

The Barsdorf – Barton story



After an enquiry about two Barsdorf burials in St. Matthew's churchyard, this plot O80 was found. On the sides of the plinth there were two more inscriptions. But these were for two gentlemen with the surname Barton, apparently sons of the first-named lady. The parish records confirmed that these two were indeed buried in plot O80, the same plot as the Barsdorfs.

[A mistranscription of a badly written O as a D has actually put the two Barsdorfs in different plots on our Burial Search records but they were interred together as the memorial inscription, which will be quoted later, will confirm.]

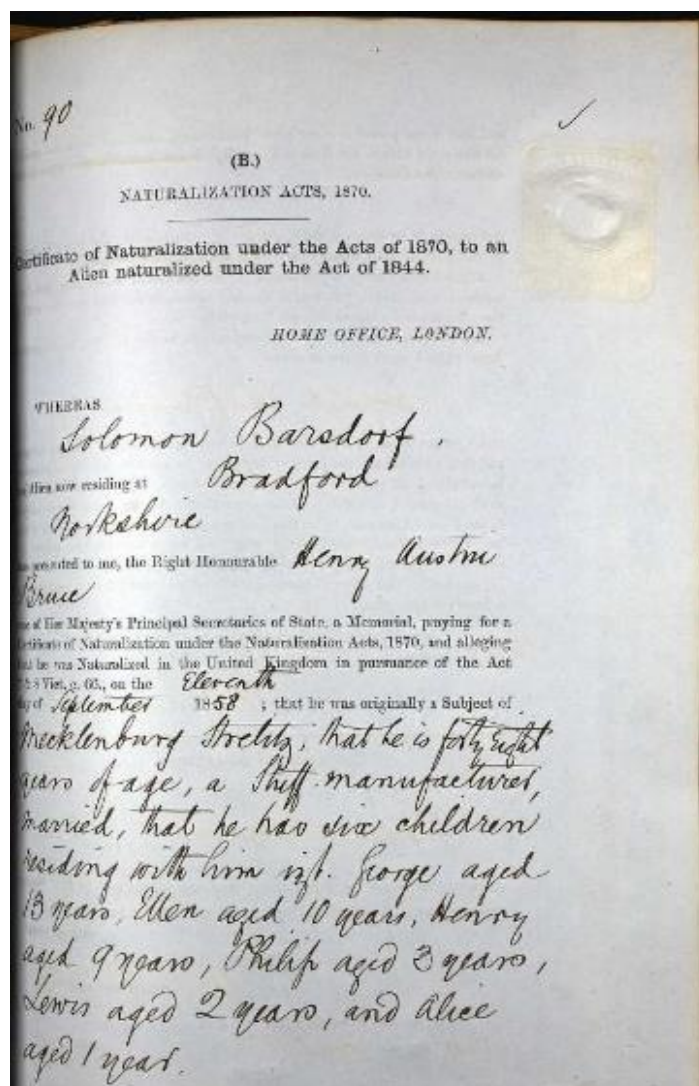
The four individuals were a teenage girl, her mother and then two bachelor sons. Some of them had lived for over sixty years at 2 Perth Villas in Lightcliffe.

Time to investigate more.

The family's story actually begins with a Solomon Barsdorf who was born in Mecklenburg – Strelitz in northern Germany on 11th October 1822. Solomon, a merchant, arrived in the UK on 2nd June 1843, travelling from Hamburg to Hull. On the night of 30th March 1851, the 28-year-old was a 'Worsted Stuff Manufacturer's Clerk' lodging with a 'tailor and draper' in Bradford.

He married Martha Knowles on 9th May 1854 in St. Paul's Church, Denholme, near Bradford. They had three children George Isart, baptised Christmas Day 1857, Ellen born 26th August 1860 and baptised 19th October 1860 and then Henry born 25th January 1862. By the time of the 1861 census Solomon was a 'Worsted Stuff Manufacturer' employing 35 men, 50 women and 5 boys. His family lived at Horton Villas, Bradford with a cook and a nurse.

Martha died on 22nd February 1865, aged 37 years, at Holme House, Clayton, Bradford. Solomon Barsdorf then married Ellen Frank on 27th March 1867 in Chorlton upon Medlock in Lancashire. The family lived in Horton Bradford where son Philip was born on 23rd December 1867 followed by Lewis in Q4 1868. A daughter Alice was born there in 1870. The 1871 census has them all with a governess and four servants at a house called Mannville. Just a few days after the census was taken Solomon and family were granted *UK Naturalization Certificates* on 6th April 1871.



Not long after this Solomon must have moved his family to Holly Bank, Lightcliffe as this was where son Ernest was born on 14th January 1872 and then Walter on 7th August 1874. Another son John died within weeks of being born, in Q3 1877 and finally Mabel was born on 12th September 1878, completing the second family. A 12th June 1879 newspaper sale notice suggests that Holly Bank, Lightcliffe was up for sale then. Perhaps the family moved back to Bradford to the address on a 1879 UK Directory.

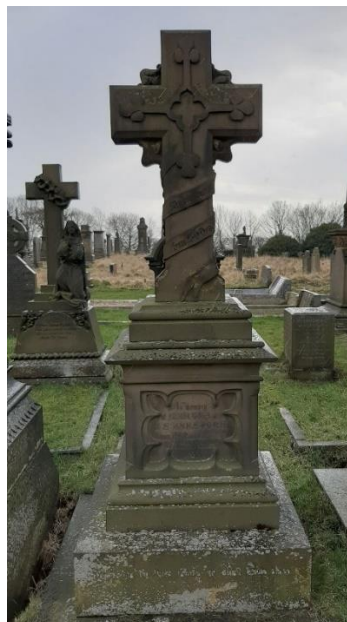
**Barsdorf, Solomon, commission agent, 41 Brook street ;
h 8 Farcliffe road**

Philip and Lewis Barsdorf joined Bradford Grammar School in 1878. Their other brothers may also have attended later on. Barsdorfs appear in sports reports as well as being named as prize winners on Speech Days. Years later Philip and Ernest would donate prizes.

In July 1880 an auctioneer was 'instructed by Mr. S. Barsdorf, who is leaving England to Catalogue and Sell by Auction the Whole and Valuable MODERN FURNITURE' at ' 8 Farcliffe Road. This was the address given when Walter and Mabel were baptised on 8th August 1880 at St. Phillip's Church, Girlington, Bradford.

After that it very much looks as if most of the family moved to Darmstadt, a city in the state of Hesse in Germany. None of them have been found on the 1881 England census except for George Isart Barsdorf. He was a 24 year old 'Commercial Clerk' lodging in Nottingham. The name G Barsdorf of Lightcliffe had appeared in a February 1881 newspaper 'Lost & Found' column about a dog!

Solomon Barsdorf died in Darmstadt on 6th September 1881. His body was brought back to England for burial in Undercliffe Cemetery, Bradford with his first wife Martha in a plot with this splendid memorial cross.



Just a few weeks later, back in Darmstadt, on 24th October 1881, 12-year-old son Lewis (Louis) Barsdorf died. It is not known where he was buried.

Some of the rest of the Barsdorf family seem to have returned to Lightcliffe, to 2 Perth Villas. Perhaps this was so that the boys could return to Bradford G.S. or even attend Hipperholme G.S. The three sons, Philip, Ernest and Walter, were very keen sportsmen. There are numerous newspaper accounts of them playing cricket, golf and tennis for Lightcliffe clubs. The ladies in the family were musical. A Miss Barsdorf – impossible to tell whether this was Ellen or Alice - sang in concerts sometimes with their mother accompanying them on the piano.

But then on 1887 tragedy struck again when 17-year-old ‘Alice of Perth Villas, daughter of Solomon Barsdorf’, died on 1st June. She was buried in St. Matthew’s churchyard, on 4th June 1887, in plot O80 which would eventually get a memorial headstone.

On 5th April 1891 widow Ellen Barsdorf née Frank was visiting her 78-year-old widowed mother, Mary Frank, and sister, Catherine, at 41 Acomb St., Chorlton upon Medlock, Manchester. Her stepson George – see later – has not been found. Stepson Henry had married and was living with his Lancashire born wife and two young sons, Leonard William and Leslie, in Cheshire. He was a mechanical draughtsman. But the rest of the family were in Lightcliffe.

1891 census

Ellen Barsdorf	Dau 30	
Philip Barsdorf	Son 23	Yarn Buyer
Ernest Barsdorf	Son 19	Wool Merchant’s Assistant
Walter Barsdorf	Son 16	Office Boy
Mabel Barsdorf	Dau 12	Scholar
Alice Ann Marriott	Servant 22	Cook Domestic
Selina Charlesworth	Servant 31	Housemaid
Address Perth Villas, Lightcliffe		

During the 1890s Philip, Ernest and Walter continued their all-round sporting pursuits. Their names - and those of others that we are familiar with as living in the area e.g. the Smithson brothers, Algernon Firth, R. Markham, some Kershaws etc., etc. - crop up regularly in sports reports. A ‘Miss Barsdorf’, probably Mabel, was also a successful golfer. She and/or her older sister Ellen trained the Sunday School choir at St. Matthew’s Church. All the Barsdorfs seemed to be involved in the local community, sitting on committees and raising funds including for St. Matthew’s new church organ which was installed in 1903.

1901 census

Ellen Barsdorf	Head 59	Living on own means
Philip Barsdorf	Son 33	Export Yarn Trade Broker
Ernest Barsdorf	Son 29	Ventilating Engineer
Mabel Barsdorf	Dau 22	
Address 2 Perth Villas, Lightcliffe		

The forty-year-old spinster Ellen Barsdorf has not been found on the 1901 census. Her brother Henry, an engineer, on a 1895 UK directory, and family with new daughter Cissie were in Stretford, Lancashire. Her half-brother Walter was on the island of Guernsey, a “Grower’s pupil” for a fruit and flower grower.

The sporting achievements of Philip, Ernest, Walter and Mabel Barsdorf continued to be reported during the 1900s with rifle shooting being added to the list. And again, familiar names crop up as their partners or opponents e.g. John Lister Clay, Tom Sander Gill, George G Hague, headmaster of Lightcliffe National School, J.F.Walsh, local architect etc.

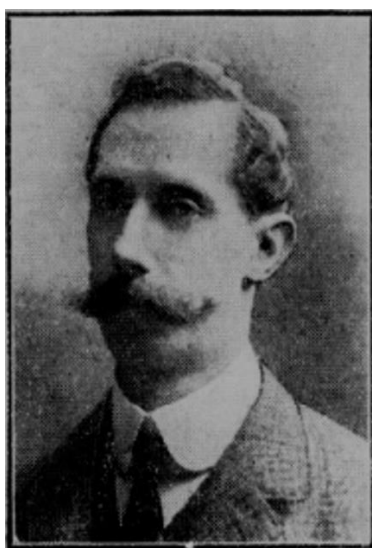
Samuel Lord Watkinson was another Lightcliffe golfer at that time. When, he married Anne Charteris, at St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe on 22nd July 1909 her friend Mabel Barsdorf was one of the bridesmaids.

On census night, 2nd April 1911, fifty-year-old stepdaughter Ellen Barsdorf was visiting a Leeds-born widow Emma Wilkinson in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Her brother Henry Barsdorf' was the general manager of Iron works in Old Trafford. His son Leslie had died in 1905 so the family living in Old Trafford comprised of Henry, his wife Amy, a surviving son and a daughter. The rest of the family were in Lightcliffe.

1911 census

Ellen Barsdorf	Head	69	Private Means
Philip Barsdorf	Son	43	Yarn Merchant
Ernest Barsdorf	Son	39	Ventilating Engineer
Walter Barsdorf	Son	36	Managing Clerk for Ventilating Works
Mabel Barsdorf	Dau	32	
Mabella Ann Robinson	Servant	53	Cook

Address 2 Perth Villas, Lightcliffe



This portrait of Ernest Barsdorf of Perth Villas, Lightcliffe, a ventilating engineer, appeared in the *Halifax Evening Courier* along with that of Newton Brooke of Fernside, quarry owner and Ernest Bacon Osborn of Lightcliffe House, worsted spinner, as the three of them stood for the district council early in 1914.

But then the Great War with Germany started during which the siblings Ellen, Henry, Philip, Ernest and probably Walter all changed their surname. Henry Barsdorf took the surname Barstow whilst the others became Bartons. Announcements to that effect appeared in various newspapers in 1916.

I, ERNEST BARTON, heretofore called and known by the name of ERNEST BARSDORF, of Lightcliffe, near Halifax, and Alexandra Works, Hopwood Lane, Halifax, both in the County of York, Ventilating Engineer and Manufacturer, a natural-born British subject, hereby give public notice that on the 18th day of August 1916, I formally and absolutely renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of my said surname of Barsdorf, and then assumed and adopted and determined thenceforth on all occasions whatsoever to use and subscribe the name of Barton instead of the said name Barsdorf. And I give further notice that by a deed-poll dated the 18th August 1916, duly executed and attested and intended to be forthwith enrolled in the Central Office of the Supreme Court, I formally and absolutely renounced and abandoned the said surname of Barsdorf and declared that I had assumed and adopted and intended thenceforth upon all occasions whatsoever to use and subscribe the name of Barton, instead of Barsdorf, and so as to be at all times thereafter called, known and described by the name of Barton exclusively.

Dated the 18th day of August, 1916

ERNEST BARTON

Witness — Richard T. Stowell, Solicitor
Manchester.

Philip Barsdorf probably made a similar declaration, but it has not been found. Walter Barsdorf's situation will be dealt with later.

It is not known whether sister Mabel Barsdorf officially changed her name. She was called Miss Mabel Barton in more Lightcliffe Golf Club reports and then late for the 1939 register but again no official announcement of a deed poll change of name has been found.

Their older half-sister Ellen Barsdorf did officially change her surname in 1916 as the *London Gazette* announced on 13th October 1916.

I, ELLEN BARTON, heretofore called and known by the name of Ellen Barsdorf, of Lightcliffe, near Halifax, in the county of York, Spinster, a natural born British subject, hereby give public notice, that on the twenty-first day of September, one thousand nine hundred and sixteen, I formally and absolutely renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of my said surname of Barsdorf, and then assumed and adopted and determined thenceforth on all occasions whatsoever to use and subscribe the name of Barton instead of the said name of Barsdorf; and I give further notice, that by a deed poll dated the twenty-first day of September, one thousand nine hundred and sixteen, duly executed and attested and enrolled in the Central Office of the Supreme Court on the twenty-third day of September, one thousand nine hundred and sixteen, I formally and absolutely renounced and abandoned the said surname of Barsdorf, and declared that I had assumed and adopted and intended thenceforth upon all occasions whatsoever to use and subscribe the name of Barton instead of Barsdorf, and so as to be at all times thereafter called, known and described by the name of Barton exclusively.—Dated the ninth day of October, 1916.

083

ELLEN BARTON.

For the 1921 census taken on 19th June 1921 Philip Barton, a Bradford yarn merchant, and Ernest Barton, a ventilating engineer with the Alexander Works in Halifax, were staying at the Bay Hotel, Rhosneigr on Anglesey. Their mother, Ellen Barsdorf, and sister, Mabel Barsdorf, were at North Hall, Buxton with a 'Sick Nurse' perhaps 'taking the waters' in this Peak District spa town. Back home at Perth Villas were Ellen Barton aged 60 and her half-brother Walter aged 46 with a housemaid and cook. He was a cashier for his older brother's firm Barsdorf & Mack, Yarn Merchants, Bradford.

Half-brother Henry Barstow was still in Old Trafford with his wife and daughter. His 37-year-old son, who still went by the name of Leonard William Barsdorf, was an electrical engineer with the General Electric Company lodging in Shepperton, Middlesex.

The following newspaper reports about Walter Barsdorf / Barton make interesting reading!

Evening Dispatch, Birmingham 29 May 1923

NEVER LIVED TOGETHER

Stafford Bench Orders Husband

To Pay £2 15s A Week

An unusual domestic story was unfolded at Stafford today, when Fanny Barton of Gnosall, applied for a separation order from her husband Walter Barton, of Lightscliffe [sic], near Halifax, on the grounds of desertion.

Complainant, who was represented by Mr Charles Owen, said she was married in July 1916, in the name of Barsdorf, and there were three children, the eldest being seven.

After marriage she went to live with a sister, where she used to meet her husband in the streets for a few hours at a time. Then she went to live with her parents at Malvern for 11 months, afterwards taking a furnished cottage at Thornton near Bradford, in November 1918. Her husband used to visit her there two or three evenings a week.

REFUSED TO LIVE WITH HER

She asked him to stay with her, but he always said he could not live with her until his mother died. She had to leave the house at Thornton because of the expense, and went to live with a sister in Birmingham, afterwards going to live at Gnosall, near Stafford.

Continuing, complainant said she was now destitute, her husband having discontinued to send her money.

A separation order was granted, defendant being ordered to pay an allowance of £2 a week to his wife and 5s a week for each of the three children, £2 14s 6d special costs being allowed.

Staffordshire Advertiser 2 June 1923

HUSBAND'S UNUSUAL REQUEST.—

Fanny Barton, Outwoods, Gnosall, applied for a separation order against her husband Walter Barton, of Lightcliffe, Halifax, on the grounds of desertion. Mr. Owen who represented the complainant, said the case was rather an unusual one. The parties were married in July 1916, but they had never lived together. The husband was employed by his brother at Bradford and Halifax, and he occasionally visited the applicant at Liverpool, where she was living. Later, the complainant took a furnished cottage at Thornton, near Bradford, but her husband refused to live with her, and in November 1918, she gave up and went to live with relatives. The defendant failed to provide proper support for the complainant and the three children of the marriage, and she had to seek relief from the Newport Guardians. The complainant stated that her husband had requested her to keep their marriage secret. He also told her that he could not live with her before his mother died. The defendant wrote stating that the summons issued against him had come "quite as a surprise." He was always anxious to provide for his wife and children but at the present time he was absolutely without means. The Bench made an order of £2 per week in respect of the wife and 5s per week for each of the children.

Staffordshire Advertiser 8 December 1923

WIFE MAINTENANCE CASE — An adjourned case came before the Court in which Walter BARSDORF, of Perth Villa, Lightcliffe, Yorkshire, was summoned for non-payment of arrears in respect of his wife's maintenance. The Magistrates Clerk (Mr S. W.

Morgan) said the defendant, who was a bulb grower, stated at the last hearing that he had planted 5,000 hyacinths, and was going to plant 5,000 more, ready for forcing in the middle of February. The defendant hoped to clear off all the arrears and start payment of the amount he was ordered to contribute by Christmas. The case was adjourned on the understanding that the defendant would make a definite offer that day. A letter had been received from the defendant, stating that, as arranged he would pay £5 not later than Dec 24, and make regular payments of £2 15s weekly, to start not later than Jan 1. Defendant's wife, who lives at Gnosall, and said she had three children to maintain as well as herself, consented to the case being further adjourned. The Magistrate's Clerk read a letter from the Clerk to the Newport Guardians (Mr Liddle) saying the Board hoped no further extensions would be granted. They had deferred taking any proceedings against the defendant in the hope that he would come forward and meet his obligations but in the interests of the ratepayer the present position could not continue indefinitely. The Bench further adjourned the case till Jan 15, the Clerk observing that he hoped the defendant would understand that this was a final adjournment.

Staffordshire Advertiser 19 January 1924

DEFAULTING HUSBAND.—Walter Barsdorf, bulb grower, Perth Villas, Lightcliffe, Yorks, was charged with being in arrears in respect of a maintenance order made in favour of his wife and children, now residing at Gnosall. — Mr. S. W. Morgan stated that when the case was last adjourned defendant promised faithfully that he would send his wife £5 by Dec 24th and keep up weekly payments of £2 15s. Defendant had not paid a farthing since making those promises. He had received a letter from defendant that morning, in which he stated that his first lot of flowers would be

placed on the market next week and after this month was out he would be able to make weekly payments of £3 15s until the arrears were paid off. — The Chairman said the defendant's promises were absolutely useless, and meanwhile his wife was waiting in vain for her money. Defendant would have to go to prison for two months.

Staffordshire Advertiser 23 February 1924

MAINTENANCE ORDER VARIED — Walter Barsdorf, Pearth [sic] Villa, Lightcliffe, Halifax, applied for a variation of a maintenance order made against him in respect of his wife and three children, who reside in Gnosall. Mr Wallace-Copland who appeared for the applicant, stated that the order, which was for £2 15s per week, was made in May 1923. The marriage between the applicant and his wife was secret for a time, because he did not wish his relatives to know. Later they separated, and the applicant told his wife it would not be advisable for her to take proceedings for an order, because it would ruin his chances with his family. Since proceedings had been taken against him his family had turned him aside. Applicant was living with his invalid mother, who allowed him a few shillings a week. He had endeavoured to start a bulb-growing business. The relationship between applicant and his wife was quite friendly, and applicant was only too anxious to do all he could for his wife. Asked by the Magistrate Clerk (Mr. S. SW. Morgan) why he did not send his £5, as he promised to do before Christmas, applicant said his crop was late, and he could get no bulbs on the market. The Bench reduced the order to £2 per week and warned the applicant that unless the monies was paid regularly during the next month further action would be taken.

Walter Barsdorf had married Fanny Bratt in July 1916 in the Liverpool district. The birth of a son Paul Barsdorf, on 4th December 1916, with mother's maiden name Bratt was registered in the district of W. Derby, Lancashire. Twins named, Della Maude and Walter John Barton – notice the surname change - had their births on 29th January 1919 registered in the Bromsgrove district, Worcestershire. By the time of the 1921 census Fanny and her children, all with the surname Barton, were living at Gnosall, Shropshire her address in the newspaper reports. Fanny was first described as 'Married' but this was crossed out and replaced with 'Widowed'. The children's father was said to be dead when clearly, he was not!

No more newspaper reports relating to this matter have been found. Was that because of what happened next?

A month after the last report eighty-two-year-old Ellen Barsdorf died on 27th March 1924. She was buried with her daughter Alice in Lightcliffe plot O80 – not D80 - on 31st March.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
ELLEN BARSDORF
DIED MARCH 27TH 1924
IN HER 83RD YEAR
ALSO OF ALICE BARSDORF
DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE
DIED JUNE 1ST 1887

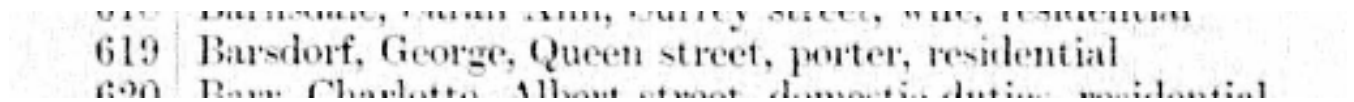
BARSDORF Ellen of Perth-villas Lightcliffe near Halifax widow died 27 March 1924
Probate London 30 July to Ernest Barton engineer. Effects £818 15s 9d.

Was Walter then able to pay off the arrears with a small inheritance from his mother and/or financial help from his brothers? And more importantly was he then able to live with his wife and children? Possibly, read on!

But before continuing Walter's story there was another probate record granting administration to Ernest Barton for his oldest half-brother George Isart Barsdorf.

BARSDORF George Isart of Auckland New Zealand died in or since 1887 at some place unknown Administration London 12 March [1926] to Ernest Barton engineer. Effects £438 7s 1d.

Some New Zealand records have more information. A George Barsdorf appears on an 1896 New Zealand Electoral Roll.



Then there is a New Zealand Cemetery record followed by a FindaGrave image.

52891	BARSDORF George	39 yrs	Asylum	12. 1. 1897	Plot 12 Ang
	MITCHELL Henry	83 yrs	Costley Home	12. 1. 1897	Plot 12 Ang
	HAYDN James	69 yrs	Onehunga	5. 5. 1897	Plot 12 Nonc



George Barsdorf
Birth 1858
Death 12 Jan 1897 (aged 38–39) Auckland, New Zealand
Burial Waikumete Cemetery & Crematorium
Glen Eden, Auckland Council, Auckland, New Zealand
Plot Anglican Division N, Row 3, Plot 12
Memorial ID 229935780 · View Source

Bradford born George Barsdorf died on 12th January 1897 in Auckland, New Zealand. He was buried in a pauper's plot simply marked by the row post above. It is interesting to speculate as to when his family back in Lightcliffe were made aware of what had happened to him. Did they know he had gone to New Zealand?

Sixty-seven-year-old Ellen Barton died on 3rd December 1928 in Halifax as the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* announced the next day.

DEATHS

BARTON.—December 3, 1928, ELLEN BARTON, of Perth Villas, Lightcliffe.—Funeral at Scholemoor Crematorium, Bradford, tomorrow (Wednesday), at 12 noon. No flowers and no mourning, by request. Friends, please accept this (the only) intimation.

She is remembered on her parents' memorial cross - page 3 - which is thought to say :-

ME [?] HELP COMETH FROM GOD

IN MEMORY OF MARTHA

WIFE OF S. BARSDORF

BORN 15TH NOVEMBER 1827

DIED 22ND FEBRUARY 1865

ALSO OF ELLEN BARTON

THEIR DAUGHTER

DIED 3RD DECEMBER 1928

ALSO OF S. BARSDORF

BORN OCTOBER 11TH 1822

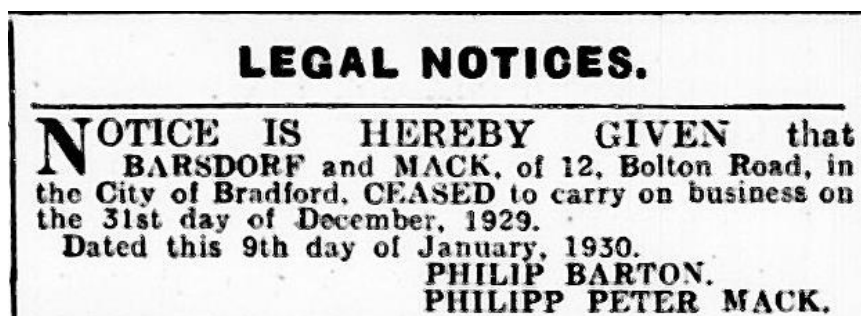
DIED SEPTEMBER 6TH 1881

BARTON Ellen of 2 Perth Villas Lightcliffe Yorkshire spinster died 3 December 1928 at Heathroyde Nursing Home Halifax Probate London 23 February to Philip Barton merchant and Ernest Barton engineer. Effects £4536 19s.

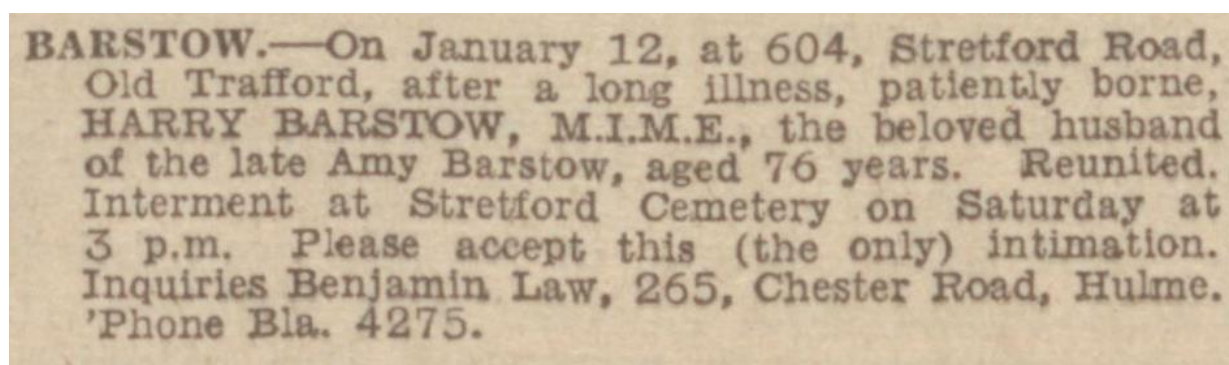
[Interestingly her death was registered under both surnames, BARSDORF and BARTON.]

Barsdorf, Ellen	67	Halifax	9 a	538	...
Ellen	67	Halifax	9 a	538	

Philip Barton's company – the one Walter was cashier for in 1921 – ceased trading at the end of 1929 as this notice in the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* for 20th January 1930 announced.



The Manchester Evening News on 13th January 1939 had this announcement.



BARSTOW Henry of 604 Stretford-road Old Trafford Manchester died 12 January 1939
Administration Manchester 4 April to Leonard William Barsdorf electrical engineer and
Cissie Monaham married woman. Effects £378 16s 10d

For the 1939 register three Barsdorf, now Barton, siblings were still at 2, Perth Villas, Lightcliffe.

1939 register

Philip Barton	23 Dec 1867	Yarn Merchant	Single	104	1
Ernest Barton	14 Jan 1872	Ventilation Engineer & Sheet Metal Worker Manufacturer	Single	104	2
Mabel Barton	12 Sep 1878	Private Means	Single	104	3
Vera Wilson	29 Dec 1922	Domestic Servant	Single	104	4

Address 2 Perth Villas, Brighouse, Brighouse M.B., Yorkshire (West Riding), England

The whereabouts of Walter Barton, if still alive, is not known. An Ancestry family tree suggests that his and Fanny's daughter, Della, married in 1939 in Cork, Ireland. Then in the 1950s a Fanny Barton, travelling abroad with her son, Walter John Barton, a schoolmaster, gave a Cork address on the passenger list. So did Walter and his family reunite and go to Ireland. Who knows!

Mabel Barton died at Lightcliffe on 19th June 1943. There does not appear to have been a death announcement, and she was not buried in Lightcliffe churchyard with her mother and teenage sister. Apart from her probate record no further details have been found.

BARTON MABEL of 2 Perth-villas Lightcliffe near Halifax spinster died 19 June 1943
Probate Wakefield 4 October to Philip Barton yarn merchant and Ernest Barton
ventilating engineer. Effects £5474 3s 1d

When her brother Philip died later that year the *Bradford Observer* for 29th December 1943 had this death announcement.

BARTON. – On Dec, 26th, at his residence, 2, Perth Villas,
Lightcliffe, Philip Barton, aged 76 years. Service at St. Matthew's
Church, Lightcliffe. Today (Wednesday) at 11.45 a.m prior to
internment Lightcliffe Cemetery 12. No flowers.

He was buried with his mother and teenage sister in Lightcliffe plot O80.

This difficult to read memorial inscription is on one side.



ALSO
OF PHILIP
SON OF THE AFORESAID
DIED DEC 26TH 1943
IN HIS 77TH YEAR.

This very grainy image of Philip Barton is taken from a group photograph of Lightcliffe Golf Club thought to have been taken in the mid-1920s. It appeared in the *Brighouse Echo* on 8th August 1986 under the following heading.

LIGHTCLIFFE READY YO CELEBRATE.

BARTON Philiy [sic] of 2 Perth Villas Lightcliffe near Halifax died 26
December 1943 Probate Wakefield 26 May [1944] to Ernest Barton
ventilating engineer. Effects £4442 12s 7d.



The death of Ernest Barton on 11th November 1947 and his funeral were reported on subsequent days in the *Halifax Evening Courier* with a useful obituary.

12 November 1947

DEATH OF MR ERNEST BARTON

The death occurred yesterday of Mr. Ernest Barton of Perth Villas Lightcliffe. A bachelor, he was aged about 75.

Mr. Barton had a German father and an English mother. His father whose family name was Barsdorf, came to Bradford during the last century and became a prominent figure in the wool trade. In the 1914-18 war the surname was changed to that of Barton.

Mr. Barton early in life became a traveller for P. M. Walker and Co. Ltd., ventilating engineers, Bedford-terrace, Hopwood-lane, Halifax, and after the death of Mr. Walker he took over the firm. At the end of 1943, when his health began to fail, he retired from active participation in the business.

He had a life-long interest in Hipperholme and Lightcliffe affairs. Born at Holly Bank, he removed to Perth Villa after the death of his father. He was associated with St. Matthew's

Church, Lightcliffe. When Lightcliffe Golf Club was formed at Cliffe Hill, he was among the first members. He was president for several years of Lightcliffe Tennis Club which recently ceased to function. He was also a member of Lightcliffe Conservative Club. There were few affairs in the district with which he had no association, and his unobtrusive generosity was extended to many causes. He was the oldest member (in seniority) of the Lodge of Probity No 61 Halifax, being initiated in June 1907.

17 November 1947

Mr Ernest Barton

The internment took place to-day at St. Matthew's Churchyard, Lightcliffe of Mr Ernest Barton (75), of 2, Perth Villas, Lightcliffe. The services at St. Matthew's Church and the graveside were conducted by Canon H. L. Taylor, M. A. (Vicar of Lightcliffe) and Canon G. Watkinson, M. A. (Vicar of Northowram).

His was the last internment in plot O80 in Lightcliffe churchyard. The again difficult to read memorial inscription is quoted below confirming that two Barsdorfs and two Bartons were indeed buried in the same plot in St. Matthew's churchyard.



ALSO
ERNEST
SON OF THE AFORESAID
DIED NOV 11TH 1947
IN HIS 76TH YEAR

There is a probate record and then the *Halifax Evening Courier* on 12th July 1948 reported more details about this will.

BARTON Ernest of 2 Perth Villas Lightcliffe died 11 November 1947 Probate Wakefield 27 May [1948] to Lloyds Bank Limited. Effects £20150 17s 2d

Local wills

Mr Ernest Barton, of 2 Perth Villas, Lightcliffe, ventilating engineer, late of P. M. Walker and Co., Ltd., who died on November 11, aged 75 left £20,150 17s 2d gross £19,938 0s 9d net value (duty paid £2,135).

He left—

£200 to Wilson A. Staincliffe. “as some slight recognition of his loyalty to me during many years we have worked together”;

£300 to Ethel Shoesmith, housekeeper, if still in his service;

£500 each to his step-niece Cissie and step-nephew Leonard, a few small bequests, and the residue to his nephews Paul and Walter and niece Della.

Probate of his will and codicil has been granted to Lloyds Bank Ltd., the sole executor.

Cissie (Monaham) and Leonard (William Barsdorf) were the children of his half-brother Henry Barstow formerly Barsdorf.

Paul, Walter and Della were, of course, the three children who had a strange existence when they were very young. After marrying in 1916 – was this because of the WW1 situation? - their parents Walter Barsdorf / Barton and Fanny née Bratt lived apart. Hopefully that situation was resolved and the 'secret' family were reconciled with their father and his wider family. Ernest Barton's Will suggests that this did indeed happen.

D. M. Barker

June 2026