

Notes on the Kildwick Typhoid Epidemic – 2

What happened to the families of those who died ?

In the first of these notes we put names to the 10 people who died in the Kildwick typhoid epidemic of 1899. They were all from Kildwick and belonged to just 4 households:

- Barritt family (3 deaths)
- Petty family (2 deaths)
- Sugden family (2 deaths)
- Tillotson/Baldwin family (3 deaths)

In this note we will look at these households as they appear in the returns for the censuses taken either side of the epidemic, in 1891 and 1901, to see how the loss of family members affected the make-up of the four households.

Barritt household

| 1891 | | | 1901 | | |
|-------------------|----------|----|-------------------|----------|----|
| John Barritt | Head | 43 | John Barritt | Head | 53 |
| Margaret Barritt | Wife | 38 | | | |
| | | | Mary Barritt | Wife | 50 |
| John Barritt | Son | 19 | | | |
| William Barritt | Son | 17 | | | |
| Sarah Barritt | Daughter | 15 | | | |
| Annie Barritt | Daughter | 13 | | | |
| Mary Barritt | Daughter | 12 | | | |
| Jane Barritt | Daughter | 8 | Jane Barritt | Daughter | 18 |
| Elizabeth Barritt | Daughter | 6 | Elizabeth Barritt | Daughter | 16 |
| | | | Charles Barritt | Son | 8 |

Notwithstanding the tragedy of three deaths within a fortnight during the epidemic (highlighted in red), the changes to the Barritt family are not dissimilar from those you might expect to see happening over a 10 year period in any late-Victorian family:

- The wife of the family appears to have changed.
- One son, William, and one daughter, Annie, who would have been aged 27 and 23 respectively, have disappeared from the household.
- The two younger daughters remain at home.
- A son, Charles, was born in 1893.

Petty household

| 1891 | | | 1901 | | |
|----------------|----------|----|----------------|--------|----|
| Martha Petty | Head | 64 | | | |
| Mary Petty | Daughter | 46 | Mary Petty | Head | 32 |
| Hannah Petty | Daughter | 44 | Hannah Petty | Sister | 50 |
| Margaret Petty | Daughter | 39 | Margaret Petty | Sister | 48 |
| Emily Petty | Daughter | 32 | | | |
| Abraham Petty | Son | 30 | | | |
| Thomas Jeff | Servant | 32 | | | |
| | | | Louise Petty | Niece | 15 |

Following the deaths of Martha, who was the head of the family, and Abe, the man of the house, the Petty family appears to have reorganised itself. A few of points are worth noting:

- All the women of the house are economical with the truth when it comes to their age – even Martha, who when she died in 1899 was recorded as being 76 years old, must have knocked off four years when asked for at the 1891 census. Can Mary really have been 46 in 1891 and then try to pass as 32 in 1901 ?
- Louise Petty was already living with the family in 1899, and will appear in a subsequent note as one of those who became ill with typhoid but recovered.
- Thomas Jeffs, the servant, left the household between 1891 and 1901. This is typical for the village as a whole; very few of the servants are retained from one census to the next.

Sugden household

| 1891 | | | 1901 | | |
|----------------------|---------|----|----------------------|---------|----|
| William Sugden | Head | 47 | William Sugden | Head | 58 |
| Christiane Sugden | Wife | 46 | Christiane Sugden | Wife | 56 |
| James William Sugden | Son | 15 | James William Sugden | Son | 25 |
| John Sugden | Son | 13 | | | |
| Thomas Sugden | Son | 4 | Thomas Sugden | Son | 14 |
| Margaret Sugden | Sister | 38 | | | |
| Mary Ann Sugden | Cousin | 38 | | | |
| Herbert Smith | Servant | 18 | | | |
| Susan Pearce | Servant | 17 | | | |
| | | | Agnes Hodgson | Servant | 40 |

Here:

- Once again, there has been a turn-over of servants.
- One member of the family (Mary Ann) is missing.
- Thomas, who was aged 12 in 1899, was one of those who became ill with typhoid but recovered.

Tillotson/Baldwin household

Between the two censuses, the Tillotson/Baldwin household suffered a double tragedy. In 1891, the census return shows the family looked like this:

| 1891 | | |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Thomas Tillotson | Head | 31 |
| Mary Ann Tillotson | Wife | 32 |
| Marjorie Tillotson | Daughter | 2 |
| Leonard Tillotson | Son | 10 months |
| Thomas Baldwin | Brother-in-law | 22 |
| Hannah Baldwin | Sister-in-law | 17 |
| Stanley Baldwin | Brother-in-law | 14 |

Thomas Tillotson was providing a home for his wife's two brothers and sister, as well as his own two young children. Another daughter, Norah, was born in 1893; but also in that year, Thomas, the head of the household, died.

Note: Norah's full name was Norah Brenda Bronte Tillotson. The "Bronte" reflecting the fact that for a number of years her grandfather, John Hartley Tillotson, was employed by the Bronte family in Haworth.

In the 1899 epidemic three deaths happened in this household: Stanley Baldwin, his sister Mary Ann Tillotson and her, by then 8 year-old daughter, Marjorie.

So, what happened to the surviving members: young Leonard and Norah, and Thomas and Hannah Baldwin ? There is a very clear answer in the census.

Thomas Baldwin moved away (he doesn't appear anywhere in the 1901 census returns for Kildwick), but the other three moved-in with another family in the village. In 1901 they were living with the children's paternal grandfather !

| 1891 | | | 1901 | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|----|---------------------|---------------|----|
| John H Tillotson | Head | 60 | John H Tillotson | Head | 70 |
| Sarah Tillotson | Wife | 56 | | | |
| Henrietta Tillotson | Daughter | 29 | Henrietta Tillotson | Daughter | 39 |
| Seth Tillotson | Son | 27 | Seth Tillotson | Son | 37 |
| Sarah Tillotson | Daughter | 24 | | | |
| Marinah (?) Tillotson | Daughter | 23 | | | |
| Eva Tillotson | Daughter | 19 | Eva Tillotson | Daughter | 29 |
| Lucy Tillotson | Daughter | 18 | Lucy Tillotson | Daughter | 28 |
| Frederick Tillotson | Son | 16 | Fred Tillotson | Son | 26 |
| Thomas West | Father-in-law | 85 | | | |
| | | | Leonard Tillotson | Grandson | 10 |
| | | | Norah Tillotson | Granddaughter | 8 |
| | | | Hannah Baldwin | Border | 27 |

As if having to take responsibility for his grandchildren and the sister of his deceased daughter-in-law was not sufficient, it is the cruellest of ironies that John Hartley Tillotson was the sexton at St. Andrew's church¹. He therefore almost certainly dug graves for some of the victims of the typhoid epidemic, possibly including those for members of his own family.

When he died, in 1903, his obituary in the Craven Herald included the note²:

... Mr. Tillotson had been in failing health for some years, and, in fact, never quite recovered from the shock of the loss of those of his family claimed by the typhoid outbreak of a few years ago.

References

- 1 History of Kildwick Church, Rev. E. W. Brereton, 1909
- 2 Craven Herald, September 18th 1903

What next – can you help ?

Do you or your family have any additional information on any of the victims of the Kildwick typhoid epidemic ? If so, the Farnhill and Kildwick Local History Group would like to hear from you. Please email admin@farnhill.co.uk.