

## Christopher Lowther

(b.1804, d.1882)

Written by Barbara Winfield, 06 January 2022

Christopher Lowther was born in Leeds on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1804, and was baptised at Leeds Parish Church on February 5<sup>th</sup> **(1)**. His parents were William and Elizabeth Lowther and at the time the family was living in Union Street, Leeds. William's father was a shoemaker, an occupation which Christopher was to eventually follow for a while.

Nothing is known of Christopher's life until the 1841 Census **(2)** where he was recorded as living in Sheffield Street, Leeds aged about 35 and a 'porter'. In the same dwelling were his brother, William (aged 50 and a shoemaker), William's wife Hannah, their son Richard (aged 13) and Christopher's father, William senior (aged about 80).

Christopher remained single until he was in his forties when he married a widow, Sarah Coulson, at St Peter's Non-conformist Chapel, Leeds on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1850 **(3) (4)**. Christopher was aged 46, and his new wife was aged 55 making her nine years older than him. At the time Christopher, described as a shoemaker, was living at 53 East Lane which was in the Kirkgate area of Leeds **(3)**.

The following year, when the 1851 census was taken, Christopher (aged 47) and Sarah (aged 58) were living at 47 Orange Street **(5)**. Christopher was no longer described as a 'shoemaker', and was now a 'chip hawker'. He would be trying to make a meagre living by selling 'chips of wood' from place to place which people could use to light their fires.

Ten years later **(6)** Christopher and his wife Sarah were living in one of about twenty almshouses in Wesley Terrace, East Leeds. Christopher was now a 'labourer bricklayer'. (*On the census form his last name was written 'Lowder'*)

In 1871**(7)** Christopher and Sarah were still living in Wesley Terrace and Christopher had returned to being a 'firewood hawker', although he was also described as a 'labourer'. He was now 67 years old and his wife was 79. Several of the nearby residents were 'on the parish', i.e. receiving financial help, or 'out of work' so it was quite a poverty-stricken area.

Two years later, Christopher's wife died at the age of 81 years **(8)**. She was buried in the consecrated section of Beckett Street Cemetery on March 24<sup>th</sup> **(8)**. Christopher was admitted to the Leeds Union Workhouse where he was recorded as an inmate on the 1881 census **(9)**. Although it seems he had not worked as a shoemaker for several years, this was the occupation that he gave to the workhouse officials, but the census also stated that he was not employed at that time.

Christopher died in the Union Infirmary attached to the workhouse in December 1882 at the age of 79 and was buried in the consecrated section of Beckett Street Cemetery on December 7<sup>th</sup>, again being described in the register as a 'shoemaker' **(10),(11)**. He shared his grave with 4 other adults and 8 very young children. (*Grave number 11900.*)

Reference list:-

**(1)** 'Christopher Lowther' (1804) Baptism of Christopher Lowther, 5 February 1804. Leeds Parish Church West Yorkshire Church of England Baptisms Marriages and Burials 1512-1812. Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

**(2)** 'Christopher Lowther (1841) Census return for Leeds, sub-district, Kirkgate. Public Record Office: PRO HO107/1343/3, folio 37, p.27 (1841). Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk>

(Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(3) 'Christopher Lowther and Sarah Coulson' (1850) Certified entry recording marriage on the Civil Registration Index, September 1850 Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(4) 'Christopher Lowther and Sarah Coulson' (1850) Marriage of Christopher Lowther and Sarah Coulson 08 July 1850 St Peters Chapel, Leeds. West Yorkshire Non-Conformist Records 1646 – 1985. Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022)

(5) 'Christopher Lowther' (1851) Census return for Leeds, *sub*-district, North Leeds. Public Record Office: PRO HO107/2320, folio 719, p.11 (1851). Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(6) 'Christopher Lowther' (1861) Census return for Wesley Terrace, Leeds, *sub*-district, South east Leeds. Public Record Office: PRO RG9 /3374, folio 90, p.5 (1861). Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(7) 'Christopher Lowther' (1871) Census return for Wesley Terrace, Leeds, *sub*-district, South east Leeds. Public Record Office: PRO RG10 /4547, folio 33, p.15 (1861). Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(8) 'Sarah Lowther' (1873) Burial of Sarah Lowther 24 March 1873 Leeds, Beckett Street Cemetery (1845 – 1987) Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(9) 'Christopher Lowther' (1881) Census return for Leeds Union Workhouse *sub*-district, North Leeds. Public Record Office: PRO RG11/4524, folio 102, p. 10(1881). Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 02 January 2022).

(10) 'Christopher Lowther (1882)). Certified entry recording death on the Civil Registration Index, December 1882 Leeds Volume 9b Page 326 Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).

(11) Burial of Christopher Lowther' 7 December 1882 Leeds, Beckett Street Cemetery (1845 –1987) Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 08 January 2022).