

Kitson Denton

(b.1862, d.1882)

10th October, 2019

Mary Kelly

Kitson Denton, variously described as a factory boy (3), coal worker (5) and general labourer (6), was born on 13th April 1862 in Ripon (1). He was baptised as an Anglican in the Cathedral on 26th April 1862, and his father's occupation was given as 'clogger' (2).

Kitson was the fourth of seven children living with his father, John Denton, 42, and his mother, Mary Denton, 38, at Southowram in the parish of St Anne, Halifax at the time of the 1871 census (3). He was nine years old and a factory boy at this time. His older siblings were a plasterer's apprentice and two factory girls whilst his younger brothers were a school boy and a toddler.

On Wednesday 6th October 1880 Kitson's mother, Mary Denton, appeared before the Ripon City Court for using "scurrilous, abusive and indecent language" towards Ann Marooney on 27th September that year (9). Ann Marooney was also charged with throwing a bucket of "filthy liquid" at Mary Denton. Both charges were dismissed.

Kitson had a short and hard life, being already at work in a factory by the age of nine. Ripon Union Application and Report Book in October 1880 describes Kitson as not being able-bodied through sickness, and grants a medical order for him (10). The same Report Book describes him as destitute in December 1880 and he was admitted to Ripon Union Workhouse on Sunday 19th December 1880 (4). By this time his religion is apparently Roman Catholic. He was assigned Class of Diet No 2, which would be usual for a young man. However, he died in the workhouse in May of the following year (6). Kitson had been living with his family in Stammergate in October 1880 (10), so it would seem that he entered the workhouse hoping to access some basic health care, although there were no comments made under the heading 'Observations on Condition at the time of Admission'. Perhaps he was simply looking for someone to nurse him at the end of his life, or perhaps his family could no longer afford to feed him?

Kitson's Death Certificate gives the cause of death as Phthisis Pneumonialis, which is now called Tuberculosis, or TB (6). This is a bacterial infection spread through inhaling tiny droplets from the coughs or sneezes of an infected person. It is debilitating illness with a persistent cough, weight loss, fever, tiredness, loss of appetite and swellings in the neck. Kitson had just turned nineteen years old when he died, on 24th May 1881. Workhouse Discharge records document that his last meal was breakfast (7). Kitson was buried in Ripon on 26th May 1881, certified by his father (8).

References

- (1) 'Kitson Denton' (1862) Certified entry recording birth on the civil registration index. Vol 9A p69. Apr-Jun 1862. Available at www.findmypast.co.uk. (Accessed 10 October 2019)
- (2) 'Kitson Denton' (1862) Baptism of Kitson Denton, 13th April 1862, Ripon Cathedral, Yorkshire Baptisms. North Yorkshire County Records Office, Archive Reference N-PR-RI-1-21, page 86. Available on www.findMyPast.co.uk. (Accessed 10 October 2019).
- (3) 'Kitson Denton' (1871) *Census return for Southowram, Halifax, Yorkshire*. Public Record Office. Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 27 August 2019).
- (4) 'Kitson Denton' (1880) *Admission and Discharge Register of Ripon Union Workhouse [1880]*, NYCRO BG/RI/5/3/1, North Yorkshire County Record Office.
- (5) 'Kitson Denton' (1881) *Census return for Ripon Workhouse, All Hallowgate, Ripon, Yorkshire*. Public Record Office. Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 27 August 2019).
- (6) 'Kitson Denton' (1881) *Certified PDF copy of a death certificate for Kitson Denton, 1881*. Order number COL823559/2019, General Register Office.
- (7) 'Kitson Denton' (1881) *Admission and Discharge Register of Ripon Union Workhouse [1881]*, NYCRO BG/RI/5/3/1, North Yorkshire County Record Office.
- (8) 'Kitson Denton' (1881) *North Yorkshire County Record Office, page 494, Yorkshire Burials*, available at FindMyPast.co.uk, (accessed on 10th October 2019).
- (9) 'Mary Denton' (1880) *Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale Herald, Saturday 9th October 1880*
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001273/18801009/054/0005>. (Accessed 10 October 2019).
- (10) 'Kitson Denton' (1880) *Ripon Union Application and Report Book, 1880*, NYCRO BG/RI/4/1/3 North Yorkshire County Records Office.