

THE MONUMENTS OF St MARY'S CHURCH, FAIRFORD - 2

MURIEL LOGGAN (1675-1754)



The monument to Mrs Muriel Loggan is one of a set of four monuments in St Mary's church to members of the Oldisworth family. Muriel was the daughter of the Reverend James Oldisworth, who served as the rector of Kencot for 56 years from 1666 to 1722, and his first wife Anne Mountsteven. Born at Kencot in 1675, Muriel was their fifth daughter although only two of them survived their childhood. Muriel's older brother William became a merchant tailor, having been apprenticed to his cousin Austin Oldisworth in London in 1690, while her younger brother James attended Merchant Taylor's School in London. James was then admitted to St John's College, Oxford in 1696, was ordained in 1704 and appointed vicar of Worminghall in Buckinghamshire the same year. These two occupations: the clergy and the cloth trade seem to have become Oldisworth traditions by the early 18th Century.

In 1716, at the age of about 40, Muriel married the Reverend John Loggan who was the curate of Tadmarton near Banbury. In the following year John was given his own parish and became the vicar of Saint Peter's church in nearby Hanwell. Unfortunately, married life did not last very long for Muriel as John died in 1721. Muriel's father James died the following year and sometime after this double bereavement Muriel came to live in Fairford as she had succeeded her father in the lease of the rectory estate in Fairford.

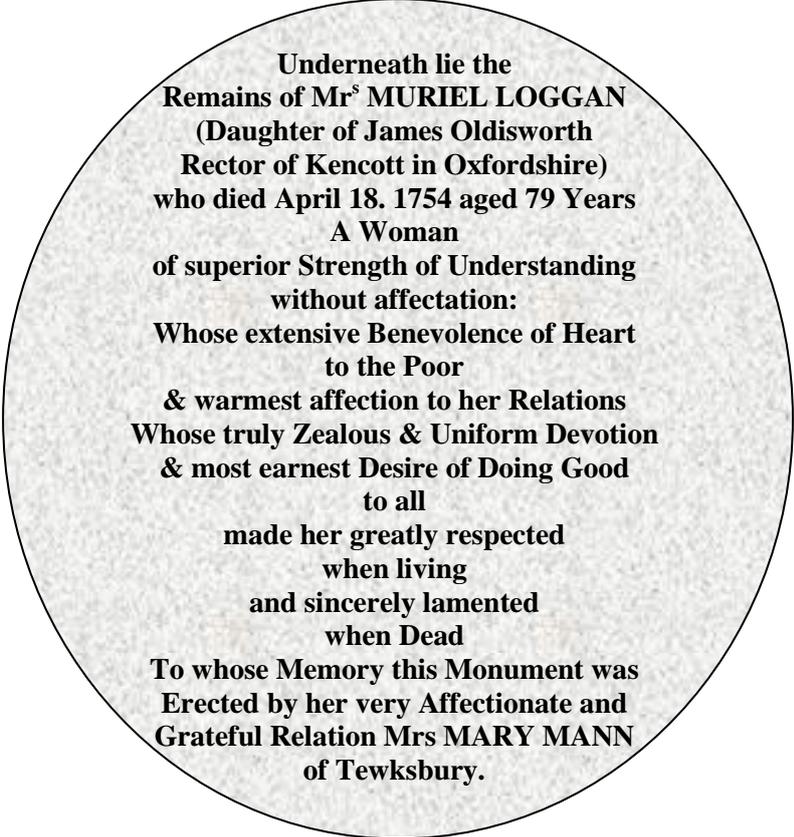
Muriel died on 18 April 1754 and was buried in Fairford church five days later. She was the last surviving member of her generation of Oldisworths and the last surviving grandchild of William Oldisworth, whose monument is situated next to that of Muriel's.

Muriel's will, written on 15 December 1753 with a codicil added three months later, is a lengthy and detailed document. She bequeathed property and small amounts of money to a total of 39 relatives and friends. The beneficiaries include the children of her cousin Clarke Oldisworth of London; her cousin Elianor Stokes and her children of Wickwar; several members of the Keble family of Fairford (also

relatives); Mary Betterton of Down Ampney and her children; and several close friends. One might feel a little sorry for the three daughters of Muriel's cousin Anne Fry who only received "the worst of my wearing linen and clothes"!

The major beneficiary of Muriel's will was William, the son of Austin Oldisworth, merchant tailor of London. To William went all the rents and profit of the rectory and other leasehold property that Muriel held in Fairford. The Fairford rectory had first been leased from the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester by Muriel's great grandfather Robert Oldisworth in 1613. It passed to William after Muriel's death and thence to his son John who sold the rights to John Raymond Barker in 1794.

In contrast to the generosity she showed to her family and friends, Muriel stipulated in her will that her funeral costs should not exceed £8 which only has a value of about £1,000 in today's money. Muriel Loggan's monument was made by John and Joseph Bryan of Gloucester. These brothers started their masonry and monumental business in 1749 and Muriel's monument is one of the earliest known examples of their work. The workshop is known for its innovative use of different coloured marbles but the inscription on Muriel's monument is cut into inferior stone and is badly worn and now very difficult to read. The monument to Alexander Colston on the south wall of the nave is a later and better quality product of the Bryan workshop. The inscription on Muriel Loggan's monument reads:



**Underneath lie the
Remains of Mr^s MURIEL LOGGAN
(Daughter of James Oldisworth
Rector of Kencott in Oxfordshire)
who died April 18. 1754 aged 79 Years
A Woman
of superior Strength of Understanding
without affectation:
Whose extensive Benevolence of Heart
to the Poor
& warmest affection to her Relations
Whose truly Zealous & Uniform Devotion
& most earnest Desire of Doing Good
to all
made her greatly respected
when living
and sincerely lamented
when Dead
To whose Memory this Monument was
Erected by her very Affectionate and
Grateful Relation Mrs MARY MANN
of Tewksbury.**

Mary Mann was another of Muriel's cousins, being the daughter of Margaret Mann, daughter of the Reverend Nicholas Oldisworth, a son of Robert Oldisworth. Mary was one of the two executrices chosen by Muriel to administer her will in 1754. However, on 5 February 1755 Mary formally renounced her responsibility, probably because at the age of 81 she felt unable to fulfil the task properly, and John Keble of Fairford (grandfather of the famous Reverend John Keble) took on the task. Mary Mann died in Tewkesbury in 1763 having arranged for the monument to Muriel to be made and erected at Fairford.