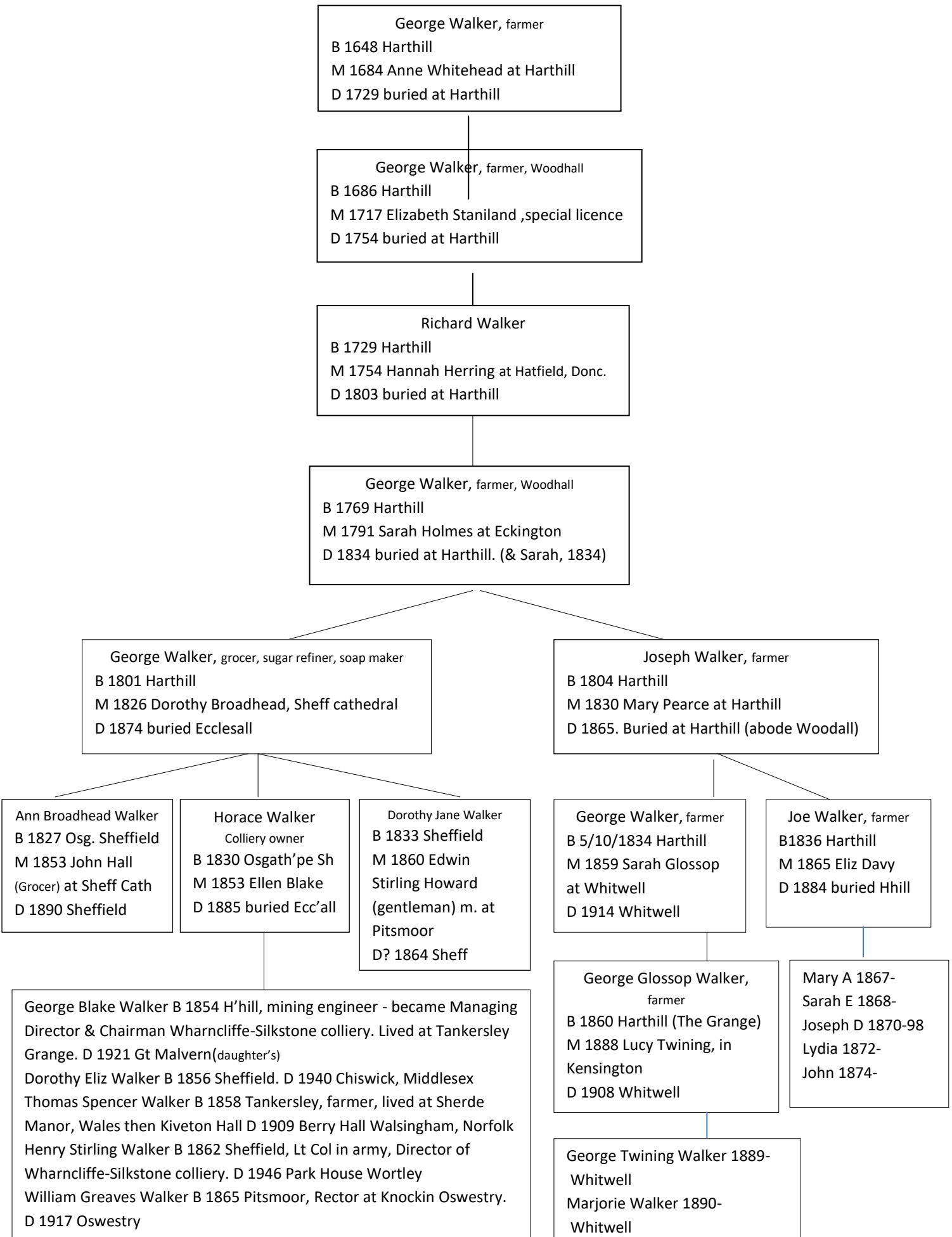


# The Walker family of Harthill

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Extracts from the Diary of George Walker, a farmer of Harthill & Whitwell, 1861 – 99 is already available to see on the Harthill Memories and History Website. This story gives details of the broader family and information about their occupations, their houses and lifestyle.



Extracts from the diaries of the Walker family, farmers and landowners in Woodall and Harthill, are available to see on the Harthill Memories and History Society website thanks to Peter Cox, descended from the family. Unfortunately I have been unable to contact Peter, but I have managed to assemble some further information about the wider family.

The earliest record that I could find was of George Walker born 1648, Harthill. The parish records for All Hallows Church, Harthill show the baptisms and burials of his son George born 1668, grandson Richard, born 1729 and great grandson George Walker, born 1769 and the father of the two men in this story.

George Walker, a farmer, married Sarah Holmes, of Eckington, at Eckington Church on 11 May 1791. They lived at Wood(h)all and had 10 children, though 2 died in infancy. Two of the sons are of particular interest and feature in this story. They follow different careers but both remain linked to the Harthill area.

## 1. Joseph Walker ( 1804 – 1865),

George Walker's diary states that Joseph was the third of four sons of George Walker, 1769 – 1834, a Woodall farmer.

Joseph married Mary Pearce at All Hallows Church in 1830.

The 1841 census shows Joseph and Mary at Woodall, with sons George age 6, Joseph age 4 and John age 2.

In the 1851 census, still at Woodall, Joseph, farmer of 190 acres, employing 4 labourers.

In the 1861 census Joseph Walker owned "300 acres, 5 labs + 3 carters + 1 gen serv".

Also from George Walker's diary, we learn that in 1865 Joseph went to Sheffield "re heart, bled and died on August 9<sup>th</sup> age 61".

One of their sons was **George Walker**, born Wood(h)all 1833 and the author of the "*Diaries of George Walker 1861-99*". At the start of the diaries he is 26 and living at Harthill Grange, 150 acres. He married Sarah Glossop in 1859 at Whitwell Church.

They moved from Harthill Grange to the Manor farm at Whitwell in 1873, when Sarah's father, George Glossop, died. George Glossop also ran Castle Hill farm, so his death greatly increased the land that the couple farmed, some owned, some rented.

In the 1881 census, George Walker of Manor House, Whitwell, farms 415 acres and employs 9 labourers and 3 boys.

George and Sarah had two children, **George Glossop Walker (known as Georgie)** born Harthill 1860 and **Mary Walker** born 1862.

Georgie was given a cricket bat and stumps for his 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was sent away to school but his enthusiasm for cricket grew, and by the age of 18 he had a trial for Derbyshire County. He played for them for 17 seasons. He was also a successful athlete, winning many trophies and prizes for running. He married Lucy Twining (of the Twining tea company family) in 1888 in Kensington, London, and they had 2 children - George Twining Walker, born 1889, and Marjorie Walker, born 1890, both at Whitwell. Georgie died in 1908 at Whitwell, at the early age of 48.

There was a sale, presumably of stock, from the Grange farm in 1874, but Mary Walker, the unmarried daughter of George and Sarah, born 1862, continued to live there for 50 years

with her servants. In her 70's she returned to the Manor Farm to run the household, due to a bereavement, and stayed there until her death during WW2. Her father George Walker died in 1914 at Whitwell.

Another of the sons of Joseph Walker and Mary née Pearce was **Joe Walker**, born 1836, Harthill.

On 14 September 1865 Joe married Elizabeth Davy at the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Sheffield (later to become Sheffield Cathedral). Elizabeth was 23, the daughter of an engineer, Joseph Davy, who lived in Pitsmoor. Joe's occupation is given as "sugar refiner" and that of his father Joseph, "farmer". The couple moved from Sheffield to Woodall on Joe's father's death.

From GW diary, we can see that Joe loses £650 with his partners in 1869, as "sugar goes down in Resolute in Hull ". This presumably refers to the storms in October 1869, causing the sinking of one of the merchant ships carrying refined sugar.

The 1871 census gives the family as being at "the Rectory", Harthill which would seem to be an error, as the actual Rectory would have been inhabited by George Townshend Hudson, the Rector of Harthill Church, and we know from GW diary that Joe and his family moved to Woodall farm in 1871. Joe and Elizabeth have 3 children – Mary Ann, born 1867, Sarah E, born 1868, and Joseph Davy Walker born 1870. Two servants Peter Berry and Eva Aldrid are also in the household.

In 1873 Joe becomes Church warden in GW's place.

By 1881 there are 2 more children – Lydia, born 1872 and John, born 1874. Two different servants are in the household – Maria Bramhall and Ann E Colts. Joe's occupation is given as "Sugar merchant and farmer 350 acres employing 5 men and 3 boys".

Joe Walker dies on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1884 at the age of 48. He is buried in Harthill churchyard.

The diary states that on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1885, the farm stock is sold for £1198 – the last of the Walkers in Woodall after 6 centuries. Lizzie moved to Scarborough after Joseph's death.

**Joseph Davy Walker**, Joe's eldest son, born 1870, is apprenticed to GW Birks in 1887. He was living with his mother, Lizzie, at 47 the Esplanade, Scarborough in 1898 when he died from scarlet fever on 27 October.

## 2. George Walker (1801-1874)

Joseph's older brother, George, was also born in Harthill. According to his obituary in the Sheffield Telegraph of 1874, he became one of "Sheffield's worthiest citizens". He began life in the grocery trade, developing a wholesale business, involved in soap making and sugar refining. He married Dorothy Broadhead at St Peter & St Paul (later became Sheffield Cathedral) on 8 March 1826. Dorothy's family were Quakers, living at Balby, Doncaster, and site of one of the oldest Quaker meeting houses.

In 1841 the census reveals the family living at Glossop Road, Sheffield. They have 3 children - Ann Broadhead Walker (born 1827 Sheffield), Horace Walker (born 1830,

Sheffield) and Dorothy Jane Walker (born 1833, Sheffield). By 1851, they are living at Osgathorpe Manor, in the Brightside district of Sheffield. They have a resident groom and 2 servants. George's occupation is given as sugar refiner, also that of Horace, now aged 21.

It is interesting to note that George's nephew, Joe Walker, was also involved in the sugar trade, having lost a lot of money in 1869 due to one of the merchant ships carrying refined sugar sinking in a storm. Also, perhaps of note, Joe Walker's wife Elizabeth came from Pitsmoor close to Osgathorpe.

George Walker was one of the earliest to realise the potential of the railway system and he became a director of the Great Northern line in 1846, when it opened between London and Peterborough. Around the same time he became a director of Sheffield and Rotherham bank.

After retiring from the sugar corporation, along with friends John Jeffcock of Cowley Manor and Robert Baxter of Doncaster, the three men financed the start of the Wharnccliffe Silkstone Colliery near Barnsley in 1853. Often called "Pilley Pit", the colliery was a functioning colliery for over 100 years.

**Horace Walker**, George Walker's son, was also involved with the sinking of the pit, and for many years was the Manager of the Colliery. He donated the large West window in All Hallows Church, Harthill, in memory of his parents. The glass was designed by JF Bentley, architect of Westminster Cathedral in 1876..



*The West window in Harthill Church*

The inscription towards the bottom of the West window in Harthill Church reads:

**“IN MEMORY OF GEORGE WALKER OF WOODHALL WHO DIED 24<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF JUNE 1874 AND DOROTHY HIS WIFE WHO DIED 22<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF JUNE 1869. THIS WINDOW IS PLACED HERE BY HORACE WALKER OF OSGATHORPE, THEIR LOVING SON.”**

Horace also donated a window at Tankersley Church, in memory of his mother, Ellen. This was designed by Edward Burne-Jones and made by William Morris in 1879.

Before marriage, in 1851 Horace was living with his parents at Osgathorpe,

He married Ellen Blake in 1853 and their first son, George Blake Walker, was born in Harthill in 1854. There is no information as to whether they were living in Harthill or Woodall at the time, or just visiting family.

By the time of the 1861 census, they were living in Wortley village, close to the colliery, and

had 2 more children –Dorothy Elizabeth Walker (born 1856) and Thomas Spencer Walker (born 1858). Thomas is listed as born in Wortley.

By 1871, the family was living back at Osgathorpe, with George Walker now 70 years old and a widower. Horace and Ellen have 2 more children – Henry Stirling Walker (born 1862) and William Greaves Walker (born 1865).( both places of birth state Yorkshire)

George Walker died in 1874 and is buried at Ecclesall Church, Sheffield.

In 1881, Horace is back in the Harthill area, living at Sherde Manor, Wales. This manorial house situated on Manor Road, Wales was first built for the Duke of Leeds. In time it became a hospital. It is a grade 2 listed building and currently divided into 4 properties called Wales Court.



Wales Court(formerly Sherde Manor)

Horace was a widower aged 51 and living with his son, Thomas Spencer Walker, a farmer of 540 acres, employing 13 labourers and 4 boys. Horace's daughter Dorothy, age 24, single, is also living there, along with Thomas's wife, Edith and their daughter Ellen Walker (born 1881).They have a resident cook, a nursemaid, a kitchen maid and 2 other servants.

Horace Walker died in 1885, aged 55, at his daughter's house in Sheffield.

After his death, two further memorial windows were placed in Tankersley Church, funded by friends and workers from the Wharnccliffe Silkstone Colliery.

**George Blake Walker (1854-1921)**, Horace's eldest child, and grandson of George Walker, was born in Harthill. He was the Underground manager, Managing Director and Chairman at the Wharnccliffe Silkstone Colliery, in a career of over 40 years at the pit.

In 1881 George Blake Walker was living in Lacton Cottage, Tankersley, a house built for the manager of the colliery. Also living at Lacton Cottage, as boarders, were Edward and Bessie Hunter (my great great grandparents). Edward Hunter was a colliery horse keeper.

Like his father and grandfather before him, George Blake Walker saw the colliery through some very difficult times, and was always committed to development and the application of labour-saving, safety and innovative technologies to ensure and sustain the viability of the pit. He was a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Institution of Mining Engineers and developed international fame, being involved in other collieries at home and abroad. He was made President of the Institution of Mining Engineers 1918-19.

George Blake Walker was given Tankersley Grange as a wedding present by his father and

was living there in 1891 with Annie, his wife, and Rosamund, his daughter (born 1888). They had a 5 resident staff at the time of the census.

The rest of Horace Walker's children followed varied career pathways:

**Thomas Spencer Walker** (1858-1909), who had been farming at Sherde Manor, Wales was farming at Kiveton Hall in 1891 but then moved to Walsingham, Norfolk, and in 1901 was living at Berry Hall Farm and farming 540 acres, employing 13 men and 4 boys. He married Edith May and they had 2 daughters, Ellen and Dorothy. Thomas died at Berry Hall prior to WW1 and the big house, like Sherde Manor, became a temporary hospital for the wounded.

**Henry Stirling Walker** (1862-1946) served in the Boer war and retired in 1910 with the rank of Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel. He went back into active service in WW1 as temporary Major in the 9<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion, York and Lancaster Regiment and later with the 8<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion as a Lieutenant-Colonel. He was also a Director at Wharnccliffe Silkstone Colliery and took a keen interest in Tankersley School, the Boys' Brigade and the National Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He married Emma Hubbard in 1886 and they had one daughter who became an accomplished sculptor. Henry died in Wortley, at Park House.

**William Greaves Walker** (1865-1917) went into the Church and became Rector at Knockin, Oswestry, Shropshire. He married Sarah Payne in 1890 and they had 2 children.

Henry Blake Walker's daughter, Rosamund Euphemia, married Arthur Morrison in 1909 at Tankersley Church and in the 1911 census was living in London.

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Anthony Standering for photograph of Wales Court

Valerie Bintcliffe of Tankersley Church (for her help with research).