

## JAMES HINSCLIFF

I cannot find any evidence of Hinscliffs/Hinchcliffes in the Hipperholme area before the marriage of James's parents, John Hinscliff and Alice Medley, on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1765 at St John's Church, Halifax. They both signed the register, John signing Hinscliff although his name had been entered as Hinchcliffe. He was a blacksmith, and both were "of Hipperholme". There is a probable baptism for Alice on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1744 at St John's Church, Coley, daughter of Susan Medley of Hipperholme. Susan/Susannah was possibly the daughter of John Medley, and had been baptised on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1715 at St Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe. A John Medley and Mary Pearson, both of Lightcliffe, had married at Halifax on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1707, but I cannot say these are her parents with any certainty.

In the West Yorkshire Select Land and Tax Records (Ancestry) John is recorded as a tenant of both John and William Walker during the years 1784 to at least 1810, when he also had property of his own with a tenant. In 1803/4 the tenancy was for "pits". The Leeds Mercury of 14<sup>th</sup> February 1818 reported that the London Gazette's list of Bankrupts included John Hinscliffe of Lightcliffe, who was to attend at the Coopers Arms, Halifax on February 24<sup>th</sup> and March 24<sup>th</sup>, presumably for a hearing.

John died on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1821, aged 74 years, and Alice on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1823, aged 79 years and both were buried at Lightcliffe, where their gravestone has been uncovered.

John and Alice had six children all baptised at St Matthew's Church:-

Thomas, baptised 21<sup>st</sup> January 1716, no further information but may have been at home in 1801 (1801 Heads of Household census)

Ann, baptised 1<sup>st</sup> May 1768, had a daughter Mary who was buried in November 1786, aged about 8 months. Ann (Nancy) married Joseph Bottomley on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1795 at Halifax. They lived in Rastrick where she was buried in 1829.

John, baptised 26<sup>th</sup> May 1771, married Hannah Whitaker on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1797 at Halifax. He died three years later and shares a grave with his parents.

Judith, baptised 16<sup>th</sup> January 1774, married John Naylor on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1797 at Halifax. She was buried at Lightcliffe on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1856.

James, baptised 30<sup>th</sup> May 1779, married Betty (Elizabeth) Hatton on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1802 at Halifax. At the time he was a blacksmith like his father and also signed "Hinscliff", as did all his siblings apart from Judith, who made her mark. I think Betty's parents were Joseph, a tailor, and Jane Rhodes, who in 1801 were living at Knowle Top, and were both buried at Lightcliffe.

Dorothy, was baptised 27<sup>th</sup> April 1786, the same day as her niece Mary. Dorothy also had a daughter before marriage, Elizabeth, baptised 30<sup>th</sup> April 1809. On 6<sup>th</sup> June 1812 Dorothy married John Cordingley.

I believe James and Betty's first child was a son, also named James, but I have not been able to find a baptism for him. In both the 1811 and 1831 Heads of Households censuses there were three males in James's family; himself, James junior? and one other unknown. In 1831 two of the three males were over 21 (James senior and junior?) and both in trade. There were also two females – Betty, and presumably James's wife Susannah Walker, whom he had married on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1830 at Halifax. At the time of his marriage James was a corn dealer. Susannah died in 1835 and was the daughter of James and Hannah Walker of Lidgate (see MI). In 1841 James junior was with his parents at Noul (Knowle?) House aged 35 years (rounded down?). In 1851 he was living on his own at Hipperholme, a florist and nurseryman, aged 49, birthplace "unknown"! He married again in 1858 to a Lydia Walker from Gomersal but I cannot find a C of E marriage for them. 1861 saw them living at the Old Drying House, Lightcliffe, and James was 59 years, a retired corn miller, born Bramham, Yorkshire! So his birthdate varies from 1802 on the two censuses, to 1800 in the 1867 burial records and on his gravestone when his age is given as 67 years. Both wives are mentioned on the gravestone. As far as I have been able to ascertain he did not have any children, and he is a bit of a mystery. The probate index gives his occupation as florist.

James and Betty also had a daughter, Rhoda, who was baptised on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1803 at Lightcliffe. She married Samuel Cooke on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1823 at St John's Church, Halifax, by Licence and with the consent of her parents. More about Rhoda's family later.

In 1829, according to the Land Tax records James, along with some others, was renting/leasing a quarry from John Holland. From 1835 to 1857 he is recorded as occupying a house, land and smithy belonging to George Mackay Sutherland. He also had some cottages in which he had tenants from 1848 to 1857. In 1839 a report of a court case involving an employee, a salesman at James's colliery, appeared in the Leeds Mercury on 19<sup>th</sup> January.

At the time of the 1841 Census James, a coal merchant, Elizabeth, and James junior had two female servants. Also, visiting them, were their three oldest Cooke granddaughters, Elizabeth, Sarah and Alice.

Ten years later, after James had retired, they were on their own and had one servant. They both died before the next census – Elizabeth on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1857 and James on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1860, aged 82, and were buried at Lightcliffe.

James and Elizabeth's daughter Rhoda and her husband Samuel Cooke had 15 children, three of whom died in infancy and one, Theodore Hinscliffe, who lived for just over a year. The other children and their descendants had interesting lives, with a number of high achievers. Samuel was a carpet manufacturer in Liversedge and they lived at Healds Hall. Most of their daughters married local woollen or carpet manufacturers, one lived in Italy with her merchant husband, and one, Rhoda Ann married a cabinet maker and lived in Hornsey, London in 'Lightcliffe House'. The two sons were both carpet manufacturers – William managing the London branch of the family firm, and James Samuel working with his father.

Among their descendants was Theodore Cooke Taylor who was also a woollen manufacturer in Batley. In 1900 he became the Liberal MP for Radcliffe cum Farnworth, Lancashire and remained so until 1918. On 29<sup>th</sup> September 1948, aged 98 and still active as head of a profit sharing firm, he spoke for 15 minutes on the BBC about "Almost a century's memories". He had been offered and

refused a knighthood. On his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1950 he received greetings from King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth and Queen Mary, and countless other well-wishers from all over the world. He died on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1952 and is buried in Batley Cemetery.

Other grandchildren include Harold Cooke Gutteridge QC, who served on several Royal Commissions and standing committees as well as being a professor at several universities here and in France. He was also President of the League of Nations Committee on the civil status of women. His daughter Joyce Ada Cooke Gutteridge, also a barrister, was awarded an OBE in 1962 for her work as Legal Counsellor for the UK Mission to the United Nations, New York.

Olive Mudie Cooke, William's granddaughter, was an artist who is best known for "the paintings she created during the First World War. She served as an ambulance driver in both France and Italy during the conflict and these experiences were reflected in her artwork". Some of her paintings were acquired by the newly formed Imperial War Museum in 1919. Her sister Phyllis also went with the VAD Nursing Yeomanry to France and she has a granddaughter, Stella Tillyard, a novelist and historian, who can be heard occasionally on Radio 4's 'A point of view' on Sunday mornings.

There were also WW1 soldiers, one or two musicians, a possible suffragette and a Commonwealth Games athlete in the 1930s. One granddaughter married John Ernest Hodder Williams, later head of the Hodder and Stoughton publishing firm; a 2xgt granddaughter married the pioneer of cataract eye surgery; and Rhoda and Samuel's youngest daughter married Edwin Firth, brother of T F Firth of Bailiff Bridge carpet mill fame. Their sister Ellen was also married to James Samuel Cooke.

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