn. An entry in Jackson's Oxford Journal for November 19<sup>th</sup> 1785, gives notice of a Sale to be held "at the House of William Pleasant, known by the Sign of The Crown, in Bensington". The Parish Registers record the earlier marriage of William Pleasant, innholder, and Elizabeth Stevens in 1765, but do not state which inn he held.

William and Sarah had 14 children between 1786 and 1812. When William died in 1820, he was described in the local newspaper as "a herald painter and master of the Crown Inn, Benson."

William and Sarah's eldest son, William (1786 – 1834) also became a painter and married Mary Allin in 1811. She was the daughter of an innkeeper of St Aldates, Oxford. William and Mary lived in St Aldates, Oxford. When William died in 1834, he was buried in St Helen's churchyard, Benson. His death notice in the Oxford Journal reveals that he was also at one time landlord of the Crown Inn, like his father. (He was recorded as landlord there in 1830.) His death notice reads, "Mr. William Costar, landlord of the Crown Inn, Benson died aged 48. For upwards of 30 years, he was an inhabitant of the City of Oxford."

William and Sarah's second son, Richard (1788 – 1858) was also for many years innkeeper of the Crown Inn. He married twice, but only had one surviving daughter by his first wife. Mary Anne was born in 1820 and married Richard Powell in 1839. As landlord of the Crown Inn, Richard took out an advertisement in the Oxford Journal in 1842, claiming that he could procure post horses at short notice. In those days, the Crown Inn had stabling for 16 horses. It became one of the most important coaching inns in the village, after the route to and from London was switched from Mill Lane to (Old) London Road.

(Richard Powell is recorded in the 1851 census with his wife, Mary Ann at the Crown Inn). Richard Costar's second wife was Clarissa Faulkner, who had a child in 1848. Clarissa is buried in St Helen's churchyard. Richard's memorial describes him as "*for many years a much respected inhabitant of this parish*".



**Tombstone of Richard Costar, who died in 1858.**