John Balmforth

(b.1810, d.1889)

21 July 2021

Barbara Winfield

According to the details on the 1881 Census ***(8)***, John Balmforth was born in Rochdale, Lancashire, about 1808, although the ages given for him on previous census records vary his year of birth from 1803 to 1811. No baptism has been found for him and the names of his parents are not known.

At some point John appears to have moved from Lancashire to Yorkshire as on August 27th, 1837 he married Ellen Haley at Darfield near Barnsley ***(1)***. On the transcription of the entry in the marriage register John's father was named as 'John Balneforth' and Ellen's father was 'William Haley'.

At the time of the 1841 census ***(2)***, about three and a half years after their marriage, John and Ellen were found to be living at separate addresses, for reasons unknown. John was a lodger at William Street, Wakefield ***(2)*** and Ellen was living with her parents in Wombwell, near Barnsley ***(3)***.

By 1851***(4)*** John and Ellen were living together again at 36, Clarke Street, Wakefield. John was now aged 40 and described as a labourer. His place of birth was listed as 'Clayfield', which was near Rochdale ***(4)***. (*His last name was transcribed as Baumforth on the Ancestry website)*

Ten years later ***(5)*** the couple were still living at the same address and John was now described as a 'corn porter'. Sadly it seems that they were childless as no children were recorded on either the 1851 or 1861 census.

John's wife died in Wakefield in 1865 ***(6)*** and by 1871 ***(7)***, a widower with no immediate family, John had moved to Leeds and was found to be lodging at 45 Grafton Street and was employed as a dyer.

By 1881 ***(8)*** John, now aged 73, had become an inmate in the Leeds Union Workhouse. His occupation was given as a 'silk dyer'. Whether John remained in the workhouse until his death eight years later is not known. He died in the Union Infirmary early in 1889 ***(9)*** aged 81, but his death could not be found on the Civil Registration index. He was buried in the consecrated section of Beckett Street Cemetery on February 23rd ***(9)*** **and** shared his grave with fifteen others, twelve of them children. *(Grave number 10788)*

Reference list:

(1) 'John Balmforth and Ellen Haley' (1837) Marriage of John Balmforth and Ellen Haley 27 August 1837, Darfield. England Select Marriages 1588-1973). Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(2) 'John Balmforth' (1841) Census return for William Street, Wakefield, sub-district, Wakefield Public Record Office: PRO HO107/1372/3, folio 4, p.2 (1841). Available at: http://www.findmypast.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(3) 'Ellen Balmforth' (1841) Census return for Wombwell, sub-district, Darfield Public Record Office: PRO HO107/1326/15, folio 13, p.20 (1841). Available at: http://www.findmypast.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(4) 'John Baumforth' (1851) Census return for Clarke Street, Wakefield, *sub*-district, Wakefield. Public Record Office: PRO HO107/2327, folio 480, p.11 (1851). Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(5) 'John Balmforth' (1861) Census return for Wakefield, sub-district, Wakefield. Public Record Office: PRO RG9 /3425, folio 109, p.28 (1861). Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(6) ‘Ellen Balmforth’ (1865). Certified entry recording death on the Civil Registration Index, September 1865 Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(7) ’John Balmforth (1871) Census return for Grattan Street Leeds, sub-district West Leeds. Public Record Office: PRO RG10 /4563, folio 141, p.19 (1871). Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(8) ‘John Balmforth’ (1881) Census return for Leeds Union Workhouse sub-district, North Leeds. Public Record Office: PRO RG11/4524, folio 98, p. 2(1881). Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

(9) ’John Balmforth’ (1889) Burial of John Balmforth 23 February 1889 Leeds, Beckett Street Cemetery (1845 –1987) Available at: http://www.ancestry.co.uk (Accessed: 21 July 2021).