

Thomas and Sarah Families

I have taken a closer look at families of Thomas and Sarah or Sally Warburton in the Bury, Bolton, and Haslingden area of Lancashire in the first couple of decades of the 19th century. There are two reasons for this. Firstly the family tree of the Bakers of Bolton begins with a Henry born in 1805. The only recorded baptism of a Henry in 1805 was the son of a Thomas and Sarah. Secondly one of the Lancashire group of DNA matches is descended from a Peter, son of Thomas and Sarah who emigrated to Massachusetts before 1850.

Before the Marriage Act of 1836 marriages had to be held in an Anglican church. It is reasonable to assume therefore that all Thomas and Sarah marriages appear in a church register somewhere. However one family in the list, that at Darcy Lever, has no obvious associated wedding so it is possible that there are other unknown marriages where the record was lost in some way. The Thomas and Sarah from Darcy Lever appear in the 1841 Census aged 55 (actually 55-59 because of rounding down), The burial of a Thomas Warburton of Darcy Lever took place on May 25th 1855 at St Nicholas, Little Lever, aged 73, though the death isn't in the registration indices. The 1841 census indicates Thomas and Sarah were both born in Lancashire. However there isn't a Thomas and Sarah marriage in Lancashire between 1800 and 1812 that isn't otherwise accounted for.

On balance it is most likely that the rest of the recorded baptisms belong to the known marriages so I have structured the list of baptisms, and known marriages into a probable framework of families. However there could be more than one interpretation, and there is conflicting evidence.

It should be noted that 40 Thomases were baptised at Haslingden, Bury, or at chapels in between during the period 1750 to 1790 so it is virtually impossible to tie any of the Sarahs' husbands to his parents without additional information such as his age at a specific point. Parish registers did not name parents of the bride and groom at this time.

To simplify matters I will first list the less controversial families.

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1. Firstly the 1803 marriage of Thomas and Sarah nee Hill of Brightmet near Bolton precedes a total of 10 baptisms. Thomas and Sarah, plus a number of their children appear in the 1851 census, though some of the ages appear a bit variable. Thomas was born in Brightmet in 1783/4.

Thomas and Sarah of Brightmet

#	Name	Date	DOB	Father	Mother	Church	Abode	Father's occupation	Comment
Wedding	Thomas	20 Mar 1803			Sarah Hill	Bolton			probably the Thomas and Sarah at Bolton in 1851 census; Thomas 67 a cotton winder born Brightmet, Sarah 67 born Tottington.
1	Mary	15 Apr 1804	20 Mar 1804	Thomas	Sarah	St Mary, Bury	Brightmet		
2	Betty	28 Jul 1805	28 Jun 1805	Thomas	Sally	St Mary, Bury	Brightmet		
3	Margaret	3 Nov 1805	3 Sep 1805	Thomas	Sarah	St Mary, Bury	Brightmet		aged 44 in 1851 a finisher; but Peggy aged 40 in 1861 a stitcher at bleach works
4	James	29 Mar 1807	19 Feb 1807	Thomas	Sarah	St Mary, Bury	Brightmet		
5	Betty	24 Jan 1808	3 Oct 1807	Thomas	Sarah	St Mary, Bury	Ainsworth		assumes first Betty died
6	Rachel	10 Jun 1810	14 Nov 1809	Thomas	Sarah	St Mary, Bury	Elton		included due to presence in 1851 (aged 42; a dress maker) and 1861 (aged 50 a house servant) censuses at Brightmet
7	Robert	30 Oct 1814	27 Feb 1814	Thomas	Sarah	Christ Church, Ainsworth	Ainsworth	crofter	note: crofter is a bleacher; aged 26 in 1851 (36 would be right)
8	John	2 Jun 1816	20 May 1816	Thomas	Sarah	Christ Church, Ainsworth	Brightmet	crofter	
9	Sarah	13 Sep 1818	3 Jun 1818	Thomas	Sarah	Christ Church, Ainsworth	Brightmet	whitster	aged 32 in 1851 miliner; 35 in 1861 dress maker
10	Mary	10 Sep 1820	3 Jan 1820	Thomas	Sarah	Christ Church, Ainsworth	Brightmet	bleacher	aged 28 in 1851

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2. The three children from Ramsbottom, including a Peter, fit neatly with the marriage of Sarah Heys at Bury 11 months before the first baptism. Although Sarah is recorded as Sally on the children's baptisms, this looks very much a single family. The supporting factors include:

Thomas and Sarah of Ramsbottom

#	Name	Date	DOB	Father	Mother	Church	Abode	Father's occupation	Comment
Wedding	Thomas	22 Oct 1810			Sarah Heys	St Mary, Bury		Thomas a dyer	Sarah from Haslingden; FamilySearch suggests marriage also recoded at Walmersley; in 1851 census at Holcombe Thomas 62 a servant born Edenfield; Sally 65 born Haslingden
1	John	29 Sep 1811	30 Aug 1811	Thomas	Sally	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Ramsbottom		
2	Annis	13 Sep 1812	16 Aug 1812	Thomas	Sally	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Ramsbottom		
3	Peter	19 Mar 1815	8 Mar 1815	Thomas	Sally	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Ramsbottom	dyer	Peter died 30/12/1898 aged 83 yrs 9 mths 22 days; names mother Sarah Barnes or Baines

- The marriage is recorded on both Ancestry and FamilySearch as occurring at both Bury and Walmersley, linking the couple with the area.
- Thomas's occupation of dyer is the same on the marriage and Peter's baptism.

Sarah was from Haslingden, and there is an 1851 census entry that shows a Sarah from Haslingden, aged 65, married to a Thomas from Edenfield, aged 62 and living in Holcombe. There is a Sarah Heys baptised at Haslingden on February 27th 1785, and a Thomas Edmund Warburton, son of John and Agnes, was baptised at Edenfield on June 12th 1788. These fit the census ages well, and link the family to the Edenfield clan.

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Their son Peter, who was born on the 8th March 1815 ties in with the Peter who emigrated to Massachusetts and died on December 30th 1898 in Lawrence, Massachusetts aged 83 years, 9 months and 22 days. This age fits exactly to the day. The only problem is that Peter's mother was recorded as Sarah Barnes or Baines on his death record. I have found no evidence that Sarah had another marriage; she was a spinster on her marriage record to Thomas. Illegitimate, or step children sometimes switched between family names. Sarah was not illegitimate if the 1785 baptism is hers, but I don't know if her mother remarried. Barnes and Heys were common names in Haslingden and there are records of intermarriages. On the other hand there is no record of a Thomas marrying a Sarah Barnes or Baines. I assume that either for some reason Sarah Heys did also use the name Barnes (or Baines), or the entry is simply an error.

3. The family in Little Lever have no obviously matching marriage, but otherwise form a a clear unit.

Thomas and Sarah of Little Lever

#	Name	Date	DOB	Father	Mother	Church	Abode	Father's occupation	Comment
Wedding	unknown	abt 1811							
1	John	6 Dec 1812	20 Oct 1812	Thomas	Sarah	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever		
2	Benjamin	13 Nov 1814		Thomas	Sarah	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever	crofter	
3	Thomas	15 Sep 1816		Thomas	Sarah	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever	crofter	
4	Sarah	11 Apr 1819		Thomas	Sarah	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever	crofter	
5	Ann	25 Mar 1821		Thomas	Sarah	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever	crofter	
6	Alice	27 Apr 1823		Thomas	Saray	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever	crofter	
7	Nathaniel	15 May 1825		Thomas	Sarah	St Matthew, Little Lever	Darcy Lever	crofter	

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4. There are no baptisms or weddings in the period before 1795 in the area, and those further afield have local families so don't appear to have moved. Therefore the sequence of Thomas and Sarah marriages begins with the marriage of Thomas and Sally Isherwood at Bury in 1795. Two children baptised at Newchurch in Rossendale to Thomas and Sally shortly after the marriage are surely theirs.

Like the later Sarah Heys marriage, Ancestry and FamilySearch also show this marriage occurring (or being recorded at) Walmersley as well as Bury, linking the couple to the area. Thomas was already a widower and he fits neatly with a Thomas of the Edenfield clan who was baptised in January 1763, and was previously married to Millicent Turner. His abode of Hill Carr spans baptisms from both marriages. This Thomas also fits a Thomas of Edenfield buried in February 1805 at Holcombe, aged 42.

Thomas and Sally Isherwood

#	Name	Date	DOB	Father	Mother	Church	Abode	Father's occupation	Comment
Wedding	Thomas	6 Aug 1795			Sally Isherwood	St Mary, Bury			Thomas a widower, previously married to Millicent Turner (Edenfield clan). Sally possibly the widowed Sally Warburton who married James Jackson 20/12/1818. Thomas probably died 27/1/1805, aged 42 of Edenfield.
1	Margaret	6 Aug 1796		Thomas	Sally	St Nicholas, Newchurch in Rossendale	Hall Carr		
2	Mary	21 Jan 1798		Thomas	Sally	St Nicholas, Newchurch in Rossendale	Hall Carr		

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5. This leaves one further marriage and several baptisms, including Henry, the potential ancestor of the Bakers of Bolton. Three baptisms fall before the marriage so must belong to another family, and two fall within 2 months in 1803 and so must belong to different families. The nine baptisms include a sequence of 4 at Holcombe with an abode of Walmersley, another 4 at Edenfield with an abode of Edenfield, and one at Bury with an abode of Tootington.

Remaining Records

#	Name	Date	DOB	Father	Mother	Church	Abode	Father's occupation	Comment
1	James	7 Jun 1800	29 Apr 1800	Thomas	Sarah	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Walmersley		
2	Jane	12 Sep 1801	30 Jul 1801	Thomas	Sarah	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Walmersley		
3	Sarah	13 Nov 1802	13 Sep 1802	Thomas	Sarah	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Walmersley		
Wedding	Thomas	2 Jun 1803			Sarah Woolstenholme	St Mary, Bury		Thomas a crofter;	FamilySearch suggests marriage also recorded at Walmersley; father's occupation changes after marriage
4	Alice	1 Jan 1804	14 Nov 1803	Thomas	Sarah	St Mary, Bury	Tootington		doesn't fit elsewhere
5	Thomas	14 Feb 1804	28 Dec 1803	Thomas	Sarah	Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Walmersley		
6	Henry	11 Aug 1805	26 Jun 1805	Thomas	Sarah	Edenfield Chapel	Edenfield	spinner	gives birthplace as Walmsley (Walmersley) on 1851 census
7	Thommy	17 Mar 1807	18 Feb 1807	Thomas	Sarah	Edenfield Chapel	Edenfield	carder	Thommy described as son of Thomas and Sarah but the following death of daughter Phanny who would have been born at that time in Edenfield suggests this is an error
Burial	Phanny	15 Jan 1809	13 Jan 1809	Thomas	Sally	Holcombe, Emmanuel	Edenfield		Aged 2; daughter of Thomas and Sally
8	George	10 Mar 1808	11 Dec 1807	Thomas	Sarah	Edenfield Chapel	Edenfield	carder	
9	Susannah	23 Jul 1809	4 May 1809	Thomas	Sarah	Edenfield Chapel	Edenfield	engineer	

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This pattern could be interpreted in a number of ways.

Firstly despite conflicting evidence I have concluded that, on balance, the Henry born in 1805 is the Henry who appears in the Bakers of Bolton tree. The family's own published tree dates his birth as 1805. His close links with the area are also attested by the 1841 census in which he is recorded as living in Walmersley-cum-Shuttleworth, and his burial record at Holcombe. His wife was born in Holcombe.

There are some discrepancies in the records. In the 1851 census Henry's age is 46, and place of birth Walmsly. This would put his birth between April 1804 and March 1805. His age at his death 2 years later fits with this date range. Walmsly is almost certainly a misspelling of Walmersley. The Henry baptised at Edenfield wasn't born until June 26th 1805 and was said to be from Edenfield. Walmersley and Edenfield are almost 4 miles apart so not easily confused.

Ages were not always well known so a small discrepancy doesn't discount this being the correct Henry, especially as the family's tree records his birth as 1805. Also there is no subsequent evidence of a second Henry either in censuses or burial records and I think this is key. Although it appears the family moved to Edenfield before Henry was born, the 1851 reference may reflect that the family did live there for a while, or that Henry himself later lived there, as indicated by the 1841 census.

Secondly I favour a solution that doesn't rely on an unknown marriage, though again the evidence isn't conclusive. The only solution that covers all the records without introducing an unknown marriage is to divide all the children between Thomas and Sally nee Isherwood, and Thomas and Sarah nee Wolstenholme.

If we exclude an unknown marriage, the four Walmersley children must belong to Thomas and Sally nee Isherwood as three of them were baptised before the marriage of a Thomas and Sarah nee Wolstenholme. The husband of Sally nee Isherwood is most likely the Thomas whose death and burial are recorded at Edenfield in March 1805, based on his age at death. This means he could not be the father of the last 3 Edenfield children, and even Henry would have

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been born after his death. However it shows he did move from New Carr in Newchurch at some point. Also given he was only 42 when he died, Thomas and Sally were young enough to keep having children.

Henry could belong to either but on balance his later census reference to Walmsly (Walmersley) suggests it is at least possible that he was the son of Sally nee Isherwood born after the death of his father, even though the parish record doesn't describe his father as deceased.

This leaves Alice who was born in Tottington on November 14th 1803, and the last three Edenfield children as the probable children of Thomas and Sarah Wolstenholme who were married in June 1803. Alice could be a red herring but she doesn't fit elsewhere, and she does imply another unknown wedding if she isn't part of the same family.

Sally Isherwood is Sally on her marriage, and the baptisms of two daughters baptised in Newchurch, but the mother's name is given as Sarah, and not Sally, on the four Walmersley baptisms. A widowed Sally Warburton remarried on December 20th 1818 at Bury, St Mary to a James Jackson. A Sarah Jackson, aged 60 is living with James, the eldest of the Walmersley children, in the 1841 census. Her death is probably that recorded in the second quarter of 1846 in North Bury, aged 69.

This would therefore seem to be James's mother, though that doesn't prove she was Sally Isherwood, as she could still be from a couple who moved into the area. If she were from a different couple it should be possible to identify the death of a Thomas who left her widowed. However I have not yet been able to identify the marriages of the couple of adult Thomases who were buried in the years before Sally's remarriage in 1818.

Sally Jackson's age at death does fit with the baptism of a Sally Isherwood on June 14th 1776, daughter of John, a Yeoman from Bashall. Bashall is about 18 miles from Newchurch-in-Rossendale where Sally's first two daughters were baptised but this could be explained by the pull of the Industrial Revolution. Nevertheless the match could be coincidence.

There is an interesting change of occupation between the father of Henry, who was a spinner, and the father of the later Edenfield children, who was a carder, and later Engineer. My impression is that spinner was a skilled and

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important job as they often employed their own piecers. A change of occupation to carder would be unlikely, or at least imply a change of circumstance.

The occupation of the father of the children born in Walmersley is not recorded, and there is no other record of the occupation of the Thomas who married Sally Isherwood. However the first of the children from Walmersley, James can be found in censuses, and he married his second wife in 1846 when a groom's father and his occupation was recorded. James's father was Thomas, a carder. If the occupation of Henry's father is correct it is an indication that he is from a different family, but it is also possible his occupation was recorded incorrectly.

Another complication is that Sarah Wolstenholme's husband was a crofter at the time of their marriage, compared with carder and engineer on the Edenfield children. A crofter in Lancashire is actually a bleacher or dyer because bleaching was done by laying out the cloth in fields or crofts to be bleached by the sun (with increasingly efficient chemical assistance).

These different occupations might indicate there are more than two families. Most local people were employed in the cotton industry, and there may have been changes of job from time to time. The fact that it seems the fathers of the Walmersley and Edenfield children was a carder doesn't necessarily mean they were the same family.

Nevertheless there must be a reasonable possibility that at least one further couple is involved, and this would permit a number of different permutations. I have decided to include the Walmersley children in the Edenfield clan as the children of Thomas and Sally nee Isherwood, with caveats. However Henry's parentage may only be fully resolved when it is possible to perform a Y-chromosome DNA test on one of his known descendants.

Finally I have included a list of other known Thomas and Sarah weddings from the period, and some possibly relevant burials, though only the first can be tied to a Thomas and Sarah marriage.

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Other Weddings, and Thomas Burials

Wedding	Thomas	18 May 1797			Sarah Handley	Manchester Cathedral			
Wedding	Thomas	17 May 1798			Sarah Penny	Fisherton Anger, Wiltshire			
Wedding	Thomas	11 Jun 1802			Sarah Graham	Stanwix, Cumberland			family in Stanwix
Wedding	Thomas	22 Jan 1805			Sarah Davenport	Bowdon, Cheshire			family in Bowdon
Wedding	Thomas	8 Oct 1815			Sarah Kibble	Stockport, Cheshire			
Wedding	Thomas	20 Oct 1831			Sarah Clegg	St Mary, Bury		Thomas a fuller	children's baptisms follow
Burial	Thomas	2 Mar 1805				Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Edenfield		aged 42; gives birth in 1772
Burial	Thomas	30 Jul 1810				Emmanuel Chapel, Holcombe	Heartsough Mill		aged 55; gives birth in 1754/5
Burial	Thomas	7 Dec 1813				St Mary, Bury	Tottington		aged 67; gives birth in 1746
Burial	Thomas	29 Sep 1831				St Mary, Bury	Summerseat		aged 62 gives birth in 1768/9
Burial	Thomas	22 Jan 1833				St Mary, Bury	Tottington		aged 84; gives birth in 1748
Burial	Thomas	6 Feb 1853				St James, Haslingden	Haslingden		aged 66; gives birth 1786