

Private Harold Roberts (19th October 1894 - 19th March 1952)

After receiving Paul Wormwell's account of

The family of Private Harold Roberts

some more research has been done.

Harold Roberts was born on 19th October 1894 in the Dewsbury district to parents William and Elizabeth née Ward. They had married on 13th August 1892 in Halifax.

| 1892. Marriage solemnized at <u>St. Paul's Church</u> in the Parish of <u>Halifax</u> in the County of <u>York</u> | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------------|------------|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 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. |
| 305 | August 13 1892 | William Roberts | 24 | Bachel | Carrier | 910/2 Street Halifax | Benjamin Roberts | Carrier |
| | | Elizabeth Ward | 20 | Sp | - | Gravefield Road Skipton | James Ward (Deceased) | Labourer |
| Married in the <u>Parish Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <u>Arthur J. A. Elleston</u> after <u>Wishes</u> by me, | | | | | | | | |
| This Marriage was solemnized between us, | | <u>William Roberts</u> <u>Elizabeth Ward</u> | in the Presence of us, | | <u>Abraham Greenwood</u> <u>Tannie Greenwood</u> | | | |

He had older siblings Nellie (Ward) born Q2 1891 and James Willie Roberts born 10th June 1893. James Willie Roberts had a private baptism on 21st August 1893 at St. Andrew's Church, Oakenshaw cum Woodlands. The certificate below, found on Ancestry, confirms Harold Roberts birth on 19th October 1894.

CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY of BIRTH.

(Issued for the purposes of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.)

| Registration District of <u>Dewsbury</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|------|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Sub-District of <u>Liversedge</u> in the County of <u>York</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No. | When and where born. | Name (if any). | Sex. | Name and Surname of Father. | Name and Maiden Surname of Mother. | Rank or Profession of Father. | Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant. | When Registered. | Signature of Registrar. | Baptismal Name, if added after Registration of Birth. | |
| 345 | Nineteenth October 1894 Common Side Robert Town Liversedge U.S.D. | Harold Roberts | Boy | William Roberts | Elizabeth Roberts formerly Ward | Teamer | <u>Elizabeth Roberts</u> Mother Common Side Robert Town Liversedge. | Nineteenth November 1894 | <u>Chas. Martin</u> Registrar | | |

I hereby certify that the above is a true Copy of an Entry of Birth in a Register Book in my custody.

Witness my hand this 27th day of February 1904

Joseph Meade
Superintendent Registrar.

[NOTE.—The word "Superintendent" to be struck out when the Certificate is given by the Registrar.]

Annie Roberts was born Q3 1896 and baptised at Roberttown on 12th September 1896. By the time her sister Lillie was born on 18th May 1899 the family were living at 27 Coal St., Caddy Field, Halifax. Lilly[sic] was baptised at St. John's, Halifax on 23rd August 1899. Another son Arthur Edward Roberts arrived on 3rd October 1900. He was baptised at St. Augustine's, Halifax on 17th October 1900. By then the family were living at 11 Alfred Street, Halifax and his father, William Roberts, was a 'Driver'.

The family certainly moved residences - presumably rented accommodation - quite frequently. They must have moved again in Halifax from Alfred Street to Moxon Terrace shortly after Arthur Edward Roberts was baptised.

As this was where 33-year-old William Roberts died at the beginning of December 1900.

| West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-1985 for William Roberts | | | | |
|--|---------------------|----------|-----------|--------------|
| Halifax, Haley Hill, All Souls > 1900 | | | | |
| No. | | | | |
| William Roberts No. 5405 | 26 Moxon Terrace | Dec 5 | 33 yrs | M. A. Martin |

He was buried at All Souls, Haley Hill, Halifax. This left Elizabeth Roberts née Ward a young widow with six children on 31st March 1901 living at 26 Moxon Terrace.

1901 census

Elizabeth Roberts Head 28 Woolen ??????
 Nellie Roberts Dau 9
 James Willie Roberts Son 7
 Harold Roberts Son 6
 Annie Roberts Dau 4
 Lilly Roberts Dau 2
 Arthur Edward Roberts Son 8/12
 John Richmond Boarder 32 Bolt ??? Iron
 Emily Richmond ditto 12
 John Henry Richmond ditto 8
 Address 26 Moxon Terrace, Halifax

The lodger John Richmond had two children with him. From Civil Births records it looks as if their mother was a Wadsworth. John Richmond had married Mary Hannah Wadsworth Q4 1885 in the Halifax district. Five children with the surname Richmond and mother's maiden name Wadsworth had their births registered in the Halifax district - there may be others. Arthur Lewis was born Q3 1887 but then died seven months later and was buried on 28th February 1888 at All Souls, Haley Hill, Halifax. Clement Richmond was born Q2 1888. For the 1901 census he was living with an uncle and aunt Wilkinson in Salterhebble. Emily born Q1 1890 and John Henry born Q3 1892 were with their father in 1901. The birth and death of Wadsworth Richmond were both registered in Q4 1897.

John Richmond was recorded as being a 'Widower' on 31st March 1901. But no death record has been found for Mary Hannah Richmond and so it is likely that he was still married.

And then the *Halifax Evening Courier* for 7th May 1901 had this report.

THIS DAY'S POLICE

HALIFAX BOROUGH COURT

Before Mr W Ambler (president), Mr J. Oates,
and Mr. J.T. Riley

SHOCKING NEGLECT OF CHILDREN

TWO BEDS FOR TEN PERSONS

John Richmond and Elizabeth Roberts, co-habiting at 26 Moxon-terrace, Old-lane, were charged with neglect of children. Mr W. Storey, who represented the N.S.P.C.C. said the charge was of neglecting eight children, under 16, six of whom belonged to the female prisoner, the eldest being illegitimate. Mrs Robert's husband died last November. The male prisoner, who was a married man, had two children. Both prisoners had neglected their children pitifully. When the female prisoner's husband died, the Guardians allowed her 15s per week for herself and family – almost as much as her husband had earned. When she began to co-habit with Richmond the relief stopped. At Christmas one of the Guardians' officials sent a goose for the woman and her children. The goose was cooked and eaten in a neighbour's house, and the children went without. The children had been sent to school without food, were badly clothed, and one of the Board School mistresses would be called to give evidence of having bought the children food. Despite the repeated warning, which the Society always gave before prosecuting, the parties had not improved their conduct.

– Inspector Robb said he had had both prisoners under supervision for some time. He had warned them over and over again. On March 15th he had visited the house at 11:30, where he found the eight children scrambling over a tomato someone had given them. That

was all the food in the house. The children had a neglected appearance. They were filthy, uncared for, and seemed hungry. Witness asked the female prisoner if there was no food. She replied that she was going to bake, but she had no flour in the house. She produced 2s 6d and some coppers. In addition to being hungry the children were dirty and their clothes were ragged and black with dirt. The house consisted of two rooms, and there were only two beds for the ten people. In each case the bed consisted of an iron bedstead, with a filthy mattress, but no sheets. There was an old black bolster. Sewed sacking served as a blanket, and there were two old coats and some rugs, which completed the covering. In the living room, besides the bed, there were a couple of chairs, a table and an old cradle, in which a very weakly child slept. Witness made subsequent visits on April 4, 16, and 22, but despite the warnings given there had not been any improvement.

– Corroborative evidence was given by Harry Crapper, relieving officer, Amy Bolton, head mistress at Booth Town Board School (who provided food on two occasions for two children who had been sent to school hungry), Constable J. A .Bates and G.A. Spink (School Board officer) – The prisoners, both young people, pleaded not guilty, but had nothing to say in excuse for their conduct. The Chairman characterised the case as a very bad one, and sentenced Richmond to six months' hard labour, and Roberts to two months, second division. Mr Storey said that Richmond's uncle would take the male prisoner's two children, and Mrs Hodgson Wright would provide a home for the female's eldest child. The others would be better in the Workhouse than with their parents.

Both John Richmond and Elizabeth Roberts were sent to HMP Wakefield for 'neglecting 8 children' as these records note.

| West Yorkshire, England, Prison Records, 1801-1914 for John Richmond | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| HMP Wakefield > Nominal Register > 1901 Apr - Jul | | | | | | |
| 2439 | Richmond John | Halifax 1890 | Neglecting 8 children | 6 Wks. H. do | 33 4/1/2 132 | Boltonmaker Rd. Blackburn Nil 6 Nov |

| West Yorkshire, England, Prison Records, 1801-1914 for Elizth Roberts | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| HMP Wakefield > Register of Female Prisoners > 1900 Aug - 1901 Sep | | | | | | |
| 623 | Roberts Elizth 2 nd Division | 7 May 1901 Halifax 1890 | Neglecting 8 children | 2 3 months L Imp II Division | 29 4/10 112 | Factoryhand & Co Ward Hull Nil |

But what happened to the Roberts children? One-year-old Arthur Edward Roberts was probably the one-year-old who died Q1 1902 in the Halifax district. His sister Lily may be the five-year-old Lily Roberts of Lee Mount who was buried at All Souls, Harley Hill, Halifax on 10th August 1904.

| West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-1985 for Lily Roberts | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|--------|------------------|
| Halifax, Haley Hill, All Souls > 1904 | | | | |
| Lily Roberts | Lee Mount | August 10 | 5 yrs. | John R. Halsall. |
| No. 5876 | | | | |

Nellie, Annie and Harold Roberts have not been found on the 1911 census James Willie Roberts was the 17-year-old 'Fitter' for a Machine Tool Maker lodging with a Barker family at 3 Leopold St., Claremont, Halifax on 2nd April 1911. This was the address on his 'Occupation Record' where he was listed on the 'Crossley and Sons Register of young persons under 18 years 1910 – 1914'. The date of his first employment was 18th November 1910.

James Willie Roberts enlisted with the Army Veterinary Corps on 11th April 1917. His medical records note that he was 'Under height & weight' at 4 foot 10 inches and weighing 100lbs, just over 7 stone! However, from childhood he had suffered from epilepsy, and this resulted in him being discharged on medical grounds on 19th September 1917. His address was given as 42 Albert St., Haley Hill, Halifax.

Harold Roberts married Grace Annie Sanderson Bebbington on 8th April 1917 in Barnsley as the parish record below indicates.

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813-1935 for Harold Roberts
Barnsley, St Edward the Confessor > 1917

1917. Marriage solemnized at the parish church in the parish of St Edward the Confessor Barnsley in the County of York.

| Column No. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 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. |
| 252 | April Eight 1917 | Harold Roberts | 22 | Bachelor | Miner | 103 Racecommon Road Barnsley. | William Roberts (deceased) | Carter |
| | | Grace Annie Sanderson Bebbington | 20 | Spinster | — | 103 Racecommon Road Barnsley. | Charles Bebbington | Munition Worker |

Married in the above church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by Harold Roberts or after 20 hours by me, Sarah F. Letcher

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Grace Annie Sanderson Bebbington in the Presence of us, Charles Bebbington Nea

It is unclear as to exactly when Harold was called up or enlisted as there were a number of Harold Roberts who served with the West Riding Regiment. Private Harold Roberts (55007) was certainly serving with this regiment in 1918 when he was taken prisoner as detailed in the following newspaper reports.

28 June 1918 Halifax Evening Courier

Pte. HAROLD ROBERTS (21), W.Y.R., 9 Ivy Terrace, Lightcliffe reported missing April 16, is a prisoner at Limberg. Employed at Brookes' Chemical Works, he is connected with St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe.

Private Harold Roberts was discharged from the army on 20th December 1918 as the various military records confirm. They also confirm his address 9, Ivy Terrace, Lightcliffe.

31 December 1918 Halifax Evening Courier

PUNISHED FOR REFUSING AN OPERATION.

- Starting from Germany on the 25th of last month, it took Pte. Harold Roberts, married, 1/7th W Yorks, Ivy-terrace, Lightcliffe, a month to come home. He was kept behind the lines during captivity nearly all the time making railways. Then he went into hospital, at Darmstadt, but says he received no treatment there. He received no letters or news from home, where he was considered missing until about the time of the armistice. The treatment of the prisoners was terrible, and for refusing an operation he got four days' confinement without food.

The 1921 census and then the 1939 register tell you more about this Roberts family as does the article by Paul Wormwell.

1921 census

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|----|--------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Harold Roberts | Head | 26 | Liversedge, Yorkshire | General Labourer | Chemical Works |
| | | | Messrs Brooks Chemical Manufacturers | | Hipperholme |
| Grace Annie Sanderson Roberts | Wife | 24 | Mirfield, Yorkshire | Home Duties | - |
| Muriel Roberts | Dau | 3 | Lightcliffe, Yorkshire | - | |
| Phyllis Roberts | Dau | 1 | Hipperholme, Yorkshire-- | | |
| Charles William Roberts | Son | | Hipperholme, Yorkshire, | - | - |

Address 14, Woodhead Row, Hipperholme, Norwood Green & Coley, Yorkshire (West Riding)

1939 register

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------|-----|---|
| Harold Roberts | 19 Oct 1894 | Engineer's Labourer | Married | 120 | 1 |
| Grace A S Roberts | 10 Dec 1896 | Unpaid Domestic Duties | Married | 120 | 2 |
| Phyllis Roberts | 27 Oct 1919 | Mill Worker (Textile) | Single | 120 | 3 |
| Charles W Roberts | 27 Apr 1921 | Apprentice Engineer | Single | 120 | 4 |
| Marjorie Roberts (Wanklyn) | 26 Jul 1924 | Warpen (Textile) | Single | 120 | 5 |

3 closed entries

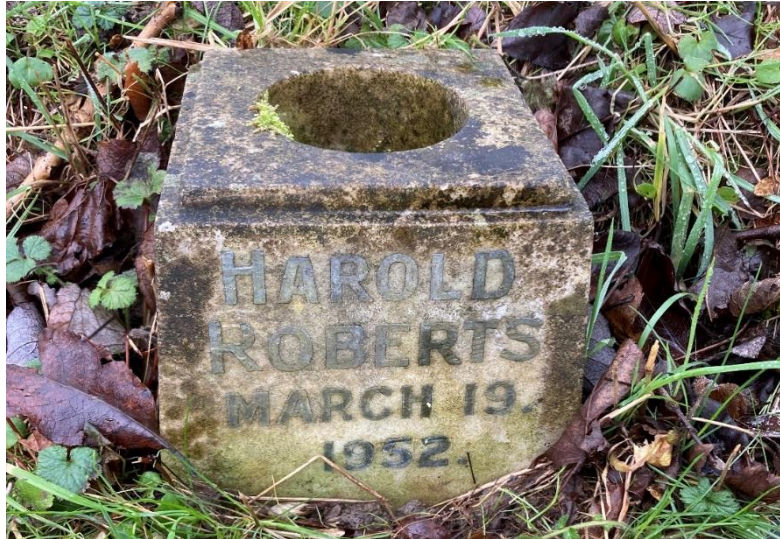
Address 4 Waverley Crescent, Brighouse, Brighouse M.B., Yorkshire (West Riding), England



An image of Harold and Grace Roberts found on Robert Botwood's public family tree on Ancestry.

Harold Roberts died on 19th March 1952 aged 57 years. He was buried three days later in the new section of the churchyard in plot NY T4 which has the little marker below.

| West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-1985 for Harold Roberts | | | | | |
|---|----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----|
| | NEW YARD | | | | |
| 3641 | T.4. | March 19 th 52 | March 22 nd 52 | Harold Roberts | 57 |



His army pension was then transferred to his widow Grace Annie Sanderson Roberts .

MINISTRY OF PENSIONS

CLAIMANT

11/W MPR 51

Registered No. **102132**

H/MR/1116.

Surname ROBERTS
(Block Letters)

Christian Name Grace A. S.

Man's Name ROBERTS. Harold
(Surname first : in block letters)

Regiment } West Yorks. Rank } O/Lt
Ship } Rating }

Regimental } No. 55007 Relationship } Widow
Official } to man }

M30213/7235 9/51 150

Grace Annie Sanderson Roberts née Bebbington died on 28th February 1980 aged 83 Her name does not appear in our burial records although the *FindA Grave* website does indicate that either she was buried, or her ashes were interred in the churchyard. In which case it does seem that this was likely to be in her husband Harold's plot pictured below. No memorial stone for Grace Roberts has been found.



D.M.Barker
March 2024