

The Bentleys of Northowram



These two almost identical headstones are in the middle section of the churchyard just off the main path by the Till Carr Lane gateway. The one on the left is for a Sucksmith family, the other is for some Bentleys. Only when researching the Sucksmiths did it become clear that the two families were related. Elizabeth Sucksmith née Bentley and Walter Bentley the first names on each headstone were sister and brother. Their parents were James Bentley and Hannah Bentley née Chew who married in Birstall on 21st October 1824.

This is their family in the 1841 and 1851 censuses.

1841 census

James Bentley	40	Stone Merchant
Hannah Bentley	35	
Emanuel Bentley	15	
James Bentley	6	
Joseph Bentley	1	
Mary Bentley	73	
Elizabeth Bentley	10	
Ellen Bentley	8	
Susannah Bentley	4	
Address Northowram		

1851 census

Hannah Bentley	Head	46	Widow
Emanuel Bentley	Son	25	
Stone merchant employing 5 men			
Elizabeth Bentley	Dau	20	Dressmaker
Ellen Bentley	Dau	18	ditto
James Bentley	Son	16	Delver
Joseph Bentley	Son	10	Scholar short time hand
Walter Bentley	Son	8	ditto
William H Bentley	Son	5	Scholar
Address Northowram village			

James Bentley died on 18th September 1850 and was buried in the United Reformed Chapelyard in Northowram. Other members of the family would also be buried there.

But it will be the siblings Elizabeth, Walter and William Henry Bentley whose story will now be followed as their names appear on the Lightcliffe headstones pictured above.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1910 for Elizabeth Bentley						
Halifax, St John the Baptist > 1830						
No. 971	Nov 14	Elizabeth	James Hannah	Bentley	Northm Delver	J. Keade

Elizabeth Bentley was baptised at St. John's, Halifax on 14th November 1830 when her father James was a stone delver. No baptism records have been found for Walter born Q3 1842 and William Henry Bentley born Q3 1846. All three were still at home on 7th April 1861.

1861 census

Hannah Bentley	Head 56	Stone merchant
Elizabeth Bentley	Dau 30	Dressmaker
James Bentley	Son 26	Stone merchant
Joseph Bentley	Son 20	Card maker
Walter Bentley	Son 18	Iron monger
William Henry ditto	Son 14	Book binder (ap)
George Hebden	Boarder 39	Banker's clerk
Address South Edge, Hipperholme cum Brighthouse		

Not long after the 1861 census was taken Elizabeth Bentley married James Sucksmith. Their story continues in the article :-

Elizabeth Sucksmith of Roydlands Farm

William Henry Bentley married Mary Ann Taylor on 14th February 1865 in St. John's Church, Halifax.

1865 Marriage solemnized at							
in the Parish of Halifax				in the County of York			
No.	When Solemnized	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname
365	February 14	William Henry Bentley	19	Bachelor	Delver	Hipperholme	James Bentley Stone merchant
		Mary Ann Taylor	21	Spinster		Hipperholme	John Taylor (Crockmer)
Married in the <u>Parish Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by _____ or after _____ by me, _____							
This Marriage was solemnized between us { <u>William Henry Bentley</u> } in the presence of us, { <u>Allen Brook</u> } { <u>Mary Ann Taylor</u> } { <u>Charles Heworth</u> }							

Before the next census they had a daughter Susan baptised at St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe on 13th April 1867 and then a son Harry born 9th April 1870.

Lightcliffe, St Matthew > 1867					
No.	When Solemnized	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession
No. 1318	18 57	Susan	William Henry Bentley	same	Delver
No. 1319	April 13	Mary Ann	Mary Ann	ends Green	Delver

1871 census

James Bentley Head 36
 Stone merchant employing 40 men and
 Farmer of 14 acres
 Hannah Jane Bentley Wife 30
 John Bentley Son 9 Scholar
 Mary Elizabeth Bentley Dau 7 Scholar
 Louis Bentley Son 2
 Walter Bentley Brother 29 Delver
 Jane Rothera Visitor 74
 Address Southedge Farm, Hipperholme with
 Brighthouse

1871 census

Wm Henry Bentley Head 24 Quarryman
 Marianne Bentley Wife 27
 Susan Bentley Dau 5
 Harry Bentley Son 11/12
 Address
 Bramley Lane, Hipperholme with Brighthouse

Elizabeth Sucksmith née Bentley was at Yew
 Trees with her husband and family.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813-1935 for Walter Bentley
 Huddersfield, Holy Trinity > 1872

1872. Marriage solemnized in Holy Trinity Church in the Parish of Holy Trinity Huddersfield in the County of York

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
144	February 5 th 1872	Walter Bentley	36	Bachelor	Stone Merchant	Hipperholme	James Bentley	Stone Merchant
		Charlotte Pacy	18	Spinster	Servant	New North Road Huddersfield	Charles Pacy	Farmer

Married in the above Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church of England by me
 W. P. Falout

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Walter Bentley & Charlotte Pacy in the Presence of us, Emma Pacy & Amelia Schofield

Walter Bentley married Charlotte Pacy at Holy Trinity, Huddersfield on 5th February 1872.

Their daughter Edith was baptised in Halifax on 25th May 1873 and then their son James was baptised at Lightcliffe on 3rd October 1875.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1910 for Walter Bentley
 Halifax, St John the Baptist > 1873

No.	When Born.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Birth.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
18	May 25 th 1873	Edith					Walter Bentley	Delver
No. 883		Charlotte					Hipperholme	W. Wrayshaw

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1910
 Lightcliffe, St Matthew > 1875

No.	When Born.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Birth.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
18	October 3 rd 1875	James					Walter Bentley	Delver
No. 406		Charlotte					Lightcliffe	J. Pacy

Their aunt, Walter's sister, Elizabeth Sucksmith née Bentley died on 19th October 1876. She was buried in Lightcliffe churchyard in plot C11 on 24th October 1876. Details of the memorial inscription on this the left-hand headstone in the image above have already been recorded.

Less than a year later her brother Walter died on 18th August 1877. He was buried in plot C12 next to his sister, on 22nd August 1875. As you can see at the time the plot was owned by his wife Charlotte Bentley. Being from a family of stone merchants probably explains the two 'twin' headstones.

Burials at Lightcliffe Cemetery in the Parish of Halifax.

No. Buried	No. of Grave	Date of Death	Date of Burial	Christian Name and Surname	Age	Sex and Owner
491	C 12	August 18	August 22	Walter Bentley	35	Charlotte Bentley



Unfortunately, there are some grey stains running down this headstone making the names and dates difficult to read. A full transcription is recorded later.

Walter's brother, stone merchant William Henry Bentley, and his family including two more sons were at Hill Top, Lightcliffe in 1881. Irvin was born Q4 1871 and Herbert Q3 1873. By 1891 19-year-old Irvin Bentley, a quarryman, and his wife Sarah Hannah Bunny were living next to his parents, they had married Q4 1890.

1881 census

William Henry Bentley Head 34 Stone Merchant
 Mary Ann Bentley Wife 37
 Susan Bentley Dau 15 Scholar
 Harry Bentley Son 10 ditto
 Irvin Bentley Son 9 ditto
 Herbert Bentley Son 7 ditto
 Kate Merme Servant 22 Servant
 Address Hill Top, Lightcliffe

1891 census

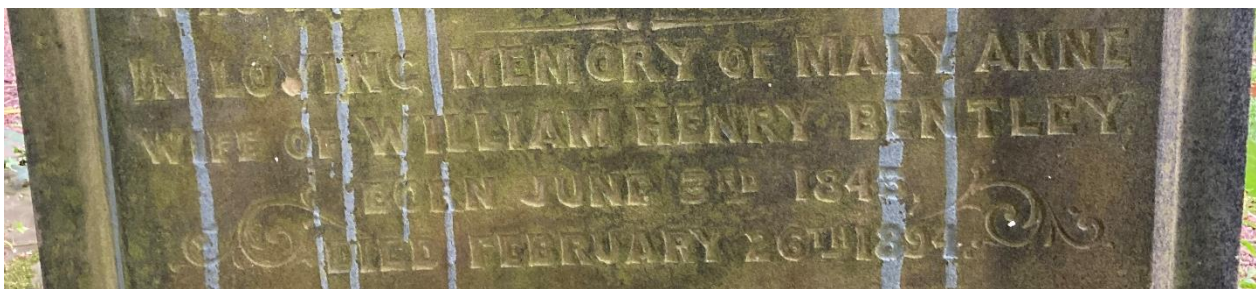
William H Bentley Head 44 Head
 Stone merchant and Quarryman
 Mary A Bentley Wife 46
 Susan Bentley Dau 25 Milliner
 Harry Bentley Son 20 Quarryman & assistant
 Herbert Bentley Son 17 ditto
 Address Hill Top Farm, Lightcliffe

Herbert Bentley's name is the next one on the headstone above plot C12. He died on 12th July 1892 aged 19 years and was buried three days later.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-1985 for Herbert Bentley							
Lightcliffe, St Matthew > 1892							
1308	C 12	July 12	July 15	Herbert Bentley	19 yrs		

Two years later his mother Mary Anne Bentley née Taylor died on 26th February 1894. She was also buried in plot C12 on 1st March 1894. By then her husband William Henry Bentley owned the plot.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-1985 for Mary Ann Bentley							
Lightcliffe, St Matthew > 1894							
1417	C 12	Feb 27 1894	March 1 1894	Mary Ann Bentley	50	William Henry Bentley	



[The Arthur Blackburn transcription of the memorial inscription for this headstone has the surname BRIGGS and not BENTLEY for Mary Anne's husband and a wrong death year of 1924. There is a BRIGGS headstone nearby so Mr Blackburn can be excused this untypical error.]

Three years later, in 1895, William Henry Bentley married a widow Georgina Turner and by 1901 they were living in County Clare, Ireland.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813-1935 for Georgina Turner								
Rashcliffe, St Stephen and Primrose Hill, St Matthew > 1895								
18 95. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Rashcliffe in the County of York								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
134	Jan 4 th	William Henry Bentley	48	Widower	Merchant	Rashcliffe	James Bentley	Stone Merchant
	18 95	Georgina Turner	41	Widow	—	Wooland near John Doble	John Doble	Iron Keeper
Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by license & after by me,								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		William Henry Bentley		Georgina Turner		Sec Per Blackburn		John Doble Vicar

1901 census

Wm Henry Bentley Head 54 Quarry Manager
 Georgina Bentley Wife 48
 Henry James Turner Step Son 26 Engineer
 Harold Turner Step Son 14 Scholar
 Address Cronogort, Killilagh, Clare, Ireland

1901 census

Walter Brierley Head 65 Patent Agent
 Maude Brierley Dau 27
 Susan Bentley servant 35 Servant
 Address Prescott St., Halifax

By 1901 Harry Bentley was a foreman in a stone quarry. He was living in Cain Lane, Southowram with his wife Amy née Chester and their four-year-old son Percy Bentley. They would later move to Southport, Lancashire where Harry Bentley was a stone merchant. He died there on 15th November 1948.

Long before then his father died in Ireland as this newspaper report explains.

Brighouse News 1 July 1904

DEATH OF MR. W. H. BENTLEY. – The news of the death of Mr. William Henry Bentley, a former resident of Hipperholme caused much surprise in the district on Wednesday morning. The deceased, who was close upon 58 years of age, was very well known, having for a great part of his life been identified with the local stone quarries, He was for some years a partner in the old firm of Gomersall, Bentley and Butterfield, of Hill Top Quarries. He left Hipperholme to take up his residence in Liscanner, County Clare, Ireland, about ten years ago. Some fifteen months ago he underwent an operation in Dublin for a cancer in his neck, and came out apparently successful, but three weeks ago the cancer returned, and he was confined to bed. Death took place on Tuesday, and he was interred yesterday. He leaves a widow and three children to mourn his loss, Of local associations he was connected with the Golden Fleece Sick Club.

Although he was buried in Ireland, he was remembered in Lightcliffe on the family headstone in St. Matthew's churchyard.

**IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF
WALTER BENTLEY OF LIGHTCLIFFE
WHO DIED AUGUST 18TH 1877 AGED 35 YEARS**

**ALSO IN LOVING MEMORY OF
HERBERT THE SON OF WILLIAM HENRY AND MARY ANN BENTLEY
WHO DIED JULY 12TH 1892 AGED 19 YEARS**

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF MARY ANNE
THE WIFE OF WILLIAM HENRY BENTLEY
BORN JUNE 3RD 1845 DIED FEBRUARY 26TH 1894**

**ALSO IN LOVING MEMORY OF WILLIAM HENRY BENTLEY
WHO DIED AT CASTLE HOUSE LISCANNOR JUNE 27TH 1904 AGED 57 YEARS.
INTERRED AT ENNISTYMEN CHURCH COUNTY CLARE IRELAND**

1911 census

Walter Brierley Head 75 Patent Agent
Maude Brierley Dau 37
Susan Bentley servant 45 Servant
Address 28 Prescott St., Halifax

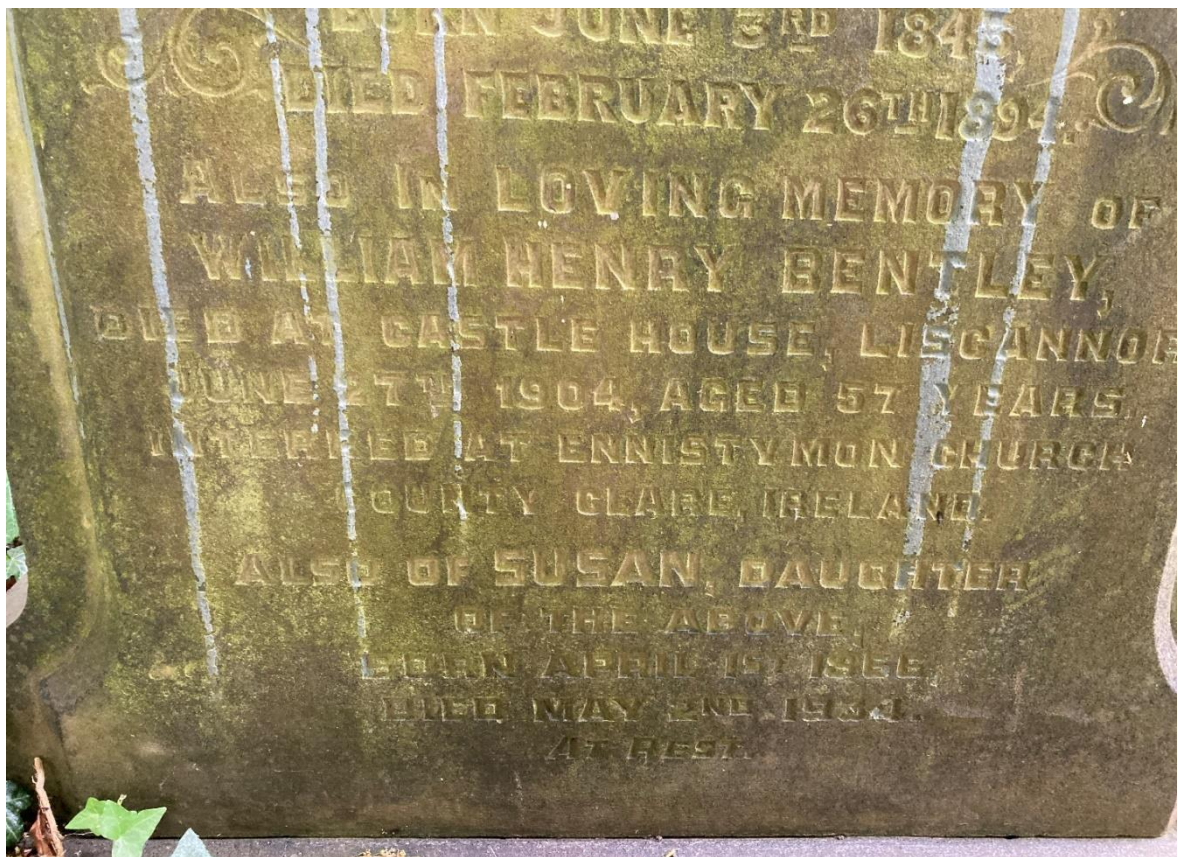
1921 census

Walter Brierley Head 85 Retired Patent Agent
Maude Brierley Dau 47 Home Duties
Susan Bentley Servant 55 Housekeeper
Address Brier Dine St John Road, Morecambe,
Heysham, LAN

His daughter Susan Bentley remained with the Brierley family until at least 1921. Her death, on 2nd May 1934, was recorded in the Halifax district so it looks as if she returned to the area at some point. Sixty-eight-year-old Susan Bentley was buried with her mother in plot C12 on 5th May 1934. The plot was then declared to be full. Someone added the final wording to the memorial inscription.

**ALSO OF SUSAN, DAUGHTER
OF THE ABOVE
BORN APRIL 1ST 1866
DIED MAY 2ND 1934**

AT REST



D.M.Barker

July 2023