

ELINOR ARBUTHNOT IN LIFE AND DEATH



The Arbuthnot Hall Committee accepted a gift of a reproduction portrait of Elinor Arbuthnot, the benefactor who gave the Hall to the village as a memorial to her second husband. The portrait is now hanging in the Hall. The legend to the right reads:

ELINOR ARBUTHNOT, formerly Elinor Guthrie, by Frederic Leighton, painted in 1865. Elinor is wearing black silk in mourning for her father's death that year. This is an authorized reproduction. The original painting is in the Yale Center for British Art. Elinor Arbuthnot, 1838-1911, née Stirling, widowed Guthrie, donated this Hall to the village in 1904, as a memorial to her second husband, Forster Fitzgerald Arbuthnot. Elinor was daughter of Admiral Sir James Stirling, the first Governor of Western Australia, she was born there. Elinor married James Guthrie when she was 18. She had 9 children. James Guthrie died in 1873. Elinor married Forster Fitzgerald Arbuthnot in 1879, they had no children. Forster Arbuthnot died in 1901. Elinor and Forster Arbuthnot are buried at Christ Church in Shamley Green.

Sarah Sullivan has solved the mystery of the wording on the memorial at the grave of Elinor and Forster Arbuthnot in the graveyard at Christ Church in Shamley Green. The wording on the bottom tier, on its own, superficially appears to suggest it is the grave of Elinor's former husband James Guthrie, except that the dates do not match. The complete inscription is:

FORSTER FITZGERALD ARBUTHNOT
BORN MAY 21ST 1833
DIED MAY 25TH 1901

ELINOR, DAUGHTER OF
ADMIRAL SIR JAMES STIRLING.
WIDOW OF THE ABOVE, AND ALSO OF

JAMES A GUTHRIE OF CRAIGIE FORFARSHIRE
BORN SEPT 8TH 1838 DIED MAY 9TH 1911



A comment on the times, Elinor is defined by the men in her life! She was 18 when she was married to James Guthrie.

Patrick Mannix