

Tyrrell Knapp (1790–1869)

Tyrrell Knapp inherited in c.1841 the land in St Clement's parish now occupied by Headington reservoir, South Park, Morrell Avenue, the remains of Cheney Farm, and the Oxford Brookes accommodation and other flats in Cheney Lane.

Tyrrell Knapp was born in Abingdon in 1790, the son of Abingdon grocer **Henry Knapp** (who is always titled simply "Mr") and his wife **Ann** or **Hannah Spicer**. It is likely that Tyrrell's father was descended from George Knapp who married the heiress Catherine Tyrrell of Hanslope in Buckinghamshire at Kidlington on 29 April 1753.

His parents Henry and Ann Knapp had the following children:

- *Henry Knapp (baptised at St Helen's Church, Abingdon on 17 May 1788 and buried there on 29 April 1794)*
- *George Knapp and Laurence Knapp (twins, both baptised and buried at St Helen's Church, Abingdon in April 1789)*
- **Tyrrell Knapp** (born in Abingdon and baptised at St Helen's Church on 17 June 1790)
- *George Knapp II (baptised at St Helen's Church, Abingdon on 9 December 1791 and buried there on 19 August 1800)*
- *Laurence Knapp II (baptised at St Helen's Church, Abingdon on 29 September 1793; Jackson's Oxford Journal of 19 May 1804 reports how Laurence died at the age of ten when thrown from a horse in the street, and he was buried in St Helen's churchyard on 20 May 1804)*
- *Henry Knapp II (baptised St Helen's Church, Abingdon on 2 July 1795).*

In 1802 Tyrrell's father Henry Knapp started a bank in Abingdon, and in 1816 when he reached the age of 21 Tyrrell's brother Henry became a partner in that bank.

Meanwhile in 1806 Tyrrell was articled as a clerk to John Roberts of Wokingham, Berkshire.

On 25 June 1810 at the age of 20, Tyrrell was matriculated at the University of Oxford by Exeter College). He gained his BA in 1814 and his MA in 1818, and his address was given as Exeter College whenever he appeared in lists of those who paid game duty between the years 1815 and 1828.

Knapp is always described as being of **Hampton Poyle** near Kidlington, and this village is given as his address twice in in *Jackson's Oxford Journal*: in April 1830 people were asked to apply to him there in connection with the letting of Manor Farm, and in February 1831 it is given as his address when he subscribed towards a church for Summertown. In December 1840 it was recorded that Richard Wootten of Oxford had permission to shoot on his land there.

Tyrrell's father Henry Knapp died in 1825.

Tyrrell Knapp must have married his first wife in the late 1820s, and they had six children:

- *Harriet Anne Knapp (born 1830/1 in Paddington)
Married the Revd George Howard Waterfall of Worcester College, Oxford and Evesbach Rectory, Herefordshire at All Souls, Langham Place on 2 August 1855, and gave birth to a daughter at The Rise on 11 November 1856*
- *Catherine Knapp (born 1833/4 in Hyde Park Square, Paddington)
Married Captain Francis D. Wyatt of the 90th Regiment at St James's, Piccadilly on 16 April 1861;
widowed, and married the Revd Robert Gibbons, Vicar of Handley-cum-Gussage, St Andrew's, Dorset at St Clement's Church on 21 December 1869*
- *George Henry Knapp (born 1832/3 in Paddington)*

- Charles Tyrrell Knapp (born on 22 September 1835 at Paddington but not baptised at St Andrew's Church, Holborn until 6 October 1844
Went up to Exeter College in 1856 and was ordained; died aged 59 at Great Yarmouth on 29 December 1895)
- Francis Adam Tyrrell Knapp (born on 16 September 1837 in Paddington but not baptised at St Andrew's Church, Holborn until 7 May 1843)
Captain of the 2nd West Indies Regiment and died aged 29 in Jamaica on 8 October 1866
- Elizabeth Knapp (born on 24 April 1839 in Brighton but not baptised at St Andrew's Church, Holborn until 7 May 1843)
Married Roger Oakden.D.L. at St James's Church, Piccadilly on 11 April 1871

Tyrrell and his first wife appear to have lived in Paddington (Hyde Park) between 1830 and 1838, although Tyrrell is listed at Hampton Poyle in the poll book of 1831. They were in Brighton when their daughter Elizabeth was born in about 1839.

When Tyrrell Knapp's mother died at Northcourt, near Abingdon, on 17 January 1836 at the age of 83, the *Gentleman's Magazine* described him as "Tyrrell Knapp, Esq. of Hampton Poyle". He and his brother Henry put up the following memorial in St Helen's Church, Abingdon in memory of their parents:



On 29 December 1840 at St Paul's Church in London, **Tyrrell Knapp** married his second wife **Harriet Harris** (born in 1813/14 and hence 23 years his junior). Her birthplace is uncertain: the censuses variously record it as Hampton Poyle; Bolshipton (the old name for St Clement's); and Hook Norton. (A Harriet Harris was baptised at Hampton Poyle on 11 August 1813.)

Their first child John was born in London soon after their wedding, but by November 1841 they had settled at The Rise in St Clement's, Oxford, where they had another eight children:

- John Walter Knapp (born on 8 March 1841 at Hyde Park Terrace but not baptised at St Andrew's Church, Holborn until 7 May 1843)
Went up to Exeter College in 1859; married Kate M. Taylor at Woodmansterne, Surrey on 30 July 1878;
died age 40 at St Leonard's-on-Sea on 22 June 1881
- William Frederick Knapp (born on 24 September 1842 at St Clement's, Oxford and baptised at St Andrew's Church, Holborn on 7 May 1843)
Surgeon-major in the army; died 27 September 1896
- Alice Knapp (born 15 June 1844 at St Clement's, Oxford and baptised at St Andrew's Church, Holborn on 6 October)
Married RN Captain Louis Hutton Versturme in 1877, died at Coningham Road, London 1 July 1892
- Laurence Knapp (born 1845/6 in St Clement's, Oxford)
Married Julia Tilley at St Budock, Cornwall on 30 March 1880
- Arthur Tyrrell Knapp (born 1847 in St Clement's, Oxford)
Died aged four on 15 July 1851 and buried at St Clement's Church on 23 July 1851
- Amy Knapp (born 1849 in St Clement's, Oxford, and baptised on 3 May 1853 at St Clement's Church at the same time as her younger brother);
Married Charles John Griffiths in 1877, and died at Bristol on 21 October 1919
- Clara Knapp (born 1851 in St Clement's, Oxford)
Died at Emsworth, Hampshire on 6 March 1944
- Arthur Henry Knapp (born 1852 in St Clement's, Oxford and baptised at St Clement's Church on 3 May 1853)
Went up to Magdalen Hall in 1873, and was ordained. Married Annie Beatrice Lush at Southsea on 5 September 1883. Rector of Pixley near Ledbury. Died at Hereford on 17 January 1943
- Lucy Knapp (born 1854 in St Clement's, Oxford and privately baptised there on 6 April)
Married the Revd Rowland Palmer on 19 December 1876 at Cheltenham.

In about 1841 Tyrrell Knapp inherited from his aunt, Miss Ann Knapp, **The Rise** in Cheney Lane (near the junction of Headington Hill). This was a tall gabled house, built or rebuilt in the seventeenth century and including an adjoining farm (the land that is now South Park, Morrell Avenue, and **Cheney Farm**). He had moved into The Rise by 6 November 1841, when for the first time he is listed on the game list as living in St Clement's. Thereafter he is always described as being "of Headington and Hampton Poyle".



Headington Hill, with The Rise on the left and Cabbage Hall on the right

On 7 May 1843 when four Knapp children were baptised at Holborn, their address was given as **Thavie's Inn**.

In 1847 the Knapp family bank in Abingdon collapsed and Tyrrell's brother Henry went bankrupt.

The **1851 census** shows Tyrrell Knapp (59) living at The Rise with his wife Harriet (39) and eleven of their children, and seven servants. He is always recorded as a landowner, and in February 1855 was listed as a member of Congregation of the University of Oxford. A wooden board inside St Clement's Church dated 1851 shows that Knapp was a Churchwarden there.

The Knapp family were again listed at The Rise in the **1861 census**. Eight of the children were at home, and Captain Wyatt, who was about to marry Catherine, was staying at the house.

Tyrrell Knapp died at The Rise on 17 September 1869 and was buried in St Clement's churchyard four days later: he has a flat grave topped with a cross. His death announcement in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* of 25 September 1869 read:

Sept. 17, in the 80th year of his age, at his residence, Tyrrell Knapp, Esq., of Exeter College, M.A. and of Headington Hill and Hampton Poyle, Oxfordshire.

His will was proved in the Oxford District Registry just a month later on 18 October 1869, his executors being his wife and his son Charles, plus Frederick Joseph Morrell and the surgeon Edward Law Hussey. His effects came to under £30,000.



Memorial to Tyrrell Knapp on wall of St Clement's Church

At the time of the **1871 census** The Rise was occupied by three of their unmarried children: George (35), Elizabeth (25), and Clara (19). Mrs Harriet Knapp (57) and her unmarried daughters Alice (23), Amy (21), and Lucy (17) were visiting 6 Sillwood Road, Brighton, where Miss Elizabeth Hall (37) and her sister kept a school.

Mrs Knapp and started selling her husband's land, and by 1875 had moved away. In that year she hoped to sell The Rise itself and the present South Park for a housing estate; but the Morrell Trustees purchased both for £26,000 in 1876 to prevent this development, which they thought was too near **Headington Hill Hall**.

Herbert Morrell let out Tyrrell Knapp's former house, which was now usually known as "Headington Rise" rather than just "The Rise". An advertisement in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* on 27 January 1877 read:

TO be LET,– "HEADINGTON RISE," 1 mile from Oxford; this very desirable large Mansion, containing 14 rooms, kitchen, laundry, and offices, with large cellar in the basement, stabling for four horses, two coach houses, harness rooms, corn room, kennels, lawn, large kitchen garden, standing in its own grounds, on an eminence commanding a splendid view of Oxford and neighbouring country. Immediate possession may be had. – Apply to Mr. David Martin, auctioneer, &c, 10, Beaumont-street, Oxford.

By the time of the **1881 census** Tyrrell Knapp's widow Harriet was living alone at 3 Royal Parade, Cheltenham with a cook and a housemaid. She died at the age of 67 on 11 October 1881 at the age of 67 at the house of her daughter, Mrs Catherine Gibbons, in Tunbridge Wells.

"The Rise" was demolished by a building speculator in c.1970.