

# Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street Earlsdon 1861 to 1921

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[Editor's note:

Niall McChesney sadly died on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020, with much of this paper very largely complete. For my part, I have made a number of revisions and updates based on data drawn from the 1921 Census.]

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Berkeley Road South is a short street in the centre of Earlsdon -- just over 40 houses, mainly terraced, with small front-gardens; a range of different types of building style, from the unusual to the typical; cars parked nose-to-tail; a hairdresser's; and an amateur theatre based in an apparently cramped building. It has a history going back over 150 years.

This paper examines the early development of Berkeley Road South, which was called Cromwell Street until 1913 when it was assigned its current name.<sup>1</sup> It looks at the origins of the street and, using the earliest and the most recent personal census material available for Earlsdon between 1861 and 1921, describes who lived there, where they came from and what they did.

## **THE GROWTH OF COVENTRY**

Like any city, Coventry's history has passed through different phases, from being an important medieval centre, through industrialisation, to the development of a modern city. Its period as a major industrial centre has also depended on a variety of crafts and businesses. By the end of the 18th century, silk and ribbon weaving were the basis of the city's economy. During the nineteenth century, it became a centre of watch and clock manufacturing. In the later decades of that century there was growth in cycle manufacturing, later replaced by engineering and motor industries during the 20th century.

Present-day Earlsdon is one of the more diverse and affluent suburbs of Coventry. Its core area was laid out in the 1850s. It was one of a number of areas that were developed on the outskirts of the city, allowing better-off working people, especially watchmakers, to move their families and businesses away from poor conditions inside the city. Cromwell Street was part of that core area.

As noted above, silk and ribbon-weaving were the basis of Coventry's economy at the start of the nineteenth century. Around 1820, 10,000 people were employed in the industry,

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<sup>1</sup> By virtue of the renaming in 1913, throughout the rest of the paper the name Cromwell Street will be used when referring to the period prior to that date with the name Berkeley Road South reserved for the period thereafter.

rising to a peak of 25,000 around 1857, at which time the total population of the city was approximately 40,000. <sup>i</sup> The industry faced a decline in the 1860s, following a national treaty with France which allowed the importation of foreign ribbons and other products, duty-free. However, in Coventry, watch and clock making were well-placed to take over as main employers. The city was already one of the three major centres of the trade in the United Kingdom, the others being Clerkenwell in London and Prescot in Lancashire. In 1860 there were 90 watch and clock manufacturers in the city, employing 2,100 people. <sup>ii</sup>

Coventry's early industries were home-based, rather than factory-based: many watch and clock makers worked in their own homes around the Spon End and Chapelfields areas of south-west Coventry. <sup>iii</sup> These were the high-earners of the day, said to see themselves above the likes of weavers. <sup>iv</sup>

Unfortunately, their industry was eventually hampered by a certain reluctance to innovate as well as by the impact of trade policies in the second half of the nineteenth century -- such as happened when the United States placed a tariff on imported English watches -- thus increasing their cost and leading to a decline in watchmaking in England. However, the skilled pool of workers was vital in assisting the growth of cycle manufacturing and machine tools, which became major industries. It also later helped the growth of car manufacturing, following the establishment of the first car manufacturer in the country at the Motor Mill, Sandy Lane, Radford in 1896. <sup>v</sup>

Against this background, Earlsdon was one of a number of small communities originally established outside the urban area of Coventry, which is notable in that new building had tended to take place either within the city or beyond the "Lammas" and "Michaelmas" lands, where Freeman had the grazing rights <sup>vi</sup> (a situation similar to the modern-day Green Belt).

A local farmer and butcher, John Moore, had built a farmhouse (called "Six Fields") in 1830 off what is now Moor Street. The 31 acre estate was sold to the Coventry Freehold Land Society in 1852. Many of the better-off working people wanted to move their families and businesses out of the city and away from the deteriorating housing and working conditions. Membership of a Freehold Land Society offered such people an opportunity to move into their own house, perhaps with a workshop attached. This was one of six such sites

developed by the Coventry Freehold Land Society during the middle years of the nineteenth century.

The Society laid out eight streets - Earlsdon Street, Moor Street, Cromwell Street, Arden Street, Warwick Street, Clarendon Street, Providence Street and Earlsdon Terrace, alongside Earlsdon Lane (see Appendix Map 1). The resultant estate comprised 250 self-build plots, each being supplied with water, as well as drainage for waste and rainwater. The Society hoped to sell the plots to members, who would then take out a mortgage and commission a builder to design and erect a house.

John Flinn, a watch manufacturer originally from Prescot and a member of the Society, built the first house, Earlsdon House, in what is now Earlsdon Street. Attached to it was a workshop where 14 men and 5 boys were employed in watchmaking.<sup>vii</sup> For Earlsdon as a whole, in 1861, out of 146 males in fulltime employment, 100 were employed in the watch trade<sup>viii</sup>.

The initial development of Earlsdon was slow and uneven, reflecting the cycles of the city's economic fortunes during the second half of the nineteenth century. Some of the plots remained unsold for years, whilst others were sold but not developed. There were 10 houses in 1854, 107 in 1861, 114 in 1871 and 187 in 1884. Map 3 shows that less than half of the potential area had been developed by the 1880s. Indeed, a walk through the initial core area of Earlsdon will show that there are only short stretches of similar houses in any street -- an indication of this gradual growth. Census figures also show that Earlsdon experienced considerable population change in its early years: about 60% of households listed in the 1861 Census had left by 1871; about 70% of households listed in the 1871 Census had left by 1881; and about 50% of households listed in the 1881 Census had left by 1891.<sup>ix</sup> Nonetheless, despite this pattern of piecemeal change, Earlsdon continued to establish itself during this period, with Frederick Smith describing the new community as "a kind of garden suburb, established mainly by Coventry watch-makers, but it was up-to-date and had a School Board of its own and a small sewage farm."<sup>x</sup>

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this pattern of incremental change gave way to a period of dramatic growth, thanks in large part to the incorporation of Earlsdon within the municipal boundary of Coventry in 1890, and towards the end of 1898 the opening of

Albany Road which provided direct and convenient access to the city, at the very time when the population of the city was beginning to increase significantly – see Appendix Table 1 <sup>xi</sup> -- thanks in large part to the advent of the new cycle and motor manufacturing industries. In the period to the start of the First World War, these new developments saw the laying out of nearly forty streets and the building of over 2,000 houses on estates surrounding the original, mid-Victorian Earlsdon. <sup>xii</sup> Owing to the city's industrial contribution to the war effort, by 1918 the growth in the city's population had reached a peak of approximately 142,000. <sup>xiii</sup> Although there was a good deal of economic dislocation after the war as companies readjusted from wartime to peacetime production, giving rise to unemployment and even a slump by 1920, the fact remains that by the time of the 1921 Census Earlsdon was no longer a small, semi-rural settlement outside the city but instead a well-developed, integrated suburb of Coventry. As the Coventry Graphic on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1912 put it:

Everybody here knows what Earlsdon is like – a thriving, active, progressive suburb with its fine schools (another one is being built), golf links, well-equipped clubs, wide roads, up to date shops, motor works, picturedromes and tram service .... There is no finer site within easy reach of the centre of the City. <sup>xiv</sup>

## **THE GROWTH OF BERKELEY ROAD SOUTH/CROMWELL STREET**

As one of its core streets, the development of what we now know as Berkeley Road South mirrored many of the changes affecting the inhabitants of Earlsdon and the city of Coventry.

One early resident of the street whose experiences exemplify a number of these trends was Thomas Fletcher, who lived in what he would have known as Cromwell Street on the corner with Providence Street for at least forty years. He appeared in each census between 1861 and 1901 and was probably still living there at the time of his death in 1904. Like a number of the original residents, he was a watchmaker who prior to coming to the street had previously lived nearby, in his own case with his uncle Joseph Tranter – another watchmaker -- in the Butts area of Coventry. However, it seems that the changes in the fortunes of the watchmaking trade led him to diversify, such that by the 1881 Census he was described as a

"watchmaker, shop-keeper and postman", while in the 1901 Census, when he was in his seventies, his sole occupation was "retail beer seller".

Thomas Fletcher's longevity as a Cromwell Street resident is, however, unusual. He is recorded in five of the six censuses, with his near neighbours Thomas Pearson and Robert Lord appearing in three, and just a handful of others appearing in two. Turning to the first of these, Thomas Pearson, who had been listed in the 1851 Census as a watchmaker living at St Nicholas Street, was living in Cromwell Street in 1861, 1871 and 1881. In a similar vein, Robert Lord, another watchmaker, who had previously been based in High Street, Coventry at the time of the 1871 Census, was resident in Cromwell Street in 1881, 1891 and 1901.

These individuals and their households apart, the street experienced a large turnover of residents throughout most of the period analysed here. This can be seen from the fact that over the course of the first six censuses analysed, the number of households grew from 11 in 1861 to 37 in 1911 and yet about 90 different households in total were recorded as resident in the street at some point during the intervening years. Indeed, as Table 2 shows, only 6 out of 37 heads of household in the 1911 Census were listed as resident in Cromwell Street in the 1901 Census. Against this pattern of continual change, however, the situation revealed in the 1921 Census was very different, as 16 of the 40 heads of household listed at this time had also been recorded as living in the street in 1911. In other words, just as there had previously been a constant flow of people into and out of Cromwell Street, during the final decade of the period under examination as many as 40% of household heads now chose to stay in the same houses as they had occupied before the Great War.

Another clear parallel with the rest of Earlsdon is the sporadic development of housing on the street in the early years of the estate, as illustrated by the maps in the accompanying Appendix. For example, map 2 from 1860 shows relatively few properties including the two houses on the south side, opposite Moor Street, recorded as occupied in 1861 by the Pearsons and the Whites; the "weavers' cottages", also on the south side, built around 1855, where the Pools and the Greens lived; and, on the north side, the corner property and the adjacent block, built around 1854, occupied by the Fletchers, the Tranters, the Hammonds, the Yates, the Taylors and two Hopkins families. Map 3 from 1889 confirms the continued slow development in the early years; the additional houses completed during the

intervening 28 years comprised only two further properties opposite Moor Street and the five terraced houses, completed in 1888, next to the "weavers' cottages".

However, as Map 4 from 1913 demonstrates, this pattern of slow growth in the housing stock changed markedly over the next twenty years with the number of households doubling between 1891 and 1911, which expansion can be attributed to the opportunities created by the rapidly expanding cycle industries booming in Coventry at this time as well as the opening of Albany Road in 1898. In more detail, in the course of the 1890's on the north side of the street a group of four new houses known as Union Terrace were built for the Coventry publican Thomas Mitchener while three more houses were added on the opposite side of the street adjacent to the "weavers' cottages". Subsequent to this, no doubt occasioned by the death of Thomas Fletcher in 1904, Charles Fletcher sold the shop on the corner of Cromwell Street and Providence Street and used the vacant plot of land on the opposite corner to build four new terraced houses, one of which soon became a confectioner's owned by William Collett.<sup>xv</sup> This expansion was followed by the construction in 1910 of a further four houses on the corner of Cromwell Street and Moor Street by local builder Charles Luck, based just around the corner at 27 Moor Street.

The "weavers' cottages" mentioned above are two of the most interesting buildings in Cromwell Street. The third floor has a "topshop", with large windows to make maximum use of daylight and reinforced floors to support heavy looms. In 1861, the occupiers were ribbon-weavers George Pool and David Green, who as in the case of other residents new to Cromwell Street had previously lived in Coventry. However, following the decline in the ribbon-weaving trade described in the previous section, like many other weavers David Green appears to have emigrated to the United States, where the Federal Census returns for 1870 and 1880 show him in the company of his wife and daughter working in Philadelphia as a storekeeper. His former neighbour, George Pool, also left Earlsdon. A study of censuses shows that in 1871 he was living in Prescott, near Liverpool, where he and his wife are both described as tar distillers and that in 1881 he was a widower living in York, described as a saddler.

Maps 2 and 3 illustrate an interesting development with implications for Earlsdon as a whole. This concerns the building behind the three-storey block on the north side which was originally a ribbon-weaving factory but which went on to become an important focus

for Earlsdon life at a time when the village had no easy access to amenities in the city given that Albany Road had yet to be opened. The factory building in question had been built during the declining stage of the ribbon trade but had fallen out of use. Local Wesleyan Methodists saw its potential as a meeting place and converted the building into a chapel, eventually opening in late 1872, and providing not only the first church but arguably also the first meeting place for the local community.<sup>xvi</sup>

In 1881, the Wesleyan Methodist Church set up a trust to replace the old factory shed and construct instead a new, purpose-built place of worship. Legal documents show that the trustees included people who lived, or would live, in Cromwell Street.<sup>xvii</sup> Thomas Pearson, the watchmaker referred to above, was resident at number 32, on the north side, in 1871 and 1881; his son, Arthur George Pearson, a watch maker, lived in his own house on the north side with his now-widowed mother in 1891; and John Dolman, a railway clerk from Staffordshire, lived in different houses on the south side between 1891 and 1911.

On behalf of the trust, Robert Waddington, a watch manufacturer, purchased the vacant site opposite Moor Street for what was to become the new Methodist Chapel. The plot had been purchased in 1852 by a William Hill, who lived elsewhere in Earlsdon in 1861, changing hands a number of times until owned by a Hannah Kimberley.<sup>xviii</sup> On 25<sup>th</sup> April 1883, the land was sold to the trustees, and a year later on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1884 the foundation stone for the Chapel was laid.<sup>xix</sup><sup>2</sup>

In parallel with its use as a Methodist chapel, the old weaving shed was also the location for Earlsdon's first school. In 1882, an education committee – referred to above by Frederick Smith – was established by a number of Earlsdon residents, who decided to use the weaving shed as the venue for the new school as this had the advantage of being available on weekdays and had also for some time been in use as a Sunday School. A young

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<sup>2</sup> In 1960 the site, which was then a redundant Sunday School, was sold by the Methodists to the "Criterion Players", who were formed following a breakaway from the "Warwick Road Church Players" five years earlier and had been seeking their own premises. The Criterion Theatre was opened in February 1961 and has become known as one of the best amateur theatre companies in the Midlands.



schoolmaster called Charles Corelli Johnson was appointed on the expectation that he would help recruit potential schoolchildren from the surrounding streets. Starting with approximately 70 pupils, the school opened in April 1882. Such was the success of this initiative that within eight years, the total enrolment had more than doubled, with the result that a purpose-built school was opened on Earlsdon Lane towards the end of 1890, which is still in use today. <sup>xx</sup>

Returning to the analysis of the census returns between 1861 and 1921, the average number of people living in the houses was fairly constant until the First World War. Table 3 shows that the lowest household size figure of 4.3 was in 1871, which appears to be related to a number of younger, smaller households moving to the street, whilst the highest figure of 5.2 in 1881 is related to the presence of three nine-person households. Between 1911 and 1921, however, the situation becomes somewhat more complicated as the overall population figure for the street remained static at 165, and yet the number of households continued to increase even though no further houses were built in the street at this time. This apparent anomaly – as well as perhaps the drop in average household size -- can be explained by the fact that several addresses in the 1921 Census are shown to have been occupied by two households, which trend might have been caused by the difficulties faced in Coventry in accommodating workers who came to work in the city's burgeoning armaments factories and associated industries during the First World War. <sup>xxi</sup>

In parallel with these changes, people came to the street from a widening variety of places over the period under investigation. On the basis of the data presented in Tables 4 and 5, a clear majority of all residents originated from Coventry and neighbouring areas, still standing at approximately two-thirds of the total in 1921. In comparison, from 1891 onwards the proportion of heads of household born in the local area fell somewhat to approximately one-third of the total by 1911, suggesting that heads of household increasingly moved from elsewhere to Cromwell Street to exploit employment opportunities in the area, then married locally and started families, although by 1921 this proportion had reverted to approximately half of the total. In overall terms, this pattern of movement is strikingly reflected in the fact that the places where the 165 residents of the street in 1921 had been born include twenty different English counties, as well as Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The age distribution of those living in the street also changed with a growing proportion of younger residents for much of the period under investigation here. The earliest inhabitants of the street were already well established in their trades by the time they moved to Earlsdon, as a result of which many of them were no longer young. Thus, as Table 6 shows, 55% of household heads were aged between 41 and 60 in 1861, compared with only 38% in 1911. Conversely, while fewer than 30% were under the age of 40 in 1861, the proportion of household heads in this age bracket rose to almost 50% in 1911, an illustration of greater job opportunities in the emerging bicycle and motor industries as discussed further below. However, because as we have already seen a much greater proportion of the household heads were still living at the same address between 1911 and 1921 as had been the case beforehand, it comes as no surprise that the average age for these residents was higher at 46 years of age, with 40% falling into the 51-60 age bracket.

Table 7, covering all residents, perhaps unsurprisingly reveals much the same demographic trend, namely the increasing proportion of 21 to 40 year-olds and the declining proportion of 41 to 60 year olds during the period until 1911, but thereafter the trend changes with an increase in the proportion of those in the older age group. In spite of this, it is striking that even in 1921 over a quarter of all residents were children aged under 13, a level which remained fairly constant throughout the period under study.

Trends in occupations in the street (shown in Table 8) reflect the wider industrial history of Coventry. In the 1861 Census, weavers and watchmakers formed the majority of workers. In the 1871 Census, there were only three weavers remaining, all members of the Ward family living in the same house, reflecting the decline in this industry. Although weavers disappeared from the street during the period under study, workers in watch and clock making were well represented, increasing in numbers at least until the latter years of the nineteenth century, probably due to the continued presence of suitable property.

Constants during the period were occupations such as school mistress and railway worker. As noted earlier, there was a school in the old ribbon-weaving shed and its replacement was just nearby while Coventry Station was only a mile away. For example, Sarah Ann Lord is described as a "pupil teacher" in 1881 (when she was 15) and a "school mistress" in 1891; and Elizabeth Hall as a "school governess" in 1891. For their part, John Dolman and William Dolman (1901 and 1891) worked on the railways and George Ball (1871) was a railway

guard. Other types of jobs appearing in the census from the beginning of the twentieth century were service trades such as bricklayers, carpenters and shop workers.

The emergence of other rapidly growing industries is shown by the 5 people employed in cycle manufacturing in 1891, rising to 12 in 1901, with those employed in the machine tool industry totalling 14. By 1921, 10 residents were recorded as employed in the motor industry and car manufacturing, representing nearly 15% of total employment in the street at the time. Almost as an aside, it is interesting to note that while Cromwell Street had been a centre of production for weaving in the earliest days of the estate, by 1921 in contrast to most of the original Earlsdon streets the recently-renamed Berkeley Road South contained no manufacturing or engineering premises, even though many of the residents themselves were employed in these sectors.

In contrast to earlier censuses, the employment data in the 1921 Census is revealing in that it not only records residents' occupations but also identifies for the first time the companies they worked for and even the location of their employers, all of which indicate some significant changes. Taking watchmakers as an example, while as seen above their forbears might typically have worked at home on an individual basis, every one of the six watchmakers still living in the street in 1921 was now instead an employee working for a company based elsewhere in the city. More broadly, of the street's 71 residents listed as having an occupation, only 16 were shown as working locally – the majority of these working in nearby shops – while the other 55 residents were employed by companies located outside Earlsdon, demonstrating very clearly the degree to which Berkeley Road South – together with the other streets of the original estate – was now fully integrated with the city of Coventry.

## **CONCLUSION**

At the beginning of the period under investigation, the 1860s, Cromwell Street belonged to the distinct "garden suburb" of Earlsdon, lying outside the city of Coventry. As established above, the new suburb and the street itself experienced a somewhat faltering start to begin with, but against the backdrop of the decline of the weaving trade – in which Cromwell Street had been pre-eminent -- and the subsequent rise of watchmaking, Cromwell Street

contributed to the wider development of Earlsdon in the course of the 1870s and the 1880s with the creation of the suburb's first church as well as its first school in what had previously been Earlsdon's first factory. From the time of the 1891 Census onwards, watchmaking in its turn was in decline but the development of new opportunities in the burgeoning bicycle and motor vehicle industries in particular -- coupled with the opening of Albany Road in 1898 -- saw the number of households in Cromwell Street double by the time of the 1911 Census. As revealed by the 1921 Census, however, the following ten years represented a distinct contrast with a period of consolidation for what was now known as Berkeley Road South, in which the numbers of houses and residents stayed level, even if the number of households rose slightly. Perhaps more significantly, as evidenced by the employment data detailed above, the final census in our survey shows that what was now known as Berkeley Road South -- together with the other streets of the Earlsdon estate -- was no longer a place where individuals lived and also worked in an outlying settlement but had become part of a genuine suburb within the city of Coventry.

## **NOTES ON METHODOLOGY**

The principal source of information has been the censuses from 1861 and 1921. These generally provide information on the following: numbers of people in dwellings, household composition, names, relationships, age, occupation, place of birth and employment status. The censuses provide consistent information, enabling the analysis of trends over time. This has been supplemented by information from electoral registers, directories and maps as well as title deeds.

A specific problem was that the 1861 Census treated Earlsdon as one area and did not give street names and house numbers. Using local history sources, maps and addresses in the 1871 Census, a deduction has been made as to which section of the 1861 Census lists those households living in Cromwell Street. Further inconvenience in tracing the development of the Street was caused by the fact that it grew in a piecemeal, as opposed to a sequential, fashion. The re-naming (as Berkeley Road South) immediately prior to the First World War was followed in 1923 by a change in house numbers – please see the final section in Appendix Two for an overview of how to match these to the numbers used today.

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### **APPENDICES**

#### **Appendix 1 - Tables**

Table 1: Population of Coventry 1891 to 1921

Table 2: Heads of Household living in Cromwell Street/Berkeley Road South in Preceding Census

Table 3: Total People and Households 1861 to 1921

Table 4: Place of Birth of Heads of Household 1861 to 1921

Table 5: Place of Birth of Heads of All Residents 1861 to 1921

Table 6: Age Distribution of Heads of Household 1861 to 1921

Table 7: Age Distribution of All Residents 1861 to 1921

Table 8: Occupations Listed in Censuses for Working People 1861 to 1921

#### **Appendix 2 - Maps**

Map 1: Earlsdon 1852/53

Map 2: Earlsdon 1860

Map 3: Earlsdon 1889

Map 4: Coventry 1911

Map 5: Earlsdon 1913

Map 6: Earlsdon 2010

Map 7: Earlsdon 2022

Notes re street names and house numbers

### Appendix 3 - Images

Cromwell Street circa 1912

Berkeley Road South 2022

First Earlsdon School by the Weaving Shed 1888

Naysmyth family behind 32 Cromwell Street (now 104 Berkeley Road South) circa 1900

Wesleyan Chapel circa 1900

Wesleyan Chapel by Sydney John Bunney

Criterion Theatre 2022

Corner Shop / Off-Licence 1908 Corner Shop

Hairdressers 2022

Weavers Cottages, Berkeley Road South 2022

North side, Berkeley Road South 2022

South side, Berkeley Road South 2022

53 Cromwell Street circa 1909

111 Berkeley Road South 2023



## APPENDIX 1 -- TABLES

Table 1: Population of Coventry 1891 to 1921

Table 2: Heads of Household Living in Cromwell Street Also Listed in Preceding Census

Table 3: Total People and Households 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

Table 4: Place of Birth of Heads of Household 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

Table 5: Place of Birth of All Residents 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

Table 6: Age Distribution of Heads of Households 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

Table 7: Age Distribution of All Residents 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

Table 8: Occupations Listed in Censuses for Working People 1861 to 1921 (Cromwell/Berkeley Road South)

Table 1: Population of Coventry 1901 to 1921

	1901	1911	1921	Increase 1901-1911	Increase 1911-1921
Population	69,978	106,349	128,157	52.0%	20.5%

Table 2: Heads of Household Living in Cromwell Street Also Listed in Preceding Census

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Number of Heads	11	9	11	18	28	37	40
Preceding census	n/a	2	2	3	7	6	16

Table 3: Total Residents and Households 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Households	11	9	11	18	28	37	40
People	51	39	57	85	132	165	165
Ave H'hold Size	4.6	4.3	5.2	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.1

Table 4: Place of Birth of Heads of Household 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Coventry	8	4	5	9	10	8	7
Adj Coventry*	1	1	1				
Birmingham			1			2	5
Warwickshire**	1	1	1	1	4	3	7
Bucks						1	
Cambs					1		
Cheshire							1
Derbyshire					1		
Devon							1
Durham						1	2
Essex							1
Gloucestershire		1	1			4	3
Hampshire							1

Table 4 cont: Place of Birth of Heads of Household 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Lancashire		1		1	1	1	
Leicestershire				1	1	2	1
London	1	1	1	1	2	2	1
Northants				2		1	
Oxfordshire			1		1	1	2
Shropshire							1
Staffs				2	4	7	3
Sussex							1
Worcs					1	1	1
Yorkshire						1	
Scotland				1	1		1
Ireland						1	1
Channel Islands					1		
United States						1	
Total	11	9	11	18	28	37	40

\* Adj Coventry refers to parishes then outside, but later absorbed into, Coventry

\*\* Warwickshire refers to the county without Coventry and Birmingham

Table 5: Place of Birth of All Residents 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Coventry	36	26	25	57	85	87	79
Adj Coventry*	1	2	4				
Birmingham		1	9	3	8	4	10
Warwickshire**	6	3	4	6	9	14	16
Beds						1	
Berks						1	1
Bucks					1	1	
Cambs					1		1
Cheshire							1
Derbyshire					1		
Devon							1
Durham						1	3
Essex						1	2
Gloucestershire		2	4		1	7	5
Hants			3			2	4
Herts						1	
Hunts					1		
Isle of Man						1	
Isle of Wight						1	1
Kent						1	
Lancashire		1		1	1	3	1
Leicestershire		1	2	3	3	4	5
London	6	3	5	7	3	4	5
Northants	1			4	1	1	1

Table 5 cont: Place of Birth of All Residents 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

Oxfordshire			1		2	5	6
Oxfordshire			1		2	5	6
Shropshire							1
Somerset							1
Staffs				2	7	10	10
Suffolk					1		
Sussex							2
Wiltshire						1	
Worcs					3	4	2
Yorkshire	1					8	1
Scotland				2	2		4
Ireland					1	1	1
Wales							1
Channel Islands					1		
United States						1	
Total	51	39	57	85	132	165	165

Table 6: Age Distribution of Heads of Households 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
< 21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21-30	2	1	1	4	5	6	7
31-40	1	2	2	5	8	12	9
41-50	5	3	5	3	9	11	8
51-60	1	2	0	3	3	3	11
61-70	1	0	3	2	2	2	2
> 70	1	1	0	1	1	3	3
Total	11	9	11	18	28	37	40

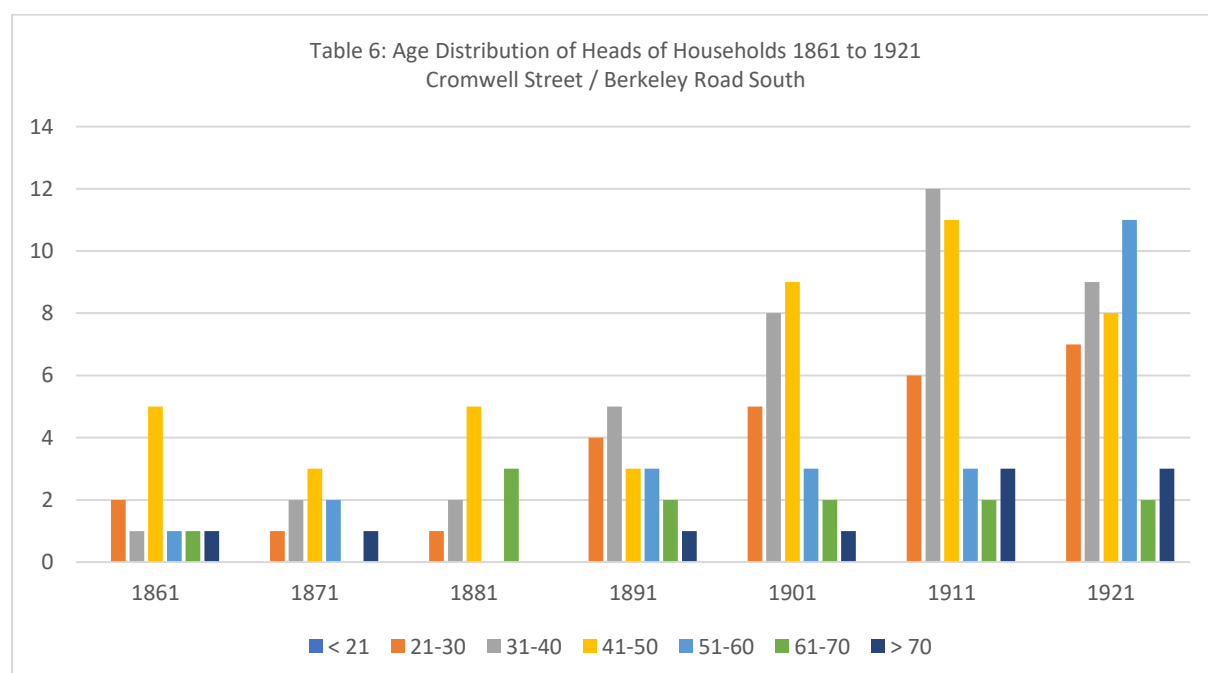


Table 7: Age Distribution of All Residents 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
< 13	14	11	17	27	40	42	43
13-20	12	6	14	13	22	28	21
21-30	5	5	6	13	21	28	31
31-40	4	4	6	13	22	27	23
41-50	11	7	8	6	15	21	22
51-60	1	4	1	6	6	7	18
61-70	3	1	5	3	4	2	4
> 70	1	1	0	4	2	10	3
Total	51	39	57	85	132	165	165

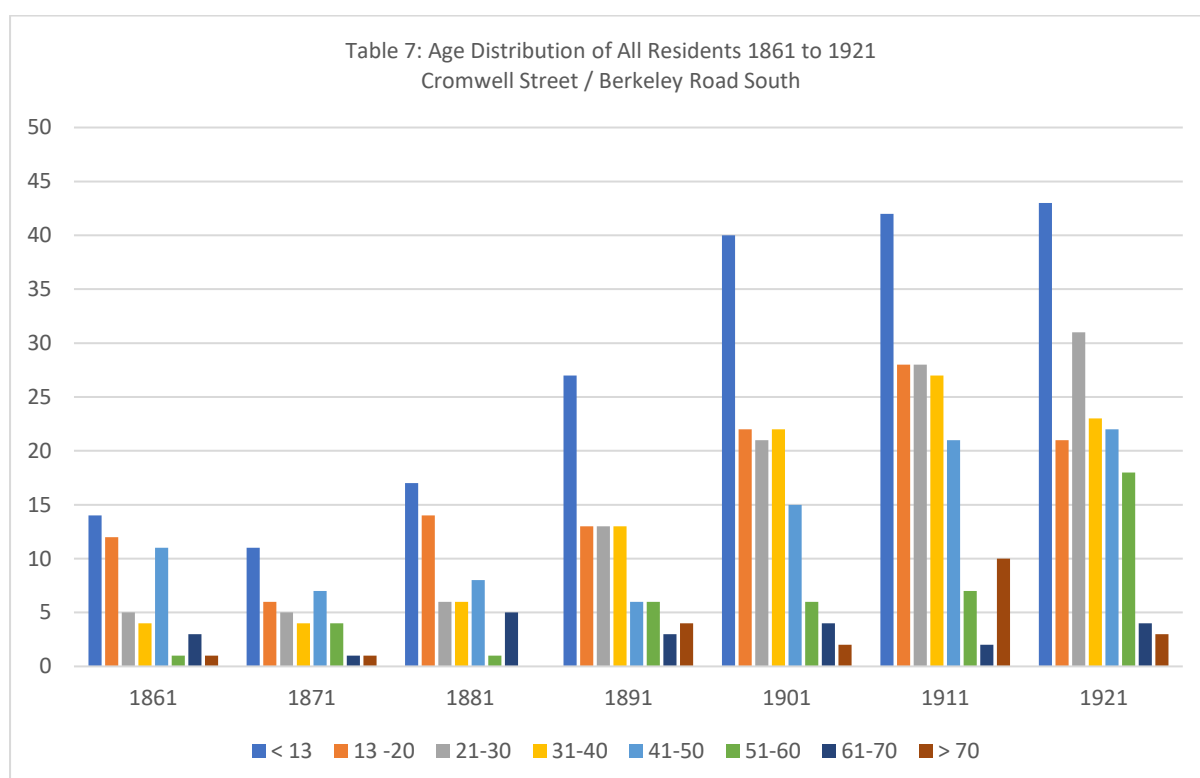


Table 8: Occupations Listed in Censuses for Working People 1861 to 1921 (Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street)

1861	
Weavers 11 Watchmakers 16 Agriculture 3 Laundress 1 Servants 2	

1871	
Watchmakers 6 Weavers 3 Dressmakers / Milliner 2 Wood Turner 1 Bath Towel Fringer 1	Annuitants 2 Clerk 1 Railway Worker 1 Servant 1
1881	
Watchmakers 7 Cycle Manufacturing 2 Plasterer / Bricklayers 2 Laundress 2 Printer 1 Smith 1	Watchmaker / Postman 1 Schoolmistress 2 Bandmaster 1 Servant 1 Weaver 1 Milliner 1
1891	
Watchmakers 18 Cycle Manufacturing 5 Joiner / Carpenter 2 Drapers Assistant 2 Housekeeper 1 Groom 1 Bricklayer 1	Postman / Beer Retailer 1 School Mistress 2 Railway Clerk 2 Clerk 1 Nurse 1 Own Means 3
1901	
Watchmakers 12 Cycle manufacturing 12 Machine Tools 4 Dressmaker 3 Joiner / Carpenter 2 Slater 2 Agriculture 2 Bricklayer 1 Errand Boy 1 Travelling Draper 1	Postman / Beer Retailer 1 Draughtsman 1 Railway Worker 3 Railway Clerk 2 Clerk 2 Typist 2 Policeman 2 Journalist 1 Butcher 1 Housekeeper 1
1911	
Machine Tools 14 Watchmakers 7 Turner 5 Weavers 4 Motor Manufacturing 4 Cycle Manufacturing 1 Builder / Carpenter 1 House Decorator 1 Bricklayer 1	Clerk 3 Shop Assistant 3 Railway Worker 2 Postman 2 Baker 2 Beer Retailer 2 Private Means 2 Confectioner 1 Railway Clerk 1

Painter 1 Slater 1 Printer 1 Milliner 1 Gun works 1 Cigar Manufacturer 1 Coachsmith 1	Assurance Collector 1 Typist 1 Housekeeper 1 Soldier 1 Policeman 1 Photographer 1 Errand Boy 1
1921	
Motor Manufacturing 10 Watchmaker 6 Clerk 6 Shopworker 8 Machine Tools 5 Cycle Manufacturing 3 Bookkeeper 3 Baker 2 Bricklayer / carpenter & joiner 2 Dressmaking 2 Fitter & Turner 2 Postman 2	Able Seaman (retd) 1 Dairyman 1 Deliveryman 1 Electric Cable Layer 1 Errand Boy 1 Final Viewer 1 Nurse 1 Sheet Metal Worker 1 Silk Packer 1 Spindle Machinist 1 Viewer 1 Wood Machinist 1

Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street, Earlsdon 1861 to 1921

Niall McChesney, edited and updated by David Porter, Earlsdon Research Group

February 2023



## APPENDIX 2 -- MAPS

Map 1: Earlsdon 1852/53



Provided by Earlsdon Research Group

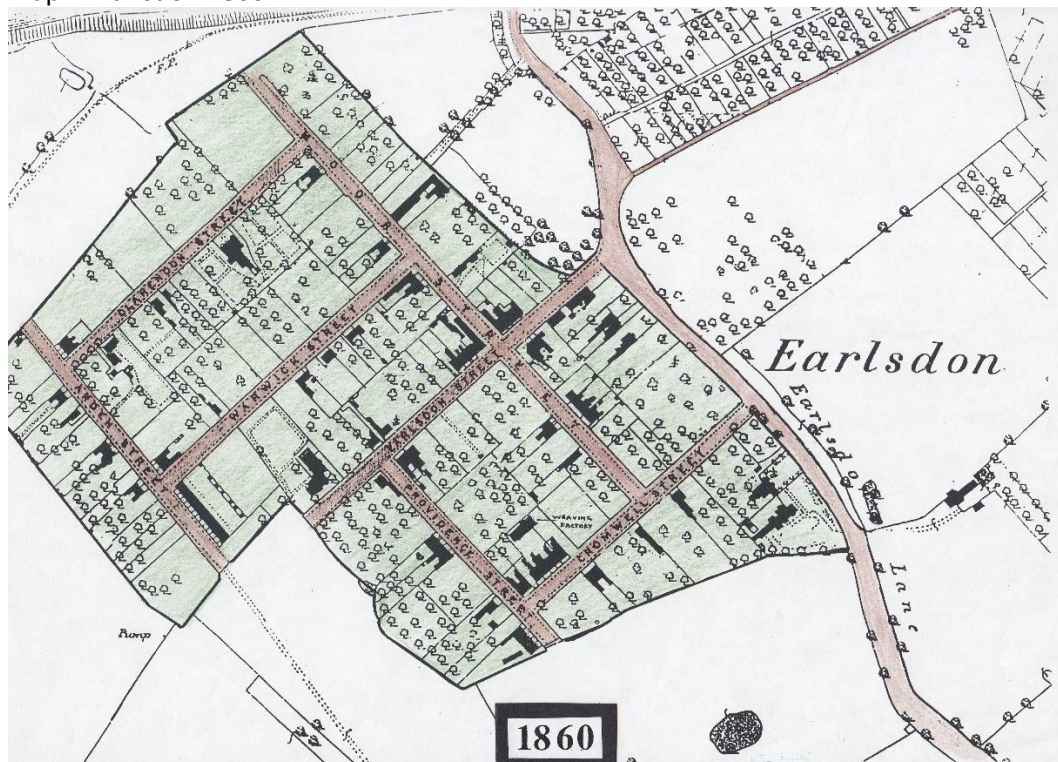
Berkeley Road South/ Cromwell Street, Earlsdon 1861 to 1921

Niall McChesney, edited and updated by David Porter, Earlsdon Research Group

February 2023



Map 2: Earlsdon 1860



Provided by Earlsdon Research Group



Map 3: Earlsdon 1889



Provided by Earlsdon Research Group

Map 4: Coventry 1911



Reproduced from Dormer Harris, Mary (1911) Story of Coventry. London: J M Dent & Co



Map 5: Earlsdon 1913

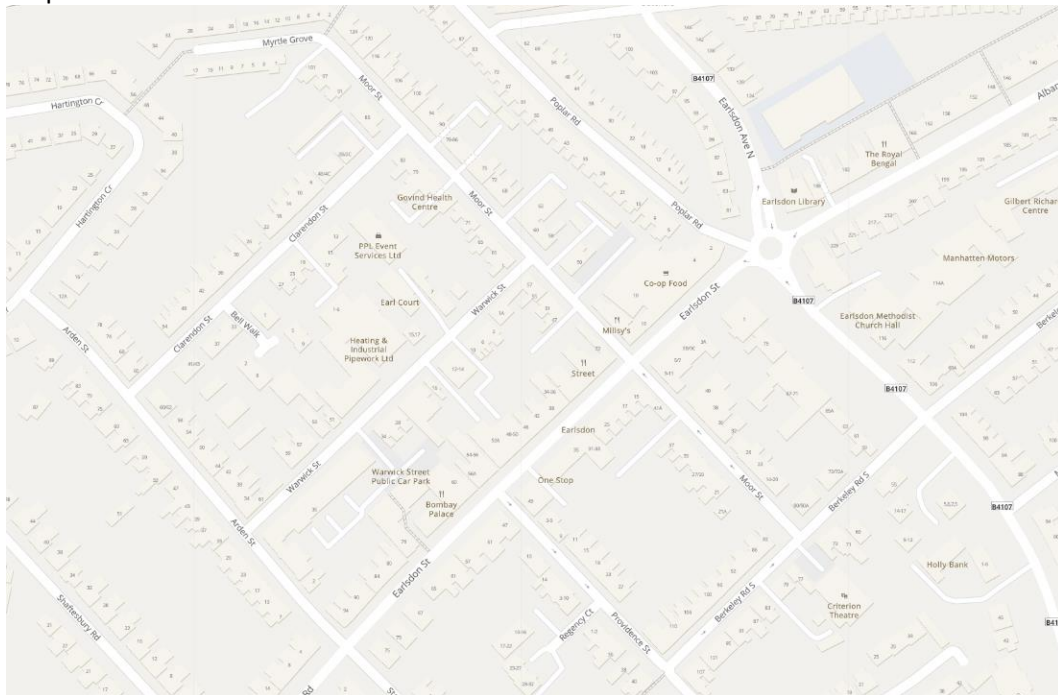


Provided by Earlsdon Research Group

Map 6: Earlsdon 2010



Map 7: Earlsdon 2022



Extract from [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)

## Cromwell Street / Berkeley Road South

### Street Names and House Numbers

Following the incorporation of Earlsdon within the city boundary of Coventry in 1890, so as to avoid confusion with a street of the same name in Foleshill, the decision was made to rename Cromwell Street as Berkeley Road South, which change officially took effect in 1913.

In 1923, and so outside the period under consideration here, a further decision was made to renumber all of the houses in Berkeley Road South so as to bring these into one continuous sequence following on from the house numbers in Berkeley Road North as they appear today.

In the tables below, the upper rows give the numbers used to the present day in Berkeley Road South while the cells in the rows beneath show the corresponding numbers used until the 1921 Census inclusive:

North side

82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	114	
10	12	14	--	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	

South side

71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101		
13	15	17	19	--	--	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43		

103	105	107	109	111													
45	47	49	51	53													

Please note that the houses we know today as numbers 79, 81 and 88 were not completed until 1924, and so these houses do not fall within the period under investigation here.

## APPENDIX 3 -- IMAGES



Photograph of Cromwell Street provided by Earlsdon Research Group (which dates it as circa 1912)

Berkeley Road South/Cromwell Street, Earlsdon 1861 to 1921

Niall McChesney, edited and updated by David Porter, Earlsdon Research Group

February 2023







Berkeley Road South 2022





EARLSDON SCHOOL CROMWELL STREET 1888  
WITH MR C.C. JOHNSON

Photograph provided by Earlsdon Research Group of the first Earlsdon School by the Weaving Shed behind the three-storey Weavers Cottages in Cromwell Street 1888



FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN GARDEN BEHIND 3 STOREY HOUSES  
 104 CROMWELL ST. (BERKELEY RD. STII) C1900  
 JAMES NAYSMYTH (FATHER OF JEAN) SECOND FROM RIGHT  
 STANDING

Photograph provided by Earlsdon Research Group of the Naysmyth family behind 32 Cromwell Street (now 104 Berkeley Road South) circa 1900



Wesleyan Chapel circa 1900 (provided by Criterion Theatre)



Wesleyan Chapel by Sydney John Bunney (provided by Criterion Theatre)





Criterion Theatre 2022



Corner shop/off licence, probably taken in 1908, showing the licensee, George Harris (listed in the 1911 Census) with daughter and either wife or assistant. From files belonging to the late Mary Montes, kept privately.



Hairdressers on the corner of Berkeley Road South and Providence Street 2022





Weavers' Cottages 2022





North side, Berkeley Road South 2022



South side, Berkeley Road South 2022





Photograph provided by Earlsdon Research Group of the confectionery shop on the corner of Cromwell Street and Providence Street (now Osborne Street), taken around 1909, probably showing Edith Collett wife of William (as listed in the 1911 Census) at 53 Cromwell Street.





111 Berkeley Road South on the corner with Osborne Street January 2023

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