

## GRAVE OF THE MONTH

### James Matthew Stocker – Coachman (1862-1895)

James grew up surrounded by poverty and violence in Robeson's Yard, a typical Victorian court behind a narrow archway in Bartholomew Street. When he was about 10 years old the family moved to Play-House Yard, Speenhamland, and a few years later to Shaw Crescent.



*A well-worn gravestone, discovered lying flat beneath grass on an Open Day in 2017.*

James was, perhaps, a typical lad of his time, apparently stealing a gate-post from Thatcham and having to spend a few nights in the cells.  
*Berkshire Chronicle (14.10.1876)*

He married Mary-Jane King in 1882 and, despite his poor start, James worked hard. He and Mary-Jane had four children in the next ten years and Mary-Jane was pregnant again when, on Tuesday June 11<sup>th</sup> 1895, whilst living in Vine Court, off Northbrook Street, James became ill. Following his usual day's work as a coachman for Dr Bunny he went home to his family.

*"He ate a hearty supper and retired to rest about ten o'clock, but had not been upstairs long before he complained of pains in the chest, and before medical aid could be rendered he expired. Mr Wylie, surgeon, gave his opinion that death was due to heart disease ..."*

*Berkshire Chronicle and Reading Mercury (15/6/1895)*

His wife gave birth to a fifth child seven weeks later.

More information is available on our website: [www.fnrnewbury.org.uk](http://www.fnrnewbury.org.uk)

Carol Brindley June 2022 - Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery  
(James was my great-great uncle)