

## John Horner

(b.1818, d. 1892)

### Elizabeth Barker

John Horner was christened in Bedale on 25 January 1818, the son of John and Jane Horner. (1). John Horner senior refers to Jane as his wife, but there seems to be no trace of a marriage record, certainly not in the Bedale parish records.

At the date of the 1841 census, father and son are to be found in Sawley, near Ripon. Why they came to be living there is not known. John Horner the father gives his age as 50, and the son's age is given as 27. Both are described as agricultural labourers. (2) In the census for 1851, they are still living together in Sawley. The father gives his age as 63 and his place of birth as Crakehall (near Bedale). He is described as a widower, and a "labourer/pauper". The son's age is given as 33 and his place of birth as Sawley, and he is described as a "pauper".(3) It looks as if John the father cannot work full time as his son needs a great deal of care, and they are both in receipt of parish relief.

By the time of the 1861 census, the two of them are no longer living together. John the father is shown in the census as living in Sawley at house no.80, described as a widower, aged 69, born at Crakehall, and his occupation is "road maker". There is no mention on the census of his being a pauper.(4) On the other hand, John the son appears in the census as an inmate of the Ripon Workhouse.(5)

It is not known exactly when John was admitted to the Workhouse, but the possible reason for his admittance becomes a little clearer later on. The records for the workhouse are patchy but we do know that by 1864, John had been certified as "a lunatic". There are annual reports of certified lunatics from 1864 to 1870 in which he is listed, and another set from 1885 to 1889 where he is still listed. (6) John may have been admitted in the 1850s, on the basis of a permanent disability, and the Sawley parish authorities would not have been prepared to support his father to care for him for more than a short period.

As regards personal information, John the father seems to have been somewhat vague and inconsistent. He may not actually have been legally married to Jane, but he refers to her as his wife, and later to himself as a widower. He gives his son's place of birth as "Sawley" on the 1851 census, although his son was born in Bedale parish. He gives his own age as "63" in 1851, and "69" in 1861. John the son also gives incorrect information about himself in later censuses. However, he should not be blamed for this, as he could only refer to whatever his father had told him, and to how much of that he could remember. In the census for 1871, there is a note alongside his name of "idiot from birth". He gives his age as "43", which would give him a birth year of 1828, not 1818. (7) For the 1881 census, he provides the information that he was born at Crakehall, which was probably correct, and that he was born in 1828, which was incorrect.(8) The 1891 census shows his age as "73" (correctly) but that he was born in Sawley (incorrectly). (9)

John Horner appears to have died in Quarter 3 of 1892 – this seems to be the most likely death record of a person of that name in Ripon in the 1890s. The age of the deceased is given as “78”, which would give a birth year of 1814. It seems somehow inevitable that if this is indeed his death record, it is not entirely accurate. (10)

## References:

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- (2) ‘John Horner’ (1841) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District, Markington subdistrict, township of Sawley*. PRO: HO 107/1352/8. Piece no. 1352, book 8, folio 5 page 2. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 20/01/2020
- (3) ‘John Horner’ (1851) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District, Markington sub-district, township of Sawley, Dist 2a*. PRO: HO 107 2281. Piece no. 2281, folio 30,page 3. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 20/01/2020
- (4) ‘John Horner the father’ (1861) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District,subdistrict Kirkby Malzeard, Dist. 7*. PRO: RG 9 3198. Piece no. 198, folio 91, page 14. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 20/01/2020
- (5) ‘John Horner the son’ (1861) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District, 4f*. PRO: RG9/3196 Piece no. 196, folio 80, page 36. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 20/01/2020
- (6) ‘John Horner’ (1864) *Annual return of lunatics, Ripon Union, dated 28 January 1864*. Available at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/county-record-office](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/county-record-office), ref QSB 1864, 2/12/13. Accessed 22/01/2020
- (7) ‘John Horner’ (1871) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District, subdistrict 4*. PRO: RG10/4275. Piece no. 4275, folio 84, page 41. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 21/01/2020
- (8) ‘John Horner’ (1881) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District, subdistrict 4*. PRO:RG11/4317. Piece no. 4317, folio 83, page 35. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 21/01/2020
- (9) ‘John Horner’ (1891) *Census return for Yorkshire, Ripon District, “Workhouse” subdistrict*. PRO: RG12/3511. Piece no.3511, Folio 125. Available at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk). Accessed 21/01/2020
- (10) ‘John Horner’ (1892) *Certified entry recording death on the England and Wales Civil Registration Index 1837-1915, Quarter 3, 1892*. Available at <https://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/information.pl?cite=cu74j2Fi%2F4%2Bs6wBz6Qfb3w&scan=1> Accessed 22/01/2020