

A DRIVER and WEATHERHEAD family history

Silsden, West Yorkshire, England

Tracing the story of two Silsden families, through six generations of change

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Appendix 4

Will and inventory of Sarah Driver of Silsden, April 1725

This will and inventory of Sarah were found in the York Peculiars Probate Index and the archivists at the Borthwick Library kindly helped me to understand this old document. A small extract of the original is below.

1. Early documents frequently use Latin and that occurs in this document in two places. Firstly 'IMP' which is an abbreviation of 'imprimis' meaning 'in the first place'. Secondly 'ITEM' meaning 'also'. Lastly 'Viz' or 'videre licet' means 'namely'.
2. We have a variety of abbreviations in this document, a number of which seem to be 'the', 'this' or 'them'. There used to be an Anglo-Saxon symbol called a 'thorn' which stood as a 'th'. Since modern fonts do not include a thorn and since it looked somewhat like a 'y' I have used a 'y'. I am advised that the fascinating on-line palaeography guides at the National Archives and at Nottingham Special Collections are really good. The Yorkshire Historical Dictionary is also recommended.
3. Thus y^e is 'the', y^m is 'them', y^s is 'this', y^t is 'that'. But y^h is perhaps 'who'. Also s^d is 'said'. 'X' is taken to be 'Christ' or 'Chris'. Some of the superscripts are not clearly written.

Transcription

In the Name of God Amen y^e fifth Day of April 1725, I Sarah Driver of Silsden in y^e Parish of Kildwick & County of York, Widow, being sick & weak in Body but of perfect Mind Memory thanks be to God for y^e same then calling to mind y^e mortality of my body & knowing y^t is appointed for all men once to die do make & ordain y^e this my last Will & Testam^t, viz In the first place I recomend my Soul into y^e Hands of Alm^y God y^h gave it & my Body to y^e Earth to be buried in a decent & Xtian maner at y^e discretion of my Executors herein hereafter named not doubting but at y^e general Re

surrection I shall receive y^e same agⁿ by y^e mighty Power of God in Xt . ---
---- And as touching such worldly Circumstances as it has pleased God to bless me wth in y^e W^{ll} I do give, bequeath & dispose y^e same in Form & Manner following.

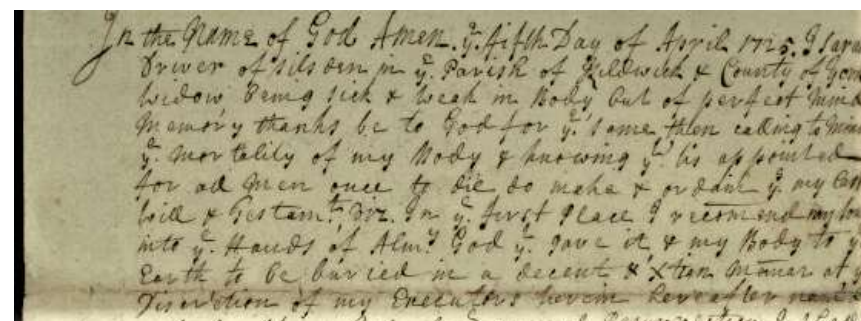
IMP

I give & bequeath unto my son John Driver of Brunthwaite y^e sum of five shillings to be paid at Twelve Months after my Decease. Item I give & bequeath unto Susan Booth of Heaton my daughter one shilling to be paid twelve month after my Decease. All y^e Rest of my Goods, Cattles & Chattels & Personal Estate I do hereby give & bequeath unto William Driver & Isabel Driver my son & daughter (after y^e Payment of my Debts & Discharge of my Funeral Expenses & y^e above s^d Legacies w^h I charge y^m to pay) jointly & equally to be enjoyed by y^m y^e said William Driver & Isabel Driver y^m Heirs Executors & Assigns for ever. And I do hereby appoint y^m y^e above s^d William Driver & Isabel Driver my Son & Daughter joynt executors of y^s my last Will & Testament. In witness whereof I have set my Hand & Seal hereto y^e Day & Year above written.

Sealed sign'd published & declar'd in y^e Presence of us

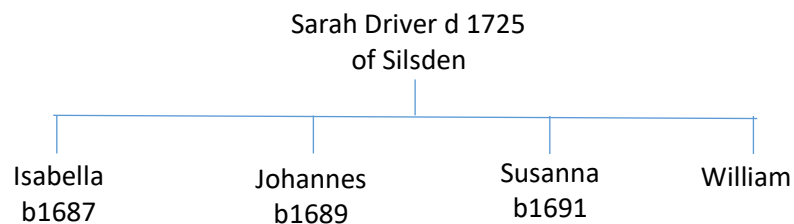
Tho Philip (?)
Jonas Jackson

her mark 
Sarah Driver



Notes

The chart below shows the four children mentioned in Sarah Driver's will. It shows baptisms of Isabel, John and Susan but that of William has not been found. Marriage of Susan to a member of the Booth family likewise has not yet been found. Brunthwaite is a hamlet east of and now part of Silsden. Heaton is a suburb of Bradford. The birth (c1665) & marriage (c1685) of Sarah have not been found, but see the Driver Narrative.



The fact, that in this will William and Isabel are treated differently from the other children and are not said to be of a different location, suggests that they may both have been unmarried and at home with their mother and inheriting the household items (if not the house). The will was written in 1725 and seems to recognise John and Susan as being married. William and Isabel are appointed as executors.

We also have separate knowledge that a John Driver married Mary Spencer in 1721 in Addingham. Addingham is an adjacent village just over the hill from Silsden. If this John were the Johannes born 1689, he would have been 32 when he married. Because Silsden had a population of only about 600 at that time, and also since there are no other viable Silsden Driver candidates in the parish records either before or after these entries, it is very likely that these relate to one and the same man.

From the History of the Steel Family of Silsden and Merseyside written by T. M Steel <http://tsgf.pbworks.com/f/STEEL.pdf> it seems likely that this

Sarah Dryver had lived in Holden. Quotations taken from the Steel History say:-

'All the remainder of Holden Park (Phillipp's Farm, Hanson's Farm, Jonathan Berry's Farm and Lodge Farm) was leased at the same time for £165 to Benjamin Phillipp, whose family had already lived for 50 years in Holden.'

'In 1704 the 'very ruinous' Lodge with its 'one elme tree before the door' had been in the occupation of Sarah Dryver, widow (sub-tenant to Benjamin Phillipp), who died in 1725.'

'In October 1706 a new arrangement of the listings in the call books began. The reason is unclear, but it may have been part of the review following the expiry of the Jennings family's lease of Holden Park in 1704. The distinction between tenants and resiants was abandoned and Richard Steel's name began to appear between those of Berry and Widow Dryver. Puzzlingly Richard's name remained in this position between Berry (and his successor Henry Smith) and Dryver until the end of the extant series of call books, in 1720. While this may simply have been an uncorrected entry, it makes it impossible to distinguish between Richard Steel senior and his son Richard junior.'

'On 24 June 1712 the old chapel of Silsden Hall, originally built by the Jennings but by then long used as a barn, was consecrated by the archbishop of York as a chapel of ease for Silsden township. A copy pew-holders plan shows among the seats in the body of the church 'No. 14' marked 'John Clark and Wm Weatherhead ~~Rich Steels~~'. This correction was probably made after Richard's death, but there is no indication of a date.

Transcribed inventory of Sarah Driver:-

May ye 7th day 1725

An aprisment mayd of the goods and Chatels of Sara^h Driver deseased

Item	Pers and aparil	1	10	0
Item	Further House won longtable	0	10	0
Item	won Chist	0	5	0
Item	4 Chayrs	0	3	0
Item	the Iron things	0	8	0
Item	won Chist	0	5	0
Item	in the Parler			
Item	won bed & beding	1	10	0
Item	won Chist and a Cofer	0	4	0
Item	won Tronel bed	0	1	0
Item	three panes	0	4	0
Item	the pewder	0	4	0
Item	the Hustolment	0	2	0
Item	3 Cows	8	10	0
Item	won mayr	1	10	0
The Totall is		14	17	0

Signed by

James Gill
Tho Phillip
John Booth
James Gills

Transcriber's notes

1. It seems that the list was written by the first named, James Gill, partly due to similar handwriting and partly due to his habit of writing an 'e' backwards.
2. John Booth may be Sarah's son-in-law and husband of her daughter Susan.
3. James Gills writes his 'e' in the modern manner.
4. The 'Totall' is incorrect. This may be caused by a transcription error but there seems little or no room for error. The sum of items as transcribed is £15.6.0. (9 shillings more than stated). An explanation of this has not been found but it is possible that there was debt that had been deducted. This inventory is thus understated by 9s. From elsewhere, another much larger inventory relating to Joseph Steel (Red Lion innkeeper and father-in-law of Charles Weatherhead N1) is overstated by £8 18s 6d. No explanation of why these variations arise has been discovered.
5. The items listed are thought to include personal & apparel, a long table, one chest, 4 chairs, a coffer, a trundle bed (since this is in the parler it indicates that this is where she slept), three pans, pewter items, the hustlement is a collection of miscellaneous smaller items, and one mare.