

Ann Hardbottle

(b.1817 approx., d.1889)

3rd November, 2019

Mary Kelly

Ann Hardbottle was born before the civil registration of births, in approximately 1817 (1). She never married and seems to have spent much of her adult life caring for other people. She first appears in census records in *Thirsk, North Yorkshire in 1841* (1), when she is aged 25, a dressmaker, living with William Halbran, 27, Mary Halbran, 22, Elizabeth Halbran, 2 and Ann Halbran, 6 months. Perhaps she was lodging with the Halbrans.

In 1851 Ann is living in Melmerby with her father Henry, 60, and mother Elizabeth, 61 (2). Also resident at the same address are Anthony Hardbottle, 25, and George Hardbottle, 23, who are both agricultural labourers. Ann is listed as Pauper (dressmaker). It seems likely that she has moved back to her parents' home to take care of them and her younger brothers. There is another Hardbottle family in Melmerby comprising Mary Ann, a widowed dressmaker aged 35 and her four-year-old son Henry and six-month-old nephew Thomas. It is unclear what relationship they have to Ann.

By 1861, the Melmerby census shows Ann as Head of Household, her mother Elizabeth having died in 1856 (3,4). There does not appear to be a record of her father's death, however. Ann is looking after an eight-year-old niece, Elizabeth Hardbottle, who is at school. Elizabeth *was born in Ripon in 1852*, her mother's maiden name *being Young* (9).

In 1871, Ann is again in Melmerby, keeping house for the widowed John Beckwith, 67, a joiner, and his son, also named John, 34, agricultural labourer (5). The older man was born in Wath and the younger in Melmerby.

In 1881 Ann is resident in the Ripon Union Workhouse and is described as a seamstress (6). A trawl of the Ripon Workhouse records did not yield any additional information.

Ann died in September 1889, in Ripon, aged 71 (7). The Ripon Workhouse Master's Report notes that, "Ann Hardbottle, 70 years, a very patient sufferer who had been confined to her bed for many years died this night, admitted from the parish of Melmerby" (8).

During this project we have been struck by the numbers of elderly male inmates in the workhouses being greater than elderly females. This seems unexpected, given that women generally outlived men. Having researched Ann's story I am now wondering if unmarried or widowed men were unable to look after themselves when their employment ceased, whereas perhaps women were able to keep house for other families and survive that way.

References

- (1) 'Ann Hardbottle' (1841) Census Return for Thirsk, Yorkshire, Class: HO107; Piece: 1238; Book: 4; Civil Parish: Thirsk; County: Yorkshire; Enumeration District: 8; Folio: 7; Page: 6; Line: 12; GSU roll: 464228. Available: www.Ancestry.co.uk (Accessed 1st October 2019).
- (2) 'Ann Hardbottle' (1851) Census Return for Melmerby, Yorkshire, Class: HO107; Piece: 2281; Folio: 574; Page: 9; GSU roll: 87466-87467. Available at: www.Ancestry.co.uk (Accessed 1st October 2019).
- (3) 'Ann Hardbottle' (1861) Census Return for Melmerby, Yorkshire, Census Returns of England and Wales, 1861. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), 1861. Piece 3199, Folio 18, p.6. Available at: www.Ancestry.co.uk (Accessed 1st October 2019).
- (4) 'Elizabeth Hardbottle' (1856) England and Wales Deaths 1837 – 2007, District Ripon, County Yorkshire, Vol 9A, page 61. Available at www.FindMyPast.co.uk. (Accessed 1st October 2019).
- (5) 'Ann Hardbottle' (1871) Census Return for Melmerby, Yorkshire, The National Archives; Kew, London, England; 1871 England Census; Class: RG10; Piece: 4279; Folio: 15; Page: 2; GSU roll: 846970. Available at www.ancestry.co.uk. (Accessed 1st October 2019).
- (6) 'Ann Hardbottle' (1881) Census return for Ripon Workhouse, Allhallowgate, Ripon, Yorkshire. Public Record Office: PRO Piece 4317, Folio 83, p. 36 (1881). Available at: www.ancestry.co.uk. (Accessed 1st October 2019).
- (7) 'Ann Hardbottle' (1889). Certified entry recording death on the Civil Registration Index, September 1889. Available: Available at: www.ancestry.co.uk. (Accessed 1st October 2019)
- (8) Ripon Union Master's Reports (1889), NYCRO BG/RI/5/2, North Yorkshire County Records Office.
- (9) 'Elizabeth Hardbottle' (1852) Certified entry recording birth on the Civil Registration Index. Apr-Jun 1852. Vol 9a p77. Available: www.gro.gov.uk. (Accessed 1st October, 2019).