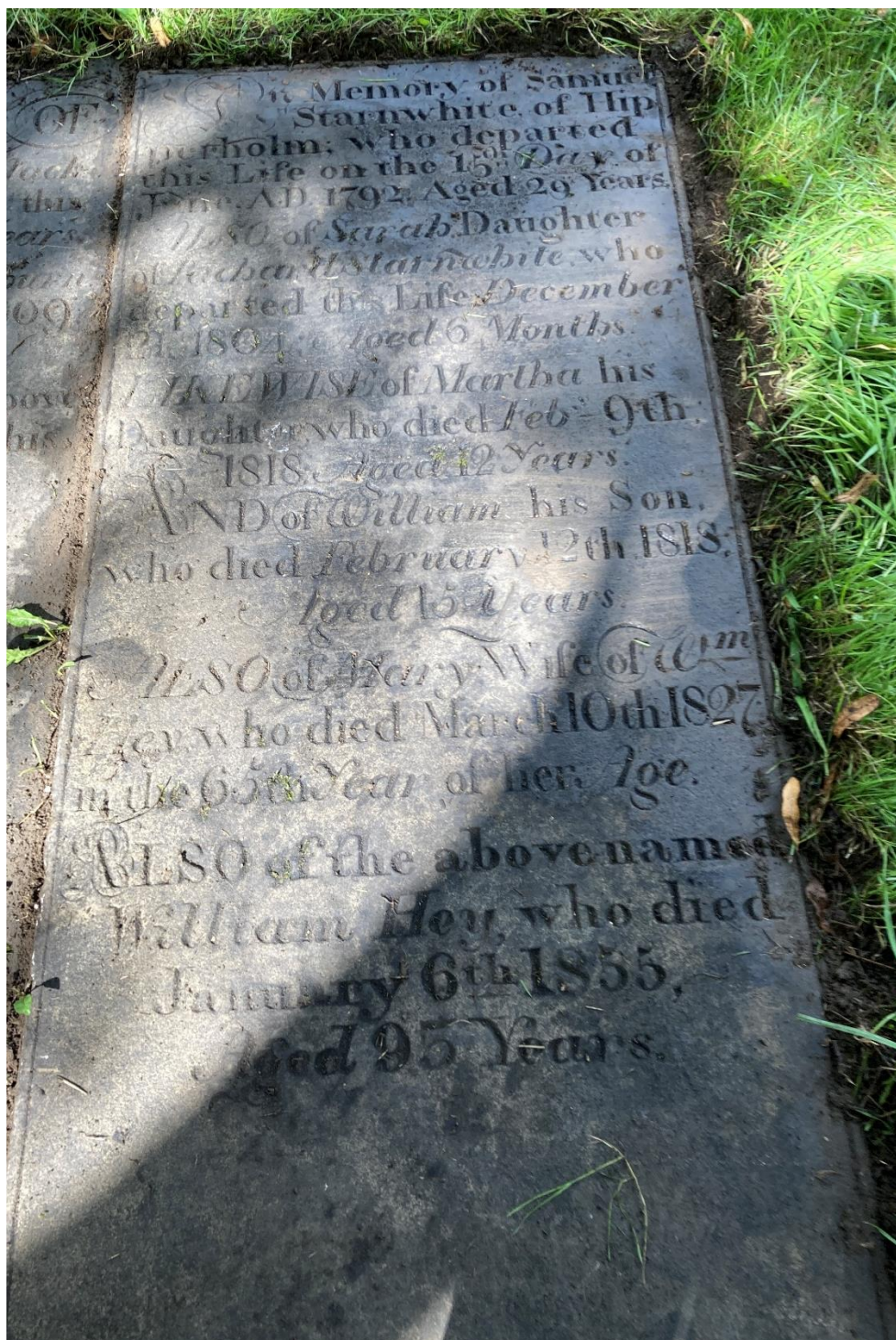


## The Sternwhite family part 1

There are about twenty Sternwhites buried in St. Matthew's churchyard. Most of them were related to Alice Sternwhite who married Edward Cordingley as explained in the article

### The Bancroft family

The earliest family burial, on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1792, was for twenty-nine-year-old Samuel Sternwhite – one of the many variations of the surname - who died on 15<sup>th</sup> June A.D. 1792. At least that is what it says on the memorial inscription on the ledger stone above the plot now given the code X\*28 in the closed section of the churchyard.



The inscription then records the passing of a six-month-old baby girl, Sarah, the daughter of Richard Starnwhite. And then two more of Richard's children, 12-year-old Martha and 15-year-old William who died within days of one another. The final two dedications are to wife and husband Mary and William Hey who is also noted as being the owner of the plot.

There must be a family connection between these six individuals and Alice Cordingley née Sternwhite. What follows is an attempt to find out just what the relationships were and why these individuals were buried at Lightcliffe.

From the calculated birth years of Samuel Starnwhite and Mary Hey they could be siblings with Richard Starnwhite another brother. This would explain why his young children were buried with their uncle. Seventy-eight-year-old Richard Sternwhite was buried in another Lightcliffe plot U\*2 on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1852 which means that he was born about 1774.

There is a non-conformist baptism record for a Richard Sternwhite born on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1774 which fits. He was baptised four days later in the Moravian Chapel at Wyke. The spelling of the surname has changed to Sternwhite which then sometimes, understandably, gets recorded as Starenwhite, Starnwhite, Sternwight or Sternwright. The transcription variations, particularly of census data, are even more unusual e.g. Shunwhite, Steowhite, Sternwhitel. To avoid confusion they will be turned back to Sternwhite in this article.

England & Wales, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Registers, 1567-1936 for Richard Sternwhite						
Rg4: Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths > Yorkshire > Moravian > Piece 3343: Fulneck, Calverley (Moravian), 1742-1783						
590	Richard Sternwhite	John & Sarah Sternwhite	Wyke	May 21 <sup>st</sup> 1774	May 25 <sup>th</sup> 1774	Wyke Chapel Rev: Steinbauer

From this baptism record it looks as if Richard's parents were John and Sar(ah) Sternwhite. A few years earlier John and Sarah Sternwhite of 'Hipperam, Parish of Halifax' had a daughter Elizabeth, born 11<sup>th</sup> February 1770, baptised at the same Moravian Chapel on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1770.

England & Wales, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Registers, 1567-1936 for Elizth Sternwhite						
Rg4: Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths > Yorkshire > Moravian > Piece 3343: Fulneck, Calverley (Moravian), 1742-1783						
536	Eliz <sup>th</sup> Sternwhite	Daught <sup>r</sup> of John & Sarah Sternwhite	Hipperam Parish of Halifax	Feb 11 <sup>th</sup> 1770	March 21 <sup>st</sup> 1770	Wyke Chapel Rev <sup>d</sup> W. Lander

No similar baptism records have been found for either a Samuel Starnwhite or a Mary Starnwhite. A Mally Starnwhite daughter of John Starnwhite was baptised in Wibsey on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1761. And then a Mary Starnwhite married William Hey, a weaver, on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1793 in Halifax. They were almost certainly the Hey couple named on the memorial inscription even if the Wibsey baptism record is not hers.

William and John Staranwhite [sic] sons of John Staranwhite were also baptised at Wibsey in February 1757 and on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1759. Their parents and those of the above Mary, Samuel, Elizabeth and Richard could be John Starnwhite and Sarah Firth of Wibsey who married on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1756.



Richard Sternwhite married Mary Hemingway on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1796 in Halifax. They then baptised ten children at St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe; Samuel Sternwhite on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1797, Joseph on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1799, Elizabeth on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1801, William on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1802, Sarah on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1804 but she died on 2<sup>1st</sup> December 1804, Martha on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1805, Richard on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1809, another Sarah on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1811, Mary on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1813 and finally Edwin on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1816. From the later baptism records, when details of the family's abode and father's occupation were recorded, we know that Richard was a Hipperholme shoemaker/cordwainer.

Baby Sarah Sternwhite was the second name on the ledger stone below that of Samuel Starnwhite, who was probably her uncle, her father's brother. She was buried on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1804. Fourteen years later two of her siblings, twelve-year-old Martha and fifteen-year-old William were also buried in the churchyard. They died within days of one another on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> February 1818 and were then buried on 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February 1818 respectively. Theirs are the next names remembered on the ledger stone.

By then this plot may have been owned by William Hey, the children's uncle by marriage. And so not surprisingly when his wife Mary Hey née Starnwhite died on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1827, she too was buried in plot X\*28 on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1827.

Richard and Mary's eldest son Samuel Sternwhite married Ann (Nanny) Naylor on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1821 in Birstall. They had their children baptised at St. John's, Coley; William on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1822, Sarah Ann on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1824, Elizabeth on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1827, Joseph on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1830 and Charles on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1833. No baptism record has been found for two more sons, Edwin born c1837 and John Naylor Sternwhite born Q2 1848. Neither survived very long and both were buried in Lightcliffe churchyard; six-year-old Edwin on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1843 and infant John Naylor Sternwhite on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1848.

It looks as if the next son Joseph Sternwhite became a tanner and lived in Sowerby Bridge where he died in 1884 and where he will be left. Daughters Elizabeth and Sarah Sternwhite no doubt married but no more information has been found.

What has been discovered is that two, possibly three, Sternwhite siblings, John, Mary and Edwin, went to Ockbrook, Derbyshire where there was a Moravian settlement. Bachelor John Sternwhite, a joiner by trade, was there on all censuses 1861 to 1891 and then died there Q3 1898.

#### 1841 census

Richard Sternwhite	68 Shoe M
Mary Sternwhite	69
Elizabeth Sternwhite	14 [Granddaughter]
Charles Sternwhite	8 [Grandson]
Mary Sternwhite	27
Address Silver St., Hipperholme cum Brighthouse	

#### 1841 census

Jonathan Smith	80 Moravian minister
Elizabeth Smith	70
Mary Sternwhite	25 Dom Servant
Edwin Sternwhite	20 Baker
Address Moravian Settlement, Ockbrook, Derbyshire	

#### 1841 census

Samuel Sternwhite	43 Ag Lab
Nanney Sternwhite	47
William Sternwhite	19
Sarah Sternwhite	16
Joseph Sternwhite	10
Edwin Sternwhite	4
Address Dyehouse, Hipperholme cum Brighthouse	

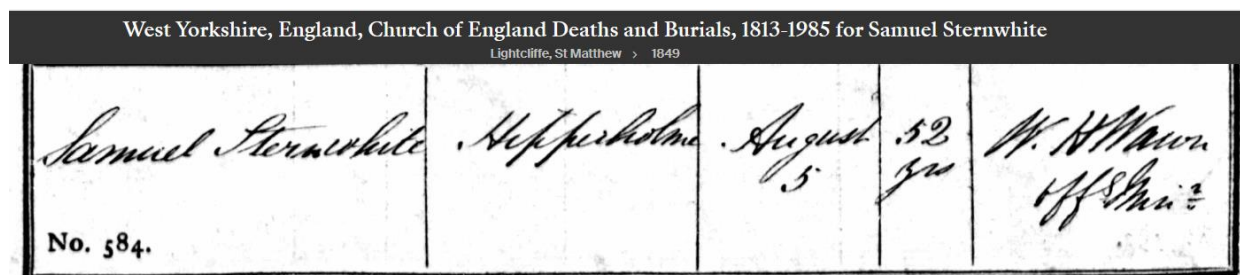
Mary Sternwhite may have been listed twice on the 1841 census; in her parents' Hipperholme household and with her brother Edwin in the Moravian Settlement in Derbyshire or it could be another Mary Sternwhite! But read on.

A Mary Sternwhite died Q4 1846 in the Shardlow district of Derbyshire. On the National Burial Index her age was given as thirty-three, her address was Ockbrook and her denomination was Moravian. This all fits with the 1813 baptism of Richard and Mary's daughter, Mary.

Samuel and Nanny's daughter Elizabeth Sternwhite married Elijah Kershaw on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1846. He was a delver and they lived at Hove Edge. Children Edwin, Lavinia and Lockwood were born before the 1851 census. All were baptised at St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe; Edwin on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1847 but Lavinia and Lockwood had to wait until 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1853 when they were batched baptised with a younger brother Thomas born Q3 1853.

Richard Sternwhite junior has not been found on the 1841 census. He died on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1848 and became the first occupant of the Lightcliffe plot, now given the code U\*2, when he was buried there on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1848.

Less than a year later his uncle Samuel Sternwhite died. He was buried in an unknown plot with no headstone in St. Matthew's churchyard on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1849.



1851 census

Richard Sternwhite Head 76  
Shoemaker & Cordwainer  
Mary Sternwhite Wife 79 Wife  
Joseph Sternwhite Grandson 20 Shoemaker  
Martha Sternwhite Grndau 17 House Servant  
Address Village of Hipperholme

1851 census

Edwin Sternwhite 33  
Assistant to Collinson Tea Dealer  
Address 5 Fountain St., Halifax

1851 census

Nancy Sternwhite Head 56 Widow Card setter  
William Sternwhite Son 28 Wool com(b)er  
Sarah Sternwhite Dau 26 Angle setter  
Charles Sternwhite Son 17 Wool com(b)er  
Address Hove Edge, Hipperholme cum Brighthouse

1851 census

Elijah Kershaw Head 27 Stone Delver  
Elizabeth Kershaw Wife 23  
Edwin Kershaw Son 3  
Lavinia Kershaw Dau 1  
Lockwood Kershaw Son under 2 Mo  
Address Hove Edge, Hipperholme cum Brighthouse

After the batch baptism of three Kershaws in 1853 Elijah and Elizabeth had two more sons, Charley born Q4 1854 and Alfred Kershaw born Q3 1857. They were baptised together at St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1857.

A year after the 1851 census was taken Richard Sternwhite senior died on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1852. He was buried with his son Richard on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1852 in plot U\*2. His wife, eighty-six-year-old Mary Stenwhite of Sowerby, joined them on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1857. There is a ledger stone over this plot, but it is by the roots of a tree, now partly covered and difficult to unearth. You can see the names Mary and Richard and the correct year and age for Mary. Fortunately, there is a transcription of what the memorial originally said. It was noted by a gentleman called Arthur Blackburn who about a hundred years ago went round a number of West Riding cemeteries recording what was on the memorials. Thankfully he came to Lightcliffe.



**IN MEMORY OF RICHARD STERNWHITE JUNIOR  
WHO DIED OCTOBER 22<sup>ND</sup> 1848 AGED 39 YEARS.**

**ALSO RICHARD STERNWHITE SENIOR  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE JUNE 7<sup>TH</sup> 1852 AGED 78 YEARS**

**ALSO OF MARY WIFE OF THE ABOVE RICHARD STERNWHITE  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE OCTOBER 5<sup>TH</sup> 1857 AGED 86 YEARS**

Their youngest son Edwin must have moved back to the Moravian settlement in Ockbrook as this was his home when he married Mary Carlton, a surgeon's daughter, on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1853.

24 March 1852 *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal*

**On the 11th instant, at Crus Easton, Newbury, by the  
Rev. H. T. J. Bagge, B.A., Mr. Edwin Sternwhite, Ock-  
brook, to Mary, youngest daughter of the late Thomas  
Calton, Esq., surgeon, Collingham, Notts.**

And then from the *Derbyshire Mercury* 22 April 1854

**OCKBROOK.**  
**T**o be LET, a comfortable COTTAGE, with Garden  
and Orchard.  
For particulars, apply to Mr. EDWIN STERNWHITE,  
grocer, Moravian Settlement, Ockbrook.

Three Sternwhite brothers, the sons of Samuel and Nanny and so grandsons of Richard and Mary married before the 1861 census. Eldest son William Sternwhite married Susey Wood in July 1858. Their eldest daughter Fanny was born on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1859. Then his brother Charles married Priscilla Fletcher Q3 1858 again in the Halifax district. But another brother Joseph Sternwhite must have moved to Manchester sometime after the 1851 census. In 1859 he was living in Barton Street as was his wife-to-be Emma Williamson. They were married on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1859 at St. John's Church, Manchester. Joseph was a shoemaker and cordwainer like his paternal grandfather Richard. As you can see Joseph and Emma then moved back to Hipperholme.

1861 census

Edwin Sternwhite Head 44 Grocer  
 Mary Sternwhite Wife 45  
 Address 6 Waterhouse St., Halifax

Lockwood Kershaw Son 10 ditto  
 Charles Kershaw Son 6 Scholar  
 Allfred Kershaw Son 3  
 Address Lane Ends, Hipperholme cum Brighthouse

1861 census

William Sternwhite Head 38 Fireman  
 Susy Sternwhite Wife 31  
 Fanny Sternwhite Dau 2  
 Address  
 Towser Cottages, Hipperholme cum Brighthouse

1861 census

Joseph Sternwhite Head 31 Shoemaker  
 Emma Sternwhite Wife 2?  
 Nancy Sternwhite Mother 67 Widow  
 Address Hipperholme cum Brighthouse

1861 census

Elijah Kershaw Head 37 Stone Delver  
 Elizabeth Kershaw Wife 34 Housewife  
 Edwin Kershaw Son 14 Worsted Spinner  
 Lavina Kershaw Dau 12 ditto

1861 census

Hannah Fletcher Head 66 Proprietor of Houses  
 Charles Sternwhite Son-in-law 28 Engine Tenter  
 Priscilla Sternwhite Dau 30  
 Sternwhite Grndson 1/12  
 Address Commercial St., Brighthouse

Charles and Priscilla's infant was eventually christened Fletcher Sternwhite, for obvious reasons. Two more sons were born, Edwin Q3 1863 and Fred Q1 1866 and then a sister Mary Hannah born Q3 1868. For years this Sternwhite family lived at 12 Oxford Street, Brighthouse and father Charles farmed. By 1901 the families of Charles and his son Fred were living next door to one another at Nos 1 and 3 Lower Oxford Street, Brighthouse. Both were said to be 'dairymen, selling milk and butter'. Charles Sternwhite died Q2 1902.

His sister Sarah Sternwhite has not been found in the 1861 census, but she married Joseph Benn on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1861. They and their family lived in Halifax where they will be left.

Freddy Kershaw was privately baptised at Lightcliffe on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1863 before being buried in an unknown plot in the churchyard on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1863. Mary Ann Kershaw was the last of Elijah and Elizabeth Kershaw's children to be baptised at St. Matthew's on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1865. The family then moved to Brighthouse where their son Ellis, born 1<sup>st</sup> February 1867, was baptised on 27<sup>th</sup> February at St. Martin's. This was just before his 47-year-old father Elijah died Q2 1867. Two years later his widow Elizabeth née Sternwhite married Thomas Hall and the family moved to Rastrick where they will be left.

Continue reading about the Sternwhites with Lightcliffe connections in

**The Sternwhite family part 2**

D.M. Barker  
 September 2023