

**Thomas Sanderson**  
**(born 1833, died 1903)**

22 November 2020  
Jane Collins

Thomas Sanderson was an inmate of Leeds Union Workhouse in April 1881 (1). In 1881, Thomas was 48 years old, he was married, had worked as an Excavator (navvy) and was born in Kirby Moorside, North Yorkshire. (1)

We do not know when Thomas left the Workhouse but in 1901 he was living at No 13 Little Somerset Street (one of a complex of streets in the location now occupied by Leeds Bus Station and Victoria Gate). He was aged 68 years, a widower and living alone. He was working as a firewood chopper and “selling same retail”. He is listed as working “on his own account”, meaning he was not an employer nor employed by anyone. Additionally, he is noted as carrying on this work “at home” (2). Working on his own account suggests that Thomas was a man able to support himself from his trade. However, within 2 years Thomas appears to have returned to the Workhouse.

Thomas died in 1903 aged 70 years and was buried in Beckett Street Cemetery in the Anglican section on 31 March 1903 (3)(4). His address on the burial is recorded as the Workhouse, Leeds with the body coming from the Medical School. It is therefore likely that poor Thomas died in the Workhouse without any family members to claim his body. It was a common and legal practice for a ‘pauper’ body from the Workhouse to be sent to the Medical School to be used for medical research and training purposes.

## References

- (1) ‘**Thomas Sanderson**’ (1881) Census return for Leeds Union Workhouse, Beckett Street, Leeds, North Leeds Subdistrict, Yorkshire. Public Record Office: PRO RG11/4524, folio 105, p.16 (1881). Available at: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 12 April 2021)
- (2) ‘**Thomas Sanderson**’ (1901) Census return for 13 Little Somerset Street, Leeds, North Subdistrict, Yorkshire. Public Record Office: PRO RG13/4221, folio 117, p.17 (1901). Available at: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed: 12 April 2021)
- (3) Thomas Sanderson (1903). Certified entry recording death on the Civil Registration Index, March 1903. Available: <https://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/information.pl?cite=OhbjcGcqbinLDzzbOrrTuQ&scan=1>. Accessed 12 April 2021)
- (4) ‘Thomas Sanderson (1903). Burial of Thomas Sanderson, 31 March 1903. Beckett Street Cemetery, Leeds; Burials – Anglicans. Leeds Beckett Street Cemetery, 1845-1987. Ref LC/CEM (B)/1/5, Numbers 78001-97840, 1900-1930. Available at: <http://www.ancestry.co.uk> (Accessed 12 April 2021)