

## **(John) Arnold Bray (1904 – 1938)**

Arnold Bray was born on 16 March 1904 in Brampton, Derbyshire. His parents were Walter Bray (1880 – 1941) and Lydia Coupland (1877 – 1947). On the 1911 Census, Arnold was living with his parents and two younger siblings at 21 John Street in Chesterfield. His father was employed as a coal miner – hewer. Arnold was attending a local school.

In 1928, Arnold married Nellie Hickman (1903 – 1985) in Staveley. They had two children:

Philip Bray	1932 - 2011
Maureen Bray	1935 -

At the time of the disaster, Arnold was employed as a ripper at Markham Colliery, and he lived with his wife and two children at 30, The View, Poolsbrook. Nellie, his widow and two children, still lived at the same address on the 1939 Register.

Article in the Daily Mirror on 13 May 1938 covering the disaster, mentioned Arnold:

*Most of all the village will mourn Uncle Bray. He was the children's friend.  
At thirty-two he was a father himself, and he loved the village children  
Arnold Bray was the organist at the Wesleyan Chapel  
For weeks he had planned for the children's anniversary procession and service next  
Sunday, had selected the hymns.  
Now Uncle Bray is dead, and there will be no children's procession on Sunday.*

A year after Arnold was killed, his relatives placed an 'In Memoriam' notice in the 'Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald:

*In loving memory of Arnold, a dear husband and daddie,  
called home suddenly May 10<sup>th</sup> 1938  
"Always in my thoughts"  
- Sorrowing Wife and Children*

*In loving memory of our dear son, Arnold,  
Who was suddenly called home May 10<sup>th</sup> 1938  
"In God's own time, our eyes shall see  
The face we loved so well  
Some day, some time, our hands will clasp  
And never say farewell"  
-From Father, Mother and Brothers.*

## ***Parents***

### ***Father – Walter Bray (1880 – 1941)***

Walter Bray was born on 23 June 1880 in Brampton, Derbyshire, the son of John Bray (1846 - 1915) and Catherine Gidlow (1851 - 1914). Walter was born in Brampton, Derbyshire. On the 1881 Census Walter was the youngest child of John and Catherine and they were living in Brick House Yard in Brampton. His father's occupation was recorded as a coal miner. On the 1891 Census, Walter was ten years old and the family had moved to Palings Row, West Bars, Chesterfield. Both his father and older brother, George, were employed as coal miners.

On the 1901 census, at the age of 20, Walter had left his family and was a boarder with John Coupland and his family at 10 Mangham Road, Greasbrough near Rotherham. The oldest daughter of John Coupland was Lydia Coupland. Walter married Lydia on the 19 August 1901, 5 months after the census was taken.

On the 1911 Census, Walter and Lydia were living at 21 John Street, Chesterfield.

On the 1939 Register, Harry and Lydia were living at 46, The View, Poolsbrook, which was a few doors away from the widow of their oldest son, Arnold. Walter at the age of 59 was still employed as a coal miner.

Walter died in 1941.

### ***Mother – Lydia Coupland***

Lydia Coupland was born on 7 April 1877 in Rawmarsh, Yorkshire, the daughter of John Joseph Coupland (1852 - 1918) and Sarah Elizabeth Frost (1856 - 1938). Her father was born in Noramby le Wold, Lincolnshire. Noramby le Wold is situated in the Lincoln Wolds, about 5 miles south of the town of Caistor. Her mother, Sarah Elizabeth Frost was from Rawmarsh in South Yorkshire.

On the 1881, Lydia was living with her grandparents at 83 Kiveton Park, Wales in South Yorkshire. On the 1891 Census, Lydia was living with her parents and siblings at St Andrew Terrace in Bolton on Dearne. Lydia was 13 years old and her father was a coal miner. On the 1901 census Lydia was living with the rest of her family in Greasebrough. Her future husband was a lodger.

On the 1911 Census, Lydia was married to Walter and living in Chesterfield. They had three children at the time of the Census, Arnold, Arthur and Herbert. They had a further son, Harry, in 1916.

Lydia died in 1947, eight years after the 1938 Markham Colliery disaster, which killed her oldest son.

### ***Wife – Nellie Hickman (1903 – 1985)***

Nellie Hickman was born 25 July 1903 in Staveley, Derbyshire. Her Parents were Albert Hickman (1874 - 1937) and Pollie Waterfield (1878 - 1968). Albert Hickman came from Woodside, near Dudley, and Pollie Waterfield came from Quarry Bank, also near Dudley. These two 'villages' are very close together, and both depended on the local mines for providing employment. Local mines in the area in the 1880s included, Woodside, Parkhead, Saltwells and Himley.

On the 1911 Census, Nellie was living with her parents and five siblings at 92 Poolsbrook, Staveley. Her father was employed as a hewer

Nellie married Arnold in 1928 in Staveley.

Nellie died in 1985, 47 years after the 1938 disaster, which killed Arnold.