

Richard Hardaker Revisited

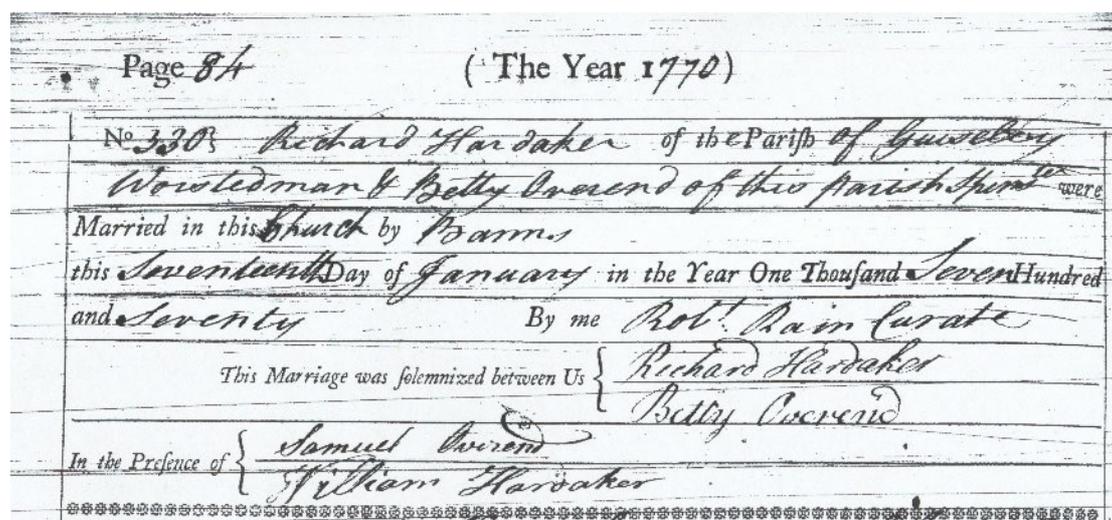
J Brian Hardaker

Draft of 26 February 2009

Richard Hardaker who married Betty Overend at Calverley church on 17 January 1770 is the earliest direct Hardaker ancestor I have been able to find.

Unfortunately, there is a lot I do not know about Richard. I have no sure record of his birth or burial, and I do not know who his parents were.

Here is what we do know about him. First, we have some evidence from the marriage register at Calverley as follows:



As the register shows, when he married, he was described as a worsted man of the Parish of Guiseley. The statement that he was of the Parish of Guiseley meant he was living somewhere in Guiseley parish at the time of his marriage, not necessarily in Guiseley village. I suspect he was living in Rawdon, which was a part of Guiseley parish. A witness at the marriage was a William Hardaker, who was presumably a close relative, probably a brother but perhaps a father, uncle or more distant relative.

Note that Betty was a spinster of Calverley parish. I am fairly confident that she was the daughter of Timothy Overend and Elizabeth née Cowling, baptised at Calverley church on 2 Apr 1743. That means that she would have been nearly 27 when she married, somewhat older than the usual age at marriage for a girl.

I think that the witness Samuel Overend was almost certainly Betty's brother Samuel, who was three years her senior.

At first sight it appears that both Richard and Betty signed the register. However, the close similarity of handwriting for the two signatures makes me doubt that. I think it is clear that the witness Samuel Overend signed for himself, but it seems possible that the rest of the entry was completed by Robert Rain, the curate.

I am reasonably confident that Richard and Betty were the parents of:

- Samuel, b. 16 Feb 1771, died 1861 at Idle.
- Richard, b. 2 Oct 1772.
- Timothy, b. 12 May 1775, d. 1832, named after Betty's father.
- John, b. 19 Apr 1780, d. 1870, my ancestor.

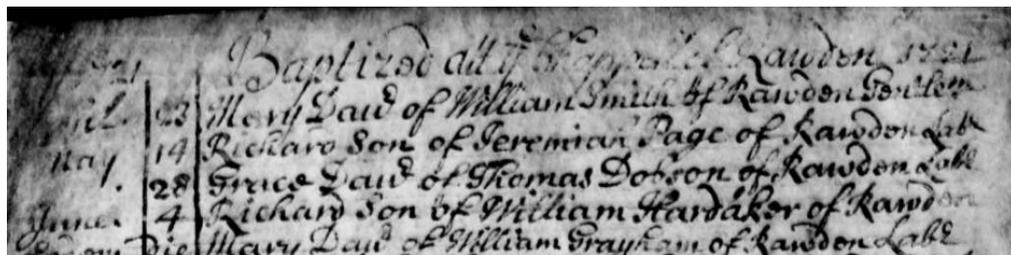
The births of all four sons were recorded at Rawdon Buckstone Baptist Chapel. The records for the first three give them as sons of Richard Hardaker of Rawdon, but no place of residence was given for John. The mother was not named for any of the children. It seems clear that Betty and Richard resided at or near Rawdon at least until 1775 and that they were followers of the Baptist sect.

It seems that none of the children died young, so there is no clue to who the father was from the burial registers.

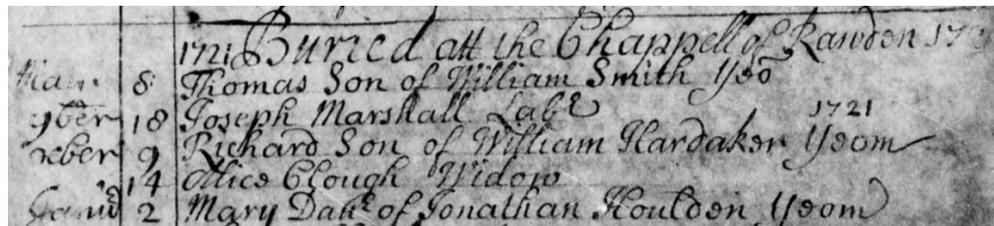
I have examined the children of Richard Hardakers born soon after 1780 and satisfied myself that it appears unlikely that Richard and Betty were the parents of any of them. We might therefore suspect that either Richard or Betty died soon after John was born.

Given that Betty was nearly 26 when she married, we might guess that Richard would have been between 25 and 30. If so, he would have been born between 1739 and 1745. The latest he was likely to have been born would be around 1755 and the earliest perhaps 1710. The only records of births I have around those dates in or near Guiseley parish are:

- Richard son of William Hardaker of Rawdon christened 4-Jun 1721 at Rawdon chapel:

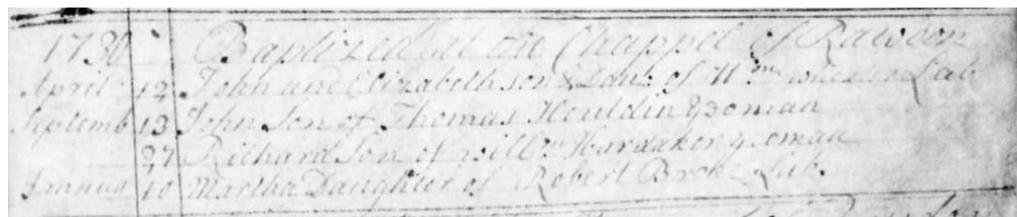


I think he died in infancy:

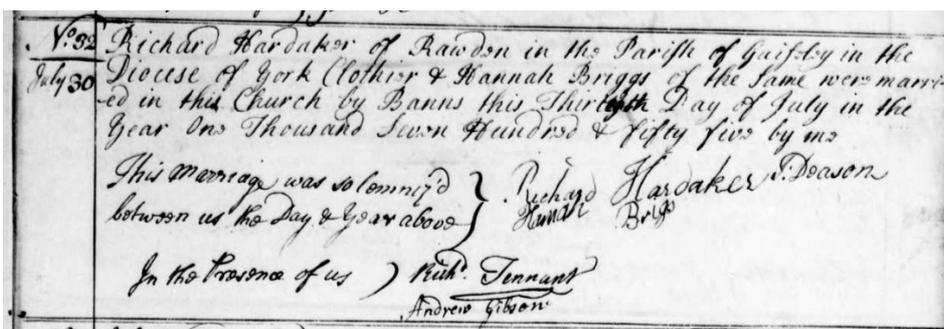


The month is not clear but I think it is December. The burial record is for the 9th day and reads: *Richard son of William Hardaker Yeom* [Yeoman]. I don't think that Richard born 1721 can be the one we are after.

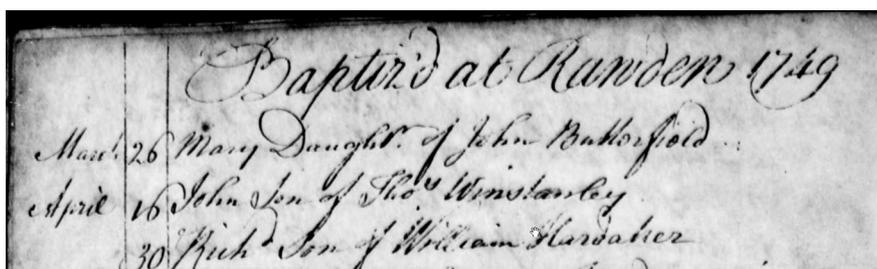
- Richard, christened, 27-Sep, 1730 at Rawdon chapel son of Willm Hardaker yeoman:



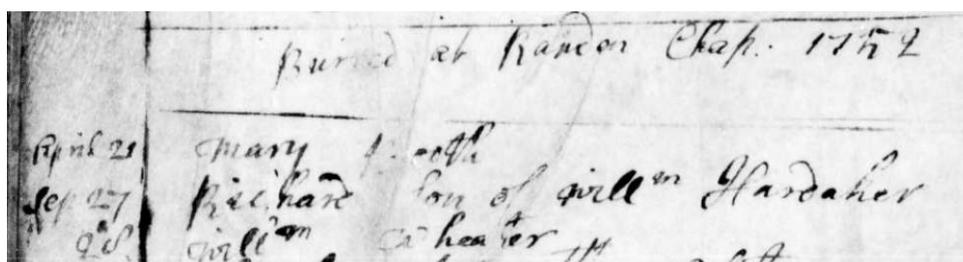
I think he married Hannah Brigg on 30-July 1755 when he would have been 24:



- Richard, christened, 30-Apr, 1749 at Rawdon chapel, son of William and I think Susannah Briggs;



He was born at about the right time, but I think he died as a child, buried at Rawdon chapel, 27-Sep 1752.



(Parry and Simpson have this event recorded as Ruth, not Richard. I am fairly sure that is an error.)

It seems unlikely that any of the above was the one who married Betty Overend, although we should examine the possibility that Richard born in 1730 may have married twice.

That Richard and Hannah married in 1755 and I believe they had the following children¹;

- John, christened, 11-May, 1756, Rawdon chapel, son of Richard. I think he died at Horsforth in 1827, aged 71.
- Susanna, christened, 19-Mar, 1758, Rawdon chapel, daughter of Richard.
- Hannah, born Rawdon, named, 13-Jul, 1760, Buckstone Baptist chapel, daughter of Richard. Also Hannah, christened, 10-Jul, 1761, Rawdon church, of Rawdon, daughter of Richard, in the second year of her age. Presumably the same Hannah who was named at Buckstone chapel in 1760, which could be significant.

¹ I have checked all these from the Guiseley Registers on Ancestry.com, though with difficulty because they are so badly indexed, being mixed up with Harewood parish. I checked the records from Rawdon Buckstone Baptist Chapel via a fiche copy of the registers in Leeds Public Library.

- Richard, christened, 30-Apr, 1763, Rawdon church, son of Richard², buried 31 Jan, 1770, Rawdon church, son of Richard.
- Mary, christened, 25-Jan, 1766, Rawdon church, daughter of Richard, buried 2 Feb 1771, Rawdon church, daughter of Richard.
- William, christened, 15-Apr, 1769, Rawdon church, son of Richard. In his transcripts of the records, Jackson has a William son of Richard buried in February 1771 at Rawdon church. I cannot find this in the registers. I believe the information comes from the BTs.
- Richard buried 24 Feb, 1771, at Rawdon church, son of Richard. Since Richard born 1763 above apparently had already died, and I found no other baptism of a Richard son of Richard at Rawdon, I believe that this was really William, born 1769, perhaps corrected in the BTs.

The christening of a child in April 1769 suggests that it is somewhat unlikely that the father of this child would have remarried in January 1770. Moreover, I believe that Hannah née Briggs, recorded as the wife of Richard of Rawdon, was buried at Rawdon church on 27 April 1797. Since I have found no other Hannah married to a Richard of Rawdon, I am reasonably sure that she was indeed Hannah née Briggs. Therefore her husband could not have remarried in 1770.

So we return to Richard who married Betty Overend. At least three of their four sons went to live at Idle, for Samuel, Richard and John were there in the 1841 Census, Timothy having died before 1841. Not surprisingly, their father, Richard, was missing, presumably having died before 1841. By the 1851 Census only Samuel and John appeared to be still alive. Samuel was aged 80, and he said he was born at Rawdon, and John was aged 69 and reported that he was born in Idle.

John was still alive in 1861, aged 79, and said he was born at Bolton, which is the other side of Eccleshill from Idle and in the parish of Bradford.

Despite John's inconsistent answers about his place of birth, it seems possible that the parents Richard and Betty may have moved across the valley from Rawdon, where Samuel was born, to Idle or Bolton by the time John was born.

It might help if we could find information on the deaths or burials of either Richard or Betty. It is a little curious that I have so far been unable to do so.

Richard presumably died between 1780, when his son John was born, and 1841 when the first census was conducted and he was not to be found. My guess is that he died soon after his son John was born, i.e. not long after 1780.

I have found the following possible burials;

- Of Woodside, Horsforth, buried at Chapel Allerton 23 Jan 1784. The date could be about right, but what was he doing at Horsforth Woodside and why was he buried at Chapel Allerton? I had assumed that this was Richard b. 1703 at Rawdon, son of Roger, who had married a second time at Chapel Allerton in 1742 to Ellen Nicholson. I believe they registered the birth and death of a son Joseph there (1750-1752).
- Clothier of Rawdon, bur. 11 Apr 1802 at Rawdon church – I think he was the one who had married Hannah Briggs.

² This record is incorrectly indexed in Ancestry.com as occurring in 1764.

- Of Sawood, Bradford, wrote his will Feb 1820. The will in my files shows he was not the man we are looking for.
- Of Shipley, bur 12 Jul 1828 at Rawdon church aged 69. For Richard of Shipley we have the MI which reads:
 - Grave 58 [721 Golisti]. In memory of Susanna the wife of William Hardaker of Horsforth who died December 23rd 1796 aged 73 years.
 - Also the body of the above said William Hardaker who died the 16th day of March 1802 in the 84th year of his age.
 - Also here lieth the body of John son of the above said William Hardaker who departed this life the 5th day of August 1807 in the 52nd year of his age.
 - Also of Richard Hardaker late of Horsforth and son of the above said William and Susannah, who departed this life the 28th day of June 1828 aged 6? years. He was Preacher in the Wesleyan Methodist Connection for upwards of Thirty Seven Years.

If, as the burial register shows, this Richard was 69 when he died, he was born in about 1759, son of William and Susanna, nee Briggs. He would not have been old enough to marry in 1770.

- Richard of Bradford, bur 9 Apr 1834 at Bradford parish church, aged 69 which means he was born too late for him to have married in 1770.
- Richard of Horsforth, bur Horsforth chapel 1837. I am not yet sure who he was but there is no reason to suppose he was Richard of Rawdon who may have later lived in Bradford or Idle.

So it seems the burial of Richard is still to be found.

The only candidate I have found for the burial of Betty is an Elizabeth Hardaker of Guiseley buried at Guiseley church in 1794, with no further details given. I think it unlikely that this was Betty née Overend.

A possibility we should consider is that Richard had pre-deceased her and that she remarried. There is one possible marriage which could fit this case:

Betty Hardaker, a widow, married Thomas Stephenson, a cloth maker, at Bradford parish church on 19 April 1802, both of Bradford parish (WYAS 40D90/1/3/5). If this was Betty née Overend, she would have been 59 years old, so there would be no children of the marriage. A search of the IGI fails to show any and the couple are not to be found in the 1841 Census, suggesting that they were not young when they married. So the hypothesis that the bride was Betty née Overend is not disproved. Unfortunately, even if correct, this idea does not advance matters.

From the naming pattern of the boys of Richard and Betty, I believe it is moderately likely that one of their sons would have been named after Richard's father. It was common to name the first son after the father's father, with subsequent sons often named after the father himself and the mother's father. Richard named his second son after himself and Betty's father was called Timothy so we at least see these two names being recycled. It is therefore somewhat likely that Richard's father was called Samuel, the name used for his first son. Unfortunately the only marriage of a Samuel I have found was in May 1755 which is probably too late for the couple to have had a

son Richard old enough to marry in 1770. Sometimes a child would be born before the marriage, especially if the mother was very young, but even so, it seems unlikely that a son Richard born around 1754 could have married in 1770 with the status of 'worsted man', an occupation probably requiring an apprenticeship of some years.

I know from the will of Robert Hardaker of Rawdon dated 18 May 1729 that there was a Samuel son of William, probably born at Rawdon around 1719. If this Samuel had survived, he could have married about 1740-45 and had a son Richard soon thereafter, who might have been the one I have been looking for over the past 20 years. But there is no evidence as to what happened to this Samuel, no sign of his marriage or death, and no sign of children, certainly no son Richard.